

Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
Petals from The Past
February 7, 2023

The Alabama Master Gardener Association (AMGA) Advisory Council met at Petals from the Past, Jemison, AL at 10 am on February 7, 2023. After a time of networking and refreshments, the meeting was called to order by Deborah Boutelier, Advisory Council Chair.

Debbie Boutelier welcomed new and returning members. She introduced AC Officers, Vice Chair, Skeeter Sims and Secretary, Amanda Redman. Attendees introduced themselves. Roll call was completed and there were 28 counties represented.

Skeeter Sims moved to accept the November 1, 2022 meeting minutes as published on the AMGA website. Sheila Bolen seconded. The minutes were accepted, as published.

What is Advisory Council and Why is it Important? Debbie Boutelier

Debbie Boutelier discussed the Advisory Council and its importance to the Master Gardener program. Representatives serve as a link between the local associations, AMGA State organization and Alabama Extension for exchanging information, concerns and problem-solving. Each county association is encouraged to appoint a Representative and Alternate Representative who are members of the local association and AMGA. Representatives should serve for at least a 2-year period. Anyone may attend meetings to learn about what is happening around the state. The duties of the Representative/Alternate Representative are listed on the AMGA website (alabamamga.org) under the tab 'AMGA Advisory Council SOPs.' The Nominating Committee also utilizes information from AC meetings to identify potential officers and committee members to fill positions on the AMGA Board.

AMGA Report: Myra Lassure, AMGA Board President

Myra Lassure presented information from the Board. Master Gardeners have obtained the naming rights to the pathway at the Transformation Garden with a pledge of \$200,000. They are working with the Agriculture Department to develop pledge cards for county associations. The Transformation Garden will include a rooftop garden, hydroponic/aquaculture garden, vertical garden, invasive species garden, children's garden, and research garden, as well as other educational gardens. The Garden will be one of the largest outdoor classrooms and will benefit multiple students and visitors. Pledges may be mailed to AMGA Treasurer, Sunita Graves (contact information was provided at the meeting).

A 501c3 Tax Class will be presented by Roger Clarke on February 10, 2023, via Zoom. There is no registration. The Zoom will be recorded.

The 50th Anniversary of Master Gardeners will be celebrated in Tacoma, WA in September, 2023. Additional information will be shared, when available.

The International Master Gardener Conference is June 18-June 22, 2023 in Overland Park, Kansas. A registration link will be forwarded through the Advisory Council.

Members may contact the AMGA Board with questions and concerns through the AMGA website (Alabamamga.org).

AMGA Conference-Devonne Ellis AMGA Vice-President

2023-Tuscaloosa

Don Sutton and Wanda Smith presented information on the “Homegrown in Alabama” Master Gardener Annual Conference which will be at the Bryant Conference Center, Tuscaloosa, AL on April 3-5, 2023.

Garden tours are planned in Northport and Alberta City. The Northport tour is on a hillside and may present some challenges for those with mobility difficulties. Transportation will not be available. There is parking nearby each location.

The Bureau of Tourism has offered a tour bus for the Civil Rights tour, but details are not currently available. There is an azalea workshop in the afternoon which may conflict with a guided tour.

RV Parking is available at the Coach’s Corner RV Park.

Silent Auction items may be brought to the Board meeting or to the Conference. If bringing to the Conference, members are encouraged to let organizers know so space will be available for display.

2024-Baldwin County

The “Paradise Found” Master Gardener Annual Conference will be held at the Daphne Civic Center, April 22-24, 2024. Hotel arrangements are pending and vendors have been contacted.

2025-Devonne Ellis reported arrangements are pending.

Extension Update-Emily Bornstein for Kerry Smith

The Spring Master Gardener Intern classes started last week. Fall Registration is June 1-30, 2023. Classes start August 10, 2023. Twenty-five (25) volunteer hours are required during completion of classes/coursework. Registration for the Service Report is an assignment and should encourage Interns to enter hours.

State Speakers Bureau – Susan Hagen

A Speakers Bureau has been created and is available on the AMGA website. Association members may utilize this information to obtain speakers for meetings, Lunch and Learn opportunities, and other outreach and educational opportunities. Master Gardeners are

encouraged to register as a speaker, but registration does not require speakers to accept invitations.

Project Funding-Sheila Bolen

The Committee has received applications and will meet soon to review the applications. There are guidelines for completing the form and criteria that should be met. It is important to be familiar with these for future requests.

Upcoming Tax Workshop

The link for the Tax Workshop on February 10, 2023 at 12 noon will be sent soon. Treasurers are encouraged to participate in the Zoom workshop.

What is the Story Behind the Numbers Activity

Debbie Boutelier shared information from Kerry Smith, State Master Gardener Program Coordinator, on the Master Gardener Effect and the importance of documenting volunteer hours. The national average value for volunteer hours increased to \$30.00 in 2022.

Representatives shared information about their projects and the “Stories Behind the Numbers”.

These included:

- Working with youth.
- Working with the physically challenged/Aging/ARC
- Botanical Gardens and Arboreta
- Farmers Markets
- Demonstration/Community Gardens
- Pollinator Gardens
- Growing/Donating fruits and vegetables (Grow More/Give More)
- Educational Outreach
- Technology – QR Codes
- Plant Sales

Jason Powell welcomed the Master Gardeners to Petals from the Past and commended Master Gardeners for their educational efforts to help people make good decisions about their landscapes. He reported about 150 more chill hours are needed for the peach crop. But, a good crop is expected. Visitors to Petals from the Past are concerned about damage done from the “flash freeze” in December. They are encouraging people to “wait and see” before making any major changes.

Announcements

The Festival of Flowers will be held in Mobile, AL on March 23-26, 2023. Baldwin County Master Gardeners will have a booth at the festival.

The next Advisory Council meeting is May 2, 2023 at Petals from the Past at 10:00 am.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:14 pm.

Submitted by:

Amanda Redman

Advisory Council Secretary