

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
June 5-6 , 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

GCFP President, Leeanna Ryba, called the meeting to order at 2:15 PM.

Chaplain Margie Wolff gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by **1st Vice President, Pat Wolanski**.

President Ryba declared that a quorum of 30 members was present and then introduced the attending State Former Presidents: Sharon Brown, Sheila Croushore, Gail Manna, and Joyce Milberg.

President Ryba extended congratulations to District VII, Marilyn Backus, Haddie Weber and Sharon Bryner for their tireless efforts to present a fun convention with Pittsburgh roots. A special thank you goes to her garden club, Burrellton, for the beautiful reception. Soon after the GCFP Convention, she and many other GCFP members headed to White Sulphur Springs, WV and the Greenbriar for the National Garden Clubs, Inc. Convention. PA was very well represented and they proudly brought home NGC awards. She also attended District VIII's fourteenth Blue Star Memorial Dedication on Saturday, June 3rd at the Pennsylvania-New York border Welcome Center. Thanks to 2nd VP, Tonya Young, there are new email addresses for the President, and the two Vice-Presidents. There will be a Zoom Leadership Conference on July 26th, beginning at 10:00 AM. She and the two Vice Presidents will meet, over Zoom, with the Club Presidents on August 24th at 6:30 PM, before they begin the Tour de PA on August 31st.

1st Vice-President, Pat Wolanski, asked to report on Tuesday morning following her District Directors' meeting.

2nd Vice President, Tonya Young, reported that since her installation at the April Convention that she has been working on the hotel arrangements for the meeting today and in the future. There are 43 members registered for lunch and 63 for dinner. She attended the NGC Convention at the Greenbriar in West Virginia. She also attended a District Director ZOOM meeting led by Pat Wolanski. She is pleased to announce that she created a new ZOOM email account: GCFPZOOM@gmail.com. All requests for ZOOM meetings should be sent to this address and all of her correspondence regarding any requested ZOOM meetings will come from this address. All ZOOM links will be sent to the requestor for disbursement two days prior to the scheduled meeting. She can also send the information to the invited attendees if their names and email addresses are provided to her. Any Board member may use the GCFP ZOOM account provided it is for GCFP business, not for a garden club meeting since clubs must have their own account.

Recording Secretary, Marilyn Backus, reported that the Minutes of the April 22nd Convention Business Meeting were approved and distributed electronically as were the October 10-11, 2022 BOD Meeting Minutes. Both sets of the Minutes were approved with minor corrections.

Treasurer, Vivian Hall, introduced **former Treasurer, Joyce Crider**, who reviewed the financial activity of GCFP provided by **Financial Advisor, Cindy Layton**. Joyce reported the Asset Summary as of April 20,2023 (Fiscal Year End) then the GCFP Statement of Financial Activity May 1, 2022 - April 30, 2023 followed by the revised Annual Budget Fiscal Year 2023-24.

The Asset Summary for Checking and Savings totaled \$55,259.35 along with Petty Cash of \$100 and Past Presidents' pins totaling \$3,151.17. Total Checking, Savings, Petty Cash and Other Assets as of 4/20/2023 is \$58,510.52. Total Assets including Advances Receivable totaled \$66,010.52. Penny Pines Total (includes \$10,000 transferred to Stifel Investment) Account was \$33,947.03. The complete report is attached to the Minutes. There is a need to promote, via the

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District Directors, that clubs should donate to GCFP Scholarships Fund rather than Penny Pines. The Allegheny National Forest is unable to use GCFP's earmarked Penny Pines Fund of approximately \$34,000 at this time.

The GCFP Statement of Financial Activity as of April 30, 2023 reports: Dues Income totaled \$47,982. Total income from Conventions School and Symposium totaled \$13,944.12. Including Advertising, Book of Recognition, Sale of Past District Director Pins and other support, the Total Income was \$63,365.12. Expenses included Liability Insurance that totaled \$11,319. Payroll totaled \$9,000. Total Chairman's Expenses were \$2,155.82. Accounting, phone, supplies and postage, Officers' Bond, website, Bank and Zoom fees, Telephone-Internet and Charitable Org Registration Fee totaled \$14,251.10. Keystone Gardener printing and postage for the Directory and Convention issues totaled \$5,846.37. Officer Allowances totaled \$8,300. Membership Fees totaled \$5,014.19. Awards for Seed Money, four Club Growth Awards, Youth Winners and Essay totaled \$3,318 and Historic Preservation totaled \$310. Total Expenses came to \$59,304.48 with a Variance of Income vs. Expenses of \$4,060.64. The complete report is attached to the Minutes.

Financial Secretary, Barbara Brand, gave the GCFP Dues Account at BB&T/Truist Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2022-2023:

Beginning Account Balance as of 05/01/2022 was		\$100
Total Receipts/Balance	\$47,905	\$48,005
Transfers to Treasurer	(\$47,905)	
Ending Account Balance as of 04/30/2023		\$100

The report for the period May 1, 2023-May 31,2023:

Balance, 05/01/2023		\$100
Total Receipts/Balance	\$21,020	\$21,120
Transfers to Treasurer	(\$21,020)	
Balance, 05/31/2023		\$100

Note that the new club application fee in May 2023 is \$25, not \$50. The complete report is attached to the Minutes.

Corresponding Secretary, Flossie Narducci, had no activity to report.

Parliamentarian, Sharon Brown, had no report.

Investment Chair, Gail Corle Manna, offered a brief synopsis of GCFP investments. This Chairman is happy to say the Federation Investments have been holding their own during this turbulent environment. As of June 2, 2023, Investments totaled \$521,200.60 and the total in the cash reserve is \$71,420.00, which is for ready use. One recommendation was made and approved by Finance, Executive and full Board: To Invest \$50,000 from the Ready Cash Fund into short term Bonds in order to leave \$21,420.00 for quick access. She will continue to monitor accounts and take care of any items as they arise during the year.

Recording Secretary, Marilyn Backus, reported that the Executive Board approved three recommendations from the combined Finance and Investment Committees and recommended a Full Board vote of Acceptance:

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#1: The Finance and Investment Committee recommends that the GCFP Full Board directs Stifel's Mary Heltzel to move \$50,000 out of the Money Market Fund and reinvest it in short-term bonds. **Approved**

#2: The Finance and Investment Committee recommends that the GCFP Full Board purchases a new Zoom plan for \$199/year and eliminates the current Zoom plan of \$149/year and \$50/month fee. **Approved**

#3: The Finance and Investment Committee recommends that the GCFP Full Board approve the 2023-24 Annual Budget as revised and read. **Approved**

Treasurer, Vivian Hall, read the highlights of the GCFP Annual Budget Fiscal Year 2023-24 (revised): Income from Membership Dues is projected to be \$47,002. Total income from Convention, Schools and Symposia is \$4,500. Other Support Income from the Book of Recognition and Keystone Gardener Advertising is \$800. Total Income is projected at \$52,302. Expenses include Chairman's totals of \$2,530. Administrative Expenses is budgeted \$30,956. Total Keystone Gardener Printing and Postage is \$11,000. Total Officers' Allowances is \$7,300. Total Memberships is \$5,433. Total Awards is expected to be \$3,720. The Total Expenses is expected to be \$60,939 and the variance of Income vs. Expenses will be negative \$8,637. The Balance in Checking Account as of 5/31/2023 is \$11,343. The anticipated Draw on Investment Account for Cash Flow is \$2,706. The complete report is attached to the Minutes. She emphasized the likelihood of drawing \$7,800 from the Investment Account for Scholarships in August 2023, due to a short-fall as noted on page three.

