

October 26, 2020

WGC Annual Meeting and Board Reports and Update

Since the weather forced us to cancel our in-person Annual Meeting and now that it's getting colder, we have decided to replace the Annual Meeting with the following update.

1. At its last meeting, the Board voted to elect the following returning officers for 2020-21: Karen Pellegrini, President; Maria Siskind, Vice President; Marilyn Faulkner, Treasurer; Anne Tiffany, Corresponding Secretary; and Susan Montiel, Recording Secretary.
2. The Board has voted Honorary Membership to Sue Metzner for her contributions to Civic Beautification and for serving as President in 2014 and 2015. We will miss Sue but hope to see her when she visits Williamstown.
3. Changes in responsibilities: With Sue Metzner's move to Arizona, Kathy McKnight will assume Civic Beautification – Annuals. The Board thanks Kathy for being willing to take on this responsibility. The Chair of the Program Committee is still open as well as Website Coordinator. ***Please consider volunteering for either of these important positions.*** Both of these have good support from the Board and the Program Committee is well established with returning members, so we hope that both positions are not too time-consuming.
4. We moved our fall houseplant sale in September to the Milne Library and it proved to be well worth our efforts, raising \$2,535. Thanks to all volunteers who donated about 325 plants. And, a special thanks to Nick Wright for donating his wonderful homegrown pears. Thanks also to the set-up and transportation crews as well as the sales staff, and the Milne Library for hosting us. Attendance seemed to be about 50% residents/50% college students. We had lots of space to spread out safely, ample parking and beautiful weather.
5. Civic Beautification – Annuals Chair, Kathy McKnight, convened a group to determine plant selection and container placement for 2021. The Town has advised us that the Route 2 Bridge reconstruction project is scheduled to start in spring 2021 and continue for 2 years so we anticipate that we may not have bridge boxes next year. Susan Hyde has retired from her long-standing and very much appreciated Post Office duties, and Betty Iannitelli has graciously agreed to assume the annual planting and maintenance of the Post Office pots and beds.
6. Our Corresponding Secretary, Anne Tiffany, shares the following updates since our last annual meeting:
 - A \$50 donation was sent to HospiceCare in memory of Suzanne (Suki) Wilkins and a thank you was received from Hospice. We also sent flowers to Suki's memorial service.
 - We received a \$150 donation in Suki's memory from her bridge group and a thank you was sent.
 - A Christmas arrangement was sent to Dorothy Reinke for her 100th birthday and a kind thank you from her was received.

- Get well flowers were sent to MJ Downing for her recent illness and a lovely thank you was sent to us.
 - A \$50 donation was sent to the Williamstown Youth Center in memory of John Foehl and thank you notes were received from the Youth Center and Sarah Foehl.
 - Pat Greenberg was sent flowers after surgery and in return, sent us a thoughtful thank you note.
 - We sent a sincere thank you for the \$5,000 donation we received from the Alice Shaver Foundation.
 - A \$200 donation was received from Ms. Helen Langtry (niece of Sally Tenney Osborne) for use in that garden. We sent a thank you to Ms. Langtry and we have previously sent her photographs of the garden.
 - After our spring plant sale in 2019, thank you notes went to the Masons for use of the lawn, to Cynthia Payne for her hospitality, and to Phil Smith for his generous plant donations.
 - We sent \$50 to the Williamstown Historical Museum in memory of Steve Burnham and we received a thank you.
 - A note of thanks went to the Hancock Shaker Village for waiving the speaker fee for John Parker's presentation.
 - Honorary Member Cathy Nagy sent a note of appreciation for receiving our Yearbook, which is sent to all Honorary members.
 - Another thanks went to Carol Paul for her donation of \$1,000, showing our gratitude for her continuing donations.
 - Get well flowers were sent to Kathie Jones and Karen Pellegrini following their (unrelated) accidents and thanks were received; we enjoyed seeing the photograph of Karen's arrangement.
 - We sent a get well note to Doris McNabb at her daughter's home following her hospitalization and flowers to Doris when she returned to Williamstown. Both were thanked warmly.
7. Our Treasurer, Marilyn Faulkner, has provided the following fiscal year-end and current financial information:
- As June 30, 2020, we had a budget shortfall of \$3,372 based on our \$17,200 budget. This was primarily due to the purchase of 10 new square containers for civic beautification and the cancellation of the spring plant sale.
 - Our Board approved a budget of \$16,000 for fiscal year 7/1/20-6/30/21. As of October 9, 2020, income is \$3,101 and expense is \$2,422. The checking account balance is \$6,555, and our long-term fund remains with Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation.
8. Civic Beautification – Perennials Chair Elaine Neely has shared the following report on the perennials at Field Park: We had a great work force this year. Thanks to Susan and Tom Hyde who provided about 90% of the work needed on the west end garden. Each week five or six of us worked on the east side and a little on the west end. We added purple phlox and foxgloves to the west end. We replaced the astible near the accident on the east end, and transplanted bee balm from the west garden to the east end. The Asian worms seem to have reduced in number in the east end but still present. We have started cleaning up the gardens but still have some color to still enjoy, and I will have Countryside remove the leaves when they decide to fall.

