Master Gardener Advisory Committee Minutes
May 16, 2012

Present: Monica David, Tracy Jo Mulliken, Jennifer Fishburn, Jennifer Schultz Nelson, Harry Clayton, Shey Lowman, MaryAnne Spinner, Rodger Harfst, Corinna Walker, Lindsey Snell, Joy Gulotta, Pat Kosmach, Brenda Dahlfors, Sonya Lallemand, Nancy Kuhajda

Via telenet: Linda Smith
Absent: Rachelle Hollinshead

Call to Order by Harry Clayton @ 10:06am
Minutes: February minutes approved

Reports

✓ 2012 MG conference: Registration opened May 1st. McHenry and Lake are sponsoring. Eliot Coleman is keynote.
✓ MG blog released: Illinois Master Gardener Blog is up. Monica and Lindsey are posting. Send ideas to Monica and they will post them. They plan on posting at least once a week. Also looked at MG web page updates. Calendar is up on the educational events page for CEU items.
✓ Impact survey: For people who trained in 2009 and 2010. Monica will resend link as a reminder for the volunteers to complete the survey.
✓ Manual reprint in 2013: About 800 manuals left from print run of 2009. A few minor changes will occur along with correction of errors. There was discussion on adding an organic chapter. Monica will work with Rich Tobiasz and Rick Weinzerl on this. Discussion on allowing current MG’s to purchase new copy at discounted price when the new reprint is complete.
✓ The new Home Yard and Garden Pest management guide has just been released and is now called “Pest Management for the Home Landscape”. Price (c1391-12) from PUBSPLUS is $24.95. The committee suggested that Monica ask the PSEP team to create the manual in electronic format in the future so that it is easier to update annually. Some would prefer the manual be done in spiral binding.
✓ Volunteer Reporting System updates: Calendar function is up now. Monica has better access. Signing of the annual volunteer agreement will be done on the system beginning in 2013. Web team is working on these updates: change contact form for volunteers to update their contact info; email list for volunteer coordinators; subscription list for newsletter. The committee made suggestions for further improvements: add a graduation year feature for help with pins and awards; add a leadership check box and add a place for anecdotal information like committee chairs; allow Monica to add statewide events like the state conference or IPM modules to all counties; add a feature to allow coordinators to keep track of screening documents. Brenda suggested that volunteers who do not add hours for a
year- have the system add zeros rather than just leave the volunteer off of any reports run. Several committee members wondered if it is possible to lock out inactive MGs from reporting on the system. The committee also discussed what to do with the electronic signature when the MG Coordinator does not want to invite a volunteer to return the next year.

✓ **STAFF UPDATES:**
  - New coordinators announced- DeKalb (Bethany Marcus), Cook-Chicago (Sarah Batka), Boone (Kathy Guyer), Ogle (Lisa Valle) and Unit 23 (Chelsie Keene).
  - Two new Hort. educators: Unit 2 and Unit 10.
  - New educator in McLean –Unit 12 (Kelly Allsup)
  - Vermillion and Piatt looking for program coordinators
  - Adams Brown- Unit 14 looking for Horticulture educator.

✓ **Policy changes with U of I legal:** Monica and Sheri Seibold meeting with legal and were told yesterday it could be 3 to 5 months. Photo and video release and application cannot be done electronically but annual volunteer agreement can. Uniform volunteer application has been redone – the lawyer is not requiring references on the MG application. There will be a few MG policy changes including updating age from 18 to 19 years old and wording on disabilities. Monica and Sheri meet with the university archivist to discuss how long all volunteer documents should be kept.

**Discussion Items**

- MG awards judging: 50 outstanding, 21 sustained, 12 teamwork. Judging forms due 6/6 to Monica.
- IPM modules preview shown by Monica and Lindsey. They hope to have 5 modules up by end of June for MGs to begin using. The modules are done except for some fine tuning, artwork and pictures.
- Online Help Desk Scheduling preview was shown. DeKalb, Ogle and Boone are testing the system. Volunteers sign up for time slots on the help desk. This app. could be used in the future for other events like Farmers Markets. Some suggestions for this scheduling included: allow more than 2 MGs to sign up per time slot; email should be generated to MG Coordinators when changes occur and only allow changes in the schedule to be made by MG Coordinator. A discussion occurred on what happens when a volunteer makes last minute changes to their shift and the MG Coordinator is not notified.
- Advanced training in MN- The committee looked at revising criteria for this certification. This website shows classes which could qualify for the certification without the MG going thru MN training. http://www.mccdistrict.org/web/pr-pancp.htm There was much discussion about the criteria for this certification and the name. Calling the advanced training- MN- causes confusion for our volunteers. The group was divided by whether to leave the name as is and accept MN and other
related subject matter training to count for certification or whether to change the name altogether. The final vote was 8-6 to change the name to Advanced Ecology training. MN training would count under this certification as well as classes such as conservation, and ecology, natural landscaping, soils, wildlife and other related topics. Monica will have new pins made up with the Advanced Ecology name. She will also be sure that all those who have received the MN advanced training title and pin – receive a replacement pin.

- JMG Specialist training is in the works. This would involve bringing in the JMG management team from Texas A & M. Their part of the workshop is a train the trainer type, with staff and volunteers expected to go out and train other JMG leaders. Monica is setting up a cross team committee to plan the workshop and she hopes to expand this beyond JMG training to include some sessions on youth gardening. It was suggested to include a session on food safety for working with and eating produce from the garden. Monica has some funding to put this workshop on. The workshop will most likely be a 2-3 day event.

- Webinars for staff and MGs. Monica was looking for topic ideas to host webinars for staff and volunteers. She has asked Denise Levgold, director of 4-H to have her staff provide a webinar on how to work with kids. Other suggestions for topics included dismissal and working with the problem volunteers; how to show impacts of our programs and communication.

- Extra IPM funds- Monica will have some funds left from her 3 year national IPM grant (the one which is funding the online IPM modules) and asked for advice on how to use up the ~$5000 grant surplus. Suggestions were: a pocket weed ID guide for MGs (currently being worked on by Michelle Wiesbrook); an online weed ID class; an online version of Pest Management for the Home Landscape; DDDI training; purchasing a dynalite for each unit and classes on IPM or organics.

- 2013 MG conference is scheduled to be a joint venture with Indiana. The conference is tentatively scheduled to be held at the Aztar in Evansville on Sept 27-29th. The committee discussed having our annual awards banquet in Illinois- probably on campus next summer. Suggestions included –have a speaker and tours; maybe a luncheon on Saturday; 11am keynote, noon lunch then tours on your own.

- 2014 MG conference location is yet to be determined. Peoria, Rock Island, Springfield were all suggested as possible locations as conference should go to that part of the state.

- New members needed- the committee discussed how to deal with new Extension regions. It was decided to leave in old regions but rewrite bylaws to include naming units.

- Reworking the mini-grant criteria was tabled until the September meeting.
Future Meetings

September 5- Crystal Lake Holiday Inn- Noon to 5pm- live or telenet
November 13- campus or telenet
February 11th -telenet
May 15th -campus
September 18th -campus