

WILLIAMSTOWN GARDEN CLUB GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 1:30 p.m.

St. John's Church, lower level

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER: President Maria Siskind called the meeting to order at 12 noon.
2. WELCOME: Maria welcomed everyone to the meeting. She thanked the hospitality committee for providing our lovely luncheon. In attendance today were 33 members, including new members, and two guests.
3. MINUTES FROM PRIOR MEETINGS: Membership voted to approve minutes from The November 14 and December 5 general meetings, which were distributed to members via email.
4. REPORTS:
 1. PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Maria Siskind):
 - a. Maria invited members who had come with guests to introduce their guests.
 - b. New WGC yearbooks were distributed today. Thanks to our membership committee, and to Elinor Goodwin at The Print Shop, for their hard work.
 - c. Please look at our signup sheets, and volunteer to participate in our upcoming activities. It's important that active members participate, promote Club events, and work as caretakers for our civic beautification projects. It's also important to help the hospitality committee by bringing refreshments to our meetings.
 - d. Once again this year, we will not be having a spring plant sale, because of the danger of distributing jumping worms.
 - e. There will be a terrarium workshop on April 30 from 1-3 p.m. at Diane Van Kempen's house, 66 Orchard Lane, Williamstown. This event, organized by Diane and by Kathy McKnight, will give members an opportunity to construct terrariums that will be nurtured over the summer and sold to the Williams at our fall plant sale.
 2. MEMBERSHIP REPORT (Kathy McKnight):
 - a. Kathy's notes some changes and corrections in the new WCG yearbook and walked us through the changes. She introduced us to the club's new members.
 3. TREASURER'S REPORT (Carol Oshinsky):
 - a. we have \$9743 currently, with outstanding checks for \$956.00 and \$345.00, which leaves us with available funds of \$8787.33.
 3. Civic Beautification Annuals report (Denny Meneghelli):

- a. We need more volunteers to maintain our planters around town. The bus stop plantings, the Cole Avenue plantings, and those at the Spring Street sign still need caretakers.

4. Civic Beautification Perennials report (Betty Iannitelli):

- a. The Aviation Club has given us funding for planting.

5. Programs Report (Diane Van Kempen):

- a. Diane walked members through the impressive of activities listed in our 2024 Yearbook, explaining minor changes. She shared her plan to add more native plants to the Sally Tenney Osborne Reading Garden on the grounds of the Milne Public Library. Sally Tenney Osborne, a librarian, was one of the founders of the Williamstown Garden Club.

6. NEW BUSINESS: Maria Siskind introduced our speaker for today's presentation. Chris Ferrero, a member of the Berkshire Botanical Gardens faculty, and a Cornell Master Gardener, gave a talk called "Gardening for Baby Boomers" which focused on practical suggestions for making gardening easier. She suggested that we start with the goal of reducing maintenance and adding enjoyment. She had an information-packed presentation, and she handed out both a detailed outline of her program and a "Plant List for Baby Boomer Gardening." She shared specific suggestions, and detailed ideas about how to achieve each one.

- Simplify your landscape—make a new master plan. (Measure out your garden and roughly draw it. Make a plan to reduce the number of plats or your garden's size, or both.)
- Substitute high-return plants for those that sap your time and energy (Limit yourself to your favorite annuals because they are expensive and need lots of watering. Focus instead on perennials. Pull out invasive plants by the roots, and dispose of them in a black trash bag, not in your compost heap.)
- Think about assembling a go-to tool kit (She brought her own favorite tools and spread them out for us to examine.)
- Readjust your attitude (Think about reducing your lawn area with low-maintenance shrubs and by adding hardscaped "garden rooms". Limit purchased mulch to the edges of your beds. You don't have to do everything!)

7. NEXT MEETING DATE: Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 16, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Milne Public Library, where Ken Gooch will give a talk called "Right Plants, Right Place."

8. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Submitted by

Pat Wilk, Recording Secretary