

# December 2015 Minutes

## St. David's Church

### December 8, 2015

On a sunny Tuesday morning two weeks before Christmas thirty-five Weeders gathered at St. David's Church Parish Hall in Wayne for the annual holiday sale and tabletop arrangement workshop that included a brief business meeting before the sale. The meeting chair was Karen Doyle.

Coffee, tea, breakfast sweets and fruit were provided by hostesses Jackie Burke and Patty Greenhalgh and the Weeders dug in with their usual relish. There was lots of good gab because we had not been together, officially, since our September meeting. Minutes of that meeting have been circulated.

Mounds of cut greens were piled high at the center of five large round tables and, after coffee, president Marilyn Sprague rang her bell signaling the beginning of the meeting. Greens chair Polly Garnett had been hard at work painting baby food jars green and stuffing them with moist oasis. Several jars were at the ready at each place and Polly came 'round with spray painted gold and silver seeds and pods to add glam to the greenery. This year's arrangements will go to Bryn Mawr Rehabilitation Hospital.

Weeders are good at multitasking so amidst the clipping of greens and making the tiny jars look festive Marilyn managed to hold a real business meeting complete with reports. She began by thanking those whose pre-meeting work and planning made the morning possible; in addition to those named above Marilyn thanked sale chairs Wendy Calhoun, Biddy Edwards and Daryle Hanlon. She welcomed new member Alice Nacey in absentia and noted Alice had an accident and fractured her kneecap. We wish her a speedy recovery. Marilyn also introduced Ellyn Spragins who now lives in Bryn Mawr and joined the Weeders on the October bus trip to New York.

Ellie Penniman reported for the admissions committee who has been working on an info page to be included in our blue binders and given to prospective members. A copy is attached to these minutes. She also read a letter to the committee from Cheryl Cheston proposing Elaine Lisle (Mrs. John) as a member. A seconding letter was received from Lorraine Wallace and supporting letters came from Wendy Bailey, Diane McCallister and Ellen Pemberton.

On December 1st, Alice Doering held a workshop to teach a new propagating technique – "winter seeding." One gallon milk jugs were prepared, filled with medium and planted with seeds, mostly of native perennials like asters and butterfly weed. Step two is to place the prepared container outside in the snow (secretarial aside - wishful thinking with our 60 degree temperatures) and rain to condition the seeds for spring germination.

Alice plans to schedule a workshop on hardwood propagation of dwarf conifers and will notify members via an email blast.

Marilyn urged support of the Fertilizer Fund and announced Sonya Driscoll is happy to receive your contributions. The PCGCA does good work throughout the city. This year, in honor of the committee's 50th anniversary and the 100th birthday of the National Park Service, there was a special solicitation to redo the sprinkler system and update the Magnolia Tribute Garden, given to the country by the GCA and dedicated in 1959. It was a Weeder, Mrs. Frederic Rosengarten (Marion), who proposed the garden and worked to make it happen. Our club voted to contribute \$3,000 toward the restoration of the garden; collectively the ten clubs that make up the PCGCA contributed \$22,500.

Marilyn thanked Patricia Doolittle, her committee and the Weeders for a spectacular flower show at our opening meeting in September.

Small groups of Weeders have been a visible presence in the community. The gardens at Ludington Library and Strafford Station have been put to bed, but Alice Doering and her crew will deck out the station for the holidays with greens left over from today's tabletop arrangements. Wendy Bailey and her committee decorated the Ronald McDonald House in October and the dining room at Strawberry Mansion was transformed into a very clever land of "three French hens" thanks to Lynne Gibbons and her gang of glue gunners who made ornaments for the tree out of clip clothespins, small wood balls, ribbons, silver balls and feathers. Lynne gave credit to Patricia Doolittle for dreaming up the ornaments and to Diane McCallister for working wonders with the fireplace mantle. As a reward for our work we were given ten tickets to see the Fairmount Park houses. The houses are open Thursday through Sunday, now through December 20th. Anyone wanting a ticket please contact Ellen Pemberton.

The GCA National Affairs and Legislation (NAL) conference on conservation matters will be held in Washington, DC. If you would like to attend, please contact Marilyn Sprague. The Weeders would love to send you!

The committee working on our Philadelphia Flower Show entry has expanded to include Julie DeVuono so we now have a triumvirate of Diane McCallister, Melissa Bullitt and Julie leading the charge to win a blue in the class titled "Welcome Home." Some Weeder brugmansias are now receiving the equivalent of spa treatment in the greenhouses at Meadowbrook so they'll look spiffy in time for the show.

Melisa Bullitt encouraged members to go through their photographs for possible submissions to the show scheduled for the March meeting. Check out the classes and send your entries to Melissa in February. She will do the matting and prep for the show.

Michelle Bolton and Julie DeVuono attended the Shirley Meneice Horticulture Conference in Portland, Oregon and gave a fine account of their late September trip. They even assembled a photo journal that was passed around at the meeting while they shared the latest news from the world of horticulture, including such rules as "don't ever top a tree." What to do when Mother Nature does that without asking? Prune selectively.

Karen Doyle reported for the program committee. They will have a planning meeting in January and new members are invited to sit in to share ideas and suggestions.

"The Weeders Took New York," was how Linda Anderson began her account of the October bus trip. Forty-one Weeders and guests enjoyed coffee in a parking lot as they assembled for their jaunt under the care of a woman bus driver. Wave Hill was the first stop and the beautiful gardens there were almost overshadowed by the glorious vista across the Hudson to the Palisades. Hostesses Sonya Driscoll, Polly Garnett, Patty Minehart and Wendy Quereau pulled off what one Weeder described as a "well catered event" serving snacks, a box lunch on the bus to lower Manhattan and wine en route home. Amy Freitag helped with organizational details for a walk on the High Line and talk by Patrick Cullina.

Diane McCallister shared a horticultural resource trip from Lorraine Wallace who was not at the meeting because her husband was in surgery. "The New England Wildflower Society has developed an interactive key called 'Go Botany' that anyone can access...There's a 'Simple ID Key' designed for the beginner and 'Advanced ID Tools' for the more botanically fluent." The simple key includes 1,200 native and introduced New England plants; the advanced includes more than 3,000 native subspecies and varieties. You can take your smartphone with you into the field and access this program. The North American Orchid Conservation Center picked up the idea and created "Go Orchids."

Business over and tabletop arrangements completed, the meeting was adjourned so Weeders could shop.

submitted,

Respectfully

Thompson

Maria M.  
Secretary