

The Volunteer Gardener

tngardenclubs.org

Winter 2026

Table of Contents

Official Publication Information	3
Guidelines for <i>Volunteer Gardener</i> Submissions	4
Message from the TFGC President	5
Ivan Racheff House & Gardens Information	7
TFGC website Information	15
TFGC, Deep South & NGC News & Events	16
Club News & District Upcoming Events	40
Youth Gardening	104
Special Feature: NGC Five Star Status—Jeri Melton	109
Featured Photography—Julia Wilson	110
Member Spotlight	112
Native Shrubs that Feed Birds all Winter	119

The **Volunteer Gardener** is the official publication of the Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.



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Guidelines for Volunteer Gardener (VG) Submissions



Deadlines for Submissions:

- **January 1 for Winter VG**
- **April 1 for Spring VG**
- **July 1 for Summer VG**
- **October 1 for Fall VG**

- Please submit articles and photos to the TFGC Website tngardenclubs.org
- A “Message from the District Director” is welcomed from all Districts in each VG edition.
- The VG editor wants to be fair to all four TFGC Districts in sharing information in the magazine. If the editor receives a disproportionate number of articles from one District, articles & photos will be included in the order they were received, and some articles may be saved for the next VG edition.
- Format of articles: Because there are many levels of technologic sophistication among club members, the editor will accept a full spectrum of submissions:
 - simply a text or email with photos and a description of the club project without any formatting, and the editor will format it for you.
 - Please list names of club members in the photos, L. to R.
 - Word or Adobe PDF document is acceptable.
- If there are photos of youth and your club does not have written parental consent to publish the youth's photo, the youths' faces will be obscured.
- Length of article:
 - Max of 3 pages if submitted in Word or PDF format
 - Max of 10 photos if photos and text/article are submitted without formatting
- If you have creative club members who like to write or take photos, please encourage them to submit articles, poems or photos that would be of interest to TFGC. The member and their club will be recognized in a “Special Feature”. At the end of each year, outstanding articles, photography and poetry will be nominated by the VG editor for a #68 B, C or D TFGC State Award.

Thanks,
Anna Marie Allen
Volunteer Gardener Editor
annabanana7@comcast.net
text: 615-477-3030



Message from the 2025-2027 TFGC President Lelia Johnson

Hello Team,

Whether it is gardening or football, there are routines, creativity, and planning that are necessary for maintenance and to secure a future. I became your TFGC coach in the spring of 2025. My installation was preceded by planning, study and organization. You and your officers have accomplished the routine drills. You have also begun to execute the plays unique to my administration.



Your Ways and Means contributions are mounting. This “No Work, No Purchase” Project has a current total of \$3372.25 and growing. Thank You!

Marilyn McDonnell has organized a virtual NGC Gardening School to begin January 21, 2026. The four courses will be completed in less than 30 days! **Go to our TFGC website tngardenclubs.org under “About Us”, then “NGC Educational Programs, and “Gardening Courses”.** You do not have to take the courses for credit. However, you cannot help but absorb a massive amount of helpful garden knowledge.

Mary Heim is registrar for NGC Flower Show School 2 at the Memphis Botanic Gardens in March. **Again, go to our website for details.**

Currently, Debbie Shaver and her team are judging your Books of Evidence for the TFGC Awards. These awards will be presented at the 2026 Conservation Camp. Unfortunately for TFGC, Debbie will be retiring from her role as State Awards Chairman in March of 2027. Now is the time to come see what this chairmanship is about. Please consider taking over this vital role.

Speaking of awards and judges, TFGC has a 5 Star NGC Judge. Jeri Melton has achieved that distinct status through a serious amount of study and dedication. Congratulations, Jeri!

Message from the TFGC President Lelia Johnson

The Racheff House and Gardens reorganization is ongoing. Members from all four districts are serving on the Executive Committee. Long hours have been spent at the Gardens. Connie Barker and crew have cleaned and sorted while serving as onsite supervisors for repairs to the meeting room and other areas of the house. Angels from District I cleaned and sorted the room and contents of the Gift Shop for three days. A discount room was set up for discounted items to be sold at the Green's Tea. Master Gardeners and TFGC volunteers planted bulbs. LaQuita Misner has been onsite Operations Officer for many of the ongoing projects. A volunteer crew from three districts washed dishes, cleaned cabinets and moved goldfish. Through many of the projects, Racheff Gardener Pam Inklebarger has lent her expertise. The goal was to have the Meeting Room ready for the annual Christmas Green's Tea. Sounds simple, but of course, it was not. DSGC Director and Racheff Ways and Means Chair, Denise Thorne, along with her team put the finishing touches and executed a lovely, memorable, old fashioned Green's Tea. Thank you, Ladies.

District Directors, please remind your Club Presidents that their Presidents' Reports are due January 20, 2026 to District Director, TFGC Awards Chairman and TFGC President. The Form C's are due April 1, 2026 and delinquent after June 1, 2026—send three copies to your District Director along with your club's TFGC annual dues of \$10 per club member.

The next TFGC Executive Board Meeting will be Zoomed on January 26, 2026—Zoom link, agenda and time to follow. Racheff Executive Committee Meetings for January and February will be via Zoom on the regularly scheduled dates and times.

Let us begin this year as the TFGC Team. Together, we can accomplish much.

