Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.
Membership Meeting Minutes
October 22, 2026
Roger Williams Park Casino

President Kathleen Damiani called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM.

Roll Call: Carol Horta Recording Secretary.
Club Present: ____11_____ Affiliates Present: _____0_____

President's Report:
Minutes of the September 24 Membership Meeting were sent out electronically in the beginning of October. **Cheryl Celeste** made a motion to accept the minutes. **Leslie Pires** seconded the motion. There were no corrections noted, and the minutes were accepted.

Sympathy or Sensitive Announcements
A longtime RIFGB member **BJ Stevens** passed away after a long fight with Dementia. Kathleen will provide an address for cards.

Thank you to **Western Cranston Garden Club** for Hospitality and center piece.

Kathleen had a special message:

> I'd like to take a moment to share a friendly reminder with all of our statewide garden clubs as we enter this especially busy time of year. Every club has something special to offer, and when we share our strengths and knowledge, we all benefit. Our partnerships, cooperation, and shared love of gardening are what make our state so special. Most importantly, let's remember to be kind to one another. A little encouragement, a helping hand, or a kind word can mean so much. We may all have different ideas and approaches, but we share a common purpose and a love for what we do. Just as we nurture our gardens, let's also nurture the friendships and connections that make our garden club community so meaningful. Thank you for all that you do for your clubs, your members, and our statewide garden club family.
>
> **When we support one another, we all bloom!** 🌷🌿

Bristol Garden Club's Garden Party on October 4th celebrating America's 250th anniversary showcased a lovely pollinator garden and story boards in the garden. A beautiful day.

As of the end of this meeting **Eileen Dennis** will be the **president elect** until April of 2027 at which time she will then be sworn in as the new president. Eileen may approach you to chair a committee. This is an honor and please seriously consider the committee she has asked you to chair. Congratulations to Eileen.

Reports From Officers:

Vice President Eileen Dennis reminded the membership that detailed information about opportunities for **Youth Programs** will be coming out soon.

Treasurer Sally Troup reviewed the **financials.** See attached.

Secretary Carol Horta asked clubs to review **photos** (she had available at the meeting) that we are using in the new RIFGC website (to be deployed next month) and/or to send in photos that represent the club to her at **carol.horta@yahoo.com**. The goal is to have all clubs represented in a gallery of photos.

President's Agenda

- Kathleen announced that a program from **Deana Thomas of the RI Mycological Society** would follow the business meeting.
- **Newsletter pictures** and articles are next due to **Judy Gray** by December 1. Send your news to **rifgcnewsletter@gmail.com.** Clubs will not be featured in the newsletter unless they send news to Judy. Please submit your news as early as possible because December is a very busy and stressful time of year.
- If your club has a **new president**, please let Heather and myself know so we can be sure you are receiving important emails. We also have to update the website. We need name, club, address, email and phone number.

- **Kathleen, Eileen, and Carol** attended the **NEGC convention** and photography show October 13-14 In Vermont. It was a great time and the scenery was beautiful! Little Rhody once again came through and won 8 awards.
    - **Award of Recognition** was presented to **Western Cranston Garden Club** for the **Sears Civic Beautification award** for the overhaul of their Adopt a Spot Garden.
    - The **Mary Louise Marks Smith Flower Show Schedule Award** was presented to The **Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs** for its innovative schedule for the Design Specialty Flower show *Dearly Beloved*. This schedule was written by **Blakely Szosz.**
    - The **Nancy H. Atwell Award** for most outstanding publicity incorporating NGC and NEGC Objectives was presented to **Barrington Garden Club.**
    - **Deanna J. Mozzochi Creative Design Award** goes to **Blakely Szosz** of the Barrington Garden Club.
    - **Pamela C. Herbert Garden of Youth Award** is presented to **Plum Beach Garden Club** for their work helping Davisville Middle School students identify invasive plants.
    - The **NEGC Member Award of Honor** was awarded to **Marcia Pearce** of Cindy Wood Garden Club. This was for 29 years of Overall Excellence in all aspects of Garden Life.
    - **Yearbook awards** Class 3 went to **Western Cranston Garden Club** and Class 6 went to **Barrington Garden Club.**
    - We brought three poster boards for the **poster board history contest** (from Barrington, Bristol and Hameho). **Hameho Garden Club** won the poster contest for their beautifully history on brick making.
- NEGC conference had a **slide show of all the red, white and blue gardens** and RIFGC had eight pictures in the slide show. Clubs represented were **Bristol, Gentian, Hameho, Western Cranston, Portsmouth, Plum Beach** and **Tiverton.** Thanks for all your submissions.
- **First Design Study — Blakely Szosz** is doing a pot-et-fleur on November 4th, 2026 at Rhode Island Builders Association, 450 Veterans Memorial Pkwy East Providence.

