

Trailwood Garden Club

Monthly Meeting Minutes

September 19, 2017

President Gloria Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

Gloria thanked the outgoing board members and introduced new board members, and read the Trailwood mission statement:

“To stimulate interest in educational and horticultural activities, to promote beautification of our community, friendship and the love of gardening.”

Gloria also read a brief history of the Trailwood Garden Club, noting it was launched in Plymouth in 1976 and is the 100th branch of the national Women’s Farm & Garden Association.

Gloria welcomed two new prospective club members to the meeting and asked them to tell us a bit about themselves:

- ❖ Ibis Aragones, a retired teacher who grew up on a farm, said that she’s a novice gardener who enjoyed the garden walk and hopes to learn more from members and activities.
- ❖ Shelley Hansen, who with her husband is in her third year of rehabilitating a large property in Canton.

Activities

Members provided a brief recap of recent group activities – such as the tour of the Westland butterfly garden. Georgia Randinitis attended the Michigan Division’s International Tea/Lake Huron Cruise, and said it was an enjoyable event on a picture-perfect day. Ruta Lacis reported on the group’s successful participation in the Plymouth Fourth of July Parade and suggested the group plan for it again in 2018.

Gloria and 1st Vice President Marie Everett discussed upcoming activities, including:

- ❖ The Michigan Division’s Fall Council Meeting, October 26 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Big Beaver Methodist Church in Troy
- ❖ The October 17 club meeting, which will feature Michigan Division President Mary Schwark
- ❖ Volunteering for Daffodils4Detroit, which will do its mass planting on Belle Isle on October 14 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Marie noted that the spot for the November speaker is still open, and that she has lined up a rain garden expert to speak in January. She’s also looking for a permaculture expert, if anyone has suggestions.

Gloria passed out new membership forms, with areas for indicating one’s skills, interests and goals for club membership, and asked that they be returned to her.

Hostesses are needed for upcoming meeting refreshments; please contact Gloria to sign up.

Service projects

Gloria outlined several opportunities for members to participate in upcoming service projects, including:

- ❖ Garden scout: The 2018 Garden Walk will take place on June 26; Catherine Pennebaker volunteered to review area gardens as prospects for the tour; another scout is needed. (Later in the meeting new member Shelley Hansen volunteered to help.) Speak to Catherine if you are interested or know of a garden we should try to include.
- ❖ The magazine that Trailwood sponsors at the Plymouth District Library has been discontinued. The group needs to select another publication to underwrite; Marie Everitt brought samples of magazines such as Green Prints and Garden Gate for members' review. A vote will be taken in October when a quorum of members is available.
- ❖ We need a location for the club scarecrow in October, which will be used to decorate Plymouth and advertise Trailwood Garden Club to the public. If anyone knows of a business or organization that would allow us to post the scarecrow, please inform Gloria. It was noted that in the past, the Medilodge nursing home has welcomed the scarecrow. Gloria is checking into the permit process in the city of Plymouth and noted that multiple scarecrows are a possibility.
- ❖ Another publicity opportunity in October is to participate in the decorated-pumpkin display at the Plymouth District Library; pumpkins will be due Oct. 28. Gloria will present more information at the October meeting.
- ❖ November 1 is the date designated for decorating the Plymouth Historical Museum for Christmas; a sign-up sheet was presented and will be available again at the October meeting.
- ❖ Kellogg Park Christmas Tree: Gloria is investigating the cost and other opportunities to decorate a tree for holiday-time publicity.
- ❖ The Medilodge bird feeder is staffed through November; additional volunteers are needed.

Fall into the Garden

Gloria suggested holding a pop-up garden event and garden treasures/craft sale in late October or early November, as an additional fundraiser and publicity opportunity. She has volunteered the use of her yard and garage for the gathering and sale. A beer/wine license is feasible and inexpensive if we wish to offer drinks and snack.

The board will discuss the idea and report back in October.

Club governance

Apropos of the magazine discussion, it was noted that currently the club needs to vote on any financial expenditures. That can be a problem when a quorum of members is not present at the monthly meetings.

Gloria proposed handling such votes via an e-mail survey that members could click on via their phones and computers. Some members opined that an in-person vote is required by the club by-laws; others disagreed and were for the notion of electronic voting. The board will investigate, and perhaps bring forward the idea of updating by-laws to permit voting via digital channels.

In the same vein, there was a discussion of creating the new designation of "active" and "associate" members to streamline voting sessions. "Active" members, who have paid dues, attended at least 50 percent of meetings year-to-date and meet other criteria, would comprise the voting body. This would make it easier to achieve a quorum as fewer meeting attendees would be needed in order to advance club business without delay. "Associate" member who participate infrequently would be welcome to all activities and welcome to vote if they do attend, but their presence would not be required for a vote. This topic will be explored by the board and revisited at future meetings.

The board has been exploring new venues for club meetings. October, November and January meetings will be held at the Plymouth Township hall; the location for the December party is undecided. On a trial basis, the February meeting will take place at the Plymouth District Library.

Financials

Garden Walk 2017 revenue included \$3,538 in ticket sales and \$1,344 from the Garden Treasures event.

Marilyn George presented financial statements from the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 seasons; last year's ending balance was \$4,154. The board will be soliciting suggestions for charitable donations and other expenditures; if you have suggestions, please send to Gloria. Marilyn and Marie will soon be conducting an audit of club financials just to bring records up to date.

Marilyn collected dues from members present.

Communications

Melissa Preddy reported that the website at www.TrailwoodGardenClub.com has been updated, with additional functions/pages planned for coming months. She encouraged members to review it online as additional "hits" will push the site closer to the top for online searches.

Members' photos are needed to enhance the website and e-newsletter; anyone with images to share, please e-mail to editor@trailwoodgardenclub.com

Some members reported not receiving the club electronic newsletter/meeting reminder; their e-mail addresses were collected to update the distribution list.

Club e-mail addresses president@trailwoodgardenclub.com (directed to Gloria) and programs@gardenclub.com (directed to Marie) will be created.

Brainstorming & Miscellaneous

Garden Walk: Several members attended a post-Garden Walk debriefing, and considered it productive to review procedures and jot down ideas for next year.

Trailwood cook books are still available for purchase; see Gloria if interested.

If anyone is aware of a pleasant restaurant in the area, with a function room we can use for parties and meetings, please inform Gloria.

The Plymouth Study Group, an organization of women age 70+, meets on Thursday mornings at the Plymouth Community Arts Council on Sheldon Road. They are looking for speakers and willing to pay a \$75 stipend. Please contact Pam Piendel at (734) 207-0178 if interested.

Sandra Healey told the group about the Michigan War Dog Memorial in South Lyon, which honors military K9 service dogs. Volunteers are needed for the Oct. 14 work day at the memorial; please see Sandra if interested.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Melissa Preddy

September 24, 2017