Lelia Haley Johnson

TFGC President 2025-2027

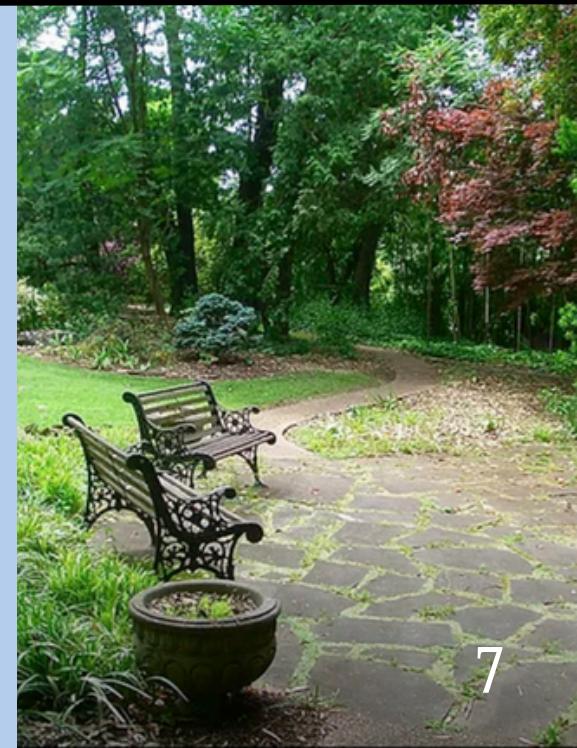


Ivan Racheff House & Gardens & Arboretum

Tennessee Federation of
Garden Clubs, Inc.
State Headquarters



**Ivan Racheff House & Gardens
TFGC Headquarters Arboretum Level II
1943 Tennessee Avenue
Knoxville, TN 37921-2686
865-522-6210
racheffhouseandgardens.com**





Ivan Racheff House & Gardens

Happy New Year everyone. As we burst into 2026, I hope that everyone has been able to spend a wonderful Christmas with family and friends and been able to reflect on the blessings of the past year. When we last connected in the Fall 2025 Volunteer Gardener, we had made some progress in the areas of signatories, utilities, and communication. I am thrilled to report that a focus on restoration and renewal have increased during the last quarter resulting in major progress at the house and in the gardens.

- Work continues on the updating of the Racheff Handbook of Operation and its correlation with the TFGC Bylaws and Standing Rules. Look for the results to be published prior to Conservation Camp 2026.
- The financial officers and investment sub-committee are reviewing, investigating, and learning more and more about our current portfolio and how best to maximize the funds in that account. We are also beginning work on a multi-year budget to keep up with monthly needs and continue necessary repairs and upgrades at the property.
- Fallen trees in the garden have been cleared with discussion of replacement ongoing.
- A pink flower program and luncheon was presented by Denise Thorne in October to support the NGC Plant it Pink garden and resulting in over \$700 collected for that continuing project.
- Knox County Master Gardeners in conjunction with DIII & DIV volunteers planted many bulbs in November to fill the empty areas. Many thanks to Nancy Howell for leading the project.
- Water valves in the garden that were old and inefficient have been identified and replaced by KUB helping with our ability to turn them on and off easily.
- A bulb sale was organized and presented in October. Bulbs were available for purchase at the October 13th meeting and then at the DIV Fall Membership Meeting. This sale is reported on with the Greens Tea information later in this article.
- Fish ponds, pumps, waterfalls and fish have been checked on professionally. All fish have been moved to the large pond to winter safely.
- From September through December, the officers have been working with Trinity Construction via Connie Barker to identify and correct the second-floor balcony/door leak impacting both the second-floor balcony and threshold and first floor ceiling. Damage was significant due to the length of time water was allowed to come in and travel down the wall. Funds that were leftover from being held for the repair of the upstairs heating and air conditioning

leak earlier in the decade were located and utilized to cover most of the latest leak remediation and replacement of the downstairs meeting room ceiling. Old office-style acoustical tiles and inefficient lighting fixtures were replaced by a framed sheetrock ceiling with hyper-efficient period-style lighting. This repair and update was finished just in time to debut at the Annual Greens Tea events. Many thanks go to Connie Barker for supervising the project daily to completion.

- ✓ Two extremely successful Greens Tea events were held on Friday, December 12th and Saturday, December 13th thanks to many volunteers and chairperson Denise Thorne. Lovely gift items, wreaths and festive food adorned the meeting room complimenting the beautiful punch and coffee table. And, of course, the traditionally stunning Christmas tree crafted by Julia Shiflett filled its customary corner. Great fun and fellowship will be remembered. Proceeds from the events were just enough to cover the overage on the balcony leak/ceiling replacement leaving all to breathe a collective sigh of relief and accomplishment.

Thanks to TFGC President Lelia Johnson and her officers for the tremendous support for our state headquarters. Mr. Racheff would be proud.

No Racheff Committee meetings will be held in January or February 2026. See you in March.



Submitted by LaQuita Misner

Master Gardeners and Garden Club Members Plant Bulbs at the Ivan Racheff Gardens.



District III & IV garden club members teamed up with Knox County Master Gardeners in November 2025 to plant more than 335 tulip, narcissus and lily bulbs at the Ivan Racheff House & Gardens in Knoxville.

Those participating included TFGC president Lelia Johnson, Evelyn Davis (Garden Club of Signal Mountain), Sandy Barnes & Nancy Howell (Chapman Highway Garden Club & Knox County Master Gardeners) & Pam Inklebarger (Gardener at Racheff House).



Sandy Barnes & Lelia Johnson



Bulbs were donated by Mountain Laurel Garden Club in District IV and by anonymous donors. Bulbs planted included: Apeldoorn tulip, Catherina tulip, Accent narcissus, Pretty Woman lily, Princess Irene tulip, Red Dress tulip & Blue Spectacles tulip.



