

**Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania**

**92<sup>nd</sup> Annual Convention**

**“Celebrating Nature’s Masterpieces”**

**Desmond Hotel Malvern, PA**

**April 4, 2022**

**Jan Szych, Protocol Chair introduced the Presiding Officer, President Sheila Croushore.**

The 92<sup>nd</sup> Annual Convention was called to order by **President Sheila Croushore** at 8:10 AM.

**President Sheila Croushore** then introduced the GCFP officers. The presentation of colors was made by the Valley Forge Military Academy and followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the singing of the National Anthem by Dolores Knight of the Uwchlan Garden Cub.

**Joyce Milberg, Convention Chaplain** then gave the Invocation.

**Mary Ann DeSanto, District I Director** welcomed all and thanked Convention Chairs, Ellen McGarrigle and Nancy Cuttic and their Committee.

A Response to the Welcome was given by **Sharon Bryner, District VII Assistant Director** who thanked the 2022 Convention Chairs and their Committee. She invited all to next year’s Convention “Thyme to Garden” in Monroeville, a suburb of Pittsburgh.

**Sharon Brown, Parliamentarian** read the Convention Rules and moved for their adoption.

**Adopted**

**President Croushore** introduced two new Board members - Jane Kruse, new District II/III Director and Judy Swanson, new Chair of Environmental Concerns.

**Nancy Cuttic** and **Ellen McGarrigle, 2022 Convention Chairs** asked for adoption of the Convention Program. A motion was made to adopt the Convention Program as printed in the convention booklet by Marcy Cunkelman and seconded by Judy Shaffer

**Adopted**

**Marilyn Small, Registrar** gave the Preliminary Credentials report. There were 15 Tri-Refreshers, 10 NGC Board members, 22 CAR-SGC Board members, 1 State President, 72 State Board members, 7 former State Presidents, 10 District Directors, 7 Assistant District Directors, 34 Club Presidents, 66 National Life members, 36 CAR-SGC Life Members, 66 GCFP Life Members, 53 Flower Show Judges, 26 Gardening Consultants, 14 Environmental Consultants, 30 Landscape Design Consultants, 280 Garden Club members, 21 Spouses or guests, with a Total of 301 Registrants.

**President Croushore** introduced Appointed Board Members, Haddie Webber, Sharon Richardson, and Barbara Campbell. She also introduced GCFP Past Presidents, Judy Vehse 1997-1999, Angie Raitano, 2009-2011, Gail Corle Manna, 2011-2013, Sharon Brown 2015-2017, Chris Leskosky 2017-2019, Joyce Milberg 2019-2021, and Lois Shuster, 1987-1989. Lois Shuster also served as NGC Past President 2001-2003. She also introduced Andrea Falchek and Jan Szych, Protocol Chairs.

**President Sheila Croushore** asked for a motion for the appointment of Chris Leskosky and Angie Raitano to approve the Minutes of the 2022 Convention. A motion was made by Gail Corle Manna and seconded by Joyce Milberg.

**Passed**

**President Sheila Croushore** then introduced the Timekeepers, Nerita Brant and Bonnie Baldisweiler. A ringing bell will mark the end of the allotted time to give a report.

**Joyce Milberg, Convention Chaplain** offered a Memorial Service tribute for those Garden Club members who passed away this past year.

## **Officer Reports**

**President Croushore** reported that she has had the privilege to work with an amazing group of Officers, Directors, and Board Members. They have organized 11 ZOOM Programs that brought in over 125 people to each session. They have updated the website and are looking at new ways to have an office and cut expenses. As president, she participated in a floral showdown against the National Capital Area in Alexandria, Virginia and happily was declared the winner.

In February, GCFP Headquarters Secretary, Elizabeth Pinkham resigned. Leeanna Ryba, 1<sup>st</sup> VP and **President Croushore** went to the office space and packed up all the papers, electronics, and files. District IV Director Tonya Young and her son Tyler also came and helped to pack the totes. At Elizabeth's request, they donated the copy machine to a church that needed one, and the office furniture was picked up by a local used office furniture store.