- If your club would like to participate by decorating a Christmas tree at the **Kinney Azalea Gardens,** you can get involved in their **Festival of Trees!** This is starting the weekend after Thanksgiving and running Fri/Sat/Sun through New Year's weekend. Go to their web site for more information.
- **Plant Propagation Workshop Series** — Learn basics of seed propagation, vegetative propagation, and micropropagation via Zoom. Dates/Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays, January 12-February 9, 2027. See the next email blast for more information.
- A save-the-date announcement: the **Connecticut Flower Show** is February 18 through February 21, 2027.

Awards Cheryl Celeste announced:

- **Yearbook Award** submissions are due by the **end of the month**. Mail a paper copy to Cheryl Celeste at 90 Salem Ave, Cranston, RI 02920. Also send an electronic copy to **gardenclubckawards@gmail.com**. Eligible Yearbooks are for the 2026-27 club year.
- **NGC award** submissions are due to the RIFGC Awards Co-Chairs, **Kathleen Damiani** and **Cheryl Celeste** at the same email address shown above by **December 15.**
- **The Member Award of Honor** award is due to the RIFGC Chairpersons by **January 1.**
- **De Feldman** reminded everyone that the **Sylvia Street Award and the Joan F. Pesola Awards** are both for designs that were exhibited at any NGC, NEGC, or RIFGC event which includes an ordinary club meeting. Clubs are encouraged to capture photos of designs by members and to submit photos for these awards by **February 1** to the Judge's Council chairperson. Out-of-state judges will decide the winner.
- The RIFGC website has all the award information for you. If you have any questions, please contact Kathleen or Cheryl through the email.

Holiday Party — Chair **Cheryl Celeste** announced that the event will be held at the Roger Williams Park Casino on Thursday, December 10 at 11:00 AM. It will be a buffet lunch, with a cost of $35 per person. To keep costs down, this venue was chosen, and there will not be alcohol. **Judy Gray** will be demonstrating how to make a Kokedama, the Japanese moss ball planter. We are seeking clubs to

donate centerpieces to be raffled. The Holiday drive is for Clothes to Kids of Rhode Island: new kids' underwear, undershirts, socks, gloves and hats in sizes 4 to 14. See attached flyer.

Flower Show in a Box — De Feldman reminded members the the Judge's Council Flower Show in a Box resource is available to clubs to help them take on a Small Standard Flower Show. Please consider hosting a show; you will receive support, and you will be helping flower show judges with their credentials.

Plant-A-Tree — De Feldman reminded clubs to collect money for this NGC initiative in order to support National Forest plantings.

Program — Carol Horta introduced our program speaker, Deana Thomas and her colleague Nathan from the RI Mycological Society who spoke for 40 minutes and then led a mini-walk outside to locate and identify fungi in the park.

New Business

Next Meeting is the Holiday Party December 10th.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Horta
Recording Secretary

Revised 10-26-26

Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.			***Operating Account***		
Treasurer's Report					
September 1 - 30, 2026					
Beginning balance, September 1, 2026					**$ 42,634.26**
Cash Receipts					
	Interest		$28.04		
	TOTAL CASH RECEIPTS			$ 28.04	
Disbursements					
	TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS			$ -	
Ending balance, September 30, 2026					**$ 42,662.30**

RHODE ISLAND FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS, INC.

cordially invites you to its

Holiday Party

Thursday, December 10, 2026 at 11:00 AM

$35 per person

Roger Williams Park Casino, First Floor
1000 Elmwood Ave., Providence, RI 02907

Buffet Lunch

Appetizers and a buffet lunch, with vegetarian options. Punch, cider, coffee, tea and water will be served. No alcohol.

Kokedama Demonstration

Judy Gray will show us how to make a kokedama, the Japanese moss ball planter.

Table Centerpieces

Each club is invited to bring a centerpiece for its table. Please let Cheryl Celeste know if your club is bringing one.

Holiday Donation Drive

We're collecting for Clothes to Kids of Rhode Island: new kids' underwear, undershirts, socks, gloves and hats in sizes 4 to 16.

$35 per person ❖ Reservations due by November 30

CUT HERE AND RETURN

Holiday Party Reservation

Due November 30

Name _____

Garden Club _____

Email _____ **Phone** _____

Number attending _____ **Amount enclosed $** _____

Mail to:
RIFGC, c/o Sally Troup
10 Anderson Dr.
Barrington, RI 02806

Payment:
$35 per person
Make checks payable to RIFGC