



Keystone Gardener

Official Publication of the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania

Volume 6, Issue 3, November 2024

KG Online Newsletter Editor, Marilyn Small





GCFP OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Leeanna Ryba

2777 Leechburg Road
Lower Burrell, PA 15068-3138
412-951-9522

GCFPPresident@gmail.com

Burrellton GC & Landscape Design
of W PA - VII

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

Pat Wolanski

3245 Water Street Road
Collegeville, PA 19426-1535
610-584-4429

GCFPVicePresident1@gmail.com

Norristown GC - XI

SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT

Tonya Young

1115 Sarazen Way
York, PA 17404-8515
717-870-5721

GCFPVicePresident2@gmail.com

The GC of York/Town & Country
GC of Lancaster - IV

RECORDING SECRETARY

Marilyn Backus

925 Wood Street
Pitcairn, PA 15140-1614
412-389-2113

marilyncbackus@gmail.com

GC of Monroeville & Landscape
Design of W PA - VII

TREASURER

Vivian Hall

1511 Wallace Road
Troy, PA 16947-9444
570-297-3684

vmh6777@yahoo.com

The Heritage GC - V

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Barbara Brand

3415 Fairfield Road
Gettysburg, PA 17325-7366
717-642-9776

babrand@embarqmail.com

Gettysburg GC - IV

A MESSAGE FROM GCFP PRESIDENT LEEANNA RYBA

I am happy to report that the state of Pennsylvania, "Penns Woods," is in its most splendid fall foliage. The Laurel Highlands and the Poconos look like a bowl of Trix cereal!

The **October Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania Board (GCFP) Meeting** was held

on October 7-8 in Boalsburg, PA. Boalsburg, outside of State College, is a beautiful place nestled in the Allegheny Mountains. The Wyndham Garden Hotel was chosen because of

its central location. Members accepting Board positions are asked to attend two Board Meetings annually and the State Convention. For the past year, the sleeping room count has not been met. This causes the GCFP to bear the expense of the meeting rooms. More than that, it implies a lack of interest. Board meetings are an opportunity to learn about the many worthy projects our GCFP clubs are involved in and to network with garden club members statewide in a more casual atmosphere. I would like to see an increase in attendance during the next administration.



Many GCFP garden clubs have traditionally donated to the **NGC Penny Pines Program**. Donations are either budgeted or memorial donations. Since the Allegheny National Forest is located in PA, all funds donated stay within our state. I think this is one reason many clubs support Penny Pines. Recently, the U.S. Forestry Dept. has changed the manner in which they accept donations. Our State Chair has spent days on the phone, sent multiple notarized forms, and had to deal with the GSA to allow the GCFP to set up contracts to donate our funds. The current process will undoubtedly cause a change in the way the GCFP handles Penny Pines, now called "Plant A Tree," donations in the future. I highly commend Barbara Andrus, my Penny Pines Chair, for her tenacity and patience shown in this position.

Thirteen GCFP scholarships are awarded to college/graduate students every year. Students do not have to be enrolled in PA institutions of higher learning, but many are. Applications must be sponsored by a GCFP garden club. The GCFP scholarship fund is supported by donations. This year District X issued a challenge to the other nine districts by making a \$1,000 donation and challenging the other districts to do likewise. So far, District VII has responded with another \$1,000 donation. I would like to commend District X and Past District Director, Deb Davis, for thinking outside the box.

As the time I am President of the Garden Club Federation of PA is winding down, I am extremely proud of the many diverse and beneficial projects "my" clubs are undertaking. Clearly, the Covid hiatus has ended, and PA is busy "Planting America, While Keeping PA Beautiful."

Leeanna

GCFP President, 2023-2025



Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania is a member of
National Garden Clubs and
Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs CAR-SGC



CAR-SGC CONFERENCE

October 22-23, 2024 | Basking Ridge, NJ

There were 172 CAR-SGC members who gathered at the lovely Olde Mill Inn in Basking Ridge, NJ, for a few informative and fun-filled days. Each banquet had outstanding speakers; we learned about Bats, the Legend of the Jersey Devil, the Billion Oyster Project and the Marvelous Magic of Mechanics. Our own **Tonya Young** represented GCFP with an amazing design using plastic chicken wire! **Angie Raitano** created a lovely honor design for **GCFP President Leeanna Ryba**. **First Vice-President Pat Wolanski** accepted the awards for Pennsylvania (see below). The optional programs on Quilling, Creating Topiaries, and Plant Fragrances were all sold out as were all the off-campus field trips. GCFP was represented by attendees across the state. We thoroughly enjoyed our experience and are really looking forward to the next CAR-SGC Conference and Tri-Refresher, October 19-22, 2025 on the Chesapeake Bay!



Angie Raitano's arrangement in honor of President Leeanna Ryba



Second VP Tonya Young with her floral demonstration



Judy Morley, Joyce Peterson, Iris Cisarik, Standing: Tonya Young and Susan Glassmoyer, Carol McConnell, Sharon Richardson, Diane Hughes, Angie Raitano, Jane Bianco



First VP Pat Wolanski giving the Pennsylvania Report



Iris Cisarik, Joyce Peterson, Diane Hughes, Angie Raitano, Standing: Gail Manna, Judy Morley, Tonya Young

CAR-SGC AWARDS WON BY GCFP CLUBS

Announced at the CAR-SGC Conference, October 22-23, 2024

Congratulations to the following individuals and clubs

Melanie Markowski, Green Thumb GC, IV, **CAR-SGC Perennial Bloom**

1st Place Yearbook, 45-69 Members, **Parkland Garden Club**, II/III

2nd Place Publicity/Press Book, Large Club, **Gettysburg Garden Club**, IV

2nd Place, Small Standard Flower Schedule Award, **Martha Washington Garden Club**, X
\$2,000 Scholarship, **Rebecca Leigh Durbin** of East Berlin, sponsored by Gettysburg Garden Club, IV



DISTRICT FORGET-ME-NOT AWARD WINNERS 2024

Honoring long-standing members whose dedication to their club and its community service make our organization special.

Marilyn Small, GCFP Awards Chair, Sheri Lowry, Vice-Chair



District I - VANESSA PETERSON



Elverson Garden Club

A member since 2003, Vanessa served as club president from 2005 - 2013 along with various other committees including publicity, year-book, and correspondence secretary. She has also coordinated the club's annual flower show for many years and was responsible for encouraging ECG's participation in the Philadelphia Flower Show. Vanessa led the club into the digital age by establishing communication via email and creating the EGC Facebook page, which she still maintains as administrator. In addition to this role, Vanessa continues as the EGC Flower Show Coordinator and Yearbook Committee Chair as well as serving as venue coordinator for hosting the September 2024 District I Luncheon. She also has conducted workshops for club members including terrariums, wine making, and hypertufas.

District IV - EILEEN HOOVER

Linglestown Community Garden Club



Eileen has been a member in good standing for over ten years. Working with the Judges Council, she is a Flower Show Judge and the club's Flower Show Chair. In addition to her GCFP Board position as Chair of National/Regional Projects, she is currently treasurer of her club and

District IV. Eileen is involved in numerous community activities including specifically the Harrisburg Area Civic Garden Center fundraiser, "The Festival of Trees," and the Rain Garden at the Harrisburg Civic Garden Center. She works every fundraiser for the club, has conducted many classes for other garden clubs, and is currently the Designer Skills Co-Chair for floral design for Penn Cumberland Garden Club. She was also on the 2024 GCFP Convention Committee.

District II/III - BECKY SHORT



Emmaus Garden Club

Becky is a 23-year member of the Emmaus Garden Club and actively participates in club activity. She recently finished a four-year term as president. Becky is well known throughout the area and uses her exceptional social skills to secure sponsorship for our activities and makes new members feel welcome at our meetings. Becky is also an active Penn State Master Gardener.

At home Becky and her husband keep busy designing and maintaining their extensive garden "rooms" to include charming patios, outbuildings, a formal knot garden, a pergola, and a conservatory. Her gardens have been featured in several magazines such as *The Herb Companion*, *Country Gardens*, and *Dream Cottage Gardens*, as well as host site for various fundraisers and garden tours.

She has helped with the design and creation at the Emmaus Library, the Healing Garden Camp, and Knauss Homestead Gardens in Emmaus. She recently doubled the size of the school youth garden club. Becky's dedication to gardening, our garden club, and the community has truly been exceptional.



District V - Sandra Hendricks McEwensville Garden Club

A member since 1986, Sandy served as District V Director twice in 2004-2006 and again in 2010-2012. She also chaired the publishing of the District V cookbook. She currently serves as District V Programs Chair and Blue Star Memorial Chair.

Sandy also served as president of her club twice in 2001-2002 and 2009-2011, club treasurer twice in 2022-2024 and 2024-2026, and corresponding secretary from 2015 to 2026. Sandy chaired the Ways & Means for the GCFP 2000 Convention and served as Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Chair in 2001. She has received seven Presidential Citations from GCFP presidents throughout the years.

Her current board position is Scholarship Chair until 2027. Sandy maintains a lovely garden and fish pond at her home and has held numerous meetings in her back yard.

