

Washington County Master Gardeners Business Meeting November 2, 2021

The meeting was held virtually via Zoom. Present: 95 members. Quorum: Yes

Call to Order. President Kathryn Birkhead called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Approval of September Annual Meeting Minutes. Mel Zabecki moved and Karen Hanna-Towne seconded to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Approval of October Minutes. Ruth Cohoon moved and Joyce Mendenhall seconded to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Approval of September Treasurer's Report. Ruth Cohoon moved and Randy Butler seconded to approve the treasurer's report. Motion carried.

New Business

A. 2022 Budget

Wanda Gore reporting. She presented a balanced budget, noting that the following changes from last year's budget:

- \$400 for advertising and marketing
- \$550 for executive committee special projects
- \$150 for memorials; this amount to be set aside for several years
- More money has been added to allow new officers to attend PNG in 2022 if the event is held in-person
- Increased contribution to state conference from \$200 to \$500

Technology expenses will be paid for with funds from the county depository.

Nancy Sloan moved and Linda Morrow seconded to approve the treasurer's report. Motion carried.

B. Amended Policies

Birkhead went over the amended policies. See attached.

Photo Contest Winner

Birkhead congratulated "Textures in the Garden" photo contest winner Mary McCully and her entry, "Extravagant Nectar." The November photo contest theme is "Autumn Colors."

Kitty Sanders reviewed the new and improved photo contest entry process. She also gave a sneak peek of the new WCMG website.

Announcements

- WCMGs were in the news recently, with articles about the special project at Historic Cane Hill and about the Lincoln Community Garden.
- T-shirt sales are going well.
- Award nominations are due November 15.
- Record your hours and pay your dues!

December Activities

Karen Hanna-Towne went over details of the Vroom (December 4) and Zoom (December 7) holiday events. Vroom will be a drive-through holiday party at the Extension Office. Zoom is our regular monthly

meeting via Zoom and will include a holiday centerpiece how-to video with Jana Mayfield, photos from holidays past, and an introduction of the Class of 2021.

Adjournment of Business Meeting. There being no other business, Elizabeth Hale moved to adjourn the business meeting at 6:45 p.m., which was followed by project spotlights from Doris Cassidy (Washington County Fair) and Jim Sposato (Lincoln Community Garden) and a talk by Terri Lane, executive director of the Northwest Arkansas Land Trust.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Young
Secretary

Washington County Master Gardeners

Policies and Procedures

LIABILITY

1. Two laws enacted by the state legislature protect volunteers from being held civilly liable for personal injury to others or property damage resulting from any act or omission in carrying out their volunteer activities. (Copies of the laws are on file in the Extension Service's state office in Little Rock.)
2. County Extension agents, using Master Gardeners to answer client questions, shall have all contacts documented with the response given (i.e., telephone calls answered in the Extension Office.)

USE OF THE TITLE MASTER GARDENER

1. The title Washington County Master Gardener shall be used by volunteers when engaged in U of A Cooperative Extension Service-sponsored activities or related educational activities.
2. The title of Master Gardener shall not be used by individuals, businesses, or organizations in relation to any commercial venture or in any form of advertisement. Implying Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service endorsement of any product, service, or place of business is not allowed.
3. The U of A Cooperative Extension Service makes no guarantee, either implied or warranted, regarding the skills or knowledge of persons completing the Master Gardener training program and/or those persons identified as active members.
4. Education and experience may be used as qualifications when seeking employment, but not the Master Gardener title.

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Washington County Master Gardeners shall conduct themselves in a manner that strengthens the public's trust and confidence in our organization. Honesty and fairness, accountability, transparency, and commitment to the WCMG organization are to be our guiding principles.
2. Although travel expenses may be reimbursed by a host group, members representing WCMG shall not accept any stipend or honorarium for speaking before groups on horticultural subjects. While gifts may be accepted, unsolicited monies must be donated to the Master Gardener group checking account.
3. Only programs or events approved by the Garden Thyme editorial staff shall be publicized in the WCMG Garden Thyme newsletter.
4. Master Gardener contact information shall be used only for Master Gardener business and shall not be used for personal gain. It shall not be shared outside our organization.
5. Social media accounts managed by and for Washington County Master Gardeners acting in their official capacity shall conform to these guidelines:
 - a. Posts containing personal attacks, profanity, nudity, hate speech, illegal material or political rhetoric, including endorsements and ads, are prohibited.
 - b. WCMG account administrators reserve the right to remove any post that might create a hostile or intimidating environment, to revoke a user's privilege to post on the WCMG accounts, and to block the content of any post. Every effort will be made to review posts in a timely manner.
 - c. Opinions expressed on social media pages are not necessarily those of the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture and its staff, and no guarantee of the accuracy of any post is given or implied.
 - d. Posts shall be used only for noncommercial purposes. There shall be no soliciting of funds or promotion of commercial entities in any post or comment.