**Leeanna Ryba, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President** congratulated the members of the ten clubs of District I on the current convention, "Celebrating Nature's Masterpieces". She has met with the ten District Directors and their Assistants and acts as their liaison to disperse information to their districts. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, they met via Zoom. These open conversations allowed every Director to share their District and Club activities. One example of this has been the second Wednesday Zoom presentations for all GCFP members. These ten Directors have entertained and educated all with their creative hour-long presentations.

**Pat Wolanski, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President** reported that she has worked with Steven Romig, Sr. Sales Manager at the Wyndham Hotel in Boalsburg, to plan and organize the 2021 June and October Board meetings. She was honored to have been invited to all the Annual District Meetings. COVID, however, restricted the officers from attending all the meetings. A decision was made not to travel together, but to attend District meetings in their local areas. She attended District I, II/III and XI. She was in awe at the accomplishments, plans and events of each garden club. Even during the pandemic, garden clubs were able to continue their work with "Zoom". Zooming became a welcome and necessary means of keeping in touch and a way to stay on track with club meetings and programs. She thanked all the clubs and districts that have sent her newsletters and encouraged anyone with questions, comments, or concerns to contact her.

**Flossie Narducci, Recording Secretary** reported that the Minutes of the 91<sup>st</sup> CGFP State Convention have been approved as distributed.

**Joyce Crider, Treasurer** presented highlights of the GCFP Financial Activity from May 1, 2021 -March 31, 2022. Membership Income totaled \$46,896.50. Conventions, Schools, Symposia, and other support totaled \$53,987.07. Expenses include Disbursements of \$11,507 and Payroll of \$24,024.20. Chairmen Expenses totaled \$6361.45. Administrative fees totaled \$6,361.45. Keystone Gardener expenses came to \$7,929.78. Officers' allowances were \$10,900. Memberships totaled \$5,455.14 and Awards were \$310. Total Expenses came to \$66,906.55 with a variance of Income vs. Expenses at (\$12,919.48). She also offered the GCFP Asset Summary as of March 30, 2022. Total Checking, Savings, Petty Cash, and other assets as of 3/31/22 is \$46,023.25. Total Assets including Advance Receivable is \$6,000. Total Assets including Advance Receivable totaled \$52,023.25. A Transfer of Funds from Stifel Investment Account for operating expenses as of 2/4/22 was \$20,000 and Penny Pines totaled \$16,503.74. The detailed complete report is attached to the Minutes.

**Barbara Brand, Financial Secretary** reported the activity in the GCFP Dues Account at BB&T/Truist. The Account Balance as of 10/10/2021 was \$100. Deposits totaled \$1,380.00. Disbursements totaled \$1,380.00. The Account Balance as of 03/30/2022 is \$100. Total disbursements to the Treasurer since 05/15/2021 were \$47,037.50. The complete report is attached to the Minutes.

## District Directors Reports

**Maryann DeSanto, District I Director** reported they were able to host their September Annual Luncheon in person. Most clubs resumed their meetings and Holiday Plant sales, and Uwchlan Garden Club staged a Standard Flower Show. The past year activities in District I mostly revolved around this GCFP Convention. It started over two years ago when she and Sharon Richardson began the convention process by visiting possible venues. They met with Judy Schaffer, Convention Coordinator, and step by step she walked them through, how to achieve the ultimate result, a fun, informative and memorable convention. Next, Nancy Cuttic and Ellen McGarrigle came on board as co-chairs, bringing their creative ideas. Nancy then recruited her sister, Marilyn Small, as Registrar, and the Convention committee was formed. Picking a theme, designing a logo, and suggesting programs which were not only educational and entertaining, but that fulfilled Tri Refresher requirements, was no small endeavor. They contacted Club Presidents letting them know this was a District event and that all members were needed on board. The next step was contacting sponsors to help support the convention by contributing funds, placing ads in the convention booklet, or donating items for gift bags. Weekly Zoom meetings kept all informed. Registration was slow in the beginning, but then as the threat of another pandemic subsided, registration took off. Planning a state convention did achieve their goal of working together with other members of District I, challenging their abilities to step outside their comfort zone, and taking pride in their accomplishments that have brought us all together this day.