Continued on next page.



DISTRICT FORGET-ME-NOT AWARDEES Continued

District VI - NANCY BITTNER



Somerset Garden Club

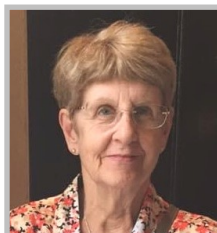
A member since 1990, Nancy has served as Somerset Garden Club President and District VI Director.

She is an NGC Flower Show Judge and has judged many local club flower shows and the Philadelphia

Flower Show. Along with being instrumental in starting the Laurel Highlands Landscape Design Council, she has served on the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania Board of Directors for 10+ years in many positions. She has helped everyone in the club to stay organized and has been club photographer for many years.

for the same fund. Generous with her time and wisdom, she is passionate about gardening and opens her beautiful home and gardens to club members. She is the club's "go to" person as the steadfast cornerstone of the club.

District IX - BETH BUTTERMORE



Tusca-Ridge Garden Club

A TRGC member since 2001, Beth has dedicated herself to GCFP, CAR-SGC, and NGC in leadership positions, serving as District IX Program Chair 2009-2016, Assistant Director 2014-2016, and

Director 2016-2018. She has been actively involved in club activities and served terms as TRGC Vice-President and President and again serving as President to guide the club after Covid. She has also served on many club committees, including Education, Program, Yearbook, Membership, Green Sale, and Hospitality. Beth also actively participates in the town's Arbor Day activities along with the gardens that TRGC maintains in the community.

District VII - IRIS CISARIK

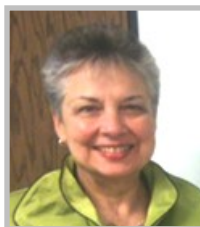
The Garden Club of Forest Hills



Iris has been an active member of The Garden Club of Forest Hills for 15 years. She is an accredited flower show judge and has won many awards for her flower arrangements. Iris was in charge of assembling the table centerpieces

for the GCFP Convention hosted by District VII in 2023. As an active member of the GCFP District VII Board, she has served in many leadership roles including Conservation Chair and is the current Chair of the GCFP Yearbook Awards Committee. Most recently Iris was Program Chair for the 2024 Spring Luncheon. She has earned certification in all four of the National Garden Club Schools. Most importantly, she is always willing to share her vast knowledge with others.

District X - MARIE MUELLER



Pleasant Hills Garden Club

A member since 2008, Marie has worn many important hats for both GCFP and the club. She is currently the club's Display Committee Chair and head of the Memorial Bricks Program for the "Let Freedom Ring"

Garden. A NGC Accredited Master Judge, Marie encourages and instructs members' displays, plans the design assignments for monthly meetings, gives instructional design presentations to members, and has guided the club through the process of holding flower shows. For many years she edited the District newsletter, "the TENDril," and was also editor for the GCFP Keystone Gardener Online for several years.

District VIII - SHIRLEY LOOSE



Garden Club of Clarion County

A beloved member of her club for 25 years, Shirley is described as being "always there." When something needs to be done, such as work in a community garden, or help with a club project, program or club holiday extravaganza,

staging a club flower show, filling a club office, or volunteering to extend the term as club president, Shirley would be there to volunteer. She generously donates her quilting handwork to the club to raise money for the scholarship fund, and acts as auctioneer during the in-house plant auction

District XI - SUE BUNKIN



Tohickon Garden Club

A member of Tohickon Garden club since 1989, Sue is also a NGC and GCFP life member, and Master Flower Show Judge. She has been Club President, Vice-President, Flower Show Chair, Design Passing Chair, Advisor for the Annual Plant sale, oversees the Make-and-Take workshop, and assists in program planning and



Forget-Me Not Awards

Sue Bunkin Continued

presenting. Active in various community activities, she is the founding member of the Tinicum Conservancy and supports other community organizations. Sue is a past Vice-President of the Greater Philadelphia Dahlia Society where she also served as an Artistic Design Chair as well as a senior judge for the American Dahlia Society. Her achievements are well known, and her contributions to GCFP, CAR-SGC, and NGC missions have been recognized by many over the years.

EXCEPTIONAL HORTICULTURISTS

JoAnn Celaschi, Chair, Valley GC, X

Congratulations to the following members who were named as their District's Exceptional Horticulturists and honored at their district's annual luncheon. Their names will be placed in the [GCFP Book of Exceptional Horticulturists](#) on the GCFP website.

District I

Paul Sheetz, Elverson Garden Club

District II/III

Doug Hall, Emmaus Garden Club

District IV

Rhoda Kingston, The Garden Club of York
Joan Horak, Gettysburg Garden Club
Delores Nolt, Town and Country GC of Lancaster

District V

Kathy Foreman, McEwensville Garden Club

District VI

Janice Davis, Patton Garden Club

District VII

Margaret Reed, The GC of Forest Hills
Sally Buchleitner, Joyful Bloomers GC

District IX

Judy Mihok, Moon Township Garden Club
Elaine Liberati, Shaler Garden Club

District X

Mary Pruss, Martha Washington Garden Club

District XI

Suzanne Smith-Oscilowski, Norristown GC

OCTOBER BOARD MEETING COMMITTEE REPORTS

CIVIC DEVELOPMENT

Martha Alexander, Chair, Great Meadows GC, X

I have focused on the **conservation education** part of Civic Development with the goal of developing and writing some of the best **garden-related lessons** that my garden club has used in teaching **Junior Gardeners**. Lessons are on the **GCFP website** under More > Youth Gardening Lessons. Expect more lesson plans on the web as we work through the next year with our students.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Joyce Peterson, Chair
The GC of Forest Hills, VII

Clubs should send to jpeterston1010@msn.com:

- **one copy** of their **best** newsletter electronically by **December 1**
- one award application
- one page of documentation (can be brief) as specified at the bottom of the rubric

Use the **MAE4 Specific Scoring Rubric** found in the [NGC Awards Manual](#) on Page 41 to make sure your newsletter is following those rules.

MEMORY BOOK

Rose Romboski, Chair, Southern Butler Co. GC, IX

The Memory Book is a collection of photos, written notes, and memories shared with President Leeanna during her term. Now is the time to think about what to add to the memory book.

GCFP Board members are asked to send photos of themselves and/or their club members with Leeanna and/or any written memory to be included in the book. The book will be on display at the 2025 **GCFP Convention**, and then gifted to Leeanna.

Please send any photos and notes to have included in the memory book, along with your name, name of garden club or pertinent details, and the names of people in the photos to **Rose Romboski**, 118 Preserve Valley Drive, Cranberry Township, PA 16066, or email: roro@zoominternet.net.

The book will be assembled as items arrive. Please do not wait until the last minute and miss the opportunity to be included. Thank you in advance for helping to make this a wonderful collection of memories for Leeanna.

COMMITTEE REPORTS Continued

BLUE/GOLD STAR MARKER

Karen Faust, Chair, Southern Butler County GC, IX

The first **Gold Star Memorial Marker** dedication at **Patriot Park** on August 12 was outstanding. **Somerset Garden Club** cooperated with **The Patriot Park Foundation** to erect the marker at the park's entrance in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Behind it are over 7,000 small **American flags** that represent the service men or women who have lost their lives in the Global War on Terrorism.



Patriot Park is about four miles from the **Flight 93 Memorial**. The Musser family donated the property for the park in honor of these Patriots. Initially, Randy Musser and his volunteers **hand set** each flag in the spring and removed them after Veteran's Day, but **high school students** now assist with the effort. This year, educational display boards are lining the entrance to the park, and more are planned.



Last June, **Somerset Garden Club** dedicated a **Blue Star By-Way Marker** near the new Gold Star Marker. Randy's wife, Linda, is a member and past president of Somerset Garden Club.



On September 8, a **Blue Star By-Way Marker** was dedicated at the Venango County Veterans Administration Clinic in Franklin, PA. This was sponsored and paid for by the **Franklin Gardeners Association** in cooperation with **Oil City Garden Club**.

We ordered two additional Highway Markers from Sewah. In August, **Stacey Ivoll**, the newly installed District IX Director, and I went to Mercer to view our first **Gold Star Highway Marker** that had recently been received at the PENNDOT headquarters. This marker will be dedicated in May 2025, following the renovations of the **Welcome Center at Mercer, PA**, on Interstate 80.

District X is sponsoring the Washington, I-70 Eastbound Welcome Center Marker at the West Virginia/PA border at Claysville, on the western side of the state.

District IV ordered a Blue Star Highway Marker to be placed in **Franklin County, at I-81 Northbound**, 1.5 miles from the PA/MD Border. Thanks to these three districts, there will be a new marker at Welcome Centers on our **western and southern borders**.

The committee's immediate goal is to secure a **sponsor for the Fulton I-70 Westbound at the PA/MD border near Warfordsburg**. We will soon ask the districts near the **Delaware Water Gap, I-80 West and Northampton, I-78 near Easton** to consider helping the Blue Star Program to finish lining the Pennsylvania Welcome Centers. There are **116 markers** already dedicated and/or on order. An updated listing will be posted on the website soon.



