



## HMGA Activity Reports and Announcements for February 2023

### Announcements -

**State Fair - Needs Coordinators.** An opportunity for several MGs to partner and engage in the creative process of creating a fun educational Fair experience for school children and adults. This Activity gives the Master Gardeners widespread exposure.

**Horticulture Learning Center - Bob Durbin** - February 13 meeting minutes.

ATTENDANCE: Steve Karcher, Katherine Hebert, Wayne Bryant, Angelette Pryor, Kate Sandy, Ann Margaret White, Emily Gianfortoni, Pat Reyes, Laurel Hill, Linda Hazelwood, Bob Durbin, & Jennifer Alexander

### 1. Reviewed Reports:

- Funds raised (\$3,423.90)
  - Design a budget to allocate funds in the budget, discussed total cash received. Materials received/tools - In-Kind donation \$450 in 2023.
- Grants Status
  - Rappahannock Electric Co. (REC) \$2,000.00 for irrigation... March timeline
  - Lowes-Hometown Grant Funds-up to \$50,000 possibly want money for "pergola" (Teaching Center). Setup with roof covering for area in the garden. Possible electrical outlets.
- NEED a person/business to nominate HLC for grant- need one person
  - **Katherine** has contacted BROOKE ADAMS with HANOVER TAVERN to nominate HLC. She already said she would be happy to help and nominate! Due this Mon.
- Info on HMGA, GuideStar and Charity Navigator - **Susan Higgins** is making us compliant.
- Irrigation - county looked at the site and we might have ground water we could use as well as roof water?
- Construction - We have enough cardboard. Thank you **Lisa Willis** for your help with King William Florist and their donation of used cardboard!
- Greenhouse - All in attendance agreed to move forward with acquiring the free greenhouse offered to us. Bill Drumheller is helping with the movement. Much to be determined before anything takes place in the actual movement of the greenhouse.
- Wood Chips-Kate Sandy is asking for a donation of wood chips from SB COX Construction and Recycling through the help of her husband who does work for the company.
- Steve has created a wonderful digital design of the garden for us to begin determining what/where and how to utilize the space the best (as well as a tabletop display).
- Initial garden bed design established (Laurel, Pat, and Bob agreed to build six beds). Garden design is posted in the office. Discussed garden view from the road, possible donation from Agri-berry (Ann Geyer), Bamboo from Lewis Ginter.
- Discussed alternative beds would be in the next section of the garden (Straw bales, Veg Trugs, etc.)

## 2. NEEDS/NEXT STEPS

- Recruit MGs and community members to work with MGs for planting beds and building beds .....Complete a Community Survey?
- Create a budget for next steps of garden development.
- Create a reasonable timeline for part one of the HLC garden complex to be completed.
- Schedule a workday in March to spread wood chips and cardboard.
- Meet with Parks & Recreation Staff to discuss grass mowing issues for the season.
- Secure arborist or tree services to drop additional wood chips.

### **Gleaning - Pattie Bland (Elaine Daniel, Corinna Muldowney, and Pattie Bland, coordinators) -**

In the 2023 season, there will be a coordinators' team composed of Elaine Daniel, Corinna Muldowney and Pattie Bland. Two online-only trainings to be announced. All Master Gardeners who want to join the Gleaning activity must take this one-hour training. The training is required annually and must be repeated even if a MG has taken it last year.

### **Home Gardening Series - Katrina Hart Coordinator. Katherine Hebert reporting.**

Those involved in the Home Gardening Series met on February 7 via Zoom to discuss and brainstorm ideas about the program's future. The HGS series initially struggled with meager attendance by the public. Most of those attending were master gardeners enjoying continuing ed hours. However, the last three presentations have been extremely well attended by community members, leaving us with more questions as to why. There is a discrepancy with the total number of community members served as volunteers did not individually log their contacts. One reported 100, and another only recorded 87 to date.

The series has been advertised on the following marketing channels:

- HMG website
- HMG Facebook
- Local garden groups on Facebook
- Library website
- Library bulletin board
- Farmers Market tables
- Mechanicsville Local
- Word of mouth

Katrina was praised by all for the structure and processes she put in place to make the HGS more efficient. All the event volunteers know exactly what their roles are and worked efficiently. The Atlee Library location has been an excellent facility for the programs. However, it is still being determined if we are attracting people from the western part of the county with this location. It was suggested that attendees put their zip codes on the survey forms to understand better parts of the county served. This is being done at the remaining presentations in the series.

Challenges:

- Getting presentations more uniform in structure and length. While a format was put in place in the planning and communicated clearly, some presenters were unwilling to incorporate this into their presentations.
- An attempt was made to align the subjects with the season, but that was impossible.

Ideas suggested:

- Changes to the survey form to collect more data
  - Add the zip code of attendees
  - Add a checkbox to indicate who is a Master Gardener
  - Add a question about how attendees learned of the program
  - Add a question about why the topic was important to them.

- Should email addresses be collected to remind interested community members of upcoming programs in a newsletter?
- Shorter presentations could be combined to make a more dynamic experience for attendees and more worthwhile of their time on a Saturday.
- Hybrid series with more specific or focused subjects being online and broader topics that lend themselves better to handouts or demonstrations in person
- Hands-on presentations could be held at the new learning center in the future.
- Teaming Master Gardeners together to complement skills and be more engaging for attendees. For example, one person might be a better presenter, and another might be better with hands-on projects.
- Better vetting of speakers before a presentation

### **Virginia Cooperative Extension (VEC) – Angelette Pryor**

Several MGs need updates for Civil Rights and Risk Mgt. Angelette notifies MG when this is needed. Will do a zoom meeting as logistics for training have changed.