President Ryba asked for a Motion to accept the 2023-24 Budget as presented, which was seconded. The 2023-24 Budget was Passed. The District Directors are asked to encourage their clubs to donate to GCFP Scholarships Fund rather than Penny Pines. The Allegheny National Forest is unable to use GCFP's earmarked Penny Pines Fund of approximately \$34,000 at this time. President Ryba reported the appointment of **Angie Raitano, Advisor to Leeanna Ryba**, and a voting member of the Executive Committee. President Ryba announced the resignation of 2024 Convention Vice Chair Susanna Reppert-Brill. She was replaced by **2024 Convention Co-Chair, Delores Nolt**. Two **Appointed Members, Nerita Brant and Nancy Fulk**, were also approved.

Former GCFP President, Sheila Croushore, presented **Lori Pancione** a belated Presidential Citation for her work on Flower Show School.

Reports of District Directors

District I Director, Nancy Cuttic, reported twelve members from District I traveled to Monroeville to attend the 93rd annual convention. The most exciting news from District I is that the Uwchlan Garden Club won the Governor's Trophy. Other exciting news is that District I received the completed application and fee for a new club joining the Federation. Radley Run of West Chester is the second new club to join District I this year and we are delighted to welcome them. District I has grown to eleven clubs! Many clubs held successful plant sales this Spring, despite some raindrops. A luncheon for 50 district members will honor its club presidents and will be followed by a guided tour. The district will next meet at its annual luncheon scheduled for September 13th and hosted by the Spade and Trowel Garden Club in Kennett Square. A presentation will be given by landscape architect, urban planner, artist and ecologist Claire Agre.

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District II/III Director, Jane Kruse, reflected that the role of a District Director, is to nurture Garden Clubs – old or new; experienced presidents or newly elected. Experience presidents have roots in the ground and can draw from a wider root system. Newer presidents may need watering, a boost talk, some admiration and expression of patience. Is anyone unsure whether a small club of 10 can compete with larger 50-100 member clubs? Clubs, like flowers, do not compete. One beautiful bloom is just as precious. Upper Perkiomen Valley found that bloom in Joseph J Romano, Jr., a GCFP Scholarship recipient.

District IV Director, Joanne Baylis, reported that District IV held its first Leadership Training Day on Friday, 28 April 2023 from 10 AM –2 PM at the York Fairgrounds. There were 15 people in attendance ranging from committee chairs, to vice presidents and presidents. It was suggested another training day be held with breakout groups, role playing, group discussions and more networking time. District IV leaders want to meet quarterly for what is called Leadership “Garden Chats”. District IV has started a new project called “Going Digital”. An intern has been secured from Central Penn College to work with the District IV Assistant Director on an action plan to move us to a more digital environment. The intern will work with each garden club and the district to scan boxed documents and put them onto a District IV iCloud account. District IV will hold a fundraiser called “Creating a Charcuterie Board, Tea and More.”

District V Director, Judy Warn, sent kudos to Marilyn Backus, Convention Chair, and her district for putting on a wonderful convention in Monroeville. She reported her club, Heritage, planted a redbud tree on the Troy Hospital grounds with help from Boy Scout Troop 4049 for Arbor Day. In addition, Heritage participated in "Farmer Boy Days 1866", based on Laura Engels Wilder's book. The event was held over two days and over nine hundred 4th graders attended. This Director was pleased to see that Leeanna's theme for the next two years will be "Plant America While Keeping PA Beautiful". District V clubs are encouraged to include litter and recycling projects in their activities. No room to collect items to recycle? Do as Dottie Hermani suggested, and save the flip tops from cans.

District VI Director, Deb Stumpf, reported that The Garden Club of Johnstown had a very successful ‘Welcome the Holidays’ luncheon last November. All proceeds benefit their community beautification projects. Johnstown also hosted wonderful programs on Williamsburg Holiday Decorations and “Dahlia Crazy” by a Master Gardener. They also held a plant sale and had a garden club “Show and Tell” where they shared tips and solutions for all gardeners. The Indiana Garden Club is holding programs on flower show procedure, design types and horticulture for their first flower show in 13 years. They held a very successful May Mart Garden and Vendor Expo. This annual event has evolved from a small plant sale in 1976 into an event looked forward to by the entire community. Weeders and Seeders Garden Club of Ligonier had a table at the Ligonier Country Market Holiday Market in November and held their first annual May Day Basket competition. Town merchants contributed prizes and were asked to do a fresh floral arrangement for judging. They are also busy planning our annual District Meeting and Luncheon on September 1, 2023. Somerset and Bedford have installed new officers. Blair is planning a flower show and held a plant sale. Patton has held a plant sale. All the clubs are busy with their civic development projects and are off to a great start.

District VII Director, Sharon Bryner, reported that the Landscape Design Society is planning a tour at Westmoreland County’s Greensburg Garden Center, a visit to Somerset County’s Flight 93 National Memorial’s Remember Me Rose Garden, and Washington County’s Donora Eldora Park, Cement City and Monongahela’s Chess Memorial Park. The club donates to Rachel Carson Homestead, Pittsburgh Botanic Gardens and Penny Pines Project. Forest Hills held a plant sale and will celebrate its 100th anniversary of its founding with an Open House on June 30th and

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“Tracing Our Roots” flower show in July. Joyful Bloomers scheduled a plant and flea market at Kane Community Living Center, and a program for framing pressed flowers, and weeds and edible plants program. Pucketos maintains five community gardens and won a grant to add a sixth garden this year. Highland Park maintains ten large flower pots in front of retail businesses in their shopping district as well as two area gardens. Murrysville is rethinking how to achieve “community beautification” in light of decreased membership and physical challenges. They are collaborating with Parks and Recreation Department and the Public Library. Monroeville is confronted with the same challenges as Murrysville. Gardens Ltd. meets nine times a year for a lunch and program. They do a hands-on project and go on a field trip. Home Gardeners Guild meets a few times a year to enhance the lives of residents in an assisted living facility in their projects. Burrellton planted a redbud tree at Burrellton Lake Park on Arbor Day, held a Plant and Flea Market in May. Verona is the district’s newest club and held a very successful fundraiser called “Verona Garden Club 3rd Annual Botany and Booze.”

District VIII Director, Rosie Lawrence, reported that District VII held a Blue Star Marker Dedication at the Keystone Welcome Center at Pennsylvania Great Lakes located in Northeast, PA near the I-90 PA/NY line. This is District VIII’s fourteenth Blue Star Marker. On September 16, the Wildflower Garden Club will hold a Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker Dedication at the West bound Exit 29 of I-80 at Barkeyville, PA. District VIII will hold its second Executive Board Meeting on June 20th at their new central location at the Cross Creek Resort in Titusville. There are thirteen clubs in District VIII. Two clubs participate in President Ryba’s theme, “Plant America, While Keeping PA Beautiful” (Reusing, Recycle, Litter-Cleanup). The Elk Valley Garden Club during their annual plant sale, asks people to bring their old flower pots to reuse in next year’s plant sale. The Presque Isle Garden Club uses social media to request used flower pots. When pots are picked up by club members, a thank you note and perennial plant is given in return. This club also participates in the “Pick Up Pennsylvania/Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful” project and members pick up litter at Veterans Park. Some changes are under discussion to make meetings more inviting, such as a small presentations and hands-on projects or raffles or an Annual Picnic in 2024. Rosie is working on a District VIII database to include information about their garden clubs to assist the preparation of future District Directors GCFP Reports.