2024 AWARDS INFO

Marilyn Small, Chair, Uwchlan GC, I
Sheri Lowry, Vice-Chair, The GC of Johnstown, VI

Are You Ready for Awards Season? Deadlines for GCFP, CAR-SGC, and NGC awards are just around the corner -- December 1, and several dates in January. Check out the updated [Deadlines Dates](#) document on the GCFP website Awards page so you don't miss an important deadline.

There were also **a few changes** made to the [Awards Manual](#), so be sure to read the "[Changes to the Awards Manual](#)" document on the website, and make note of the necessary changes in your printed copy of the manual. **Some date changes are: Laurels, Perennial Bloom, Publicity Press Book, and Youth Yearbook Award**, so check out the document for those dates and all of the other manual changes.

NGC has **discontinued the Social Media Pages Award** beginning this year ([NGC Manual](#) Page 34).

The Governor's Trophy eligibility this year is for Medium Clubs 21-50 members. The **Book of Evidence** for this award is due by January 15 (Page 19 of the [GCFP Awards Manual](#)).

NOTE: Last year's first-place winners for Special Recognition State Award (Page 20 GCFP Manual) may not submit the same project again this year.

Remember that all NGC and CAR-SGC award applications start at the state level and must be submitted to the respective state chair by the due date. Do not send applications directly to NGC or CAR-SGC.

We look forward to your submissions!

PA HORTICULTURE SOCIETY LIAISON

Flossie Narducci, Chair, Norristown GC, XI

In September, the Norristown Garden Club invited a **Philadelphia Flower Show Ambassador**, Sarah Makin, to do a presentation for the club's monthly horticulture workshop. On January 23 at 6:30 p.m., **District XI** will provide this informative session through **Zoom** for anyone interested in **entering** or **volunteering** the **2025 Philadelphia Flower Show**.

For those with specific questions, such as, "Where can I find what classes are open for exhibitors? Where to park? Where to stay overnight?," Flossie will reach out to Sarah and ask her to address your questions in her presentation.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Flossie Narducci
Norristown Garden Club, XI

Sincerest condolences were sent to GCFP President, Leeanna Ryba on the passing of her husband, Richard.

Condolences were also sent to former GCFP President, Chris Leskosky, for the loss of her mother.

SEED MONEY

Marjorie Stillwell Sears, Chair
Old York Road GC, XI



Seed Money is for Planting America while keeping Pennsylvania Beautiful!

This is the time to start planning a project for next year. Use your imagination to come up with something special for your community.

Put it on paper by using a [Seed Money Application](#) found on the GCFP website under Awards, and next April you'll have a check to get you started!

You can email the form to me or drop it in the mail by Friday, February 14, 2025. My info is on the form.

If you need some new ideas, check out the previous KG newsletters to see what other clubs have done. And don't forget to apply to AMES Tools and [ESPOMA](#) for grants, because they can supplement your Seed Money.

FLOWER SHOW SCHEDULE

Margie Bucci, Chair, Indiana GC, VI

As of September 27, the committee received four schedules to be evaluated. Clubs wanting their schedules to be evaluated are requested to send them to Margie Bucci as soon as possible. The deadline is November 30, 2024.

GARDENING SCHOOL CREDENTIALS

Mary Jo Schlomann, Chair
Uwchlan Garden Club, I

All upcoming Gardening Schools can be found on the [NGC Website](#). A Course II "Virtual" class will be offered on February 10-12, 2025, in New Smyrna Beach, FL. Gardening School has:

- **16** Provisional Students
- **30** Consultants
- **15** Master Consultants
- **1** Emeritus



YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Chris Hawthorne, Chair, Ingomar GC, IX
Barbara Oswald, Co-Chair, Ingomar GC, IX

National Garden Clubs announced the new theme for the **Youth 2024-2025 Poetry Contest -- "My Garden Has Vegetables To Share That I Can Spare."** Children may use different types of poetry to tell others about vegetables seen in gardens that can be shared to help fight hunger and food insecurity.

The theme should be used throughout the poem, but **NOT as the title**. If the title is the theme, it will be disqualified. Writing the poem should be a class assignment for Kindergarten through Grade 12, so there is no help from family members, assuring the original work of the student.

The garden clubs initially judging children's entries are asked not to forward dark or dismal entries to the Youth Co-Chairs because they will be disqualified.

The Youth Sculpture Contest is for children in Grades 4 - 8, who work on items created by recyclable, reused or reduced materials that can fit on an 8 1/2 x 11" sheet of paper. Two 4 x 6" photos of the items should be attached to the back of an application form found on the [NGC website](#) under "Youth & Scholarships > Contests and Activities."

The Essay Contest is for high school students in Grades 9 - 12, and again, should be a class assignment, so that there is no influence from family members, assuring the original work of the student. The theme and the title of the essay is **"Should Edible Insects be Harvested as a Food Source From Our Gardens?"** It must be 500-600 words long and will be penalized if it doesn't conform to requirements. Use spell check, no run-on sentences, and cite sources.

The **rules** regarding 2024-25 Poetry Contest, Youth Sculpture, and High School Essay Contest can be found on the [NGC website](#). **Mail hard copies** by Monday, December 2, 2024, to Chris Hawthorne. It is important for entries to be typed and legible, with accurate student names, grades, and sponsoring club names. Any illegible entries will be discarded.

GCFP FLOWER SHOW SCHOOL

Joanne Baylis, Chair
Littlestown Garden Club, IV

GCFP Flower Show School is on track with Courses I and II approved by NGC.

Course I will be offered April 28, 29, 30, 2025, at the Gettysburg Fire Department Social Hall. Hotel arrangements have been secured at the Hampton Inn in Gettysburg. Information and/or brochures for [Course I](#) and [Course II](#) can be found on the [GCFP website](#) and the NGC website under "Education Opportunities." Instructors for Course I will be Pam Braun teaching Flower Show Procedure and Horticulture, and Judy Binns will be teaching Design.

Planning ahead, Flower Show School **Course II dates are October 20, 21, 22, 2025**.

In the meantime, promote Flower Show School to your garden club members, and I look forward to many from around the state participating.

FLOWER SHOW JUDGES CREDENTIALS

Nancy Cartwright, Chair, Penn-Cumberland GC, IV

GCFP currently has **48 Emeritus FS judges** and **87 Accredited FS Judges**:

- 15 Accredited
- 13 Life
- 59 Master

There are three new accredited judges:

- **Martha Alexander**, Great Meadows GC, X
- **Joanne Baylis**, Littlestown, GC, IV
- **Pam Walsh**, Uwchlan GC, I

Judges in Good Standing:

- **32** until December 2025
- **8** until December 2026
- **47** until December 2027

There are no recently deceased judges.

Pennsylvania plans to have a Symposium every other year. The next Flower Show Symposium should be in 2026.

Judges are reminded to complete Form 13, 15L or 15M with their exhibiting and judging credits to prepare for their next Symposium. Forms are found on the NGC website [HERE](#).





FLOWER SHOW SYMPOSIUM

Tonya Young, Chair

GC of York, Town & Country GC of Lancaster, IV

On August 5 - 7, 2024, Pennsylvania hosted a Symposium at the DoubleTree in Mars, PA. There were **51 people** in attendance. Of these, **16 judges** took the course for credit, **29 audited**, and the remainder attended for educational purposes.

Three judges achieved

Master Judge Status:

- **Tom Huston**
- **Delores Nolt**
- **Audrey Williams**

One received

Accredited Life Status:

- **Margaret Wolff**

Our instructors were:

- **Pam Braun**, who taught Aroids, Ferns & Friends in Horticulture
- **Claudia Bates**, who covered the design topics Design Diversity and Spatial Thrust

The allied topics were:

- **Manipulated Plants/Botanical Arts**
- **Expression vs. Interpretation**

Several judges supplied fabulous horticulture specimens and designs. All purchased specimens were successfully sold to recover our costs. Additionally, several quality pottery containers were donated to our silent auction. Items donated by our judges resulted in well-stocked and well-shopped Ways and Means tables.

Thank you to the many people who assisted in making this a very successful symposium. I am so proud to be a judge in Pennsylvania. Whenever I asked for assistance, the answer was yes. I cannot express my heartfelt thanks enough.

FLOWER SHOW BOOK OF EVIDENCE EVALUATION

Deb Stumpf, Chair, Indiana Garden Club, VI

I hope that all the flower shows held this summer were a rousing success. As Books of Evidence are prepared for flower show awards, note that a **digital copy of the Book of Evidence** is now required by NGC to apply for an award. The file can be delivered on a **flash drive** or can be **emailed**. Everything that would have been included in a book **MUST** be in the file. This includes the **applications** and a digital copy of the **schedule**.

If the digital record is to be returned, please include return postage. Most flower shows are held summer into fall, but those having a holiday show in November or December should contact me directly about book submission.

The deadline for submitting a **Book of Evidence** is **December 1, 2024**, but I am willing to work with those in a time crunch. I hope that flower show chairs try to reward their club and committee's work by applying for a **Flower Show Achievement Award**.

