

VISTA ROYALE COMPUTER CLUB
Meeting Minutes 1/25/2024

Linda Briggs, President, welcomed 28 new and returning members to the fourth meeting of the 2024 season. She also announced the Public Budget Meeting noted below. Sandy McKenny will let Nancy, Sec., know of any genealogy announcements she has for club members and they will become part of the meeting minutes.

Upcoming VRCC Meetings:

Feb 01 Indian River Sheriff Dept.

Feb 08 ACT/Jurgen Schwanitz - Building Gaming Machines

Feb 15 Chamber of Commerce, Debbie Avery, President

Feb 22 iPhones by Linda

Feb 29 TBA

Mar 07 Estate Planning - Pamela Hennig

Mar 14 ACT/Jurgen Schwanitz - Cyber Security

Mar 21 TBA

Mar 28 End of Season Program - Linda Briggs

Programs always begin at 9:30 a.m. and are held in the Pine Arbor Clubhouse kitchen

Twelve consecutive weekly programs are scheduled - every Thursday between 1/4/24 - 3/28/24

Shout Out to ALL MEMBERS - Thank you for supporting VRCC, now in its **22nd year of serving the Vista Royale community!**

Membership Fee Sign Up Details:

2 For 1 through January 31 @the LAB

\$20 (cash only) + proximity badge to sign up (\$20 for 2 people) .

Indian River Genealogy Conference

Free and open to the public

Presenter: Lisa Louise Cook

March 23, 2024 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. (In-person registration begins at 8:00 a.m.)

Our History: Your Story

3980 12th Street, Vero Beach FL

Today's Presentation:

McKee Botanical Gardens - Amy Shoemaker

AMY SHOEMAKER

Amy Shoemaker is the current, and first ever, Education Coordinator at McKee Botanical Gardens (MBG). Amy, formerly a public school teacher, is in her fifth year of working where she loves what she does - MBG! Part of Amy's job is publishing two program booklets each

year (January - May and August - November). She plans activities, programs, seminars, and workshops for children and adults.

MBG HISTORY RECAP

MBG, formerly McKee Jungle Gardens, housed a combination of exotic plants and flowers from many areas of the world and animals (chimpanzees, elephant, brown bears). Waldo Sexton purchased the chimpanzees from the Chicago Fair. They were chain smokers when he bought them and they actually put on a show in gardens. However, as time went by regulations for how to care for animals changed. So, when the gardens closed in the seventies and reopened in 2001, it opened as MBG.

The Hall of Giants was built based on a sketch design by Waldo, built solely as a home for the world's longest piece of wood. It is a beautiful piece of furniture. The story is, Waldo took a piece of paper and sketched out the Hall of Giants, handed it to the contractor and said build this so I have a place to put my table. This Philippine mahogany piece of wood is 32 feet long, one solid cut of wood - amazing! Waldo tracked that piece of wood which he had seen at a World's Fair. He knew it had ended up in a CA museum. Though, the piece of wood was mistakenly marked as redwood until an expert set the record straight. Eventually it ended up in the basement of a museum in NY. Waldo continued to keep track of it and eventually brought it to Vero Beach when opening McKee Jungle Gardens. It was polished and turned into a table which was actually used for serving visitors steaks, baked potatoes, and cabbage palm soup. The stone on each side of the Spanish kitchen that holds the roof on the kitchen deserves a careful look. On each side it is shaped like a leg and a boot - two different looking legs and boots. When the Gardens closed in the seventies the table was purchased by the the owner of Dodgertown. The table was never utilized and kept in storage at Dodgertown. After after many, many years Dodgertown loaned it to MBG and just last year donated it back to MBG. Visitors are allowed to eat at the table now that it is owned by MBG.

The Hall of Giants is where all the history of MBG is stored for visitors to tour. There is also an eight minute video in the Hall that runs on a continuous loop. It was designed as a commercial/news clip to play in movie theaters. After being lost for many years and eventually found by someone in their memorabilia, the film was given back to the Gardens and was stored in archives when it closed in the 1970s. The film was resurrected from the archives when reopening as MBG in 2001. It shows all the animals that were in the jungle garden. Come see it for yourself at the Gardens or find it on YouTube.

