

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
 October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
 Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

GCFP President, Leeanna Ryba, called the meeting to order at 2:05 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 was present.

Recording Secretary, Marilyn Backus, reported that the Minutes of the June 6-7, 2023 Full Board Meeting were approved and distributed electronically by President Ryba on September 25, 2023. Since no major corrections were received, the Minutes were accepted by acclamation.

Financial Secretary, Barbara Brand, reported on the GCFP Dues Account activity at BB&T/Truist for the period June 1, 2023 - October 2, 2023:

<u>GCFP Dues Account, Truist</u>			
Balance, 06/01/2023			\$100.00
Deposits:	Member dues	\$27,342.50	
	Total Receipts/ Balance	\$27,342.50	\$27,442.50
Disbursements			
	Transfers to Treasurer	(\$27,342.50)	
Balance, 10/02/2023			\$100.00
Total dues transferred to Treasurer since 05/01/2023		\$48,362.50	

As required in the Financial Secretary’s job description, Barbara prepared a report that lists the GCFP member clubs, by District, that have paid their annual dues, including new member dues, since the beginning of the fiscal year – as of October 1, 2023. This list reflects the removal of any members that have resigned or passed away. The report is distributed to the State Officers, District Directors, the Liability Insurance Chair, and the Membership Chair.

Treasurer, Vivian Hall, reviewed the financial activity statements of GCFP provided by **Financial Advisor, Cindy Layton**. The complete report is attached to the GCFP Minutes.

The Asset Summary as of August 31, 2023 for Checking and Savings totaled \$61,538.99. Total Checking, Savings, Petty Cash and Other Assets were \$64,790.16. Total Advances Receivable for the next three Conventions totaled \$7,500. The Penny Pines Total (including \$10,000 in the Stifel Investment Account) was \$34,899.03.

The GCFP Statement of Financial Activity from May 1 – August 31, 2023 reports a Total Income of \$47,711.50 from Dues and Book of Recognition Donations. Total Expenses of Chairmen, Administration, Keystone Gardener, Memberships, Officer’s Allowances, and Awards came to \$38,623.07, with a positive Variance of Income vs. Expenses of \$9,088.43.

The Report of 2023 GCFP Scholarships showed that the Total Funds in the Savings Account for Scholarships as of July 31, 2023 was \$5,993, which was a shortfall of \$6,007. The shortfall was resolved by a transfer of Stifel funds on August 2, 2023 and enabled GCFP to write 12 award checks of \$1,000 to various universities.

Parliamentarian, Sharon Brown, and **Advisor, Angie Raitano**, did not report.

President Ryba introduced **Mary Heltzel, Sr. VP of Stifel Investments and GCFP Investment Advisor**, who reviewed current market conditions and noted the straightening out of yield curves and volatility index and an outperforming bond index. Mary reported that as of October 6, 2023, there was \$514,347 in the GCFP portfolio and GCFP income yearly average is \$30,067, mostly from bonds. She recommended that GCFP move \$25,000 from the GCFP Money Market and then purchase a bond paying 6% interest.

Recommendations from the combined Finance/Investment Committees

The Recording Secretary read each of the four following motions from the combined Finance/Investment Committees for Full Board approval, after which President Ryba explained the details and asked for a voice vote of approval for each:

Motion #1: The Finance and Investment Committee recommends that the GCFP Full Board approve the purchase of ten Past District Director pins, which will be needed for Fall Annual Meetings in 2024. **Passed**

Motion #2: The Finance and Investment Committee recommends that the GCFP Full Board continues to hold its Board meetings at the Wyndham Gardens State College and move forward with 2025 contracts with the hotel. **Passed**

Motion #3: The Finance and Investment Committee recommends that the GCFP Full Board accept a proposal from Mary Heltzel of Stifel to move \$25,000 from the GCFP Money Market and then purchase a bond paying 6% interest. **Passed**

Motion #4: The Finance and Investment Committee recommends that the GCFP Full Board approve a donation of \$200 to Pennsylvania Horticultural Society once a PHS project need has been identified. **Passed**

Corresponding Secretary, Flossie Narducci, reported that she sent get well wishes to Sandy Manthorpe, who suffered a stroke. Sympathy cards were sent to Colleen Ragan on the death of her mother, Maureen Innes, and to Marie Mueller on the loss of her husband. Happy Birthday wishes were sent to long time member, Betty Sykes, who celebrated her 100th birthday.

NEW BUSINESS

President Ryba reported that since the June 2023 Board Meeting, she attended the Blue Star Marker Dedications at Patriot Park held by District VI's Somerset GC on August 14, and at the Interstate 80 Rest Area – Westbound Mile Marker 31 held by District VIII's Wildflower GC of Leeper on September 16. In July, she enjoyed a beautiful Sunday afternoon at "The Great Gardens Tour" held by the Shaler GC in District IX. Also, on July 21, 2023, Student Judge, Leeanna, judged her first Flower Show, "Tracing Our Roots," at District VII's The Garden Club of Forest Hills that was held as part of the celebration of the club's 100th anniversary. As President, she also attended their Open House at the Westinghouse Lodge in Forest Hills. On August 16, 2023, as a Student Judge, she entered the Flower Show at the Greensburg Garden and Civic Center hosted by the Pittsburgh Area and Laurel Highlands Judges Councils. She won three blue ribbons in horticulture and a 90+ in design. In September, President Leeanna enjoyed being a guest at the District Annual Meetings and learned about the many worthy projects the GCFP clubs have initiated in the past year: Citizen Scientists in District II-III measured rainfall; Gettysburg GC in District IV supported a Habitat for Humanity Project; The Outdoor Gardeners in District XI installed a pollinator garden at the John B. Kelly Elementary School; Spade & Trowel GC in District I gave out saplings at a local farmer's market for Arbor Day; Presque Isle GC in District VIII picked up litter as part of "Pick Up PA"; Fox Chapel GC in District IX recycled thousands of tennis shoes; Heritage GC in District V beautified their downtown area with hanging baskets; Bedford GC in District VI will hold a Gold Star Dedication. Many clubs offer scholarships to students. She is extremely proud to be GCFP State President, and thanked all.

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

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

2nd Vice President, Tonya Young, reported that she had the pleasure of traveling to the District Meetings in September and was overwhelmed by all the hospitality. It was wonderful to attend, learn about the clubs' activities, and spend time in areas of the state she had never visited. Tonya spoke on the Benefits and Reasons for belonging to GCFP. Today's meeting had 37 reservations for lunch and 55 reservations for dinner and 43 sleeping rooms were reserved. GCFP Board meetings are now contractually obligated for a minimum of 50 room nights to avoid meeting room rental fees. Unfortunately, the minimum was not met at this meeting. Therefore, GCFP will incur charges \$175.00 per day for the meeting room rental and the complimentary room night offered to our President was forfeited. Tonya compared the costs of meeting space at the Graduate State College (formerly Atherton), Penn State, and Wyndham Garden State College at the request of the finance committee. Her recommendation was to continue at the Wyndham because it offered the best pricing and guest services overall. The dates of the next Board meeting in State College are June 10-11, 2024.

REPORTS OF THE DISTRICT DIRECTORS (reports were given at 7:15 PM)

District I Director, Nancy Cuttic, reported that the end of spring was profitable for the clubs in District I that held plant sales. Profits from \$1,000 to \$10,000 were recognized by several clubs. With their earnings, Springfield Garden Club awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to a local senior high school student who demonstrated an interest in horticulture and the environment, while Uwchlan Garden Club donated \$5,000 to the trust of the treasured historic Uwchlan Meetinghouse, where they hold their meetings and activities. District I was proud to honor their past year award winners at their annual luncheon. District I enjoyed the company of the GCFP officers and raffled off some fabulous items. Uwchlan GC held a successful Flower Show in June 2023, co-chaired by Assistant Director, Pam Walsh and Philadelphia Area Flower Show Chair, Valerie Burgess. The Elverson Garden Club will host their first flower show this month. Chester and Delaware counties are rich in colonial history. Many of their clubs continue to maintain gardens and decorate historic buildings in the area, as well as beautify public spaces. Local favorite tours include the renowned Chanticleer, Stoneleigh and Longwood Gardens and at least one club each year will feature something about Kennett Square mushrooms. The next District meeting, November 2023, will feature a Thanksgiving centerpiece challenge modeled after the cooking show "Chopped." The concept is to show how everyone can buy grocery store flowers, along with a few other items, and create a stunning centerpiece. All participants will receive the same container, assorted flowers and produce. Centerpieces will be raffled at the end. A new club in District I, Radley Run Social and Garden Club, will hold their annual fashion show in November 2023 to raise approximately \$15,000 that is divided into three \$5,000 scholarships for students of horticulture and related fields at Penn State, West Chester University and Williamson College of the Trades.

