

## COUNCIL MEETING

January 13, 2021

The regular meeting of the Rose Valley Borough Council was held via Zoom on January 13, 2021. President of Council Bill Hale called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Other Council members present were: Councilpersons Deb DeMasi, Dave Firn, Stephanie Middleton, Bob Siwicki, Judy Voet and Vippy Yee; Mayor Tim Plummer; Treasurer Joe Hare; Controller John Neilson; Solicitor G. Guy Smith; and Secretary Paula Healy. Pennsylvania State Police Trooper Jessica Tobin also attended the meeting.

Members of the public present were Anne Bradley, John Caldwell, Kelly Caulfield, Ursula Erb, Cindy Holston, Peter Howell, Jim Kauffman, Wojek Paciorek, Ron Ploeg, Matt Sullivan and Richard Taxin.

After the Pledge of Allegiance, the Minutes of the December 9, 2020 Council Meeting and the December 14, 2020 Budget Meeting were approved on motions made, seconded and unanimously passed.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Paciorek asked if it is still worth doing recycling given conditions in recycling markets and wondered if the material put out is actually being recycled. Mr. Firn answered that the EAC had recently reviewed this issue and concluded that most of the material is indeed recycled. However, it has become much more expensive which is why Council decided to move back to every other week recycling pick up instead of weekly pick up.

Mr. Paciorek also asked if the Borough could pick up leaves. Mr. Firn replied this would be very expensive and that the EAC encourages composting. He noted that EAC meetings are the fourth Tuesday of every month and open to the public.

### EAC & ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Neilson asked how the deer hunt was progressing. Mr. Firn reported it was still ongoing and the count was not yet in.

### HIGHWAYS & TECHNOLOGY

Ms. Yee reported that Carney Tree Company will soon take down the trees for the project to improve the left side sightline for motorist pulling out of Longpoint Lane onto Knowlton Road.

Ms. Yee has arranged for a Penn State student to intern with the Borough of Rose Valley to help with website design.

## LIBRARY

Mrs. Voet reported that the next Library Board of Directors' meeting will be January 20, 2021. There will be a membership meeting at 6:30 p.m. followed by a Board Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Middleton asked about donating books. Mrs. Voet replied that at this time the Library is not accepting donations, as mandated by the Delaware County Library System due to the pandemic.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

Trooper Jessica Tobin attended the meeting to bring Council up to date regarding the Pennsylvania State Police. She spoke about the new monthly incident report format, traffic control, drug seizures, medicine drop-offs and the new police barracks. She complimented the Borough's Town Watch program.

Mr. Paciorek complained about the trash on Knowlton Road. Mrs. Healy noted that most of Knowlton Road is not in Rose Valley. Solicitor Smith explained that the County community service program run by Walt Omlor in which DUI offenders pick up trash along roadsides has been halted due to the pandemic.

Mrs. DeMasi reviewed the Police and Fire Reports. The Police Report cited the following incidents: 1 motor vehicle accident and 2 traffic citations. The Fire Report showed that the fire company responded to two automatic fire alarm activations and one incident of wires down on a road.

The Town Watch program is proceeding as usual, with no passing of equipment due to the pandemic. Mrs. DeMasi stressed that Town Watchers are only to observe and report suspicious behavior to the police and are not to confront individuals.

Mrs. DeMasi reviewed the data from the speed devices on Rose Valley Road. She noted there are fewer cars driving up and down Rose Valley Road due to the pandemic with people working from home and limiting their travel.

The pandemic is still ongoing. Mrs. DeMasi encouraged everyone to be vigilant and get the vaccine as soon as possible. To date there have been 22 reported cases in Rose Valley and one death. State representative LeeAnne Kruger will hold a Zoom Town Hall meeting regarding Covid-19 on January 20 at 12 noon.

## PLANNING

Ms. Middleton reported that there was no Planning Commission Meeting in January. Consultant Bob Thomas is still waiting to hear from PennDOT regarding right-of-way information. Mr. Firn plans to look into grants for the sidepath project. The next scheduled Planning Commission meeting is February 4, 2021 at 7:30 p.m.

## FINANCES

Mr. Hare reviewed the Status of Funds for December 2020. Mr. Siwicki reviewed the Income Report for December 2020. Mr. Neilson reviewed the Bills for Approval for January and answered questions. The Bills for Approval in the amount of \$27,384.00 were approved on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed.

Mr. Siwicki also reviewed the Status of Funds for January 1, 2021 showing the beginning of year transfers and loan. At the beginning of 2021, all the monies in the General Fund Checking and Savings accounts were transferred to Capital Reserve. These transfers include payback, to the extent possible, of the \$70,000 loan made at the beginning of 2020. At the end of 2020, there was \$21,306.37 in the Checking account and \$55,378.94 in the Savings account for a total of \$76,685.31. This indicates a net gain of \$6,685.31 for the year on a cash basis without any allocation from Capital Reserve. However, this was only because several large checks written in December had not yet been cashed. The QuickBooks Budget vs. Actual for the year showed a net loss of \$10,151.08. A loan of \$70,000 was also made from Capital Reserve to the General Fund Checking and Savings accounts, with \$40,000 going into Checking and \$30,000 into Savings. This resulted in net transfers of \$18,693.63 from Capital Reserve to Checking and \$25,378.94 from Savings to Capital Reserve.

## GENERAL

Resolution 1 - 2021 appointing Robert M. Healy to the Vacancy Board was approved on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed.

## SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Mr. Smith informed Council that there have been a number of tax assessment appeals filed by Borough residents. He is the Borough's intervener in these tax appeal cases and will keep Council advised as they progress. He also noted Delaware County suffered a cyberattack at the end of last year and that it was his understanding they paid a large ransom to have their computer systems restored.

## MAYOR'S REPORT

The Mayor's Annual State of the Borough Address below was read and entered into the minutes. Following the Address, Mr. Plummer announced that he will not be seeking another term as Mayor. Mr. Hale then announced that he will be running for Mayor.

There being no further business, on a motion made, seconded and unanimously passed, the meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

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Paula W. Healy, Secretary

**Mayor's State of the Borough Address**  
**Submitted to Borough Council, January 13, 2021**  
**by Mayor Tim Plummer**

As we begin our 98th year as a Borough, only two short years away from our Centennial Year, we should pause to reflect on our many accomplishments in 2020 and our goals for 2021. Our overarching goal as the elected and appointed officials of Rose Valley Borough and as members of key volunteer organizations will always be the improvement of our community. We have made remarkable progress toward achieving the goals we set for ourselves at the beginning of 2020. Highlights of the outstanding work of Borough Council are outlined below. In addition, the achievements of the Rose Valley Centennial Foundation, the Rose Valley Museum and Historical Society and the Rose Valley Gardeners are also summarized. As Mayor of this wonderful Borough, I am honored to present to you my Annual State of the Borough Address.

