

Victoria Garden's Women's Club  
Board of Directors Meeting  
August 5, 2024

Present: Susan McMahon, Ruth Chrismore, Laura Blackburn, Gail Thomas, Joan Neumann, Lindy Waters, Patricia Martuscello

Absent: Cindee Cullingford

Program Update: Ruth reported that the September 11<sup>th</sup> Women's Club Luncheon meeting was all set. Sign up is available on the website. The April meeting is still a work in progress. There will be a panel of people: a financial advisor, and representative from Senior Solutions Case Management. It was suggested that we invite other senior service vendors to come with information and set up tables in the hallway. The program committee has a meeting August 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss the event. At the September meeting, we will kick off the lottery card collection for Casino Night. We will have other months and events listed on the website so people can sign up in advance even though the menus will not be available. It will be a "Save the Date" kind of concept. The November Pepper's Fashion Show ticket price will be \$35.00. Make A Difference Certificate will be awarded to Cindy Netherton at the September luncheon.

Fundraising: Susan reported that Casino Night is paid for by the sponsors that she has gotten. There are two \$5,000 sponsors: Eric Hansen and Derek Mears (Neighborhood Center), two private \$1000 sponsors, and more sponsors in the works such as realtors, Peek A Boo Windows, and Budget Blinds. The board had a discussion, and if we get more sponsors, we will have another Roulette and Craps Table.

The Mah Jongg event needs a food sponsor, it could end up being Budget Blinds. They may do the food for the event, instead of being a sponsor for Casino Night.

Susan is in the process of looking for a place to print the program for Casino Night.

In September, the Casino Night Save the Date notices will go out. October will be the launch for the Prize Patrol. In December pre-sales will begin, the menu will be finalized, a set up plan will be provided to the VG clubhouse. In February, servers for the event will be identified and scheduled, Lottery Tickets Sales will open, registration staff will be identified, and set up will be scheduled along with volunteers. In March, there will be weekly committee check-ins, guest bags will be prepared, and the program will be finalized.

The Annual Impact report will be going out to members in a blast, thank you to Joan!!

Treasurers Report: Gail reported \$30,685 cash in the account, \$8,000 in Temporary Restricted funds. The only unexpected expense was the Thank You event in July, which was very successful. It was suggested that the next time we have it from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM (an hour shorter and a little bit later).

Membership: There are 259 paid members. Cindee is calling people that said they'd renew but haven't yet. There will be a "box" on the membership form that Emeritus Members can check when they renew.

Friendship Branches/ Sunshine Committee: Lindy has been going over branch lists. She has an email out to the Cedar Branch to find out where they stand, and who is going to lead it. A Branch Leader Orientation is scheduled for Monday, September 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM. Janice Kiefer is speaking at the orientation. Leaders are encouraged to promote tribute cards, t-shirts, and aprons.

Charitable Action: Susan reported the Summer Snack Drive for Blue Lake Elementary was a huge success. Family Renew Back to School clothes and supplies have been purchased for the 20 children that currently live there. The Family Emergency Center ribbon cutting ceremony will be August 27<sup>th</sup>. The Little Red House is being turned into dorm sleeping areas with a common area, kitchen, and two bathrooms. The VGWC donated \$2,000 for bedding and other items to assist in setting up the rooms.

Pat Martuscello reported that many organizations donate backpacks to Starke Elementary filled with supplies. Right now, their supply room is full, along with the classrooms. Each child has a backpack filled with supplies and there are over 100 extras. We will see what they need in January. Two friendship branches supplied the physical education teacher with hula hoops and other supplies. Teachers filled out a wish list and those extra items have been purchased. The Neighborhood Center has asked the Women's Club to participate in a Turkey Drive for Thanksgiving. Madelyn is going to contact Susan with the details.

Tech Update: Laura requested that the Branch Leaders send her pictures of their activities for the slide shows at the monthly meeting. Sponsors are going to be highlighted on Facebook and the website, and animation will be added.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:32 AM

Respectfully Submitted,  
Patricia Martuscello  
VGWC Recording Secretary

#### **Membership Report From Lindy:**

In July, the Friendship Branches committee met to identify current members, new members, and Co-Leaders for each of the 13 Branches.

Roles within the committee were solidified.

Lori Herrscher- generated the computer lists for all 13 Friendship Branch members and Co-Leaders. These Excel groups were shared with committee members.

Sharon Cieszkiewicz- will be creating communication summaries of the Branches' gatherings including location details/hours/costs/etc. This communication will include Facebook posts.

