

Green Party of Maricopa County (GPMC) General Membership meeting
2005-06 Strategy Session: Saturday, November 20, 2004
Arizona State University/Memorial Union—Room 222 (Mohave): 10:00am to 5:00pm

Agenda:

10:00am—Arrival & introductions

10:15am—History of Arizona Green Party (AZGP): orientation for new members

10:25am—ASU Campus Greens report (Arianne Peterson)

10:45am—Introduction of guest speakers/panel presentation: “How can the Greens/GPMC & others support Community-Supported (organic) Agriculture?”

Panelists: Terry Hughes of the Gentle Strength Cooperative
Charlie Collins of Victory Farms/CSA
Kelly Saxer of Desert Roots Farms/CSA (tentative)

11:45am—Lunch (GPMC Steering Committee will meet during lunch break)

12:45pm—GPMC Business

- Assign roles—facilitator, note taker, timekeeper and vibes watcher
- Review agenda & set times
- Review of minutes from Oct. 23rd General Membership meeting (Angel)
- Events/announcements
- Treasurer’s report
- Database/Technology/Website update (Richard)
- GPMC Newsletter/Winter 2004 issue (Trevor & Angel)
- Membership Outreach report (Regina)
- Sustainable Transportation task force (Korky)
- GPMC officer/open positions & committees/task forces (Angel)
- GPMC fundraising/\$1 per month campaign (Angel)

1:45pm—2005-06 Strategy Session

- Brainstorm
- Ranking of items (Electoral, Issue-based & GPMC Internal)

3:15pm—Break

3:25pm—Committee/Task force meetings

- Database/Technology/Website & Membership Outreach
- Fundraising & Newsletter
- Sustainable Transportation & ?

4:25pm—Committee/task force reports

4:35pm—Parking lot/other announcements/next meetings:

- GPMC Steering Committee meeting: Monday, Dec. 13th, 2004 at 6:30pm—Gentle Strength Co-op (234 W. University, Tempe AZ)
- GPMC Holiday/Winter Solstice Party: Saturday, Dec. 18th, 2004—5pm to 10pm; Location TBA
- Arizona Green Party (AZGP) State meeting: Saturday, Jan. 8th, 2005—Noon to 5pm: Arizona State University West (4701 W. Thunderbird Road, Phoenix AZ)
- GPMC Steering Committee meeting: Monday, Jan. 10th, 2005 at 6:30pm—Gentle Strength Co-op
- GPMC General Membership meeting: Saturday, Jan. 22nd, 2005—12:45pm to 4:00pm; Location TBA

4:45pm—Meeting review/evaluations

5:00pm—Adjourn

Green Party of Maricopa County (GPMC) General Membership meeting minutes—Nov. 20th, 2004

In attendance: Tana-chy Bruhns, Lare Clark, Charlie Collins, Joan Davis, Korky Day, Terry Hughes, Charles Imboden, Seth Jones, Joan Kuheana, Matthew LeShure, Gregg Lustig, Jerry Mikkelson, Brian Moore, Brian Patrick, Jose Rivas, and Angel Torres

History of Arizona Green Party (Angel)

ASU Campus Green report: support for Sodexo workers at ASU; environmental training with Sierra Club in Spring 2005

Introduction of guest speakers/panelists: Terry Hughes of the Gentle Strength Cooperative and Charlie Collins of Victory Farms/CSA (Community-Supported Agriculture)

Charlie: Originally, Victory Farms/CSA sold to select restaurants in the Valley. But, that was just feeding rich people. We expanded the farm to support a CSA for 120 families. Our delivery day is on Saturdays from 8:00am to 11:00am. We have a high turnover rate; at one time we had 300 member families. We put together a questionnaire for our members: how often do they cook at home? We supply our members with vegetables, and supplement with organic fruit/produce from Wilcox, AZ. It is difficult to find organic eggs. We have not yet found our “core” group of folks that will support Victory Farms/CSA. We try to grow seasonally, but it is difficult. Two challenges that we (Victory Farms/CSA) face: 1) finding & keeping our “core” group of members to support the CSA; 2) we harvest everything the day before delivery. We have lots of recipes on our website (www.VictoryFarmsInc.com). We have also done advertising on KJZZ radio on have printed postcards for distribution. Our goal: 200 member families to support the CSA (economies of scale)—sustainable number of members. Victory Farms/CSA is located at 27th Ave. & Northern on a horse property. We are located on a 1-1/4 acre property and have purchased two more acres. High taxes are another challenge for us. Our property is in an older neighborhood with elderly residents. The city of Phoenix has been doing a lot of in-fill development. Victory Farms is trying to promote the idea of “Urban Farming”, in order to be close to our customers. I (Charlie) would like to be part of a group (educationally, financially, etc) that educates the public about urban farming (acquiring more land). Small farmers are the wave of the future. We need more CSAs & more urban farmers.

Question to Terry & Charlie: How do you view the relationship between Gentle Strength Cooperative (GSC) & Victory Farms/CSA? Is it a competitive or symbiotic relationship?