**Jane Kruse, District II/III Director** shared some ideas which “excited” members of their clubs. Working in conjunction with other groups – garden clubs or community groups expand the sphere and reach of a single club. That project may benefit the garden club or be a fundraising event for another charitable service, such as food kitchens, women shelters, hospice families or Easter Egg Hunts. Sharing plants took on a new approach. Parkland Garden Club had one person bring in a plant and gave information about that plant. That plant was given to another club member who became responsible for introducing a new plant and passing it on to the next club member; and the cycle repeats meeting after meeting. Upper Perkiomen Valley, which focuses primarily on community vegetable and pollinator gardens, supplied new plant seeds to members, had periodic progress reports on the growth at meetings and then a final show of the plant or fruit by the end of the growing season. With a different twist, South Schuylkill Garden Club distributed sweet pea seeds to members to SOW, GROW and SHOW. All District II/III garden clubs have been invited to bring their blooming sweet peas to the September Annual Meeting hosted by Milford Garden Club as they celebrate their 85<sup>th</sup> year of looking “Beyond the Garden Fence”. Taking an artistic flair has members of Garden Club of Reading sit in the public garden at Reading Museum and invite their members to paint the flowers that they are growing. The Garden Club of Montrose goes foraging in nature and glue what they find to a painted canvas. It is called Foraging Art. Capsulizing on the “let’s do something different” thought, how about --- having high tea with a retirement community, purchasing T-shirts to wear while working in community gardens, making the best of an ugly sweater luncheon, helping with clean-up for Earth Day.

**Tonya Young, District IV Director** reported that their clubs are having fun working together on District annual meetings and attending more events of sister clubs. The District IV website is evolving. The club’s scholarship applications are available online. Zoom meetings are keeping them in touch. District IV is hosting an NGC Standard Flower Show – “Time Goes On” to be held in conjunction with York Quilters Guild on June 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> at York College of PA. Green Thumb GC traveled to enjoy whimsical birdhouses created with unique items. Soon they will be traveling to chemical free Nine Pine Farms, Hensler 20-year-old Hosta Garden, and Clarence Schrock Memorial Park Environmental Center. Fun excursions by Garden Club of York members include Longwood Gardens, an Iris tour, potting classes, and a walking tour of Lancaster City. Town and Country GC members are looking forward to their “unknown secret garden tours”. In preparation for their Annual Tea, Penn Cumberland GC had fun making fascinators. Hanover GC is thinking spring as they learn the timeless art form of Pennsylvania Dutch Egg scratching. Things are blooming in Gettysburg as members filled the downtown pots with pansies. Chambersburg GC hosted their 86<sup>th</sup> Flower Show, a Virtual Flower Show “Natures Beauty” using primarily Daffodils. The Garden Club of York that is celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year is working on a newly established

sensory garden at a local library and an interactive garden at a pediatric therapy facility. Penn Cumberland GC has partnered with Medards House, a local teen center, promoting gardening to youth. Biglerville GC partnered with other organizations to plant trees as part of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Goal. District wide community outreach includes garden education programs at a local library, adopt a block, planting at courthouses, street corners, planting trees, plant sales, holiday decorating, and involvement in community days. The GC of Harrisburg and members of Harrisburg Area Civic and Garden Center enjoy an evening study group.

**Tonya Young, Symposium Chair** reported that GCFP and Northeast Judges Council are hosting a Symposium June 3, 4, 5 in Lancaster, PA. Currently 38 people have registered. It will be held at the Double Tree Resort by Hilton. The instructors are Sue Kirkman who will teach Collections and Displays. Her Allied topic is Horticulture Specialty Shows. Lynn Fronk will be the design instructor featuring Color. Lynn's allied topic will be Flower Show Etiquette, "Miss Manners goes to the Flower Show". She suggests that you make your reservation ASAP. This information can be found on the GCFP website as well as NGC. Registration Deadline is May 5<sup>th</sup>.

**JoAnne Fogelman, District V Director** reported that their District is comprised of small towns and rural areas in the center of the State. The NGC Membership Mondays Zoom programs have provided a wealth of information for clubs to attract new members. Tending gardens in their community is a large part of each club. Clubs met at more outside gardens for tours and meetings. Fund raisers included a Christmas Craft Show, fall plant sale and winterberry sales. Interesting programs ranged from honeybees, essential oils, French gardens, floral arranging, a Lavender Farm tour, composting and making Holiday wreaths. One thing the past few years has taught all is to be more creative as garden clubs and individuals.