**Rose Valley Borough Council**

Bill Hale (President), Dave Firn (Vice President), Bob Siwicki (Finance), Debra DeMasi (Public Safety), Stephanie Middleton (Planning), Vippy Yee (Highways, Insurance, Cable Vision and Technology), Judy Voet (Library), John Neilson (Controller), Joe Hare (Treasurer), Tim Plummer (Mayor), Paula Healy (Borough Manager) and G. Guy Smith (Solicitor).

Website: [rosevalleyborough.org](http://rosevalleyborough.org) Email: [rosevalleyborough@comcast.net](mailto:rosevalleyborough@comcast.net)

**Environment and Environmental Advisory Council (Dave Firn, Chair & Council Liaison)**

EAC Members: Leonard Busby (Chair), Roger Latham (Vice Chair), Chris Bourke (Secretary), Jim Audley, Monica Gagliardi, Ron Ploeg and Katie Rubin. Associate members: Mario Bacchia, Jim Castellan, Cindy McPherson, Byron Sherwood and John Smith.

Website: [rosevalleyeac.org](http://rosevalleyeac.org) Email: [info@rosevalleyeac.org](mailto:info@rosevalleyeac.org)

**2020 Accomplishments:**

**Deer Control:** The Borough successfully applied to the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) for permission to conduct a cull in late winter 2020 based upon Dr. Latham's extensive analysis of the effect of deer browsing on the native plantings in the deer enclosure and companion plot. Unfortunately, the cull was only minimally successful with only two deer taken due to, among other reasons, the availability of other food sources in the spring. With a state of emergency declared due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the cull was suspended. The Borough authorized its best hunter to bow hunt exclusively in the Todmorden Woods in late 2020 and January 2021.

**Invasive Nonnative Species:** Although the annual spring native plant sale was canceled due to the pandemic, volunteers under the supervision of the EAC continued to remove numerous invasive plants from our parklands and replace them with native species mostly donated from residents' gardens. The EAC continues to investigate alternatives to herbicides in controlling invasive vegetation in our parklands.

**Spotted Lanternfly:** A male ailanthus tree and a cork tree in the Saul preserve continue to be utilized as trap trees to kill spotted lanternflies that feed on their sap.

**Trail Improvements:** Two significant projects were accomplished in the fall of 2020. This is even more notable given the additional difficulties on group projects posed by the pandemic. In the Chadwick Preserve, a new upland trail was constructed along the ridge complete with a switchback trail down the steep slope at the end of the ridge to connect with the floodplain trail. Debris was cleared and invasive plants removed. This work also included maintenance on the

extensive native plantings accomplished previously under a Growing Greener grant. In the Saul Preserve, volunteers created a new trail to replace a poorly designed and badly eroded trail and various other parts of existing trails were refurbished to remedy muddy patches and reduce erosion. Jim Audley designed the repairs and improvements and spearheaded the efforts in a highly efficient and organized way while Katie Rubin, Stephanie Browning and others enlisted volunteers. The trail improvement projects were accomplished for less than the \$2,500 budgeted and utilized 46 volunteers (ages 3 to 76) over four weekends in October and November.

**Trail Signage:** Borough Council included \$10,000 in the 2021 budget for the design and, after Council approval, construction of trailhead informational kiosks and other signage for the Saul and Chadwick Preserves.

**Rose Valley Road Pathway:** A conceptual study was commissioned in 2019 under the auspices of the EAC which outlined the possibility of an 8-10' wide pedestrian and bike trail along Rose Valley Road between SEPTA's 118 bus stop at Brookhaven Road and SEPTA's Moylan/Rose Valley Train Station. After much discussion in the Fall of 2020, Council commissioned a feasibility study under the purview of the Planning Commission to explore the feasibility of a 3' - 4' wide pedestrian pathway from Possum Hollow Road to the Moylan/Rose Valley Train Station.

**Rose Valley EAC Facebook Page:** Established and maintained by Katie Rubin.

#### **2021 Goals:**

- Continue to evaluate the results from the Borough's deer hunting and culling programs and continue to investigate non-lethal methods to mitigate deer damage to our parklands.
- Organize manual removal of the remaining Japanese knotweed present in the Chadwick Preserve, especially in the area of the native plantings established under the Growing Greener grant. Apply spot herbicide in the fall as warranted.
- Investigate live-staking of native willow and dogwood shrubs to stabilize eroding portions of the Ridley Creek streambank.
- Monitor for the presence of spotted lanternflies in the Borough. Treat affected Borough-owned trees and educate residents about threats posed by this nonnative invasive insect. Encourage owners of male ailanthus, cork and bee-bee trees to convert them to trap trees, and to destroy female ailanthus, cork and bee-bee trees.
- Explore the benefits and feasibility of Rose Valley applying for Tree City USA recognition with the Arbor Day Foundation.
- Continue to sponsor invasive plants/native planting workshops and the annual native plant sale if the pandemic has been contained and gatherings are considered safe.
- Continue to assess the trail system throughout Rose Valley, including within our three largest parklands. Develop a plan for further improvement and implement trail enhancement strategies, including erosion control. Invite volunteer participation when appropriate and apply for grant funding to support costs of materials, and if needed, consultant expertise.
- Continue to develop a communications plan for the parklands, including signage and kiosks at the main trailhead in the Saul and Chadwick Preserves. Apply for grants where available.
- Continue to participate with Nether Providence, Swarthmore and Rutledge on developing an implementation plan for recommendations outlined in the 2018 Multi-municipal Parks, Recreation, Trails and Open Space Plan as part of the 4EAC (a multi-municipal EAC collaboration with representation from Rose Valley, Swarthmore, Rutledge, and Nether Providence), including to develop environmental initiatives that benefit our shared community.

- Provide advice to residents on reducing environmental toxins. Discuss the advisability of proposing an ordinance requiring residents to inform neighbors prior to commercial spraying for mosquito or tick control.
- Continue to search for grant opportunities to improve the quality of our parklands, streambanks and floodplains.
- Continue to explore collaborative projects with Swarthmore College to benefit Rose Valley's parklands. In particular, the EAC will seek to work with the professor of Conservation Biology regarding student research projects that could be done in Rose Valley and provide the EAC with more insight and understanding into our ongoing efforts to restore and maintain native plants and wildlife.
- Continue to monitor and maintain the streambank stabilization and riparian buffer restoration projects completed in 2018 and 2019.
- Continue to disseminate invasive plant information, such as timely "Weed Watch" postings in the sanctuaries, to aid in the identification of invasive plants through pictures and descriptions with suggested removal and disposal techniques. Encourage residents to "Free the Trees" on their properties from English ivy infestation, which poses a public safety hazard by predisposing trees to topple and is the source of proliferation by seed of this highly invasive nonnative species.
- Continue to educate our community about nonnative invasive pests and other environmental issues through the Environmental Alert communications sent through the community email listserv. All residents are encouraged to contact the Borough office to join the listserv if they are not already receiving email alerts from Paula.
- Migrate the EAC's website to the Borough website and update the content as needed. Council member Vippy Yee and daughter Noa Dijkstra have begun work on this.
- Continue to monitor the market for recyclable materials and make recommendations to Borough Council regarding the Borough's recycling program.

