

Minutes of the Russel & District Horticultural Society

September 17, 2018 at the home of Pegi Holtz

Carole Van Die, president welcomed everyone and particularly the nine new guests who were asked to give their names and where they were from. There were over thirty-five people present.

The minutes of our June meeting were posted online and Susan Barr made a motion to accept them as presented and this was seconded by Grace Stapper. Carried.

Mary Chartrand and Catharina Shane presented the group with a lovely idea. They are organizing a Christmas House Tour on Hamilton Road, Russell this coming December 8th with the proceeds coming to the Hort. Soc. It will be a “drive yourself” event from 10am to 4pm. They are hoping that a few of our members will be on the organizing committee and that our general membership will embrace the chance to help sell tickets. We can help advertise on our website, Facebook and of course, word-of-mouth.

Pegi Holtz gave out the prize money from the June flower show & OHA convention prizes. Our Juniors won a second place ribbon for their yearbook and got \$8. None of the publications from our Senior group got prizes but Rosie Grigaitis won two red ribbons - one for poetry and one for photography.

Lindley McPhail and Pegi gave a quick synopsis of the OHA convention activities and pointed out the costumes that we wore on the Friday “60’s/70’s” fun night. Lindley had attended a workshop on “Growing Your Flower Show” and had hoped for some concrete examples of things to do to encourage more people to enter. Pegi spoke about the Saturday night Key Note speakers, Carson Arthur whose topic was “Understanding and Embracing the New Gardeners”. His theme seemed to be that we need to start “thinking outside the box”, become more innovative and embrace technologies such as websites, Facebook, twitter, live-streaming events, webinars etc. if we are to attract younger gardeners to our group. Thankfully, we have a lovely website which is updated regularly, an active Facebook following and, I suppose if we didn’t want to actually spend time gardening, we could tackle some of these other areas too.

Linda Duhamel gave a short talk about the importance of volunteering. She said:

“Hey Everyone: I am here to give a short talk on volunteering - (which is something I love to do) and the Hort. Society is having a problem with. One of the greatest challenges facing any organization is recruiting and retaining volunteers. Volunteering is not a hard job to do and it provides you with a sense of purpose with the organization. I think we have all heard the “old saying” a company is only as good as the people who work there - well the same can be said for any organization. So please, the next time a volunteer sheet goes up or you are approached to volunteer - don’t back away - step up to the plate and give of your time - You will never be sorry. It’s fun - always a learning experience - it’s good for your health - it gives you a sense of purpose and self-confidence. Don’t depend on the old die-hards: We all need new blood. ***Please Become a Volunteer.***”

Then she followed with a poem that she received after being a first time volunteer at the hospital in Ottawa:

Volunteers

Volunteers are just ordinary people with *extraordinary* hearts.

They offer the gift of their time to teach, to listen, to help, to inspire, to build, to grow, to learn.

They expect no pay, yet the *Value* of their work knows no limit....

They've known the *unexpected joy* of a simple hug.

They've planted the tiny *seeds of love* in countless lives.

Volunteers are just ordinary people who reach out and take a hand and together *make a difference* that lasts a lifetime.

Carole then thanked those who had volunteered at the Russell Fair for creating, setting up and sitting at our Hort. Soc. booth and the Flower Show.

The President's Veggie Challenge only had five entries: Largest zucchini, Longest carrot and Best beet display were won by Erin Holtz Christensen. Largest pumpkin was won by Joanne Vargas.

Marilyn MacMillan read thank you notes from two students who received \$200 each from our society as graduation scholarships. (Kurtis from STACHS and Sophie Oescheger from Russell High).

Both Lindley and Connie Johnston spoke about our involvement with Heritage Day in Russell on September 22 from 10am to 3pm. There will be horse drawn wagon rides, speakers, things at the museum etc. Jon Funston and his wife Manon have volunteered to set up a display at MacDougall Park which will give a little history of our group and the park.

This was followed by the Auction of Gifts from the Garden and refreshments which were brought by Marilyn.

Respectfully submitted by

Pegi Holtz