## Hancock County Extension Master Gardeners

## Meeting Minutes

## May 28, 2020

**Opening**

The meeting was called to order by President Jerry LeCount at 6:13 PM. The meeting took place via Zoom due to COVID-19 restrictions.

**Education**

Jerry introduced Mary Ann Wietbrock, Hancock County Advanced Master Gardener, Master Naturalist, and President of The Pennsy Trails of Hancock County Inc. She presented information on the development of the Pennsy Trail Head at 400 W US 40, including types of flora and fauna present at the site, various groups that had participated in clearing the trail head, and future plans.

**Break**

Jerry announced a short comfort break of 10 minutes.

**Announcements**

President Jerry LeCount opened the business portion of the meetingby welcoming everyone to our first Zoom meeting, and expressed hope that we would be able to meet face-to-face again in July.

**Approvals**

The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Vicki Snarr, seconded by Paul Norton, and approved.

The Treasurer’s report was presented by Greg Arthur. The current balance is $2819.34, with $138.97 cash on hand, and $2680.37 in the bank. There was some discussion about which members have paid dues; Teresa Bowlby reported that all individuals (except Emily Snider, whom she will contact again) that have not paid dues have been relocated to the “Lapsed” section of the membership list.

**Old Business**

Teresa gave an update on the 2020 Plant Sale, which was not able to be held in the traditional manner due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Because we had already committed to purchase plants from the Hope Center, we felt it necessary to honor our commitment by having some sort of plant sale. Through the extraordinary work of several members, two on-line sales were held – one focused on Mother’s Day with lots of flowers for sale, including hanging baskets, and one focused on vegetables and herbs for planting. Customers were alerted to our sale through our Facebook page, shares from our page, our MG website, and our members spreading the word. The remaining flowers were donated to the Hancock County Fairgrounds, and our members donated their time planting those flowers. The remaining herbs and veggies were donated to the Marion County Community Gardens. We brought in a total of $1694.00 and had expenses of $1222.87, leaving us with a profit of $471.13. Teresa thanked everyone for the team effort, listing key participants individually.

Paul updated us on the vinca Greenfield Re-greening project. He listed the 13 Hancock County Master Gardeners who volunteered to plant about 4000 vincas on May 13, 2020, stating each person will receive a certificate of appreciation. There has been much positive feedback from the community regarding the beautification process, and several people have expressed interest in the Master Gardener program after seeing the volunteers out working.

Don McAuley reported on behalf of the Media Committee. Don thanked various committee members for their work. There has been a large increase in the number of questions on our Facebook page and in our “Ask a Master Gardener” page of our website. The team is currently working on ideas for the next newsletter, so if anyone has any ideas, please send those to Don. Tim met with Lais McCartney, our new ANR Educator and Master Gardener Coordinator, to get her ideas/thoughts for updating the “Who We Are” and “Become a Master Gardener” pages of our website. Don has also been working with Lais to get the flash drive presentations uploaded to our Google Drive.

Lais spoke briefly about the next Master Gardener class, as it is a top priority of hers to have a MG class this fall. She spoke with John Orick, State MG Coordinator, and reports that we don’t know when or what the class will look like, and that she should find out something on June 1st. There is a link on our website where individuals can add their name to the list of people interested in becoming a Master Gardener:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeWzuh-tOdDKAwo1\_2I6uEq-jDOjgZzJIND\_lBapWl3ZCMVNg/viewform

Marsha Burkhart updated us on the Octagon House project in Shirley. Marsha received a call from the Virginia Harrell, Octagon House representative, who also needs volunteers as part of a $20,000 grant for which she is applying. If we could confirm that we will volunteer at the House, she can use that in her grant application. Marsha contacted Harvest Land regarding mulch, and they will assist by providing the mulch at commercial prices. There was discussion amongst members as to which plants they would be able to donate, and Jerry asked that members email Teresa with plants that they would have available, and we can discuss at our next meeting. Although we don’t normally have a meeting in June, he suggested that we have one to discuss the design and install details once we have the list of plants. Teresa moved to support the Octagon House by providing volunteer hours, and Jerry seconded the motion. Marsha will let Virginia know, and we will discuss plants at the next meeting. Marsha asked if Paul could share his sign design with Virginia so that she can have something similar installed at the site.

Marsha also mentioned that Brian Thomas, Hope Center Director, is asking for volunteers to work at the greenhouse there. Marsha will send the contact information to Teresa and she will forward it to the group. These will not count for volunteer hours.

Elaine updated us on the Extension Gardens. There’s a workday coming up this Saturday, and you can sign up via Signup Genius. We had some plants donated, so there are several that she would like to move out of the Gardens and donate to the Octagon House to make room for the new plants. Mary Ann suggested that any extras be planted at the Pennsy Trail. Elaine also updated us on the condition of the day lilies – they are improving but she’s not sure whether we will have the Day Lilly Sale in July. She also asked if anyone had any plants that can thrive in dry shade and would be willing to donate some starts.

**New Business**

Lais was introduced again to the group as our new Master Gardener Coordinator. She gave her work and personal history and stressed that making our Master Gardener group the best in the state is a high priority for her. We are excited to have so much support! Welcome, Lais! She also announced that Tim Harris has reached the Master Gardener level. Congratulations, Tim!!

Paul mentioned that the *Daily Reporter* did a write up regarding the vinca plantings and Jerry asked that Lais forward the information to Teresa for distribution.

**Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made and seconded at 8:16 PM. The next meeting will be held on June 25, 2020 at 6:00 PM via Zoom.

**Minutes prepared by:**

Teresa Bowlby, Secretary