



**Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**June 1, 2023**

---

President Judy Gray called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

Roll call Pat Yearwood, Recording Secretary was taken: 16 clubs present and 11 absent.

President's Report:

Minutes of the April 27, 2023 Annual Meeting were sent out late electronically. Please review and we will approve them at the September 2023 meeting.

President Judy Gray Introduced the 2023-2024 Executive Board

Vice President: Kathleen Damiani, Western Cranston Garden Club

Treasure: Paul Nunes: Rehoboth and Edgewood Garden Club

Corresponding Secretary: Kathy Bessette; Angle Tree and Gention Garden Club

Recording Secretary: Pat Yearwood, Western Cranston Garden Club

She also thanked the executive board for hosting today's Meet and Greet. And informed the attendees there were many items for sale: books, foxgloves, Agra wool, and organic vegetable plants.

**"Growing Together for a Sustainable Future"** is President Judy Gray's theme. Retyped below.

For our organization to be ever changing with the fast pace of life, let's look toward the future with a renewed spirit working toward a foundation that will keep growing and be sustainable for generations.

The benefits are bountiful when we invest in Educational and Environmental programs with emphasis on Greener Floral Design practices, organic gardening, youth programs, enhancing the connections with our Affiliate Groups and working on being financial sustainable.

We are the anchor for all that is good in the Ocean State. The opportunities to grow can only be achieved with us Growing Together, Working Together and being the best.  
we can be.

I will be working on forming Standing Committee Chairs so we can move forward toward these goals.

**Judy Gray Shared a few notes on the Annual Luncheon held April 27, 2023**

- On behalf of the federation, she thanked Deb McCartin and Karen Cipriano for Chairing the Annual Luncheon. Assisted by members of their club and executive board, it was a fabulous meeting.

- Thank you to Awards Chairs Kathleen Damiani and Cheryl Celeste for their unwavering dedication to the awards process and presenting the Awards.
- Congratulations to all the clubs that received awards. Everyone that applied for an award, thank you. Highlighting your club and members activities is an honor and the federation thanks you.
- Thank you to Sue Redden for the readings and to Vera Bowen for installing the new Executive Board.
- The Ely Medal of Beauty Award was given this year by Ex-Officio Sheryl McGookin to Former President Blakely Szosz. This is the most prestigious award offered by the Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs. For many years Blakely's contributions have been many, and most appreciated. Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs continues to grow under her valuable influence.
- In April, Former Pres. Sheryl McGookin, Former Pres. Vera Bowen, and I attended the NGC Annual Meeting in White Sulphur Springs W.V. Great Programs, Award Ceremony, and business meeting. Also, a chance to welcome the incoming New England Garden Club Director Sue Minor from N.H. as well as meet and greet with the State Presidents from New England.
- I recently attended Rehoboth and Sogkonate Garden Club plant sales. I even traveled to Ashland N.H. to visit my former garden club. Great Plants sales at all 3 clubs.
- Barbara Blossom is relocating to Ohio to be closer to family. A potluck farewell gathering was held in her honor by members of the Bristol and Bayberry Garden Clubs. Her friendship, uniqueness, enthusiasm, and talents will be missed.
- I sadly announce the passing of Mary Louise Ryan, beloved wife of Maury Ryan, a friend to many and member of the Edgewood Garden Club and RI Orchid Society.

#### **In preparing your programs for the year**

- A digital program book is available on our website listing speakers, and programs to assist you in developing programs for next year.
- Review the awards that are available on RIFGC, NEGC and NGC websites. You may find awards that apply to your club level programs, projects etc.

Dates, Events etc. Extremely important to email Judy Gray [judy.gray123@gmail.com](mailto:judy.gray123@gmail.com) all upcoming events and open meetings. We will make sure they are placed on our website and social media platforms. We will also place them on the calendar located on the table as you come into the meeting. We do not want to overlap events. We want to shine light on each club's event.

- June 3: Portsmouth GC Plant Sale, 9-2pm, 2658 E. Main Rd. Portsmouth
- June 10: Gentian Garden Club Plant Sale 9-1 pm, 546 West Greenville Road, N. Scituate, RI
- June 10: Rose Society 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Rose Show, 1-3pm, 604 Seven Mile Road, Hope RI
- June 24 Plum Beach GC Yard Sale, 9-4pm, Old Baptist Church, 44 Main St. Wickford
- June 23-25 Newport Flower Show, Marble House, Newport
- July 16 Newport Polo Charity Day Benefit Match, Gates open at 3pm, 250 Linden Lane Portsmouth, RI. This is a fundraiser for the Life Member Group.
- September Art in Bloom in discussion with the Prov. Art Club, but also looking at other venues. More information to follow.
- September 21 South County GC will host a GCA flower show called "Be Inspired" This club is also a member of federation as well as GCA.
- RIFGC meetings will be 2023 Sept 28, Oct 26, No Nov meeting, Dec 7-Holiday Luncheon. 2024 Jan 25, Feb 22, Mar 28, Jun 13 (changed from Jun 6).