CERTIFICATION AS A MASTER GARDENER

Under normal circumstances, an individual must complete the following requirements during the first year to become an active member of WCMG:

1. Attend 40 hours of formal Master Gardener training
2. Perform 40 hours of volunteer work on sanctioned projects
3. Earn 20 hours of additional education, which may be obtained through the following means:
 - a. Attending Master Gardener membership meetings and programs. Each membership meeting counts as two [2] education hours; credit for other programs is equal to the number of hours in the presentation.
 - b. Attending lectures, programs, classes, workshops, conferences, demonstrations, seminars, garden club programs, etc. of other organizations
 - c. Going on garden tours, fieldtrips to nurseries, horticulture operations, etc.
 - d. Going to fairs, lawn and garden shows, botanical gardens, etc.
 - e. Listening to gardening podcasts; reading books, magazines, and catalogues; watching TV, YouTube or other videos of gardening/horticultural programs; exploring garden-related websites
 - f. Researching information to present at a meeting or program

Hours must be recorded by the deadline (see Recording Volunteer Hours below)

During the second year and subsequent years, a member must complete the following to remain an active member:

1. Perform 20 hours of volunteer work on sanctioned projects
2. Earn 20 hours of continuing education (see first-year education examples above)
3. Pay annual dues

Hours must be recorded by the deadline.

RECORDING VOLUNTEER AND EDUCATION HOURS

1. Volunteer and education hours must be entered in the online recording system by December 1.
2. The above date may be changed by the Executive Committee due to extenuating circumstances.
3. Travel to and from a Master Gardener activity shall not be counted as volunteer hours.
4. Preparation for a committee meeting or a sanctioned project workday shall be counted as volunteer hours for that project or committee.
5. Unless other arrangements have been made, WCMG members are responsible for entering their own hours. Members who do not have a computer should contact the Membership Committee chair to make arrangements for a committee member to enter their hours.

MEMBER REINSTATEMENT PROCESS

If a former Washington County Master Gardener left the MG program in good standing and wishes to rejoin the county program within 7 years of becoming inactive, he or she shall submit the **Request for Return to the Master Gardener Program** form (*see Member Resource Guide - Forms*) to the Washington County Extension Agent.

Upon the approval of the Washington County Extension Agent and the Executive Committee, a former WCMG may be reinstated in the county program provided that:

1. He or she completed the first-year requirements and was recertified the following year;
2. Is not under the policies of Leave of Absence or Sustainer;
3. Agrees to complete pro-rated volunteer and education hours for the year of reinstatement; and
4. Signs a new **Volunteer Agreement** form.

A member may be granted reinstatement only one time. After 7 years, a former Master Gardener must repeat Master Gardener training.

ADVANCED MASTER GARDENER CERTIFICATION

1. Advanced Master Gardener certification is provided by County 76 and is open to active members in good standing who have fulfilled all the requirements for three (3) years. Master Gardeners must remain in good standing in their county program to continue taking courses and to achieve advanced certification.
2. Master Gardener Sustainers will be allowed to participate in advanced training opportunities if space is available, but hours will not count toward advanced certification.
3. Master Gardeners have the opportunity to reach five levels in the Advanced Master Gardener Program.

WCMG AWARD RECIPIENT REIMBURSEMENT

Master Gardener of the Year, Rookie of the Year, one chairperson for the Sanctioned Project of the Year and one chairperson for the Excellence in Education Award shall be reimbursed a portion of their registration fee to attend the State Master Gardener Conference the year they receive the WCMG award. The amount of funds budgeted for that purpose shall be split equally among the winners attending the conference.

ENDOWMENT FUND

The WCMG Endowment Fund exists to award scholarships to University of Arkansas (UA) Horticulture students. Funds donated to the Endowment Fund shall be held in an account managed by the UA Foundation Agricultural Development Council (ADC) until the balance reaches the amount necessary to be considered an endowed account. At that time, the funds will be transferred into a permanent endowment fund. If adequate funds are not received by December 1, 2023, the donors give permission to expend these funds in support of the Washington County Master Gardener Program.

WCMG members or others may make memorials, donations to honor individuals, and general financial contributions to the WCMG Endowment Fund at any time. Donations may be made online at <https://uada.formstack.com/forms/donations> Donations not made online must include a completed **Washington County Master Gardener Endowment Fund** form which can be found in the Member Resource Guide “Forms” section or in the “Members Only” section of wcmgar.org.

OTHER DONATIONS TO WCMG

Washington County Master Gardeners and the general public may donate funds to the Washington County Master Gardeners organization to honor or memorialize an individual, the WCMG organization as a whole, a specific committee or project, or an event.

Gifts in-kind may also be made and are subject to approval by the UA Foundation Agricultural Development Council. Each type of donation or gift of any value shall be reported to the Washington County Extension Office. The staff chair shall ensure that the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service (UACES) financial guidelines are followed for all gifts and donations.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDAS

1. WCMG members who wish to submit an item to the Executive Committee's monthly meeting agenda shall contact the President at least five (5) days prior to the Executive Committee meeting.
2. The President shall provide a written agenda to Executive Committee members prior to the monthly meeting.