

The Garden Path

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Anne Skalka <i>President</i>	Lorraine Persiani <i>Immediate Past President</i>
Linda Reasoner <i>Vice President</i>	Maggie Kramer <i>Club Parliamentarian</i>
Rick Lazarick <i>Treasurer</i>	Jeff Tryon <i>Newsletter Editor</i>
Karen Lewandowski <i>Recording Secretary</i>	Lynn Grillo <i>Newsletter Designer</i>
Iliana Okum <i>Corresponding Secretary</i>	



The President's Message

August 2024 | Anne Skalka, President



Photo by Iliana Okaum

Welcome to a new year in gardening. Audrey Hepburn has been credited with the saying “To garden is to believe in tomorrow.” This has always resonated with me, and I have decided to have as the theme for 2024 — ‘Plant Hope.’ ‘Plant Hope’ reminds me of why I started my first garden many years ago. Feeling totally at sea with a difficult new job, and small children, my garden was the only place I could relax. The moment I put my hands in the dirt, all the various stresses and demands were temporarily forgotten. ‘Plant Hope’ also reminds me that there will be another year, even if this year was difficult. Not all my plant plans worked out, some of my designs could have used a more critical eye, but there’s always next year. ‘Plant Hope’ also reminds us that we are the caretakers of our own small worlds, and together we create refuges for the birds, bees, butterflies, and all the creatures around us.

I’m honored to serve this term as club president. Almost immediately after being nominated — past and present officers as well as board members stepped up to show me the ropes. I’m feeling confident that with all of us pitching in we will have a fantastic year. I’ve seen the list of speakers and activities for the upcoming year and I know that we’ll have fun.

See you in August!

~ Anne Skalka

June 2024 Meeting Minutes

Monique Bonnier, Recording Secretary



From Left: Linda Reasoner, Iliana Okum, Rick Lazarick, Karen Lewandowski, Anne Skalka

Installation of Officers

The end of the year event and Installation of Officers was held on June 6, 2024 at the Hollowbrook Community Center. President Lorraine Persiani started off the meeting at 6:07 p.m. welcoming all members and wishing happy birthday to June members. She urged members to sign up for hospitality positions.

Lorraine asked for any additions or corrections to the proposed budget and for members to vote to pass the budget. Members voted unanimously to pass the budget.

Lorraine thanked members who worked tirelessly throughout the year on special projects and on various committees. She then presented certificates to members with milestone anniversaries.

The winners for the place settings were announced in three different categories.

Members were invited to enjoy the delicious appetizers and desserts while the prizes were awarded for the White Elephant Auction.

The evening ended with an outstanding Installation ceremony performed by Anne Chmielewski and a brief speech by incoming president, Anne Skalka.

2024-2025 Club Officers

Anne Chmielewski confirmed the slate of officers. A vote by the general membership was taken and the new positions are as follows:

- President – Anne Skalka
- Vice President – Linda Reasoner
- Immediate Past President – Lorraine Persiani
- Recording Secretary – Karen Lewandowski
- Treasurer – Rick Lazarick
- Corresponding Secretary – Iliana Okum
- Club Parliamentarian – Maggie Kramer

Announcements

May 6, 2024 | Monique Bonnier, Recording Secretary

Take Note!

- ✎ Items for the newsletter are due to Jeff Tryon by the 15th of the month.
- ✎ The next Regular Meeting is **August 5th at 6:30 p.m.** at the Hollowbrook Community Center for the annual installation of new officers.
- ✎ August meeting: Jersey Fresh Auction! Bring your “Jersey Fresh” item to the auction. It can be anything purchased (\$5 minimum value) from a farmers’ market (produce, flowers, honey, jam, etc.) or your own garden or something you make from a Jersey Fresh item (baked goods, sauces, salsas, etc.).
- ✎ With no further business to discuss, Lorraine Persiani motioned the meeting to be adjourned at 7:10 p.m. and seconded by Monique Bonnier.
- ✎ Our hospitality committee provided a spread of delicious snacks for the membership.



Cloche for ailing Desert Rose plant keeps squirrels out; also created a wonderful growing environment for this rare plant to finally recover from the shipping blues. ~Devah Brinker

Announcements

Happy Birthday!

- Jackie Anderson-Kraus - Jul 18
- Greg Chasar - Jul 19
- Terry Palise - Jul 28
- Gerree Pecht - Jul 29
- Pat Coiante - Jul 31
- Eileen Keenan - Jul 31
- Matt Kowalski - Aug 1
- Marcia Felcone - Aug 6
- Anne Skalka - Aug 7
- Diane Sanchez - Aug 9
- June Rosso - Aug 13
- Susan Fair - Aug 17
- Ginny Sari - Aug 18
- Iliana Okum - Aug 19
- Angela Proctor-Weaver - Aug 24
- Alicia Magee - Aug 25

Flowers for Ewing Library

Lynn Grillo

Hospitality Committee

Terry Palise (Chair), Carol Bozarth, Anne Chmielewski, David Chmielewski, Mary Corrigan, Heidi Furman, and Linda Reasoner.

