

President's Report
4/21/20

Good morning everyone!

This has been a year like no other, but it started quite normally. We began with an Opening Party hosted by Tracy Sipprelle and me at Updike Farm. That was, in retrospect, a quaint event where we freely gathered together to celebrate the start of a new year and the friendships that bind us.

We pulled off a tremendous feat by getting the Daughters of the American Revolution, Princeton University, and the Municipality of Princeton to join with us in funding the restoration of the Bench at All Wars Memorial Park. This triumph was made possible by Wendy Mager, who convinced the University and the Town to participate, and Avril Moore, who involved the Historic Preservation Commission. Tom White, an architect on the Historic Preservation Commission, supervised the restoration. We funded our portion of the work with the proceeds from last year's new COSMOS fundraiser. The restoration was completed in time for the annual Veterans' Day celebration and was concluded with a reception at the Nassau Club hosted by Avril Moore and me.

We held another successful COSMOS fundraiser at the Bedens Brook Club. As you have heard, we raised about \$16,500 for our civic projects thanks to the hard work of Stephanie Wedeking, ably supported by Mary Bryson, Amy Decker, Molly Finnell, Gigi Goldman and Martha Sword. The Executive Committee has decided not to hold COSMOS next fall in light of the pandemic.

We were assigned three committees for the 2022 Annual Meeting to be held in New Jersey. They are: invitations, registration and badges. Meg Michael and Wendy Mager have agreed to chair the invitations committee, Maureen Stellato the registration committee and Jane Murphy the badges committee. Thank you for agreeing to serve as chairmen of these committees.

We held three breakfast meetings, which were well-attended and especially popular with our younger members.

We held a Roundtable in which half the Club participated. We discussed three topics. First, we reviewed the general membership meeting schedule. Members liked the breakfast meetings and asked that they start earlier. Secondly, we addressed the need for guidelines for distributing fundraising proceeds. Participants thought 1) that contributions of more than \$2500 should go to the membership for a vote, and 2) that we should establish an ad hoc committee to formulate procedures for reviewing fundraising distribution proposals. In light of the pandemic, the Executive Committee has postponed the formation of the ad hoc committee until the fall. Finally, the Membership Committee proposed ways to streamline the membership process. These ideas will be presented to the Club this fall in the form of amendments to the Bylaws and Standing Rules.

The Executive Committee hosted a Grand Opening Party for the Photography Show, which was our biggest and best show yet.

We earned a total of four commendations from the judges for classes in our Horticulture, Floral Design and Photography Shows.

Amazingly, we visited the Philadelphia Flower Show just as the coronavirus pandemic was beginning.

Since then, the pandemic has shut down all group activities. Nevertheless, we have held a series of meeting and one workshop by Zoom. We have held two Executive Committee meetings, the Photography and Conservation Committees' Planning meetings and a Compost Workshop sponsored by the Conservation Committee. And now we have held a general membership meeting by Zoom. It's proof of the ingenuity and dedication of the members of this Club, something in which we can be rightly proud.

I thank you for the opportunity to have been your president. You are an impressive group of women. You will be in good hands with Jennifer DelVecchio. She is full of energy and fresh ideas. I wish you all a healthy and happy summer. I look forward to the time when we can once again meet.

Respectfully submitted,
Robin Gosnell