

MINUTES OF THE WEEDERS MEETING

DECEMBER 9TH, 2014

THE JEANES-KARABOT LIBRARY



President Marilyn Sprague opened the meeting at 10:10, and thanked our hostesses Ellie Kirk and Lorraine Wallace, as well as Polly Garnett as organizer of the greens for the table decorations, intended for Bryn Mawr Rehab. Particular thanks went to Meeting Chair, Ellie Penniman, and Becky Caldwell as Chair of the Christmas Sale, and to Biddie Edwards and Nancy Evans as busy members of the Sale Committee.

The Minutes of the October 14th Meeting were approved as distributed. Treasurer Laura Mitchell reported that there were 4 or 5 Weeders who still have not (gasp!) paid dues, but that our coffers were quite full, with a total of \$49,256.47. No sooner than her report was accepted, came the question: why on earth did we have so much money??? There was general consensus that we should find worthy projects to support.

Admissions

Marilyn said that Ellie Penniman is serving as an advisor to the Admissions Committee. Ellie proceeded, in Julie DeVuono's absence, to read a letter from Julie proposing Michele Bolton as a new member. Michele moved to Berwyn several years ago from Illinois, and has lived with her family in Westport, CT., Paris, France, and Chicago. She and her husband Andy have 4 children; she is a skilled interior decorator and has become very enthusiastic gardener. She has attended one Weeders meeting and the propagating workshop at Alice Doering's house. Various members who have met Michele spoke very favorably about her.

Letters in support or otherwise may now be sent by email. They should be sent within 30 days to either Isabel Wister or Ellie Penniman.

Community Affairs

Strawberry Mansion

Patricia Doolittle reported for herself and Lynn Gibbons about the extremely creative use their Committee had made of common household recyclable materials to decorate Strawberry's Entrance Hall and Lewis Parlor for the Christmas tours. The items included light bulbs, tin cans, bottle caps, corks, and tea bags! The results were "spectacular," and Patricia commended Beth Kowalski, the director of Strawberry, as the creative energy behind the effort. There were three workshops, after which Strawberry provided the participants with lunch.

Ronald McDonald House

Wendy Bailey chaired a wonderful effort to create floral arrangements for Ronald McDonald House at St. Christopher's, and said that photos of the decorations can be seen on the website.

Magnolia Tribute Garden This is a project of the PCGCA, and members from Philadelphia-area clubs are asked for help for fall and spring clean-ups. Wendy Bailey, Ellie Penniman, and Marilyn Sprague assisted with the fall event, and reported on the wonderful experience.

Gazebo Garden of the Ludington Garden

Cheryl said that the garden was in terrific shape, with a mountain of debris to prove it. She urged anybody interested to come help out there on Mondays.

Strafford Station

Alice Doering encouraged members to join in at Strafford. This year they have planted several new shrubs and a couple of trees. They placed large Christmas wreaths on the overpass (carefully avoiding annihilation by Amtrak), and will use the leftover greens from this meeting to decorate the pots at the station.

Conservation

Nancy Evans reported on the Committee's Nov. 12th trip to the Covanta Plymouth Renewable Energy trash-to-steam operation, near Plymouth Meeting. The firm's environmental engineer, Paul Bunn, spoke with unshakable conviction about the remarkable benefits of his process. He acknowledged the general unpopularity of such operations with community groups, but argued that despite the higher initial expense (over landfills), trash-to-steam was more profitable in the long run. Furthermore, they made sure to exceed all EPA standards, and ended up with sellable electricity.

Outfitted in hard-hats and earplugs, we were escorted to the Tipping Hall, a gargantuan and smelly place where the trash trucks unloaded their unpleasant contents into a dip pit. Five floors above, a single employee operated a giant claw which lowered to grab huge mounds of garbage, and then dropped it somewhere else, mixing up the contents as well as aerating them for better burning. "Dickensian," pronounced Nancy. We saw the furnaces, the water tanks and the pipes taking the steam to the anticlimactic generator. We were told that steam escaping the system should ALWAYS be white; any other color is reason for concern.

All in all, it was very educational and weird, i.e. an ideal Weeders adventure, and the next Conservation outing, completing the trash trilogy, will logically be a visit to a recycling site.

Garden Club of America

Jackie Burke and Marilyn Sprague were delegates, and Lloyd Brown was involved as a GCA Director, in the Zone V "North by Northwest" meeting on October 16th at the Huntington Valley Country Club. Jackie reported that the Weeders were successful in both the Photography and Flower Shows: in Photography, Alice Doering and Melissa Bullitt both won 1st, and Nancy Evans 2nd; Beth Bartle won a 1st in floral design. Alice also won the Rosie Jones Horticultural Award, and got a blue for her Syningia. Her

terrarium, with help from Cheryl, Diane, and Sally, won an Honorable Mention. There were 14 Clubs participating.

The speakers: Bill Shaffer ("Taking the Flower Show Home"); David Robertson, Exec. Director, Pennypack Environmental Restoration Trust ("Botanical Invaders"); and lastly, Ashley Edwards, exchange intern at Longwood Gardens ("The GCA/ Royal Horticultural Society Interchange Fellowship").

Horticulture Diane thanked all those who had attended Leila Peck's Bulb Workshop, and urged them to care for their bulbs.

Joint Meeting of the Philadelphia Committee of the GCA

In Linda's absence, Marilyn recounted the success of PCGCA's 50th Anniversary Meeting, held on November 5th at The Philadelphia Country Club. The Meeting raised \$5,390 for the Fertilizer Fund and attracted about 200 attendees, of whom 113 stayed for lunch. The much-admired Jane Pepper gave a wonderful and personal talk to a room full of friends. Linda Anderson and Ellen Pemberton deserve many thanks for all their work to chair and promote the Anniversary, and, Diane McCallister, Ellen Pemberton, and Wendy Bailey for their lovely flower arrangements on many tables, and Lloyd for her contribution of witch hazel branches.

Fertilizer Fund To the great pleasure of Weederdom, an upright Sonya, reappeared among us, after some months recuperating from a spinal fluid leak. Less joyful was her news that the Weeders rank 7th out of 10 Clubs in contributions to the Fertilizer Fund. So, support Sonya, and GIVE! (We don't want her to be embarrassed by us and suffer a relapse!)

Photography

Melissa Bullitt reminded everyone to go through their photos for the March competition; the deadline for entry is in February.

Communications

Marilyn thanked Lorraine and Cheryl for their many, MUCH appreciated efforts.

Stenton Meadow Project

Marilyn announced the very glad tidings that this Project, for which we are Seconders for the Founders Fund, has reached the Finals; as there are only three remaining in competition, Stenton is guaranteed at least \$7,500.00. The vote is in March.

Zone V Meeting

Jackie Burke attended 2 day Zone V Meeting at the Huntington Valley Country Club. (See **Garden Club of America**, above, for report.) The Meeting also featured Zone Representative reports from the following Committees: Workshops; Leadership; NAL; Communications; Archives Strategic Plans; Membership; and Programs.

For the good of the order: Marilyn relayed the sad news of Louise Stengel's daughter's malignant brain tumor, and Alice Doering's son's heart attack. Sally Wood was having cataract surgery that day. Isabel Wister had better news, that her mother was doing much better.

The Christmas Sale began at 10:40!

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy Cadwalader, Secretary