Newsletter Deadline

Submit all info to Jeff Tryon by the 15th of the month via email:
wtgcnewsletter@gmail.com

Birmingham Park Maintenance

Please sign up to help at our Birmingham Mini-Park this summer!
Contact Heidi Furman

Birmingham Park Feature in
The Ewing Observer

Birmingham beautification



HELEN KULL
EWING THEN & NOW

Editor's note: The following column was help from the July issue of the Observer due to space limitations.

Once again this month, "Ewing Then and Now" features a recent "now" story—and it's a beauty!

Anyone driving through the main intersection in West Trenton, where West Upper Ferry Road/Parkway Avenue, and Bear Tavern Road/Grand Avenue intersect, has no doubt noticed the beautiful improvement of the "pocket park" featured at the intersection. The West Trenton Garden Club recently engaged in an initiative to enhance the park, and they have done so in (and undoubtedly with) spades!

Located at the crossroads in what was then known as the village of Birmingham where General Washington's troops split in two directions on Christmas Night, 1776 in order to surprise the Hessians in Trenton with a two-pronged attack, the small plot of land has been the location for many homes and businesses over the centuries, including at one point the original location of the West Trenton Hardware Store.

But now the land is owned by the township, and maintained by the West Trenton Garden Club, a 70-year-old organization of horticultural enthusiasts and dedicated Township residents, committed to sharing "the love of gardening, the principles of flower design, and encouraging civic improvement with its members and the community."

Birmingham Park, as it is now known, has for five years been the home to a Blue Star Memorial By-Way monument. The Blue Star program was begun in 1944 by the NJ Council of Garden Clubs with the planting of 8000 Dogwood trees along Route 22 in N.J. as a living memorial to veterans of World War II.

The idea caught on, and now, in collaboration with state departments of transportation, the program has spread nationwide to honor all who serve in the United States Armed Services. The West Trenton Garden Club is proud to have a Blue Star Memorial in the park.

But club members felt that the memorial, and indeed the park itself, needed some improvements and enhancements. So they applied for a \$1000 "Community Project" grant from the National Garden Club to provide for new benches and flags, infrastructure (water supply) improvements, and some plant

acquisitions for bed plantings surrounding the monument.

They were thrilled to be awarded the grant money in mid-December 2022, funds which were later supplemented by individual donations and a fundraising project of individualized, commemorative bricks.

The volunteer members of the Garden Club soon organized into teams to efficiently and effectively coordinate the various tasks necessary to complete the project, under the leadership of Rick Lazarick.

Coordination with partners such as Ewing Township Public Works, Rutgers University Department of Landscape Architecture, Bountiful Gardens and Mercer County Technical Schools Sypek Center helped to provide input for decisions, and move the project along smoothly.

Progress on the beautification of the park in 2023 included clearing out old growth in the park; replacing the benches; placing flags in the park; improving the access to water for the plantings; laying two areas of commemorative bricks; selecting and purchasing the red, white and blue-flowering perennials to surround the Blue Star Memorial, and other plants and trees for the rest of the garden; and finally planting more than 100 plants in September of 2023.

The plants strengthened their roots over the winter, and this spring, they sprung up from the ground, looking phenomenal! The members completed reporting and final aspects of the project, and held a public Celebration of the Enhancements just weeks ago in May. Garden Club members, project partners, project donors, township officials and others were invited to view and enjoy the garden, and to celebrate the great work done by the Garden Club to beautify this pocket park in West Trenton.

There are many small "gems" in Ewing—people, places, institutions which shine in their own small way for all of us to see and enjoy.

Birmingham Park is one of these gems, and so is the West Trenton Garden Club and its generous, energetic members. Make sure to visit the park, give thanks

for those who have and enjoy the beautiful enhancements there. And if you enjoy the West Trenton Garden Club, welcome your participation in more about them at

Helen Kull is an advisor to the West Trenton Garden Club and the Ship Historic Preservation Society.



August Program | Jersey Fresh Auction

August 5, 2024

Meeting Details

As usual, the evening will begin with a short business meeting followed by refreshments while you take chances on your favorite “Jersey Fresh” items – provided by members. A ticket sheet costs only \$5.

Note To Members: Don't forget to bring your “Jersey Fresh” item to the auction. It can be anything purchased (\$5 minimum value) from a farmers' market (produce, flowers, honey, jam, etc.) or your own garden or something you make from a Jersey Fresh item (baked goods, sauces, salsas, etc.).



Random Acts of Beauty



The kiss of Spring is upon us...

Everything is beginning, or already in bloom! The WTGC presents certificates of appreciation to businesses and homeowners who have noticeably improved their landscaping or created a site of beauty. Through the growing season, members can notify Committee Chair, Nancy Grant at (856) 305-1857, if they see a location worthy of this community beautification award. Happy Spring!

Gallery | Installation of Officers

Photos by Lynn Grillo



Gallery | Place Settings At June Meeting

Photos by Lynn Grillo



Gallery | Field Trip to Hidden Spring Lavender Farm
Photos by Iliana Okum



Gallery | Evening in the Garden at Mercer Educational Gardens (MEG)
Photos by Iliana Okum

