

Dear Petal Pushers,

The February meeting was held at the home of Kathy Hymel. Debbie Abbott with the Planning Committee, introduced our guest speaker, Master Gardener, Susie Andres. Ms. Andres spoke on Butterflies & Hummingbirds. Her talk was very informative and her belief is to have a garden where you can see it and enjoy it! After her presentation, Sandy Miller, President, thanked her for making the trip to Lake Ramsey and presented her with a Lake Ramsey cookbook. We had fourteen members attending the meeting. Sandy said we had a lot to discuss so everyone helped themselves to desserts, fresh fruit and refreshments.

Sandy thanked Kathy H. for hosting this month and thanked Debbie and the Planning Committee for arranging for our guest speaker for this month's meeting. Sandy informed the club that the HOA has contracted with a new landscaping company, RCI, to take care of the green spaces. The previous company, Hawks Landscaping Co., was not doing a good job so we were glad to hear that a new company was hired. However, the new company is charging almost three times more than Hawks. (\$21,500. vs \$8,500.) Because of the huge increase in cost, the HOA has eliminated the Garden Club's budget from the 2019 HOA's budget.

Everyone agreed that hearing this news was very disheartening. The Garden Club worked very hard to be recognized by the HOA as a budgeted entity. Since 2011, the Garden Club has accomplished many projects considering the restraints put on us by the on-going OCI litigation. We had great plans for landscaping around the flag poles and the Lake Ramsey Sign but, of course, these plans will not go forward. If needed, Jeff Burton is the contact person on the HOA Board. Our current balance in the Garden Club's bank account is \$1,680.00. Sandy asked everyone to think about how and on what we should spend this money. Going forward, the only income the Garden Club will have to work with will be the \$25.00 per member dues collected in September of each year.

The fountain in front of the Guard House is not working and needs a new pump. Kathy Hymel will contact Treasurers Unlimited to get a price to replace the pump. Since the HOA helped with the original purchase of the fountain, Sandy will contact the HOA to see if they will also help with the repair costs. Once the fountain is repaired, Kathy H. said she does not want to be responsible for the maintenance of the fountain. Sandy thanked Linda Rowe and her husband for planting the fall flowers around the fountain and in the arbor. A touch of color in the dreary winter is always a boost to our morale!!!

Nine members enjoyed the field trip last month to Camille Hill and our next field trip will be on Friday, March 22nd with a trip to the Houmas House Plantation and Gardens. You can go to www.houmashouse.com to get more information on this historical piece of history! The deadline for letting the Planning Committee know if you will be attending so lunch reservations and car pooling can be organized is March 8th. Please contact Debbie at 1-318-614-7234 or Kathy Lyons at 985-867-8523.

Believe it or not, the Garden Club's active year is almost over. After the March field trip, our meeting on April 8th will be at Darlene's home and the Installation of New Officers will be on May 13th at Jane Griffith's home.

Respectively Submitted,

Darlene Parlipiano
Secretary, LRG