District IX Director, Claudia Bernardo, reported several District IX Clubs are kicking off their National Garden Week activities. Projects and programs on the agenda include a children’s program on how seeds germinate and grow, public programs for adult audiences on pollinators, free plant giveaways, and a hands-on public workshop for participants to make their own hanging flower baskets. Last year Shaler Garden Club and Southern Butler County Garden Club both received first place National Certificates in recognition of their National Garden Week celebrations. Our District Membership chairperson and our Programs chairpersons both conducted surveys on what we do to attract and retain new members, and on the type of programs and activities we offer. Our District grew from 9 to 10 clubs when Oak Hills Garden Club of Butler County joined the GCFP in May. This club has been in existence for 80 years. Five out of 10 of our clubs hosted Plant Sales and/or plant giveaways while others held plant exchanges. District IX clubs will host three public garden tours and one local great garden contest. Greybrooke Garden Club is partnering with the Wexford Pond Society for a pond tour, and the proceeds will benefit clean water projects in third world countries. All of the clubs maintain public gardens. Southern Butler County Garden Club received a First Place National Award for their work at Graham Park Community Garden.

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District X Director, Deborah Davis, reported Martha Washington, Pleasant Hills, Town & Country and Valley Garden Clubs won several GCFP flower show awards. The Garden Club of Munhall held their annual spring benefit on April 29, awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to a student, held a plant auction in May, and will hold a twilight tour of members' gardens in July. Giant Oaks had a trip to Beechwood Farms Nature Preserve where the Audubon Society spoke on bald eagles. They also held a plant sale and garden market in May, Meals on Wheels for Peters Township clients, and a bottle cap recycling program collecting 22,000 bottle caps for recycling. Great Meadows had a trip to Connellsville Canteen, a local WWII museum, a flea market in May, and made fascinators for their flower show in July, and taught East End Community Center children about gardening, pollinators and more. Martha Washington had programs about growing conifers for a Christmas tree farm, making maple syrup and the benefits of having toads and frogs in gardens; a plant sale in May; spring cleanup of the Veterans train station garden and LeMoyne House garden; and a patriotic small standard flower show in July. Mon Valley will have a seed library available with garden books, seeds and supplies and a trip to Renziehausen Rose Garden in June. Pleasant Hills had a plant sale in May, maintains gardens at Pleasant Hills Library, Let Freedom Ring Garden, butterfly garden and Oakcrest entrance to Pleasant Hills Arboretum. May's meeting was "Horticulture in Allegheny County Parks" and a June field trip to Flora Park is scheduled. Town and Country gave \$1,000 to Carmichaels Area High School for their Envirothon, had a May program on bugs, and a June program on "Medical Herbs for Everyday." Uniontown had programs on bee habitats, pollination, the best way to start a lilac bush and how to make a bubbler water fountain for birds and bees and a trip to Amish greenhouses. Valley had a program about pollinator gardens with ideas for selecting native flowers to plant, invasive species to expunge and container gardens. They plan to take a trip to a local nursery in June.

District XI Director, Honey Bawduniak, reported that the Outdoor Gardeners participated in "Chestnut Hill Day" with their own booth for plants and other garden items. Garden Club of Bristol Borough has a Self-Guided Tour Along the Delaware on June 10th. Countryside Gardeners are celebrating their 90th Anniversary with a Standard Flower Show "Celebration of Memories" from September 14-16, 2023 and October 7th is Market Day in Newtown where their club will make and sell floral arrangements. Norristown Garden Club is having a Standard Flower Show "Picnics and Tailgates" on September 16th. They also have a garden contest for residents of the borough with monetary prizes to give incentives to plant their area to "Keep Norristown Beautiful." Trevose had their annual plant sale (many of the plants were started from seed by the members) on May 20th. Their annual Standard Flower Show "Rooted in History" will be held on August 18-19, 2023. They will be celebrating their 100th Anniversary. The Garden Club of Philadelphia and Vicinity's Small Standard Flower Show "Garden of Arts, A Celebration of Phenomenal Women" on September 30, 2023, will also have plants for sale. District XI has also been busy with the induction of new club officers.

501C-3 Exempt/990 Reporter, Mary Jo Gardill, reported it is a huge benefit to be under the GCFP's umbrella. Only one simple sheet that requires no payment is needed; it can't be any easier. The deadline was May 31 and this year was no different than the last ten years. With a few days to go, there were a dozen clubs with no response and a variety of excuses. TWO DAYS AFTER THE DEADLINE, FINALLY ALL OF THE 990 FORMS ARE IN and OFF TO THE ACCOUNTANT! Just a few quick tips:

- The Fiscal year is May 1 to April 31 so it cannot be completed until May 1. It is preferable to send it by May 15.
- By completing the 990 short form, the garden club verifies it has not earned more than \$50,000 in that fiscal year.
- Financial numbers are only required if there were games of chance like raffles or 50/50s within the year.
- Forms may be emailed, faxed or snail mailed.

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- A magic green card should be in each garden club treasurer's check book along with the EIN as well as all the 501-C3 & dues information.
- District Directors, please report new garden club officers as soon as possible so that we can avoid any issues or problems with the IRS.

Awards Chair, Marilyn Small, was not present but **Awards Vice Chair, Sheri Lowry**, reported an updated NGC Awards Manual was posted on the NGC website in late April. The most notable NGC update is the expectation that ALL NGC applications are to be submitted electronically including first place newsletters and flower show books of evidence. They are updating GCFP Awards Manual and will post it on the webpage. Two Items that have already been posted are the NGC PowerPoint "Creating an Award-Winning Application", and the GCFP Major Award Winners Listing. Those gathering information and planning to submit applications for the 2023 Awards year should keep in mind that successful applications adhere to the requirements, scoring rubrics, and instructions found in the Award Manuals and supporting documents located on the GCFP Awards Page of our pagardenclubs.org website. Updates to these Manuals and Documents are planned to be posted by July 1st. Wait to complete and forward your applications until the updated forms and information have been posted.

Bee Gap Chair, Bonita Herman, reported that she bought some Mason Bee cocoons again, and her plan was to clean out the nesting tubes as soon as the bees hatched and came out. The problem was the bees emerged early and were laying eggs before she could clean the tubes. Erie had a cold May and its plants were slower to bloom. Tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, and snow drops were flowering but they are not natives. Bonita was concerned just where the bees were going to get nourishment and pollen for the larvae to eat. Mason Bees do not travel far for their food source like the honey bees. They stay only around 500 feet, while the honey bees may travel miles. Masons were on a few primroses, dandelions and on her blossoming small apple trees. She found a small muddy area and Masons were using it for sealing up the nesting tubes. The females were very busy laying eggs and sealing tubes even in her homemade Mason Houses. In her larger house, she observed them going in and out. After about 15 minutes, she saw one female go in and come just to the opening and then back up to lay an egg. Later, she could see the hole was starting to fill up with mud. Bonita said not to be discouraged if it appears there are no Masons in your houses, because they are there, perhaps in the ground or in woody debris or in some hollow stems to nest. If there are some in a house, leave it alone until the fall. The bee is hatching, eating and making the cocoon and needs some of the warmer weather to do this.

Birds, Butterflies & Conservation Chair, Marcy Cunkelman, reported that hot temperatures brought out the early mason bees and some other pollinators early, only to put them back in for protection from the freezing weather. Birds came back later because of the unusually cold weather in May. Butterflies were out, in-between the hot and cold days. Because of the heat, skippers and other southern butterflies are coming back early. Thankfully, it looks like the fruit and berries were able to make fruit, between the frosts. A saucer of water in the shade, with large rocks, will offer relief for birds and other critters looking for a sip to cool off. Using smaller pebbles covering the water leaves spaces for butterflies and bees to land and sip to get a drink. The container will need to be kept clean, and will need to be replaced with fresh water daily or every few days. Monarchs have reached PA. When picking any milkweed leaves, please wash the latex sap from the hands or gloves. People have had severe problems with sap getting in eyes. Marcy asked if members planted any host plants for the caterpillars? Violets are for the different fritillaries, spicebush for the Spicebush butterflies, Tiger Swallowtails use tulip tree, sassafras, sweet bay and other trees, Black Swallowtails use plants in the parsley family, including fennel,

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Queen Anne's lace, dill and parsley, Zebra Swallowtails only use pawpaw, and the Question Mark and Comma use elms and nettles. Folded leaves with some webbing on Baptisia, hides the tiny green caterpillar of the Wild Indigo Duskywing butterfly. Before destroying any damaged or webbed leaves on a plant, make sure it is not from a caterpillar using it as a host plant. Remember those "worms" as some people call caterpillars grow up to be a butterflies or moths.

