



Orinda Garden Club
General Meeting Minutes
Thurs., April 23, 2015 at Orinda Country Club

President **Janet Riley** welcomed members in the Orinda Country Club Orinda Room at 10:04 am.

Beautification

Bouquets: Jane described the Club's involvement with Bouquets for the Contra Costa County Hospital over the past 50 years. This morning, members assembled to create small floral arrangements to be taken to the hospital in recognition of this Anniversary. She showed photos of members who have contributed to this endeavor and spoke about the history since the inception of the 1965 group. Since that time, the containers have graduated from baby food containers, to small paint cans, to the present unique OGC logo decorating rust-proof cans.

Bouquets Committee meets informally on a monthly basis and this has evolved into an "oasis of kindness and beauty". Jane recognized all the members who have contributed as hostesses, drivers, volunteers and chairpersons. Thank you to Chris S. and Sheila who are this year's co-chairs.

Hospitality: Nita reminded us of the May General meeting at Julia Morgan Hall in the UC Berkeley Botanical Garden. Sign-up boards circulated for drivers and docent tours. The box lunch is \$20 with a choice of vegetarian or regular. Please write a check or place cash in the envelope.

Beautification: Laurie S. thanked the 15 members and Bob Nelson who worked tirelessly to clean up tons of weeds and spread mulch on Orinda in Action Day at the off ramp from Lafayette and along Camino Pablo to Shell Station. She will hire workers to spread the rest of the mulch. The area is looking much improved.

Dena thanked those who came to prune the roses at Heather Farms. The next work-day is April 30 at 9:30 a.m.

Lisa H. asked for members to sign up to make Library arrangements during the summer months.

Education

Conservation: Judy S. and Pam W. reported that many dry cleaners will accept canvas bags for dry cleaning, and laundry in order to reduce the use of plastic bag covers. Hamlin Dry Cleaners will sell large bags for \$10 and you can go on Amazon to find other "green" garment bags.

M.J. reported that 25 members went to Tilden Botanical Garden to hear Bart O'Brien, executive director, talk about California natives. This is an incentive to research and use drought-tolerant planting materials.

Newsletter: Petra announced an early deadline for FMN – April 30.

President's Report

March General Meeting minutes were approved as written.

Janet announced that Hillsborough is having a Flower show April 24-25 where a few of our members will be exhibiting and judging. Filoli is presenting a Mother's Day Flower Show of over 100 exhibits from May 7-10 where the theme is an international flare. There will be teas, brunches, and refreshments. Go to www.filoli.org for tickets.

The current GCA Bulletin has four entries regarding Orinda Garden Club including the reception of the Freeman Medal, the NAL Conference representatives Judy S. and Pam W., the Partners for Plants in conjunction with Piedmont Garden Club, and our upcoming Garden Tour, "Orinda in Bloom".

Janet announced that "end of year" committee reports are due. Please update the job description and present to your successor in email format. There will be an opportunity to present the report, but also take the time to meet, train and prepare your successor for this next year.

By-Laws: Two weeks ago, Janet sent to all members the proposed changes to the By-Laws and the Board approved changes to the Standing Rules. The Board approved the By-Laws changes and recommends approval by the members. Janet summarized the major changes:

- 1. Size of Club: Increase to a total of 80 members so that we have room to grow over time.**
- 2. Nonresident Actives: To promote membership retention and inclusion, allow a member with 5 or more years of membership who moves outside Orinda to continue her active membership and allow up to 10 nonresident actives.**
- 3. General Meeting Attendance: To support our members in tough times, allow excused absences in special circumstances including but not limited to a medical condition of a member or her immediate family.**
- 4. Membership: Allow first year actives to sponsor or endorse new members at their option since they have the right to vote, hold office and serve on the board.**
- 5. Change of Status: Make February 1st the deadline to change membership status so that we have 6 weeks to sponsor new members.**
- 6. Membership Chair: Make the VP the Membership Chair so that she focuses on the full cycle of new members from selection through training.**

A motion was made, seconded and passed to approve the changes as emailed to the members.

Membership Report

Membership: Dona reminded us that 4/25 is the final date in which to present letters of sponsorship and recommendation. Only four letters total are needed.

Roster: Jan passed a clipboard for members to change any information that will be entered into the Roster for next year.

Garden Tour: Cathleen reported things are on track but encouraged members to sign up for lunch and the Garden Party. There are beautiful Auction items available, including water color paintings by Catherine Watters and Tina Locke. Also included is a fabulous Art Deco diamond necklace donated by Morrison's Jewelers. Deb S. reported the online auction will start May 1st and end at midnight, May 6th. On May 7, the day of the tour and party, tables will be set up at OCC during the day and then at the Garden Party for participants to continue bidding. She explained the bidding and encouraged everyone to access information on www.Orindacg.org where detailed descriptions of each item and bidding process will be outlined. Jane announced the vendors and stated that they will be set up in the Bertero garden. Twenty percent of proceeds from the vendors' sales will go to OGC. Payment can be made by credit card. The Garden Party is not sold out so please consider coming to this elegant and fun event.

