

Heart of Missouri Master Gardeners June, 2009 Meeting Minutes

6/16/2009 at the Extension Center

34 members in attendance

Chairperson: Laura Redfield-Jacobs, President

“Plants of Merit” presented by Chris Nejelski, Plants of Merit Coordinator, Missouri Botanical Gardens, St. Louis

The Plants of Merit program is now in its 10th year. There are 56 “active” plants of merit now. Each year, new plants are added to the list, and a few are “retired”. The Plants of Merit program is intended as a guide for homeowners and the green industry, to improve the diversity of landscape plantings. Plants of Merit are chosen carefully using a rigorous process. Annuals and perennials are observed over a 3-year period; shrubs over a 5-year period; and trees are observed for 7 years. Then, general availability, resistance to pests and disease, low maintenance, and noteworthy ornamental characteristics all factor into the final selections. A new category for 2009 is “Edible Ornamentals”. For more information about the Plants of Merit, go to www.plantsofmerit.org. Chris had a great slide show with beautiful pictures of plants and great information, and this program is available for others to use to “spread the word” about Plants of Merit. She encouraged our Master Gardeners to use her slides in making their own presentations on the Plants of Merit program. The group also really liked her short and sweet “rule” for container planting design: “Thriller, Filler, Spiller”...You need a “thriller” (an eye-catching centerpiece plant), “filler” (lots of plants to fill it in), and a “spiller” to go over the sides of the container. Couldn’t be easier, could it?

“The Mizzou Botanic Garden” presented by Pete Millier, Director of Landscape Services and the Mizzou Botanic Garden, MU Campus

The entire MU campus is a botanical garden, with no admission fees. In 1999, the University of Missouri Botanical Garden was established, and renamed in 2004. It is a resource to the public to learn about plants and plant research; it is considered an educational resource. The Mizzou Botanic Garden contains the largest collection of plants adapted to mid-Missouri. Its landscaping combines with the architecture and history to create a lovely setting to attract students and faculty to the campus. The three Tree Trails on campus are used by the Physical Therapy program on campus to provide exercise therapy for clients. The Botanic Garden staff also works with the College of Engineering to design and test new storm water management products, and practices. There are 11 Theme Gardens, such as the Butterfly Garden near Eckles Hall, and the Container Garden south of Jesse Hall. Future plans include an arboretum, a rose garden and a rhododendron garden. Because the Mizzou Botanic Garden has endowments for the gardens on campus, these projects and the beauty they bring will not require any public money.

Committee Updates:

- **Extension Grounds:** still needs a chairperson. Contact Laura Redfield-Jacobs if interested.
- **Mizzou Botanical Gardens:** Elizabeth Hoyos told the group about a volunteer opportunity related to the Tree Trails on the Mizzou Campus. Charles Paxton, who works with the campus landscaping program, would like to have someone assist him with a Tree Trail project that would involve the Boy Scouts and/or Girl Scouts, to set up a way for them to use the Trails for mapping and botany merit badges. If you are interested, contact Charles at 882-1865 (office) or 999-0385 (cell/home).
- **Educational Displays:** Peggy Eichen requested help in updating and preparing displays for the October 17th annual Chestnut Roast event. Contact Peggy Ann Eichen at eichenp@missouri.edu.

- **Habitat for Humanity:** In late May, they assisted several homeowners with tree and shrub plantings. They also had 2 community service volunteers assisting. The coordinator for community service is always looking for volunteer projects, so if you'd like more information, contact Phyllis Barks and she can put you in contact with them.

Old and New Business:

- The minutes and treasurer's report from the May meeting were approved by the group.
- Laura Redfield-Jacobs and Cindy Deegan told the group about the **Missouri Master Gardener Endowment**, founded by Ray Rothenberger and Jim Wilson, which provides support for the Master Gardener program throughout the state. Our book sale at the March meeting raised \$119, and it was moved, seconded, and approved that we donate that money to the endowment.
- The group discussed what we could do to support **Mary Kroening** and her family while they deal with their daughter Anna's recent diagnosis of a brain tumor. It was unanimously approved to send them a gift card for use while they are staying near the Mayo Clinic, to help with gas, food, and other daily living expenses. Julie Fisher had a card for all to sign, to send our well wishes to the family.
- Laura Redfield-Jacobs updated the group on the possibility of ordering **HMMG shirts**, for general use, and to wear at the state conference. She has found a shop in California, MO who is willing to make us T-shirts for \$6/each and polo shirts for around \$18/each. She will get more information on colors and sizes, and order forms, and will have them at the next meeting.
- Laura also had researched the feasibility of an HMMG group trip to **Powell Gardens**. After checking into renting busses, she decided that carpooling would be the best option. Kent said we might be able to borrow 2 15-passenger vans, too. The group rate for the entrance fee and lunch is \$17/person. If we can't get ourselves organized for a full-blown group tour, think about doing the Butterfly Tour on August 8th.
- Debbie Scholes reminded the group that the **Master Gardener State Conference** will be held in Jefferson City on September 18-20. Go to <http://mq.missouri.edu> for a link to the conference site.
- Everyone in attendance was held hostage at the Extension Center until the snack/beverage sign-up sheet was filled in for the rest of the year. The meeting was adjourned by 8:45 pm.