On the same day, District I volunteers Kathy Eisenhour, Debbie Hardin, Jackie Walker & Daryl Walker spent two days cleaning and reorganizing the Racheff Gift Shop. The result is a much nicer area for people to shop, while providing funds for Racheff.



Left to right: Linda Roberson (Pearl Hooper Garden Club in Bartlett), Jackie Walker, Kathy Eisenhour & Debbie Hardin (Tipton Fleur de Lis Garden Club in Atoka).





Ivan Racheff House Greens Tea 2025



The *Ivan Racheff Greens Tea* is an annual festive event held each December at the *Ivan Racheff House & Gardens* in Knoxville, featuring beautiful selections of fresh wreaths, holiday arrangements, and delicious holiday treats! This year, there was a ticketed “Pre-Sale” event on Friday, December 12th, followed by an Open House Greens Tea on Saturday, December 13th.



Denise Thorne, 2025 - 2027 Deep South Regional Director, was Chairman of the Event

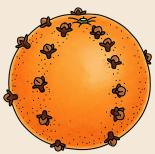


Deep South Garden Clubs Parliamentarian Wanda Taylor (left) and Chairman of the Racheff Bake Sale Janie Bitner helped with the sales at the Tea.

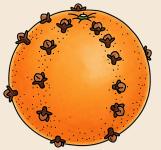


Ivan Racheff House Greens Tea 2025





Ivan Racheff House Greens Tea 2025



Check out the

TFGC Website

Updated Forms

Upcoming Events

Volunteer Gardener

News & More!



tngardenclubs.org

TFGC, Deep South & NGC News, Reports & Opportunities





Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs

Fall Executive Board Meeting 10-28-25

At Through the Grapevine, Murfreesboro, TN and via Zoom

The meeting was called to order by Lelia Johnson, TFGC President. An invocation/devotional was led by Gloria Harris and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Debbie Shaver.

President Johnson welcomed all and did introductions of those present. Maggi Burns and Ann Leanard were acknowledged as past State Presidents. The District Directors were announced with all present or on Zoom. Garden Club Presidents and members were also acknowledged.

A quorum was discussed with the President and Parliamentarian and President Johnson announced we did have a quorum for a board meeting. Zoom protocols were also reviewed by the president.

Readers of this meeting were appointed as Anna Marie Allen and Karen Dawson.

Time Keepers appointed were Becky Fox Matthew and Jackie Walker and comments were set at 2 minutes per subject.

REPORTS of Executive Committee:

*President Johnson gave a report on her activities the past 6 months. She designated this time frame as "clean up" and the TFGC bylaws and Standing Rules were revised.

The Racheff House and Garden Operations manual was also revised with members of the TFGC Executive Board, District II and District IV currently serving as interim committee chairs and Lelia serving as the chairman of the group. Racheff meetings are the 2nd Monday of the month.

Various TFGC meetings and activities have been attended by the President along with Zoom meetings that included NGC and Deep South. She attended District I's board meeting on October 6, 2025 and will be attending a Veteran's Day service for a Blue Star and Gold Star marker on November 11th in Trenton, TN. District II had their Fall Meeting on October 7th in Joelson, Tn and District III's Fall Meeting was on October 27th at the Hampton Inn in Cleveland, Tn. She was also in attendance at the District IV Fall meeting on October 17th at Fox Den in Knoxville.

She will be continuing her travels to meetings in all the Districts.

*President Elect, Laquita Misner reported that TFGC District 4 had a good meeting and she had also gone to District III for the Dayton Garden Club's 70th Anniversary. She has also been helping out with activities at Racheff and as needed in other areas.

*Recording Secretary Faith Young reported that the minutes from the June 10th Ex Bd Mtg were approved by the readers and then distributed.

*Treasurers report-Marilyn Smith reported a current checkbook balance of \$27,546.09. (Restricted funds were \$12,118.08 and General funds were \$15,428.01.) There were deposits of \$2,235 and disbursements of \$1409.06. Additional Funds in the Vanguard Accounts: Scholarship \$6,904.90, Brainerd Scholarship \$26,999.70, Life Memberships \$24,593.97, General Investments \$33,197.36 and Brokerage \$212,065.11. (Attachment # 1)

*Racheff House and Gardens-President Johnson reported in Denise Thorne's (Ways and Means Chair for Racheff House) absence that the Racheff Greens Tea is set for Saturday December

13th. They have a lot of work to prepare the Racheff House and gift shop for this activity and will send out notices for any who are available to help.

District Director Reports:

*District I Director, Jackie Walker, reported they had a President and Treasurer's meeting at the Memphis Botanical Garden in May that was a training and planning meeting. They have since met there for a Board meeting and their Fall Membership meeting. The membership meeting had 79 members present! Three of their clubs were presented with Endowment Trust Fund Awards. The Garden Club of Rosemark has had a flower show and the Tipton Fleur de Lis Garden Club will be having a Blue Star Memorial Service in November. There were 24 TFGC Awards, 4 Deep South Awards and 2 NGC appreciation awards given to District I at the State Convention in April.

(Attachment #2)

*District II Director, Becky Fox Matthews, reported that the district II Presidents meeting had been held with a program in Brentwood on Roberts Rules of Order, and their Fall Membership Meeting in Joelton focused on "Planting for Biodiversity"

Flower Growers Garden Club received a grant from the TFGC Endowment Trust Fund and a District II member, Jeri Melton, recently completed her last of 32 tests plus required traveling to 10 states to successfully achieve NGC 5 Star Status. Their district received 35 TFGC Awards, 7 Deep South Awards and 16 NGC appreciation awards at the State Convention. Anna Marie Allen puts out a monthly District II Newsletter as well as the TFGC Volunteer Gardener.