Due to NGC's request that all Flower Show Books of Evidence be in digital form, the State Judge's Council has changed the Flower Show Evaluation procedure. Please send a paper copy of your evaluation to Mary Jane Martucci as before. Also, send a digital copy of your evaluation to Deb Stumpf - logansmimi56@yahoo.com

This can be done two ways. You can scan your paper copy into your computer and email it or you can use the fillable form on the GCFP website and email that. If there are no digital evaluations for a book I receive, I will be forced to disqualify the book of evidence.

I hope all of our judges can work together to make this system work.



FLOWER SHOW STUDENT JUDGES CREDENTIALS

Claire Lechlitter, Chair, Bedford County GC, VI

There are currently **16 student judges**.

- Ten have successfully completed their schedule assignments
- Five are currently working on their schedules
- One is still finishing up course requirements

Martha Alexander, Joanne Baylis, and Pam Walsh have completed their student judging credentials and are now accredited judges. The website will be updated soon. Two student judges plan to apply for accredited judge status; I await their applications to be approved before updating the listing.



GCFP 2025 CONVENTION

April 6 - 8

Hosted by District XI



All **able-bodied gardeners** are summoned to an encampment to be held at Valley Forge, PA. We will **muster** on April 6, 2025, for

"A Gardening Revolution."

For it was here, in the winter of 1777, that a rag-tag army, fresh from defeats by the British, lay dormant during the winter, only to emerge in the spring and blossom into a fighting force that would ultimately cultivate the seeds of liberty. Back then, Valley Forge was a bit like a **botanical disaster area** -- no peonies, no petunias, no blue bells, just a bunch of bedraggled soldiers with a severe lack of greenery. But fast forward to the **2025 GCFP Convention**, and you are in for a treat!

District XI is looking forward to hosting the 95th GCFP Convention titled, **"A Gardening Revolution" on April 6-8, 2025**. It will take place at the **Alloy Hotel in King of Prussia**; a quick 5-minute drive from the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

Highlights of the convention include:

- Trolley rides through Valley Forge National Park on Sunday afternoon
- Monday lunch with Martha Washington
- Dinner with Renee Tucci, author of "Framing Floral Techniques"

You will also learn about **colonial kitchen gardens**, **wild orchids** growing in Hazelton, PA, and **recycling** for the **birds**! Your design skills will be uplifted with presentations on exhibition tables, on positive and negative space within a floral design, and on discovering new creativity in design.

We hope you can join our encampment on April 6 - 8, 2025. Pull out your finest **red, white and blue attire**.

Be on the lookout for the Keystone Gardener in January for full registration details.

ENVIRONMENTAL TRASH TO TREASURE

Marsha and Naser Chowdhury, Chairs
Parkland GC, II/III

Our committee is currently focused on designing and developing the theme and rules of the **2025 Trash to Treasure** contest, which will be held at the State Convention at Valley Forge, PA, April 6, 2025. Complete rules will be published in the winter KG.

Valley Forge is historically significant for the **Winter Encampment of 1777-1778**, where **General George Washington's Continental Army** camped for essential training and were transformed into an effective fighting force. The soldiers endured extreme cold, hunger, and disease, and had to overcome challenges that made Valley Forge a **symbol of American perseverance and resilience**.

Recognizing the sacrifices and determination of the Revolutionary War generation, the GCFP 2025 **Trash to Treasure** contest will showcase the design and construction of a functional **patriotic bird house** for the garden, utilizing recycled materials. The design theme will acknowledge the revolutionary period setting at Valley Forge that can include log and stone house architecture and/or another creative revolutionary themes. Construction materials will primarily include recyclables.

District Zoom Presentations

All are welcome to attend!



November 18, 2024, 6:30 p.m.

District I

"Inspiration Longwood Flower Show"

January 23, 2025, 6:30 p.m.

District XI

"How to Enter and/or Volunteer for the Philadelphia Flower Show"

February 11, 2025, 6:30 p.m.

District VII

"Divide and Conquer: Dividing, Transplanting, and Overwintering Plants"

March 18, 2025, 6:30 p.m.

District IV

"Moonlight Gardens"

Get the Zoom link from your District Director

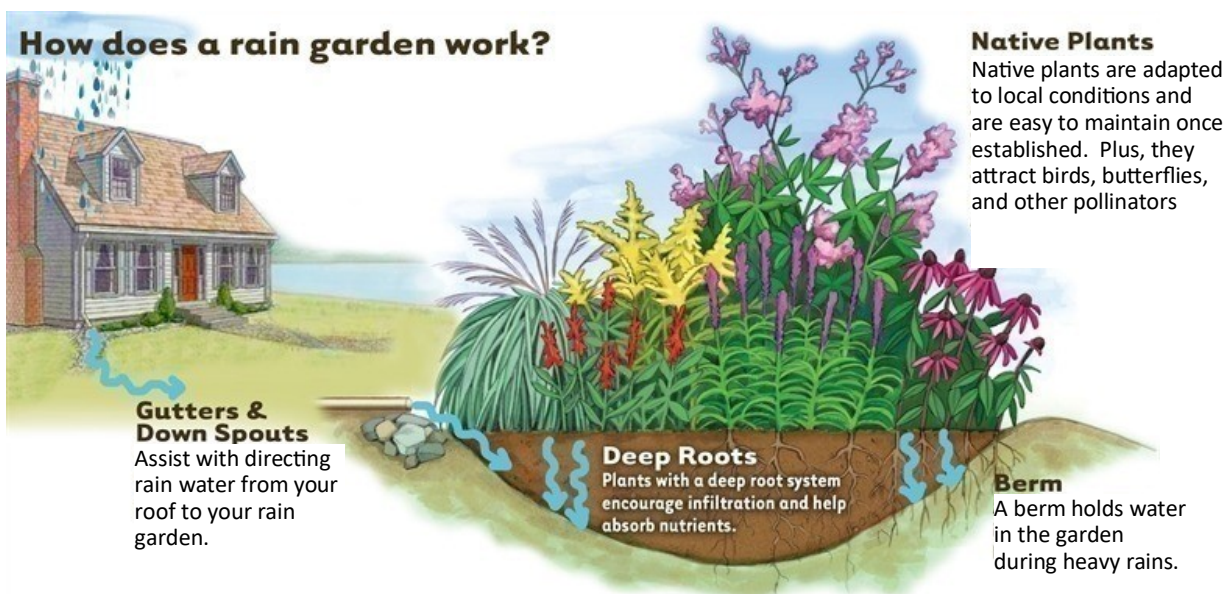
PA RESOURCE COUNCIL

Mary Lou Colussy, Chair, Patton GC, VI

“Have you heard about rain gardens?” Rain gardens are bowl-shaped gardens designed to capture rainwater from hard surfaces such as roofs and roads. These gardens are cultivated with beautiful **native plants** featuring flowers of purple, yellow, red, and white. The plants have deep root systems, creating channels for rainwater to easily soak into the ground.

Native plants provide **food and shelter** for a variety of local and migrating birds, butterflies, insects and pollinators. Rain gardens can help to protect our streams and rivers from **pollution** and **flooding**.

PRC and their partners forged an **initiative** to create rain gardens for public demonstration on public and private property with the vision of accelerating the adoption of green stormwater infrastructure. More information can be found on the [PRC website](#).



ENVIRONMENTAL - KEEP PA BEAUTIFUL

Judith Swanson, Chair
Gardeners of Crooked Billet, XI

Pick Up Pennsylvania is partnering with The **Ocean Conservancy** for its **International Coastal Clean Up**, now through November 30. This is a global initiative for individuals or clubs. Find more info on the [KPBP/ Pick Up Pennsylvania website](#).

Participants do NOT have to live near the ocean or an intracoastal waterway to participate because this initiative covers local streams as well. Consider joining forces with and supporting a **school group or a scout troop** at the local stream or pond, and schedule a clean-up event if only for two hours, which is better than none.

The purpose is to **beautify the community** by creating a healthier environment for everyone, protecting wildlife, fostering community pride and inspiring others, and being positive change makers. **Free supplies** are available for as long as they last. Con-tact the Pick Up Pennsylvania Program Coordinator (Michele Dunn) and visit the [KPBP website](#).



KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL

November 15, 2023

kab.org



FOUR AND FIVE STAR MEMBERSHIP

Nancy Lambert Fulk, NGC Chair, Penn-Cumberland GC, IV
Sheila Croushore, Somerset Garden Club, VI

National Garden Clubs, Inc. (NGC) offers **four schools** for the educational growth of its members. Schools offered are Environmental (ES), Gardening (GS), Landscape Design (LDS), and Flower Show (FS). Upon full completion of course requirements in any one school, a member attains the status of Consultant, or in the case of Flower Show School, Flower Show Judge.

The **Four Star Program** encourages garden club members to complete all four NGC Schools and achieve Consultant/Flower Show Judge status in each. To maintain their Consultant "Good Standing" accreditation status, these graduates refresh in an ES, GS and LDS course at least once every five years. Alternatively, these graduates may attend a Tri-Refresher or Multiple Refresher for credits.

For example, if Sally is a Consultant in Gardening and Environmental, she can refresh at a Tri-Refresher for only one of the schools. FS Judges must attend a Symposium and attain exhibiting and judging credits once every three years.