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

District II/III Director, Jane Kruse, reported that Garden Tours were back with great response from the community as experienced by Milford, Monroe County and Parkland Garden Clubs. Flower shows brought great flair with Bethlehem's "Café de Fleur" and "Emmaus in Bloom." Summer Solstice featured the Upper Perkiomen Valley's Community Benefits Garden which yielded over one ton of produce this year. District II/III's Citizen Scientist project of measuring rainfall is nearly completed this growing season. Longitude and latitude comparisons were made this year but made little sense. The benefits included greater awareness to rainfall and how often to water outdoor plants. Perkiomen Valley container plant challenge this year was the "three sisters" – corn, beans and squash. Members were encouraged to report their results. District II/III continued their trial of Zoom Educational offerings on September 26 with "Rare, Endangered and Threatened Plant Species of PA." District II/III now has a new Assistant Director, Claire Kukielka.

District IV Director, Joanne Baylis, reported that District IV's annual meeting held on September 14, 2023, was hosted by the Chambersburg and Gettysburg Garden Clubs with 94 attendees. At their meeting, it was announced that there were three resignations from the board. One in particular was Assistant District Director Robin Pottorff. The District was fortunate to find a replacement in record time. Carla Kelly, the current president of the Town & Country Garden Club of Lancaster was installed at the annual meeting and will fulfill the term vacated by Robin through September 2024. The Central Penn College intern started working on the District's "going digital" project in late June 2023, creating the way forward for each garden club. The Littlestown Area Garden Club was the first garden club to kick off the project. Jessica Mutzabaugh met with Littlestown club members in August, 2023, and helped them with scanning their paper documents and getting them into a Google drive connected to the clubs' Google email address where the digital documents will be stored. On October 30, 2023, District IV will hold another leadership training day. Cate Hand from the Town & Country Garden Club of Lancaster will be leading a problem-solving model that will help clubs look at issues they might be having today and compare them to issues that are listed on the old president's reports. During the discussions, Cate will provide ways to help in overcoming some of these issues. They will hold another Leadership "Garden Chat" on November 15, 2023, from 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM, at the Pheasant Run Farm Bed and Breakfast in Lancaster, PA. District IV will host the GCFP Convention, April 7-9, 2024, at the Doubletree by Hilton, on Willow Street, in Lancaster, PA.

District V Director, Judy Warn, was absent but her report was read by **Assistant District V Director, Joyce Wenner**. She reported that McEwensville Garden Club hosted a well-attended District Annual Meeting in Watsontown at the historic Watson Inn. In August 2023, Judy attended the Duboistown Garden Club's flower show at the Taber Museum. Three of the District's clubs, DuBoistown, McEwensville and Heritage Garden Clubs entered the Bloomsburg Fair. For the first time, Heritage Garden Club entered the fair and received a first-place award and three other awards. All of the clubs reported that they held plant sales. McEwensville Garden Club made over \$600 at their plant sale. Mifflin County Garden Club held a "Wine, Cheese & Chocolate Event" in June to encourage members to bring a friend and help build their membership. Heritage Garden Club shared a delicious Farm-to-Table meal at Nicole Harris' Greener Pastures Farm. After the meal, Harris, assisted by her daughter, Nora, presented a program on Flower Pounding at which each member was given a tote bag. Flowers were placed face down on the tote bag in a design of their choosing, and, using a hammer, the design was pounded in. Standing Stone Garden Club received a 1st Place Award for their newsletter. They observe Arbor Day by honoring a garden club member or worthy citizen by planting a tree in cooperation with town authorities.

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

District VI Director, Deb Stumpf, reported that the clubs of District VI have been involved in various community beautification and civic projects. Blair Garden Club had a highly successful plant sale and a wonderful flower show. One of their members was the speaker for a Victorian Tea and gave an informative speech on the Baker Mansion garden. They continue to support the Discovery Garden in Hollidaysburg at Legion Park. The Bedford Garden Club participated in the Bedford Bed Races with a bed decorated in a floral and greenery theme. They were judged the most creative and received \$100 for garnering the most “Likes” on Facebook. They will hold their Christmas House Tour this year on the first weekend of December 2023. The Evergreen Garden Club continues to maintain the garden at the Historical Society and the Heritage Garden at IUP in Indiana. They will have their annual Tinsel Time fundraiser on December 7, 2023 at the Ramada Inn in Indiana. The Indiana Garden Club held their highly successful fundraiser, May Mart, in May 2023 and had a successful flower show in August 2023. They continue to maintain three civic beds in town and a bed at the Indiana Community Garden, which provides food for the local food bank. The Garden Club of Johnstown has instituted a “Show and Tell” segment at their monthly meetings and on the website. They are busy preparing for their “Welcome the Holidays” fundraiser on November 11, 2023, using Thanksgiving this year as their theme. Patton Garden Club held a Program titled “Baleful Weeds and Precious Juiced Flowers.” This program included a very educational discussion of plants that are poisonous and harmful if consumed, versus those that may be safely used in cooking and other applications. They also continue to maintain their beautiful “Corner Garden” in Patton. The Somerset Garden Club is very proud of their work with the Children’s Aid Home Garden. The Chair of this committee continues to work with students on Fridays to weed, plant and educate. They will also participate with a group of other clubs involved in community service to increase their membership. She commended the Weeders and Seeders Garden Club for hosting a wonderful, well-attended District VI Annual Meeting. Their theme “Nature is Always in Fashion” was highlighted by mannequins clothed in dresses made of all-natural materials, including one clothed in a skirt of dollar bills that members could win.

District VII Director, Sharon Bryner, reported that the District VII Annual Meeting was held on September 6, 2023 at Edgewood Country Club with a majority of its clubs in attendance. Two of the clubs, Home Gardeners and Joyful Bloomers, enhance the quality of life of residents in assisted living centers and both intend to enter a decorated tree in the McKeesport Festival of Trees. Home Gardeners also awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to a senior at McKeesport High School while Joyful Bloomers meets and maintains courtyards at Kane Community Living Center and recently raffled off a fire pit, donated by Home Depot, to the family of slain McKeesport police officer, Sean Sluganski. It also recently toured the McKeesport Regional History and Heritage Center at Renziehausen Park. Murrysville and Monroeville clubs are networking and sharing their hosted programs at their libraries. Murrysville participated in a Meet and Greet that included local nonprofits and children activities. The club sent photographs and documents of the garden of PAJC Chair, Mary Ann Artman, to Phipps Conservatory’s Sustainable Garden Awards program. In September, Monroeville hosted a “Gardening in Deer Country” program at its public library and recently participated in Heritage Day at the Monroeville Historical Society by providing activities for children. Burrellton worked with its City Parks and Recreation Department to continue planting dogwood and redbud trees at Burrell Lake Park. The owner of Valos Chocolates recently spoke to the club on “Where Chocolate Comes From.” Sharon reminded all that District VII will host a Zoom on October 17, 2023 at 6 PM. The title is “Supporting More Native, Diverse and Productive Home Landscapes” and the speaker is Gabe Tilove, Director of Adult Education and Community Outreach for Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. He directs more than 250 classes annually on topics ranging from sustainable horticulture and native plant landscapes to botanical art, floral design and culinary arts.

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

District VIII Director, Rosie Lawrence, thanked the State President, First Vice-President, and Second Vice-President for coming to District VIII's Annual meeting on September 5, 2023. The Warren Garden Club had a flower show in June titled "Here Comes the Bride." The Heather Club of Edinboro in July had a small standard Flower Show titled "Home Sweet Home" for which they received the Staging Award. Gospel Hill Garden Club also had a flower show titled "Night at the Movies." They added a Botanical Arts Division with 8 x 10 color photographs featuring ideas from The Wizard of Oz, Fantasia, and our Flying Friends, Birds, Bees and Butterflies. In keeping with the "Keep America Beautiful" theme, the garden clubs continue to work with recycling materials. Some garden clubs reuse the plastic containers from year-to-year when they do their plant sales. Some local community members in the area bring their containers to a central location and, in return, they get a perennial plant or a pack of seeds. Some garden clubs recycle glass items to make garden art and sell those items at their plant sale. Another garden club had a "Make and Take Flower Challenge" program using recycled tuna and cat food cans by using leaf stems and twigs from their gardens. Another great idea is to use craft sticks painted in different colors to indicate the price for items and to save the craft sticks for reuse. They also recycle garden tools for a small price or donation to the garden club. Every year during November, the Oil City Garden Club donates 100 baskets for hospice patients with recycled items and some "goodies" like homemade cookies, tea bags and candies. Several of their garden clubs participate in the "Pick Up Pennsylvania" program. The clubs receive trash bags, gloves and safety vests to collect trash in the streets, parks, and highways. The Wildflower Garden Club had their Blue Star Marker dedication on September 16, 2023 at the Westbound I-80 Rest Area Mile Marker 31. That marker is Number 16 for District VIII.

