Town & Country Garden Club Membership Meeting Minutes

Community/Senior Center

March 13, 2024

**Social gathering** with refreshments 5:30 to 6 pm

Raffle: Gift Card – Judy Beers $2 for one ticket or $5 for three

**Business meeting** 6:02 Vice President Holly Walczak reminded everyone that Chris Lincoln was away and Holly was stepping in tonight to run the meeting.

**Minutes** of the February general meeting were called for approval. Motion to accept was made by Josie Schmidt and seconded by Teri Doern. They were approved without correction.

**Treasurer:** Teri Doern reported that our current bank balance is $5,741.04. She also reminded everyone that she has two TCGC tee shirts left. Cost to a member is $15, and the club absorbs the balance.

**Hartford Flower Show:** Margareta Kotch reported that the FGCCT Flower Show in February was well worth the trip. She reminded everyone that members can earn free entry to the show by signing up to be a hostess for a time slot. Duties are confined to making sure the exhibits are undisturbed. Member Peggy Townsend won three 3rd place awards for flower arranging and one blue ribbon in horticulture. Holly also attended and remarked about the wonderful bonsai exhibits and speakers.

**Flower Arranging Workshops**: Everyone who attended was very pleased with the February flower arranging workshop, led by Arline Shanley, in lieu of a speaker. The next workshop will be held at the library on March 27th at 6 pm. Cost is $30.00, and this workshop is open to the public. We had four non-members sign up through our Facebook page thanks to Hillary’s post.

**Member Garden Tour:** We have two members who have invited club members to tour their gardens this summer, Jane Sharpe and Hillary Goldstein. We are looking for one more member to offer her garden.

**FONS:** Friends of Newtown Seniors will host a dinner on April 11th. There is no charge to attend. Flyers for the event are on the tables around the room.

**Birthdays and New Members:** Our newest club member, Debbie Berte, was welcomed. She works at Hawley School, and will be joining Island #1. Also with us for part of the evening was Ellen Kutner, who joined the club last fall but has only been able to attend two meetings to date. We all sang Happy Birthday to Josie Schmidt, whose birthday is March 13th (today) and recognized Denise Rod’s March birthday as well (in absentia).

**Ways and Means**: Judy explained that our next fundraiser will be a plant sale on May 18instead of May 11 as originally announced. Members will bring plants to sell from their own gardens or obtain plants from another source. Pot up plants from your garden as soon as possible so they can develop roots. Use clean pots and new potting soil. Improve a pot’s appearance with a little mulch on top. The club will provide tongue-depressor type sticks which will be inserted into the soil with information about the plant. You can get pots from nurseries, the Christmas Tree Shop, or Ocean State Job Lots, to name a few.

**Civic:** Jane Sharpe reported that Barbara O’Connor and Holly Walczak will be the new chairmen of Island #2. A grant from the town paid for the plaque soon to be installed on or near the sculpture on Island 2.

**Conservation:** Nancy Azzaro gave Holly her report since she is in Florida. The Connecticut Audubon Society has some interesting Eco-Travel Tours. One currently being offered is a tour to the Lakes Region in New Hampshire, the source of the Connecticut River. Their website is ctaudubon.org for more information about the organization and their travel offerings.

**Publicity/Membership**: Hillary Goldstein reminded us to join our Facebook page, “like” an event we have planned, say you are going to attend (whether you are or not), and share it with others by using the share button at the bottom of the page.

**Horticulture:** Elaine Sullivan shared information about what she is doing in her garden right now. She suggested cutting down grasses, tagging plants for transplant, digging up invasives and gathering downed branches for composting, filling in holes, edging, adding trenches to channel water, planting seeds indoors, estimating mulch needs for later, and cleaning garden tools.

Elaine also shared some resources she found online: a video entitled “Discover the Simplicity and Joy of No Dig” Gardening at **charlesdowding.co.uk** and **awaytogarden.com** for seed planting schedules inside and outdoors. Her mention of soil testing led to a suggestion that soil testing might be a display at our plant sale on May 18th.

Josie Schmidt asked for garden pictures of blooming or emerging plants for the newsletter (please).

**Field Trips:** In Arline’s absence, Barbara reminded us that the club will offer a field trip to Hartford’s Elizabeth Gardens in June.

The business meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm. Barbara O’Connor and Margareta Kotch critiqued the floral arrangements in “angular design” with an oceanic theme and one succulent horticulture entry.

At 7 pm, speaker Michele MacKinnon presented “Wicked and Wonderful Weeds.” She provided a useful handout as well.

Respectfully submitted,

Joy Kopesky, Recording Secretary