(Attachment # 3)

*District III Director, Jackie Westfield, reported that a Fall membership meeting had been held recently with a program on pollinators. The district has been very busy with interesting programs and activities. The Dayton Garden Club celebrated their 70th Anniversary with a Garden Party. The annual day of gardening will be held February 26th and all TFGC members are invited.

*District IV-Dr. Jan Brown reported via Zoom (as her husband is in the hospital) saying their district was rewarded 4 Endowment Trust Fund grants and the Shady Oaks had a great flower show. They also had their fall membership meeting.

COMMITTEE Chairman reports:

*Calendars-Debbie Shaver said 483 calendars were ordered making around \$791 for scholarships.

(Attachment # 4)

*Awards-Debbie Shaver reported that the deadline for state rewards is January 1st. Debbie wants hard copies only as she will scan to send on for Deep South and National. Forms are online and if questions arise, check with Debbie. There are some minor tweaks to a few forms. Flower Shows and Schedules WILL need a PDF sent to Debbie so she can forward them on. Judging will be January 6th at the Grapevine in Murfreesboro, TN and she needs more people to help (5 people per District).. If members have done books of evidence in the past, encourage members to help with judging. Debbie is also looking for an apprentice to learn about the awards process. Lunch will be provided for \$20 at the judging in January. (Attachment #5)

*Friends of the Cumberland Trail-Debbie said that 4 crews are building more trails with less than 40 miles to complete the entire trail and within 2 years they expect completion. TFGC wants to be part of the dedication at that time with helping with receptions, etc. More land is being secured around the trail to help preserve it. "Freinds of the Cumberland Trail" help by doing

activities that are outside of the parks purview such as upkeep, holding land easements, receptions, etc. All are encouraged to join the "Friends of the Trail" by going online or contacting Debbie Shaver. It's \$15 a year to join and they meet 4 times a year. (Attachment #6)
*Life Membership-Debbie Shaver reported on this for Charlotte Scott. Two memberships had just been awarded and 2 more are coming up with a total of 4 from Murray Hills Garden Club.
*Endowment Trust Fund Report- Chris Kelyman, chairman of the ETF fund, (via Zoom) said since the last report clubs were encouraged to apply for ETF matching grants of up to \$1,000. Nine clubs sent applications and trustees met via Zoom (6 of the 7 trustees) to review the 2025 applications. Eight applications met the criteria for grants. A total of \$6,965 was awarded with specifics in the Volunteer Gardener.

*Garden Study School- Marilyn McDonnell, chairman, said it's time for new courses that will be held via Zoom so this should help with access to the courses. The classes will be in late January 2026 and early February. The classes can be taken for no credit so tests will not be required for those. Current Gardener Club School members can use these as a refresher. She encouraged all TFGC members to participate and had a list of school topics for members to share with instructors that could lead Zoom classes. (Attachment # 7)

*Tennessee Council of Nationally Accredited Flower Show Judges (TCNAFSJ)- Kathy Rychen, reported for Molly Hampton, state judges chairperson. An NGC Flower Show school II will be held in Memphis on March 8 through 10th and a NGC Flower Show Symposium will be held April 13-14 in Murfreesboro. All clubs who are having flower shows should send a letter of intent to Debbie shaver at least 45 days prior to the show. Flower show schedules should be sent to Kathy Rychen, Flower Show Schedule Review Chairman, 4 months ahead.

(Attachment # 8)

*Volunteer Gardener-Anna Marie Allen, VG Editor, reported that the next deadline is January 1 with other deadlines on the first day of April, July and October. She encouraged all to send before these dates so she can publish sooner. She said reports should be posted directly to the website rather than to her personal email and all inquiry forms should go to the web master in order to receive updated information. The VG is published quarterly, distributed via email and also is posted on the TFGC website tngardenclubs.org (Attachment # 9)

*Web-site-Janeen Larkin Horn, Website Committee Chair, reported that all forms need to be viewed on the web-site. The Volunteer Gardener will be on the web site and since an event calendar is on the website, she encouraged all to use the format for adding activities to this site. News/online etc., information can be sent to Anna. She encouraged all to publicize the new website to club members. tngardenclubs.org (Attachment # 10)

*Racheff Update-Laquita Misner, gave a report regarding the status of the State home of TFGC located in Knoxville. Locks and keys to entrances have been changed and all financial accounts are now legally owned by TFGC and Racheff with reports provided monthly. After a thorough evaluation of the house and needed repairs, funds were discovered for a leak repair. This has been done with support beams bolstered so sheetrock and lighting in the downstairs meeting room is scheduled to be ready by the December 13th Green's tea. The gardens are getting cleared from debris and water valves are being updated. A Greens Tea sale preview will be Friday, December 12th from noon til 3:00 for \$10 each. Visitors are paying to use the area and a few events of TFGC were held in the fall months, so they hope activities will bring a fresh new set of people interested in using the site. (Attachment # 11)

* President Johnson recognized TFGC member Jeri Melton who is the first Tennessean to have achieved the NGC 5 Star Status! She started in August 2011, passing 32 tests, went to extra symposiums, and traveled to 10 states. She said all the states she visited to accomplish gave her some lifelong friendships! Two other current members of TFGC (Virginia Pennington and Kay Daley) also have this status, but they both started their quest in other states. Five Star is the highest award in a program that requires flower show school, garden study school, environmental school, and landscaping design school, then going through all 4 schools again 4 more times achieving a status of "master". There are only about 300 in the world who have achieved this status. She is credentialed to judge landscapes, environment, etc.