District IX Director, Claudia Bernardo, reported on her clubs' annual meeting reports. Moon Township GC announced that they have "soil tested" their club. Their soil test came in the way of membership surveys to find out what members like, what they would consider changing and whether they had new ideas for the club. Results provide input and ideas and where to nourish the club with learning opportunities. Her own club did this several years ago and found the biggest reason for joining a club was fellowship and socialization, followed by educational programs, and then service. She was impressed that her Clubs have done more with horticulture therapy programs: Oak Hills GC donates to a hydroponics program that trains people on the autistic spectrum. Southern Butler GC initiated a new program by partnering with a Community and Residential Empowerment program. They now have a weekly service project where people with intellectual or developmental disabilities and autism have helped in their community garden by weeding, deadheading, watering, maintaining the bird feeders and taking part in garden-related craft projects. Several other clubs have regularly scheduled visits to nursing or retirement homes to provide floral design or craft projects. Her Clubs' programs this summer reflected their roles as environmental stewards. Many of their programs continue to emphasize the plight of the pollinators and native plants. Ingomar GC learned how to construct solitary bee houses. More educational programs were offered on birds emphasizing their habitat needs and migration patterns. Some clubs are partnering with their townships to develop Pollinator Pathway Gardens. Shaler GC offered an evening symposium for the public on Pollinator Garden Certification. Another club participates in an "Adopt A Highway" program collecting 30-gallon bags of trash. Fox Chapel GC annually sponsors a used sneaker/tennis shoe drive, collecting nearly 3,000 pairs of shoes. Moon Township GC will conduct a program on recycling and will investigate what they can do individually and as a group to educate the community on recycling. Tusca Ridge GC hosted a very unique make-and-take project of crafting wreaths from recycled sweaters. District membership increased by 44 members this past year. The clubs strive to stay visible within

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

communities by hosting plant sales and May marts. Summer activities include hosting garden tours, garden contests and community workshops. Greybrooke, Ingomar and Shaler Garden Clubs host joint meetings that are open to other District IX members. Clubs such as Edgeworth are very involved in making seasonal arrangements, which are sold at community garden marts. Butler GC maintains award-winning gardens at historical sites and at their Blue Star Marker garden located at the Butler Veterans Medical Center. Fox Chapel GC embraces their community by donating to preserve the historical features in nine county parks. This Director is impressed that District IX clubs not only offer their regular meetings, programs and field trips for their members, but that the clubs are creating ways to actively nurture and strengthen the bonds within the District and within their communities.

District X Director, Deborah Davis, reported that District X had its Annual District meeting on September 3, 2023, at South Hills Country Club. There were 86 people registered, including their honored GCFP guests, President Leeanna Ryba, First Vice-President, Pat Wolanski, and Second Vice-President, Tonya Young. Awarded to District X members were 37 tulip awards for new members, 51 Laurel awards, 15 Daffodil awards, 1 Butterfly award to Randi Starr of Giant Oaks Garden Club, 1 Forget-Me-Not Award to Diane Hughes of Great Meadows Garden Club and 1 Exceptional Horticulturist Award to Peggy Brown of Valley Garden Club. Steve Neubauer, of Neubauer's Flowers, presented a wonderful program. Garden club presidents prepared tri-fold posters about their 2023 activities in lieu of written reports. District X made \$1,003 from the basket raffle, 50/50, white elephant sales and vendors. It also raised \$121 for the Natural Disasters Fund.

District XI Director, Honey Bawduniak, was absent but her report was read by the Recording Secretary. Honey reported that her district enjoyed having Leeanna, Pat and Tonya at their Annual Luncheon in September 2023. District XI had three new Exceptional Horticulturists: Jane Irwin-Klotz (Norristown Garden Club), Cheryl Brumbaugh (Norristown Garden Club) and Donna McCloskey (Garden Club of Bristol Borough). She presented the Perennial Bloom Award to Liz Snowdon (The Outdoor Gardeners), the Forget-Me-Not Award to Jane Comroe (Norristown Garden Club) and the Director's Special Award called the 'Chrysanthemum Award' to four individuals: Diane Barkley (Countryside Gardeners), Carol Brunner (The Crooked Billet), Helen Breslin (The Outdoor Gardeners) and Ann Ballentine (Tohickon G. C.). For the loyalty, love, joy, talent and time they give to their clubs and service to the District XI, they each received a certificate and a mini-mum plant. These awards were in addition to the Laurel Awards presented to the District club members for their outstanding contributions to their clubs. Norristown GC presented an NGC Standard Flower Show, "Picnics and Tailgates" on September 16, 2023. The Club of Philadelphia and Vicinity presented an NGC Small Standard Flower Show "Garden of the Arts, A Celebration of Phenomenal Women," on September 30, 2023. Outdoor Gardeners presented an NGC Standard Flower Show, "Broadway in Bloom," on October 6-7, 2023, and Countryside Gardeners sold floral arrangements at "Newtown Historic Market Day" in Newtown, Bucks County. The district clubs are now planning for Holiday Tours, welcoming new members, putting gardens to bed and working on indoor projects.

REPORTS OF BOARD MEMBERS (in alphabetical order)

2023 Convention Vice Co-Chair, Haddie Weber, surprised **2023 Convention Chair, Marilyn Backus**, by presenting her with Haddie's personally hand-embroidered framed gift of a "Thyme to Garden" sampler, in blue and gray, which was displayed for all to admire.

2024 Convention Chair, Joyce Crider, reported the 2024 GCFP Convention, "Petals and Patchwork," on April 7, 8, 9, 2024 is well on its way to being finalized. Their speakers, workshops and sessions are all in order. Attendees will be entertained by "An Arboreal Amble" led by Dr. Richard Olsen of the National Arboretum; Karl Gercens of Longwood Gardens will present "'Dessert' Plants for your Gardens," and Sam Hoadley of Mt. Cuba, will speak on "Knockout Natives," just to name a few. Make an Herb vinegar or Alcohol Jewelry at one of their three workshops. Learn about the gardening practices of the Lancaster County Amish with author Beth Oberholtzer and her book, Amish Gardens of Lancaster County, which is available for purchase. Charles Cresson, from Longwood Gardens, will talk about unusual bulbs for gardeners. There will be sessions on Stormwater Management and Wildlife Gardenscaping by Derek Stoner. There will be vendors with jewelry and clothing, and locally grown plants, jams, jellies and baked goods. All Tri-refreshers are called to sign up for the convention and the tour of the Lancaster County Environmental Center Wildflower Gardens. To get everyone in the mood for the Amish Country and the 2024 Convention, she and Delores Nolt sold ten-dollar raffle tickets for the quilt, tote bag and wall hanging in the back of the room.

2024 Convention Co-Chair / Tri-Refresher, Delores Nolt, announced the presenters and credit hours for the Tri-Refresher to be held at the 2024 GCFP Convention in Lancaster, PA. Naturalist, Lisa Sanchez, will present "Wildflowers, Gardens and More," in a one-hour classroom and one-hour walk viewing the Wildflower trail for two Environmental School credit hours. Conservatory Manager, Karl Gercens, of Longwood Gardens will present "Dessert Plants for Your Garden" for one Landscape Design credit hour. Naturalist, Derek Stoner, will present "Wildlife Gardenscaping: Designing Attractive Gardens for the Benefit of Birds, Bees and Butterflies" for one Landscape Design credit hour. Vice President of Horticulture, Andrew Bunting, of Pennsylvania Horticultural Society will present "PHS Gardens Flourishing Through Sustainability" for one Environmental School credit hour. Longwood Gardens instructor, Charles Cresson, will present "Succeeding with Unusual Bulbs that Grow in Your Garden" for one Gardening School credit hour. Dr. Richard Olsen, Director of U.S. Arboretum will present "An Arboreal Amble" for one Landscape Design credit hour. The Manager of Horticultural Research at Mt. Cuba Center, Sam Hoadley, who has a Degree in Sustainable Landscape Horticulture from the University of Vermont, will speak on "Knockout Natives" for one Gardening School credit hour. These speakers give Tri-refresher students eight hours of classroom instruction.

2024 Convention Vendor, Flower Show and Seating Arrangements Chair, Nancy Lambert Fulk, asked for many volunteers to help with the flower show at the 2024 convention. The schedule is in the process of approval and will be delivered to everyone. She also asked for contact information for great vendors that would be interested in setting up at the convention, and for volunteers to distribute seating numbers at the door before meals.

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

2025 Convention Chair, Karen Wychock, was absent but the Recording Secretary read her report. Karen invited all to a Revolution, a “Gardening Revolution!” District XI will host the 2025 GCFP Convention in King of Prussia on April 6-8, 2025 at the Alloy Hotel, located off the PA turnpike. The convention will be a mix of gardening and American history. The convention committee worked for the past year to secure a location and invite a variety of speakers to take part in the convention. They will take advantage of the King of Prussia location by offering trolley tours of the Valley Forge National Park. There will be lunch with Martha Washington, whose husband had something to do with the American Revolution. Tim Farrell, from Telefloral, will be the main speaker on Sunday evening. He will be completing a series of six designs that will be raffled off. The committee continues to plan for the 2025 convention and hopes all will join this “Gardening Revolution!”

