

Columbia Gardeners Fall Meeting  
October 19, 2022

There was a social hour between 6-7 p.m. that gave gardeners a chance to mingle and enjoy refreshments. The business meeting and speaker followed the social hour.

**Board members in attendance:**

Betty Miller  
Amod Bhide  
John Spencer  
Diane Stack  
Cleve Chick  
Ebele Onwueme  
Susan Levi--Goerlich  
Bill Small  
Joe Reyes  
Betty Bensel  
Guy DiRoma  
Sara Kaman

**Welcome and Opening Remarks**

Betty Miller called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. She introduced herself as the President of Columbia Gardeners and thanked everyone for coming. She commented that this has been the first in person general meeting since Fall 2019 and remarked that we had a good turnout considering that COVID is still out there.

Betty introduced the elected Board members, the site managers and all of the committee chairs who were present and thanked Sara Kaman (our Program Director) for organizing the meeting.

Betty next gave a brief summary of the order of business and turned the meeting over to Heather Richardson (Nominating Committee Chair) who conducted the election of Officers.

**Election of Officers**

Heather thanked the two other members of the Nominating Committee (Allison Esrig and Alice Jackson) for their help.

She explained that each year, Columbia Gardeners elects a President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary and a Member at Large from each site at our annual Fall meeting. She presented the requirements Board members and nominees must meet in order to serve on the Board.

Specifically,

- Board members must attend at least seven of the eleven yearly Board meetings which are held on the second Tuesday of each month, except December.
- Board members must contribute to the operation and success of Columbia Gardeners, Inc. by fully participating in Board meetings, sharing views on the issues being considered by the Board, proposing solutions and voting on these issues.
- Board members must have access to email and read their email regularly to keep up to date on matters related to Columbia Gardeners.
- Board members and nominees must be in compliance with Columbia Gardeners Rules and Regulations and have no adverse rulings from Columbia Gardeners, Inc.

Heather presented the slate of officers that the Nominating committee put together. The slate included Betty Miller for President, Amod Bhide for Vice-President, John Spencer for Treasurer, Diane Stack for Secretary, Ebele Onwueme for Long Reach Member-at-Large, Bill Small for West Side Member-at-Large and Carol Cannon for Elkhorn Member-at-Large. She pointed out that all of the nominees are currently serving Board members and that nominations for any of the elected positions can be made from the floor.

Heather asked for nominations from the floor but there were none. Voting was conducted by a show of hands. People were asked to raise their hand if they approved of the current slate of officers; then people were asked to raise their hand if they did not approve of the slate of officers. The slate of officers was unanimously unopposed. Thus, all elected members will continue in their current positions for another year.

Heather thanked the audience, as did Betty M.

Betty M. asked if anyone had any questions or comments. There were none. The business meeting was adjourned and we had two guest speakers.

### **First Speaker**

Betty M. next introduced Caroline Feil (a Master Gardener) whose presentation was titled "Growing from Seed: A Winter of Fun".

Caroline's talk covered getting ready for indoor germination, growing media to use when starting seeds indoors, germinating seeds indoors, maintaining seedlings through germination,

preparing seedlings for transplanting into pots, transplanting seedlings into pots, establishing strong seedlings, planting seedlings, maintaining seedlings and germinating seeds outside. She also showed us a neat way to make a pot out of newspaper.

Caroline's talk was quite interesting and very well received. It gave us excellent advice on growing seeds indoors. She gave us a handout with a copy of all her slides, as well as a copy of the directions for making a newspaper pot.

### **Second Speaker:**

Betty M. next introduced Andrea Cochran (a Master Gardener who gardens at Elkhorn) whose presentation was titled "How to Identify Poison Hemlock". It should be noted that Betty Benschel actually developed the slides for this presentation, had planned to give the presentation but lost her voice so had to recruit Andrea to give the presentation for her.

Poison Hemlock has been found in various places at the Elkhorn site. It contains a toxic alkaloid and is poisonous to humans and livestock if ingested. It also causes some people and animals to experience dermatitis if touched.

Great care must be taken when working around poison hemlock, including wearing personal protective equipment and safety glasses or goggles. Poison Hemlock should never be burned, composted, weed-wacked or touched with bare hands or skin.

Poison Hemlock is tall and invasive and belongs to the same family as carrots, parsnips and celery. It is commonly mistaken for Queen Anne's Lace. It is an erect biennial (flowering plant that takes two years to complete its life cycle) weed that can grow six to ten feet tall. During the first year, growth is limited to a rosette of dark green leaves. More growth is observed in the second year when the plant develops branching and alternately arranged leaves in erect stems. This erect plant has smooth, hollow stems that are covered with purple spots. Each leaf is made up of several pairs of leaflets, multi-stemmed, and fern-like. During the reproductive stages, the flowers are white umbrella-like clusters.

The following link <https://extension.umd.edu/resource/poison-hemlock-identification-and-management> on the University of Maryland Extension website has a very well written article with color pictures that describes Poison Hemlock Identification and Management.

A person in the audience said that she is a West Side gardener and had Poison Hemlock all over her plot so it is not only at Elkhorn. Another person mentioned that Water Hemlock is all over the place, especially around the lakes. Water Hemlock could be worse than Poison Hemlock. The Columbia Association Open Space Department has helped to get rid of some of the Water Hemlock and Poison Hemlock.

### **Door Prizes and Close of Meeting**

A number of door prizes were awarded and the meeting ended around 8:25 p.m.