(Note that anyone interested in expanding their knowledge may attend NGC School courses, Symposiums and Tri-Refreshers.).

Upon completion of four refresher credits in each school earned as often as once in a calendar year, one becomes a Master Consultant in each, as required in the **Five Star Program**.

The **Five Star Program** encourages Four Star Program members to continue their education and pursue a higher level of learning and skills by achieving a Master Status in each of the four NGC Schools.

Similar to the Four Star Program, **Master accreditation** requires one course refresher at least every five years in each ES, GS and LDS School and every three years for FS School. A Master Consultant can receive credit in those schools for which he/she is already a Master Consultant. For example, if Sally is a Master Consultant in Gardening and Environmental, she is able to refresh for both at a Tri-Refresher.

NGC establishes the content of **four sequenced courses** comprising a series for each of the four schools:

- Each course consists of **ten hours of instruction**, including any field trips and tours.
- Exams are offered for accreditation in each school.
- One becomes a **Provisional Consultant** after passing two courses in each school and may join a Consultants Council.
- Members completing all four courses become **Consultants among NGC members**, a special achievement, but it does not convey professional status. They may judge contests and displays as representatives of the ES, GS and LDS Schools in events.

Pins are available on the NGC website.

More info can be found on the [NGC website](https://www.ngcinc.org/).



Four Star Pin



Five Star Pin

GCFP Five Star Members

Attaining Master Status in All Four NGC Schools

Dorothy Yard	June 2012
Waterford GC, VIII	
Patricia L. Beall	April 2015
Ingomar GC, IX	
Judith H. Morley	May 2018
Heather Club of Edinboro, VIII	
Sheila Croushore	May 2018
Somerset GC, VI	
Gail S. Corle Manna	Sept. 2018
Bedford County GC, VI	
Judy Vehse	May 2019
GC of Reading, II/III	



GCFP Four Star Members

Completing All Four NGC Schools

Dorthy E. Yard	Nov. 2003
Waterford GC, VIII	
Patricia Beall	April 2009
Ingomar GC, IX	
Sheila Croushore	April 2011
Somerset GC, VI	
Judith L. Vehse	May 2015
GC of Reading, II/III	
Gail S. Corle Manna	April 2015
Bedford County GC, VI	
Pat Ptasick	April 2015
Heather Club of Edinboro, VIII	
Judith Morley	April 2015
Heather Club of Edinboro, VIII	
Charlotte A. Zerance	April 2015
GC of Harrisburg & Linglestown GC, IV	
Carole D. Spahr	April 2016
Penn-Cumberland GC (Deceased)	
Claire H. Leichliter	April 2017
Bedford County GC, VI	
Joyce Wallen	Sept. 2019
Penn-Cumberland GC, IV	
Nancy Fulk	Oct. 2021
Penn-Cumberland GC, IV	
Barbara Andrus	June 2024
The Heritage GC, V	

PROGRAM RESOURCES

Diane Quinn, Chair, Emmaus GC, II/III

Two exciting new resources are available to all club members on the GCFP website. To view these documents, navigate to More > Program Resources > scroll down to Speakers/Topics/Contact Information (or link [here](#)). You will need the GCFP password to open the Excel spreadsheets.

- The **GCFP_Program file** is a compilation of favorite speakers and topics shared by District Directors, Club President and Program Chairs.
- The **Speakers_GCFP Members file** lists GCFP members who are willing to speak, conditionally, on specific topics.

If a program or a speaker is missing on these lists, please notify this GCFP Program Chair with their contact information. Our goal is to have these documents updated and shareable around the state annually by April 1.

FROM PENNY PINES TO PLANT-A-TREE

Barb Andrus, Heritage GC, V

Most are familiar with this program for national forests called Penny Pines. The new name **"Plant-A-Tree"** better reflects the program's mission and will help us reach a wider audience. National Garden Clubs is making changes to the donation process to make it more accessible and user-friendly. Even if you are already familiar with the original Penny Pines program, please read through the changes below.

DONATION AMOUNT – Previously, we required donations in increments of \$68. Donors can now contribute any amount, starting from as little as \$50 to as large as \$10,000. This change provides greater flexibility for donors and enables a wider range of people to participate in the program.

CERTIFICATES – As of May 31, 2025, NGC will no longer provide mailed certificates to donors. In an effort to **"Go Green,"** we will offer digital certificates that donors can customize and print out. We kindly ask that all donors provide their email address (even if donating by check) so that we can electronically send out tax receipts and online certificate link instructions. We assure that your privacy and personal information will be handled with the utmost care and security.

DONATIONS TO SPECIFIED FORESTS – You may designate to have your donation go to a specific National Forest; however, the Forest Service reserves the right to utilize funds based on need. If you specify a National Forest where there is no tree planting need, then the donation may be used for planting trees in another forest. Please note that individual plantings will not be identified per donor.

Thank you for your support and dedication to our reforestation efforts. **A \$50 minimum is required with each donation.**





NATURAL DISASTERS USA

Kathy Crossman, Chair, GC of York, IV

Did you know that as a member of National Garden Clubs we have disaster insurance? NGC has [grants](#) available to all club members of the Federation. This is an important fact to remember each time we contribute to [GCFP NATURAL DISASTERS](#) fund.

No matter where you live, you have seen continued changes in our climate. Winters exhibit extremes in cold, ice, and snow. We are seeing summers of excessive heat and droughts. And we all know of the extensive damage done by hurricanes and tropical storms. Descriptions are filled with superlatives and include "never-seen-before" conditions. News reports only reinforce the need for funds to help with garden restoration.

Gardeners are known for their love of beauty and know the power of supporting nature and the environment around them. We have all turned to nature for solace in difficult times and are quick to recognize the importance of "Garden Therapy" for everyone. Therefore, it is no surprise that our GCFP membership would be so generous with their contributions to the *Natural Disasters* fund. When disasters strike, such as fire, floods, hurricanes or

ice/snow, many relief organizations help to provide food, clothing, and shelter to those in need. It is after towns are cleaned up and rebuilt that gardeners recognize the need to restore beauty to their public gardens and parks.

Last year, National Garden Clubs (NGC) provided **grants in total of \$22,920** to federated clubs in FL, GA, OK, MO, and KY following hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods. Requests are ongoing for consideration once a club submits the grant application. Awarded funds are used to supply needed plant material and planting supplies. We can take pride in knowing that our continued generosity is helping to restore hope and assistance to fellow gardeners!

District Directors and Club Presidents need to remind their treasurers that ***checks to this fund must be made payable to GCFP with the notation "Natural Disasters, USA" on the lower left memo line.***

I am happy and proud to serve as a link in this chain from GCFP to NGC and thank all of you for your past generosity knowing that you will continue with this special outreach as the need arises.



KEYSTONE EVENTS

RADLEY RUN GARDEN AND SOCIAL CLUB, I - December 5, 2024

Our Holiday Luncheon and Fashion Show Scholarship Fundraiser is on **Thursday, December 5**, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Radley Run Country Club, 1100 Country Club Road, West Chester, PA. Tickets are \$55. See the [Holiday Luncheon Fashion Show](#) reservation form.



GETTYSBURG GARDEN CLUB, IV - December 7, 2024

Our annual Christmas Greens and Gourmet Gifts sale occurs on **Saturday, December 7**, from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., or until we sell out, at the Gettysburg Fire Hall, 35 N. Stratton St., Gettysburg. Proceeds benefit the Lincoln Square Flower Gardens and scholarships for Adams County students majoring in horticulture-related fields. Cash, credit cards, or checks will be accepted for purchases. Contact 551-427-5248, or visit the Gettysburg Garden Club website, gettysburggardenclub.org for additional details.



UWCHLAN GARDEN CLUB, I - December 7, 2024

The Uwchlan Garden Club invites you to its annual Christmas Fair on **Saturday, December 7**, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Uwchlan Meeting House, 5 N. Village Ave, Exton, PA. Items for sale will include fresh, handmade wreaths, swags, and arrangements, which can be tailored to your decor. There will also be a bake table, and you can purchase wonderfully hand-crafted hypertufa creations or artfully decorated winter items. And children can take advantage of the Kids Corner to make and take a craft at no cost. Tickets will also be available for the raffle that supports the Uwchlan Conservation Trust, Inc., which maintains the 1756 Meeting House.

SEEDS OF SERVICE PRESIDENT'S PROJECT

Barbara Campbell, Chair, Parkland GC, II/III

The 2023-2025 **Seeds of Service Award** recognized programs, projects and/or events of exemplary volunteer service to individual members, clubs and/or communities that emphasize service relating to President Ryba's theme of recycling, reusing, or litter cleanup.

It is very interesting what different clubs are doing to help make the world a better place by recycling or by educating and encouraging the public to keep plastic and other products out of landfills by repurposing, recycling, and reusing them.

There are companies such as:

[TerraCycle](#) and [NexTrex](#) that are converting recycled plastic into useful products.

[Nike footwear](#) collects tennis shoes and uses them in their Nike Reuse-A-Shoe initiative to make running tracks, playground mats, and Nike shoes and apparel.



