



## **Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs**

### **Board and Election Meeting Minutes**

**March 27, 2025**

**President Judy Gray called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM**

Please Shut off your cell phones at this time.

Welcome to you all and thank for attending.

### **Roll Call by Pat Yearwood, Recording Secretary. (includes affiliates)**

Club Present: 20 Absent: 6

### **President's Report:**

Minutes of the Feb 20, 2025, Board Meeting was sent out electronically. Are there any corrections?: no

Do I hear a motion to accept the minutes as stand: Yes. Sue Jones. Do Hear a second: Michelle Danish. The l's have it, the minutes stand as submitted.

### **Executive Board**

Kathleen Damiani, Pres. Elec and member of Western Cranston GC

Paul Nunes, Treasurer, Pres. of Rehoboth G.C. member of Edgewood G.C.

Pat Yearwood, Recording Secretary, member of Western Cranston GC

Kathy Bessette, Corresponding Secretary, member of Angle Tree GC

### **Thank you to South County Garden Club for hostess duties**

Claudia Swain, Pres shared the club is located in Wakefield. The club is a member of the Garden Clubs of America in Zone 2. This September 25<sup>th</sup> SCGC is excited to host a meeting for 102 members of Zone 2 in the Wakefield area. Jean McCleary assisted Claudia sharing a wonderful array of homemade cookies.

**Today, Thursday March 27, 2025, is our Meeting to elect the next slate of officers for 2025-2027 term and nominating committee for 2027.**

**We as a whole have the opportunity to turn the next page in our story as RIFGC.**

Thank you for being part of this process.

We will start the election process, while the votes are being tallied the board meeting will proceed with the board meeting.

**President Judy Gray invited Ex-Officio Sheryl McGookin and Nominating Committee Chair to take the floor.** Second by Linda Howard

- Sheryl explained the process as the RIFGC ballot for the next slate of officers for 2025-2027 and the nominating committee (3 must be circled from the list )for 2027

**Old Business**

**RIFGC Community Project Award**

Have a community project you would like to start and feel unable due to lack of funds? The RIFGC, in an effort to “give-back” to clubs, has \$2000.00 available to help with these projects. Every year at the Annual Luncheon we randomly draw awards of up to \$500 to the selected clubs to help them accomplish their goal. This award will not be judged! The same club is not eligible for this award two years in succession. Website Awards at the bottom of the page simple instructions. This gets emailed to me with subject line Community Project Award.

**RIFGC** received a Thank you note from NGC Life Membership Chairman honoring Judy Gray and Sheryl McGookin with a NGC Life Membership.

These gifts benefit the

- NGC Permanent Endowment Fund, which is used to support the organization's long-term goals and operations.
- Plant American Community Grant Fund. Project grants to NGC member clubs help educate adults and children about the joys of gardening and create a pride throughout the community. Grants may be used for physical landscaping or environmental projects, or for horticultural or educational opportunities for the community.

**Deadline for RIFGC Newsletter June 1<sup>st</sup>** send to President Judy Gray.

**RIFGC Flower Show Dance Through Design April 10-13**

- We have just over a week, and we will be in full swing setting up the flower show. Thank you to everyone who has been working on the show and all the hostess volunteers that signed up.
- Bravo to all the RI Designers who have entered the flower show a total of 18 designers out of 48. 2 members and 1 club entered the Education Exhibits.
- Group Rates are available for 10 or more people in your group \$10 tickets. Deadline is April 8<sup>th</sup>
- Lecture Series: **free** with your ticket to the show starting at 1:00 on Thursday 10th the day the show opens. Great time to see the designs at their absolute best and support our very own
  - 1:00PM Carol Horta, Pres of Gentian as a Master Gardener will be talking all about Compost
  - 2:00PM Lecture on the floating gardens that are at Roger Williams Park. Last fall after board meeting we went to meet Alexandra and learn all about the eco system of these floating gardens. Super interesting Do not miss.

