**MVGA Education Committee Meeting**

7/11/17, 9 am

Location: Panera Bread

Present: (6) Jennifer Boldt, Kim Bunge, Ian Hoen, Josh Miller, Joe Perlaky, Beth Scheckelhoff

Absent: Deb Bettinger, Tom Creque

Meeting started at 9:05 am

Summer Retail Roundtable:

* Discussed what should be the focus/emphasis of spring vs. summer Retail Roundtable
  + Spring – HR, labor, training, etc. to jump start the season
  + Summer – reflection on the season, look ahead to new varieties/trends/planning for next year
* Toledo Zoo (Nancy) has expressed interest in hosting MVGA. This would help raise awareness of the hort. dept. at/within the zoo. Offer of parking and zoo entrance has been extended.
* We will ask if food/snacks need to be provided through zoo vendors or if we can contract with a third-party vendor to provide.
* Possible idea/collaboration with zoo – placement of QR codes in/near plant displays that link to the garden center(s) where that plant could be purchased, or more broadly, link to MVGA members
* Proposed schedule for Retail Roundtable:
  + Welcome/opening remarks by zoo director
  + Speaker: Manager of zoo gift shop to talk about retailing/merchandising
  + Speaker: New varieties for 2018 (Raker, North Branch, and/or Monrovia reps)
  + Roundtable discussion/snacks
  + Zoo tour
* Will check and see if kids/families are welcome to visit the zoo during or after the Retail Roundtable
* Dates: week of Aug. 21 (1st option) or early the week of Aug. 28 (after IGC show but before Labor Day)
* Time of day: 1st extended evening hours, 2nd morning, 3rd afternoon (zoo hours normally 10 am – 6 pm)
* Josh will contact Nancy re: hosting summer Retail Roundtable at Toledo Zoo.

Aside: Is there interest in any MVGA-propagator programs, similar to those for North Branch and Monrovia?

Annual Meeting:

* Date: Nov. 16 (1st option if venue available), or Nov. 9 (2nd choice)
* Location: Strawberry Acres (deposit required but was returned w/in 30 days last year)
  + Josh will check on venue availability
* Food: Michael’s Catering
* Check with Jill Bench to see if/how many scholarships will be awarded this year
  + Invite awardees to attend annual meeting for presentation of award
* Speaker suggestions: Scott Carpenter (Metroparks), Peter Quiring (Nature Fresh)
* Another entertainment suggestion: greenhouse historical trivia using clickers (or cell phone texting)
* Will hold off on auction for one more year, but will mention its return during the annual meeting
* In addition to thanking sponsors during program, invite them to set up a small tabletop display
* Kim and Beth will take a look at the sponsorship/membership form and update it

Winter Conference:

* Proposed dates: Jan. 9 or 11
* Potential locations: Schmitt, NatureFresh (Beth will provide contact info)
* Topic: focus on greenhouse ornamental production
* Presentation ideas: Garrett Owen (ext. specialist for MSU in SE Michigan), WPS updates (include first-hand account from grower(s) who has/have been audited)
* Offering recertification credits is a nice draw that boosts attendance

Meeting concluded at 10:35 am