**Jan Davis, District VI Director** reported that District VI Clubs took advantage of the lazy, hazy days of 2021 pandemic summer with outdoor activities. Picnics and garden tours were a fantastic way to get together. Club activities were not all fun and games. Clubs planted and maintained community gardens. Indiana Garden Club renovated the garden beds along the fence line at the top of Vinegar Hill near the boyhood home of Jimmy Stewart. The District VI Annual Meeting hosted by the Patton Garden Club was extra special. District VI is the proud home district of GCFP President Sheila Croushore. Their Annual Meeting program, "Hats Off to Sheila", was a celebration to honor her. The Weeders and Seeders Garden Club used autumn treasures to construct a Mother Nature scarecrow named "Nature's Beauty." Two of their clubs received grants from the National Garden Club for 2022. Somerset Garden Club's grant is for their Children's Aid Home Project. Weeders and Seeders Garden Club has been awarded a National Garden Club Youth Pollinator Grant for 2022.

**Marilyn Backus, District VII Director** reported that on March 19, thirty-two District VII members welcomed Spring at their annual Membership Luncheon and program for the first time in two years. Four clubs (Burrellton, Pucketos, Monroeville and Joyful Bloomers) out of eleven were judged by Angie Raitano at the District Masterpiece Trash to Treasure. District VII's winning club entry was a Monet pond masterpiece made by Joyful Bloomers. Their District Forget-Me-Not winner from Pucketos GC, Jean Nader, could not attend the luncheon, or this Convention, due to a chronic medical condition. Iris Cisarik, Program Chair, found a wonderful presenter from HTG Supply in Butler Garden Club's Yearbook. He was practical in his explanations and products for Hydroponic Gardening.

**Bonita Herman, District VIII Director** was pleased to announce that Ruth Shindledecker was a Forget-Me-Not award recipient. The Heather Club placed a Blue Star Bi-Way Marker in Liberty Park in Edinboro, PA. District VIII placed a Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker at the Welcome Center in West Springfield at the Ohio/PA state lines. Another Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker will be placed at the Welcome Center at the NY/PA state line. Lawrence Park Garden Club of Erie is planning to participate in the Wreath Across America program by placing a wreath at the Erie Soldiers and Sailors Home.

**Karen Faust, District IX Director** reported on the many Spring and Summer events in their District. Edgeworth Garden Club members will create water dish gardens and Shaler Garden Club's will host a Spring

Wreath Workshop. Southern Butler has planned a Field trip to DJ's Greenhouse in Mercer County. Tusca Ridge will celebrate 64 years at their Anniversary party in April. Moon Township Garden Club will celebrate "Wine, Dine, Crops and Hops" at a Garden Party in June. Garden Guru, Doug Oster, will be the speaker at Butler Garden Club's 'Summer Garden Party' on June 16. Fox Chapel Garden Club will sell 700 of their prized plants at their Plant Sale. Southern Butler and Butler Gardeners are found every spring in their respective Community Gardens, providing beautiful visual experiences for the public. District IX will welcome all to Cranberry Township's North Boundary Park on Tuesday, June 14<sup>th</sup> (Flag Day) for the dedication of a new Blue Star Memorial Marker.

**Kay Bair, District X Director** listed some "fun" activities of their Clubs. Great Meadows GC of Fayette County is hosting a Wildflower Walk on Tuesday, April 26<sup>th</sup>. District X's FUNdraiser - "*Designs for The KING*" - will be on June 15<sup>th</sup> at Valley Brook Country Club. Flower shows for the summer include Valley Garden Club's, "Roaring 20's"; "Fairy Tales" by Pleasant Hills Garden Club; "Tidings and Tinsel" by Martha Washington Garden Club; and a Horticulture Show by Town & Country Garden Club "Beauty in Nature". Their District offers scholarship money for tuition to any of the NGC Schools. Plant America Community Project Grant applications are open to NGC member clubs from June 1 through October 15. Pleasant Hills Garden Club received a \$1,000 grant. This marks the second time a District X Club has won the Plant America Grant. On April 11, 2022, from 2-3:30 PM there will be a special ZOOM presentation of Membership Monday: PLANT AMERICA COMMUNITY PROJECTS GRANT PROGRAM.