2026 Convention Chair, Joyce Milberg, extemporaneously reported the theme of the Convention in Erie will be “Mystery on the Bay.” The Convention planners are considering a Tri-refresher that will invite nonmembers, and topics such as the “Dark Side of Butterflies,” “Synchronous Fire Flies” and “The Fire-Fly Festival.”

501C-3 Exempt/990 Reporter, Mary Jo Gardill, reported the 2022-23 990 filings have all been accepted, except for the two new Garden Clubs, which are being worked on currently. It is important for District Directors to understand that unfederated clubs that decide to join GCFP, must provide the details of a new club’s officers and EIN to this 501-C3 Reporter. On another note, the golf scramble and putting contests had to be cancelled due to low numbers, but Mary Jo hoped to plan it for next year.

GCFP Advisory Committee Member, Sheila Croushore, met with the other Advisory Committee members on October 3, 2023 via Zoom. They have two suggestions, which have been discussed with President Leeanna. The first is to double check the Advisory emails to be sure all members are on the Board email list. The second recommendation is due to a few schools not having chairs, and because a multiple school refresher will be held at the Spring 2024 Convention, they need to identify who is to sign consultants’ paperwork and to communicate that information.

Awards Chair, Marilyn Small, reported all of the award documents were updated and on the GCFP website by mid-July. She thanked Vina McLeod Rudolph for her patience with uploading new documents to the website and re-uploading when changes were made! On Tuesday, October 3, **Vice Awards Chair, Sheri Lowry**, and Marilyn Zoomed an Awards Presentation for members, detailing some basics of applying for awards and some important changes. She had approximately 58 members in attendance. The presentation can be found on the GCFP website Awards page. There are new submission rules and requirements for some awards, so all are asked to read all of the 2023-2025 awards manuals from NGC, CAR, GCFP, and documents for understanding the new submission rules. There are two major changes for submitting awards this year: 1. All NGC award entries are to be submitted electronically, with the exception of the newsletter, which may require an electronic submission at a later date. 2. “All applications with photos of people, including Youth under age 18, MUST have a signed Publications Release Form for each person involved, on file at NGC Headquarters.” (NGC Awards Handbook 2023-2025). Other changes this year are for the Comprehensive Award. This year it will be divided into two awards: 1. GCFP Comprehensive Award for the district with the most GCFP Awards; 2. Youth Contests Comprehensive Award for the district with the most club-sponsored winners of Youth Contests, which include the Youth Poetry, Sculpture, High School Essay, and Smokey

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

Bear/Woodsy Owl Poster. 3. Only 1st, 2nd and 3rd places will be recognized and included in the computation of club totals. Awards deadlines are just around the corner -- December 1, 2023 and January 2024. All NGC awards are due to the respective committee chair by December 1, 2023. Check the [Awards Deadlines](#) document for all other due dates, and [Committee Chairs document](#) to send to the correct person, because a few committee chairs have changed. This part of the GCFP website is password protected, so call the District Director for the password. Eligibility for the Governor's Trophy this year is for small clubs, 1 - 20 members. An email was sent to the District Director of those clubs suggesting that they inform their small club(s) to review the requirements for applying.

Bee Gap Chair, Bonita Herman, reported on the Squash Bee, a native solitary bee that pollinates the Cucurbita species, i.e., pumpkins and squash, which are entirely dependent upon these bees to pollinate them. The Squash Bee is similar to a honeybee, but is slightly larger with a rounder face and hairy legs, while the honeybees have smooth legs. They are busy just after dawn as the flowers of the Cucurbita start to open, and sleep at midday as the flowers close for the day. The male sleep in the closed flower and the pollen sticks to him. When he awakens, his day starts, either by searching for food or a female to fertilize. The female goes from flower to flower looking for nectar and pollen for her nest, thus pollination occurs. The nests are on the edges of the Cucurbita fields/gardens in bare soil. A mound of loose soil, about a pencil width diameter, is probably an active nest. The nest is a vertical tunnel with a short antechamber, where the females rest at night. There are several lateral chambers with a shiny waterproof lining for the eggs. She fills the chambers, lower ones first, about one-third full of pollen and nectar. She lays the egg and "walls" it off so that several eggs, each in their own room, can be laid in one chamber. Female eggs are laid first in the deepest chambers. Since these are solitary, non-aggressive bees that are unlikely to sting, it is safe to walk around or near nests. The egg hatches, and the larvae eats the pollen and nectar. The larvae spend the winter as prepupae, and in the spring, they pupate to adults and then emerge in late spring or early summer to die in the fall. Gardeners can assist squash bees by leaving some bare, non-compacted soil near squash plants; using newspaper or grass clippings as mulch that does not inhibit nesting; using a no-till method, at least not near nesting areas; and waiting until mid-July to till when the bees' emergence should be completed.

Birds, Butterflies & Conservation Chair, Marcy Cunkelman, reported that it is time to say good bye to the summer residents and hello to the winter visitors, some of which have already arrived. Put those leaf blowers away since they damage the protection of leaf mulch for the pollinators and caterpillars, toad, frogs and amphibians, and turtles, that hide and overwinter. Blue Jays are gathering up the wonderful oak mast and planting acorns everywhere. Doug Tallamy says the top of line host plant for all critters are oak trees, which support 897 caterpillar species in the United States. Monarchs are still on the move to their winter grounds in Mexico. Cape May in New Jersey has been tagging with the Monarch Watch tags and has been using a mini tracking device they glue on the backs of monarchs. The tiny, 62 mg, 8x8x2.6 mm chip can simultaneously measure light intensity and temperature, and wirelessly communicate that information back to researchers once the butterflies reach their destination. Marcy requests that all members NOT take down the hummer feeders for as long as possible, since removal doesn't stop a hummer from migrating. Feeders give hummers a source of carbohydrates (sugar water) for energy when most flowers have stopped producing nectar and have died. Researchers have caught, identified and banded 204 western hummingbirds, such as the Rufous, Allen's, Calliope, Anna's and Black-chinned in 49 counties since the 1990's. This research is valuable to understanding hummingbird migration. Marcy just completed the "NGC Certified Pollinator Garden Application." It is only 2 pages long and it's very similar to the PA Master Gardeners

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

Certified Pollinator Gardens application. After waiting over 3 months, her new pollinator habitat license plate N8IVE finally arrived. She reminded all that it is time to get feeders clean, and filled with fresh sunflower seed and chips and to recycle pumpkins for the critters to eat. Her gardens will probably be frosted this coming week and she will be leaving the plants in place through the winter for natural food and cover. It is also time to plant more natives. She expects to see something special in the yard as a result of adding a great native plant.

Blue Star Memorial Chair, Karen Faust, reported that on Saturday, September 16, 2023, District VIII erected their SIXTEENTH Blue Star Marker. She extended many thanks to District VIII Director, Rosie Lawrence, and her faithful Blue Star enthusiasts. This vibrant group of women and men bring our Nation's Veterans to the forefront at the Interstate Welcome Centers on I-90 (East and West) as well as at their community gardens and parks and now to Interstate 80 (Mile Marker 29) at Barkeyville. Karen encouraged all members to visit Patriot Park near Somerset's Flight 93 Memorial. She joined and thanked the members of Somerset Garden Club at their dedication of a Blue Star By-Way Marker at the Park Entrance on September 16, 2023. The Park is dedicated to the men and women patriots of the Global War on Terror since 9-11. When traveling to Hershey a few weeks ago, Karen noticed two markers along the Turnpike that were almost unreadable. Karen found that Sewah, the current manufacturer in Ohio, is not accepting markers for restoration at this time. Karen was informed that there is a man and wife team that travels from State to State in their motor home to do on-site restoration. Jane and Karen will investigate and will report back any findings. Please share a photo and its location with Karen when a marker needing repair is noticed. One of Karen's goals in this position is to place a Blue Star Highway Marker at every Pennsylvania Welcome Center. As of today, eight are installed, but she seeks sponsors for six more Markers: two on the eastern border, two on the southern border and two on the western border. Some of the members of District VIII suggested that District VIII and Karen's District IX consider jointly planning and paying for a marker on I-80 Eastbound near Mercer, PA. Karen has asked Rosie Lawrence of District VIII and Claudia Bernardo of District IX to propose this idea at their next District Meetings. Brochures with the new pricing and Karen's business card were available at the back table. The Gold Star Bi-Way Marker installation planned for September 2023 in Bedford was postponed until 2024.