Terry: I believe Gentle Strength Co-op can provide a complimentary relationship to Victory Farms, and other CSAs, in many ways, including:

- 1) Helping to spread the financial “risk” among different CSAs (if one CSA has a good crop, and another has a not-so-good crop, etc)
- 2) Assisting with CSA diversity (one CSA provides fruit, another provides vegetables, etc)
- 3) Partnering with CSAs for administration
- 4) As a drop-off location for CSAs, and pick-up location for CSA member families
- 5) In the near future, GSC would like to have a full-service restaurant and “Green Juice” Bar. GSC could purchase excess “greens” from CSAs
- 6) Act as a “buying club” for CSAs
- 7) Assist with purchasing land (land trust)
- 8) Providing farm labor for CSAs (worker-owned CSAs)

Question by Gregg Lustig to Charlie: Is there a network of CSAs? Are you doing any marketing?

Charlie: To my knowledge, there is no network of CSAs. With the exception of radio and postcards, Victory Farms doesn't do any marketing. We are trying to keep a low profile. Urban farmers are being squeezed out of the cities by high taxes, new housing, etc. I like Terry's suggestions. There is a possibility for us (Victory Farms) to offer dry goods. I would like to become a teacher/advocate for “Urban farming”.

Terry: Cooperatives and CSAs introduce social values back to farming & life. Gentle Strength Co-op purchases most of our organic produce from Albert's Organics. We would prefer to purchase locally. The politicians and bureaucrats are in the pocket of the corporations. We need to build local, sustainable economic opportunities.

Comment from Joan Kuheana: Urban farmers need to communicate your message to the elected officials/politicians.

Charlie: Victory Farms is not certified organic, because it would bankrupt our operation in order to fulfill all the necessary paperwork/requirements.

Comment from Matt Leshure: We should organize a public forum on this issue.

Comment from Joan Davis: We need to educate the schools and students on this issue because of the poor diet of children. Kids are getting fatter these days. We need this type of education program in the schools.

Charlie: The public school system has been bought out by “Big Business”. Unfortunately, the schools are not doing this type of education.

Terry: Very few folks make their living as farmers.

Comments from Angel: I think the 1st step is to bring the key players to the table (Gentle Strength Co-op, Victory Farms & other CSAs) and have them meet to discuss Terry's ideas. The 2nd step would be to organize a public forum on this issue. GPMC should continue to be involved in this process. Community-based economics is one of the Ten Key Values of the Green Party. On the issue of this type of education in the public schools, this is one reason we need Greens/progressives to “run” for school board positions.

Final question to Charlie & Terry: How can folks support organic farming/CSAs?

Charlie: We need to get our message out there. The power of the boycott is very important. I would also like to do a film/documentary on farming.

Terry: 1) join a CSA; 2) support community gardens; 3) encourage local restaurants to purchase from CSAs.

Lunch break

GPMC Business:

Facilitator: Korky; Note taker: Angel; Timekeeper: Gregg; Vibes watcher: Jose

Review of minutes from Oct. 23rd General Membership meeting (Angel)

Events/announcements: Final Friday at Gentle Strength Co-op on Friday, November 26th.

Treasurer's Report (Angel): Stan in Georgia at School of the Americas (SOA) protest. \$12 in the account?

Database/Technology/Website update: Richard & Stan not present—no report

GPMC Newsletter (Angel): Trevor has completed the initial draft; it should be on the website soon.

Membership Outreach (Angel): Regina is doing an excellent job of outreach. The committee continues to send postcards, e-mails and phone calls to registered Greens in the county.

Sustainable Transportation task force (Angel): The theme of the Fall 2004 issue of Co-op America Quarterly is on this topic. Folks that want to join the task force are encouraged to purchase a copy. The articles include ideas on purchasing a hybrid vehicle, converting your vehicle to bio-diesel, riding mass transit, walking, biking, creating walk able communities, "greening" transportation policy, etc.

GPMC officers/open positions & committees/task forces (Angel): We still have open positions for co-chair (womyn) and secretary. The current committees/task forces are database/technology/website (d/t/w), cultural/entertainment, fundraising, membership outreach, newsletter, sustainable transportation, volunteer, and youth caucus. Other potential caucuses, committees/task forces include: carpool/transportation, childcare, elder, LGBTQ, media outreach, personnel, people of color/1st World, speakers bureau, Womyn, etc.

GPMC fundraising/\$1 per month campaign (Angel): The idea for a "GPMC \$1/month" campaign occurred after last month's (Oct. 23rd) meeting. On the ride from Mesa Community College to the Gentle Strength Co-op in Tempe, Korky mentioned to Angel that in Canada, the Greens charge a \$10 per year membership dues. The "light bulb" then occurred to Angel, "Why don't we request registered Greens in Maricopa County to donate \$1 per month?" With 1700 Greens in the county, our fundraising problems would be solved. We also discussed our potential budget for 2005 and the reason we need funds (rent for office space, the ability to hire staff, postage/mailing, voicemail, etc). The members present were supportive of the proposal. An appeal for funds was made (\$108 donated/1 t-shirt sold).