- 3:00PM Jim Studley from Sodco is a RI based sod company that works with alternative microgreens sod more environmentally alternative to traditional sod. He was part of last year's Education Day, he has that much more to talk about.
- **Eileen Dennis as chair for the Youth Botanical Arts Section of the flower show if you have any questions.**
- **Youth Design Entries:** We provide flowers containers and space to design at the show. Any youths PreK to 18yrs old are welcome to the Convention Center on **Tuesday April 8<sup>th</sup> 9-2:30** to create a floral design. Garden Club volunteers will be around to help oversee the project. *An adult must accompany their youth the entire time.* . If you can't make the 9AM to 2:30 PM time the station will be kept open until **4:00 but you must make reservation by emailing [judy.gray123@gmail.com](mailto:judy.gray123@gmail.com) by Sunday April 6<sup>th</sup>**
- **Soon to be RIFGC 2025-2027 President, Kathleen Damiani** will be calling on members to become Standing Committee Chairs. Please say yes. None of these jobs are overwhelming; there is great support for everyone to succeed. To be asked means we saw a quality in you that was that could only enhance the building blocks that make up the federation.
- **Reminder All plant sales, open meetings, events etc.** please supply dates ASAP to Judy to include in the calendar.
  - 1) To keep Calendar updated weekly if not bi-weekly.
  - 2)Not to overlap to many events so one event doesn't take from another.
 As president ,Judy Gray tried to get to as many events, sales etc that possible could and will continue as ex-officio. It was very important for Judy to connect with the membership and having this updated calendar and email blast clubs have found that other clubs have been attending their open meetings etc. Please keep up this communal exchange of ideas and experiences.

**Dates to Remember:** You will find all in my last Pres Email Blast.

April 22 Earth Day please do your part and don't forget to send photos

April 25 Arbor Day once again we will reimburse any club \$50.00 if you plant a tree for Arbor Day. Please take a photo and a receipt and email Paul Nunes (pbnunes4@gmail.com)

**Deadlines:**

April 1 for NYBG Trip Sandi Tinyk will speak in a bit

April 11<sup>th</sup> April Annual Meeting, Awards, and Installation Luncheon. Held on April 24, 2025

## **Newport Flower Show is June 20-22. “A Floral Fair”**

The Horticulture and Botanical Arts Schedule is out. Vera Bowen announced the Floral Design portion of the schedule should be out on Friday. Many participated 2024 in Horticulture either individually or as a club. Make an effort to look at the schedule and enter. & ENJOY!

## **REPORTS FROM OFFICERS**

- Paul Nunes, Treasurer: Report Operating Account February 1 through February 28, 2025  
Beginning balance-Jan.31,2025 \$57,405.57  
Ending balance-Feb 28,2025 \$55,253.26  
Full details are filed with these minutes
- Kathy Bessette Corresponding Sec; Thanked all the volunteers for hosting shifts at the RIFGC Flower Show. Full list with names, clubs, shift times will be emailed out soon

### **Reports from Standing Chairs**

**Please Keep your Reports to 3 mins.**

- **April Annual Meeting, Awards and Installation**
  - Luncheon on April 24 at the Quonset O Club in North Kingstown.
  - Enjoy friendship, awards ceremony and the fanfare of installing a new slate of officers.
  - Need your reservations to Paul Nunes by April 11. A form has been sent out in Pres. Email Blast.
  - Our program speaker is Polly Hutchinson of Robin Hollow Farm who has a cut flower business and floral design shop at Farm Fresh RI. She will be talking about her farm and sustainable floral business practice.
- **We ask that clubs donate a themed gift basket** to be raffled off. Please let Kathleen Damiani if you plan to donate one.
- **Awards Chairs Kathleen Damiani and Cheryl Celeste**
  - All awards have been judged. If you have submitted any awards, please attend the April 24<sup>th</sup> banquet so there is a member of your club present to accept any award you may have won.
- **Education and Environmental Day**
  - A huge success, over 45 people attend and most stayed through three speakers.
  - We had two guest Sue Miner, NEGC Director and 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Pres of NGC and Winnie Schmidt, Pres of NH.

- Thank you, Vera Bowen and Sarah Lee for Chairing this event.
- Thank you, Blakely, for presenting and Vicki Iannuccillo for helping set up and break down.
- **Sarah Lee, Environmental Chair** Sent out some information which I will also pass on in an email. First at the table up front is a Zoom Meeting with Doug Tallamy you can photo the QR Code to get the information and register. Also in my last email blast.

From March 24th : one 5c environmental newsletter

## WHAT WE'RE INTO THIS WEEK

By Audrey Chan

### Microplastics are messing with the food supply

Microplastics pollution could make it harder to feed the world, according to a new study in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. The findings suggest these tiny plastic particles are messing with plants' most important function: photosynthesis. Microplastics block sunlight, degrade soil health, and clog nutrient and water channels. All this could add up to a 12% drop in photosynthetic capabilities of land-based plants, potentially slashing up to 14% of the world's staple crops of wheat, rice, and maize—which is on top of a 24-million-ton dip in seafood production every year due to microplastics. The researchers warn that unchecked plastic pollution could push another 400 million people worldwide toward starvation in the next two decades. “Importantly, these adverse effects are highly likely to extend from food security to planetary health,” the authors tell *The Guardian*, since plants play a major role in balancing Earth's CO2 and mitigating climate change.

