

Houston County Master Gardening Meeting – November 2017

Date: 11-14-17

Present: Linda Lind, Sue Meyer, Janene Hosch, Sarah Goff, Mary Zaffke, Terri Kolar, Lane Zaffke, Vicki Otto, Anna May, Jennifer Wister, Michael Wiste, Barb Hefte, Char Meiners, Michael Cruse, Karen O'Rourk.

Absent: Loretta Knutson, reported she was sick, Brenda Pohlman, Kathleen Taylor, Jean Davy, Mary Thompson, Charmaine Uphaus notified Loretta she could not make it, and Doug Thompson. Thompsons still on a trip to China

Welcome: Meeting called to order at 5:34 pm by Michael Cruse (Extension Educator), location Justice Center. Terri Kolar, secretary.

Treasury Report:

None

Old

Business:

Approve last month's minutes. Approved as written.

Anna secured Elsie for catering for garden conference March 17, 2018. Menu similar to last year. Price not confirmed yet.

Doug has confirmed Kaitlyn O'Connor of Prairie Moon Nursery to do a keynote and a break out session. Talk specifics to be further defined but key note probably "How to Grow a Prairie" keeping in mind some people will only be interested in minor landscaping use or individual plants. A break out might be pollinator shelters and potted garden kits.

Doug also found a company that would print 500 double-sided custom printed bookmarks (we send the pictures and text) for a \$50 with free shipping. Great idea and price.

Doug posted the March garden conference on our FB event page (date & location) details will be added later.

Doug has a MG friend near Waconia that does "Ask a Master Gardener" time at various local libraries as volunteer time. Good idea.

New email for Lane Zaffke lane.zaffke@gmail.com

Char has drafted a “save the date” poster and book mark for the spring conference. Both look excellent. Changes will be made to reflect the new title for the conference Thyme to Garden and gardening with kids. She will also add the university logo.

The panel presented by master gardeners has had several name changes but now will be gardening with kids.

Mary T. confirmed Harvey will be a keynote speaker at the conference. He will speak on successful selection and care of lower canopy trees and shrubs for our area. He will cover selection, getting started, ongoing care, site selection, insect resistance; grow rate and specific features of different trees and shrubs. He was paid \$100 last time he was a speaker and is ok with that again.

Mary T informed the group Mary W. is not available as a speaker for March.

Nancy Runnigen needs the title of the spring conference emailed to her, the deadline to get this to her is before November 20. She will work on CE activities for Jan/Feb “save the date”. This information will go out to all area CE programs and the Caledonia Activities calendar which is sent out by the Chamber of Commerce. (Done emailed 11-14-17) (Loretta responded to her a few days ago).

Herb Logo “Thyme to Garden” will be the name of this year’s spring garden conference.

A plant and card were sent to Kelly (extension secretary)-passing of her father-in-law.

New Business:

Karen O’Rourke (state board advisory) this is her second year in this position, she has been on tour of each county in her region. Her goal is to encourage two way communications between the state and counties. It was noted that very few MG attend the state and regional meetings. These trainings are a train the trainer and based on the latest priority research. This year the topic was pollinators. The training was held in November. There is a training each year, 2018 topic will be local food production, cost \$15, train the trainer taught by professionals utilizing the latest based research. Karen asked why we thought so few MG attend these trainings. We thought location was a problem, to travel 2 hours for training. Mike offered Rochester may be a good spot for future regional training. Karen asked how the group is able to access the state webinars. Most felt the WebX platform made accessing the trainings difficult. Karen was also interested in projects our group does and who we collaborate with. The group offered many of our activities and collaborators-schools, community ed, city, women’s shelter, Neighbor’s in Action, school gardens, garden workshop, local plantings, scholarships to new MG, fair booth, farmer’s markets, other MG groups, plant exchanges, Caledonia Green, and Pruning at the Nature Center to name a few. In closing Karen wanted ideas in the future how the state could help the local MG groups. The group voiced the need for more education, trainings, and pamphlets for resource

materials. Mike said the office would not be keeping pamphlets on hand as most people now have computers, but if we did need some they could be obtained.

Spring Conference title will be Thyme to Garden. This year when people register or sign in we want to be sure to get emails so we can keep our email data base current.

Mike will again be presenting in two locations so he will be our 9:45 Breakout session 1 presenter. Gardening with kids MG panel will be 11:00.

Newspaper articles the group is doing a great job covering these. We have discussed in the past but not taken action on the idea of posting our articles to our Face book page so we can all view the articles and use them as a reference tool. Mike will discuss with Doug the possibility of these being on Face Book and also Mike being an administrator for the site.

Mary T. revised the application for school garden grants. The information went out to schools, day cares and newspapers. November 1 was the deadline for applications. Only one application was received. Possibly we need more coverage on this. The application is from the Little Lions preschool in Spring Grove. (Children 2-5 years of age). Mike read the application to the group, they have an existing butterfly garden they want to expand by 20 feet, and they would like to also have some containers of plants, apple trees, fruit bushes and a raised bed garden. Funds requested \$420. The group decided yes this should be funded in addition to a MG champion being assigned to discuss/advise on their gardening plan. Sue and Mary Z. will be the MG champions for this group. Sue will notify the preschool.

Mike informed us that the yearend report is divided into two parts and the first part is due this Friday. It revolves around what are our impact, value and success stories. The university is pushing a three prong approach: output, outcome and impact. We are going to focus on what we are doing and do it well. Mike ran through a series of questions regarding our activities, we focused on youth initiatives, at least 10 of our MG had direct contact, school gardens, Caledonia kids event, and school garden focused activities. What did we intend to do and had we done what we intended. Yes we provided education and got kids excited and interested in plants and gardening. What did we produce, what was the outcome? We agreed we had increased awareness, resources and skills. Our focus has been on building horticultural skills. If anyone has pictures from our youth activities please email them to Mike for the report.

Another question in the report was how the state leadership can support us. All agreed trainings close to home, better webinar access. The group is open to any training.

Please remember to get your hours turned in.

Addendum item-a thank you note was sent to the group by Kelly.

Tasks:

Thinking ahead:

Marketing of spring conference, save the date postcards, conference brochure

Sharing Ideas:

Volunteer Hours this meeting: 1.5 hours plus your travel time

Next Meeting: Date January 9, 2018

Location Justice Building