The following clubs participated in the President's Project:

District IV

Penn Cumberland Garden Club - recycled plastic for use in future products

Gettysburg Garden Club - recycles and reuses pots from their annual plant sale

District V

Heritage Garden Club - recycled plastic for conversion into useful products

District VI

Weeders and Seeders Garden Club - created a pollinator garden at the local recycling center

District VII

Joyful Bloomers Garden Club - presented a program on recycling at a local library

District IX

Fox Chapel Garden Club - Nike Reuse-A-Shoe to make running tracks and playground mats

District X

Pleasant Hills Garden Club - recycled plastic for use in future products

District XI

Gardeners of Crooked Billet Garden Club - experimented to determine if detergent strips are equal to regular detergent. Conclusion was that detergent strips packaged in envelopes performed as well as detergent that comes in bulky plastic bottles.

Thank you to all the individuals who spearheaded the projects for their clubs and all the individuals who participated in the President's Project.





NGC SCHOOLS INFO

Environmental



Gardening



Flower Show

Become a Flower Show Judge!



Landscape Design



For more detailed info and registration



go to <https://gardenclub.org/our-schools>

Subscribe to *The National Gardener*

The official publication of National Garden Clubs published quarterly. Subscribe [HERE](#) and



Follow National Garden Clubs Inc. on Facebook

NGC GRANTS and PROGRAM INFORMATION



Espoma Gardening Project Grant

October 1, 2024 through May 31, 2025
Information [HERE](#)



PLANT AMERICA - Community Project Grants

More Information [HERE](#)



Natural Disaster Grant

More Information [HERE](#)



Youth Pollinator Gardens

More Info [HERE](#)



Native Plant and Wildflowers Educational Program

More Information [HERE](#)



PLANT AMERICA Plant for Pollinators

More Information [HERE](#)



PLANT AMERICA - Landscape for Wildlife

More Information [HERE](#)



[Apply HERE](#) to Register Your Garden as a National Garden Clubs Certified Wildlife Habitat



Planting for Pollinators

[Apply HERE](#) to Register Your Garden as a National Garden Clubs Certified Pollinator Garden

SMOKEY BEAR/WOODSY OWL POSTER CONTEST

Betty Grossheim, Chair, Puketos Garden Club, VII

This past year, 2024, was my first year as the Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Contest Chairperson, and I have to say that it was a pleasure to go to my mailbox last winter and receive posters from across the state. However, I was disappointed that only 8 clubs participated with only 16 posters to judge.

Our state winners were sent to the CAR-SGC committee, then those winners went on to NGC. The national winners were published in the Fall issue of [The National Gardener](#). Please look at the winners on Page 24. The grand prize winner was outstanding in detail, creativity of the letters, and coloring skill. But we have students in Pennsylvania who could do as well!

I am looking forward to an increase in participation from the clubs of Pennsylvania. The district directors have all received hard copies of the information needed to sponsor the contest and wonderful information is available on the [National Garden Club website](#) or the [Forestry Service website](#).

Remember, the contest is open to all 1st through 5th graders, if they are sponsored by an affiliated garden club. This could include scouting troops, church groups or even family members if you desire.

If you haven't started the contest, please begin soon. The posters must be judged locally and the winning entries sent to me by January 24, 2025. However, if possible, I would like the posters earlier as the winning posters are due to CAR by February 1. I will return any posters that do not get sent on to CAR.



Club News

GETTYSBURG GARDEN CLUB, IV

Barbara Brand

As with many other garden clubs, the Gettysburg Garden Club has an annual Spring Sale. We focus on native plants with the majority of these plants coming from the gardens of members. For years we have purchased containers of various sizes to pot the plants. In 2022, a customer asked us if we would like the pots returned once she planted them. Why had we not thought of that! That comment resulted in the establishment of a reuse program within the club.

One of the Gettysburg Council members, Ms. Butterfield, is a strong advocate for the environment and writes articles in the paper on a frequent basis. She has been a speaker for us in the past and is very supportive of all the club's projects. We asked her to publicize that we were accepting pots greater than 4" in diameter for reuse at our Spring Sale. The response was overwhelming. We received well over 1,000 pots!

In 2023 and again this year, we have not bought a single pot. This reuse project has been very successful. In addition, we engaged our youth and had a "clean the pots party" with volunteers from a local Boy Scout troop. This became an opportunity to teach why you need to start with a clean pot. With such a supportive response from the community, we will continue to reuse pots for our sale each year.



CELEBRATING A CENTURY WITH THE KANE GARDEN CLUB'S 100th ANNIVERSARY TEA PARTY

Rosie Lawrence, District VIII

The club members celebrated in style at a Tea Party event held at the Kane Memorial Chapel on September 21, 2024.

Club members, dressed in elegant attire, with some wearing dresses reminiscent of the styles from a century ago. The tables were carefully set with gleaming gold-and silver-trimmed tea sets, complemented by the sparkle of fine crystal, creating an atmosphere of timeless charm. The celebration was a tribute to the club's rich history, blending the past with the present in a beautiful display of tradition and community spirit.



her 35 years of service. Next to be honored were Rosemary Sicher and Janet Bard for their wonderful 50 years of service. These ladies contributed in every capacity serving their garden club.



Bonita Herman presented the club with a Certificate of Recognition for its outstanding accomplishments and 100 years of dedicated service as an active garden club.

Kane Garden Club President Bonnie Phillips personally acknowledged and expressed her gratitude to the individuals present. As a token of appreciation, she presented each honoree with a bouquet of roses. Bonnie extended her sincere appreciation to all KGC members for their contributions.



During the event, two esteemed individuals were introduced:

District VIII Director Bonita Herman, representing the District and Lawrence Park Garden Club, and District VIII Past Director Rosie

Lawrence, representing the Garden Club of Clarion County and the Wildflower Garden Club. These distinguished women delivered eloquent speeches acknowledging the contributions and accomplishments of long-standing club members celebrating their remarkable achievements with a special certificate.

Rosie Lawrence led the recognition segment, honoring Becky Gullifer, Janet Baker, and Judy Cox, for their 15 years of service; Judith Lyle for her 20 years of service; and Jeanne Iannuzzi for





HERITAGE GARDEN CLUB

District V

Heritage Garden Club of District V is taking the NexTrex Recycling Challenge

Our Club President **Caroline Hall** is stationing the NexTrex bin at her home. As of October 14, 2024, we have turned in 779 pounds of plastic with 221 pounds to go. We have advertised our collecting of plastics and have received collections from a local church, the ambulance association, the local junior high school, a maple syrup business, and a restaurant. This summer, our club has additional collection areas in the town of **Troy**.



Caroline Hall, Heritage Garden Club President, displays the NexTrex Collection Box



Collections in front of Building 9 restaurant on Tuesdays during the local Cruise-In Classic Car Show



District News

DISTRICT I - Pam Walsh

This past summer our **District I** garden clubs could be seen at various well known local gardens, horticultural sites, botanical gardens, the oldest rose garden in Philadelphia, an arboretum within a cemetery, and club members' gardens.

One of the recent highlights of our district was our annual luncheon held at The Farmhouse at People's Light, hosted by **Elverson Garden Club**. It was a beautiful day filled with great food and fellowship and a delightful speaker. The luncheon was well attended, and our raffle items were a hit! A special thanks to the Elverson members, including their **12 dedicated male members**, who made everyone feel welcome.

Community outreach projects include:

- native plants education and giveaways
- revitalization of gardens near a meeting place
- two clubs joining to plant flower barrels in their town and raise beautification funds
- joining with an organization that supports individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities for a pressed flower activity
- many youth DIY programs

District I was proud to hold our **"Inspiration Longwood Flower Show"** at the world-renowned Longwood Gardens October 5-6. Seven of our eleven district clubs participated financially, by volunteering, and by exhibiting.

We had a steady flow of people visiting from all over the US and abroad. Our members were happy to answer design and horticulture questions and to share the benefits of membership in a garden club. We look forward to hosting another flower show at Longwood Gardens in 2026.



Our next District I meeting will be our second **Fall Centerpiece Challenge**. Each club will send a two-person team. Each team will be given identical Wegman's flower bouquets, containers and extra accessories to create centerpieces to be raffled off to those in attendance. We had record attendance last year and hope to have even more this year.



DISTRICT VI - Mary Lou Colussy

District VI Annual Meeting , August 30, 2024

Installation of officers for 2024-2026 was conducted by President Leanna Ryba. Our new officers are: **Mary Lou Colussy**, Director; **Wilma Light**, Assistant Director; **Mary Davis**, Recording Secretary; **Karlice Makuchan**, Assistant Recording Secretary; **Judy Jackson**, Treasurer; **Sheri Lowry**, Assistant Treasurer.

GCFP President's Leanna Ryba spoke on her theme Plant America - Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. *A Tale of Two Clubs* was a story told by Tonya Young GCFP 2nd Vice-President. A report on leadership was given by Pat Wolanski GCFP 1st Vice-President.

