

2024 PROVISIONALS REPORT

After conferring with Peg Condon, who chairs the Hadwen Garden and is responsible for leading the members of the Provisional Class in “weeding” at the Hadwen House Garden every Monday morning, together, we sent an email to all ten Provisionals just welcoming them to the NGC and describing the requirements of membership as a Provisional, what responsibilities they are expected to carry out and dates to put on their summer calendars.

We decided to wait until early April to send this email -- early enough so that they would be aware of the Daffodil Flower Show but not so early they would forget about what we communicated regarding the summer of 2024 and the NGC. Included in the email was a reminder of what they should do if they needed to miss a General Meeting and what to do if they could not come to Monday mornings at the Hadwen Garden. I decided I should be firm in encouraging them to come on Mondays instead of substituting Thursday morning at the Salt Marsh Garden. I did this for two reasons: Firstly, if a few of them decided it was more convenient for them to go to Salt Marsh, we wouldn't have enough workers at Hadwen, and, secondly, being all together and working together as a group to hopefully establish familiarity and camaraderie is one of the points of working at Hadwen.

Peg and I worked well together and her enthusiasm and energy at the garden was contagious. We had ten women as Provisionals and each one is terrific. They were attentive while they were working but still managed to socialize with one another and no one was on their phone or distracted. At the outset, we asked that they turn off their phones unless they thought there could be a family emergency. They came on time and didn't leave until all the debris was bagged. Peg said from the start that unless it was pouring rain that we would be working. There was one Monday when we did not work as it was the “Nantucket by Design” week and the NHA needed to use the garden that Monday.

Note: Please emphasize that this is their Provisional summer and it is not a good idea to plan a family vacation in July or August.

Gretchen Riley kindly hosted a flower demonstration at her home just before Green Thumb and I brought the lunch. This worked out really well. Each Provisional brought flowers and a container from their home and created an arrangement that Gretchen critiqued. Gretchen gave them many useful tips. Several of the Provisionals entered the Green Thumb and won a prize.

In addition to attending every General Meeting, I made it clear that the Provisionals were expected to work at the Green Thumb Flower Show Preview Party as greeters and we established three shifts for which they signed up to work and they would be expected to serve at the House Tour Tea and to bring store-bought or homemade cookies. I asked Marianna Brewster to send a “Sign-up Genius” email to them for both of these events so we would know who was working which shift. This group came early to set up on House Tour day and stayed late.

They were, truly, the most responsible group of women and we are fortunate to have these women in our club. They showed great interest in the club and our activities and were good humored and fun to be around. Several went beyond their Provisional responsibilities and volunteered to be runners at the Green Thumb Flower Show or to be docents at the House Tour so they were working all day. Several went to Salt Marsh to work in addition to working at Hadwen.

Mid-summer, they began to think about their skit for the Annual Meeting. I emphasized that they could do anything from reading a poem to singing. They chose a date and met at the home of one of their members.

It was a great pleasure to work with and get to know these women.

Respectfully submitted,

Merriellou Symes

Provisional Chair, 2024.