The EAC welcomes participation by residents in helping to preserve and heal our local environment. EAC monthly meetings are open to the public; most are held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm at the Borough Office (check with the Borough Office to confirm a specific month's meeting date) or via Zoom during the pandemic.

### **Planning and Planning Commission (Stephanie Middleton, Chair)**

Steve Karlovic, Jim Kaufmann, Lynn Kelley, Ron Ploeg and Hope Thurlow.

#### **2020 Accomplishments:**

**Rose Valley Road Pathway:** Approximately two years ago, several EAC members suggested that the Borough consider creating a pathway along Rose Valley Road. Rose Valley has many trails and paths, but there is no safe and direct way to walk between the Moylan/Rose Valley Train Station, the School in Rose Valley, Thunderbird Lodge, Hedgerow Theater, the Village Green, the Old Mill and the Saul Wildlife Preserve. Borough Council agreed to fund a small conceptual study by Bob Thomas of Campbell Thomas & Co. to explore such a pathway under the auspices of the EAC.

**Conceptual Study:** In August 2020, Bob presented this Conceptual Study at a Planning Commission meeting. The Planning Commission also reviewed the portions of the June 2018 Multi-municipal Parks, Recreation, Trails, and Open Space Plan applicable to Rose Valley Road. These two studies are posted on the Borough website. Approximately 60 Borough residents attended the August meeting to offer comments and ask questions about the pathway. The

Planning Commission has since had several public meetings to discuss the pathway with minutes of these meetings posted on the Borough website.

**Feasibility Study:** At the September 2020 Planning Commission meeting, Corey Brown, Senior Transportation Planner with the Delaware County Planning Department, discussed the availability of grant money to fund projects to improve pedestrian access to train stations. Later, after much discussion, the Planning Commission voted to recommend that Borough Council retain Mr. Thomas as a consultant to assist in the preparation of a feasibility study for a 3' to 4' wide pathway along Rose Valley Road from Possum Hollow Road to the Moylan Train Station. The pathway would not be a traditional concrete sidewalk. After Borough Council approved hiring Mr. Thomas, the Planning Commission, which has responsibility for the study, asked EAC members Jim Audley, Monica Gagliardi, Dave Firn and Roger Latham to work with the Planning Commission on the study. Dave Firn volunteered to work on investigating and applying for grants to fund the project if it is determined that there should be a pathway. Ron Ploeg volunteered to coordinate the effort to talk to residents and institutions along Rose Valley Road. Ron also volunteered to discuss the project with State Representative Leanne Krueger and Delaware County Council member Elaine Schaefer. The Planning Commission will continue to have regular meetings to discuss the project which may take years to plan and complete if approved. Whatever the Borough decides to do about a pathway, safety will be a priority.

**PennDOT:** Rose Valley Road is not a Borough road; it is under the jurisdiction of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT). For this reason, the Borough is not able to construct a pathway within the PennDOT right-of-way, reduce the speed limit, install stop signs, traffic lights, or cross walks, build speed bumps, or take other actions to improve safety without the permission of PennDOT.

**Right of Ways and Easements:** Bob Thomas and the Planning Commission, along with other working group members, will be discussing the project and safety concerns with PennDOT and Borough engineer, Matt Houtmann. The Borough and Rose Valley Centennial Foundation own land along a substantial portion of the road where the pathway could be located and PennDOT has a right of way on both sides of Rose Valley Road. Among other things, Bob Thomas is working to ascertain the width and location of the PennDOT right of way to determine if it is feasible to locate the pathway within it. If not, easements from landowners along the road will be needed for the pathway. Pennsylvania has a landowner liability protection statute that protects landowners who allow a public trail to be located within a right of way or easement on their property, provided they do not charge a fee for usage. After the Planning Commission has a clear plan in mind for the design, appearance, maintenance and location of the pathway, discussions will be held with individual landowners along the road. The Commission will continue to discuss with residents any objections and concerns regarding the pathway and ideas for improving safety and sightlines along Rose Valley Road.

**Boy Scout Project:** In coordination with the larger pathway feasibility study, Jack Henry, a member of Rose Valley Troop 272, presented to Borough Council in December a proposed Eagle Scout project to open a new trail on the Borough property above the Hedgerow curve on the southwest side of Rose Valley Road with a bridge over a small stream and continuing up to Traymore Lane. Borough Council approved the project and agreed to provide funding for

materials.

**2021 Goals:**

- Continue work on the Rose Valley Road Pathway feasibility study.
- Better define the proposed pathway design, material and appearance, maintenance requirements and location.
- Solicit input from landowners along potential pathway routes and from other residents of the community.
- Apply for grants to fund, at least partially, feasibility study, preliminary engineering and easement acquisition for the pathway.

**Public Safety and Town Watch (Debra DeMasi, Chair)**

**2020 Accomplishments:**

**Police:** The Pennsylvania State Police (PSP), Troop K, provide law enforcement for Rose Valley Borough. During 2020, there were less incidents requiring police involvement than in 2019, and the statistical average decreased to less than 13 calls with police response per month. This past year the number of false burglar alarms in the Borough decreased by over thirty percent. Several other types of incidents have also decreased in number; these were in the areas of hang up calls, trespass, and disturbances of the peace. On the rise in 2020 were PSP traffic stops for vehicles traveling at excessive speeds. Interestingly, as the number of traffics stops increased, the number of motor vehicular accidents (MVA) decreased. Rose Valley resident participation is vital to ensuring the well-being of our community, and residents are encouraged to immediately notify the State Police with any information regarding suspicious activity within the Borough. The direct line for the PSP is 484-840-1000.

**Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services (EMS):** Fire protection in Rose Valley is mainly provided by Nether Providence Township through the South Media and Garden City Fire Companies. South Media covers most of the Borough while Garden City handles the Todmorden area. The Middletown Fire Co. provides fire protection for the Longpoint Lane area. EMS services are provided for most of the Borough by Media Ambulance while Parkside Ambulance usually covers the Todmorden area.

**Fire Marshall:** Mr. Matthew Poissant is Rose Valley's Fire Marshall, overseeing the fire inspections and follow-ups on various structures within the Borough. Each month he sends Borough Council a Fire Report, with attachments on topics that call attention to seasonal activities promoting good fire safety practices. A reminder for all seasons is to check smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors for proper operation. Rose Valley residents may review these fire safety topic attachments by going to the Borough website.