District VI Presidents' Reports were given by: **Judy Custer**, Bedford GC; **Emma Kowalski**, Blair GC; **Mariann McGee**, Evergreen GC; **Pat Prushnok**, Indiana GC; **Sue Konvolinka**, GC of Johnstown; **Mary Davis**, Patton, GC; **Shelia Croushore**, Somerset G C; **Kate Nuernberger**, Weeders and Seeders GC. **Mary Jo Gardill** led a memorial service for District VI members who have passed. **Monique Ridet** presented the District VI awards; district laurels were given to the presidents.

Lady Bug Award: Deb Christopher and Patti Schildkamp

Mushroom Award: Wilma Light

Forget-Me-Not Award: Nancy Bitner

Exceptional Horticulturist Award: Jan Davis

GCFP Awards:

Indiana GC - Poetry and GCFP Scholarship

Penny Pines - Evergreen GC and Indiana GC

Yearbook - GC of Johnstown

Evergreen Chair **Marcy Cunkelman** gave the credentials report. **Pat Wolanski** invited us to the GCFP 2025 State Convention. **Bedford GC** invited us to the 2025 District VI Meeting. **Mary Lou Colussy** made announcements and **Mary Jo Gardill** gave benediction.

After a hearty lunch, a program, *Second Time Around Recycling in the Garden*, was presented by **Marcy Cunkelman**.



DISTRICT VII - Marilyn Backus

District VII Director **Marilyn Backus** introduced Assistant Director **Diana Pelletier** of Highland Park Garden Club.

District VII has 285 members in eastern Allegheny and western Westmoreland Counties, 44 of which **joined** since August 2023.

Forty members attended the Annual Meeting at Edgewood Country Club to hear Jeanne Cecil speak about Rachel Carson's life, witness the installation of officers, and view the 2025 Convention video.

Since June:

- **Burrellton GC** maintained numerous gardens
- **Monroeville** planned the replanting of a corner garden that was destroyed when the municipality replaced drain pipes
- **Highland Park** toured McKeesport Rose Garden, Westinghouse Park Arboretum, Biblical Garden at the Rodeo Shalom and Beechwood Farms
- **Home Gardeners Guild** presented a \$1,000 scholarship to a McKeesport student at the Senior Assembly
- **Murrysville** hosted a flower show at an independent living residence
- **Joyful Bloomers** held a picnic and native plant talk with an Audubon Society speaker
- **Forest Hills** planted 100 native perennials in a new pollinator garden and distributed "Plant of the Week" profiles
- **Landscape Design Society** had several district members participate in their tour and lunch at the Pittsburgh Botanical Garden
- **Pucketos** delivered horticulture therapy favors to the Veteran's Shelter and hosted a Sparkle & Glitz Ladies Luncheon that featured a speaker on collectible jewelry
- **Verona** decorated their main street with hanging baskets
- **District VII** donated \$1,000 to the GCFP Scholarship Fund. The Board is investigating ways to make more available and affordable opportunities to maximize the benefits of a federated club and to attract new members to the District Board and the clubs.





DISTRICT VIII - Rosie Lawrence

It's been an honor and a privilege to serve and to represent **District VIII**.

I had the opportunity to work with **Sheila, Leeanna, Pat** and **Tonya**. I've learned a lot from them and also from all our other District Directors.

We enjoyed our District VIII Picnic on July 24 at Waldameer Park. We all brought a dish to share with our friends. We also had the pleasure of our **GCFP President** and **First VP** joining us at the picnic.

I had the honor of attending and representing District VIII at two GCFP Conventions: **2023 "Thyme to Garden"** in Monroeville, PA, and **2024 "Petals & Patch Work"** in Lancaster, PA.

The **Garden Club of Clarion County** participates in the Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Poster contest. In 2023, two students' posters competed at the National level. In 2024, they had 1,2,3 and 4 grades take FIRST place in the State of Pennsylvania.

Our District VIII **Annual Meeting** took place on September 3 at the Cross Creek Resort. Our guest speakers were Ken and Peggy Butler, founders of the PA Fireflies group. Our GCFP First VP Pat Wolanski and our GCFP 2nd VP Tonya Young joined us. We missed our GCFP President Leeanna Ryba.



The **Garden Club of Clarion County** celebrated their **95th Anniversary** with an afternoon tea at one of the local churches.

The **Kane Garden Club** celebrated their **100th Anniversary** with a wonderful re-dedication of their Florence Newcomer Nature Trail & the new Pollinator Garden. They also had a Remembrance Tea at the Kane Memorial Chapel. We all received a beautiful gold remembrance teaspoon.



District VIII has a logo. With the help of **Dot Yard, Mary Hetrick** and **Marilyn Small**, we created the logo. Thank you ladies!

And don't forget . . . **"District VIII is GREAT!"**

DISTRICT X - Deborah Davis

The 2024 Annual Meeting was held on September 4 at South Hills Country Club. We welcomed GCFP officers Pat Wolanski and Tonya Young and heard their informative talks.

Juliette Olshock from **Phipps Conservatory** spoke on "Planting for Pollinators."

District X awards were distributed:

- Butterfly Award: **Diana Hagan**, Giant Oaks Garden Club
- Exceptional Horticulturist Award: **Mary Pruss**, Martha Washington Garden Club
- Forget Me Not Award: **Marie Mueller**, Pleasant Hills Garden Club
- Membership award for the highest number from a garden club attending the Annual Meeting went to **Martha Washington Garden Club**

During my term as District X Director:

- a **book was prepared** for each board member with contact information for the District X Board, garden club responsibilities, and a 12-month calendar of events and tips
- a **Facebook** page was created so garden clubs could connect and view District X events
- **Standing Rules for District X were amended** to include Amendments to the Standing Rules, GCFP Nominating Committee Conflict of Interest Policy, Whistleblower Policy, and Policy on Dissolution/Withdrawal
- **\$1,000 was donated** to the GCFP scholarship fund
- A **Civic Beautification Grant** of \$100 was given to each District X garden club who applied to do a civic beautification project with before and after pictures
- a **Blue Star Marker** ordered and paid for the I-70 Claysville Welcome Center
- two successful **Spring Teas** in March, two successful **June fundraisers**, and two successful **Annual Meetings** in September

It has been a wonderful learning experience, and I appreciated the opportunity to represent District X on the GCFP Board.



NOSTALGIA CORNER

Lydia Lewis, Countryside Gardeners, XI

My grandmother, **Mary K. Parry**, was GCFP President from 1936 to 1938, and a friend of Mrs. Burpee. She was born in Woodside, Bucks County, in 1889. She graduated from West Chester Normal College and taught in several one-room school-houses and at the Baltimore Friends School. She was also a Red Cross volunteer during WW II.

In addition to being Chair of Southeastern Division of Garden Clubs, she was a past President and charter member of Countryside Gardeners, established in 1933, and was a force in the formation of Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, where there is a trail in her honor. She was 98 when she passed away in 1988. Needless to say, she was a wonderful grandmother. We all called her Meema.



Mary K. Parry



Lois Burpee



PENNSYLVANIA GAME COMMISSION SEEDLINGS FOR SCHOOLS PROGRAM

returns February 3, 2025

Seedlings for Schools is a partnership program of the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Howard Nursery and the Wildlife for Everyone Foundation.

Since the Seedlings for Schools initiative began in 2008, **1.8 million** seedlings have been dispersed statewide to all counties of the Commonwealth. Seedlings are grown and shipped from the Game Commission's Howard Nursery located in Centre County, Pennsylvania. The program allows students to experience their role as caretaker of their environment while having fun in the outdoor classroom.

For more information and to view the educational materials available, check out

Seedlings for Schools [HERE](#)



NGC AWARD OF EXCELLENCE



NGC is seeking applicants for two categories of **Awards of Excellence**.

Non-members and states submit these awards to your state Awards Chairs by December 1.

SR-1 Award of Excellence for Non-Members - Do you have an individual, organization, or institution that has significantly contributed to advancing the goals and purposes of National Garden Clubs? Please consider nominating them for **Service and Recognition (SR-1), Award of Excellence for Non-Members**. An individual recipient must accept the award in person at the NGC 2025 Convention in South Carolina. A maximum of three (3) NGC Awards of Excellence for Non-Member may be awarded per year.

SR-2 Award of Excellence for States - Has your State Garden Club performed distinguished work for a coordinated activity or project following the programs and objectives of NGC in which many State Garden Club members participated? Please think about nominating your State for the **SR-2 Award of Excellence for States**. Note that the best applicant receives a Certificate of Merit and \$500. A maximum of four (4) NGC Awards of Excellence for State Garden Club may be awarded per year.

2025 GCFP TRIP TO ITALY - "Food & Gardens of Italy"

Tentative Departure date is September 29, 2025

For a more detailed itinerary, go to the [GCFP Website](#) > More > GCFP Tour Information and scroll down for the brochure.

Please email sharonrichardson22@gmail.com with the subject line "Italy Garden Tour" for more information.



12 days | 15 days with Lazio Region Agriturismo Extension

Drawing in horticultural enthusiasts from across the globe, Italy's stunning gardens are a sight to behold. With lush villa gardens featuring thousands of species of plants, pools, fountains, statues, and more -- you'll be sure to go home inspired with new ideas for your own gardens. Admire the shimmering shores of Lake Como and Maggiore, soak up the sun on the Italian Riviera, and fall in love with Tuscany as you end your trip in Florence -- making visits to some of the most iconic gardens in each locale.



