

Beacon Hill Garden Club Minutes

September 24, 2013

Attending

Lisa L., Barbara S., Christina O., Mick D., Dee D., Betty Jean, Amy, Katrina

Old News

Christina provided a recap of the Beacon, a hill of beans project. All in all, a great success! 24 planters at El Centro, another 10 or so a Beanhenge, and 50 planters along business on Beacon Avenue. And they all lived! We met our match for volunteer hours with the grant. The teens from the Jefferson Center did a great job. There will be a closing event 10/11 with a harvest bean supper for the neighborhood.

Treasury Report

All current members renewed and there was one new membership.

Canning connections donated \$214 to our account when they closed.

Current balance of \$574.82

Christina is working on non-profit status, so there will be some fees deducted for that after the new year.

Seed Savers Conference

Mick talked about the annual Seed Savers Conference in Iowa. The focus was on seeds and livestock. Some interesting facts, 50% of seeds are controlled by 5 companies. Seeds have generally been considered open source. You grow the plant, pick the seeds of the ones with the characteristics you favor, and replant or share. Now companies are patenting genes on new seeds. This requires you to pay the companies for seeds each growing season. Even if you choose not to, wind pollinated crops with these seeds can migrate to your garden and now these seeds are no longer yours.

Seed libraries are becoming popular, one is starting on Jackson. They are like libraries in that you borrow the seeds and bring them back after the season to share. Some require membership where you are educated on seed saving and how to collect and label properly. Generally good to label with the common name, latin name, location collected, year, and anything else that might be noteworthy.

El Centro Update

Mick also showed plans for El Centro. Some improvements include having the park open to the public all the time. The garden's goal will be to educate, demonstrate, and the harvest goes to the El Centro food bank. The focus will be introducing as many edibles as possible. Timeline set to be done in 80-90 days.