Blue Star Memorial Central Assistant, Jane Howe, reported that Mary Louise Michie, President of NGC 1995-97, stated, "Each time a Blue Star Memorial Marker is dedicated, we show our love for this beautiful United States of America and our appreciation for the members of the Armed Services of America." The Blue Star Memorial Marker is seen all over Pennsylvania and the rest of the United States. It honors and shows gratitude to all service men and women who have fought, are fighting, and will fight, to save America's freedoms. There are now 110 markers in Pennsylvania along the Turnpike, rest and Welcome areas, at museums, courthouses, parks, ball fields, zoos, libraries, retirement homes and other approved appropriate places. Jane highlighted that six Welcome Centers in PA need a Blue Star and asked for volunteer clubs to step up and make it happen. Any garden club in District IV and V should contact Jane, and other Districts should contact Karen Faust for more information on these six projects.

Book of Recognition Donations Chair, Joyce Hoek, reported that since June 5, 2023, 13 people were honored in the Book of Recognition, and donations totaled \$295. 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." She asks all to please consider a donation to the Book of Recognition in appreciation for, or 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 has chosen to focus on Conservation Education. This ties in directly to the Seeds of Service Project which involves working with a youth community, performing recycling and environmental activities. It also focuses on the Plant America, Feed America Project by educating youth about gardening and actually growing a community garden to feed the hungry, which they are doing in her club. Through her research, she found lots of lists of resources, worksheets, books, awards and contests, but no lesson plans for teaching and working with Junior Gardeners. So, she has developed lesson plans on pollinators, gardening, recycling, and ecological topics to use with youth groups. They include hands-on activities and experiential learning projects, and projects with the local state park. She will work with Vina to get them on the website. One short lesson introduction is about the 5 R's of Recycling. Martha wrote an article on the 5 R's for the Keystone Gardener. The 5 R's are Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, and then finally, Recycle.

Club Newsletter Awards Chair, Joyce Peterson, reported that she received one newsletter for awards this year so far. She asked the District Directors to encourage their clubs to send their newsletters to her before the deadline of December 1, 2023 and intends to send a notice to the DDs to forward to their clubs as a reminder.

Club Yearbook Awards Chair, Iris Cisarik, reported that she has already received a few club yearbooks. She noted a few of the points that are important when judging the yearbooks. Programs should cover a variety of NGC goals and objectives and there should be background information briefly listed on speakers and/or programs. There should also be a brief description of club projects. It usually takes only a few minutes to fill out the GCFP Award Application Cover Sheet, which is found online. Recall that only hard copies are accepted for judging, the deadline to her is December 1, 2023 and two award applications are necessary.

Convention Coordinator, Judith Schaffer, reported that she hosted a Zoom session on September 26, 2023 with the three upcoming Convention Teams - 2024, 2025 and 2026. They discussed "small print wording" in their contracts dealing with service fees, combined tax fee and language on AV usage. Each convention's final wrap-up and evaluation session acts as a teaching tool for future budgeting and programming. Scheduling early gives us a desired event date, but then initiates a cash payment schedule. Fund raisers are vital to help defray these early costs. Did you know that King of Prussia is not allowed to begin promoting their fund raisers outside their district until Lancaster's convention is done? The Lancaster team is selling tickets for an Amish Quilt Raffle. Buy tickets for their fund raiser today!

Environmental – Keep PA Beautiful Chair, Judi Swanson, reported that Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful.org (KPB) has a VAST website with many off-site resources. KPB is a non-profit community action and education organization, which is an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful. Volunteers are its PUBLIC FACE who do the "heavy lifting" while KPB works with partners like government agencies, and private corporations. Core Programming focuses on Litter Control, Prevention, Education, and Enforcement. Other programs promote Recycling, Beautification and Greening, Illegal Dumping, and Land and Waterway Stewardship. KPB has a Financial Grant Program to aid organizers and municipalities that seek to keep PA "Clean and Green." Its most well-known initiative is the "Pick Up PA" program. Pick Up PA is wide-ranging: assisting volunteers, communities and various organizations to stage events, pick up litter in roadways, empty lots, parks, schools and waterways, and support community improvement projects in Recycling, Illegal Dump spotting, Greening/Beautification and Education. KPB maintains a

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

calendar of events on its website where clubs can register their own event or inquire about joining others. Litter collection supplies, and promotional materials such as posters, signs, and folders are often available to volunteers. Other events, open to only the planner's group, are listed to essentially join "the movement" and to qualify for supplies. Litter collection events are usually scheduled in spring and/or fall. The Altoona Garden Club has a litter pickup program every year. Most informative for Garden Club event planners is the explanatory video that is available on the KPB site. It outlines the process of conceptualizing, planning and organizing an event. The site provides projects submitted by past planners, and tips for planning events that are age appropriate for youngsters and seniors, with safety suggestions included. KPB's Program Coordinator can be reached at the phone number listed on the site. Judi's club, The Gardeners of Crooked Billet, took a major step to get out of plastics. She designed a Laundry Challenge for her members that compared the cleaning potential of the new laundry detergent strips to members' liquid, pod or powdered detergent on a medium-sized load of towels and bedsheets. The club purchased Canada's TruEarth Laundry Detergent. Fifteen volunteers from GOCB compared four washes: plain water, usual detergent, then two using the laundry strips. Participants judged each wash and compared each to the others, using the same set of items for each wash and giving normal usage to the items between washes. They recorded their findings on a log sheet which was turned in after the month of serial washes. The rationale was that if members were pleased with the cleaning power of the detergent strips compared to their usual detergent, then they would be inclined to use the strips regularly with the result that USE of Plastic bottles would decrease, and a POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION is made to the environment because of LESS WATER wasted and LESS SPACE consumed. ALL participants were pleased and intend to incorporate detergent strips in their laundry routines.

Environmental - Trash to Treasure Co-Chairs, Marsha and Naser Chowdhury, reported their Committee focused on two specific areas: First, to educate/communicate key topics of interest associated with environmental health and waste management through the Keystone Gardener Online. Specifically, they issued an article titled "Battery Recycling is Critical for Reducing Hazardous Waste" in the KG Online Newsletter (vol 5, Issue 2, July 2023). Secondly, to develop Trash to Treasure Theme/Rules for the 2024 GCFP Trash to Treasure contest. Lancaster County produces 2.1 billion pounds of milk annually (1776 farms). Because Lancaster ranks 1st in PA and 10th in the country in milk production, the contest is based on application of milk cartons and dairy containers in crafting an artistic display of patchwork. The theme of the contest is "In a Milkwork Garden." Information and contest rules will be communicated through the next Keystone Gardener.

Flower Show Book of Evidence Evaluation Chair, Deb Stumpf, reported that a digital copy of a Book of Evidence is now required by NGC to apply for a flower show award. An example may be viewed on the NGC website. This copy can be on a disc or a flash drive, but it must accompany a book, if one is submitted. Applicants are free to send just the digital copy, but it must accompany a GCFP application, two NCG applications and a copy of the show's schedule. Those wanting to have the book of evidence or the digital record returned must include return postage in the application. Deb asked all applicants to please remember that all Books of Evidence MUST be sent to her as the state chairman for this award and that her name and address is on the state application form. Clubs that are having a holiday show in November or December are asked to please contact Deb directly about book submission. The deadline for submitting a Book of Evidence is December 1, 2023, but she is willing to work with anyone who may have a time crunch. She encouraged Flower Show Chairs to reward their clubs and committees by applying for a flower show recognition award.

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

Flower Show Judges Council Chair, Mary Hetrick, announced the program, A Perfect Harmony: Floral Designs Inspired by Quilts, for the Judges Council Luncheon at the GCFP Convention on Tuesday, April 9, 2024. Mr. Steven Cox from Longwood Gardens will create five floral designs. Four will appear on pedestals in front of hanging quilts. A fifth quilt will be behind him as he creates the final design. The President of the York Quilt Guild will join us and give a description/history of each quilt. It is such a wonderful program for Petals and Patchwork. All designs, including containers, will be raffled off for attendees to win. The GCFP is in the process of developing and implementing something new to help with the rising costs of having Flower Show Schools and Flower Show Symposiums. The State Judges Council has approved a Flower Show School/Symposium Donation Fund to which anyone may donate. Details of the fund will be better explained in the next issue of the Keystone Gardener. The Northeast Area Judges Council will send six judges to the Philadelphia Flower Show in March 2024.

Central Area Judges Council (CAJC) Chair, Tonya Young, reported 24 members in CAJC since she invited the new Student Judges to join. Three joined and others plan to attend. CAJC will focus on two design types, armatures and transparency, at their next meeting, and then incorporate them into their next flower show on March 28, 2024. CAJC members are working on the schedule for the flower show at the 2024 Convention.

