



STATE MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEER ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE  
February 9, 2007  
Howlett Hall, Room 139, OSU Campus, Columbus, Ohio



**Meeting Attendees:** Pam Bennett, Carolyn Allen, Lynn Bauer, Troy Cooper, Barb Davis, Schroeder Dodds, Dave Dyke, John Haley, Steve Hudkins, Bill Jones, Susan Liechty, Tim Malinich, Mary Maloney, Greg Meyer, Mary O'Rourke, Rosalie Perry, Tammi Rogers, Fred Rufener, Rich Sherman, David Shetlar, Kathy Smith, Robin Stephenson, Kay Studer, Ellen Weinau

Absent: Sarah Baer, Diane Bambenek, Joe Boggs, Jim Chatfield, Kathleen Evanoff, Barb Mills, Thais Reiff, Tim Rhodus and Charlotte Robe.

Pam Bennett called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. After each attending member introduced themselves, Pam introduced Dr. Bill Randle, the new Chair of the Department of Horticulture & Crop Science (HCS). He briefly summarized his previous positions prior to his current position and the learning curve he is currently incurring. He also expressed his strong support for the Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) program.

The first order of business was to select a new secretary to replace Tammi Rogers who had been the secretary for more than two years. Schroeder Dodds volunteered and was approved as secretary for 2007. Mary Maloney volunteered and was approved as Chief Financial Officer for the committee for 2007. Steve Hudkins was CFO in 2006.

Pam circulated a list of the individuals on the list serve for the MGV Advisory Committee for each individual to review the accuracy of their individual listing. She advised that at the beginning of each month each of us should receive an email notification as a method of ensuring that we are still on the list. If we don't receive the notification, we should contact her. Pam also distributed a listing of the MGV county coordinators for each of the counties, although some counties do not have MGV programs. Any needed corrections should be sent to Carolyn Allen.

After distributing a 2007 State Master Gardener Volunteer Advisory Committee listing, Pam explained that she had assigned one, two or three year terms to each person on the committee. A few changes may be made in the assigned terms as needed to ensure continuity. Members should contact Pam to make changes.

Pam advised that she had completed her PULSE tour visiting with representatives from every county. The main subjects discussed by attendees at the meetings were the need for more communication, the need for advanced training programs, and more connections between county MGV groups.

Pam explained that there are two MGV accounts. The State MGV fund has a current balance of \$1,230.15. A second account has a balance of \$7,987.87; however this account still has an outstanding debt of \$4335.23 that is owed to the Dept. of HCS for reproduction of the MGV manuals for prior years. An addition will be made to the account in the amount of \$2,500 to \$3,500 that was earned through a perennial program at the C.E.N.T.S show. An additional \$594 will also be deposited for the sale of MGV Manuals sold to organizations outside the state.

Reimbursement forms were distributed for claiming mileage for attending the meeting.

Mary Maloney summarized the status of the MGV endowment that was originally intended to fully fund the state MGV coordinator position; \$2.1 million is needed to fully fund the position. Currently \$15,353.00 has been donated to the endowment. A minimum of \$50,000 is required before a return can be realized from the endowment. There was a discussion on the advisability and benefits of requesting the OSU Development Force and other OSU financial entities to assist in soliciting donations for the endowment. A committee composed of Pam, John Haley, (Pam will ask Bert Hendley, a Franklin County MGV), Mary Maloney, Kathy Smith and David Shetlar was established to define the purpose of the endowment and how to proceed with future solicitation efforts.

The 2007 State MGV Conference will be September 14-15 in Columbus and is being jointly planned by Delaware and Franklin counties. The focus will be global situations, including global warming and genetically modified organism issues. Several distinguished speakers have already been selected in response to requests to raise the caliber of

presentations. The banquet and program on the 14<sup>th</sup> will be devoted to awards, with no keynote speaker. Attendance at the 2004, 2005 and 2006 conferences was 450, 312, and 228 respectively. It was suggested that spouses/significant others should pay a higher registration fee; this will be determined by the committee organizing the conference. Efforts are being made to permit reservations by email, including on-line credit card payment. Counties are being requested to supply door prizes, as in the past. The 2008 conference will be in the north-central region, but the specific site has not been selected.

A lengthy discussion was held regarding the newly instituted \$10.00 state MGV fee for active MGVs. Pam advised that her predecessor had initiated the \$10.00 fee, and a few counties had submitted the fee, but the State Coordinating Committee postponed the requirement pending a determination of what the fund was to be used for. She presented her plan at the MGV Coordinator's Conference in November of 2006 and proposed a \$5.00 fee, but it was suggested that she raise it to \$10.00, and that suggestion was implemented. She only received one direct letter and 2 indirect letters in opposition to the plan. The \$10.00 fee can be collected from each active MGV through annual dues, or paid from the county MGV fund, or any other method at the option of the county. In anticipation of the incoming funds, several actions have already been initiated including plans for the 2007 state conference and greatly expanded and improved web support. The planned uses for the fee receipts were discussed. Opinions were offered that the money should not be expended for events, like the annual conference, which a relatively small percentage of MGVs attend, but should be devoted to leadership and organization issues. It was the general consensus that a budget for more than one year is needed to accommodate the large initial expenses being incurred this year.

