

President's End of Term Report

2012-2014

The past two years have made an unimaginable, positive mark on my life and stretched me in ways that I never knew possible. Traveling, making new friends, facing challenges and accomplishing much while working with the incredibly talented members of our Club has been exhilarating. I have had the pleasure of watching The Virginia Beach Garden Club grow and develop in ways that were unexpected. Surprisingly, it has been a time of not only exploring new areas and ideas, but honing in on the details of the well established affairs of our Club that needed to be revised to meet our ever changing needs.

Our first huge change was made in the fall of 2012, with a new vendor that came to us with more efficient ways of handling our 32nd annual Fall Flower Festival, making the ordering, delivery, and labor aspects much easier for our members. The Convention Center never looked better! In November, our Board, working with the Finance Committee, and with the approval of our membership, separated The VBGC Fund from our budget. This fund, established in 1990, by our wonderful, far-sighted Associates, defrays the travel expenses of the Club President and Delegates attending GCA and GCV Meetings. It continues to be a healthy, active asset for our Club.

January of 2014, found us excited about a new project. Through the generosity of III and Company, we began work on a fabulous new website for VBGC. This beautiful, informative site will provide a special place for our Ground Cover, pictures, information about us and a pre-pay situation for our Fall Flower Festival.

The main focus of our Club these past two years has definitely been on conservation and the environment. Much of our time, effort and money was directed towards worthy causes dedicated to help in these areas. \$1,000 was donated to GCA's Save the Redwood League effort. We partnered with Lynnhaven River NOW, and our Club is proud to have a 99% participation in LRN's Pearl Homes Project. Our active, committed Community Projects Committee kept us enthusiastically tending the Wildflower Garden at the Virginia Aquarium and Marine Science Center, managing our meadow garden at VBGC's GCA Centennial Tree Project on Great Neck Road, and continuing our support for Mary's Garden at Sentara Virginia Beach Hospital. The Club donated \$22,000 to the new Brock Environmental Center for the installation of the Rain Garden, planted the new Laskin Road entry to Virginia Beach and helped keep that area clean. VBGC sponsored a local student each year to attend Nature Camp for one week. Additional funds from our ways and means budget are given to organizations that share our concern for conservation and our environment.

We have written legislators about the dangers of uranium mining in Virginia, fracking in North Carolina, sponsored a Delegate's Forum concerning environmental issues in

Virginia Beach, and supported Scenic Virginia. We have had representatives both years at the GCV Conservation Forum, GCV Legislative Day and the GCA National Affairs and Legislative Meeting.

Each April, GCV's Historic Garden Week took center stage. We partnered with The Princess Anne Garden Club and were assisted by the Jr. Virginia Beach Garden Club to accomplish this great task. The 2013 and 2014 tours were phenomenal donating in excess of \$50,000 to GCV for historic restoration and preservation projects. Historic Garden Week serves as an important link to our community and the clubs who share this delightful responsibility.

Our Horticulture Committee is a strong and dedicated group planning and implementing seed and propagation workshops in the spring and working during the summer making troughs and other items to sell at our Roots and Shoots Booth for the Fall Flower Festival. The Committee prepared plants to enter for GCA Zone meetings, eagerly attended the GCA Shirley Meneice Conferences, and in 2013, The Virginia Beach Garden Club hosted the GCV Horticulture Field Day with five of our members' gardens on tour.

We were proud of our members, who in addition to their responsibilities concerning VBGC, held offices and positions in GCA and GCV. We have three members who are accredited Horticulture Judges, one Horticulture Candidate and a Photography Candidate in the GCA Judging Program. We also proudly claim the GCA Zone VII Scholarship Representative, and a member on the GCA Nominating Committee. We were equally excited that the GCV Development Chairman was one of our members and that we had a member on the GCV Horticulture Committee.

The Virginia Beach Garden Club's future looks bright. We have invited and accepted nine wonderful and enthusiastic new members during 2012-2014. Our Club continues to work year round. Projects, committee meetings and workshops during the summer keep us moving forward to accomplish what we cannot complete during our nine month meeting period. Our members' enthusiasm to get the job done is amazing!

It was a honor and a privilege to serve as President of The Virginia Beach Garden Club and I deeply appreciate that opportunity. It is always better to give than to receive, but I honestly feel that I received much more than I gave. The positive support given to me by the members of my Board and this magnanimous Club was overwhelming – thank you will never be enough.

Donna A. Eure
June 5, 2014