Bob Kampe and Joan Wright have focused on the Sally Tenney Osborne garden and were challenged by deer eating the hosta even though repellent was applied. Catmint was added to help. Perennial Loriope muscari grass was also added to fill in the rounded beds. Additional grasses will be considered for next year to replace hosta.

9. Membership Co-Chairs Lyn Rork and Kathy McKnight report that since the last annual meeting, we have added 9 new members, 3 members have moved to Associate membership, 4 have resigned and 3 have been changed to our Honorary membership category. Current membership is 78:

Active: 54 plus 2 unlisted by request	56
Associate:	10
Honorary:	12

New members since the last Annual Meeting: Heleny Cook, Linda Dragat, Ginny Granger (rejoined), Jennifer Howlett. Karen Parker, Nick Pesce, Kelly Ryan. Barbara Winslow.

Members moved to Associate Members: Jeanne Blake, Jytte Brooks, Parvin Hajizadah.

Members resigned: Gudveig Baarli, Paula Byrby, Francoise Connors (from Associate), Carol Crosscup.

Changes in "Honorary Listing": Robin Clutz and Sue Metzner from Active Membership; Suki Wilkins (deceased).

All scheduled WGC outreach activities were cancelled due to covid-19 virus concerns, except the fall houseplant sale which moved from Paresky steps to the Milne Library and was open to the community as well as college residents.

10. Scholarships were given to two Mt. Greylock Regional High School students, Amelia Murphy and Brooke Phelps, who have an interest in horticulture. In addition, our Club supported the GCFM scholarship program.

11. Communications Chair Susan Pike reports that the annual WGC Yearbook was distributed in the spring. As our gardening year evolved with numerous unexpected changes to meetings and other Club activities, the updates were posted on the club's website. As in past years, the most current member contact information is on the website in the For Members tab.

We've been able to significantly reduce the monthly cost of the website this year. The higher cost was due to the host offering MailChimp email service to the membership. Though we have terminated that hosting service because we are using Constant Contact instead, the Club retains the ownership and ability to use its MailChimp account for email blasts in the future if it so chooses.

12. Program Chair Linda Conway reports that in spite of the pandemic limitations we were able to present several of our scheduled meeting programs using Zoom for May, June and August.
- a. Our November meeting will be on November 10 at 1pm by Zoom. Williams College Prof. Joan Edwards will present "Conserving Our Flowers and Their Pollinators." Please watch for the link to join the Zoom meeting.

- b. With regret, we have decided that we will not have our Holiday Luncheon this year. Members are invited to make a donation to the Berkshire Food Project in lieu of luncheon tickets <https://berkshirefoodproject.org/>

13. Other Activities

- a. Greens Workshop: Harper Center has advised they are currently limited to gatherings of 15 and they are not certain if that requirement will be increased by December 1, 2020. The Club is evaluating the possibility of donating bows, greens and vases to the Harper Center for a hands-on activity; we'll let you know if this occurs.
- b. The Community Chest has advised the Penny Social will not be held this year. The Community Chest is considering how the non-profit groups can participate in the Holiday Walk on Spring St.; more information will be forthcoming.

14. Here are some good sources for interesting garden webinars to sit back with your cup of tea or glass of wine and enjoy.

- Garden Club Federation of MA website at www.gcfm.org
- Mass. Master Gardeners at thedirt@massmastergardeners.org
- Ecological Landscape Alliance at ela.info@comcast.net

15. Closing thoughts: This has been a hard year for all of us. We are grateful that the Club has been able to continue some of our activities and that our members have embraced using Zoom. We will continue to do what we can to stay nimble and safe.

We believe that Constant Contact messages have been a good tool to keep members informed of changes and updates. All new information will be sent this way, so please look for them.

- ***Do you receive our Constant Contact email messages?*** Please contact me if you do not.
- Do you have suggestions? Would you like to see more or fewer photos? How else can we improve this mailing? Please share your thoughts.

Wishing you all a safe and healthy winter.

Karen Pellegrini
President