

Georgia Gourd Society Meeting November 2, 2019

Meeting was called to order at 1:15 pm by President Ellen Tatum

In attendance: Ellen Tatum, Troy Tatum, Jane Ballou, Tom Ricker, Diane Ricker, Beth Westberry, Kay Rozea, Holly Gallagher.

Secretary's report - Minutes read by Beth Westberry. Motion made to accept and 2nd.

Treasurer's report given by Tom Ricker. Yearly audit will take place December 14, 2019. Tom will get with Jane and Ellen about Wells Fargo acct. Motion made to accept report and 2nd.

OLD BUSINESS

2019 GourdFest discussed.

Survey - Troy read the suggested survey to be sent out to all GGS members (current & inactive,) and also to non-members who took classes. Kay will check on the way to send out the survey and work with Beth to get this out within the next month.

General public attendance was down. Vendors (with exception of 2) were happy with their sales.

Competition - Suggested that check in and pick up tables be rearranged next year so no backups. Suggested that any comment cards from judges be attached to the gourd (or tag) so artist can see that, and so that it does not get separated.

Theme for 2020 Show announced as Wish Upon A Star. After discussion it was decided that Ellen will send out an email to GGS members to vote for one of the following: Wish Upon A Star, Down on the Farm, Gourds on the Go(transportation) & Circus. Winner will be announced.

Jim Story Award/Raffle very successful. Troy would like an article written about this and submitted to the AGS Magazine for Spring issue. Dennis is working on an article.

NEW BUSINESS

GGS is setting up a display case in the Zebulon library for month of January 2020. If anyone would like to contribute to the display, get items to Troy. Ellen said that items have been sold from the exhibit.

Troy will check into having a lockbox put on the storage space so an additional key will be available to get into the space as needed by others on the Board. Suggestion made to put a sign in/sign out book inside the space. 4 woodturners and 2 Dremel type tools are in storage and can be checked out with prior approval. Scarecrows are also in storage and can be used for other events (possibly in Cherokee). Contact Troy to schedule use of any items from storage.

2020 GourdFest. Troy reported that vendors may become less and less due to age and retirement. Need to look at other options such as candles, wood working type, baskets, gourd jam maker. Blue Whale will most likely not be traveling in 2020. Recommended we stay at only 2 gourd vendors (Scotts and Ghost Creek,) When more than 2 gourd vendors are present then none of them do well. Both Scotts and Ghost Creek were very please with 2019 sales and have been very supportive of GGS.

Need to have a social media person to reach more markets such as GPB and local tv. Suggested that brochures could be placed in GA welcome centers. That would need approval by the state a year in advance.

Can we get the back inside cover of AGS Magazine to promote 2020 GourdFest?

Can we get mailing lists from SC, NC, FL & AL gourd societies to promote our show? Especially important since AL Show may move in 2020 and Sept FL show cancelled. Do we want to invite AL to participate/combine GourdFest with AL if their 2020 Oct show is cancelled?

Questioned about price of lunch increasing to \$6 and all ok with that. Would like same caterer for Saturday dinner.

Suggested that local gourd vendors be invited to GEDs held at other dates in 2020.

Need to get help with clean up. Can budget for that.

Proposal to have 2020 GourdFest at the same time and in conjunction with the Fair with dates of Sep 25 - Oct 3. GourdFest would keep current reserved dates of Sept 26th & 27th. Fair is main fundraiser for Kiwanis. Building is not used during Fair. Fair wants to change their dates because 2019 attendance was affected by school fall break.

Discussion:

PROS:

Kiwanis would promote us in print & radio advertising. Our mission is to promote gourd so this would be free publicity for GGS.

Attendance would increase as normal GourdFest attendance is 500-900. Fair attendance in good weather is 8,000 - 9,000 on Saturday and 4,000 - 6,000 on Sunday.

Will provide a free booth for GGS in the main bldg. Use for demos and exhibits.

CONS:

Fair hours Sat 1pm - 11pm, Sun 2pm - 9pm. GourdFest hours would need to change possibly to Sat 10:00 - 6 or 7pm and Sun 11:00 - 5 or 6pm. This would impact classes so may need to have 2 hr classes Sat/Sun morning. Would also need to change Sat mtg to Sun morning.

Increased attendance would mean:

Parking issues. Back area can be reserved for us but not as much space as usual.

General public would most likely come in to use bathrooms so keeping them clean a problem.

Public would want to buy less expensive food, sit inside at tables.

Theft from vendors and competition could be a problem.

Increased professional security would be needed. This would be an additional cost to GGS.

Gourd vendors most likely would not have space outside. Outside classes could be affected by the livestock/petting zoo in the building beside us.

Sunday teardown could be affected as far as being later and getting everything out of the bldg while the fair visitors are in the same area.

Admittance to GourdFest would be free but if visitors leave for the Fair then GGS could be asked to collect that fee as visitors leave our bldg.

General consensus was that we would rather not be a part of the Fair. We do not have the manpower/volunteers to deal with all the issues that will arise from the increased attendance. Would a better use of our money and resources be put toward increased advertising, GEDs, etc?

Troy will talk to Kiwanis to see if the weekend of Sept 18th/19th is available for us to change to if the fair dates of Sept 25 - Oct 3 are confirmed. If not, then we will need to ask for some concessions and to negotiate among other things: Rental cost of bldg, parking, security, etc.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm