

## MGAPC General Meeting Minutes - Tuesday November 28, 2023

*Our Lady of Consolation Ministry Center - 1799 Hamburg Tpke, Wayne NJ 07470*

7:00 PM Gathering and Sign In

**Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order by Jo-Ann Pituch at 7:05pm. She announced that 42 people have rsvp'd for the Holiday Party however we need seventy to meet the costs of the venue. She asked the group to join the celebration. Jo-Ann then introduced Bert Sebastian to lead us in the Pledge of allegiance.

**Continuing Education:** Bert Sebastian introduced guest speaker Salvatore Mangiafico to speak on Rain Gardens. Sal is an associate professor at Rutgers. He gave a presentation on rainwater runoff and the basics of planting a rain garden. Resource handout attached to meeting minutes for reference! Note: before digging, locate utility lines - Call 1.800.272.1000.

**Recess:** Short Recess at 8:00pm

Master Gardener Ritika Gandhi announced during the break that she will be a vendor at the Laurelwood Craft Fair December 9th & 10th, 10am-3pm, she will be selling her hand painted silk scarves.

### **8:12 PM Meeting minutes**

Bert called the meeting to restart and moved to approve last month's meeting minutes. Jo-Ann and Ann Kahwaty first and seconded the motion.

### **Election of Officers for 2024:**

Before the group votes for the 2024 board members, county agent, Amy Rowe, described a limitation to the current bylaws. The board is proposing an amendment to the bylaws to allow a current board member to continue in their role for an additional year (beyond the maximum allowed 3 year limit) if there are no nominations for that position leaving the position uncontested.

Bert called for a vote. By a show of hands the majority voted Yes to accept the bylaws be amended.

Bert called for a vote to accept the uncontested/unopposed slate of officers nominated for the board. By a show of hands the majority voted Yes.

Jo-Ann handed out paper ballots to vote on the 2nd Vice President position.

While Barbara Shapiro collected ballots Ritika Gandhi and Patty Lang stood in front of the group to introduce themselves. Ritika graduated in 2021, she is a resident of Wayne who focuses on indoor gardening and art. Patty graduated in 2021, she is a resident of Wayne who focuses on outdoor gardening and volunteering at the High Tunnel.

Voting is then concluded and remaining ballots collected to be counted by Bert.

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### Reports:

Bert Sebastian requested members reach out to her with potential guest speakers and to please consider presenting a lecture themselves next year.

### Treasurer Report:

Pete Tomasi reported the total funds are \$15,468; with approx \$1,000 of which is in savings at Lakeland Bank. There is about \$150 in outstanding checks. There is more money this month after collected dues and holiday party payments. Credit card transactions are now available to pay dues, please email or see him after the meeting.

The vendor for MGAPC branded merchandise offers T-shirt sizing: Small to XXL. Unfortunately they have been communicating slowly. The board is working on creating a link on the website to make safe credit card purchases. He asked members to purchase and wear branded shirts, hats, etc to events/when volunteering. Please see Green Times for updates.

Rashmi Dhekne thanked Pete for his good work the past 3 years as treasurer and the group clapped and cheered.

Jo-Ann Pituch requested everyone to send payment for membership dues a.s.a.p to be sure your name is in the member directory. She personally thanked Pete Tomasi for helping her make powerpoints, ordering clothing, setting up the credit card system, working at the plant sale, and photography. Pete laughed with a joke: "I was 24 when I started!"

### 2024 Board:

Bert announced the results:

President:	Kamala Anupindi
1st Vice President:	Bert Sebastian
2nd Vice President:	Patricia Lang - won by paper ballot
Treasurer:	Jayne Ross
Recording Secretaries:	
Executive meeting	Michele Savvides
General meeting	Rebecca Walter
Corresponding Secretary:	Katie McEwan

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### **Project Leaders:**

#### Little Falls Public Library

Ann Kahwaty shared that the garden club is planning for spring and collecting seeds for a lending library. They are looking for guest speakers and the Woman's Club memorial garden has been installed and winterized. Ann thanked volunteers.

#### MGAPC Christmas Party

Jo-Ann (for Linda Franco) posed a question to the group: Do we want the Christmas party at The Brownstone next year? If yes, they will need to put down a deposit at this year's party to hold the date in 2024. (First Tuesday of December 2024.)

Jo-Ann asked the group if we should look for a new location. Pete asked if Linda knows another place and if we should form a committee? Janye shared The Brownstone is probably "the best bang for the buck." Ann agreed and stated they got a deal and shared "Tommy takes care of us." Jo-Ann asked for a show of hands vote to go to The Brownstone next year - majority voted Yes.

There was a request for a truly vegetarian meal (or vegan) and a discussion started.