**Marjorie Sears, District XI Director** reported that District XI has twelve interesting but unique garden clubs. Countryside Gardeners care for the Williamsburg Style gardens at the 1733 Half-Moon Inn & Tavern. Gardeners of the Crooked Billet maintain the "Welcome to Hatboro Sign Gardens" as well as the Union Library gardens where they hosted an amazing Plant Sale. During the Pandemic they met in the picnic grove at Graeme Park where, they have maintained "Becci's Herb Garden" which has examples of herbs used commonly in colonial era. Some members sit on the Hatboro Environmental Advisory Council, where they promote the National Wildlife Federation Garden Certification Program, that seeks to identify and recognize gardens that provide wildlife habitat. Norristown Garden Club has sixteen of their members here today! In 2021, they donated \$15,300 towards student scholarships. Their Holiday Tour brought awareness to the importance of maintaining the rich history in their area by visiting five historical places that George Washington may have visited during the Revolutionary War. Their "Blooming in the Country" Garden Tour is coming up June 25<sup>th</sup>. Old York Road Garden Club has had an amazing year with the re-opening of the Historic Richard Wall House and Plant Sale & Tour on April 24<sup>th</sup>. Our Garden Club of Philadelphia & Vicinity has been busy with Zooming. The Outdoor Gardeners added a pollinator garden to their elementary school's vegetable garden. Tohickon Garden Club hosted a Dahlia Tour at the Dahlia Diva's home of Sue Bunkin. Trevoise Horticulture Society will be celebrating their 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party next year. They designed a garden for a local firehouse that rewarded them with a Plant Sale at a Community Fire Prevention Event. Thanks to Karen Wychock, there will be a District Flower Show "Color Outside the Lines" on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

### **Chairmen's Reports**

**Mary Jo Gardill, 501-C3 Chair** reported that after the GCFP financial zoom & distribution of the magic green cards, all the 990 tax forms will be in by May 15 so that their busy District Directors will not have to call to remind one single person. You ask about magic green cards; each Treasurer has received one that will be kept with the district/club's checkbook as a reminder for not only the 501-C3 pertinent information, but also the dues information & deadlines. It's a veritable magic green card, a two/for deal, no less! Now don't forget, AS THE MAGIC GREEN CARD STATES, TAX 990 FORMS ARE DUE MAY 15 & GCFP DUES ARE DUE JUNE 15!

**Joyce Milberg, Advisory Council Chair** reported that almost one half of the current Advisory Council live out of state. To be eligible for the Advisory Council, they must maintain membership in a GCFP Garden Club. However, some clubs may have Bylaw restrictions on attendance, requiring their members to be residents of PA. Should this be the case, the Advisory Board recommends a 2-paragraph addition to the

BOD manual, encouraging them to maintain membership in their “home” club, if possible or joining a club without such a restriction was a suggested solution. She also gave an update on former president, Dot Yard’s medical condition. Dot is improving and hopefully she will attend the next Judges’ Council meeting.

**Nerita Brant, CAR- SGC 2022 Conference Chair** reported that the Conference “7 Super Blooms that Changed Our World”, will indeed be live and in person. Dates are November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> at Seven Springs Mountain Resort in Champion, PA. Flyers with information about tours, workshops, and the keynote speaker, our own Tom Huston, are available at the Registration table. All members of GCFP are members at large of CAR-SGC. Registration with a schedule and hotel information are now on the GCFP website.

