



# Diggin' Dirt

## An Introduction

### Inside this issue:

2009-10 Officers 2

LMGA Minutes, March 26th 2

LMGA Reaches Out 4

I'm Will Balk, and I thought I might give a sort of introduction of myself as your new President.

My first garden memory is of presenting my mother with a fistful of lovely flowers when I was four years old. I had seen them in Mrs Riley's yard next door and had plucked them for Mama, without permission of course. I was promptly sent back to apologize, and Mrs. Riley, bless her heart, warmly accepted my apology and then took me around her beautiful garden and introduced me to her beloved plants, naming them and describing them with affection.

We were living at the Sandhills Experiment Station, outside of Columbia,

where my father had taken his first job on the research faculty after returning from the Pacific in WW2. It was the beginning of an extended relationship with the Clemson Extension Service and with horticulture, since my father retired some 35 years later as the Director of the Edisto Experiment Station in Barnwell County. My four siblings and I grew up on several thousand acres of horticultural and agricultural research, and many of my summer jobs were in assisting the research of the scientists and farmers and horticulturists on the Station.

I am a hopeless plantsman – not so much a gardener. It's the joy of learning a plant or a species or a genus, of trying to comprehend its peculi-

arities and quirks and demands that gets me most excited. Design and layout are joyful diversions for me, but it's the knowledge and its acquisition that really gets my blood rushing.

And all this has molded me. I'm hopeful that this lifelong devotion to things horticultural has provided me with the abilities I'll need in helping LMGA prosper and in working with and learning from all of you Masters of gardening. Now back to getting my hands dirty!

Will

## LMGA Officers 2009-10



### President

Will Balk

### Vice President

Deb Sefchek

### Secretaries

Irene Randall  
Sandra Educate

### Treasurer

Susan Harden

### Coordinators

Bluffton

Bill Leonard

Hilton Head

Kathy Rundquist

Northern Beaufort

Pat Lauzon

Newsletter

Jennifer Staton

## LMGA Meeting Minutes, March 26th

The meeting was called to order by President Alice Massey at 1:15 p.m. with 32 in attendance. Alice began by thanking all the master gardeners for their support of her and the association over the last two years while she has been president. She said that this will be her last meeting as president with election to be held today.

New member introduced; Jennie Collins moving her membership from Greenville SC.

Ten more weeks for the MGA class in HHI on Wednesday 1 to 4 pm. Laura Rose has Kathy Rundquist helping her setting up for the class, but can use some more MG help. Also office help is needed in the HHI office on Wednesday mornings 9:30 to 12:00.

Secretary was not present today (Pete Godbey taking notes). February minutes sent by email.

Treasurer report (Susan Harden) revenue from programs (rent-a-MG and Turf Love) \$3261 with costs of \$1776 and \$12086 on account.

### Old Business:

-Important to post hours through the SC state wide MGA program at [www.clemson.edu/ceimg](http://www.clemson.edu/ceimg) under "educational services" and include your travel time. With problems reporting via email, days can also be sent to Will Balk at [combahee45@yahoo.com](mailto:combahee45@yahoo.com) or send via Laura Lee at the office. In this time of funding cut backs, it is extremely important to report all of the hours of all of the MGA's.

-The state MGA conference has been postponed due to funding constraints. It has been recommended that the conference be held every other year.

-Laura Rose said that the Jamboree at Riverbanks on 24 March was extremely successful with 360 MGA's in attendance. Beaufort presented the Turf Love program with other demonstrations including the popular grafting camellias demo.

-Please send your favorite pictures to the Beaufort MGA web site: [lowcountrymga.org](http://lowcountrymga.org) it is up and running.

-Membership dues must be paid up to be on the MGA mailing list. The list was passed around to be verified.

-Laura Rose said that office help is always needed at the Beaufort location, please sign up any day on the calendar.

## LMGA Meeting Minutes, March 26th (continued)

### Regional Reports:

Bluffton- Bill Leonard

-Tweed and Heyward Houses will be worked at on 9 and 30 April, bring tools and bug spray.

-Turf Love program as of today has 205 applications. Contact Bill Leonard if you can help with the Turf Love project, ready to expand Turf Love to Sun City. This is one of the best ways for MGs to get community involvement, improve MGs' image and volunteer hours. Will stated that there is a proposal for 20 hours of continuing education and 30 hours of educational service for MGs. This information caused concern from members; Alice said these hours are proposed and that more information will be provided by the next meeting to members.