Your tour package includes:

- 10 nights in handpicked hotels
- Breakfast daily
- 3 lunches
- 3 dinners with beer or wine
- 2 wine tastings
- 1 food tasting
- 6 sightseeing tours
- Expert tour director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach

Included highlights:

- Villa Taranto Gardens
- Orticolaro Flower Show
- Lake Como Cruise & Bellagio
- Villa Balbianello
- Villa Carlotta
- Villa Durazzo Pallavicini
- Pesto Experience in Cinque Terre
- Villa Garzoni & Torrigiani
- Farmhouse tasting and lunch
- Villa Medici
- Pitti Palace & Boboli Gardens

Tour pace:

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least 2 hours daily across mostly flat terrain, including cobblestone streets and unpaved paths, with some hills and stairs.



DONATIONS



SCHOLARSHIPS

Linda Southerling, Chair
Four Seasons Garden Club, I

For GCFP scholarships to students who plan to further their education in agriculture-related fields.

Scholarship Donation Form [HERE](#)

Donations:

The GC of Johnstown
The GC Federation of PA, District VII
Penn Cumberland GC
Greybrooke GC
Uniontown Flower Club
Oak Hills GC

In Memory of:

Helen Ream Kime
Elaine Good
John Kime
Karen Wilshire
Carmella Dunkerly
Patty Austin
GC of Clarion County
Delores B. Holler
Bedford County GC
Sandy Manthorpe
Angela Raitano
Michael Thomson
Angela Raitano
Jean Shirley
Presque Isle GC
Helen Naimark
Richard Adamson
Andy Kildow
Joe Nardi
Gil Brody
GC of Monroeville
Nancy Collier
Susan Irwin
Meena Phatak
Elaine Myers
Norristown GC
Susan C. Beebe
Norristown GC
Isabelle Rudisill
Town and Country GC of Lancaster
Mary Ellen 'Mel' Shewalter
Butler GC



BOOK OF RECOGNITION

Joyce Hoek, Chair
Garden Club of Harrisburg, IV

These donations give special recognition to club members and help support general operating expenses of GCFP.

In Memory of:

Marijean Roussel-Dupre
Ruth Shindledecker
Gospel Hill Garden Club



The donation form can be found in the Forms Library under "More" on the GCFP website or [HERE](#).

Donations can be made "In Memory of," "In Honor of," or "In Appreciation of" a beloved club member.



THE SAGE AND ROSES FUND

Vivian Abel, Chair
Town and Country GC of Lancaster, IV

The Sage and Roses Fund was created in 2002 by our own **Lois Shuster**, former NGC President, to provide funding for new Blue Star Memorial Markers and maintenance of existing markers that are in need of repair or restoration.

During Lois' presidency, email was a new way of communicating. Lois came up with a plan in which garden club members would send email greeting cards, thereby eliminating the cost of postage (currently 66¢ each). They would then donate whatever they saved in postage to the Sage and Roses Fund.

The email part of the plan has been largely forgotten through the years; however, GCFP Past President **Sheila Croushore** revived it when her term ended. She sent her GCFP Board members thank you notes for their service by email. She then sent a generous donation to the Sage and Roses Fund.

Donations may be sent to: Vivian Abel
200 Marticville Road
Lancaster, PA 17603

Checks should be made payable to GCFP and "Sage and Roses Fund" should be written on the memo line. All donations are appreciated.





DONATIONS

PLANT-A-TREE formerly Penny Pines

Barb Andrus, Chair, The Heritage Garden Club, V

Donations stay in Pennsylvania for special projects or to help reforest areas in the Allegheny National Forest.

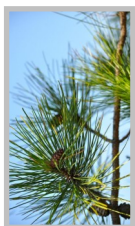
\$272 collected since June to October, 2024

General Donations

Garden Club of Clarion County, VIII
Bethlehem Garden Club, II/III
Butler Garden Club, IX

In Memory of

Karen Willshire
Carmella Dunkerly
Patty Austin
Garden Club of Clarion County
Elizabeth Bartron
Anna Stofko
Bethlehem Garden Club
Janet Mascia
Butler Garden Club



Online and mail-in donations can be made from the NGC Website link [HERE](#). (Scroll down.)

LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Jan Olsen, Chair, Garden Club of York, IV

Would you like to be a GCFP, CAR-SGC or National Garden Club, Inc., **Life Member** or give a membership as a gift? Just follow these steps.

Click on the **Life Membership** link you are interested in, complete the form on the [GCFP website](#) under "More > Forms Library," and send it along with your check to the address on the form.

GCFP Life Memberships

- Claudia Bernardo, Shaler GC, District IX
- Deborah Davis, Martha Washington GC, District X
- Susan Glassmoyer, Penn-Cumberland GC, District IV

CAR-SCG Life Membership

- Susan Glassmoyer, Penn-Cumberland GC, District IV

NCG Life Membership

- Michael Sarraino, Garden Club of Munhall, District X

If you have a question, feel free to contact me – Jan Olsen, jebeau47@gmail.com

NATURAL DISASTER, USA

Kathy Crossman, Chair, Garden Club of York, IV

\$905 in donations between June 10, 2024, and October 1, 2024, from

**GCFP Districts VII, IX, X, and
The Garden Club of Johnstown**

Natural disasters continue to affect all parts of our country, so there is a constant need for our assistance in restoring gardens and parks. Last year, NGC was able to provide **grants** in total of **\$7,723**, and continues to receive new applications for aid following hurricanes, tornados, and floods.

Our continued generosity is helping to restore hope to our fellow gardeners. Requests have been emailed to **all directors** to encourage their clubs to consider a contribution to **NATURAL DISASTERS USA** during the upcoming club year.

The need for aid from this fund is ongoing. District Chairs and Club Presidents please remind your treasurers that contributions to these funds must be made payable to GCFP with the notation "**Natural Disasters USA**" on the lower left memo line. Please include your email address with the contribution so that an electronic receipt can be sent.



Kids' CORNER

Fourth graders can see America's natural wonders and historic sites for free!

- You and your family get free access to hundreds of parks, lands, and waters for an entire year.
- Explore ancient dwellings or see a waterfall taller than a building. Stay close to home or travel somewhere new.
- Educators can get passes, download activities, or plan a field trip with fourth-grade students.

More Info [HERE](#)



ON THE *Move*



Joyce Crider, Town and Country Garden Club of Lancaster, District IV, is leaving Pennsylvania and GCFP to live near her family in Georgia.

A NGC, CAR-SGC, and GCFP Life Member, Joyce will be sorely missed because she served GCFP, CAR-SGC, District IV, Town and Country GC, and Landscape Design Council in **many** positions. Most recently, she was Chair of the 2024 Convention in Lancaster and District IV Flower Show Chair, and she leaves her position as GCFP Nominating Committee Alternate for District IV. Joyce also served as GCFP Treasurer for two years.

To keep in touch, her email will stay the same, jcrider616@gmail.com, but her new address is: 1111 Chateau Point, Hoschton, GA 30548-4208

Photo Contest

Would you like to see one of your fabulous photos showcased on the cover of the next KG Online (May 2025)? Send your best shot of a beauty from your garden, a winning entry in a flower show, or a special shot of one of your club's tours or projects.

It must be a vertical size, not horizontal.

Send your photos to Marilyn Small

GCFPKGOnline@gmail.com

This issue's cover photo is by

Debbie Carpenter

The Garden Club of Johnstown

Harvest from Wagner-Ritter Garden

GCFP 2024-2025 CALENDAR

November 18	District I Zoom Presentation, 6:30 p.m., "Inspiration Longwood Flower Show"
15	America Recycles Day
January 23	District XI Zoom Presentation, 6:30 p.m., "How to Enter and/or Volunteer for the Philadelphia Flower Show"
February 11	District VII Zoom Presentation, 6:30 p.m., "Divide and Conquer: Dividing, Transplanting, and Overwintering Plants"
March 28	District IV Zoom Presentation, 6:30 p.m., "Moonlight Gardens"
April 6-8	2025 GCFP Convention, The Alloy Hotel, King of Prussia

DEADLINES FOR THE KG ONLINE NEWSLETTER

May 1 Issue - April 15

July 1 Issue - June 15

Nov. 1 issue - October 15

(Please mark your calendar)

State "KG ONLINE Submission" in the subject line when submitting articles.

Please submit info as a **MS Word document**, not PDF or typed in the email itself to

Marilyn Small, GCFPKGOnline@gmail.com

The Editor reserves the right to edit for clarity, accuracy, or space requirements.

The Keystone Gardener and KG Online issues are now password protected on the GCFP Website. Call your District Director for the password.

GCFP HEADQUARTERS

GCFPVicePresident1@gmail.com

THANK YOU TO OUR WONDERFUL PROOFREADERS

Marilyn Backus, Jane Dodson, Angela McDonnell,
Judy Warn, Karen Wychock, and Dorthy Yard

Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania is a member of [National Garden Clubs](#) and Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs [CAR-SGC](#)