**Emergency Fire Calls:** There were 29 emergency fire calls for Rose Valley in 2020, almost identical in number and type to the 28 calls in 2019. The one increase was related to the dispatch of emergency medical services. A significant amount of the call volume dealt with responses to automatic fire alarms and downed electrical wires on Borough roads.

**Town Watch:** Town Watch continues to be one of the mainstays protecting the welfare of our residents with three patrolled areas: Central Rose Valley, Longpoint Lane, and Todmorden. Its effectiveness is dependent upon the participation and dedication of numerous volunteer patrollers. Each day, these citizen volunteers drive a route within one of the three patrol areas at



the time of their choosing. The random patrol times act as visual deterrents to criminal mischief and other undesirable activities. Patrollers who see anything out of the ordinary may communicate directly with the Pennsylvania State Police and report patrol incident information to the Borough Office. Town Watch has taken on a new level of importance during the Covid-19 pandemic. Last Spring, at the start of the pandemic, its volunteers were involved in call chains to periodically check on the health and well-being of Borough residents. The Rose Valley Town Watch encourages and welcomes new members. Participating in Town Watch is a way of giving back to the community from the safety and comfort of your own car. Interested residents may call the Borough Office at 610-566-2040.

**Traffic Calming & Pedestrian Safety:** Speed management is a significant challenge and to promote traffic calming, two state-of-the-art speed devices were installed by the Borough in 2019. These devices are in strategic, permanent locations along Rose Valley Road on either side of the Hedgerow curve. These signs provide motorists with instant feedback regarding their speed, usually resulting in immediate slowing. In addition to safety and traffic calming concerns, the speed devices are used as follows: 1) in partnership with agencies such as the State Police to monitor the Borough roadways; 2) to keep a continuous recorded log of traffic and speed data for Rose Valley Road; 3) to provide traffic data for the feasibility study of a pathway along Rose Valley Road; and 4) to supply traffic data to support future grant writing.

**2020 Data:** The 2020 yearly data summation for the traffic devices revealed that Rose Valley Road was traversed by a total of just under 1,464,000 vehicles. This number reflects a decrease in traffic by almost 700,000 vehicles from 2019, as the daily average volume decreased from almost 6,000 to about 4,500 vehicles. The decrease in traffic volumes is attributed to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Emergency Preparedness:** The Rose Valley Borough (RVB) Emergency Operation Plan (EOP) mandated by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), with content contributions from members of the Delaware County Emergency Planning Commission (Local EPC), and Mr. Brent Hopkins, Rose Valley's Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC), was adopted in 2019. This document was reviewed and updated in 2020 as required. Rose Valley residents are encouraged to develop their own emergency preparedness plans and assemble a disaster supply kit. Residents can find copies of the Delaware County Guide to Emergency Preparedness by going online to: <https://delconew.azurewebsites.net/delcoready/resources.html>.

**Covid-19 Pandemic:** In February, the government and medical researchers announced a new, novel coronavirus designated Covid-19. By the beginning of March, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Delaware County's Emergency Services, and Delaware County Council's newly formed alliance with Chester County's Department of Health, moved expediently with their pandemic responses, constantly amending information as more was learned about this virus. Rose Valley Borough followed their directives, restrictions, and precautions to mitigate its spread. Recommendations were made for residents to maintain social distant (stay 6' apart), wear facemasks, and follow good hygienic practices such as using hand sanitizer and handwashing. Pandemic information updates were disseminated to residents by email and updates published on the Borough Website. By early April 2020, a statewide "Stay-at-Home" order was in effect, restricting travel to essential activities and work to life-sustaining businesses and government services. Schools were closed for the rest of the academic year. On April 8th, at its last in-person

meeting of the year, Borough Council extended the Emergency Declaration made by the Mayor on April 1st. All subsequent Borough meetings were conducted via “Zoom” out of concern for public safety and the Borough Office was closed to the public. Residents were provided information on how to deal with a suspected Covid infection, encouraged to stay home, and to check on their neighbors from a safe distance. The Town Watch continued patrolling, revising its guidelines to no longer transfer any equipment between members. Governor Wolf instituted a “red-yellow-green” system for reopening the Commonwealth and on June 5th Delaware County moved from “red” to the “yellow” reopening phase. The guidance placed a 50 percent capacity limit on the number of people at indoor and recreational gatherings. Social distancing was still maintained at all locations and functions. Gatherings were once again permitted at the Old Mill and the Rose Valley Swim Club opened in compliance with these guidelines. The Borough’s preserves and trails provided a healthy means of recreation for residents. Covid-19 cases began trending down and the County moved into the “green” phase with certain restrictions still in place. Through the summer months aggressive mitigation efforts kept the virus at bay and prevented hospital systems from being overwhelmed with patients. By the September Council meeting, Rose Valley was in the sixth month of the pandemic with a total of three cases. It appeared mitigation efforts were working, and that the Fall would continue on the same track. Unfortunately, toward the end of October, Delaware County cases began trending up again. By the November Council meeting, Rose Valley had five cases. Soon Delaware County was approaching the highest number of cases since the height of the pandemic in April, resulting in County hospitals having to divert patients, long wait times at emergency rooms, and first responders and healthcare workers stretched to the limits. People were discouraged from traveling for the Holidays and having close contact with anyone outside of their own family. By the January 13 Council meeting, Rose Valley had 22 reported cases and one death. Experts have estimated that over half of people infected with Covid-19 may be asymptomatic carriers and that as bad as the current situation is, it will get worse over the coming winter months. Rose Valley residents are asked to do their part to keep themselves and their community safe and healthy by staying home, wearing a mask, social distancing, washing their hands, and getting vaccinated as soon as possible.

### **2021 Goals:**

- Continue to follow the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), PA Department of Health, and Delaware/Chester County Department of Health Covid-19 mitigation guidance.
- Recruit residents to participate in the Town Watch Program; review and update the Town Watch Guidelines including Covid-19 adjustments; move the Town Watch Celebration date to the Fall instead of the Spring.
- Continue to use the traffic data to explore ways to decrease vehicular speeding on Rose Valley Road.
- Explore ways to foster pedestrian safety on Rose Valley roads; participate in the feasibility study for a pathway along Rose Valley Road from Possum Hollow to the Moylan train station.
- Encourage the trimming of overgrown bushes and trees along residential roads and especially at intersections to improve sight lines and enhance pedestrian safety.
- Review and update the RVB-Emergency Operations Plan.
- Continue collaboration with first responders who provide emergency services to Rose Valley Borough.

