

Bedford Garden Club
Executive Committee Meeting
Home of Nancy Kronenberg
187 Guard Hill Road, Bedford Corners
September 11, 2019
9:30 a.m.

Attendance: Nancy Kronenberg, Robin Ashley, Jayni Chase, Liza Clymer, Ellen Conrad, Joyce Corrigan, Wendy Cushman, Mary Finnegan, Deirdre Glascott, Debbie Gourd, Laura Harris, Diane Lewis, Cynthia Mas, Lindsay Matthews, Virginia Maybank, Linda Merrill, Janet Robinson, Beth Sachs, Denise Santomero, Nancy Vincent, Natica Von Althann, Francine Walker, Tina Winchester, Leslie Wortmann

President Nancy Kronenberg welcomed all to the first meeting of our 2019-2020 season and her first as Club President. She thanked our committee chairs for the tremendous work they did over the summer to get us off to a wonderful year.

The cover for the pamphlet for this year's program has been designed by Nancy's daughter. Rather than guess at program, work shop and trip dates as yet finalized, the program will be divided into two sections, one showing dates that have been set and the other with the various activities and meetings anticipated but for which a date has not yet been pinned down. This second section will provide space for members to fill in dates as scheduled.

Minutes

The minutes of the "May" meeting held on April 30 were approved unanimously by those present who had been members of the executive committee at that time.

Treasurer's Report

Tina Winchester commented on the fabulous fundraiser held in June, complementing Debbie Gourd, as point person for the financial aspects of the event, for her invaluable service. While the event raised \$37,000, a \$3,000 shortfall from that budgeted, she said that the deficit could be made up in other ways. She reminded us that the funds raised were divided in half and allocated to two fiscal years.

Tina brought up the subject of the 2023 Zone III meeting that we and Rusticus are to host. The two clubs must each put up \$20,000 to cover the expense of the event. For us, this can be covered in part by the more than \$12,000 held in a savings account that is designated for this purpose. We have other accounts to draw on for the balance. Over time, we will need to replenish the accounts to pay for such meetings in future years.

Other issues touched upon included:

- All membership dues were to be paid, but were not in their entirety, by September 1. The date is particularly important as we were required to pay, and did pay, GCA dues of \$62 per member in mid-August.
- Tax forms have been filed to continue to qualify us for our not-for-profit (i.e. tax exempt) status.

- A subcommittee has been meeting to discuss how best to invest our savings. A report will be given this fall.
- Dues for “Active” members, currently \$200, were last raised a few years ago from \$175. We may want to increase these again by \$25 to help replenish our accounts earmarked for a future Zone meeting. She suggested a 10-year timeframe to accomplish this goal.

Public Relations

Joyce Corrigan discussed ways that we are and can increase public awareness of our activities. She asked us all to come up with ideas. It appears that we have an Instagram account, although we may need to rename it to include “NY” to distinguish it from the Massachusetts and Ohio clubs bearing the same name. Website chair Nancy Vincent said that we do not yet have a public page and are waiting upon Branch Out! to submit material. Virginia Maybank will see that this is done. Wendy Cushman suggested that we submit our calendar to the GCA website; other clubs have theirs displayed.

National Affairs and Legislation

Diane Lewis reported on the many efforts of the NAL, a committee of the GCA, founded in 1969 with the purpose being to bring to the attention of the membership important legislative proposals in Washington that impact our broad interests of conservation, water quality, biodiversity and the like. Nancy K emphasized that the NAL is a major advocacy unit. Diane said that one of the major issues at present is their opposition to the Administration’s plan to remove the use of pesticides from the Endangered Species Act. She asked that we let her know of any issue that may be of concern to the protection of the environment.

A discussion focused on the use of herbicides and pesticides. Ellen pointed out that local nurseries may be promoting applications that can be harmful to bees and our water supply. We may consider as a club investigating these products further. We may also consider speaking with the nurseries or developing a position paper on the subject, without pointing to specific nurseries, that could be submitted for publication to better inform the public.

Regarding the use of organic pesticides, Diane said that while safer, they still can kill what we don’t want to kill.

Civic Affairs & Conservation

Co-chairs **Jayni Chase** and **Ellen Conrad** reported on our activities in developing a Pollinator Pathway in Bedford. We were asked to take photos of pollinators in our gardens. Photos should be emailed to Photography Chair **Anita Stockbridge** and cc’d to Ellen and Jayni. Anita will select the best ones and, where needed, enhance them before placing them on our website, submitting them to the GCA and to Joyce for posting on Instagram.

The two announced two up-coming evening programs open to the public at the Bedford Playhouse about which they were asked to send information to Nancy V for inclusion on our website:

- October 17, Doug Tallamy, professor of entomology at University of Delaware and author of ***Bringing Nature Home*** and ***The Living Landscape***, has been engaged by Rusticus, as the lead sponsor, and ourselves to speak. We may also open this to Bedford 2020 and The Westchester Land Trust to co-sponsor and help defray the cost which is now estimated to be \$2,000 for our share.

- November 5 will feature a new documentary, ***Pollinators***.

Workshop and program ideas the two are looking into, include:

- Environmental consultant, Jim Nordgren, will be coming to Jayni's property to advise on removal of invasives. This may be scheduled as a workshop with many in attendance expressing interest in attending.
- Use of Caramoor as a workshop.
- Daniele Russo author of ***Beyond Plastics*** may be proposed as a speaker. The book focuses on the worldwide plastics crisis and identifies substitutes for plastics.

