

Minutes of Rappahannock Garden Club Meeting August 11, 2016

The meeting opened with President Bonnie Schaschak welcoming members and guests. Special guests were Loya Wheatley who served as the 2006 president of the RGC, her daughter Marion Thorkildsen, and Crissy Ketner, a youth guest of vice-president Jenny Boyenga. Chaplain Cheryl Brown Davis gave the blessing followed by lunch. The hostess committee consisted of Cathie Elliott (chair), Tami McCauley, Jan Litsinger, Pat Willett, Debbie Burgess, Jo Manson, and Paula Brinser. Birthdays of the month included Judy Ripley, Glenda Decker, Mary Snyder, Edna Earle Mizelle, and Jo Manson. Cheryl Brown Davis led the group in singing "Happy Birthday."

President Bonnie called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. Her special message for the month was sustaining the gardener - that means growing what we like and enjoy so that we will continue to garden. She said that as we fill our yards with plants, we are increasing local plant and animal diversity, while cleaning the air so our gardens are benefitting the environment in many ways. She emphasized that most important, sustainable gardening means gardening economically, within our budgets, so we will keep gardening.

Old business included the review of minutes and financials from the July meeting that had been posted on the website. Cheryl Brown Davis made a motion, seconded by Judy Ripley, and approved by the membership that the minutes and financial report be approved. President Bonnie mentioned that the July newsletter had been posted and strongly encouraged all members to read it. As mentioned in the newsletter, it is already time to begin planning for next year, since we are halfway through this year. She said that there was a suggestion box on the welcome table with slips of paper for members to submit suggestions for the type of programs or field trips that would be of interest to them. Bonnie also encouraged members to use the committee signups on line. There is need for hostesses for the September meeting. Jane Austin volunteered, and Bonnie indicated that she would need to call members who had not served as hostess this year. She announced that Cathie Elliott will be a judge next month, and Paula Brinser volunteered to be a clerk.

There was discussion about Sharon Rowe's condition. It was reported that she had a fractured wrist as a result of being in a traffic accident. She was currently at the Outer Banks but would return home for surgery. It was announced that Cathie Ward needs assistance at the Free Health Clinic. Cathie broke her wrist so is unable to work at the clinic. Jo Manson volunteered to sub for her.

President Bonnie recognized Cathie Elliott who has been taking flower show school courses to become a National Garden Club accredited judge. To become an accredited judge, members must participate in flower shows and earn five exhibiting credits in horticulture and design. Cathy won "Best in Show" for her parallel design at both shows at the Fredericksburg Fair. President Bonnie also recognized Aleta Hoffman who received an official Monarch Butterfly Station certificate.

Cathie Elliott gave an update on the survey and the monarch butterfly project. She urged every member to participate in the survey. President Bonnie requested volunteers for the Most Valuable Gardener Committee. Jenny Boyenga, Margie Redlin, and Debbie Burgess volunteered. One of the volunteers will need to head the committee. Deborah Brooks who was chair last year has all the forms that can be used by the committee. The committee will present the names at the October meeting. The last announcement was in reference to the "Frightened Frog" program that would conclude the following Monday. Mary Ann McKay was recognized for her amazing job in creating lesson plans and craft activities. Marty Wilson requested that the "Frightened Frog" volunteers perform a frog song for the members. It was quite an entertaining performance!

New business included information about a program offered by the Kilmarnock Garden Club. RGC members are invited to a fundraiser, "Flowers for a Song," with David Pippin creating floral designs interpreting holiday songs. The event is scheduled on Wednesday, November 2, 2016, at ICYCC. Social hour is 11:00 (vendors present), followed by a buffet luncheon at noon, and David's show at 1:15. The cost is \$35 per person. Members are encouraged to participate, and hopefully there will be enough for a table.

Vice-president Jenny Boyenga addressed plans for the October meeting. Plans include a special afternoon with Nancy Hargroves who is the incoming National Garden Club president. Tickets for the program will be sold for \$10. This will serve as a fundraiser for the club's scholarship program.

Other new business included the presentation of new member Paula Brinser. Paula is a native Virginian who lived in the Richmond area most of her life. In April of this year she and her husband moved to Irvington while having a home built on Prentice Creek. Paula has four adult children and several grandchildren. She spent more than thirty years working in advertising and served as vice-president at the Times Dispatch. Paula recently started a small business to focus on marketing services. Her interests, in addition to gardening, include reading, genealogy, and jewelry

making. President Bonnie presented her with a welcome gift of garden items.

Vice-president Jenny Boyenga introduced guest speaker Lisa Robinson who presented “Planting for Winter Interest.” She has worked professionally as an interior and landscape designer, planner, and consultant for over thirty years and especially enjoys managing her design projects to completion. The focus for her business, From the Outside In, is creating beautiful views. Her newest garden club role is volunteer chairman for the 2017 NGC Convention to be held in Richmond. Lisa is an accredited NGC Flower Show judge and an accredited judge for the American Daffodil Society. She is currently serving on the executive committee and Board of Directors as Blue Ridge District President.

Lisa provided insight into winter landscaping. She said that you can add interest by creating vignettes and accessorizing with items such as statues, garden ornaments, concrete balls, glazed containers or pots, and antique glassware flowers. She said you can create interest through unique form and ground cover. Bark, berries, and bloom add interest to any plant. Examples are the Red Twig Dogwood and the crepe myrtle that she described as a plant for all seasons. Crepe myrtle is also salt tolerant. Plant material that provides form, texture, and contrast in color or texture is preferable. Lisa stressed the need to consider views from windows looking outward and also on the exterior approach to homes. She showed slides of various gardens demonstrating winter foliage and flowers. A key point for gardeners near the coast is to select plants that tolerate salt spray. One such plant is the yucca that can tolerate salt, is deer resistant, and is beautiful in arrangements. Conifers are excellent salt resistant plants. The Lenten Rose blooms from Christmas into late spring and the Japonica is beautiful in winter with its red berries. The Fatsia Japonica (evergreen) has beautiful large leaves with a tropical look. The Magnolia Southern Charm (Teddy Bear) is compact with shiny leaves and large flowers. Jasmine has bright lemon yellow flowers. It can tolerate wind and is an erosion control plant. Forsythia is golden yellow in spring. It blooms during late winter and early spring and is salt tolerant. Star Magnolia has pure white flowers that light up branches in the winter. Lisa was an incredible speaker.

Judging results were as follows:

Horticulture

Debbie Burgess – 3 Blue – 15 points

Susan Edmonds – 1 Blue – 5 points

Jean Ehlman – 2 Blue, 1 Red – 13 points

Jo Manson – 2 Blue – 10 points

Margie Redlin – 1 Blue plus Best in Show – 15 points

Judy Ripley – 3 Blue, 3 Red – 24 points

Cathie Ward – 1 Red – 3 points

Food Gardens

Debbie Burgess – 2 Blue – 10 points

Artistic Design

Cathie Elliott – 1 Blue plus Best in Show – 15 points

Margie Redlin – 2 Blue – 10 points

Jo Manson made a motion to adjourn. Jenny Boyenga seconded the motion that was approved by membership. Time of adjournment was 2:35 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,
Anne O'Bryant
Recording Secretary**