President Ryba recessed the meeting at 4:12 PM. The meeting was reconvened at 7:45 PM.

Reports of Board Members, continued

Blue Star Memorial Chair, Karen Faust, reported that two days ago, District VIII erected their fourteenth Blue Star Marker. Many thanks to this vibrant group of women and men that have brought our nation's Veterans to the forefront of the Interstate Welcome Centers on I-90 (East and West) as well as their community gardens and parks. Veteran's groups such as VFW, American Legion, etc. would love to assist, but there are also so many community organizations and townships that can ease the financial burden as well as provide much needed help with receiving the marker from the manufacturer, installation of the marker and even the landscaping and maintenance of the area around the marker on a continual basis. While the Markers have risen in price this year, our long time Blue Star Marker Chair, Sandra Manthorpe, offers Clubs \$100 after the installation has occurred. Karen encourages clubs to email a letter to Sandra with the details of your Club or District and the marker's location, and please include a photo. This would surely bring a smile to this dear woman's face. One of Karen's goals is to place a Blue Star Highway Marker at every Pennsylvania Welcome Center. Karen seeks sponsors for six more Markers – two at the Delaware Water Gap Exit of I-80 Westbound and at Northampton Exit of I-78 Westbound, two at Fulton Exit of I-70 Westbound and at Franklin Exit of I-81 northbound and two at the Mercer Exit of I-80 Eastbound and at Washington Exit of I-70 Eastbound. She plans to update the GCFP website for the new markers before July. District VIII's Wildflower Garden Club will dedicate their Highway Marker on Route 80 at Barkeyville on September 16th. A Gold Star Bi-Way marker will be installed on September 24th in Bedford by Bedford Garden Club.

Blue Star Memorial Central Assistant, Jane Howe, reported her goals for 2023-2025 are to enthusiastically promote the Blue Star Memorial marker project, encourage participation in the project by the many garden clubs in my area and throughout the state, to offer assistance with the Blue Star Memorial projects, to assist the Blue Star Memorial Chairman in central clubs, and to participate in Blue Star Memorial Marker dedications. She encouraged making our memorials "sparkle" by making it a priority in the Spring to clear winter debris, dead plants and overgrown plantings. More memorial information is on the website and she may be contacted for any questions. She asks GCFP members to honor our past, present and future Veterans.

Book of Recognition Donations Chair, Joyce Hoek, reported that since her last report in April 2023, the Book of Recognition has not received any donations. However, nine people were honored in her previous report. Donations are appreciated and will be used, as needed, for the expenses of the GCFP. The donation form can be found on the GCFP website under "Forms". Please consider a donation to the Book of Recognition in appreciation for, in honor of, or in memory of a member. The names of those honored will be published in the Keystone Gardener.

Civic Development Chair, Martha Alexander, reported that she will focus on Civic Improvement, Conservation Education and Recycling to support President Ryba's message to "Plant America, While Keeping PA Beautiful." She intends to research trends in these focus areas and write about them in the Keystone Gardener and KG Online newsletter. She encourages

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applications for NGC and GCFP Civic Awards. Her Great Meadows Garden Club offered a landscape beautification plan to the Wharton Township building. They manage the Point Lookout Blue Star Memorial and work with minority students on gardening and conservation education. They maintain a large East End Community Garden with a smaller Children's Garden within it. Her club members have taught children about plant biology, pollinators and bugs, good gardening techniques, rain gardens, recycling, and much more. Members have led the children in planning and planting a garden, and garden therapy for their mothers and others. Her club received a 2023 Espoma Organic and NGC Plant American Grant for this work, and has big plans for the future.

Club Newsletter Awards Chair, Joyce Peterson, reported there were many fewer newsletters sent in last year. She hopes for a better turnout this year. Those received were outstanding and they were awarded. One of the clubs sent in a cookbook which was also outstanding but the Rubric did not agree. Maybe cookbooks need their own Rubric. She asked District Directors to encourage their clubs to send in their newsletters, and if they don't have one, to suggest starting one. Newsletters are a wealth of information and useful reminders of upcoming meetings and events.

Club Yearbook Awards Chair, Iris Cisarik, reported that In 2022, 40 GCFP garden clubs applied for the club yearbook award. She reminded all clubs to send one yearbook but two award applications. One application goes to GCFP and the second one goes to the Central Atlantic Region, if the yearbook wins first place. The first-place winners' books in each category are sent to CAR, so those winners will not have their yearbooks returned at the Convention. The deadline for applying is December 1, 2023. There were 40 clubs that entered their yearbooks in 2022 and GCFP has 111 garden clubs as of June 5, 2023. Applying for a club yearbook award is the easiest award for which one could apply. She hopes to see a hundred yearbooks this year!

Convention Coordinator, Judith Schaffer, reported she met with the Convention Chairs on Wednesday, May 31st via Zoom. They discussed the use of hotel earned points for Conventions, and a needed increase on the GCFP hotel deposit amount. The 2023 Convention in Monroeville is finalizing the Record Book. A Volunteers' Chair should be a member of each Convention Planning Committee. The 2024 Convention in Lancaster is finalizing their plans to include a flower show and tri-refresher. Judy encouraged members to support their quilt fundraiser. The 2025 Convention in King of Prussia is planning a colonial theme throughout the event. An afternoon tea is being scheduled. The installation of officers will take place at this Convention. Plans for a special piece of jewelry are moving forward, featuring bluebells. The 2026 Convention in Erie will be at the Erie Convention Center and the Sheraton Hotel.

Convention Chair 2024, Joyce Crider, reported District IV is all fired up for our April 7 - 9, 2024 Petals and Patchwork 2024 Convention. It will be held at the beautiful Doubletree by Hilton in Lancaster. They are having a quilt raffle, a flower show, a Tri-refresher, lots of educational and informative speakers and 3 workshops on Sunday. The new Co-Chair, Delores Nolt, oversees the Tri-refresher. A beautiful quilt is being raffled that goes with our theme, "Petals and Patchwork." Tickets will be sold in September. Please mark your calendars for April 7, 8, 9, 2024 convention in LanCASTer!

Convention Co-Chair 2024 / Tri-Refresher, Delores Nolt, announced the following presenters for the Tri-Refresher to be held at the 2024 GCFP Convention in Lancaster, PA. On Sunday, April 7, 2023 the speaker will be Naturalist Lisa Sanchez whose topic is "Integrated Pest Management" for one-hour classroom and one-hour walk viewing the Wildflower Trail for

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Environmental School. At Sunday Dinner, the speaker will be Longwood Gardens Conservatory Manager, Karl Gercens, whose presentation is "Dessert Plants for Your Garden". This topic is about trees, shrubs and perennials with colored foliage for one hour of Landscape Design. On Monday, April 8, 2024, 10:45-11:45 a.m. the speaker is Naturalist Derek Stoner, who will present "Boosting Bird Diversity with Native Plants" for one hour of Landscape Design. On Monday, April 8, 2024, the Luncheon speaker is Andrew Bunting, Vice President of Horticulture at the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, who will present "Environmentally Sound Gardening Practices across PA" for one hour of Environmental School. On Monday, April 8, 2024 during the Afternoon session, Charles Cresson, a Longwood Gardens instructor on bulbs, will present "Unusual Bulbs that Grow in Your Garden" for one hour of Gardening School. On Monday, April 8, 2024, the Dinner Speaker will be Dr. Richard Olsen of the U.S. Arboretum who will present "An Arboreal Amble" for one hour of Landscape Design. On Tuesday, April 9, 2024 during the Morning session, Sam Hoadley, Manager of Horticultural Research at Mt. Cuba Center, with a Degree in Sustainable Landscape Horticulture from the University of Vermont, will speak on "Knockout Natives for one hour of Gardening School. These speakers will give the Tri-refresher students eight hours of classroom instruction.

