

## **Minutes of Rappahannock Garden Club Meeting May 12, 2016**

President Bonnie Schaschak welcomed members and guests after which she called on Chaplain Cheryl Brown Davis to bless the food. The hostess committee consisted of Mary Jacobs and Gail Federman, co-chairs, and Deborah Brooks, Sara Ford, Barbara Touchette, Joan Eremenko, Pam Lazorchek, and Sandra Harris. Birthdays of the month were announced, and Sandra Harris led the group in singing "Happy Birthday."

President Bonnie called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. In keeping with the 2016 theme Environmental Stewardship, she said the tip for the month was creating a backyard wildlife habitat, and a miniature version can be created on patio or deck. Basic elements include fresh water (birdbath would be an example), plants and feeders that provide nourishment for birds and insects, and rocks, trees, bushes and/or bird houses for shelter and nesting.

Old business included the review of minutes and financials from the April meeting that had been posted on the website. Sharon Rowe made a motion, seconded by Margie Redlin, and approved by the membership that the minutes and financial report be approved. Treasurer Robin Perks made the last call for submission of expense reports to her. She requested that members use the financial report form that is posted on the website. President Bonnie announced that Anita Shawver had brought in homemade pimento cheese that was for sale in the Root Cellar. She also announced that the Youth Program committee would be working with youngsters at the Boys and Girls Club on Thursday, May 26, at 4:00 p.m. There was a signup sheet at the back table. Bonnie also reminded members of the Northern Neck Burger fundraiser on May 18<sup>th</sup> and the Just Gardens Tour on May 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> that is the major fundraiser for the Haven. Three club members would have their gardens on display. She said the RGC storage room at the church had been organized by Jo Manson and Margie Redlin. Members were encouraged to keep it organized. She reminded members that Cathie Carr had opened a flower shop in Irvington at the old Bay Window building.

President Bonnie discussed an article from the May 5<sup>th</sup> Rappahannock Record entitled "Spring Stewardship Campaign is Underway." Stewardship Virginia is a statewide campaign to encourage and recognize voluntary work that improves Virginia's natural resources. This year the emphasis is on the need to restore habitat for pollinators that have suffered in recent years. She reported that there would be an invasive plant cleanup project at Belle Isle State Park on May 21<sup>st</sup>, from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. If anyone is interested in participating, she has the registration kit and additional information. Bonnie announced that at the previous meeting Anita Shawver had shared with her several articles, all of which have particular interests for a garden club. One such article was "Garden Book

Focuses on Healthy Environment.” The book is Chesapeake Gardening and Landscaping: The Essential Green Guide by Barbara Ellis. Bonnie stated that the book is an excellent resource for gardening in the Northern Neck for both waterfront and inland gardeners in creating and maintaining environmental friendly gardens. It is one of the few books that address specific gardening needs in this area.

President Bonnie advised members to sign up for committees online. There was a shortage of three hostesses for the June meeting. Margie Redlin, Muffin Fitzpatrick, and Julia Putney-Brandt volunteered to help. Anita Shawver is the only hostess signed up for July. For the June meeting there was a need for one additional guide, and Sandra Harris volunteered. At the Free Health Clinic Julia Putney-Brandt volunteered to work with Joan Eremenko the week of May 22<sup>nd</sup>, Jenny Boyenga volunteered to help Margaret Curtis the week of May 29<sup>th</sup>, and Muffin Fitzpatrick volunteered to help Sharon Rowe the week of June 5<sup>th</sup>.

Jo Manson presented several committee reports. The first was regarding the holiday party and luncheon in December. She thanked committee members Mary Hutya, Cheryl Brown Davis, and Pam Lazorchek for their assistance with site visits for the event. She presented the costs and dates available for both the Tides Inn and Indian Creek Yacht and Country Club. Members voted to hold the event at ICYCC on Thursday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. Regarding the Root Cellar, Jo announced the addition of some gardening books that will be for sale each month. The books have been donated to the club by the husband of the late Lynne Hoen and will be available for donations only. The “Plus One” membership initiative has taken off with the installation of four new members this year and possibly two more in June. Another potential member is close to retirement. Jo started her scholarship committee report by introducing members of the scholarship committee. They were Anita Shawver, Marty Wilson, Anne Skerrett, and Betty Otley. She said the club was able to give two \$1,000 scholarships, because the finance committee and the board approved donating some additional funds. The scholarship recipients were Nicole Saunders and Dylan Rose from Lancaster High School. Nicole has a 3.982 GPA and wants to major in marine biology. She has completed a year at the community college, and after completing her second year she plans to transfer to the College of William and Mary. Her goal is to work at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. Dylan has a 4.263 GPA and has been pre-selected to attend Virginia Tech as a junior where he will major in biology. He will complete his RCC associates degree before he graduates from high school. His science instructor at the Chesapeake Bay Governor’s School, in his reference letter, indicated that Dylan was presently writing his thesis comparing the catch rate of male and female blue crabs in a variety of marine environments. Members were encouraged to attend the scholarship presentation at Lancaster High School on May 16.

Vice-president Jenny Boyenga introduced the guest speaker John Lunsford who would speak on “Square Foot Gardening.” She said he had been a Master

Gardener since 2009. He started the Farm Museum Demonstration Garden in Heathsville and is currently the director. In his introductory statement, he said he specializes in raised gardens, mostly vegetables but plans to grow some flowers this year in addition to vegetables. He said he had fond memories of being in the garden with his dad. He sees the advantages of raised beds in providing better drainage, reducing erosion, and providing better control of soil quality. He said it is easier to plant, thin, and weed in a raised bed, and it provides higher yields using intensive gardening techniques. He discussed the types of raised beds and the materials that are used in raised beds. In his power point presentation he showed different designs and discussed the factors that need to be weighed in design considerations. Factors such as sun or the amount of light, soil, compost, irrigation, and mulch are most important in the success of growing just about anything. He said the best resource book is Square Foot Gardening by Mel Bartholomew. In conclusion he showed slides of the garden beds at his home from the time of actual construction of the house until now.

Before adjournment Jenny Boyenga asked members to vote for their favorite containers to be used in floral demonstration at the next meeting. Marty Wilson commented about horticulture exhibits based on observation and comments from judging. She said some exhibits had too much saran wrap, not enough water to just under the rim, and leaves under water.

Debbie Burgess reported the results of Horticulture and Food Garden.

#### **Horticulture**

Deborah Brooks – 9 Blue, 1 Red plus Best in Show – 58 points

Deborah Burgess – 9 Blue – 45 points

Carol Clark – 5 Blue plus Best in Show – 35 points

Margaret Curtis – 1 Blue, 1 Red – 8 points

Pam Lazorchak – 1 Blue – 5 points

Jo Manson – 2 Blue – 10 points

Mary Ann McKay – 2 Blue, 1 Red -13 points

Margie Redlin – 6 Blue – 30 points

Sharon Rowe – 10 Blue – 50 points

Marty Wilson – 9 Blue, 1 Red – 48 points

#### **Food Garden**

Deborah Burgess – 1 Blue – 5 points

Carol Clark – 4 Blue – 20 points

Margaret Curtis – 1 Blue – 5 points

Jo Manson – 1 Blue – 5 points

Joan Eremenko reported results for design.

#### **Artistic Design**

Joan Eremenko – 1 Red – 3 points

Jenny Boyenga made a motion to adjourn. Cathie Elliott seconded the motion that was approved by membership. Time of adjournment was 2:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Anne O'Bryant  
Recording Secretary