

SDBG Docent & Volunteer Meeting Minutes

August 5, 2020

10:05 am. Call to order

Approval of minutes from June 3 meeting - Linda Cooper, Secretary. Minutes approved as distributed.

Treasurer's Report - Gail Earnest. Balance remains unchanged at \$2,356.17.

Garden Updates

Ari Novy, CEO - The Garden remains open under limited capacity. Revenue is coming in with online ticket sales, new membership and donations. The new budget for the fiscal year reflects a 35% reduction relative to last year. Ari and staff are thankful to the many Volunteers who have helped in various areas of the Garden with on-site activity. There will be more areas of the Garden that will be opening up for work sites for Volunteers soon. Because of County restrictions, it is difficult to open the Gift Shop at this time. Plans are underway for a solution to open the new Plant Shop in the picnic area near Hamilton Children's Garden. Additionally, the Garden is working on establishing a children's play/obstacle course area in the Eucalyptus Grove using re-purposed wood products, as well as modifying the Seeds of Wonder Garden so it can open.

Currently there are three fundraising campaigns going on, and the Garden is thankful for any and all support. SDBG is doing well compared to other gardens and cultural institutions.

Jill Gardener, HR and Volunteer Services Manager - There are now 210 trained Volunteers. Shifts are filled one month at a time and fill quickly. Many thanks to Helen Montag and Nick Ruddick for their work on the Vogistics data base. There will be another Conservatory training coming up for Volunteers with additional information to share with visitors. When working in the Conservatory, the information binder is located in the main classroom.

Volunteer Updates - Susan Starr, Chair.

Please let Susan know of any ideas for future social activities that can be added remotely.

Volunteer of the Month - Shahla Dreyer and Liz Tesolin. Liz introduced Rhana Kozak who was chosen as VOM for April. Rhana is originally from Denver and lives with her husband in Encinitas. She has two children and four grandchildren. Rhana's varied interests include starting a flower boutique, a luxury day spa, as well as studying forest bathing.

Rhana created the Forest Bathing program at the Garden and leads Children's tours.

Coordinator Reports - Jeff Clingan, Vice Chair.

Milestones - Sue Ruddick and Fran Spath. Sue told members to continue to submit their hours as usual on the Website. Milestone awards were announced for 90 hours (6 Awardees) and 200 hours (2 Awardees).

Fran told Volunteers who usually sign in at the Welcome Center they now need to submit their hours online or call her if needed.

Botanic Book Buddies - Barb Farley. Book Buddies will be starting via Zoom in September. 25 members have signed up. The book for September is Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer, PhD. She is an active member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation of the Northeast.

New Business

Report of the Subcommittee on Docents and Volunteers - Susan Starr, Chair.

A Subcommittee on the Status of Volunteers in the Docent Society was formed last October, 2019 and charged with determining what steps the Docent Society could take to ensure that all volunteers feel welcomed and valued by the Society and the Garden.

The Subcommittee consisted of 3 Docents, and 3 Volunteers with Susan Starr as Chair. A final report of the Subcommittee was submitted to the DEB in February 2020 with six recommendations accepted by the DEB. Three recommendations require a vote of the Docent Society membership*. Three can be handled by the DEB.

The six recommendations reviewed are:

1. Change name to SDBG Volunteer Society*
2. Add a Volunteer Coordinator
3. Do not establish a formal Mentoring Program
4. All Active Volunteers can vote*
5. All Active Volunteers are eligible to hold office*
6. Report Docent and Volunteer milestones together

The full report of the Subcommittee is available on the Docent/Volunteer website – SDBGDocents.org – under Minutes

Meeting Adjourned at 11:14 am

Linda Cooper, Secretary

Speaker Program - Kathryn Blankinship. Leonard Burkhart, Ph.D., Disinfecting Tools: or how not to spread diseases in the garden. Introduced by Jeff Clingan.