Environmental – Keep PA Beautiful Chair, Judi Swanson, reported that "PENNSYLVANIA FIGHTS DIRTY" is a statewide anti-litter initiative co-sponsored by KBP, DOT, DCED and the State Police. It aims to pitch awareness, provide education, plan action, produce behavior change and promote anti-litter enforcement. Judith will attend a virtual webinar in June to learn how GCFP can fit into the campaign's programs. Litter is a big problem in Pennsylvania and in the nation. Litter prevention and control is now listed by many garden clubs nationally as a major feature of their platforms.

Environmental - Trash to Treasure Co-Chairs, Marsha and Naser Chowdhury, reported that there will be a "Trash to Treasure" contest at the April 2024 GCFP Convention in Lancaster. They are exploring different options for a suitable contest theme in concert with the overall convention theme of "Petals & Patchwork." Contacts have been made with key Convention individuals, including 2024 Convention Chair, Joyce Crider, to review options and ideas. Once the contest theme is finalized, district directors will be notified via the Keystone Gardener. Contest specifications and judging rules will also be provided. As the district directors communicate and cascade the contest information to their clubs, these Co-Chairs will be available to provide support and consultation.

Flower Show Book of Evidence Evaluation Chair, Deb Stumpf, reported that 2022 had a large number of flower shows held by our clubs. However, only six clubs submitted books for a state award. All of the books were very well done, received blue ribbons in state competition and were sent to NGC for judging. All received NGC's Awards of Merit. Outstanding job everyone!! Please remember that all Books of Evidence MUST be sent to this state chairman. Deb Stumpf's name and address is on the state application form. If a club is having a holiday show in November or December, please contact Deb directly about book submission. The deadline for submitting a Book of Evidence is December 1, 2023, but if a club is in a time crunch, Deb is willing to work with the club. She hoped that after the work of putting on a flower show, that the Flower Show Chair will try to reward the club and committees by sending in a book for judging.

Flower Show Judges Council Chair, Mary Hetrick, was present and offered no report.

Central Area Judges Council (CAJC) Chair, Tonya Young, reported that Joyce Hoek will be working with Betty Lewis as the CAJC Flower Show Schedule Advisor. Clubs interested in having

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a flower show and wanting assistance from this council may contact any CAJC member. They hope to assist clubs with workshops on horticulture and design, schedule writing and general flower show procedure. The NGC website has added a collection of information to help with Flower Shows, such as, "What is a Flower Show?", "Take the Mystery out of a Flower Show" and "A Fresh Look at Flower Shows". PowerPoint presentations include "Flower Show Basics", "Entering Horticulture", "Staging Photography in a Flower Show", "Table Designs" and a basic guide "Having a Flower Show". To access these, click on "Programs", then "NGC Flower Shows". CAJC will promote these to their clubs. The Garden Club of Harrisburg held a flower show on May 23. CAJC is anxious to have new judges join it. The next CAJC meeting is July 27, 2023.

Erie Area Judges Council (EAJC) Chair, Kay John, reported EAJC includes 15 accredited Master Judges, 3 accredited Life Judges, 2 accredited Judges, 3 Emeritus Judges and 1 Student Judge. At the first meeting in March, the decision was made to hold EAJC flower shows on even numbered years. Area flower shows will be held in 2023 at Warren Garden Club on June 15th, Heather Garden Club on July 8th, Gospel Hill Garden Club on August 1st, and Presque Isle Garden Club on August 9th. In April, members brought "Construction" designs for discussion and, in August, Council members will participate in a "Design in a Bag" challenge.

Laurel Highlands Judges Council (LHJC) Chair, Charlotte Crissey, reported that the 2023-24 Officers are Chairman Charlotte Crissey, Vice Chairman Sheila Croushore, Secretary Deb Stumpf and Treasurer Judy Jackson. There are three up-coming events: Blair Garden Club of Hollidaysburg is presenting a Small Standard Flower Show, "The Gardener's Pallet" on July 22nd at First United Methodist Church in Hollidaysburg. Indiana Garden Club is presenting a Small Standard Flower Show "Wonders of Nature" on August 4th from 1-4:30 PM at Indiana County Conservation District Building, 435 Hamill Road, Indiana. Laurel Highlands and Pittsburgh Area Judges Councils are having a joint Standard Flower Show, "Dance with Me" on August 16, 2023 from 1-2 PM at the Greensburg Garden Center, Greensburg, PA. Horticulture Classes are open to any amateur gardener and Design Classes may be entered by any NGC member but must be registered for in advance. Design Entry Chair is Judy Jackson 814-623-7279.

Northeast Area Judges Council (NAJC) Chair, Barbara Campbell, reported that the new officers are Chairman Barbara Campbell, Co-Chairman Chris Leskosky, Recording Secretary Delores Nolt, Corresponding Secretary Tonya Young, and Treasurer Marjorie Faust. They reviewed what was shared at the Judges Council at 2023 GCFP Convention in Monroeville, specifically, Point Scoring should only be used on three occasions, that is, at Symposiums, if there is a problem, and if the judged designs are not in the same room. No printed copies are shared with the designer. Regarding judges' comments, write one positive and one focus on the greatest fault, but given in a positive way. GCFP has a link to a list of 232 Endangered Plants. The latest update to the Handbook is in National Gardener Spring Issue on page ten. Three sets of corrections appear on the NGC website dated July 2020, July 2021 and July 2022. Connie Burnley resigned as Flower Show Student Judges Credentials and Claire Leichter was appointed. The Judges Credentials Chair is Nancy Cartwright. The NAJC program featured Tonya Young sharing what she learned at Symposium Instructor School in February 2023, specifically, that Expression and Interpretation are not the same and visiting Home Depot helps with Angular Design. These topics will be continued at the next meeting on June 28th at Master Gardener Becky Short's garden, which has been featured in "The Herb Companion", "Country Garden", "Lehigh Valley Magazine", "Dream Cottage Gardens", and "Lifestyles Over 50".

Philadelphia Area Judges Council Chair, Valerie Burgess, was not present and offered no report.

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Pittsburgh Area Judges Council (PAJC) Chair, Mary Ann Artman, was not present but her report was read by Vice-Chairman, Marilyn Backus. PAJC has 22 members currently. There are 3 Emeritus Judges, 13 Master Judges, 5 Accredited Judges and 1 Student. The 2023-25 Officers are Chairman Mary Ann Artman, Vice-Chairman Marilyn Backus, Recording Secretary Iris Cisarik, Treasurer Margie Bucci and Corresponding Secretary Margie Wolff. PAJC meets 4 times a year, usually at the Greensburg Garden and Civic Center. One of these meetings will include a joint flower show with LHJC on August 16th. PAJC was responsible for the third day's luncheon floral centerpieces at the GCFP weekend convention at the Doubletree hotel in Monroeville PA. Its members held key positions in many of the Convention's committees and programs. Including our joint PAJC/LHJC show, our members will be involved in 6 scheduled flower shows this year.