Erie Area Judges Council (EAJC) Chair, Kay John, was absent but her report was read by the Recording Secretary. She reported the Erie Area Judges Council met on August 30, 2023 and elected Tom Huston as the new Chairman of EAJC beginning in 2024. Many favorable reports and comments were made concerning their 2023 area flower shows. EAJC will begin planning their next flower show in the spring. It will be held during the summer of 2024. Horticultural specimen details were discussed by members who brought specimen plants to the meeting. Design was a challenge in "black & white," which produced remarkable interpretations with the materials supplied to each member. EAJC's next meeting is November 1, 2023. Members will bring a Thanksgiving design and seasonal horticulture.

Laurel Highlands Judges Council (LHJC) Chair, Charlotte Crissey, reported several of their clubs held Flower Shows including Blair Garden Club, Indiana Garden Club and a joint show of our council and the Pittsburgh Area Judges Council. Finally, a "for fun" non-NGC show will be held by Designers Guild on Oct. 30, 2023 at the Greensburg Garden Center. At their August 16, 2023 meeting, the Council discussed two topics: A. subdividing "Any Other" horticulture classes because the judges noticed an inordinate number of entries in these classes that were not fully subdivided by the show's Classification Chairman. Judging of large numbers of specimens in this class is difficult, slows down the judging process and limits the number of awards offered. It was suggested that all clubs, especially clubs that do not have their own judge(s), should be made more aware that NGC judges are available for consultations. An article is being prepared to submit this idea to the Keystone Gardener. B. judging of Flower Show Schedules because there seems to be some discrepancies between the guidelines in the NGC Flower Show Schedule Rubric and Form 29, the form used to evaluate schedules. Because they are not coordinated uniformly, the judging of Schedules is unnecessarily difficult. Their next meeting will be held in December at a date to be announced.

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

Northeast Area Judges Council (NAJC) Chair, Barbara Campbell, was absent but her report was read by the Recording Secretary. Barbara reported that the NAJC met on June 28, 2023 at the home of Becky Short, who is President of Emmaus Garden Club and is a Master Gardener. The Council discussed how to assist other garden clubs to have flower shows, such as, completing an entry card, writing a schedule, how to do designs and prepare horticulture and staging. Several clubs have expressed interest in having their help. The next meeting is a field trip to Home Depot to look for items that could be used in designs. Rosie Ebersole did a demonstration on how to "Design with Nine" at the Allentown Fair. One new student judge attended their meeting.

Philadelphia Area Judges Council Chair, Valerie Burgess, was not present and did not send a report.

Pittsburgh Area Judges Council (PAJC) Chair, Mary Ann Artman, was not present but her report was read by PAJC Vice Chair, Marilyn Backus. The joint Pittsburgh Area and Laurel Highlands Judges Councils' flower show, "Let's Dance," took place on August 16, 2023. A short meeting was held afterwards to discuss the potential merging of Pittsburgh Area council with Laurel Highlands, as was previously suggested. Laurel Highlands declined the offer to merge, stating that the area to travel was too large. The date for next year's joint flower show with LHJC is scheduled for June 25, 2024. Mary Jane Martucci volunteered to write the Schedule. PAJC then discussed and approved changing its next meeting from October 25, 2023 to October 18, 2023 to avoid schedule conflicts.

Flower Show Judges Credentials Chair, Nancy Cartwright, reported GCFP currently has 91 Accredited FS Judges in Pennsylvania. The numbers are categorized as follows: 21 Accredited Judges, 7 Life Judges and 63 Master Judges. There are ten Judges in Good Standing until December 2023, two Judges in Good Standing until December 2024, 79 Judges in Good Standing until December 2025 and 44 Emeritus Judges.

Flower Show Schedule Chair, Margie Bucci, reported that she received four Schedules to evaluate. She asked that anyone having a Schedule to be evaluated, should send it to her as soon as possible. The information on how to apply is on the GCFP website in the Awards Manual, pages 17 and 27. The deadline for submission is December 1, 2023. In the Handbook for Flower Shows, the "Scale of Points for Evaluating Flower Show Schedules" and the Rubric (Form 29), which is used to evaluate the Schedules, are not exactly the same. Because they are not coordinated uniformly, the judging of Schedules is difficult.

Flower Show Schools Chair (April-October 2023), Lori Pancione, was not present but her report was read by the Recording Secretary. Lori reported that Flower Show School IV will be held October 12-15, 2023 at the DoubleTree by Hilton, in Plymouth Meeting, PA. She and the Philadelphia Area Judges Council [PAJC] expect 34 students. Throughout the course, members of the PAJC will bring the needed horticulture and designs for the point scoring sections of the school. There will be approximately seven all-day workers at the school. Amassing, organizing and transporting all the unusual components for the Assemblage, Floor and Creative Grouped Mass Designs, as well as the Horticulture Collections and Displays, has taken lots of work and will require several trips back to the Philadelphia area for her. Hence, Lori was unable to attend this October board meeting and apologized for her absence. Kay Morrissey, the outgoing PAJC Chair, Audrey Williams, Horticulture Chair for Schools 1-3, and Liz Snowdon, Design Chair, have been invaluable assistants to her throughout this school series that is drawing to a closure with School IV. The Ways and Means Team headed by Marjorie Sears worked hard to sell items to

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

help defray school costs. Without this team's herculean efforts, the schools could not have been completed. She appreciates their tireless work on behalf of the Plymouth Meeting Schools. Lori hopes this last group of students will complete School IV with stellar grades and that 25-30 new student judges can be added to the state of Pennsylvania. Once the tests are received and processed for School IV, and the school finally accredited, a full report will be sent to both the state judges council and the GCFP board. She expects this to happen sometime near the end of December. It does take some time for the tests to be marked, mailed back and the accreditation process to take place. Budgetary discussion will continue with the State Judges Council to make sure the series of schools finishes up smoothly and successfully. Again, she expressed sincere appreciation for ALL who have supported and worked so hard and so faithfully to make this series of schools available to the eastern side of the state.

Flower Show Student Judges Credentials Chair, Claire Lechliter, reported that she recently received the information from Connie Burnley detailing only one remaining student judge who will hopefully take the exam in October. Lori Pancione expects GCFP will very soon have 26 new student judges who will need their credentials recorded by Claire. Connie Burnley has provided Claire with her system and some very good advice.

Flower Show Symposium Chair, Tonya Young, reported that Pennsylvania will host a Symposium on August 5, 6, 7, 2024. The location is at the DoubleTree by Hilton Pittsburgh-Cranberry Hotel. She asked all to mark their calendar and to look for more information soon.

GCFP History & Historian, Judy Jackson, was absent and did not send a report.

Gardening School Credentials Chair, Mary Jo Schlomann, was absent and did not send a report.

Habitat for Humanity Donations Chair, Lisa Merschultz, was absent and did not send a report.

President Ryba recessed the meeting at 4:22 PM and reconvened it at 7:45 PM.

The District Directors reported first in the evening. See their reports on pages 3-7.

REPORTS OF BOARD MEMBERS, continued

Horticulture Coordinator, JoAnn Celaschi, reported that eleven names were added to the Exceptional Horticulturalist Directory in 2023 on the GCFP website (click on Directories, then scroll to Honor Roll of Exceptional Horticulturists.) These people showed, through their education, their experiences in growing and handling a variety of horticulture specimens, and the sharing of their knowledge, that they are truly exceptional horticulturists.

Horticulture Hints Chair, Grace Mitchell, reported that she had a Horribleculture summer. First, her garden did not get plowed until the second week in June. Then it rained so much she couldn't plant. Then after she did plant, it didn't rain for 3 weeks. Then when she wanted to run the tiller, it wouldn't start. Then the groundhog ate \$50 worth of sunflowers when they had four leaves. Then a new weed, which resembled wheat, overtook most of the rows. Then all the zinnias that she managed to weed were half the size they should have been. (Recall the three weeks with no rain.). But hope springs eternal in the gardener's mind (or is it insanity?) The catalogs for fall bulbs are here. Jung Seeds.com has a daffodil called Rip Van Winkle. It looks like a bad hair day or an electrical accident. The ice cream tulip is a scoop of vanilla ice cream in a pink bowl. Better luck to all next year!

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

Horticulture Therapy Chair, Maryann DeSanto, reported that a few clubs that have visited local nursing homes and facilities took advantage of their home-grown flowers for summertime arrangements and various pressed flower crafts. Another club was able to obtain donations from a local grower. Succulents were also used for interesting designs. The Green Thumb Garden Club creatively incorporated leis, flowers and pineapple plants for a "Vacation in Hawaii," as their latest Horticulture Therapy visit. The Garden Club of Springfield will visit a local nursing home next week to help residents make fall arrangements. The Garden Club of York participated in a weekly garden program from April to September. Working with special needs adults in a daycare program, they met at a garden established by the family of one of the adults they serve. In this garden, they planted and cared for raised beds, ending with everyone taking home fruits, vegetables and pumpkins for their fall decorating. With the Holiday season approaching, another way to reach out is to write holiday cards to local residents. Every year, some clubs ask for the names and room numbers of the residents from the local nursing home and then, for each, write a personal card, which is collected at the club meeting and then delivered to the facility. The residents appreciated these cards so much. It takes so little time to bring joy to someone's day. Maryann encouraged members to view the GCFP Horticulture Therapy Facebook page for photos and ideas and consider incorporating a Horticulture Therapy program.