- Education/ Environmental Day: Wed, Mar 6,2024
- RIFGC Specialty Flower Show: April 4-7, 2024

**Vice Pres. Report Kathleen Damini:** WCGC will hold a flower Show May 18, 2024. Request members to collect pull tabs from aluminum cans and bring them to her. She will bring them to Ronald McDonald House who receives funds from them. Kathleen is also working on the RIFGC Website. Please contact her with any issues.

**Treasurer's Report:** Paul Nunes report reflects March 1 to April 30, 2023.:

Balance on hand:	\$28,206.78
Total receipts	6,621.90
Total disbursements	\$14,718.89

Ending Balance: April 30,2023           \$20, 109.79  
 Details included in itemized report.

**Corresponding Secretary Report: Kathy Bessette:** Gentian GC Plant Sale, Jun 10, Situate Art Site  
**Finance Committee-**Will meet after the closing today's Executive Board meeting.

**NGC NEWS:**

**RIFGC NEWS:**

Formatted: Font: Bold, Underline

**Reports of the Officers**

**Corresponding Secretary Kathy Bessette:** See above.

**Recording Secretary Pat Yearwood:** Requested it would help with minutes accuracy if the committee chairs would have a copy of their notes/reports for her.

**Treasurer: Paul Nunes:** See above.

**Standing Committee Reports**

**Annual Meeting: Deb McCartin & Karen Cipriano**

**Affiliate Membership Chair: Sheryl McGookin:** Strategic effort to align more closely with affiliate organizations in 2023-24. All would benefit.

**Education and Environmental Day: Vera Bowen & Sara Lee:** To be held Wed. March 6, 2024. Details to follow.

**Finance Chair: Blakley Szosz: meeting to be held after today's board meeting.**

**Judges Council Linda Kirkpatrick:** Linda will Chair this committee 2023-24.

**Design Study Mary DiBara/Kathy LaRiviere:** Chairs would appreciate suggestions and ideas on areas of interest to assist in program creation. There will be 3 classes in 2023-24 and there will be price increase. Details later. It was mentioned that the Judges Council and Design Study are separate committees.

**Life Member Group Cathy Moore:** - 2023-24 Will have the Newport Polo All Charity Day an annual funding event. July 16<sup>th</sup>, Tickets through Paul Nunes, \$100.00. details to follow.

**Newsletter/Photography Sheryl McGookin :** There will be a Summer Newsletter. Send pictures and photos of new officers with names to Sheryl.

**Webmaster Kathleen Damiani:** Hard at work to update the website. Please direct any issues with web to Kathleen.

**New Business-**

Sandy Tinyk is organizing a trip for May 15-23, 2024, trip to Great Gardens of Southern England and the Chelsea Flower Show. \$4,390.00 +airfare out of Boston. Details available contact Sandy.

Vera Bowen and Sheryl McGookin Announced the Awards RIFGC received at the NCG April meeting in White Sulphur Springs, W.V.

1. RI Judges Council Certificate of Merit Award 15C, Horticulture Specialty Flower Show "A Walk Through a Hundred Acre Wood"
2. RI Federation of Garden Clubs- Award 16C Design Specialty Flower Show "Our World 4-7-2022
3. Member of Honor Award: Linda Alves WCGC for the NE Region to be presented in person on Oct. 11, 2023 NEGC in Plymouth, MA.
4. Certificate of Appreciation to Plum Beach for Permanent Community Improvements and Landscaping of Historical Areas.
5. Helen S. Hull Scholarship Award presented to Mathew Atnunes. Sponsored by RIFGC

Life Member Group 2023-24

Deb McCartin-Luncheon Secretary  
Paula Munko- Membership  
Paule Nunes-Treasurer  
Linda Alves-Vice Chair  
Blakley Szosz- Chair  
Sandra Jack-School Scholarship

Blakely was praised for all the work she has done and continues to do as she steps into the Chairman position Blakely noted although much has been accomplished, there is much to do and she looks forward to refine what Life Member does.

Wantaknowho Garden Club: Past President Sharon St. Martin introduced the club's new President Candy Hass and informed the club is celebrating their 85<sup>th</sup> year.

**Old Business: NO**

Meeting adjourned at: 11:14 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Yearwood  
Recording Secretary, RIFGC