Flower Show Judges Credentials Chair, Nancy Cartwright, reported that GCFP has 110 accredited Flower Show Judges, specifically, 29 Accredited Judges, 13 Life Judges, and 68 Master Judges. One is working on reinstatement and there are 39 Emeritus Judges. Patz Lowery passed away in 2021 and was removed from our records in 2022. Near-by states are holding Symposiums this fall. All judges whose Good Standing ends in December and have not yet attended a Symposium should consider attending one. Judges should send the appropriate accreditation application, found on the NGC website under Flower Show Resources, Forms page, to Nancy Cartwright, Credentials Co-Chair no later than six weeks before the targeted Symposium.

Flower Show Schedule Chair, Margie Bucci, was not present but her report was read by Recording Secretary, Marilyn Backus. She reported that she has received one schedule to evaluate so far. She encouraged Schedule writers to view very helpful sample schedules and "How to Write Awards in a Schedule" on the NGC website. These are located under Flower Show School (FSS), then FFS Resources, scroll down to FSS Reading, then click on Sample Schedules. In addition, the "Scale of Points for Evaluating Standard Flower Show Schedules" in the "Handbook for Flower Shows" has been updated to Form 29 dated 7/22.

Flower Show Schools Chair (April-October 2023), Lori Pancione, reported that Flower Show School #3 held April 13-16, 2023 at the Double Tree by Hilton in Plymouth Meeting, PA was recently accredited by NGC. In attendance were 33 students (27 students who took the tests, two judges taking the course for symposium credit, three non-credit audits, eight full-time workers and two instructors. Most of the students passed all parts of the school with stellar grades. Course 3 did not break even but the Schools Committee is looking at ways we may possibly garner more money from Ways and Means via District XI and PAJC sales as well as increased tuition for the students. A proposal to raise additional funds is being discussed. Budgetary discussion is underway with the State Judges Council to provide support for Course 4 to make sure the series of schools finishes up smoothly and successfully.

Flower Show Student Judges Credentials Chair, Claire Lechliter, reported that she received the information from Connie Burnley detailing only one remaining student judge who will hopefully take the exam in October. Lori Pancione informed her that the GCFP will very soon have 26 new student judges who will need their credentials maintained by me. Connie Burnley provided Claire with her system and some very good advice. Claire hopes to do as great a job as Connie has done for the GCFP over the years.

GCFP History & Historian, Judy Jackson, was present but offered no report.

Gardening School Credentials Chair, Mary Jo Schlomann, reported that all upcoming Gardening Schools can be found on the NGC Website at <https://www.gardenclub.org/school/gardening-school-courses>. Gardening School has 18 Provisional Students, 41 Consultants, 14 Master Consultants and 1 Emeritus.

Habitat for Humanity Donations Chair, Lisa Merschultz, was not present and offered no report.

Horticulture Coordinator, JoAnn Celaschi, was not present but her report was read by Recording Secretary, Marilyn Backus. She advised all club awards chairs and officers that the time for submissions for this year's Exceptional Horticulturist award will soon be here. This is a non-competitive award that is given at each district's September annual meeting. The names of past winners of this award can be accessed on the GCFP website by clicking on "Directories", then "Other Directories". If a club has a member who is an exceptional horticulturist and has not already received this award, please be sure to nominate them by August 1st. The three candidate qualifications for the award are Experience, i.e., growing numerous types of plants, trees, shrubs, annuals, perennials, and houseplants and able to discuss how best to grow them. Education, i.e., having attended one of the schools provided by the National Garden Club/GCFP. This is not a requirement but the candidate should be familiar with the schools and programs of the NGC, flower and gardening catalogs, horticulture magazines and other source of horticulture information. Sharing, i.e., presenting their knowledge and experiences with growing plants with friends, garden club members as well as civic organizations. The candidate should have served club and community when called upon and should be able to represent the GCFP as a knowledgeable source of horticulture information. JoAnne stated there is no separate formal application used to nominate a member for this award but rather a written description of the candidate's qualifications should be sent by August 1, 2023 either by snail mail to JoAnn Celaschi, 1216 Lookout Ave., Charleroi, PA 15022-2028, or by e-mail to celaschi@hotmail.com. Photographs are not required but identify the club and district of anyone nominated for this award.

Horticulture Hints Chair, Grace Mitchell, reported that gardening after dark may be a legend—but it is said if you plant in the evening your plants will be healthier, and tilling soil under cover of darkness prevents weeds from sprouting because they need sunlight to do so. She recommended that all get headlamps on and get busy. But know that the sun will come out tomorrow! Her other recommendations are to save the empty 4-pack containers from flats and put them upside down in bottom of large pots when transplanting to have better drainage and lighter weight pots. In addition, banana peels are full of nutrients. Roses and tomatoes will really appreciate your blending the peels with a little water and pouring the mix around the plants. Also, poke holes in a 2-liter bottle and bury it next to a plant that needs gradual watering. Cut off the top in case it should rain. Remember— a dirty hoe is a happy hoe, but clean it before you put it away!

Horticulture Therapy Chair, Maryann DeSanto, was not present but her report was read by Recording Secretary, Marilyn Backus. She reported Horticulture Therapy visits have slowly resumed in most Districts. Club Chairs have shared their latest Ideas for memorable visits, and she in turn forwarded their photos and ideas to all the clubs. Nursing homes were the last to remove their restrictions on visiting, so clubs used creative ideas to let residents know they were not forgotten. Clubs that can visit a facility monthly keep their ideas fresh by drawing from seasonal and holiday themes. This summer, one club will be working with students, instructing them in gardening skills along with floral design. Not only will they complete these projects, but they will be encouraged to give away what they have made, to the needy, community members

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and local Nursing Homes. Connecting youth with the elderly can only be beneficial to both groups. Garden Club members can appreciate the health and well-being gained from gardens and fresh flowers. She encouraged all to share their love of Horticulture with others, because it will be a most rewarding experience.

Insurance Chair, Lorraine Dupre, reported her job is to act as a liaison between federation clubs and the insurance agency, Reed, Wertz & Roadman, Inc. Requesting Certificates of Insurance for club events and answering insurance related questions are her main duties. A new certificate of insurance will replace the one now in force after the July 25, 2023 renewal date. It will be posted on the GCFP website. The current preliminary premium summary rate is \$11,209 for the term 07/25/2023 – 07/25/2024. This is an increase of \$388.

Keystone Gardener Editor/Advertising, Karen Wychock, reminded everyone to view the GCFP website for specific directions when submitting information to either the online version or printed version of the KG. All of the information is located under the NGC, CAR and GCFP News. Those following the information on style, format and advertising rates makes her job much easier. When submitting a document to the Keystone Gardener printed booklet, or to the KG ONLINE newsletter, please put it in a WORD document. The next deadline for the printed Directory Issue KG is June 15th.

Keystone Gardener Online Editor, Marie Mueller, was not present but her report was read by Recording Secretary, Marilyn Backus. She reported that the deadline for the next KG ONLINE Newsletter issue is June 15th, and that issue will be posted on the GCFP web site by July 1st. The deadlines and the Style Formatting instructions for submissions are available on the GCFP web site. Be sure to send submissions in a WORD document. PDF files do not fit into columns. The new KG Online submissions “one click” e-mail is now available on the web site. It is KGonlineGCFP@gmail.com. Include the submitter’s name, club name, and phone number in the email, in case the Editor needs to call for clarification.

Landscape Design Laurel Highlands Council Co-Chairs, Sheila Croushore and Sue Konvolinka, reported that this council adopted the GCFP Children’s Peace Garden at the Flight 93 Memorial Chapel. The next meeting will be July 18th.

Leadership Workshop 2023 (Zoom) Chair, Kay John, reported a leadership workshop will be held on July 26, 2023 via Zoom, from 10 AM to 12 Noon. A registration form will be sent soon. Please encourage present and future club officers to register. Topics include parliamentary procedure and protocol, insurance liability, awards, GCFP website and others. Registrants will receive the workshop link a few days prior to July 26th.