The group concept for MG Course continues to work very well. The Presentation Mentor Group, **Taylor Adams, Anne Margaret White, and Haylie Zapantis**, worked extensively with trainees...

2023 is the year for Hanover Situational Awareness for our VCE Unit. More info to follow later from Laura. This analysis drives what we provide to the community as Extension always meets community needs.

HLC – Bob will tell you more about community survey but will be able to collect surveys at the April 15, 2023 event at the Hanover Museum. Will also be at HGS, Plant Sale, Plant Clinics etc.

Mike Flagg available to talk about Hanover landfills and progress toward recycling etc. for the county.

Please encourage spouses, friends etc. to attend March HMGA meeting with Andrew Pompei – planning dept. about Comp Plan Updating progress.

New Master Gardener logos from VA TECH. Does not affect HMGA tomato logo.. more on the EMG logo..

Informal Evaluation of HGS brought to light the importance of updating presentations and having others review information so we always present to the public in a professional manner. Many MGs are resistant to this feedback.

All MG Activities will be formally evaluated this year. Angelette is working on this task and will include MGs in process.

Milestones sent to VA TECH for 2022

MG college dates are June 8-11, 2023 – will HMGA offer scholarships again? If so, how many and what value?

### **Educational Grants - Becky Watson (Betty Jane Hughes, Mary Wagner, Doris Gullotta, Mike Little) -**

The Atlee Little League Complex made an application for a Grant for construction of four raised beds, plant them with native plants, and incorporate interpretative signs to the Complex grounds. The site was previously seen by the MG Home Visits team and planting native plants was one of their recommendations. All Grants Committee members recommended approval of the Grant. The application is attached to the Reports.

### **Scotchtown Demo Gardens - Doris Gullota -**

February 13 - Spoke with Susan Auman from the Daylily society about the plants at Scotchtown. She said they would be happy to lend some help with the gardens and may be able to provide some plants as well. I provided her with a list of the plants that were installed in the gardens in 2004. She spoke with the Iris society and they may provide some period appropriate bulbs for us.

February 15 - Met with Dawn and Patrick at the gardens to do a walk through. We will need to replace the supports for the beans in the kitchen garden. I will provide stakes that are more appropriate for the colonial time. They said they would turn the compost bin for us once a week and keep it watered. They also said they would expand the dye garden out about 1 foot and dig a matching plot for the fabric plants. They will update their voice tours to include this garden. These two gardens will be a teaching source for the school tours they do during the year. We talked about the perennial gardens and the need to remove the shrubs. I want to remove many of the daylilies and create groups of plants that can be easily identified for visitors. We also discussed the replacement of the June Berry tree that was removed a few years ago.

February 22 - Put two cotton seeds in gallon jug containers. Made labels for the plants I want to put in the cold frame. I am planning on planting seeds after the BOD meeting on Monday the 27th if anyone wants to join me. We are making arrangements for the work day on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Any suggestions on what to do with excess day lilies would be helpful.

### **Communications - Betty Jane Hughes -**

- Working with Pat put a list of who has paid dues for 2023 on the website.
- Working with Angelette we have done multiple upgrades on BI – removed files no longer needed, updated some of older files.
- Updated changes in training schedule.

### **Website - Katherine Hebert -**

A communications committee has been formed with lots of talent amongst four master gardeners, **Victoria Shipp, Nicky Maddams, Susan Higgins, and Hallie Zapantis**, and one trainee, **Scott Bateman**. We have several people who are familiar with WordPress for helping to maintain the website. We have a few writers/editors to help create additional content and one who is familiar with an email marketing program for a future community newsletter. Many who joined the committee are excited about the ability to earn hours from home. Our first meeting will be at the Hanover Tavern on March 1<sup>st</sup>. We will meet and stay for optional dinner and socializing.

Work has begun to convert some documents posted on the public side of the website to web pages. Some of the monthly chores, Garden glossary, etc have been converted.

New pages have been created for the following categories that will house content new and old once progress is further along. The intention is to make the site easier for visitors looking for specific information. More will follow. These are still early days and the pages will not be live until content is updated and images are found.

- Pollinators
- Pest and Diseases
- Kitchen Garden
- Creating Good Soil and Compost

The Horticultural Learning Center Graphics have been updated and the garden drawing removed from the website. A community survey will be placed on the garden page soon.

### **Land Care Steward - Linda Hazelwood -**

On January 24th, Pattie Bland and Emily Gianfortoni gave a presentation on Nutrients/Fertilizers to the MG training class.

On February 2th, Linda Hazelwood gave a presentation on Vermicomposting to the training class

**Meetings, Trips & Tours, Continuing Education - Eleanor Fukushima, VP -**

The February member meeting celebrated a Valentine's Day theme with many luscious desserts. Thanks to those contributing. The MG lead program was on Hydrangeas by Joan Vandervort that was interesting and well prepared.

The March 13th member meeting will be a potluck dinner and feature Andrew Pompei, a Principal Planner and Project Manager, from the Hanover County Planning Department. His presentation will be on the updating of the County's Comprehensive Plan.

**Plant Sale - Pat Reyes** - Emails will be sent to all MGs on activities associated with the Plant Sale.

**Plant Clinics - Needs a Coordinator.**

**Youth Activities - Needs a Coordinator.**

**MG Help Desk - Val Kish** - Reports quarterly. Next update in April.

**2023 MG Training Class (MGTC) - Val Kish** - Classes end March 23rd. Class report coming in April.

**Extension Office Demo Garden - Sandy Pence** - Want to be a part of this garden? Let me know.

**Pole Green Butterfly Garden - Sandy Pence** - Planning for next year will begin soon. Want to be a part of this garden? Let me know,

**Rural Point Elementary School Garden - Sandy Pence** - Nothing to report.

**Speakers Bureau - Carol Brown** - No report