

Minutes of RIFGC Meeting
March 27, 2014

The meeting was called to order at the Roger Williams Park Casino at 10:09 am by President Sandi Tinyk.

Roll was called by Recording Secretary Lisa Pollack. Twenty-two Clubs were represented.

Corresponding Secretary Marnie Sandham read letters from Barrington Garden Club and Western Cranston Garden Club thanking RIFGC for grants they received at last year's Annual Meeting. Blakely Szosz described Osamequin Nature Preserve and Bird Sanctuary, off of Route 114 in Barrington, and invited all members to visit and explore the trails there.

Treasurer Bernie Larivee delivered a detailed report, dating back to November 19, 2013. See attached reports for details of the checking and CD accounts, as well as raffle proceeds from February's Flower Show.

There being no corrections to the Minutes of the January 23 meeting, the Minutes were accepted as previously electronically distributed.

President's Report: delivered by Sandi Tinyk

Thanks to Cathy Moore for running last month's Board Meeting.

Thanks to Sue Redden for producing an incredibly beautiful and successful Flower Show last month. She did a fabulous job. When does she sleep?!

Thanks to every single person who helped with the Flower Show in any fashion.

As Horticulture Chair, Sandi was especially thankful for the sheer number, and superior quality, of entries.

The News was e-mailed earlier this week, a bit late due mostly to computer issues. It was well worth the wait, with 30 pages of great articles, announcements, reports, and helpful advice. Thanks to the Club Presidents who submitted their reports. Please make sure to pass it on to your members.

Please remember that it is expected that President's Reports will be submitted by each and every Club for the Spring issue of the News. This is a short paragraph describing a great program put on during the year by each Club. Please make sure that incoming presidents are aware that they will need to write this for next Spring's issue.

Arbor Day (April 22) is coming quickly. Paula Munko has written a great article on its history for the News. There are excellent reports from many chairs. Thanks to all for your input.

Sandi has a stack of Posters available for National Garden Week, June 1-7 this year, and June 7-13, 2015. Please take one back to your Club. This would be a great time to hold Club events. Perhaps you can get your Mayor or Selectmen to recognize National Garden Week in the course of their business.

There will be no meeting in May. But the June Board Meeting will take place on Thursday, June 5, partly here in the Casino, partly in the Rose Garden, and there will be an optional lunch available for purchase for a garden party. There will be a special speaker, John Mitchell, a Massachusetts author who has written and illustrated An Eden of Sorts. His book, detailing his efforts to increase the biodiversity of his own garden, will be available for purchase and signing. This is open to all members.

Second Vice President's Report: Blakely Szosz thanked Sue Redden for her educational exhibit on garden club membership and announced that as a result of that exhibit there were 70 requests for information about joining local clubs. Please keep in touch with Blakely as she sends out information to the appropriate clubs and make sure to follow up with the potential new members.

Committee Reports:

Annual Meeting: De Feldman expressed her dismay that only 135 tickets have been purchased so far. We really need more sales in order to make it worth putting on an event of this scale. The event promises to be wonderful with a great fashion show. The Business Meeting will start at 10:00 am. The National President will be at the luncheon, along with the New England Region Director, at least four State Presidents and one Vice President. Guests are welcome to attend. Darcy Scott is selling tickets, and you really have until April 18 to purchase tickets. Tickets will be refunded until April 10.

Sandi Tinyk added that the April meeting really lasts only about three minutes and then the awards are given out.

Sandi reminded members that for the past several years Community Project Awards totaling \$2000 have been given out at the luncheon. Submissions are due this year by April 14 to Sandi. Please send a paragraph describing a project (such as environmental, community garden, clearing trails) your club would like to engage in. If you have a specific amount of money you're looking for, please include that, though please recognize that you may not get that exact figure. Club awards will be drawn out of a hat until all funds are distributed. At the conclusion of your project, before the next Annual Meeting, it is expected that your club will submit a report about how the funds were used.

Awards: Sue Redden, Chair, said the RIFGC Awards committee has met, reviewed all awards applications, and has determined winners to be announced at the Annual Meeting. Things are slow right now, but the Regional award nominations will be due to her in September.

Design Study: Vera Bowen announced that the last session will take place on Wednesday, April 2, 2014 at the Watch Hill Fire Station. Containers and plant materials will be provided.

Vera announced that Advanced Design Study will be on the same day as BDS. This is open to anyone who wants to join in, just contact Vicki. They will be focusing on light and line mass designs.

