

# Cape Cod Hydrangea Society Virtual Board Meeting

May 13, 2020

Present: Presidents, Pat Vigliorolo and Linda Coven; Treasurer, Rick Murray; Assistant Treasurer and former President, Peter Berrien; Secretary, Carolyn Weiss

The virtual meeting was held on Zoom and was opened by Linda at 4:35PM.

The Secretary's report for the Board Meeting of September 12, 2019, was accepted.

TREASURER: Rick reported some limited activity in our accounts though not as much as usual. He asked whether, depending on whether we are able to have Hydrangea University 2020, we should return the sponsors funds which amount to \$1500. Pat said that either Joan Brazeau or Cathy Sampson or both will speak with our sponsors when we know the fate of HU.

Rick also suggested that we raise the HS dues this year by \$10. This will be discussed at future board meetings. Membership renewal letters should be sent out as normal without an increase this May. He also asked whether we should include a new form of non-participation membership for members outside of the Cape. They would receive the newsletter, of which we are very proud, but not attend meetings, workshops or contribute their time and energies to our various committees. Suzanne Boas is interested in offering the newsletter to garden clubs to entice them to know about our group and to join. We will form a committee to look into this idea.

Rick will send his report to Judy Bartha to post on our website.

OPEN BOARD POSITIONS: We need a Vice Presidents or Vice Presidents. No one so far has volunteered for this position.

OPEN COMMITTEE POSITIONS; Joan has announced that this is her last year to run HU so we must find someone to take her place. Joyce Halpert also needs assistance with her position as Social Chairperson and is looking forward to other opportunities within the organization. Paula Rushworth is looking for a co-chair or someone to take over her position as Head of the Display Garden. It was suggested that Paula look at one of her volunteers as a possible Head. This led to a discussion as to how to get new blood to participate in our various activities. Linda will ask the Committee Heads to type up a list of duties and responsibilities of each committee. This should include the number of hours of work entailed and what times of year are active. Additionally, each of the Board officers will be responsible for writing their own "job description". The position of Historian was also discussed. Pat will get information from Elizabeth Payne to ascertain the status of her files and to ask whether or not she wishes to continue in this position.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

SOCIAL AFFAIRS: Joyce Halpert sent an e mail stating "My report is mostly a vague idea of what will or will not take place this season. Wine in the Garden – We have not contacted anyone to host this event

because it is on hold. Pot Luck – We are planning this event for winter. Date, time and place to be announced. Our annual dinner will be sometime in October, provided restaurants are open. For now we have to plan our social events based upon State guidelines.”

DISPLAY GARDEN: Paula Rushworth reported via e mail: “A small but hardy group met in early March to finish what Linda Coven and Joy Bogstead had already started in the Display Garden. The hydrangeas are cleared of leaf litter, and dead canes and stumps have been cut to the ground. This important step of “Regeneration Pruning” has allowed the new basal growth to bask in the sunlight.

Due to the Governor’s COVID-19 Orders, on non-essential work, stay at home, and social distancing now in place until May 18, our next workday is scheduled for May 27. I could add a workday on May 20 if needed.

We will do the “Detail Pruning” of trimming back stem wood to just above a pair of buds. Mid May to early June is the best time for “Detail Pruning”, with healthy stems and plant growth clearly showing.

There are 26 members on the roster, about 9 snowbirds have not made it back yet. Generally, in May, we have a handful of people who can make the workdays.

The hydrangea maintenance team meets in the Cape Cod Hydrangea Society Display Garden at Heritage Museums & Gardens on selected Wednesdays from 9:30 to 12:00. A reminder email will be sent to the maintenance team members the day before a scheduled workday confirming the work session.

Display Garden Maintenance Schedule 2020 Heritage Museums & Gardens: Sandwich, MA, 9:30 – 12:00 on May 27, June 10, June 24, July 8, July 22, August 5, August 19, September 2, September 16.”

MEMBERSHIP: Emily Woudenberg sent an email as follows: “As of May 6, 2020, we have 204 members in the Cape Cod Hydrangea Society for the fiscal year of June 1, 2019 to May 30, 2020. This includes 84 single memberships, plus 60 family memberships of two people, equaling 120. The total membership is 204.

Members are also drawn to the Cape for the summer from ten states, including Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, North Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Florida, California and Texas. Plus one member from Nova Scotia, Canada!”

NEWSLETTER: Suzanne Boas reports via email: “The only thing that I have to report is that the spring newsletter will be out by mid-May (probably earlier) and that the summer newsletter will be out by the end of August.”

HYDRANGEA FESTIVAL:

SPONSORSHIPS; Cathy Sampson reports via email: “Letters were mailed out to potential sponsors in early February. The cost of a sponsorship remains at \$250. To date we have received sponsorships from Barnes Custom Builders, Crocker Nurseries, Hart Farm Nursery and Garden Center, Parterre, Soares, Star Roses and Plants. I also have a verbal commitment from Cathy Kert Interiors. Last year at this time we would have been wrapping up calls to potential sponsors. I have been hesitant to call during this difficult time due to the COVID virus impacts on the business community. This is for two reasons: 1. I think we need to be sensitive to the financial impact the COVID virus is having on all businesses. 2. We

are not sure at this time if we will be able to hold this event due to the Governor's orders. One vendor has called to ask if the event is still happening, but has not pulled out at this time."