CHILDREN'S GARDEN

The Children's Garden took about three years to build and opened in January 2020. It is an acre of great wonder and discovery. Anyone can enjoy walking through it and everyone is encouraged to check out the pirate ship the next time you are there. A host of activities is going on in the Children's Gardens such as, morning programs for those 4 years and under (older sibs can tag along), music time, and two play groups. The play groups are loaded with sensory nature related bins and activities, fine motor skills, numbers, etc. The kids are having fun and learning at the same time, and all the while socializing with other children.. The only

rule is that parents are asked to keep an eye on their own child. They have a great time! The Children's Garden offers a science based program on Fridays designed to support the huge homeschool community in Vero Beach, though any age appropriate child is welcome to participate. There is a plethora of activities for children and families alike. The area is safe, being fenced in with only one way in and out.

ADULT PROGRAMING

Always on the lookout for variety and enjoyment for members, Amy has crafted a wide range of options, including exercise classes (Tai Chi, Pilates, Yoga), many interesting workshops, including arts & crafts, painting, Origami, jewelry making, mosaic stepping stones, and more. Some classes sell out immediately, the instructors are hand picked and wonderful leaders. Take in a seminar, workshop, or a variety of activities. Amy makes the effort to try to find something for everyone when planning the workshops.

TAI CHI - THURSDAYS PILATES - WEDNESDAYS YOGA - CURRENTLY LOOKING FOR AN INSTRUCTOR

SUMMERTIME MATINEE AND LUNCH - VERY POPULAR INSIDE VENUE

MEMBERSHIP

MBG membership gets you into 350 other gardens located all over the USA that are part of the American Horticultural Society. A print out of all the local gardens is available in the gift shop and the website has a listing of all 350 locations. There is no extra pricing for events at the garden. The cafe is open to the public and does not require an admission fee. Programs and workshops fill up quickly. Reserve early, if possible. The programs in the Children's Garden do not require registration or reservation - free for members or cost of admission. Anything offered in the education building does require reservation and payment in advance. The popular Pirate and Fairy Celebrations on Saturdays in May is free with membership or cost of admission.

The weekly History and Highlights tour goes out every Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. Use your membership or pay admission and wait by the History and Highlights Tour sign.

Parties of 10 or more are encouraged to make a reservation for a personal tour.

PARKING TIPS

The north lot is actually closer to the admission gate than the south lot.

Major events - remote parking/shuttle bus at the old Wells Fargo Bank location at Vista Royale's main entrance.

THE HERE AND NOW

* A TROPICAL FLOCK OF AVIAN AVATARS - mixed media and interactive exhibit. In the Garden now and through April 28. The Avatars are enormous and very impressive in person. Visitors can actually walk through one and under another. Check it out!

* **February 3 and 4** -- MBG @ GARDENFEST, Riverside Park, Vero Beach - come see us!

* **Saturday, February 10th** 15th ANNUAL MOTOR CAR EXHIBITION - 10 AM – 3 PM.

This year's motor car exhibition will feature Rods & Customs...vehicles showcasing creative work of individual builders. 3000 Visitors are expected. Remote parking/shuttle bus at the old Wells Fargo Bank at main entrance to Vista Royale.

* Remember - BIKE RACK on site

* CAFE - Open to the public and does not require admission

SEEK - Nature lovers here's an APP tip -- consider downloading the SEEK app to your device. It can quickly identify plants and animals. Below are links for more information and for downloading SEEK to a device.

Google Play Store

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.inaturalist.seek&referrer=utm_source%3Dinat-seek-page%26utm_campaign%3DiNaturalist%2520Seek%2520Page%26anid%3Dadmob

Apple App store

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/seek-by-inaturalist/id1353224144>

VOLUNTEERS:

"We can't function without our volunteers. They are the backbone of everything we do.", chanted Amy. There is a wide range of volunteer options for locals and snowbirds alike. Do you like working with children? Would you be interested in handing out programs or menus during a special event? Maybe the back office is more your style - come stuff envelopes and help out with large mailings. There is no requirement for a minimum or maximum number of volunteer hours. Sign up is simple on the website or give Amy a call and she will point you in the right direction for becoming a volunteer. One requirement is a simple background check, solely looking for no history of child abuse. Anyone who enjoys being outside in nature, working with children, or helping to organize stuff is welcome and needed. The idea is to keep volunteering as stress free as possible - children are never without their parent(s) - volunteers are facilitators - everything is organized for volunteers. MBG has turned the library into a beautiful volunteer center where you can come in and make coffee while waiting for a shift to start and hang out with other volunteers and staff. Volunteer opportunities for sign up are sent out via email.

Linda Briggs adjourned the meeting at 10:42 a.m.

NEXT MEETING - February 1st:

Indian River Sheriff Department

9:30 AM. PACH KITCHEN

SEE YOU THERE!!