## **Highways and Technology (Vippy Yee, Chair)**

### **2020 Accomplishments:**

**Snowplowing:** The Borough budgeted \$40,000 for snow plowing and salting in 2020 but only spent \$1,670. The Borough works with a snowplowing contractor that is paid on a time and materials basis for the equipment and treatment materials used. For the past three years, the actual amount spent has been less than the amount budgeted. The budgeted amount for 2021 is \$30,000 with the Capital Reserve fund available to cover any potential overage. Each fall the Borough solicits bids for snowplowing and salting. Since the Borough roads are a mix of various widths, including some that are quite narrow, the equipment used to plow the roads is smaller than equipment used by PennDOT and other larger municipalities. This impacts the number of contractors that submit bids for our work. For 2021, we received one bid and the contract was awarded to R.C. Marland.

**Roadwork:** During the Spring, an annual inspection of Borough-owned roads is performed by the Borough engineer Matt Houtmann who then makes recommendations for the annual patching and repaving program. In 2020, based on this review, the Borough did not undertake major roadworks projects as it rebuilt its Highway Aid Fund after repaving all of Longpoint Lane following the installation of the new sewer system force main. Smaller repairs were made to Borough roads including to a stormwater inlet on Todmorden Drive at a total cost of \$7,920. Residents on Longpoint Lane and Price's Lane expressed concerns about the safety of motorists pulling out onto main roads due to sightlines blocked by embankments. The Borough Engineer prepared plans for improving the left-side sightlines for motorists pulling out of Longpoint Lane onto Knowlton Road and out of Price's Lane onto Rose Valley Road. Families on Prices Lane requested traffic calming measures to reduce the speed of motorists, and delivery trucks in particular, on the lane. Some residents were in favor of installing speed bumps, but others were against them. On the recommendation of its engineer, the Borough worked with residents to have bushes removed or trimmed back to increase visibility along the lane and improved signage including a new speed-limit sign.

**Technology:** Due to the pandemic, the Borough moved all of its public meetings to the online Zoom platform beginning in April of 2020. The Borough website is being completely redesigned and moved to a new hosting platform. The site will feature improved functionality that ensures easier access to public documents and services, the ability to announce Borough events and news, a search feature and incorporation of the EAC website.

### **2021 Goals:**

-Perform the Spring inspection of Borough-owned roads as soon as the weather permits. Based on the results of this inspection, the Borough Engineer will make recommendations regarding road repaving and repair. Based on the 2020 assessment and Aqua PA's ongoing water main replacement project, Todmorden Drive will be a likely area for improvement.

-Complete sightline improvements for motorists pulling out of Longpoint Lane onto Knowlton Road and out of Price's Lane onto Rose Valley Road and repaint the historic Borough-owned Old Mill Lane bridge.

-Update the Borough website and incorporate the Rose Valley Environmental Advisory Council website into it.

-Develop a social media/internet policy.

## **Library (Judy Voet, Chair)**

### **2020 Accomplishments:**

Judy Voet serves as Borough Council's representative on the Helen Kate Furness Free Library (HKF) Board. Jessica Brill serves as the Borough's second representative. Many Rose Valley residents support this gem in our community not only financially, but also through their time and talents as volunteers or by serving on the Board. In addition, several of the HKF Investment Committee members are Rose Valley residents who provide financial guidance and expertise. The Borough's financial support of the library continues to be strong and we have increased our contribution again this year to help address necessary Covid-19 related expenses.

**New director and staff:** This year, Helen Kate Furness Free Library welcomed Leah Kulikowski as our new Library Director. Leah joined us from the Cecil County Public Library in Maryland and has extensive experience working in public libraries in management and leadership positions. She has been invaluable in guiding the library through the Covid-19 pandemic. We also welcomed a new Public Services Librarian, Laura MacBride, who worked part time in 2020, but will move to full time in the new year.

**Fundraising:** A significant portion of the library budget is generated by fundraising activities of the Board, such as the Annual Appeal, May Fair and Well-Red Community parties and extensive book sales. All except the Annual Appeal had to be curtailed this year due to the pandemic. An annual joint project, the Book It! 5K Walk/Run had to occur virtually. Donors have stepped up to the challenge, however, and fundraising has been robust. We hope that next year we can eventually resume in-person events and that Rose Valley residents will continue to support and participate in our fundraising activities.

**Adult Programming:** The pandemic resulted in the closure of the library and the curtailing of most adult programming. The library has now reopened for curbside pickup three days a week with the book drop open 24/7. While it is not now possible to browse in the library, books may be requested on the Delcolibraries.org website for curbside pickup at HKF Library. The total of in-person and digital circulation has remained constant with digital circulation replacing physical.

**Children Programming:** Children's programming has continued during the pandemic, both online via Zoom and in the front garden of the library. Story times, PAWS for Reading to dogs and Santa Saturday occurred in the front garden and all had great participation.

**Facilities (physical and virtual):** The facilities focus this year has been largely pandemic related with protecting the health of staff and patrons at the forefront. The pandemic has resulted in a large increase in digital/virtual demand. The library has risen to this occasion by providing Chromebooks for loan and expanding its WiFi range so that it reaches partway into the parking lot. The Delco Library system has purchased 100 WiFi hotspots which can be checked out by patrons through the delcolibraries.org website for curbside pickup at HKF Library.

**Volunteering:** We continue to rely on volunteer efforts during the pandemic to staff our circulation desks and preside over curbside pickup. People interested in volunteering must first be trained in correct Covid practices and should contact the Library Director at [fsdirector@delcolibraries.org](mailto:fsdirector@delcolibraries.org). The Library website is [www.hkflibrary.org](http://www.hkflibrary.org).

### **2021 Goals:**

- Increase staff by converting a part-time position to full-time.
- Continue to increase the circulation.
- Provide community meeting space (when the pandemic is over) and interesting and informative programs for all ages.

- Add to the collection at or above the Del. Co. Library's recommendation of 12% of budget.
- Continue to host fundraising programs that are fun, interesting and supported by the community.
- Keep the website current with frequent updates.
- Continue to implement the Facilities Improvement Plan.

## **FINANCE (Bob Siwicki, Chair)**

### **2020 Accomplishments:**

**2020:** The Borough ended 2020 with expenses approximately equal to income with no appropriation from Capital Reserve, thanks to very low expenditures for snow removal and salting last winter.

**2021 Budget:** Council approved a 2021 budget which calls for no change in real estate tax receipts, total revenue and expenses of \$398,889, and an appropriation from Capital Reserve of \$37,832. There was a significant change in the millage due to the County-wide reassessment of property values to bring them into line with market prices. Older properties in the Borough were being carried at assessed values far below market while newer construction was assessed at substantially higher levels. With a new aggregate assessed value totaling \$215 million and no change in budgeted real estate tax receipts, the millage decreased from 2.04 to 1.00 mills. It is the goal of Council to reduce the Capital Reserve fund to approximately \$150,000 over time through budgetary appropriations as the fund somewhat exceeds the size deemed sufficient for capital reserves. The amount of appropriation called for in the 2021 budget represents slightly less than 10% of budgeted revenue. To assist with the funding of three 2021 road improvement projects, \$50,000 was also transferred from Capital Reserve to the Borough's Road Improvement Fund near the end of 2020.