DOCENTS: Also from Cathy Sampson via email. "At this time, no activities for scheduling have occurred as it is too early in the process. I can start sending emails out for scheduling once we have a firm list of homes on the tour. There could be problems in specific towns, such as Falmouth, who have cancelled all events for the summer. Some towns may not allow us to have house tours due to local restrictions. I am concerned that we may have increased difficulty getting slots filled this year. As many of our volunteers are in the "at risk" age and health status, myself included, volunteers could be hesitant to be exposed to many strangers. Last year we tried to fill slots at the member gardens with three people per shift and two people per shift at Heritage. In some cases, if a member garden shift was already filled, volunteers turned down doing the same time slot at Heritage. Perhaps this would be a good subject for either a member meeting presentation, newsletter article or President's email. This year I suggest only having two people per shift, with exceptions made for some homes. If the Festival does go on, I will be looking for some assistance with the docent job, mostly for during the Festival week. I had a person in mind but she is dealing with serious health issues and will not likely be able to volunteer at all."

HYDRANGEA UNIVERSITY: From an emailed report of Joan Brazeau: "Technically, as of now, HU is a go as planned. However, we are beginning to seriously consider changing, cancelling, postponing, and virtualizing many of our onsite programs this summer. I think the first thing will be to hear from the Governor on May 18<sup>th</sup> what the guidelines will be for Mass's reopening. Is there going to be any kind of timeline? I think the next step is thinking about how we could accommodate social distancing measures and still do the program. Do we need to reduce the capacity in the room? Do we consider a digital option – i.e., allow people to purchase a digital ticket for a webcast? What does that look like and can we accommodate it? These are all questions we have to answer for many of the programs and we are just beginning to explore the options. My thought is to wait for the Governor's plan, see what it is, and then go from there. Perhaps Tuesday or Wednesday, the 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup>?"

GARDEN TOURS: Report via email from Mary Kay Condon: "I have attached the "FINAL" for the CCHS Member Tour Garden Line-up for this year. Pending your approval, we will forward it to the Cape Cod Chamber. I believe we have an excellent garden line-up. Delighted to have Carol join the "Team" which is largely the tried and true repeat gardeners whose gardens have carried the flag for CCHS in so many Festivals. They truly deserve our sincerest thanks. Lets hope this kind of event will go forward." Her list of gardens follows: Mal and Mary Kay Condon's Garden in Yarmouth Port; Carol Condon's garden in Yarmouth Port; Linda Coven's Garden in West Yarmouth; Dan Passoni's Garden in East Orleans; Marcia & George Chapman's Garden in East Falmouth; Gail & Michael Watts' Garden in East Dennis; Mary & Roger Bowker's Garden in East Sandwich.

WEBSITE: Judy Bartha sent an email as follows: "There was very little to do with the website. I have updated the membership list with some updates and have noted that some of the events have been cancelled."

PROPAGATION: Tom Bartha reported via email: "Unfortunately, there is not much to report on. Last year nobody among the members was interested in our offerings. We specified dates for the workshops but nobody signed up. We made it clear that we can accommodate anybody's preference for dates. Even that did not make any difference. This year, if we can do a workshop at all, we will offer to do it at just about any date that is convenient for a person. We'll do a workshop even for one individual. We

believe that we made it known to everyone that we will no longer sell plants at open gardens. Last year we went to four of the most popular gardens and sold a total of 20 plants. Fortunately, many people had asked us a lot of questions about hydrangeas so we felt good about spreading information. However, the amount of work (loading and unloading the truck twice each day) was simply too much considering the return.

Our more mature plants did quite well this past winter. While we have not yet taken inventory, it seems that last year's cuttings did not fare as well. This, notwithstanding the improved conditions in the storage garage. We set up a thermostat that turned on the heat when the temps dropped below 36 degrees and turned it on when the temps reached 38 degrees. We also watered the plants once, which we had not been doing before last year."

HISTORIAN: This subject was covered above.

OLD BUSINESS:

SCHOLARSHIPS & INTERNSHIPS: While Tom Bartha is pushing for scholarships, the officers believe our emphasis should be on an Intern Partnership with Heritage Museum and Gardens. Mal will explore this when he returns to the States.

DONATIONS: A sum of \$500 was donated to the Family Pantry and \$1000 to Heritage Museums & Gardens towards plant material. We have received thank you notes from both.

NEW BUSINESS: We opted not to have a General Hydrangea Society meeting in May 20<sup>th</sup> virtually.

LETS TALK HYDRANGEAS: A group of 12-14 members met on February 19<sup>th</sup> and March 11<sup>th</sup>. The results of the group meetings are the current improvements/additions to the Display Garden at Heritage.

DISPLAY GARDEN PROJECT: Photos have been taken of the new planting area. Planters, Benches, and Water Fountain are yet to come.

DISPLAY GARDEN SIGNAGE: Judy Bartha suggested that we need educational signage in our Display Garden. It was discussed with Les at HMG and he asked us to come up with the verbiage for the new signs in the Display Garden. They will have them made and installed by their staff. We would then reimburse Heritage. This is a project to consider in 2021.

BY LAWS: The officers agreed that the current by laws do not fit the Society as it now is. They need to be adjusted accordingly. Joan Harrison will help us with this. Who comprises the Executive Board? Who is an officer? Who is a Committee Chair? We need a clear description of this. The Board members will work on this over the summer to present to the membership at the fall general meeting.

CORONA VIRUS RELIEF FUND: It was agreed to donate \$500 to the Corona Virus Relief Fund. This was suggested by Joan Harrison.

VOLUNTEER HOURS REQUIREMENT: Because only a small number of HS members are volunteering for activities, we will consider adding a requirement of 10 hours of volunteer work to the membership. This will be discussed further at a future meeting.

The Zoom meeting ended at 5:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Weiss, Secretary