* Assistant TFGC treasurer and ETF Trustee treasurer, Evelyn Davis, reported that grants were all distributed with money to spare but no grant applications, so those funds were transferred to the TFGC scholarship fund. Restricted funds were discussed. (Attachment # 12)

"Discussion- LaQuita Misner asked about forms for the youth garden club that will be changed to mirror the "Senior" garden club form on the forms area in the website. Youth/Senior will be the updated title but the form will remain the same. The form is on the website.

*President Johnson encouraged all to read the bylaws job descriptions and standing rules for all officers, committees, etc.

*Racheff House and Gardens-Karen Dawson, InterimTreasurer for RHG, reviewed the balance of Ivan Racheff House & Gardens for the 6 months with explanations of the biggest expenses and the limited income to meet expenses. The beginning balance on April 1, 2025 was \$11,912.24 with income from donations (Garden Clubs, CMC, Friends, private, etc.) and events (which included a transfer from the Wells Fargo Investment of \$11,427.32) for a total income of \$20,917.03. The biggest expenses are for payroll and payroll expenses, and utilities, along with house insurance. Total Expenses which included funds transferred to the garden and payroll account were \$26,678.77 leaving a September 30, 2025 balance of \$6,150.50. Donations are needed and more fund raisers/income to pay for the work that is needed on the house both outside and inside.

DISCUSSION: the \$750 required from each district goes to the state. The \$10 for this term for Ways and Means will go to TFGC and also help with Racheff eventually as Racheff is the president's project. Paula Fortson praised Karen for her work on the finances at Racheff, and had a clarification regarding income from CMC (Commercial Metals Company, the Racheff neighbor) who gives \$500 a month for the house expenses. (Attachment #13)

A benediction was led by Gloria Harris and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

Faith Young, TFGC Recording Secretary

Present: Lelia Johnson, LaQuita Misner, Marily Smith, Anna Marie Allen, Becky Fox Matthews, Debbie Shaver, Dianna Mansfield, Faith Young, Gloria Harris, Jackie Walker, Janeene Larkin Horn, Jeri Melton, Karen Dawson, Kathy Rychen, Maggie Burns, Marilyn McDonnell, Shannon Thurman, Ginger Cloud, Paula Fortson, Cecile Borz, Evelyn Davis and Guest: Kathy Eisenhour

ZOOM Attendees were: Diane Ryder, Chris Kelyman, Bonnie Stockel, Jackie Westfield, Pamela Reiners, Candace Wells, Jan Brown, Gina Clark, Kay Cox, Lori, Janie Bitner, Cynthia Humes and Anne Leonard

Readers approval: Anna Marie Allen, 11-4-25, Karen Dawson, 11-5-25



2025 TFGC Endowment Fund News

With the holidays behind us, it is time to look ahead to what the TFGC Endowment Trust Fund has to offer in 2026. There is a new round of matching grant applications with a deadline of September 1, 2026. Grant information and grant application can be found on the TFGC website (tngardenclubs.org). Mail grant applications to your District's Endowment Trust Fund Trustee. Trustees will promote the ETF grant opportunity at each of their Spring Membership meetings and Presidents' meetings allowing plenty of time for applicants to meet the deadline.

District Trustees are:

District I - Chris Kelyman email: cabkelyman@aol.com, cell: 1-901-619-4708

District II – Becky Fox Matthews email: becky@lostfrogs.com, cell: 1-615-838-1359

District III – Evelyn Davis email: evelyndavis112@msn.com, cell: 1-423-364-7754

District IV – Janet Brown email: drjanw@comcast.net, cell: 1-865-441-4477

Your District Trustees will provide you with all the necessary information you need for the application process to include all their contact information.

On the TFGC website is also an Endowment Trust Fund donation form giving clubs and their members the opportunity to show their support with a financial gift. If the gift is "In Honor of" or "In Memory of", a hand written acknowledgment is sent. Your financial support will help the Endowment Trust Fund to continue offering matching grants up to \$1,000.00 for years to come with the funded projects creating an awareness of the benefits of garden clubs and the good work they do in their communities. All contributions given in January through March 31, 2026 will contribute to grant funds available for 2026 so now is the time to give.

The ETF Trustees look forward to an active year of grant applications and strong financial support.

Submitted by Chris Kelyman District I Trustee and Chairman

Chris Kelyman

Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs

ENDOWMENT TRUST FUND



CONTRIBUTIONS

October - December 2025

	Donor Name	District	Garden Club	Honoring	Remembering
1	Anna Marie Allen	II	Harpeth Bend	Jean Pickard	
2	Murray Hills Garden Club	III	Murray Hills Garden Club		
3	Pamela L. Dowd	II	Garden Lovers Club		John Rawlings
	Pamela L. Dowd	II	Garden Lovers Club		Charles Rowland Wells
5	The Garden Club of Signal Mountain	III	The Garden Club of Signal Mountain		
6	Optimistic Garden Club	II	Optimistic Garden Club		

TFGC's Scholarship Fund is being awarded yearly according to guidelines. Because it is only funded by Calendar Sales and donations, it is critically low. The 2026 scholarships would have been the last to be fully funded.

The ETF Trustees voted to transfer \$2,359.12, the unused funds available for the 2025 Matching Grants to the TFGC Scholarship Fund. The TFGC Board was informed at the 2025 Summer Meeting. This allows full funding for the TFGC Scholarships through 2027.