Insurance Chair, Lorraine Dupre, was absent and did not send a report.

Investment Chair, Gail Corle Manna, was not present but her report was read by the Recording Secretary. Gail is happy to say the Federation Investments have been holding their own during these turbulent times. As of October 5, 2023, Investments totaled \$513,820 and the total in the cash reserve is \$39,681 for ready access. Accounts have a current yield of 5.85%. Since the June Board meeting, \$50,000 has been moved from the cash reserve into investment accounts as approved by the Board and there was a \$6,000 transfer to the Treasurer in August 2023.

Keystone Gardener (KG) Editor/Advertising, Karen Wychock, was not present but her report was read by the Recording Secretary. Karen announced that the next deadline for the printed KG is November 1, 2023, which is for the Convention Registration issue. She reminded everyone to check out the GCFP website for specific directions when submitting information to either the online version or printed version of the KG. The KG info is listed under the MORE tab located on the right-hand side of the screen. Information on style, format and ad rates can be found there. It makes her job so much easier if everyone followed just a few steps. When submitting a document to the Keystone Gardener printed booklet, or to the KG ONLINE newsletter, please put it in a WORD document using Arial 11-point font.

Keystone Gardener (KG) Online Editor, Marilyn Small, reported her main concern in her new role is receiving enough information to publish information and articles, although she is slowly starting to receive info from a few chairs, clubs, and District Directors. October 15, 2023 is the deadline for the November 1, 2023 issue. She intends to get the draft copy to proofreaders by October 21, 2023. Several members have agreed to stay on as proofreaders: Marilyn Backus, Jane Dodson, Angela McDonnell, Judy Warn, Karen Wychock and Dorothy Yard. Committee Chairs who have a report that is newsworthy enough for the full membership and want it to be published, please email it to Marilyn Small in a Word document. Also, club members or district directors who have done or are doing something interesting and newsworthy, please send that information also. The KG Online has a section named "Keystone Events" to share any major upcoming club or district events. The original KG Online masthead and logo has been slightly changed to a darker green to match the GCFP logo color.

Landscape Design Laurel Highlands Council (LDLHC) Co-Chairs, Sheila Croushore and Sue Konvolinka, reported the LDLHC met for two hours on September 7, 2023 at the Children's Peace Garden at the Flight 93 Chapel in Shanksville, where they planted four mums near the twins on the bench statue, cleaned the statue and weeded the garden areas. They look forward to spring to schedule a workday to add soil and spread mulch.

Leadership Workshop 2023 (Zoom) Chair, Kay John, reported that due to health concerns, the July 26, 2023 Leadership Conference was cancelled. Plans are for the Zoomed Conference is to be rescheduled and held during the spring of 2024.

Liaison to PA Horticulture Society (PHS), Flossie Narducci, was present and did not send a report.

Life Memberships, State/Regional/NGC Donations Chair, Jan Olsen, reported that there were no new Life Members since the June 2023. She made packets of information about Life Memberships for the District Directors and asks them to use the packets to promote Life Memberships in their clubs. Each packet contains information about Life Memberships and copies of the Life Membership application for NGC, CAR-SGC and GCFP.

Membership Chair, JoAnne Fogelman, reported that she received 56 Inquiries from NGC regarding people interested in information about joining a garden club in PA since June 2023. She sent these inquiries to the District Directors to be passed onto the nearest garden club. Each district had the following number of inquiries: I (7), II/III (10), IV (4), V (5), VI (3), VII (1), VIII (1), IX (8), X (5), and XI (12).

Memory Book Chair, Rose Rombowski, was absent and did not send a report.

National/Regional Projects Chair, Eileen Hoover, was absent and did not send a report.

Natural Disasters, USA Donations Chair, Kathy Crossman, reported that donations from June 6, 2023 - October 9, 2023 to the Natural Disasters/USA fund, in the amount of \$444, were received from GCFP Districts VII and X and Ingomar Garden Club. All checks have been forwarded to Vivian Hall, GCFP Treasurer. Natural disasters continue to affect all parts of our country and so there is a constant need for our assistance in restoring gardens and parks. Last year, National Garden Clubs (NGC) was able to provide grants in total of \$7,723 and continues to receive new applications for aid following hurricanes, tornados, and floods. GCFP can take pride in knowing our continued generosity is helping to restore hope to our fellow gardeners! Kathy has emailed 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 chairmen and Club Presidents need to remind their treasurers that contributions to these funds must be made payable to GCFP with the notation "Natural Disasters USA" on the lower left memo line. She also encouraged all Club Treasurers to include their email address with their contributions so that she may send their receipt electronically.

Nominating Committee Chair, Diane Hughes, was present and did not send a report.

Organizational Studies Chair, Sharon Richardson, was present and did not send a report.

Pennsylvania Resources Council Chair, Mary Lou Colussy, reported that Pennsylvania Resources Council is a statewide environmental organization dedicated to the vision of a Pennsylvania where nothing is wasted. They steward resources to prevent waste and conserve the environment – building awareness, enabling action, and supporting systems change. One of the oldest environmental organizations in the Commonwealth, Pennsylvania Resources Council, (PRC), has worked to protect Pennsylvania’s natural resources since 1939. In the 1970s, PRC committed to resource stewardship and first engaged in large-scale recycling. In the 1980s, PRC committed to waste reduction. In the 1990s, PRC was a leader for recycling and solid waste management in southwestern PA. In the 2000s, it added environmental education and watershed protection to the mission.

President Ryba recessed the meeting at 9:00 PM and asked attendees to reconvene on Tuesday, October 10, 2023 at 9:00 AM. The continuing Meeting opened at 9:10 AM.

REPORTS OF BOARD MEMBERS, continued

1st Vice President, Pat Wolanski, reported that since June, she has been actively engaged in managing emails from members and outside organizations. Many inquiries about joining local garden clubs have landed in her inbox, and she has been referring them to the appropriate District Director for personal follow up. One of the highlights of her role has been attending the Annual District Meetings that allows her to travel around this beautiful State. These meetings have been exceptionally welcoming and filled with camaraderie. Meeting garden club members in person has been a truly enriching experience. She enjoyed listening to the Presidents’ reports on their activities, successes, and upcoming events. The monthly meetings of the District Directors (DDs) have been ongoing since June, focusing primarily on innovative fundraising ideas and membership. Additionally, monthly PowerPoint presentations are planned for the members of GCFP. Each District has been assigned a month for their presentation, with the first planned for October 17, 2023, hosted by District VII. Everyone should have already received the link from your Director. As mentioned in her last report, the GCFP District Directors’ Manual has been revised and a new document will soon be forwarded to Vina and made available on the GCFP website. Looking ahead, the upcoming meeting will center around end-of-year paperwork submissions. To add a touch of fun and creativity, one of the directors proposed a show-and-tell session for sharing holiday craft ideas. DD meetings take place on the fourth Thursday of each month. Beyond the structured topics, these meetings provide the DDs with a platform to connect, exchange ideas, seek guidance, and address any concerns.

Penny Pines Donations Chair, Barb Andrus, reported the GOOD news that the Collection Agreement between the GCFP and the USDA, Forest Service Allegheny National Forest is now officially updated! The ten-page contract states the GCFP fund will provide \$13,945 for the five-year term of 8/28/2023 to 8/28/2028. The Allegheny National Forest celebrated the 100th Anniversary of their establishment as a national forest on September 24, 1923, and ‘Commemorating 100 years of growth!’ Penny Pines donations may be sent to Barb as they are earmarked for the Penny Pines Reforestation fund. Clubs will receive a certificate thanking them for their contributions. The GCFP Penny Pines Donations since June 1, 2023 to present is \$136.

Personnel Committee Chair, Betsy Smith, was absent and did not send a report.