**Real Estate Transfers:** The 2020 real estate market was relatively strong. Some of the activity can be traced to a migration of urban dwellers to the suburbs, a consequence of the surge in remote working brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic. There is cautious optimism that real estate transfer tax receipts will increase once again in 2021.

**Recycling:** The budget for recycling remains basically unchanged from 2020 to 2021, however the frequency of recycling pickups will go from once a week to once every two weeks. The two bids originally received for a continuation of weekly pickups were rejected, as they were deemed too expensive. The contract was re-bid specifying biweekly pickups, and the selected vendor (J. P. Mascaro) met our budgetary constraints. The Borough understands that weekly pickup is more convenient, however taxes would have had to increase substantially to continue this practice.

**Information Technology:** During the year, we benefitted from an upgrade in our accounting software. Towards year-end, we were in the process of giving remote access of the Borough's financial data to selected Council members, a move that should help minimize the need to be present in the office and in danger of Covid-19 exposure.

**Rose Valley Centennial Foundation:** For a fourth year we included an expenditure line item for the Rose Valley Centennial Foundation to further assist that organization in their repair and renovation of Thunderbird Lodge to make it a suitable home for the Rose Valley Museum.

**Wharton Esherick Furniture:** The Borough, through the Council, participated in an effort to maintain local ownership of Wharton Esherick furniture being sold by Hedgerow Theatre. In a two-part transaction made possible by the generosity of the Rose Valley Folk, the Borough's Capital Reserve fund was tapped to provide \$50,000 for the purchase of the Esherick 1934 Dining Table which resided at Hedgerow House, while the Folk agreed to forego the \$350 per

month rent on the Borough Office for a period of ten years. The foregone rent will amount to \$42,000, reducing the Borough's net purchase price for the table to \$8,000. Hedgerow Theatre had kindly withdrawn the table from the Freeman's auction to ensure it would stay in Rose Valley. Council then approved the donation of the table to the Rose Valley Museum and Historical Society, on the condition that it remain on display in the Museum.

### **2021 Goals:**

- We are budgeting to utilize some of the balance in the Capital Reserve fund to meet operating expenses, as the fund somewhat exceeds the size deemed sufficient for capital reserves.
- Monitor expected costs associated with multi-year road re-surfacing of Borough roads and other road improvement projects to ensure sufficient funds are available from the Highway Aid and Borough-funded Road Improvement Funds.
- Monitor any budgetary demands associated with compliance with Commonwealth mandates concerning stormwater management.
- Support other possible projects the Borough may elect to pursue in 2021.

### **2020 Borough Resolutions and Ordinances:**

- Resolution 1 - Appointing Robert M. Healy to Vacancy Board
- Resolution 2 - Appointing Bruce Hunt to Zoning Hearing Board
- Resolution 3 - Appointing Jim Audley to EAC
- Resolution 4 - Extending Mayor's Emergency Declaration due to Covid-19
- Resolution 5 - Applying for County Aid for Road Work
- Resolution 6 - Appointing Katherine Rubin to EAC
- Resolution 7 - Allocation of Liquid Fuels Monies
- Resolution 8 - Appointing R.C. Marland as Snowplower for 2021
- Resolution 9 - Appointing Fischer Cunnane as Auditors for 2021
- Resolution 10 - Setting Fees for Permits for 2021
- Resolution 11 - Setting Salaries and Employee Benefits for 2021
- Ordinance 351 - Setting Millage Rate at 1.00 Mills for 2021

### **Rose Valley Centennial Foundation (Tim Plummer, President)**

Other Board Members: Nick Slagis (VP Operations), Lynn Kelley (VP Finance), Jack Reohr, Bruce Hunt and Tami Caesar. Board Member Mimi Spangler had to resign during the pandemic and is greatly missed. **Website:** [www.rosevalley100.org](http://www.rosevalley100.org)

### **2020 Accomplishments:**

**Fund Raising:** The RVCF established an initial fundraising goal of \$1,000,000 for its Capital Campaign to repair and renovate Thunderbird Lodge to make it a suitable home for the Rose Valley Museum. Our fundraising committee consists of Tami Caesar, Bruce Hunt, Lynn Kelley, Tim Plummer and Nick Slagis from the RVCF plus Paula Healy and Morris Potter from the Rose Valley Museum and Historical Society. By the close of 2020 we have raised over \$680,000 in support, pledges, and grants, in large part through the generosity of the Rose Valley community, including the Rose Valley Borough. We sincerely thank all those in our community who have helped us through their donations. We would also like to thank the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission which awarded us a Keystone Historic Preservation Grant of \$99,787 and The Ethel Sergeant Clark Smith Memorial Fund which awarded us a grant of \$8,000. We intend to apply for another PHMC Keystone Grant in early 2021 and will need the continued help of the

community to raise the required one-to-one matching funds.

**PHMC Keystone Grant:** Since the grant money had to be matched dollar for dollar, the RVCF performed well over \$200,000 of exterior work on Thunderbird Lodge in 2020 to ensure the building remains sound and watertight. Stone walls were repointed, stucco was refurbished, and areas of the tile roof, including wooden structural supports, were properly repaired and preserved. The Keystone Grant requires that we follow U.S. Department of the Interior standards for preservation and place covenants in the property deed that we will maintain the building to those standards. Doug Seiler is our Preservation Architect, and our bridge to understanding the standards and how properly apply them. Working with Doug we have been able to build a network of dedicated experts to support and provide the craftsmanship Thunderbird Lodge requires. These include Andy deGruchy (Masonry/Stucco), Andy Wasik, (Roofer), Keith Childs (Masonry/Pointing), John Caiola (Carpenter), and Charles Timbie (Structural Engineer). It was a challenging year for construction work due to the coronavirus pandemic. Work came to a halt on March 19<sup>th</sup> when Governor Wolf announced Covid-19 restrictions and could not resume for several months. The Keystone Grant involved the following five areas of work:

**1. Tile Roof:** Our tile roof expert, Andy Wasik, worked with carpenter John Caiola to repair a large section of the tile roof on the southwest side of the residence. Andy removed the existing tile, inspected the underlying wooden planks and rafters and then worked with John to make the necessary structural repairs. They removed all exposed cellulose insulation and where appropriate replaced it with rock wool. Andy then installed new ice shield and reinstalled the tiles. It was discovered that the damage to the rafters under a dormer area was more extensive than anticipated. Many of the rafters needed replacement as did a large framing header and many rafter tails. The damaged rafters, framing header and roof planks were replaced with Douglas fir, while the visible rafter tails were replaced with reclaimed, one-hundred-year-old yellow pine. The worn copper dormer roofing was also replaced. So many roof tiles had to be replaced and we exhausted our reserve supply. Andy therefore had to stop his work late in the year and stabilize the roof for the winter. The grant money for the remaining tile work was reallocated to repair the interior beam pockets discussed below.