Submitted by Evelyn Davis

TFGC

JUDGING AWARDS

Tuesday, January 6, 2026
starting at 9:00 CT

Through the Grapevine
630 Broadmor Blvd. Suite 190
Murfreesboro, TN 37129
615-890-7346

*Lunch will be \$20.00 and you can bring cash or check
if doing check make it out to Through the Grapevine*

Ideally we need at least 5 from each district
total of at least 5 Flower Show Judges

Members need to study awards rules
and be familiar with the requirements

Remind everyone if you are sending in awards
for Deep South and National
YOU MUST SEND THEM TO ME BY JAN 1
NGC or DS will not accept awards from individual clubs

Send names of who will be attending to me as soon as possible
Any questions Please email me at
buffiescorner@bellsouth.net

Debbie Shaver

TFGC State Awards Chairman

APPRENTICE NEEDED

Needs to be

Familiar with Computers, scanning, uploading

Able to communicate via computer

Able to keep charts and records

Able to work with Wonderful Members

Must be able to attend conventions etc.

Enjoy presenting awards to great people and clubs

THEN THIS JOB IS FOR YOU

Are YOU our next Awards Chairman ?

Contact me at
buffiescorner@bellsouth.net

and we can get you started.

You will have one year to learn and gain experience

WE NEED YOU

—from Debbie Shaver

Presidents' Reports

are due

JANUARY 20TH

If you are a TFGC Club President, you need to submit a
“President’s Report” for 2025.

The “Club President’s Report” Form that you submit can be found on the
TFGC Website: tngardenclubs.org

If your club participated in a Flower Show in 2024 or 2025, submit a
“Flower Show Report Form” as well.

This form is also on the TFGC website.

Send completed copies of the form(s) to the following THREE (3) individuals,
postmarked OR emailed by January 20th:

(1) TFGC State Awards Chair, (2) TFGC President & (3) Your District Director:

- TFGC State Awards Chair—Debbie Shaver
349 Sharpe Lane Dayton, TN 37321-7728
buffiescorner@bellsouth.net

- TFGC President—Lelia Johnson
3475 Brighton Blvd. NW Cleveland, TN 37312-2549
l.johnson924@yahoo.com

District I Director—Jackie Walker
1085 JE Blaydes Parkway
Atoka, TN 38004-5155
j.walker653@gmail.com

District II Director—Becky Fox Matthews
1006 Waller Road
Brentwood, TN 37027-8349
becky@lostfrogs.com

District III Director—Jackie Westfield
905 11th Street NE
Cleveland, TN 37311-4603
tndistrict3director@gmail.com

District IV Director—Jan Brown
7320 Twin Creek Road
Knoxville, TN 37920-9530
drjanw@comcast.net

Submission Deadline is January 20, 2026

Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl Poster Contest!

Children from first through fifth grade are invited to participate in the National Garden Clubs, Inc. Poster Contest!

POSTER RULES AND TIPS

1. All poster entries must be sponsored by a recognized local garden club.
2. Posters must feature Smokey Bear or Woodsy Owl and may NOT feature both together.
3. Smokey Bear posters MUST include Smokey's wildfire prevention message:

Only You Can Prevent Wildfires!

4. Woodsy Owl posters MUST include Woodsy's conservation message:

Lend a Hand, Care for the Land!

5. Each poster **MUST** be 11x17 inches in size.
6. A good poster has a bold and simple design. The message should be easily understood, both in picture and in text.
7. Materials that can be used include crayons, markers, poster paints, watercolors, etc. The choice of paper is up to the child. Posters may include artwork pasted upon a second piece of paper. However, they must be flat. No three-dimensional posters, computer-scanned, or electronically-generated material will be accepted.
8. The artist's name, address, phone number, grade, school, teacher's name, city, and state must be printed on the back of the poster in the lower right corner. Please print the poster sticker from the NGC website; then paste or tape to the back of each poster.
9. Each poster **MUST** also show the sponsoring local garden club name and city.
10. Posters are created by individual student artists.
11. Students should check spelling. Posters with spelling errors will be disqualified.
12. Posters are judged for originality, design, slogan, artwork, and overall effectiveness of the message.

NOTE: Since Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl are official icons protected by law, the colors of their clothing **MUST** be accurate. Check the colors on www.symbols.gov. For free participation certificates, click "NGC Poster Contest" on this site. A poster may include just the head of Smokey Bear or Woodsy Owl or their whole body. Woodsy Owl vintage images may also be used.

13. Winning posters should be copied as they will not be returned.
14. Visit the [National Garden Clubs website](#) and the symbols website for further contest details.
15. Only 5 first-place posters in the TFGC competition will be entered in regional competition. Regional winners will be entered in the national competition. National entries become the property of NGC.
16. Please complete the *Local Winning Poster Report* and *Local Accountability Report Form* and send with posters. These forms can be printed from the NGC website, under Projects, Youth and Scholarships, Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl Poster Contest.

IMPORTANT: TFGC clubs participating in this contest should have their Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl chair mail only 5 posters. Those 5 first-place posters should be sent to the TFGC Chair, Phyllis Allen, by Jan. 20, 2026, to 2975 Devonshire Cove, Germantown, TN 38139. Posters can also be sent via FedEx or UPS.



Coming soon to a location near you-- your favorite chair!

Knock those winter doldrums out the window!
Join fellow gardeners from across the state
and beyond as we prepare for

SPRING

Our favorite time of year.