Finance Committee: Vera Bowen said there will be a brief preliminary budget meeting today, before the books are closed. The Budget will be finalized in a few weeks, and will be proposed and voted on at the Annual Meeting.

Flower Show: Sue Redden, Chair, reported that the annual Flower Show is now over! The Show appears to have been the shining star of the whole event for many people. Thanks to all who contributed in any way to the show, it was a pleasure to work with you and to get to know you better. There is so much work that goes into the Show: from taping the floor, to lugging the heavy staging to the U-haul and back to storage, to painting, cleaning, and preparing staging for exhibitors. This was not easy this year as there was constant dust from the mulch and it was a cold, snowy week.

It was especially incredible to receive 198 Horticulture entries – thanks for coming through for us. The Designs and Artistic Crafts were fantastic, and the 93 youth clock faces looked wonderful. The computer ladies were kept very busy with all the entries in each Division. The Comfort Suite (Sue doesn't like "coping station") offered great food, thanks to Quononoquott, Bristol, and Portsmouth Clubs. The judges were blown away by the quality of the exhibits, especially given the weather conditions. Congratulations to all who entered an exhibit, you are all winners in Sue's book!

Flower Shows and Garden Tours:

- Mar 3 & 4 Portsmouth Garden Club presents a flower show at Atria in Portsmouth.
- May 8 Hametho is presenting an In-House Small-Standard flower show.
- June 7 Quononoquott Garden Club is having a Garden Tour.
- June 11 Barrington Garden Club is presenting a Garden Tour of 8 gardens and a Small-Standard Flower Show.
- June 14 & 15 Sogkonate Garden Club is presenting a Small-Standard Flower Show in Little Compton.

Flower Show Schools: Both Massachusetts and Connecticut are beginning a new series of Flower Show Schools. September 10-12 in Derby, CT and October 8-10 in Milford, MA. Please pass these dates on to your members. We need more judges in RI, and remember, the RI Judges' Council will provide a scholarship which will pay for the registration of these courses after you pass your first Course and apply to take the second Course. You may also attend these courses simply to learn and not take the exams.

Habitat for Humanity: Sandi Tinyk reported that the calendar fundraiser project is a work-in-progress. It will be nice to have holiday dates noted in future calendars. Please take photos throughout the year. Blakely Szosz noted that photos from this time of year were especially lacking. It would be nice to have smaller photos so that more can be included. It was suggested that having a sample in October or November to show to individual clubs would be helpful in selling calendars in the future. Another suggestion was to add a few additional pages for the first months of the next year. All photo submissions will be due by October 15.

Proceeds from this Calendar were \$116.75. That will be applied to the budget for Habitat for Humanity. We can get a good tree or several shrubs with that with our great pricing at Andy's Landscaping in Warwick.

NGC Calendars, "Vision of Beauty," will continue to be ordered. Our calendar is not intended to compete with NGC's, as theirs is a weekly calendar with floral designs, while ours is a 12-month calendar illustrated with our own gardens.

Horticulture: Linda Alves wished everyone a happy Spring after this cold, snowy Winter. She sees signs of Spring in her garden with crocuses and snowdrops in bloom and the daffodils slowly appearing.

Linda shared names of good and bad insects. She suggested using non-toxic or low-toxin remedies, but only after properly identifying the type of insect problem you might have. You can call the URI Hotline from 9 am to 2 pm at 800-448-1011 for help.

Linda also shared her recipe for an insect-repellant soap:

Combine 1 teaspoon liquid dishwashing soap and 1 cup of cooking oil. Add one cup of rubbing alcohol and one cup of water. Shake vigorously. Pour into spray bottle.

Make sure to spray the soap on top of leaves, underneath the leaves, and the plant as a whole.

Hospitality: Thanks to Bernie Larivee and Vera Bowen for the needed shot of caffeine.

Judges' Council: Lynne Merrill reminded all that judges are available to consult as you start to think about offering a flower show. Also, remember that the Flower Show Schools are great learning experiences, even if you don't plan to take the tests to become a judge.

