

MGAPC General Meeting Minutes - Tuesday February 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 President Joe D'Errico at 7:02 pm.

1st Vice-President, Bert Sebastian led us in the Pledge of allegiance.

Continuing Education: Bert Sebastian introduced guest speaker David Cadorett to speak on "Setting up and Maintaining a Tub Pond"

A couple of lecture notes: David is an aquarium hobbyist and water lilies and lotus flowers enthusiast from Rutherford, New Jersey. Visit his Instagram and Facebook pages by searching: "Dave's Exotic Water Gardens."

Tub ponds are self-sustaining with fish; but without fish it is best to use mosquito dunks.

Use mesh baskets for marginal flowers like water celery, creepy jenny, water iris, and cattails.

Soak soil before planting water lilies and lotus; then layer on sand, pea gravel, and water rocks before submerging the potted plant into the tub pond.

Recess: Short Recess with guest Dave Cadorett.

8:20 PM Meeting minutes

Joe D'Errico presented a "Thank You" gift to Sara McHugh for leading MGAPC as president for 4 years (2019-2023.) Thank you Sara!

Reports:

Treasurer Report: by Peter Tomasi

We have reconciled our accounts at the end of Feb and currently have in excess of \$11,000 in deposits.

Membership Report: Jo-Ann Pituch reports that the membership cards are completed and will be mailed out the week of March 13th. She noted it's been the best year in membership participation.

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Project Leaders:

Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum - FOLA

The Plant Sale is on May 13th and 14th. They are taking pre-orders for native plants online. <https://laurelwoodarboretum.org/plant-sale/>

They offer: 39 different annual flats, multiple grasses, 17 Native perennials, and 32 shrubs. There are 24-32 trays per flat.

Lourdes Osorio described the current deer situation at Laurelwood, the scope of the proposed fencing project they are petitioning to erect, and the community opposition. Form letters are available to be signed and sent to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, in favor of a deer fence.

Joe emphasized the great relationship between MGAPC and Laurelwood but remarked the board will not take an official position on the matter. He asked if anyone had any questions; there were none.

Sunny's Garden

Sara McHugh shared that Linda Franco, Roger Mazowiecki, and herself will be chair people for the project this year. They typically meet on Monday mornings and are currently clearing non native grasses. Please Volunteer!

103 Hamburg Turnpike, Bloomingdale, NJ 07403

Program Associate Report and State Awards with Jo-ann Pituch

Dr. Amy Rowe (Ph.D.) is our interim MGAPC Advisor and Interim County Extension Department Head.

Cecilia Diaz nominated Bloomingdale Senior Center "Sunny's Garden" and the Passaic County Plant Sale Committee for the NJ State Award for Excellence.

Project leaders Sara McHugh, Rodger Mazowiecki, Linda Franco, and Joe D'Errico were awarded pins for their work bringing the garden back after almost two years of Covid restrictions, recruiting and leading volunteers and colleagues, working with the Department of Public Works, and "going above and beyond" to brighten the senior center grounds.

The Plant Sale committee members Jo-Ann, Chairman, Joe D'Errico, Co-chairman, Patricia Lang, Betty Montagne, Sara McHugh, Peter Tomasi, Maureen Alex, Anthony Molinari, Jill Hanifan, Linda Franco, Mike Fowler, Michele Savvides, Kathie Hetherington, James Gillick, and Bert Sebastian were awarded for successfully bringing the sale back after 3 years. They were praised for ingenious collaborations, fundraising, plant selection, working with interns, and raising funds for Master Gardener led projects throughout the county.

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MGAPC Plant Sale - May 20th

Jo-Ann will step down as Chairman/Project leader. Linda Franco will stay on the committee.

Future general meetings and meet ups:

March meeting to be at: *Our Lady of Consolation Ministry Center*.

The April meeting will be in combination with Bergen County MG at their offices.

Sara McHugh brought up the need for a location for the May and June general meetings; Noting there is potential to use our current meeting space, the NJBG, or Laurelwood.

Graduation will be held at the High Tunnel and this year's picnic will be at Sunny's Garden.

Group Conversation

Joe and Jo-Ann discussed group field trip ideas: Rutgers Agriculture Experimental Gardens, Snyder's Farm, Tomato Festival, and the Middlesex County High Tunnel.

Joe noted that master garden members can go to NJAES meetings to learn more about the organization.

Joe and Sara discussed the idea of a mentoring program and asked members to consider if they would like to become a mentor to a new member or intern.

Jo-Ann noted there are 6 new students for Passaic County.

Joe is looking into the idea of a grant committee and the potential to join with other county programs. He is interested in a new green house project next to the RCE High Tunnel.

Jo-Ann mentioned contacting Nicholas Polanin and ordering tomatoes for the plant sale.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Barbara Cook and seconded by Mary Jo Sichak. The motion passed on a voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.