**Warm days, cool nights, the perfect awakening
for our gardens**

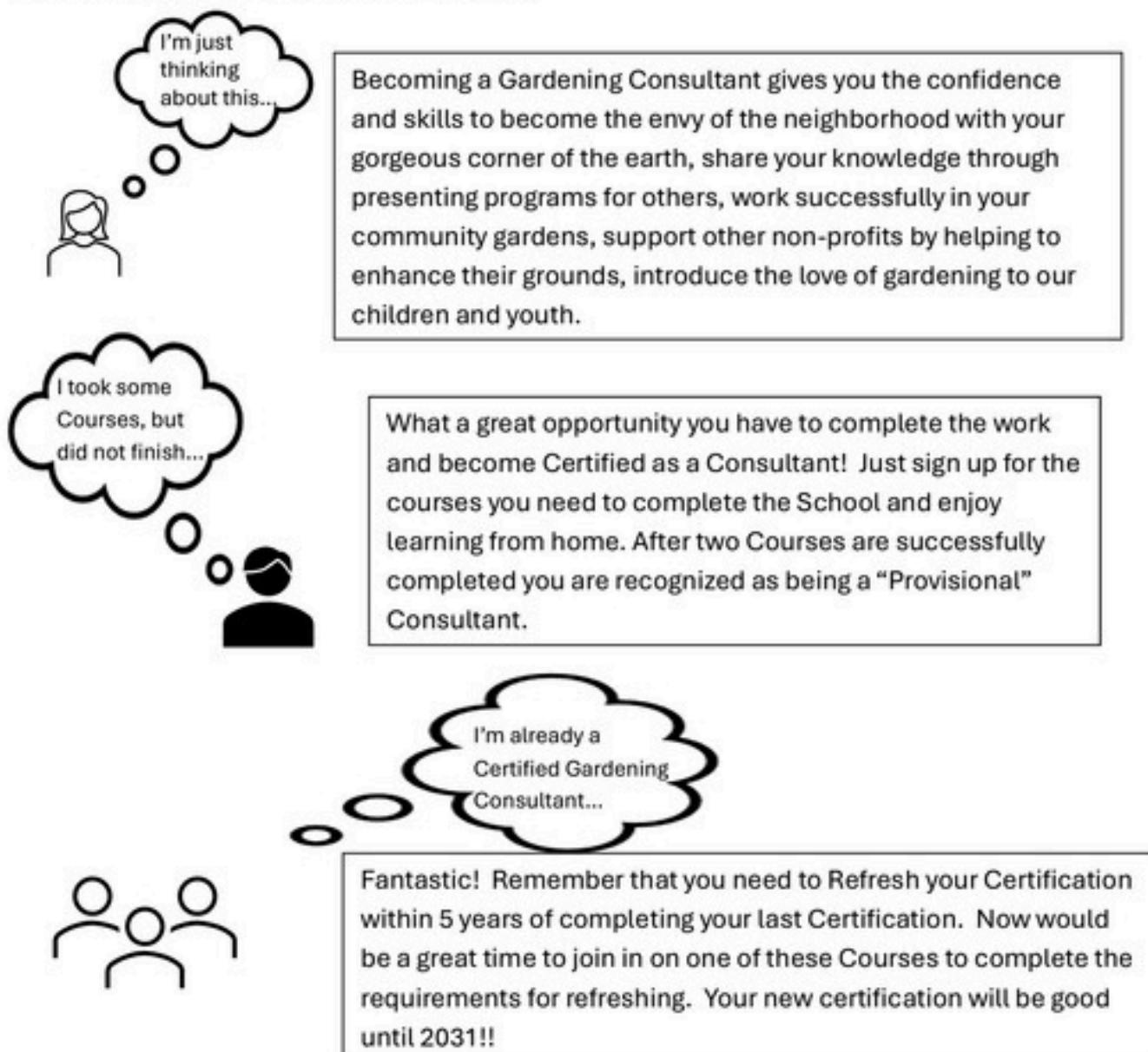
- What? Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs NGC Gardening School 2026
- When? January 21-22, January 28-29, February 11-12, February 18-19
- Where? ZOOM from the comfort of your own home
- How? Register on Google <https://forms.gle/wGAYxuNSNovRNrHQ6>
- Why? To learn more about gardening tips and techniques for your own garden
or your club's gardening projects
- Bonus? Complete all 4 Courses and become a NGC Gardening Consultant!

For more information, email Marilyn McDonnell, TFGC Gardening School Chairman at

mmcdonnell25@comcast.net

NGC sanctioned Gardening Schools provide opportunities for garden club members and others to delve into the basic concepts of successful gardening. Set up in four (4) Courses with each Course involving 10 instructional hours and exams on most of the topics covered, success in this School gives the status of "Consultant", certified by NGC!

The Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. is offering this School during the winter months of 2026 so that participants from across the state and throughout the US can use those months to plan and prepare for their most successful gardens ever. Each Course will be conducted over a two-day time period in one week. Exam components will be tested immediately following each topic for quick recall. Just think, within a single month of time you can become an official NGC Consultant!



I'm just thinking about this...

Becoming a Gardening Consultant gives you the confidence and skills to become the envy of the neighborhood with your gorgeous corner of the earth, share your knowledge through presenting programs for others, work successfully in your community gardens, support other non-profits by helping to enhance their grounds, introduce the love of gardening to our children and youth.

I took some Courses, but did not finish...

What a great opportunity you have to complete the work and become Certified as a Consultant! Just sign up for the courses you need to complete the School and enjoy learning from home. After two Courses are successfully completed you are recognized as being a "Provisional" Consultant.

I'm already a Certified Gardening Consultant...

Fantastic! Remember that you need to Refresh your Certification within 5 years of completing your last Certification. Now would be a great time to join in on one of these Courses to complete the requirements for refreshing. Your new certification will be good until 2031!!