Classification of vegetarian in this context should be a meal consisting wholly of vegetables, fruits, grains, nuts, and soy. Not including dairy, eggs, or fish. A purely vegan meal may be ideal.

#### Master Gardener Coordinator report by Amy Rowe

Amy announced Julia Piermatteo is the new master gardener coordinator and she will start on December 4, 2023. She is a new graduate of Scranton University, where she studied Plant Science. She worked/volunteered at Abma's Farm and Thielke Arboretum. She is a Bergen County resident and is seeking a master's degree at Rutgers. The hiring committee, including Joe D'Errico, voted for her unanimously and Cecilia Diaz found her impressive with a lot of experience. Amy requested patience while Julia adjusts to the new job. She will be coordinating the master gardener classes (online) next year.

Amy announced all projects that have been submitted were approved including Michele Savvide's! Please submit proposals for new projects before the end of the year.

Jayne Ross asked Amy to extend an invitation to Julia for the holiday open house. The group thanked Amy for standing in while Rutgers searched for a new coordinator! She confirmed she will continue to be a part of the program and is Julia's direct supervisor.

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Bert Sebastian called for any other project leaders to share

### St. Gerard Majella Parish report by Michele Savvides

This is a new project, currently in the building/planning phase at St. Gerard's church in Patterson. It is a small plot of land with raised beds to grow vegetables. Volunteers will assist local gardeners, promote learning, weeding, and facilitate productive harvests. Plan to meet on Saturday and Sundays.

Rashmi asked if Michele would coordinate with the Father English Pantry.

<https://ccpaterson.org/frenghish>

Michele mentioned her passion for educational gardens.

Pete suggested Michele check with Rutgers to see if working in Patterson makes her project available for a federal grant.

### High Tunnel report by Maureen Alex

Maureen shared the HT project had many highs and lows in 2023. She mentioned the 4H club, the shed, and some structural issues. Maureen reminded everyone how the High Tunnel project was conceived by Cecilia Diaz and of the bountiful produce they donated to St Peter's Haven in Patterson two years ago. She and Patty look forward to working with Julia P and she requested members to volunteer next year!

Bert concluded the meeting; listing future meeting dates:

- Holiday Party December 5, 2023 - 6:30-9:30pm at The Brownstone
- Executive Board meeting Thursday, January 18, 2024 - 10am at the Nike Base
- General Membership meeting Tuesday, January 23rd - 7pm at Our Lady of Consolation

**Adjournment 8:53 PM:** Bert reminded everyone to sign in and called to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Rashmi

## RAIN GARDEN RESOURCES

Sal Mangiafico  
Agricultural and Resource Management Agent

Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Cumberland County  
291 Morton Ave.  
Millville, NJ 08332

Phone: 856-451-2800, ext. 1  
Email: mangiafico@njaes.rutgers.edu

### Sal

*Rutgers profile page*  
*Facebook (work)*  
*Twitter (work)*

[njaes.rutgers.edu/personnel/individual/3353](http://njaes.rutgers.edu/personnel/individual/3353)  
[www.facebook.com/MangiaficoWork](http://www.facebook.com/MangiaficoWork)  
[twitter.com/GreenKnightGnus](http://twitter.com/GreenKnightGnus)

### Earth Day Every Day Webinar Series

*Main site*  
*Sign up via email*

[envirostewards.rutgers.edu/earth-day-every-day/](http://envirostewards.rutgers.edu/earth-day-every-day/)  
Tell Sal

### Earth Day Every Day Newsletter

*Articles*  
*Sign up via email*

[saalem.njaes.rutgers.edu/category/earth-day/](http://saalem.njaes.rutgers.edu/category/earth-day/)  
Tell Sal

### Rain Gardens

*General*  
*Rain Garden Information*  
*Center*

[water.rutgers.edu/Rain\\_Gardens/RGWebsite/raingardens.html](http://water.rutgers.edu/Rain_Gardens/RGWebsite/raingardens.html)  
[water.rutgers.edu/Rain\\_Gardens/RGWebsite/rginfo.html](http://water.rutgers.edu/Rain_Gardens/RGWebsite/rginfo.html)

*\* Rain Garden Manual*

[water.rutgers.edu/Rain\\_Gardens/RGWebsite/RainGardenManualofNJ.html](http://water.rutgers.edu/Rain_Gardens/RGWebsite/RainGardenManualofNJ.html)

*Rain Garden Outreach*  
*Manual*

[njaes.rutgers.edu/environment/raingarden-manual.asp](http://njaes.rutgers.edu/environment/raingarden-manual.asp)

# RUTGERS

New Jersey Agricultural  
Experiment Station