***Sarah Lee's suggestion to easily help remediate this problem: buy things with less packaging and less plastic. Pick up plastic before it breaks down into smaller pieces. Buy less single use plastic.***

- **Finance Committee:** Blakely Szosz we will be presenting a 2025 Budget at the Annual Board Meeting
- **Flower Show School Chair** Vicki Iannuccillo Please take the time to look at all the schools offered by the NGC. You just might find a course you like.
- **Historian / Trip** Sandi Tinyk. There is a deadline change to April, 24, 2025 for the June 17<sup>th</sup> to NYBG exhibit Van Gogh Painting with Flowers

### New Business:

- Linda Howard will present the Portsmouth Garden Clubs RIFGC Community Project: Used the award to create a Pollinator Garden in conjunction with a playground that the town wanted to create. Heavy work amending the soil in a

10 x 12 area. Had plant donations from club members, and from a business in Westport, MA The Butterfly Effect. The project is named for Mary and George Mendonca who also donated

- **Vera Bowen-Bristol Garden Club:** Mary Frances Snow is the new incoming President. Check Bristol's GC website for April 14<sup>th</sup> Daffodil event and May 1<sup>st</sup> Plant Sale at Mt Hope Farm. She also announced that the RI Daffodil Society is having a flower show at Blithewold, all entries need to be submitted by April 14<sup>th</sup>. More information coming.
- **Paul Nunes Treasurer** proposed the following motion.  
Effective following the installation of new officers on April 24, 2025, the President, Treasurer, and Finance Chair be authorized to open, close, and sign on bank or investment accounts of the Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs with full authority to conduct transactions , including but not limited to deposits, withdrawals, and other banking activities, as necessary for the operation and financial management of the organization.  
Seconded by Sandi Tinyk, There was no discussion. Voted on and approved by the membership.
- **Life Member Scholarship:** 2025 recipients 1) Taylor Sirois from Seekonk \$2,500. Paul Smith College for Forest management . 2) Stephen Kiely from North Attleborough \$2,000 for Conway School in Sustainable Landscape Planning and Design

### **At this time, I would like to thank**

Sheryl McGookin Ex=Officio and Nominating Chair

Nominating Committee: Blakely Szosz, Sally Philips, Vera Bowen ,Pam Delaney for the hard work, support and dedication to this task of seeing the potential in others to elevate them to be nominated to a leadership role in this organization.

### **Sheryl McGookin, Ex-officio and Chair of Nominating Committee announced the Nomination Committee for 2027**

Congratulations go to: Paul Nunes-Edgewood GC/Rehoboth GC; Kathy Bessette-Gentian GC, Jane Shaw-Cindy Wood GC. Judy Gray will be Ex=Officio and Nominating Chair.

**Sheryl McGookin announced the next slate of officers for the 2025-2027**

***Kathleen Damiani, President.***

***Judy Gray, Vice Pres***

***Carol Horta, Recording Secretary***

***Heather Fraga, Corresponding Secretary***

***Sally Troup, Treasurer***

**Congratulations and thank you to the next slate of officers from the membership. Before we end this meeting Judy Gray shared**

“I am blessed to hold the position as Pres. for the federation, I had my time to shine. It is now Kathleen's time to shine along with her slate of officers. It was the best thing that I could have done by saying yes,. I just can't say enough about how the job has shaped me. I managed like most vice/president while juggling a full-time job, a child in high school with all his demands, chairing the flower show etc. It can be done with dignity and grace. Ok I did have a good cry once in a while, but that is on me not the position. What you put in you will get back triple fold. “ I am here temporary as Vice President; this is a volunteer organization so please go back to your clubs look at who would be a good candidate for Vice President. We are only as strong as our volunteerism. We need to fill this position. Thank you.

Meeting Adjourned: 11:06 AM

Submitted:

April 3, 2025

Pat Yearwood

Recording Secretary

Addition: Eileen Dennis, Pres. Elect of Hameho GC was announced she will accept the nomination for Vice President of RIFGC. This will be voted on April 24, 2025 at the RIFGC Annual Meeting.