A tangential discussion addressed the need for a standard MGV nametag to be used by all MGVs. She presented a proposal that included both the OSU Extension and MGV emblems. The desirability of using the MGV pin in conjunction with the nametag was discussed, particularly where to attach the pin, and the use of "hour" pins. The color of the emblems was also discussed. It was mutually agreed that the nametag should have a magnetic fastener. A motion was made, seconded and passed to authorize up to \$12,000.00 to purchase standard nametags for each current active MGV that has satisfied the required volunteer and training requirements and paid the \$10.00 fee. Thereafter, each new MGV will receive their nametag from the county after they complete their training and initial volunteer hours. Each county can determine how the nametags are paid for. Pam, Bill Jones and Mary Maloney will finalize the nametag design and Pam will start the process to get the nametags ordered.

During lunch, Bud Witney, who works with Tim Rhodus gave a presentation on the new MGV website that is being developed. The website will be open to all MGVs, but will have designated sections available only to MGV coordinators.

Following lunch, discussion regarding the budget was continued. The advisability of including the MGV endowment in the budget was discussed and discouraged. A budget committee was established to discuss and develop the budget. Greg Meyer will be the chairperson and members will be Pam, Bill Jones, Tim Malinich, Mary Maloney, and Fred Rufener.

The benefits of establishing sub-region representatives to improve coordination and networking amongst adjoining counties was discussed. The sub-region representatives will be responsible for contacting designated counties and scheduling and conducting periodic meetings, as well as to represent the members of their sub-region. Meetings may or may not occur, dependent upon the desires of the county MGVs involved.

Also discussed was regional meetings for the MGV coordinators. Transportation problems were mentioned due to the large areas covered by each of the three regions. The possibility of either 6 meetings, in lieu of 3, or 1/2 day video conferences was discussed. It was agreed that regional meetings will not be scheduled this year.

Pam advised that update of the MGV manual has not been completed yet, and will not be completed for the classes this year. The question was raised whether the effort should continue for a small revision, or whether a major revision was required. The consensus was that a major revision was not required. A committee composed of Troy Cooper, David Shetlar and Kathy Smith will continue to work on the minor revision effort. Various proposals for publishing and distributing the manual in the future were discussed, without any final decisions.

Pam announced that she wants to expand the annual MGV awards program as reflected in the \$2,000.00 line item in the proposed budget. An awards committee was established to include Rosalie Perry (Chair), Barb Davis, Susan Liechty, Tammi Rogers, and Ellen Weinau. Applications for award nominations will be distributed in May.

The possibility of a MGV membership card was discussed for current/active MGVs. A potential difficulty would be maintaining the cards current and precluding unauthorized duplication. It was decided to establish a standard card template that would be included in the MGV website and the counties would determine its use.

The new contract for MGV apparel was discussed. The state MGV account will receive a slight profit on each sale. When the new website is implemented, the price list and order blanks will be included. The listed price will include one logo --- either the OSU Extension or the MGV logo. Addition of the second logo will cost extra. However, there is a MGV logo that contains "OSU Extension" in small letters. The same price will apply to either embroidered or printed logos.

Jane Martin's recently completed Power Point programs and the reason she is charging for them were discussed. After she retires, the proceeds will be directed to the state MGV account.

A discussion was held regarding on-going and future MGV involvement in the Emerald Ash Borer program. The consensus was that MGVs could participate in information and education efforts, but should not become involved in enforcement actions. David Shetlar and Kathy Smith are the committee contacts for these efforts.

The Ohio Prison program for teaching gardening skills to inmates by MGVs is being extended from Pickaway County to other counties. Judy Niggemeyer is the contact for the program. The state prisons are paying for the educational program. MGVs can participate in the program as instructors but the inmates will not become MGVs.

Tom Blaine at Wooster is coordinating with a colleague in Georgia to do a study on the value of the MGV program. Pam will continue to explore and promote this effort.

David Shetlar advised that in previous years MGVs have assisted significantly in science studies, but participation has been falling due to some counties not permitting the efforts to be counted against volunteer hour requirements. The possibility of including opportunities for these kinds of projects on the forthcoming website was discussed.

There was a brief discussion of the "zoomerang survey," which was used to obtain the MGV statistics for 2007. Survey results and statistics should be available by the end of February.

The Ambassador Program for the Ohio Heritage Gardens at the governor's mansion will be continued under the new governor. Training for new ambassadors will be held in March, and representatives from each county are encouraged.

The first advanced MGV training course is planned for March in Columbus on vegetables and another in June on integrated pest management in the landscape. Discussion followed regarding other advanced training programs across the state. It was brought out in the PULSE tour that counties would like programs that aren't always in Columbus and in close proximity. Pam asked for counties to volunteer to organize an advanced training program. Adams, Erie, Hamilton, Cuyahoga and Allen counties volunteered for this responsibility. They each have \$400.00 from the state budget to help with speakers for their program. Additional classes have yet to be scheduled. The possibility of presenting training by video is being explored.

At the last MGV Coordinators' Conference there was a brain storming session of how to better market the MGV program. Dave Dyke's group suggested that the Governor declare a statewide MGV day, and that each county present a MGV program for the public on that day. A desirable date and potential projects were discussed. A Marketing Committee was established consisting of Dave Dyke (Chair), Steve Hudkins, Susan Liechty, and Mary O'Rourke.

In response to questions regarding the definition of active/inactive/emeritus/trainee MGVs in relation to attending the state conference, a Policy Committee was established to include Pam Bennett (Chair), Dave Dyke, Steve Hudkins, Tim Malinich and Rosalie Perry.

The next meeting was scheduled for May 9th, 2007 at 10:30 a.m. at The Gwynne Conservation Area (<http://gwynne.osu.edu/>). Kathy Smith will check on the location.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Schroeder Dodds  
Secretary