Life Member: BJ Stephens said that the May 15 event in the barn at Mount Hope Farm will blow your socks off. Physician Zsolt Orban will present a program on Macro-Photography of Flowers. You will not believe that you are looking at a drop of water and you will never look at Queen Anne's Lace the same way again! Tickets are \$35 and must be purchased by May 7. Mount Hope Farm will be in bloom in May and those of us in Design Study will not recognize the barn! The barn holds 140 people, and it would be marvelous to have all 140 seats sold. Guests are more than welcome. Dr. Orban has been very generous, filling a table with guests, and he will donate 15% of the proceeds from sales of his CD back to the Life Member group. Remember, it is the one-time \$100 membership fee that is invested to support the scholarships awarded.

Life Member Scholarships: Janice Panoff said that she and BJ would like to attend individual club meetings to explain more about the Life Member Group and Scholarships.

Janice is especially pleased to announce that there are two scholarship winners this year. Last year's winner, Lauren Esperance, who also won the NGC scholarship, has won again for next year, her senior year at URI. She has been awarded \$1500.

The second winner, Lauren Breene, will be a sophomore at URI. She has been awarded \$4000, and will be a candidate for a National scholarship.

Our students make us very proud.

Sharon Gainey noted that the Fall event will be on Thursday, September 18 at the Dunes Club (thanks to Betty Ann Taylor).

NEWS: Sandi Tinyk said that Judy Hager is no longer able to be the Editor. Vera Bowen will edit the June/July/August issue. Please make sure to get all submissions to President Sandi Tinyk for review, no later than May 1. Sandi will pass on articles to Vera.

Discussion arose regarding ways of sharing/distributing News, Northern Exposure, and KIT. Some clubs use a buddy system for those without e-mail; try posting copies of any relevant news or announcements at a favorite local coffee shop; ask your local Library for a file to put things in that members, or even the public, can access there; bring two copies of any news, etc. to your Club meetings and have members read them there.

Youth: Rochelle Kieron, Chair, reported that only Sogkonate had submitted anything to her. She had 7 posters and 2 sculptures from them (all on display today). Lilly Coward, a first-grader, was a NE Regional winner and was awarded \$25 for her poster.

Remember, students in grades 1-5 are eligible. Dark colors show the best. Make sure to read the rules.

New Business: Sandi Tinyk announced that the position of New England Region Director is held by one of the former presidents of a New England State. Each of the six states must nominate someone for the 2-year term of this position every 12 years. For the 2015-2017 term, this position will be held by a Rhode Island member. Qualifications for this are: the candidate must have served as state president, must have served on the NGC Board, and must have attended 3 consecutive NGC or NER meetings within the last five years. We need to nominate and elect both a Director and an Alternate Director. Sandi has spoken with various candidates, and two have agreed to serve, if elected.

Sue Redden was honored to nominate Vera Bowen for the position of NER Director. This was seconded by Janice Panoff. Vera Bowen was elected unanimously. Sue Redden was also honored to nominate Lynne Merrill as Alternate Director. This was seconded by BJ Stephens. Lynne Merrill was elected unanimously. Congratulations to Vera Bowen and Lynne Merrill. BJ Stephens voiced the feelings of many when she said, "It's wonderful to belong to an organization with such wonderful members who are willing to represent us."

Announcements and Upcoming Events:

Sofi Cofield of Portsmouth Garden Club: May 3 & 4 from 10-4. Portsmouth Garden Club presents their annual flower show at Atria Place in Portsmouth. There will be floral arrangements in each of the public rooms there. Visitors do the voting.

Bristol Garden Club announced that their plant sale will take place on May 3 at Mt. Hope High School. .

Sue Talbot of Sogkonate Garden Club: Mother's Day weekend at Sakonnet Garden in Little Compton. Private garden tour. Visit www.sakonnetgarden.com for more information.

Jan Marcello of Chatham Village Garden Club announced their annual plant sale at Buttonwood Senior Center in Warwick on Saturday, May 17, from 9 am-noon. Perennials, annuals, herbs, some vegetables, and even some small trees and bushes will be on sale.

Blakely Szosz of Barrington Garden Club announced that the Barrington Garden Tour "Through the Garden Gate" (featuring 8 private gardens) and flower show "Gifts from the Garden" will take place on Wednesday, June 11 from 10-5. Tickets are available by emailing barrgardentour@gmail.com \$25 in advance, \$30 day of tour.

Vera Bowen announced that she has Newport Flower Show (June 27-29) schedules, and coupons for discounted advance sale tickets.

The next meeting will be on June 5, at the Casino, beginning with social time at 9:30 am.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:36 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa B. Pollack, Recording Secretary