Nancy Greenfield- will continue her role as an overall information source to maintain a smooth transition for our Friendship Branches. Her knowledge is invaluable.

As Director, I intend to appreciate the skills of my committee members and the needs of Friendship Branch and VGWC members, to communicate the value of “socializing with a purpose.”

Finally, the Leaders Orientation meeting is a work in progress.  
Sent from my iPhone

### Publicity Report from Joan:

During the month of July 2024, I created the following flyers:

2023 2024 Impact Report

2024 2025 Women’s Club Calendar

3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Casino Sponsor Opportunities

Joan Neumann

### President’s Summer Update: Susan

Summer is usually a quiet time for the women’s club, but not this year. I thought I would take this opportunity to update you on VGWC summer activities and give you a preview of the year ahead.

Up first, giving and volunteering. The **June Blue Lake Elementary snack drive** was hugely successful thanks to you and the VG community. You filled the need for summer school students with enough left over to last well into the school year. Karla Johnson, Connie Hollingsworth and volunteers sorted the snacks by expiration dates before storing so nothing goes to waste! Well done!

Speaking of back to school! Valerie Steil, Rebecca Carpenter and Susan McMahon shopped for **back-to -school clothes for 20 school age children residing at Family Renew Community – Deland**. Clothes were bundled for each child and handed out at the annual Family Renew Back to School pizza party, along with new backpacks and school supplies! VGWC budgeted \$2000 to cover these purchases. Funds were set aside from previous year’s fundraising efforts! Wishing these students a great school year!

We have **deferred our school supply drive to January** and let me explain why. We heard from our schools that they receive a ton of back-to-school supplies and backpacks at this time of year from several corporate sponsors for students. Last year they were overwhelmed with the amount of supplies received in August and storage space was a challenge. So, for now the immediate need has been met for back to school but we know supplies will begin to run low and for that reason our drive will take place in January! However, before teachers left for the summer, we asked them for a list of specific “teacher only supply needs” (stapler, hoola hoops for PE, colored paper, etc). Two of our friendship branches fulfilled these needs!

- Did you know **The Neighborhood Center is opening their first emergency shelter for families with children later this month?** That’s right! The Family Emergency Shelter (FES) will offer shelter for up to 5 families at a time. One dorm will be designated for families escaping Domestic Violence (DV). VGWC has offered to furnish the Domestic Violence room. A team of volunteers will soon set-up, decorate and create a welcoming safe haven for these families. VGWC charitable funds were provided to purchase items needed for the dorm.

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Several of our members continue to volunteer on a regular basis to assist the homeless, families and children. **We will continue to update you with new and existing volunteer opportunities and how to get involved.** Rosie McKenna is leading the efforts to identify and match volunteer opportunities. Contact Rosie if you want to learn more.

Be on the lookout for the **Great Turkey Drive in November** benefiting The Neighborhood Center and our **Annual Giving Tree** program benefiting children, families and seniors in November/December.

**We have an exciting line-up of programs** kicking off with September 11<sup>th</sup> luncheon, featuring John Brown, Orlando News Anchor and Author. Tickets are available online NOW! October is Volusia County League of Women Voters inspiring us on the importance of the women’s vote. Pepper’s Boutique is back in November for a fashion show and lunch. This one will go fast so get your tickets as soon as they become available. December is holiday craft boutiques and luncheon. We love meeting new faces, so invite your friends and neighbors to any of our events.

**We are hosting two “All VG Resident Community Events” in 2025.** First up is January 8, 7:00 – 9:00, featuring Sheriff Chitwood and April 9<sup>th</sup>, “Focus on Seniors: Panel Discussion. Professionals in estate planning, senior living solutions and elder care will share information. Both are FREE events, open to all VG residents

**Set your calendars for Mah Jong Madness, February 14, 2025 and Casino Night, March 29, 2025, our two major fundraisers.** Both are sure to be sellout events! I am pleased to announce that we have strong business sponsorships and secured commitments that cover all costs of our events. Contact Susan McMahon if you want to know more about sponsorship opportunities. We will be asking members to **donate Lottery Scratch Off Tickets once again beginning in September for our annual Lottery Board Raffle in March.**

I hope you are as excited as I am about the year ahead! We have accomplished so much and continue to make a difference in our community. **Follow-us on Facebook “Victoria Gardens Women’s Club”** to stay up to date on branch activities and VGWC programs. **Visit us at VGWC.org** to register for events, program calendar and sponsors.

Susan McMahon  
VGWC President