Liaison to PA Horticulture Society (PHS), Flossie Narducci, reported that after two years of hosting an outdoor Flower Show, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society returned to the Philadelphia Convention Center this past March. Many GCFP members attended and several submitted entries, won ribbons and even served as judges. The dates for next year’s Show have been announced: March 2 – 10, 2024. The theme is still a secret. Flossie asked that anyone interested in serving as a Judge or a volunteer to contact her.

Life Memberships, State/Regional/NGC Donations Chair, Jan Olsen, reported that there are three types of life memberships available to all garden club members for personal use or for gifting to other members deserving special recognition. They are GCFP (state), CAR-SGC (regional) and NGC (national). The largest portion of the funds collected from these life memberships helps

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provide for the scholarships given annually by these garden club groups. The GCFP Life membership includes a pin, as does the CAR-SGC Life membership while NGC Life membership has a pin available for purchase from their catalog, if desired.

Membership Chair, JoAnne Fogelman, reported that she sent an “Application for Active Membership” to a club in District I that voted to join the Federation. National Garden Clubs’ “Find a Club” tool on their web site is not functioning and they have decided to remove it. Potential members should contact NGC Assistant Executive Director, Katie Roth, who will forward the potential member's information to the State President, State Membership Chairman and NGC's Liaison to the State Presidents, Donna Rouch. JoAnne will then send the contact's information to the appropriate District Director. Since GCFP elected not to participate in NGC's “Find a Club,” nothing will change for GCFP.

Memory Book Chair, Rose Rombowski, reported that the Memory Book (a scrapbook of photo memories & written notes) prepared for GCFP President Leeanna is a beautiful way to capture moments throughout her term. It's never too early for clubs to keep in mind, throughout the next two years, whenever a club has an event that includes Leeanna, to take a photo with her to capture the moment. Send hard copy photos to Rose at 118 Preserve Valley Drive, Cranberry Township, PA 16066 or email them to roro@zoominternet.net . Towards the end of Leeanna's term, Rose will send a reminder to the board about photos and any special notes to share with Leeanna. The completed book will be given to her at the 2025 GCFP Convention.

National/Regional Projects Chair, Eileen Hoover, was not present and offered no report.

Natural Disasters, USA Donations Chair, Kathy Crossman, reported that the donations from GCFP garden clubs and districts from October 8, 2022 to June 6, 2023 totaled \$1,324.90. These contributions were received from the following garden clubs: Heritage, Shaler, Harrisburg Civic, Harrisburg, Littlestown Area, Gettysburg, Spade and Trowel, Bethlehem, Four Seasons, Shiloh, Parkland, Biglerville, Duboistown, Hazelton Area, Ingomar and York. Districts IV, V, VII and X also contributed. All checks were forwarded to former and current GCFP Treasurer, Joyce Crider, followed by Vivian Hall. Before the Fall meeting, Kathy will be sending requests to all directors to encourage their clubs to consider a contribution to Natural Disasters USA during the upcoming club year. The need for aid from this fund is ongoing. District Directors and Club Presidents are asked to remind Treasurers that contributions must be payable to “GCFP” with the notation “Natural Disasters USA” on the lower left memo line.

Nominating Committee Chair, Diane Hughes, was present but offered no report.

Pennsylvania Resources Council Chair, Mary Lou Colussy, reported she prepared an educational exhibit for the GCFP 2023 Convention in April. She readily agreed to this because most attendees are not aware of the anti-littering and recycling aspects of the PRC. PRC has been fighting litter through its “Lens on Litter” photo contest for decades and operates across the state to prevent the damage that litter can cause. Litter is a huge problem for Pennsylvania, as it negatively impacts the environment, public safety, and the state's economy. PRC has facilitated conservation workshops since 2000 to teach the general public the importance of backyard composting, watershed awareness and education, rain barrels and rainwater harvesting, green cleaning, and more. In addition, there are recycling programs and collection events sponsored by the local PRC and affiliates. Approximately 50% of the waste that Americans generate every day is recyclable through traditional recycling systems. Finally, PRC has provided Environmental Education in schools statewide for over 50 years.

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President Ryba recessed the meeting at 9:00 PM. and asked attendees to reconvene for the remaining reports of the Full Board on Tuesday, June 6th at 9:00 AM.

Reports of Board Members, continued

1st Vice President, Pat Wolanski, reported that in April, she attended the State Convention in Monroeville and in May, the National Convention at the Greenbrier in West Virginia. She has been handling GCFP's 205 emails as they come in. Her email address has now been changed to gcfpvicepresident1@gmail.com. In May, she was invited to conduct the installation of officers for a garden club in District XI. As first Vice President, she is responsible for meeting with the District Directors. Their first Zoom meeting was Thursday, May 25th. The meeting was well attended, with sharing of ideas and a review of the District Director manual. After reviewing the manual, some revisions could be made. Any potential changes will be discussed with President Leeanna. At the District Directors' meeting today, ideas for increasing District Meeting attendance, fund-raising, scheduling future meetings and potential meeting topics were discussed. District Director meetings will continue each month on the 4th Thursday at 6:30 PM with the exception of Thanksgiving week, which will be held on the 5th Thursday, November 30th at 6:30 PM.

Penny Pines Donations Chair, Barb Andrus, reported that the GCFP Penny Pines Donations from September 30, 2022 to April 20 was \$1,706.00. Additional donations since April 19th totaled \$680.00. The Collection Contract between the Allegheny National Forest and GCFP Penny Pines Fund was due to be renewed on December 30, 2022. Carol Hall, the previous GCFP Penny Pines Chair received notification from Jeffrey Gaede on March 27, 2023 saying the contract expired and the ANF would refund and close out the GCFP fund of \$13,957.76. If we did not accept this refund then it would go to the US Treasury! We have indeed received the \$13,957.76. As of May 5, 2023, SAM (Systems of Awards Management) Unique Identification Entity number TP8EWQ2U95Z7 for GCFP's Penny Pines Fund is now ACTIVE and eligible for a Collection Contract renewal between the Allegheny National Forest and the GCFP Penny Pines Fund. Linda Ordiway, the Allegheny National Forest Wildlife Biologist, and others are working with their grants and agreement folks to determine if they should move on with a new agreement this year. April Moore has not gotten back to Linda yet for potential use of any GCFP funds as of yet. This Chair was concerned that if it is next year before ANF can present a plan of projects to GCFP and accept our Penny Pines funds, whether GCFP could utilize some of the \$13,957 for other needs.

Personnel Committee Chair, Betsy Smith, reported that her job is to ask all GCFP Board members to complete a current Personnel Form so that GCFP is aware of leadership's current interests, and ideas. She encouraged attendees to complete or update their information at the meeting.

Pollinator Restoration Program Chair, Leslie Anthony, was not present but her report was read by Recording Secretary, Marilyn Backus. She reported June 19th – 25th is National Pollinator Week. She suggested that members buy one or two native PA pollinator-friendly plants during the Week and/or add a water source to their garden, such as a birdbath, dish of water or butterfly puddling area. She recently learned that the National Garden Clubs, Inc. is launching a new pollinator initiative but details are not yet available. She encouraged all GCFP members and club-maintained community gardens to get certified as PA Pollinator Friendly, post the beautiful plaque in these gardens and feature them in the GCFP newsletter. Districts and local clubs should feature these certified and exceptional gardens in newsletters as well and generally include more articles about pollinators, plants and pollinator friendly gardening practices. Perhaps members

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whose gardens are certified can be awarded a special pin or certificate of achievement. Doug Tallamy's Homegrown National Park at www.homegrownnationalpark.org is also worthy of GCFP support. She encouraged clubs without a Pollinator Advocacy Committee, to consider forming one that helps fellow members learn how to improve the pollinator value of their gardens. She was honored to have an Educational Exhibit at the 2023 Annual GCFP Convention.

