

PBGC Membership Meeting

May 11, 2021

Members met on the back lot of the Baptist Church for the first in- person meeting since December 2019. Individuals brought their own lawn chairs and refreshments. Many of the Covid 19 restrictions have been lifted which allowed the club to have this meeting.

Kathy Romeo, President, welcomed members and guests. There have been 2 meetings with perspective members, one in the fall and one this spring and 5 of those interested were at the meeting this morning.

Kathy then welcomed our newest members, Merry Moody and Paula Childs. Martha Parks, Mary's sponsor, introduced her friend of 55 years. Marion Bartkiewicz, Paula's sponsor, introduced her long time friend. Kathy congratulated Marion Bartkiewicz on becoming a life member of the Federation of Garden Clubs.

In honor of Mother's Day Kathy read a poem about mothers and the love of gardening. She asked the Board and the Communications Team to stand and thanked them for their work during the very difficult past 15 months.

Kathy thanked Barbara Halavik, Daffodil Project, for the wonderful display of the 15,570 daffodils around our town.

Barbara Dawson, Treasurer, reported that there is about \$14,000 in our checking account and \$9,700 in the CD, representing \$23,700 in assets. She just received a \$1,500 legislative grant and is hoping for another \$2,000 town grant. Also there has been discussion with a relative of Ann Wallou about a donation to the Club for the work we have done in maintaining the garden named for her in Updike Park. She mentioned that we had \$480 so far this year from brick sales. Barbara cautioned the members that while this seems like a lot of money we have not been able to have any fundraisers. Our largest expense is \$3,500 a year to maintain the 3 Island Gardens.

Elaine Casey Lemieux, 2nd VP reported on the proposed program schedule for the remainder of this year.

June 11th- container gardens at Betty Sue Reeds house. The containers will then be donated to Betty Sue for display in her yard which is part of the Histwick Garden Tour.

August 10th – beekeeping

September 14th – drying herbs

October 12th – cooking with herbs

November 9th – hands on holiday table decorations

December 14th – holiday party at Joanne McDermot's house.

Linda Sollitto, Civic Beautification, thanked the members who helped with the cleanups at OLP. She asked that we resume the regular schedule of clean ups on the Fridays following the monthly membership meeting. Please bring your tools and a bucket. Linda also mentioned that she received a donation of black pansy seeds from friends of Ann Wallou. Her friends remembered that she loved black

flowers and these will be planted in her garden. We recently installed 19 bricks in the front section of OLP. Kathy thanked the individuals who helped with that, including several husbands.

Betsy Coghlin, Horticulture, thanked those involved in the recent cleanup of the herb garden at Gilbert Stuart; joining her were Janet Ferni, Brenda Johnston, and Jane Brockway. The garden is 25 years old and it is in need of some new herbs, she asked members for any herbs they could donate.

Brenda Johnston mentioned that there is a water source in OLP and that she would like to purchase a flexible hose to be kept at the site.

Betty Sue Reed reported for Sharon Pickering, Membership Chair, that we currently have 44 active members, 4 associate, 5 honorary, and no one on the waiting list. The following changes have been made: Joan Peet, Lee Karwoski, Sue Shriner, and Nancy Beck have resigned and Sandy Secrest is now an associate member. Betty Sue also recognized our newest members, Paula Childs and Merry Moody and presented them with a small bouquet of flowers.

Gail Stokes, Yearbook/website, reported that we would not print a new yearbook. A copy of the updated membership list will be on our website. Also, a single sheet copy will be emailed to all members. She reminded members that you can get to our Facebook page from the website without being a member of Facebook. Lots of interesting information and comments to view. Kathy encouraged all members to take a look at the website before the next meeting. To get to the members only section use the password purpleplum.

Brenda Johnston, Ways and Means, reported on some initial work done on planning for a yard sale in conjunction with the Histwick Garden Tour scheduled for the last weekend in June. We already have several items that were collected for the Garden Marketplace, which was cancelled last year because of the Covid 19 pandemic. It will be held from 8 :30 to 4:00 on Saturday June 26th. The location has not been decided and members were asked to donate up to 4 high end garden items, such as trellises, garden tools, watering cans, garden sculpture, etc. She will be looking for volunteers to help the day of the sale.

Brenda Johnston, Design Committee, also reported on the Newport Garden Show. It will be very different this year, you will need a timed ticket purchased on line, will be required to wear a mask, and there will be no vendors. PBGC will again enter the garden club competition. Brenda and Marion Bartkeiwicz will be designing our entry this year. Paula Childs and Debra Hughes volunteered to help.

Sheila Skeffington reported on Histwick's Garden Tour. She thanked several members of PBGC for volunteering that weekend to be at the gardens. She also thanked Betty Sue Reed and Linda Sollitto for opening their gardens for the tour. Tickets will be available at local Wickford stores. The Tour brochure will include information about the PBGC gardens in town. She mentioned how exciting this collaboration is between the 2 organizations. Linda Sollitto mentioned that her yearly plant sale will be held the 2 days the tour takes place at her garden.

Marcia King, Special Projects, reported on the creation of the Never Forget Garden in Updike Park. The Board, after being approached by Will King, wanted to move forward with this project honoring the 100th anniversary of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The official dedication will be held on August 7th. She thanked Brenda Johnston and Sandy Bemenderfer for helping with the planting.

Andrea Sarrison, Publicity, discussed her efforts with the local press to highlight the work of the Club. A recent article on the Tree Planting Project mentioned our role in making that happen. She recently set up a photo shoot with South County Life at the pollinator garden at Casey Farm and is hoping we will get some coverage promoting brick sales.

Darlene Vincent, 1st VP, reported that she will be putting together a 3-person nominating committee and will send out an email listing the vacancies. Kathy Romeo, President, asked members to think about serving. Don't be shy, speak up if you are interested. The nominating committee will present the slate of officers at the October meeting, ask for a vote at the November meeting and install the new board at the December meeting. Kathy also raised the issue of having co-presidents and co-vice presidents. She would like members to think about this before it is discussed further. There is also a need for chairs for the following committees: youth, birds and conservation, and special projects. Some projects were cancelled this past year, such as the Meals on Wheels Project and the nursing home project because of the Pandemic, and committee chairs will be exploring whether those projects can resume. In addition, we need someone to oversee the maintenance of the 3 island gardens. This individual would be responsible for overseeing the contract with New Leaf, which entails 3 cleanups a year, spring, summer, and fall.

Kathy updated members on the OLP renovations. There have been a few delays and so they will be starting later than originally thought.

Debra Hughes encouraged members to get involved with the Audubon Society's May walks. They are free, easy to moderate in difficulty, and the guides are very informative. Check it out on their website.

The next meeting is at Betty Sue Reed's home. She suggested we park nose in on an angle on the road, in addition to some spaces in the driveway.

A raffle was held and Pam Childs, a guest, went home with a potted garden donated by Kathy Romeo. Meeting adjourned at 10:45.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Diane Devine, Recording Secretary