**Marilyn Backus, 2023 Convention Chair reported** that the 2023 Convention will be held Friday-Sunday, April 21-23, at the Doubletree by Hilton Pittsburgh-Monroeville Convention Center. Rooms will be \$124. They will offer a tour of the 1790 Log House built by Scotch-Irish immigrants in Greenock, and participants will return to participate in a Friday Afternoon Tea, to which they are encouraged to wear a hat. At the evening Icebreaker, wear your ethnic or a favorite fun costume. McKeesport is a polka and tamburitzza capital and is home to many ethnicities. That is why the entertainment that evening is Musical Entertainer Mickey Dee, a multi-lingual Polka Hall of Fame recipient and the Master of Musical Ceremonies at the International Village Festival. 40 interested vendors have been contacted. The Presenters include Education Director for Pittsburgh Botanic Garden, Mark A. Miller, presenting “From Black to Green: The Story of Pittsburgh Botanic Garden.” The Director from Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens will help us reimagine our backyards as rich, healthy landscapes. Certified Master Food Preserver Marcy Cunkelman will tell how to safely can jams, jellies pickled vegetables, meats, and salmon. A Lecturer-Consultant will present “A History of Garden Design in the United States and How This Garden Heritage May Guide Future Design.” A Professional Photographer will hold a class on “Mastering Your Phone Photography.” Associate Director of Education at Tree Pittsburgh will discuss Pittsburgh’s urban forest past. The Director of School Garden Programs at Grow Pittsburgh will explore ways a garden club can support the next generation of gardeners. Other speakers are from Rachel Carson Homestead, the National Aviary, and Research & Collections at Carnegie Museum of Natural History.

**Joyce Crider, 2024 Convention Chair** reported that the 2024 GCFP Convention will be held at the Doubletree Resort by Hilton, Lancaster PA on April 7, 8 and 9, 2024. Join them for a “Petals & Patchwork” Convention.

**Nancy Fulk, Environmental School Chair** reported that she and her co-chair, Sharon Richardson have completed the fourth school. It was held at the Stroud Water Research Center in Avondale. They highly recommend Strouds for expert information. There were nine students in attendance. Of the four schools, one was held in Lionville, two in Exton and the last one in Avondale. There were attendees from Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Delaware, Mississippi, and New Mexico. In total they had a count of 89 and some of those have already become consultants and received their pins.

**Lori Pancione, Flower Show Schools Chair** reported that Flower Show School #1 scheduled for April 28-May 1, 2022, will be held at the Double Tree by Hilton in Plymouth Meeting, PA., a western suburb of Philadelphia with easy access to many major highway arteries, the Philadelphia airport and tourist attractions. 32 students are enrolled. Pam Braun will replace Dot Yard as the Horticulture Instructor. Julia Clevett will teach Flower Show Procedure and Design. She asked all District Directors to encourage their membership to enroll in the next school, scheduled for October 13 – 16, 2022 at the same location. Jackie Davies will be teaching Design and Susan Kirkland, Horticulture. Thanks to the wonderful support of the PAJC Judges Council, they have received a grant that will help pay the airfare for the instructors.

**Grace Mitchell, Horticulture Hints Chair** offered tips for transplanting. Do it in late afternoon when the sun is not so hot, and wind is calm. If moving woody plants or shrubs, remove one third of the foliage to encourage growth. If you grow mildew magnets like phlox, asters, mums, etc., make a spray from 10 cloves of garlic boiled in 4 cups of water and spray every 4 to 5 days. Keep dogs out of your new plantings by

scattering rotten potatoes around. Make your own knee protectors by cutting the cups from old, padded bras.

**Mary Lou Colussy, PA Resource Council Chair** reported that the PA Resource Council and partners will receive \$244,475 from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to support watershed restoration and protection projects in southeastern Pennsylvania. Project plans include constructing 75 new rain gardens and bioswales, planting 200 trees and installing 20 flow-through planters to capture more than 6 million gallons of stormwater annually.

**Barbara Andrus, Penny Pines Chair** reported the GCFP Penny Pines donations as of March 31, 2022, totaled \$2,654.00. 33 Clubs and two Districts, IV and V, have contributed. Contributions of \$68.00 to GCFP Penny Pines Fund will plant one acre. Please use the Penny Pines GCFP form on pagardenclubs.org under FORMS LIBRARY #18. There is a need for funding the Youth Conservation Core Summer Program. The YCC hires youth from ages 15 – 18 for an eight - week program. The YCC would be a good experience for teens to learn the value of trees and pollinators and Penny Pines funds could be used to cover their salary. Another financial need is for a restoration project, the Marcellus gas well pad that they don't want to produce gas. They need funding for the purchase of plantings, fencing material and seed mix for wildlife and pollinators.

