

Remembering Lydia

Most of you know that Lydia was a leader in our Garden Club. She was President for two years, twice Flower Show chair, editor of our 60th anniversary booklet, Governance chair and, more often than not, the power behind the throne. She was generous with her talents and her accomplishments were many.

When I first encountered Lydia at a Garden Club meeting, I was impressed by her confidence, her competence and her silver chignon. I use the word encounter because I don't think I ever had an idle, easy chat with Lydia. She was always on a mission, she always had a plan. That day we were probably planning a flower show and in her husky voice she told us exactly what we should do. I think we were supposed to have music. Lydia was a woman of conviction and action.

On another note, past president Liz Chehayl reminded me that Lydia loved succulents. And now that I reflect on it, Lydia was succulent. Succulent means "rich in desirable qualities" and "affording mental nourishment".

In the plant world, succulents are often prickly on the outside but soft and tender on the inside. Brian Holley, the Garden's retired Director, wrote: "Lydia was so incredibly brilliant and committed to advocacy; really kind, but a little embarrassed to have anyone see her be soft."

That was Lydia.

What makes me saddest today is that Lydia is not here to bask in the love and appreciation we are sharing. Let us remember to let others know how we value them when they are still with us.

I close with words from another past president, Linda Brown: "The world without Lydia is hard to fathom."

Catherine Ware
Naples Garden Club President
2001-2003 & 2018-2019

June 27, 2018