

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL 4, 2022
SALLY LUTZ

“Well, well...well. What a ride! What more can I say? After over 2 years, I've learned a thing or two that I would like to share with you. Linda LaRue Brown has done a fantastic job reviewing this year with photos of our Meetings and Programs. TY Linda! I would like to review this year (and part and parcel to that our Pause Year) on a personal note... how I think our Club and Board - has changed and adapted and what I have learned in the process. I promise it won't be too long and laborious, as that's one thing I've learned about meetings in general – keep them organized, short and sweet.

So let's begin:

NEVER EXPECT THAT WHAT YOU HAVE CAREFULLY PLANNED WILL COME OFF...ON TIME AND PERFECTLY

We have learned to revisit, redo, respond...to mask and remask. Who would have thought that even having a meeting would be inconceivable. Who would have thought that the Year's Programs and Workshops were all set to go and then put on PAUSE for an entire year. And who would have thought we would lose a beloved member to Covid. Grief. But we changed and we managed with the help of a little technology and unwavering Board acceptance. The more frequent “Letter From the President” and Trowel Prints seemed to keep everyone informed with what was happening and what had changed.

AND THEN THERE'S. ZOOM!

I had no idea what Zoom was 2 years ago.! Bold Solutions and our Member Zoom stars saved the day. Thank you zoom stars Polly, Mary, Raynelle, Susan Linda Sudie to name a few. We had a very acceptable and responsible Pause Year and this year...Gang Busters! We were ready.

WE HAVE LEARNED TO LISTEN TO ONE ANOTHER MORE CAREFULLY – TO CONSIDER EVERYONE'S PRIORITIES – NOT JUST OUR OWN OR WHAT WE USED TO DO.

In that process, we have learned to say YES to things that we didn't think we could And, just flat out say NO to others. Sometimes a NO is lot harder to say than a YES.

BY THE SAME TOKEN: I MUST STATE CLEARLY: NEVER DISCOUNT EXPERIENCE.

That magic word that can put everything in perspective. A delicate balance, the new and the old. We must consider both carefully.

HERE'S A HARD ONE: DEVELOP A "THICK SKIN"BUT NOT TOO THICK.

Sometimes your feelings may get hurt... yup it happens. Nobody likes it, but maybe we need to put things in perspective and ask ourselves the question – "Is this really worth getting upset about?" Which brings me to the next epiphany:

WE ARE A GARDEN CLUB – NOT A FORTUNE 500 COMPANY. WE ARE ALL VOLUNTEERS, NOT EMPLOYEES.

BUT We all need to be "responsible" volunteers, because we are counting on one another. The good reputation of the Naples Garden Club is counting on you too.

LET PEOPLE DO THEIR JOBS.

We had a wonderful Board of Directors this past year. I tried very hard not to insert myself into their business. I didn't want to second-guess. Let the Board and Committees work – empower them. Don't micro manage.

I LEARNED HOW VALUABLE OUR PARTNERSHIP IS WITH THE BOTANICAL GARDEN.

We began negotiation for a new MOU (Memo of Understanding) in 2019-2020. It was "iffy" and we had trouble coming to an agreement on a few issues. Here's where the ensuing Pause Year did us a favor. A year of reflection and a revised MOU was proposed and accepted in the summer of 2021. This is the first year and it has managed beautifully with both the Club and the Gardens working together as a unit – both accepting financial responsibility and financial gain where appropriate . It has been a pleasure working with Erin Wolf-Bell, our go-to person at the Garden. Even Erin noted that our relationship is now "better than ever."

PROGRAMS AND WORKSHOPS FOR THIS YEAR WERE GENUINELY EXCITING.

We had record numbers of attendance: Through March we had 765 Members & guests at General Meetings; 436 Members at Workshops; and 66 Participants at Presenter Workshops. Our meetings were different and well received. The same-ole became "hurry and sign up!" So much thought went into this year...How gratifying.

Our "New" House and Garden Tour was a sold-out success as was our "Visions" Flower Show... which had over 5000 visitors over the two days! Yah, I'd call that successful.

At last – here we are:

I had some miss steps along the way – no doubt about it. But without question, I know I did get one thing right:

FRIENDS IN FLOWERS.

Thank you for letting me do my job, but most of all thank you for being my Friend.