**Kathy Crossman, Natural Disasters Chair** reported that Donations from Garden Clubs and Districts in Pennsylvania from October 1, 2021, to April 1, 2022 totaled \$1,156.58. Natural disasters continue to affect all parts of the country so there is a constant need for assistance in restoring gardens and parks. In 2021, NGC provided a grant of \$4500 to restore hurricane damage to Iowa and \$5000 to Oregon following fire devastation. District Directors and club presidents are reminded to inform their treasurers that contributions are to be made payable to GCFP with Natural Disasters listed on the memo line.

**President Croushore** reported that National Garden Clubs' membership website maps all their affiliated clubs. Pennsylvania does not appear on the NGC map. She advised that this is because the PA state structure flows from the President to the District Directors and then to member clubs. The downside to this is the inability to register in a timely fashion for National programs, such as Zoom meetings, because of the delay in members' awareness. A lengthy discussion followed where it was pointed out that the future direction of NGC might be to register local garden clubs, even virtual clubs directly and bypass State organizations. It was suggested that GCFP be vigilant and on guard to oppose this effort and maintain its current structure. The discussion concluded with a straw vote supporting this view.

**Marie Muller, Keystone Gardener Online Chair** was not present. Her report was read by the Recording Secretary. The deadline for the next KG ONLINE Newsletter issue is April 15, and it will be posted on the GCFP web site, by May 1. The remaining deadlines for the 2022 issues are: June 15 for July 1<sup>st</sup> posting and October 15 for November 1<sup>st</sup> posting. These deadlines and the Style Formatting instructions for your submissions are now available on the GCFP web site. Be sure to put your submission in a WORD document. Send your submissions by e-mail, and in the Subject line add: "KG Online submission". Also make sure your name, club name, and phone number are included in the email, in case there is a need to call for clarification.

**Recommendations from the Executive Committee** were read by the Recording Secretary.

With the advice of Financial Advisor, Mary Heltzel, a recommendation was made to invest \$15,000 in Bonds and another \$15,000 in Dividend Growth Investments from the ready cash that is available. A motion was made by Mary Jo Gardill and seconded by Barbara Campbell. **Passed**

A motion to accept the recommendation from the Executive Committee to accept the resignation of GCFP secretary, Elizabeth Pinkham was made by Jan Szych and seconded by Angie Raitano. **Passed**

A motion to accept the recommendation from the Executive Committee to approve the creation of a Data Management position with a starting salary of \$2500 and not to exceed \$5000 was made by Daryl Jones and seconded by Nerita Brant. **Passed**

A motion to accept the recommendation from the Executive Committee to approve the moving of the GCFP database to the Cloud at a fee of \$360 per year was made by Charlotte Crissey and seconded by Lois Shuster. **Passed**

### **New Business**

**President Croushore** presented **Presidential Citations** to Karen Wychock, Keystone Gardener Editor and Marie Mueller, Keystone Gardener Online Editor for their over-the-top dedication, and keeping everyone informed.

**Sheri Lowry, Awards Chair** acknowledged Clubs with special anniversaries. Joyful Bloomers, District VII and Lawrence Park Garden Club, District VIII are celebrating 50 years. Alexandria Garden Club District V is celebrating 75 years and The Club of Little Gardens of Malvern District I will celebrate 80 years as a Federated Club. Both the Gardeners of the Crooked Billet and Old York Road Garden Club from District XI are 85 this year. Chambersburg Garden Club, District IV will be recognized for their 90 years. GCFP Club Membership Award. A small (< 29) Highland Park Garden Club, District VII has welcomed 14 new members. Medium size club (30-99) Emmaus Garden Club, District II/III had 17 new members. Large club (100 +) Garden Club of Old York Road District IV is a winner with 27 new members. Each Club will receive \$100.

**President Croushore** announced that the next Finance Meeting will be on Zoom on May 31 at 6:30 PM. The Executive Board meeting will be on June 6 at 10:00 AM.

Announcements from **Nancy Cuttic, Convention Chair** acknowledging a special thank you to Tonya Young and her son Tyler Smith who are serving as the tech coordinators of the convention. For lunch there will be a “Taste of Philly” buffet. If assistance is needed, please see Nancy Cuttic or Ellen McGarrigle.

**President Croushore** adjourned the meeting at 10:10 AM.