**2. Stucco Refurbishment:** Our stucco expert, Andy deGruchy, repaired, cleaned and refreshed the lime rendering (stucco) around the exterior of the Lodge. He first refurbished the stucco on the underside of the bay window facing Rose Valley Road as a test area. Doug Seiler worked with Andy and Jim Reed to match the existing stucco color and a successful match was finally agreed upon. Andy then went on to refurbish the stucco all around the west and south walls of the residence, and on either side of the repaired roof dormer.

**3. Stone Repointing:** Our stone mason, Keith Childs, repointed the rear-porch arches and pillars, the large wall facing Rose Valley Road, the walls on either side of the museum entrance, and those of the octagon tower. He also repaired a damaged area of the wall around the first-floor porch facing Rose Valley Road and lifted all the coping stones along the wall to add flashing underneath to prevent future water damage.

**4. Significant Sag:** During preparation of our final plans, it was discovered that there was a significant sag in the cantilevered, second-floor bedroom over the living-room porch. Several associated cracks and areas of damaged stucco were also identified. A portion of the second-floor stucco wall framing had also disconnected from the ceiling/roof framing in this area. Our

carpenter, John Caiola, used screw jacks to slightly reverse the sag and then stabilized it by placing two exterior oak posts under the wooden beam supporting the bedroom wall. He also attached a steel “C” beam behind the wooden beam and tied the lower corner of the bedroom up to the ceiling/roof framing with a metal “Simpson” strap. The two wooden posts rested on the stone knee wall on the outside of the porch. Voids under the cap stones which would support the posts were filled with mortar by Keith Childs prior to post installation to prevent cracking, and special-order cast bronze plates were placed between the posts and the cap stones to distribute the load. John also reattached the stucco wall framing to the ceiling/roof framing. The unfortunate side effect of this development was that the scope of the stucco and stone repointing work had to be scaled back. We plan to address this work in our next PHMC grant campaign.

**5. Interior Beam Pocket Repairs:** While planning repairs to the interior of the first-floor studio, two failing beam pockets were discovered in the first-floor ceiling. This is a structural repair that will be addressed in January of 2021. A narrow section of the interior plaster walls under the beam pockets will be removed and the inside stone wall pockets repaired. After the stone is fixed, the plaster walls will be repaired including an area of the first-floor studio where a bathroom was removed.

**Gothic Arch Window Preservation:** We received an \$8,000 grant from the Ethel Sergeant Clark Smith Memorial Fund to preserve the Gothic Arch window facing Rose Valley Road, which we more than matched with our own funds. Nichols Construction performed the work. They removed all damaged wood and replaced it, which included much of the window frame and sill. They installed copper flashing on the top and under the sill, repotted and reglazed the windowpanes, and installed preservation glass where a large pane of modern window glass had been used as a replacement. They restored the window to full operational function and replaced missing hardware. They removed numerous layers of paint and finished the work with two coats of primer and finish paint. The original paint color was determined by Christopher Frey, a preservation specialist at Keystone Preservation. At the request of the RVM&HS, we engaged a second paint specialist, Tina Reichenbach of Richbrook Conservation, who reviewed Chris Frey’s work, investigated the composition of the paint and binder, and suggested a commercially available match.

**Other Work:** A fire alarm and security system was installed by Rendon Alarm. An old oil tank was decommissioned and removed from the basement by Ricky Rieck. All chimneys were inspected and cleaned, and a broken flue repaired by Jim Murray Chimneys. Several dead trees along School Lane were removed by Jim Carney Tree Company. Inspecting the pergola column knocked over last year by a fallen tree, we discovered several substantial cracks that made it unlikely we could lift the column without it breaking. We plan to rebuild the column in sections in 2021. A considerable amount of landscaping work was accomplished as volunteers cleaned up the property, removed unwanted brush and planted new gardens. New native plants replaced non-native invasives thanks to many hours of work by the grounds committee.

**2021 Goals:**

- Recruit additional board members.
- Apply for grants and donations from outside organizations while continue fundraising efforts within the local community to build up matching funds for a second PHMC Keystone Grant.
- Apply for the second Keystone Grant in March after closing out our current grant. This grant



will address the two studio decks and the south wall of the studios. It will also include the roof, stucco and masonry work that was not completed during our first grant. We plan to start work funded by this grant in the fall of 2021 and complete the work in 2022.

-Rebuild the pergola column knocked over by a fallen tree.

-Restock our reserve of 6 x 12-inch terracotta roofing tiles.

-Perform interior repairs to the extent funds allow.

-Refurbish the remaining Rose Valley Road windows (bay & basement) and the five small tower windows.

-Address emergency repairs as identified.

### **Rose Valley Museum & Historical Society (Morris Potter, President)**

Other board members: Ryan Berley (curator), Maggie Dee (treasurer), Paula Healy (secretary), Peter Howell (program co-chair), Sue Keilbaugh (vice president and program co-chair), Jim Reed (facilities manager).

**Website:** [www.rosevalleymuseum.org](http://www.rosevalleymuseum.org)

### **2020 Accomplishments:**

**Social Meetings:** We started off our third year with high hopes and an engaging schedule of events planned for every month, except July and August when we would close for renovations. In January, we had our Members Meeting and party, always fun, and February brought the Valentine Wine and Chocolate Pairing. With curator Ryan Berley of Shane's Confectionary providing the chocolate and Jack Cunicelli of 320 Market choosing the wine, it was a nice collaboration between local businesses and the Museum.

**National Arts and Crafts Conference:** Then off we went to Asheville and the Grove Park Inn for the National Arts and Crafts Conference, an event that attracts nearly 3,000 visitors annually. This year Rose Valley was high profile. We continue to be the first booth visitors encounter on their way to the exhibitors. This year Ryan was one of those exhibitors with his own display booth. In addition, his collection of Trench Art was on view in the Inn's enormous lobby, which is a major gathering area at all times day and night, and he was a featured speaker on the subject of Trench Art. The organizers said that trifecta had never happened before.

**Covid Cancellations:** Then in March the world changed. No more open days at Thunderbird Lodge; no more lectures until September; the cancelation of the popular Members Tour and Tea; and cancelation of an RMV sponsored trip to the artists' colony of Byrdclyffe in Woodstock, NY.

**Lodge Renovations:** On the other hand, the shut-down was a bonus for the renovation work being done on the Lodge. Our 2nd floor exhibition space would have had to be closed anyway for the repair of the Gothic window facing the road. That repair has been accomplished and is a thing of beauty. At one point or another this year, almost every side of the building had scaffolding covering it and craftsmen going up and down. Not a good time to have visitors to the museum!