Pollinator Restoration Program Chair, Leslie Anthony, reported that there is a certification to fit every kind of naturalized yard. Whether a yard is a pollinator, native plant or wildlife habitat, or a monarch way station, there is a certification for it! The organizations know that being able to spread awareness with yards signs is one of the top benefits of certification. And so, certifications may come easy. Their goal is primarily financial support. Leslie endorses the Penn State's Pollinator Friendly Habitat Certification program because it focuses on the needs of the state's pollinators and recommends plants and practices that boost the pollinator value of a property. All GCFP members and club-maintained community gardens should get certified as PA Pollinator Friendly. The plaques look especially beautiful in community gardens and serve to educate the public. She wants to see club-maintained certified gardens featured in the Keystone Gardener, and in District and local club newsletters as well. Newsletters should also include more articles about pollinators, plants and pollinator friendly gardening practices. Leslie asked GCFP clubs to consider forming a Pollinator Advocacy Committee, as Shaler Garden Club did two years ago. This summer the Committee held a workshop covering the basics of a Pollinator-Friendly Habitat. Over 25% of the club's membership attended along with members of the community. Committee members contributed pollinator-friendly articles, featured exceptional pollinator gardens in the club's newsletter, answered plant and pollinator questions and visited homes that are preparing for certification. Members whose gardens are certified are awarded a special pin acknowledging this achievement. At the state and district levels, Leslie hopes to see more recognition given to clubs and members who are making a difference for pollinators.

President's Project – We're Keeping PA Beautiful Awards Chair, Barbara Campbell, was absent and did not send a report.

Protocol Chair, Haddie Weber, was present and had nothing to report.

Sage and Roses Donations Chair, Vivian Abel, reported that the Sage and Roses Fund was established by Lois Shuster, when she was NGC President. Its purpose is to help pay for new Blue Star Memorial Markers and to maintain those markers which might be in need of repair or restoration. When Lois began this fund, her idea was to have garden club members send greeting cards by email rather than by U.S. mail and donate what they would have paid in postage to the Sage and Roses Fund. Our GCFP Past President Sheila Croushore did just that when her term ended. She sent thank you notes to the GCFP Board members by email and then sent a generous donation to the Sage and Roses Fund. To donate to the Sage and Roses Fund, please make your check payable to GCFP and write "Sage and Roses Fund" on the memo line. Mail the check to Vivian Able at the address listed in the Summer 2023 Directory issue of the KEYSTONE GARDENER. All donations are appreciated.

Scholarship Committee Chair, Sandra Hendricks, reported that the updated 2024-25 Scholarship material will be available on the GCFP website. The Application and Financial Need Forms are "fillable PDF" forms, which are easier for students to fill out and send. All District Directors and Scholarship Chairs, Club Presidents and garden club members are encouraged to give information to local high schools and college students in their districts who are deserving and in need of financial assistance to attend a college. The deadline is February 1, 2024 for a hardcopy of the application to reach Sandra. Awardees will be announced at the April 2024 Convention. District II/III had a student who won a four-year scholarship. Several Districts had scholarship winners who were freshmen and sophomore college students. She asked all to encourage these students to reapply and continue their scholarships. A college sophomore or above may also apply for a National Scholarship by filling out both GCFP and NGC applications,

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

but only one NGC winner per state is allowed per year. Sandra distributed ads to the District Directors that describe how to apply and where to get the forms on the website to put in newspapers and in schools.

Scholarship Donations Chair, Linda Southerling, was absent but her report was read by the Recording Secretary. Linda reminded all that donations to GCFP scholarships go to students who plan to further their education in Agriculture related fields. Donations were received since June from Burrellton Garden Club, Butler Garden Club, Heritage Garden Club and Wildflower Garden Club. Donations were received from Sharon Brown in memory of Gladys Dapp and Anne Collier.

Seed Money Committee Chair, Marjorie Sears, was absent but her report was read by the Recording Secretary. Marj reported that 2023 had 50 clubs apply for a part of the \$2,500 available. Each club that applied received \$50 for their club and community projects. The upcoming Keystone Gardener Newsletter will have the Seed Money Distribution List itemizing the clubs that applied and how the money was to be used. Most clubs were looking for flowers. Members with seed planting skills can make Seed Money go further! Burpee provides a special coupon code (PAGC23) uniquely for GCFP leadership for 20% off, with free shipping, without an order minimum and good for up to 50 seed packets at a time. At this time, it is NOT valid on plants and bulbs. Marj will alert the leadership if there are any updates. The Seed Money Application is on the GCFP Website and may be completed for 2024 projects and sent to Marj via email or snail mail.

Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Chair, Betty Grossheim, reported that the Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Poster Contest is open to all children in the first through fifth grades. Usually, the contest is presented in schools, but any youth group such as the local boy or girl scouts, church youth groups or even family members may participate, if the local garden club sponsors the entries. The best way to get the necessary information and forms is to type Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Contest in a computer search engine, and find the website sponsored jointly by the National Garden Clubs and the Forest Service. This site is easy to navigate and contains all necessary forms, rules, suggestions, information labels and sources of information. Betty brought a tri-fold board describing the contest and provided samples of incentives to give students ideas about creating their posters. Winning poster entries are due to Betty Grossheim by January 20, 2024.

Tours Chair, Sharon Richardson, reported that the itinerary and registration materials are ready for the eleven day "Chelsea and the Gardens of England" tour, leaving May 14 and returning May 24, 2024. The EF Go Ahead Tour's capacity is a maximum of 38 people. Trip highlights include Trafalgar Square, Buckingham Palace, Sissinghurst Castle, Hever Castle, Cotswolds, Eden Project, Cornwall Gardens, Stourhead House and Chelsea Flower Show. The package includes nine nights in handpicked hotels, daily breakfast, two lunches, three dinners with beer or wine, an expert tour director and local guides, six sightseeing tours and a private deluxe motor coach. Sharon urged those interested to register as soon as possible and purchase trip protection. There will be a private website for the tour members. A Zoom meeting overview is scheduled for November 1, 2023 at 6:30 PM. The Land Package will cost approximately \$4,750 and airfare is to be determined. Please contact sharonrichardson22@gmail.com for more information.

Web Master, Vina McLeod Rudolph, was not present and did not send a report.

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
October 9-10, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College, Boalsburg, PA

Youth Activities Co-Chairs, Chris Hawthorne and Barbara Oswald, were not present but their report was read by this Recording Secretary. Chris asked all to encourage their clubs to participate in the various youth contests. The 2023-24 Youth Sculpture Contest does not have a theme, but must fit on an 8.5x11 inch sheet of paper and must be recyclable, reused or reduced material. The photographs of the entries are judged for creative use of materials, the student's description and craftsmanship, and is open to fourth to eighth grade students. The 2023-24 High School Essay Contest theme is titled, "What is the Current and Future Impact on our Society of the Wildfires Caused by Climate Change?" The essay is judged and should be 500-600 words in 10-point font and should be part of an in-class assignment for students in ninth through twelfth grades. It is judged on Content, Composition, Manuscript, Neatness and Legibility and sources must be cited. The 2023-24 Poetry Contest theme is "I Spy With my Little Eye Something Green Outside-Celebrating Our Green World" and deals with green objects seen in our world. A poem entry must have a title different from that of the theme and should also be part of an in-classroom assignment for Kindergarten through Ninth Grade. A poem entry does not need to rhyme and is judged for Title, Content, Creativity, and Style. Details for each contest are on pages 22-24 of the 2023-25 GCFP Awards Manual available on the Awards page of the Website. The deadline for all contests sent to Chris Hawthorne is Friday, December 1, 2023. Chris noted there is increasing participation from garden clubs across the state each year and hopes a new club participates each year. Contact Barb Oswald or Chris Hawthorne with any questions.

New Business

President Ryba announced, with regrets, that she accepted the resignation of District II/III Assistant Director Gail Blasko, and District IV Assistant Director, Robin Pottorf. She welcomed and thanked Claire Kukielka for accepting the position of Assistant District II/III Director and Carla Kelly for accepting the position of Assistant District IV Director. She also welcomed and thanked Diane Quinn of Emmaus Garden Club in District II/III as the new GCFP Program Resources Chair.

The President also made the following announcements.

Thursday-Sunday, October 12-15, 2023	Flower Show School Course IV at Doubletree, Plymouth Meeting, PA
Tuesday, October 19, 2023	FREE Zoom District VII presents Gabe Tilove, Landscaping
Monday-Thursday, October 23-26, 2023	CAR-SGC Conference with Tri-Refresher at Corning, NY Doubletree

- The password to the GCFP website remains the same and must not be communicated in writing.
- The address of the 2023-2025 GCFP Treasurer, Vivian Hall, is 1511 Wallace Road, Troy, PA 16947-9444. Her phone number is 570-297-3684, and her email is vmh6777@yahoo.com
- The GCFP Headquarters address is PO Box 2054 Lower Burrell PA 15068-1454.
- The Zoom Leadership Conference has been postponed until March 2024.

Chaplain Margie Wolff offered a closing blessing. President Ryba adjourned the meeting at 10:10 AM and called for the Full Board to reconvene at the Business Meeting held at the 94th Convention, on Monday April 8, 2024.

Marilyn C. Backus – GCFP Recording Secretary

Attachment: Ref. Vivian Hall emailed the **GCFP Asset Summary as of 8/31/2023, GCFP Statement of Financial Activity 5.1.2023 - 8.31.2023 and Report of 2023 GCFP Scholarships Financial Statements** on October 2, 2023.