

A SUMMARY REPORT FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS

Our By-laws require us to have an annual meeting in June and for the President to give a report, our equivalent of the “state of the union address”. Of course, leave it to the GCA to combine a requirement with FUNvisiting Susan’s gorgeous house and garden and socializing!

I will not be long addressing the required meeting. I am taking this as an opportunity for a long thank you note to all of the GCA members and in particular to my team of Board members!

I will quickly summarize what we did in the last two years, trying to give credit where it is due.

For the last 2 years, we tried to combine civic and service activities that benefit our community with educational and fun activities that support our members’ desires. If you can remember back 2 years, we started by conducting a survey of all members to understand their desires and priorities. An incredible 75% of you responded to the survey and based on your input we designed **our programs** for the past two years **and selected the community service projects** that best met the priorities that were identified.

In the past 2 years we supported “The City of Flowers by the Bay” that helps beautify Annapolis; “The Maryland Native Plant Society” which promotes awareness, appreciation, and conservation of Maryland’s native plants and their habitats; “The Boys and Girls Club of Annapolis” which focuses on young gardeners; and “Grow Annapolis” which is a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering and sustaining community gardens and urban agriculture programs, with a special focus on young people.

Our most fun, is when we work on projects together; because we get to know each other better and form friendships. Here are the fun projects that we have done: Hammond Harwood House, with our annual decorating of one of their rooms, and decorated the State’s Circle with our wreaths for the Holiday season. The festivity and comradery of decorating the AYC is high on many members’ list, we have continued to decorate the Yacht Club every year for Christmas with at least 7 trees and many other decorations. We have continued to learn from each other with workshops conducted by our members on a variety of floral design styles, which allows us to learn from each other, while providing centerpieces for our meetings.

We were also good about supporting District-level activities with donations. We contributed to The Penny Pines program which is a joint project of the National Garden Clubs and the Forest Service to replant indigenous trees in areas that are damaged by fire or natural disasters. And we have paid into the National Garden Club’s disaster relief fund.

The bulk of our funding for these activities has come from our May Fair fundraiser, which in addition to giving us another project to work together, gives us and our guests the opportunity to celebrate the beauty of spring and have a great shopping experience while enjoying the great food the AYC provides.

Also, thirteen of our members participated in developing designs for Art Blooms at Walter's museum in Baltimore and Annemarie Garden in Calvert County for the past 2 years

I just want to remind everyone about our wonderful programs. Thanks to Eva's efforts and your input, we have learned about "Artistry in Photo-graphing Nature", "Inside the World of Honey Bees", "Winter Birds and their Care", "How to grow and Care for Orchids", "A brief History of the Links between Jewelry and Flowers", "Decorating with and Drying Herbs", "How to establish Bay Friendly Gardens", "Heaths and Heathers", "Relationship between Ballroom dances and Flowers", and a "A look through the history of Gardens, how the develop and change". During our field trips we have visited the wonderful Fiore Winery, Chanticleer, one of the most beautiful pleasure gardens of the USA, The Franciscan Monastery in Washington DC, and a trip to Longwood Gardens to learn about Blue Bird Habitats, and how to attract them to our gardens.

Also, we established our first web site, which in addition to allowing us to join the 21st century and to make our information easily accessible, allows us to record our club history as it happens, and has given me the chance to just point Kate to the web site for reference, instead of the bulky file I inherited from Evie. It also presents our face to the world. We have in fact, received many compliments and requests for information and guidance from the public and have responded to these.

We also had programs that allowed us to share some intimate experiences, as we got to know each other better, through programs that had us talking about our weddings and the significance of the flowers we used, and shared photos and memories of gardens around the world that we had visited.

I certainly have forged friendships that I hope will endure and I hope to continue to learn from you. You are an incredible group of lovely, compassionate and fun ladies. I thank you for the way you have enriched my life and for the privilege of serving for 2 years. I am very grateful to Kate and her team for taking over and carrying on.

There is a special plant that I need to pass on to Kate. It is a living bamboo, a symbol of longevity in Asian cultures. It was given to me by Evie, who said that she got it from Sharon Chappell as the torch was passed and it was Sharon and Evie's hope that it would continue to be passed on from President to President in our club. There is a little "Evie" add-on of an out of place silk orchid, which I do not get, but decided not to quarrel with. I hope Kate will take good care of it!

I want to thank Susan for opening her home to us, and I would like to present her with a token of appreciation from the club – A gift certificate from Homestead Gardens.

I am grateful to my advisor, Evie Renz and along with you want to wish her well in her courageous battle against cancer. I also want us to remember our colleague, Carol Manion.

I especially want to recognize and thank my fellow board members:

Eva, Mary, Sheryn and Amy, I have tiny “thank you” gifts for you.

Thank you everyone. Before I turn the meeting over to Adele Maguire, I want to thank each of you again.

Now I will ask Adele to conduct the installation of new Officers. By way of introduction, Adele is twice past president of Calvert Garden Club and my role model for what a dedicated GC President can do to energize and enliven an organization.

My last act as President is to offer Adele a small Thank You gift from the Club.

Welcome to the new Board. IT IS ALL YOURS!!

Shahla