**Photography:** But it was an excellent time to use the first-floor studio for photography. Carl Finkbeiner dedicated his entire summer to photographing almost 200 items that were auctioned online in October by Brandywine Auction. This event was a fund raiser in support of our "Keep Wharton Esherick in Rose Valley" effort. Many of us from the Valley watched and bid from the lawn as the auction was projected onto a screen on Thunderbird's porch.

**Esherick Collection:** Just three days later we watched the drama of escalating prices at Freeman's Auction of Hedgerow's Esherick collection. We had set out to acquire 4 hammer-

handle chairs and the staircase from Hedgerow's original lobby. We came away with 2 chairs and the staircase, buying them for far more than we had intended. Fortunately, people have stepped up with contributions to cover our short fall, including an angel with an offer to match \$10,000 we raise with \$20,000 of his own. We have done so. The 1934 Dining Table that Esherick made for the actors at Hedgerow House has been living outside under their porch roof for decades with no apparent ill effects. This past spring Hedgerow kindly allowed the Borough to purchase the table for \$50,000 prior to the auction so that it would remain in Rose Valley. The purchase was made possible by the Rose Valley Folk's generous offer to forgive rent for the Borough Office at \$350 per month over ten years, which works out to \$42,000. The Borough subsequently donated the table to RVM&HS on condition that it remain on display in the Museum. Once repairs to the museum porches are complete, this well-seasoned table will resume living under a bigger porch roof and become a useful part of our furnishings. (Esherick made these pieces to be used!) The two hammer-handle chairs and the staircase will make their home on our 3rd floor. As part of our mission to preserve the history of Rose Valley, we collect examples of artists who have lived and worked here. Esherick is of particular importance given that in today's world he is probably the most famous artist associated with Rose Valley. He was most active here at the beginning of his career working in wood and his furnishings from Hedgerow are prime examples of his development as an artist.

**Other Collections:** Esherick's work is joined in our collection this year by Dante and Beatrice, two plaster maquettes (look it up) by John Maene, foreman of the Rose Valley Furniture Shop (donated); an oil painting by Yarnall Abbott, husband to Eleanor Abbott, also an artist, for whom, during the 1920's, he designed 205 Possum Hollow Road overlooking what became two lakes and the RV swimming pool (purchased); a Charles Stevens watercolor (purchased); and 18 Howard Stratton pastels, mounted and framed (donated). Stratton ran a summer school here in the first year of the arts-and-crafts colony. He was the head of the art department at the Philadelphia Museum School of Industrial Arts; several of his former students came with Price in the first wave.

**Neil Toporski:** Neil Toporski deserves special recognition for volunteering to help us move into the modern world. Due to the pandemic, we have been forced to rely more on technological means to communicate with our members. Neil has helped us post past taped lectures on our website; set up, record, edit and post our Zoom lectures; and provided the technology to film a 360-degree interactive walk through our collection in the upper studio.

### **2021 Goals:**

-Our hopes for next year are necessarily modest. We should be able to provide online events for the winter and spring of 2021, including lectures re-scheduled from last year. Hopefully by summer we will be able to at least open the Museum to visitors and by the fall move back to live events. When the schedule is available, we will post it. A huge thank you to our friends and members who have supported us financially through our third year. Thunderbird Lodge is our greatest asset. Your additional support of the Centennial Foundation is as essential to us as it is to them.

### **Gardeners of Rose Valley (Deb Flanagan and Mary Cooper, Co-presidents)**

**Background:** The Gardeners of Rose Valley (GRV) has a three-fold mission: to join together to share and explore gardening pursuits; to maintain community garden spaces (Pew Park and the Moylan-Rose Valley Train Station perennial garden); and to continue the Rose Valley traditions of decorating pillar and post with greens in December and creating May baskets for worthy

recipients. We embrace an informal motto: "Come when you can and do what you are able." Our membership of 80 plus individuals (men and women) spans the generations; a common thread is our interest in gardening and caring for the community.

### **2020 Accomplishments:**

**Winter Lecture:** Before Covid-19 restrictions took effect, we got off to a fantastic start with the annual Winter Lecture held January 27 at the Old Mill. Our speaker was entomologist Doug Tallamy speaking on the topic "Creating Living Landscapes". Doug described how insects support life within our gardens and ensure that plants and the ecosystem remain healthy and vibrant. This lecture was also an early release celebration for Dr. Tallamy's new book, *Nature's Best Hope*. A record number of guests attended the lecture, and several new members were added to the GRV roster that evening. The Gardeners also profited from the sale of Doug's books.

**Moylan Station Garden:** The GRV took on the project of renovating the Moylan Station Garden. Gardeners were invited to a Dig Day to remove any plants they wished to rescue from the station garden. Quite a few plants were removed and relocated to the Saul Preserve. Hollywood Landscaping was then hired to remove the remaining plant material. Lynn Gee, a GRV member, volunteered to coordinate the new design for the garden. She enlisted Tom Borkowski of Spruce Hill Design to assist with design plans. Plant material was secured, and planting took place the weekend of Nov 7-8.

**Pew Park:** The Gardeners maintained Pew Park as in the past. John Kelly with Hollywood Landscaping continued to generously volunteer time assisting with the restoration and rejuvenation of the park's grass, spring mulching and other projects.

**May Baskets and Holiday Swags:** Two traditions of the Gardeners of Rose Valley are making May baskets and in December decorating pillars, street signs, monuments, and iconic landmarks throughout the Valley with swags. Covid-19 presented a challenge due to restrictions of social gatherings. However, with some inventive planning, the Gardeners were able to continue the traditions of May baskets and swags. 40 May baskets were distributed to Rose Valley residents, and more than 80 Holiday swags once again adorned Rose Valley street signs and pillars.

### **2021 Goals:**

-Unfortunately, Covid-19 will determine the events that can take place during 2021. The annual Winter Lecture will not be held, and no field trips or garden tours are planned as of this writing.

-The GRV will continue to maintain Pew Park and the Moylan Station Garden and carry on the traditions of May baskets and Holiday swags.

-We continue to encourage **New Members** to join us. Those interested should contact co-presidents Debbie Flanagan (debflan@gmail.com) or Mary Cooper ([mcooper@dcdesignco.com](mailto:mcooper@dcdesignco.com)).

### **Fourth of July Celebration (Tim Plummer, Uncle Sam)**

What would have been the twenty-third annual Fourth of July Celebration was cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic.

**In Summary:** Rose Valley is blessed to have so many talented volunteers serve in our Borough government and local organizations. We can be proud of our accomplishments in 2020 and look forward to 2021 and the eventual end of the pandemic.

Sincerely  
Tim Plummer, Mayor