Treasurer's Report: Sandy outlined the budget for next year (see attached documents). Prices have gone up and the Club will need increased revenues to meet budget and have a cushion. The Administration Account is funded by dues. The Contribution account is funded by fundraisers. The Budget committee met and the Board approved the recommendation of dues increase for Actives of \$290 and Associates of \$170. A motion was made and seconded to approve the dues' increase as recommended. Discussion ensued with several members asking about budgetary items and questioning necessity. A member requested a secret ballot for which Janet was prepared. It was determined that we have a quorum, or 51% attending today. Ballots were collected and tabulated. The motion was passed overwhelmingly with 50 approving, 8 objecting, and 1 abstaining.

Upon the recommendation of the Board, a motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the Administration Budget for 2015-16 as presented.

Sandy addressed the Contribution Budget for 2015-6 and answered questions from the membership. Upon the recommendation of the Board, a

motion was made, seconded and passed to accept next year's Contribution Budget.

Current balances of our account were outlined, pending charges. Suanne I. described the beauty of the UC Botanical Garden encouraged members to join the Friends.

Susie R. and Kris R. sold raffle tickets and made \$500 today.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Formanek

The purpose of Orinda Garden Club is educational and charitable and shall be: to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening, to cooperate in the protection and conservation of our natural heritage and to encourage and assist in the beautification of the community.

Key Dates:

May 7: 10-4 pm Garden Tour

May 7: 5-7 Garden Party

May 21 General meeting at UC Berkeley Botanical Garden

Summary of Save the Redwoods Program

Speaker: Lisa J. introduced Sam Hodder, CEO of Save the Redwoods. She mentioned he thinks of his title as "Chief Exploring Officer". Sam has been very active in conservation his whole career. One of the new goals he has is to climb up to the canopy of the redwoods and do some research. He will give us a historical perspective of the relationship of GCA and Save the Redwoods and speak about the opportunities going forward.

Sam outlined the mission statement of the organization: "Save the Redwoods protects and restores redwood forests and connects people with their place and beauty so these wonders of the natural world flourish." Since 1918, this mission has been achieved through acquiring land to preserve for posterity. Other goals are to invest in scientific research, improve parks, add to and maintain the infra structure, educate through programs and grants.

In 1963, Orinda Garden Club became an important partner and supporter. Sam pointed out that Sandy Denny has been a valuable and great connection.

Growing up, Sam had many relatives in GCA on the East coast. He notes his grandmother as being an inspiration for him that rooted him in the love of the outdoors.

In the 1930's, GCA committed to a 50/50 partnership participation with Save the Redwoods to preserve and protect the area around Humboldt State Park, the largest redwood grove anywhere. This became a nexus for national conservation. It was during a long train ride to Seattle from the East, that the GCA Treasurer began talking about the projects and by the end of the trip, she had raised enough money and support to begin this long-lasting relationship. The program began in 1935 at a GCA annual meeting.

The history of this partnership serves to protect surrounding lands and forests. Over 2 million dollars has been donated by GCA. The last purchase was in 1972.

Now we have a new partnership opportunity. In 2003, the "Canoe Fire" burned 11,000 acres. The fire was good at some level for the re-forestation. However, the trails and bridges were destroyed, limiting access. Last year, Sam spoke at the Zone XII meeting and over \$382,000 or the \$270,000 goal was raised from clubs around the country. OGC contributed a \$5000 gift for which Sam was very grateful and acknowledged our long-lasting partnership.

A video was shown of the Student Conservation Association working to rebuild and restore the area. These students signify a generation committed to conservation and devote 10 months of volunteer work in the redwood forests.

He outlined several other projects mentioning that a lot has changed since the early days. Not many non-profits have been around as long as GCA and Save the Redwoods. Cultures are changing. Sadly, the forests have lost much of the old growth with only 5% of the original forest remaining. There are many opportunities to look at landscape as an ecosystem. Also opportunities to reintroduce California parks to today's needs and reconnect to a new generation.

He mentioned the projects including Prairie Creek, where the tallest trees in the world stand. Also private acreage such as the Navarro Family ranch is the largest remaining in Mendocino County and works with Save the Redwoods to maintain and preserve the fishing streams. This development affects everything downstream so the opportunity to preserve and protect is great.

Recently purchased is 180 acre Mendocino property near the mouth of Bay River where Giant and Pygmy redwood trees exist to serve to inspire and connect with people.

Another project mentioned is the Mariposa Grove in Yosemite. Lastly, the Redwood Climate Change Initiative is rooted in science and directed by the best professionals to set up plots to measure growth and biomass. It has been determined that "old growth" redwoods are growing faster adding 1.6 cubic meters/year.

Sam outlined many trails in the East Bay that are available for hiking. These are the French Trail in Redwood Park and Big Tree Trail in the Joaquin Miller Park.

He concluded that resources are abundant in the Bay Area. He stated that he is honored by the partnership with GCA and specifically OGC, inspired by what we do, and looks forward to opportunities in the future. Questions were taken. Janet thanked Sam for his wonderful program. The program ended at 12:15 p.m.