President's Project – We're Keeping PA Beautiful Awards Chair, Barbara Campbell, reported that the four award categories of recognition for exemplary depictions of "Plant America, While Keeping PA Beautiful" are: 1) By an individual Garden Club Member for Club or Community Service performing recycling/reusing. 2) Service by a Club for working with Youth or a Youth Community performing recycling/reusing. 3) Service by a Club for working with Youth or a Youth Community performing litter control. 4) Mentoring of a Youth Leadership "Environmental Club". This GCFP award is also known as Seeds of Service and is given to the clubs within each District in even years as a reward and as a recognition. One, or up to all four, of the aforementioned categories can be awarded to each of the Ten Districts. (District II/III is considered one District for this award.) To apply, a club should write a one-page description of the project/event including a photo, if possible. The description should state the lasting benefits of these services and the garden club exposure created from the project or the event. If the picture includes youth, please forward the signed NGC RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION AND WEBSITE Minor Youth Section form along with the paperwork submitted. Clubs should send their application to their District Director by June 15, 2024, for all projects occurring from May 1, 2023 to May 1, 2024. The top club applications from each District for each category should be sent to the President's Project Chair, Barbara Campbell, by June 30, 2024. These exceptional projects will be noted in the Keystone Gardener/KG Online, and will be presented certificates at the GCFP 2024 September Annual District Meetings.

Protocol Chair, Haddie Weber, was present but offered no report.

Sage and Roses Donations Chair, Vivian Abel, was present but offered no report.

Scholarship Committee Chair, Sandra Hendricks, reported the number of GCFP Scholarship Applications that were received from students per district for 2023-24. District II/III had one, District IV had five, District V had two, District VI had two, District VII had one, District VIII had two. There were two alternates from district IV and district VI. There was one National winner from District IV. Sandra thanked club members for working hard to get students to apply. She thanked Sheila Croushore for her support with NGC's new requirements. Every member can begin to inform local high schools, colleges and garden clubs of the GCFP Scholarships now.

Scholarship Donations Chair, Linda Southerling, reminded all that Scholarship donations are always welcome and to consider remembering, recognizing and honoring people with a donation. Always use the online form found on the GCFP website and use E-mail rather than USPS addresses for responses and acknowledgements. Due to recent thefts of checks going through USPS, everyone should use black gel pens to ensure checks won't be washed and redirected.

Seed Money Committee Chair, Marjorie Sears, reported that many clubs have Perennials on their "Wish List" because they attract bees and butterflies and look good year after year. The Burpee Catalog, had a section for Perennials to grow from seeds. Marj favored Gloriosa Daisies followed by Gaillardia 'Arizona Sun'. She gave each District Director a Gloriosa Daisy to care for or pass on to someone in her District. She reminded all that Burpee has a Coupon Code,

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“PAGC23”, uniquely for PA garden club leaders that extends 20% off, and free shipping, without an order minimum. Group leaders can order up to fifty seed packets at a time. The coupon is also valid on plants. A clarification was stated that “Seed Money” grants are not used for seeds, but to start up a project.

Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Chair, Betty Grossheim, was not present and offered no report.

Tours Chair, Sharon Richardson, was not present and offered no report.

Web Master, Vina McLeod Rudolph, was not present but her report was read by Recording Secretary, Marilyn Backus. She reported she is updating the website to reflect current forms and Chairs. She requested all the Board Members to review the forms and information related to their position. If updates are needed, please contact her via email at gardenfairie@mac.com. Please be very specific, and she will update the master file, and the website. She received four District Annual Meeting Calls, as of this meeting. She will make the registration forms fillable and post them to the Districts’ page of the website. She posted flyers for Club Flower Shows, Plant Sales, and Garden Tours/Walks. The password for the protected files on the website was verbalized at the meeting. Vina learned that if one uses the Caps Lock button for the first 3 characters of the password, then it won’t work. The Caps Lock button only works for the alphabetical keys. The Shift key must be used for the alternative characters on the number keys to work. She encouraged anyone who encounters a problem on the website to send her an email with a phone number to call.

Youth Activities Co-Chairs, Chris Hawthorne and Barbara Oswald, were not present but their report was read by Recording Secretary, Marilyn Backus. They reported the Youth Poetry theme for 2023-24 Kindergarten through ninth grade is “I spy with my little eye something green outside—celebrating our green world.” There is no Essay Theme yet posted for High School grades nine through twelve. The Youth Sculpture rules are assumed to be the same as in previous years and the contest is open to grades four through eight. The deadline for all entries to be received by these Co-Chairs is Friday, December 1, 2023. The co-chairs will physically meet club member(s) to avoid postal system delays. There were more garden clubs participating in the youth contests last year and they hoped there will be more this year. Their contact information is correct on the website under Award Chairs.

Convention Chair 2023, Marilyn Backus, reported that she, Haddie Weber and Sharon Bryner had two goals for GCFP’s first weekend convention. First, to have the weekend be an especially fun, relaxing informal event. Second, to break even! We thank Sharon Richardson, who offered links to several key sponsorships. All ten districts placed ads in the Convention booklet and used creative takes on the word “THYME”. She thanked the Highland Park vendor chair who obtained 24 vendors, the Rockledge Raffle Chair who had 30 raffle items, Murrysville for selecting 10 local, outstanding speakers who charged reasonable fees and Forest Hills for lending us Registrar Linda Phelps as well as the Centerpiece Team Leaders who worked with District X’s Angie R. of Landscape Design Society. She thanked Pucketos for a successful Afternoon Tea on the Titanic and Burrellton for a memorable Presidential reception. Breakeven depended heavily on the donation of time by 68 volunteers, and members’ donations to the Convention and to the Hospitality Room. She is relieved to announce the Convention made \$6,000 and may have enough to at least partially reimburse a few last-minute medical emergency cancellations.

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Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

New Business

President Ryba announced that Sheila Croushore is the “Minister of Fun”. One of the wreaths, which were hung on participants’ room doors for delight and competition, was auctioned and the proceeds donated to the GCFP Scholarship Fund.

The President also made the following announcements.

Wednesday, July 26, 2023 at 10 AM The Zoom Leadership Conference. Club Presidents, VPs, Treasurers and all members are encouraged to attend.

Thursday, August 24 at 6:30 PM. Instead of the GCFP Officers meeting with Club Presidents before the Fall Annual District Meetings, there will be a Zoom President’s meeting.

Thursday, September 21, 2023 NGC Fall Board meeting will be held via Zoom.

Monday-Tuesday, October 9-10, 2023 Next GCFP Board of Directors Meeting at Wyndham Gardens, Boalsburg, PA

Thursday-Sunday, October 12-15, 2023 Flower Show School Course IV at Doubletree, Plymouth Meeting, PA

Monday-Thursday, October 23-26, 2023 CAR-SGC Conference with Tri-Refresher at Corning, NY Doubletree

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Sunday-Wednesday, June 2-5, 2024 NGC 2024 Conference in Denver, CO causing GCFP to move our BOD date.

Monday-Tuesday, June 10-11, 2024 GCFP BOD Meeting at Wyndham Gardens, Boalsburg

Monday-Tuesday, October 7-8, 2024 BOD Meeting at Wyndham Gardens, Boalsburg

Chaplain Margie Wolff offered a closing blessing. President Ryba adjourned the meeting at 10:21 AM and called for the Full Board to reconvene on Monday October, 9.

Marilyn C. Backus – GCFP Recording Secretary

Attachments: Asset Summary as of April 20,2023 (Fiscal Year End);
GCFP Statement of Financial Activity May 1, 2022-April 30, 2023;
Annual Budget Fiscal Year 2023-24 (revised)
Financial Secretary’s Report on GCFP Dues Account-Annual Report and May 1-3, 2023 Report