N. Beaufort County-Pat Lauzon

-Habitat for Humanity houses landscaping projects will be worked 2 May with 16 May in case of rain.  
-Garden-a-day tour celebrating National Garden Week will be held 9:30 to 12:30 for five days the first week of June. MG's required to help with tours at five gardens (3 at Battery Point and 2 at Royal Palms).  
-Rent-a-MG has completed three gardens in 10 days at \$50 each. Research reports have been assigned for education of MG's.

### New Business:

-George Westfield said that he has hundreds of plants left over from local contractors for MGA projects. Some plants stored behind the HHH stadium are very large and heavy. Contact him for plants.  
-Pete Godbey has started a sign up sheet for MGA's interested in starting carpools. Contact Pete at 525-1047 or at mgandpg29902@embarqmail.com Also to encourage MG's to bring plants to exchange at the meetings.

Pete gave flowering almonds to the two guest speakers for the day and a flat of mondo grass.

-Japanese iris bulbs were distributed out of the trunk of the car of one MG.

### Election:

President Alice Massy introduced the slate of officers for 2009-11; President - Will Balk, Vice President - Deb Sefcek, Secretaries- Irene Randall (Recording) & Sandra Educate (Corresponding), Treasurer - Susan Harden. No other members were offered in nomination. Motion made and seconded, vote passed to accept slate of officers as presented.

### Guest speaker:

Marian St Clair garden writer for the Greenville News and Sharron Thompson contributing writer for the State News, spoke about their friend, author and MG extraordinaire, Margot Rochester. Copies of Margot's new book "Down to Earth" were available for sale. It was precious to hear Marion speak of her love for our fellow gardener. With views of Margot's garden and gardens they had traveled to and enjoyed it was well worth enduring the business of the meeting to see and hear. Some of the quotes from Margot include: about plant tattering- "Some people have intolerable tidiness, they should get over it", garden labor "Rule of five- do only 5 things at a time in your garden", "hope springs eternal in the gardeners heart", and "with so many choices no wonder gardeners are such happy people". Marian said, read Margot's book and you will know and love her before you finish the book. (Dr. Margret Rochester passed on after a brief illness in October 2008.)

### Farmers Markets

Tuesday

3 - 7 pm

Pigeon Point Park  
Beaufort

Opens: May 12

Thursday

8 am - noon

The Mall at Shelter Cove  
Hilton Head Island

Opens: May 14

Thursday

2 - 6 pm

40 Calhoun St.,  
Old Town Bluffton

Opens: April 23

Saturday

2 - 6 pm

Habersham Post Office  
Burton

Opens: May 2nd

Saturday

8:30 am - 12:30 pm

Heritage Park  
(Naval Hospital Gate)

Port Royal  
Opens: April 25



## Lowcountry Master Gardener Association



Beaufort County Extension Service  
P.O. Box 189  
102 Industrial Village Rd. Suite 101  
Beaufort, SC 29906

Laura Lee Rose  
(843) 470-3655 ext. 117  
lrose@demson.edu

### LMGA Mission and Goals

*The purpose of the association is to educate its members and to support and engage in projects and activities which promote and foster community enrichment, knowledge and enhancement in the areas of horticulture and ecology. The Association shall be organized and operated for the benefit of its members and shall operate on a not for profit basis.*

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## LMGA is Reaching Out!

The Lowcountry Master Gardener Association is now on Facebook and Twitter. These sites are geared towards the community and anyone who has an interest in gardening in Beaufort, Jasper or Colleton counties can join the Facebook group or follow on Twitter.

**Facebook** is a free-access social networking website that is operated and privately owned by



Facebook, Inc. Users can join networks organized by city, workplace, school, and region to connect and interact with other people.

People can also add friends and send them messages, and update their personal profiles to notify friends about themselves.

Twitter is a free social networking and micro-blogging service that en-

ables its users to send and read other users' updates known as *tweets*. Tweets



are text-based posts of up to 140 characters in length which are displayed on the user's profile page and delivered to other users who have subscribed to them (known as *followers*). You can find us at *lowcountrynga*.