Floral Design (formerly, Exhibitions)

Leslie Wortmann and **Lindsay Matthews** reported. Their focus will be on the art and design of floral arrangements with **Wendy Cushman** responsible for planning flower shows of our own and identifying and recruiting participants for flower shows put on by other organizations. The first workshop on October 23 will be on Color, Containers & Design (the art of floral design). This will be followed by BYOV, tentatively scheduled for November 26, awaiting confirmation from Varner Redmon regarding use of her studio. In the spring, a session will be held entitled: "Top Ten Tips". Lindsay said that they plan to require that seedlings participate in the training sessions. Nancy K echoed the sentiment saying that all members would be required to participate with 2023 and our Zone meeting in focus.

On Greens Day in December, the committee will provide wreathes and be in charge of their decoration.

A discussion ensued on various aspects of Greens Day which is a joint effort with Programs. The following decisions were made:

- We will make wreathes for the community as we have in the past.
- We will not make individual wreathes.
- There will be a wreath making exhibition. One possibility includes Virginia's experimentation with making a wreath from succulents.
- There will be at least a limited boutique.
- Leslie will order paper whites and other plants that are hot sellers.
- Nancy will hold a formal meeting.
- The boutique will not sell baked goods, although edibles with long shelf lives, such jelly and frozen cookie dough, sell well and could be made by members.

Liza suggested that they might reach out to Shelly Ferrall who has in the past organized and run successful boutiques to help run ours this year.

Horticulture

Robin Ashley announced workshops and trips she and co-chair **Dana Worlock** are planning.

- Trip to Bear Creek Flower Farm, Stamfordville, NY on October 23.
- Propagation workshop. Even though there is not a Zone meeting to prepare for this year, the feeling was generally expressed that it would be a good idea to continue to hone our skills with 2021 and, particularly, our own meeting in 2023.
- Mushroom growing workshop in spring.
- Visit to Earth Tones nursery, a native plant specialist and Environmental Horticulturist Kim

Eierman's favorite, in Woodbury, CT.

Membership

Chairman **Janet Robinson** gave a brief report. By November she should have a clear idea of the number of slots available. Each proposer must have her complete package submitted by April 1, to be voted on at the May executive committee meeting. The annual Seedling Luncheon will be held in May or June, but formal attendance will not begin until the September meeting. Any prospective member can, of course, be brought to an open meeting. Janet will lead each proposer through the steps.

Programs

Denise Santomero outlined an exciting lineup of programs this year that will focus on gardens of the world. We will start off at our September 18 meeting with Stephen Byrns, President, Untermyer Garden Conservancy giving a presentation on Persian gardens. Other countries in the schedule feature gardens from America, Russia, Japan, and Europe (with our own Martha Stewart presenting). Nancy K said that there were still a couple of months available for other subjects submitted by committees. One will likely be a photography presentation utilizing Susan Burke's wonderful newly renovated barn. Robin has a noted arborist who has assisted her personally who she recommends highly as a speaker. Our Plant Exchange was suggested as a time when he might speak, but any speaker would be limited to less time than Robin believes would be necessary. The following year was suggested.

Special Events

At the request of Susan Burke, Wendy Cushman brought to our attention a luncheon (the 2019 Keesee Awards Luncheon) honoring NY Botanical Garden's President Emeritus Gregory Long on November 6 at the Metropolitan Club hosted by Audubon NY. Susan has bought a table and encouraged others to come.

Wendy also mentioned that, apropos of our up-coming program on the Japanese garden, from May 1 to November 1, 2020 the NYBG will feature the work of internationally celebrated Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama. Along with considering a club trip to view the exhibit (Wendy will speak with Varner), Denise may change the order of her speakers to have the one on Japanese gardens speak at our April meeting to prepare us better to appreciate a visit to the NYBG.

Flower Shows

Wendy Cushman brought up the need to offer a Floral Design 101 course conducted by the GCA. It can be held anywhere, she said. There must be 25 enrollees, which could include Rusticus members. The price is \$125 per person. Nancy K recommended that we start with our own inhouse floral design training, as Leslie and Lindsay have planned. She asked if we were required by the GCA to offer their course. If not, she asked, should we? In any event, Nancy K recommended that we defer offering such a course until the next cycle. Nancy V directed us to the GCA website which has instructions for virtually everything including flower shows and hosting a GCA Zone meeting. We should all avail ourselves of it.

Scholarships/Internships

Beth Sachs spoke of the distinction between scholarships and internships, both of which will be addressed by her committee. She said that the GCA has asked us to participate in their "GCA

Scholarship Program” and directed us to read the “Scholars Report” in the Summer 2019 edition of **The Bulletin**. She will be guiding the club in investigating new opportunities such as those presented by our recent affiliation with Caramoor where we have redesigned and planted their sunken garden. We will also be evaluating changes in our internship funding.

Branch Out

Virginia Maybank reported on the tree planting project that we are coordinating with the town to plant trees on town land. Funding of \$12,000 per year for three years has been allocated by the Town of Bedford for this purpose. **Heather Langham** heads up our efforts. 30 trees are planned to be planted this fall. Damaged and dying trees that were planted through our efforts a few years ago in front of Hunting Ridge Mall will be replaced with the help of the town. Virginia said that we had learned several important lessons from this experience. The trees being replaced were subjected to snow plow damage, poor pruning practices and “volcano” mulching as well as suffered from the isolation of the trees from each other. We will take precautions to avoid such problems with the new trees.

Virginia also mentioned that a request had come to her for \$500 to defray part of the \$4,000 expense incurred to replace the “Christmas” tree on the Village Green. Several questions were raised: Why was the cost so high? Should this go to Project Review? Why us?

Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Linda J. Merrill

Recording Secretary