2005-06 Strategy Session: The members present "brainstormed" on what issues/goals GPMC should focus on for the next 2 years. We came up with 23 items and classified them in 3 different categories (electoral, issue-based, or GPMC internal business). We ranked the 23 items using weighted votes (3 votes—1st choice, 2 votes—2nd choice, 1 vote—3rd choice, or 0 votes—least favorite/abstain).

- 1) Speaker for Earth Day/organize activity (Issue-based): 19 votes
- 2) Participate in other public events (Issue-based): 21 votes
- 3) Candidates in 2006 elections (Electoral): 12 votes
- 4) School board elections/candidates (Electoral): 16 votes
- 5) 85 active members (5%) of the 1700 registered Greens in Maricopa County (Internal): 24 votes
- 6) Green-sponsored events (Issue-based): 19 votes
- 7) Bicycle ride—Green Party event or "Critical Mass" (Issue-based): 15 votes
- 8) Encourage Greens to be involved in the community (Issue-based): 18 votes
- 9) Increasing membership/increasing participation (Internal): 24 votes
- 10) Fundraising (Internal): 21 votes

- 11) Publicity—television, media spokesperson, letters to the editor, PSAs (Internal or Issue-based): 23 votes
- 12) Neighborhood events (Issue-based): 17 votes
- 13) “Choice Voting”/Proportional representation campaign in Scottsdale (Electoral): 18 votes
- 14) “Top to bottom” candidates (Electoral): 12 votes
- 15) Ballot status for the Green Party in Arizona—20,000 signatures for petition drive or 10,000 additional registered Greens (Electoral): 7 votes
- 16) Adopt a highway (Issue-based): 13 votes
- 17) Gentle Strength Co-op & CSAs [community-based economics] (Issue-based): 20 votes
- 18) Recruiting candidates from outside the Green Party (Electoral): 11 votes
- 19) Build GPMC and committees/task forces from various localities (Internal): 20 votes
- 20) “Fusion” politics (Electoral): 10 votes
- 21) Establish GPMC legal fund (Internal): 13 votes
- 22) Democratization of the political process/Voters’ Bill of Rights (Electoral): 18 votes
- 23) “Proportional Party” proposal by Korky Day—temporary coalition for 2 goals [PR & IRV] (Electoral): 11 votes

Based on the votes totals, the “top 3” areas for GPMC members to focus on for 2005-06 are:

Electoral:

- a) “Choice Voting”/Proportional representation campaign in Scottsdale: 18 votes
- b) Democratization of the political process/Voters’ Bill of Rights: 18 votes
- c) School board elections/candidates: 16 votes

Issue-based:

- a) Participate in other (non-Green sponsored) public events: 21 votes
- b) Gentle Strength Cooperative and CSAs (community-based economics): 20 votes
- c) Speaker for Earth Day; organize Earth Day event/activity: 19 votes
- d) Green Party “sponsored” events: 19 votes

GPMC internal-business:

- a) 85 active members (5%) of the 1700 registered Greens in Maricopa County: 24 votes
- b) Increasing membership/increasing participation: 24 votes
- c) Publicity—television, media spokesperson, letters to the editor, PSAs: 23 votes
- d) Fundraising: 21 votes

- Publicity was classified as both Issue-based and GPMC internal-business but was located under the GPMC internal-business column.

Comment from Korky: incorporate brainstorming ideas into GPMC committees/task forces

Break

Committee/task force meetings & reports:

Database/Technology/Website (D/T/W): Gregg not in favor of www.cafepress.com for link to GPMC website. GPMC should set up our own internal website store. Seth Jones interested in joining D/T/W committee. Gregg will contact committee members to organize separate meeting.

Membership Outreach: The committee continues to do outreach by e-mails, postcards, and phone calls. Gregg wants to organize separate meeting. Angel will contact Regina to set date.

Fundraising: We raised \$108 in donations. Angel will contact committee members to set date for a separate meeting.

Newsletter: New issue should be on website soon. Angel will contact Trevor to set date for separate meeting.

Sustainable Transportation: Korky wants contact info for committee members to order to schedule time and date for separate meeting.

Youth Caucus: Jose Rivas is the GPMC Youth Caucus coordinator. Brian Patrick and Charles Imboden join as new members of the caucus.

Parking lot/other announcements/next meetings (see agenda):

- Date change: GPMC Holiday Potluck, Sunday, Dec. 19th, 2004—2pm to 6pm, home of Richard Scott & Patricia Smith, call 480-990-8531 to RSVP & for directions
- Gregg makes proposal for Sunday meeting/once every 3 months

Meeting review/evaluations: Brian “liked meeting”; Seth “2 thumbs up”; Gregg “good meeting...conversation between Terry Hughes and Charlie Collins was good. It is excellent to have a strategy session once per year”; Charles “good meeting...enjoyed it”; Lare “feels like we are the French Underground....1st time active since 1994”; Jose “we seem to be making progress...Membership Outreach committee continues to make phone calls”; Angel “Good meeting! We try to do things better every time.”

Adjourn