Register at <https://forms.gle/wGAYxuNSNovRNrHQ6> or for questions or more information, contact Marilyn McDonnell, TFGC Gardening School Chairman, at mmcdonnell25@comcast.net

Presenting—for your pleasure and learning--Tennessee's NGC Gardening School 2026

Join us

On January 21-22 for Botany, Soils, Outdoor Flowers, Plant Propagation and a special presentation on Tennessee's Native Plants;

On January 28-29 for Diseases & Pests, Irrigation & Water, Lawns & Alternatives, Fruits & Vegetables and a special presentation on Pollinators in the Garden;

On February 11-12 for Plant Growth, New Plant Development, Containers, Houseplants, Native Trees & Shrubs, a Garden Tour brought to us by Bates Nursery and with a special presentation on Wildlife and in the Garden;

On February 18-19 for Classification, Garden Styles, Plant Identification, Pruning, Woody Ornamentals and a timely presentation on Roses!

Instructors and speakers for these Courses include professors from the University of Tennessee, garden specialists, master gardeners, extension agents and other experts in their field.

Each 2-day Course will begin at 8:30 CT each day and will conclude around 3:30 daily. Testing for those seeking NGC Certification will be conducted after each session in an online format. (Hint: if you can fill out the online registration form, you will be able to complete the exams with no problems.)

The ZOOM link will be sent to each participant after checks have been received. A short practice ZOOM session will be scheduled a few days prior to each Course and will be a requirement for those participants who have not previously participated in a ZOOM session.

Register now for something to look forward to in the New Year! [REGISTER HERE](#)

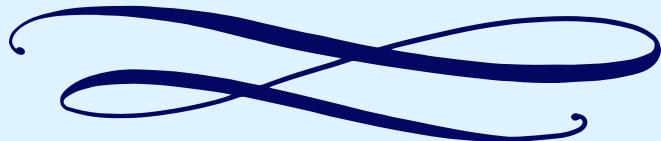


TFGC Board of Directors' **Zoom** Meeting



January 26, 2026

A Zoom link & time will be emailed to
Board of Directors members



Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs presents

Day of Gardening

Foodscaping

Learn more about “Foodscaping”—the art of integrating fruits, vegetables, and herbs into your ornamental beds for aesthetic and practical purposes. Whether you’re a beginner or an experienced gardener, living in an apartment or in your own home, there’s something for everyone at the 2026 Day of Gardening!

Saturday

Feb. 21st

9:30am-2pm

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
822 Belvoir Avenue, Chattanooga, TN 37412

9:30AM

Registration & Coffee

10:00AM

Food Forests with Jonathan Parks Allen

11:00 AM

Holly Jones, Director of UTK Kitchen Gardens

12:00PM

Buffet Style Lunch, Door Prizes, & Market

1:00PM

Kelly Smith Trimble, Author of Creative Vegetable Gardener

To register, fill out this form and attach \$45 by Feb. 11th, or register at the door for \$50. If you’re sending a check, make it out to TFGC District III. Mail check to Diane Ryder, 1551 Picket Rd, Signal Mtn, TN 37377. In the memo line, write “Day of Gardening 2026”.

Your Name:

Phone:

Address:

Email:

Tennessee Council of Nationally Accredited
Flower Show Judges
of
District II

Will sponsor an
NGC Flower Show Symposium

Monday & Tuesday
April 13 - 14, 2026

Held at
The Oaklands Mansion
in
Maney Hall
901 North Maney Avenue
Murfreesboro, TN 37130

For more information
Contact Kathy Rychen
kathyrychen@gmail.com

Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc. News

The National Gardener

1 Oct. 2025

REGIONAL NEWS

Deep South Region

It is an honor to represent the Deep South Region as the Director for the next two years. I have a close connection with each of the six states. Living in Tennessee we have picturesque vistas from the Mississippi to the Great Smoky Mountains, but it thrills me to spot my first live oak tree dripping in Spanish moss or spotting my first palm tree when I travel south.



The Garden Club of Georgia hosted a wonderful DSGC convention in Valdosta this spring that represented true Southern hospitality for all our DSGC six states. I was also their guest at the Augusta GCG Convention and had the pleasure of installing their officers. The Garden Club of Alabama held their convention in Guntersville at a state park, and members were surrounded by springtime nature for our enjoyment. The Louisiana Garden Club Federation and New Orleans area will be on my stop in my travels next year to enjoy the spring oleanders and especially the seafood! Spring will also be the site for Florida Federation of Garden Clubs to host the next DSGC Convention with a cruise. I will be returning there for their FFGC spring convention.

Key West is always our family gathering destination every Thanksgiving so I will host a luncheon there for the "Key Clubs." I can't wait to visit and meet them. We have two grandchildren that are University of Mississippi graduates, and I feel like that state is my second home for the last ten years. The Natchez Garden Club will be a garden tour that I can't miss. Traveling and meeting our members, enjoying the botanical gardens and historic sites of the Deep South is a joy and always has been for me. That is why conventions are so important and meaningful.

My theme is "Plant the Deep South with Flowers and Trees, for the Birds and Bees." I have given away 60 plus bluebird houses to our members to promote this theme. PLANT AMERICA and Plant the Deep South are our projects. The Scholarship Program is the benefactor of our Fall Ways and Means Bulb Sale which is going strong. Youth, education programs of birds, bees and pollinators, trees, horticulture and floral design are the topics of new awards and that will be funded by sponsors and donations.

I can't wait to visit and support our members and President Donna Donnelly in the years 2025-2027! We all want to wish Mrs. Deen Day Sanders a Happy 92nd birthday this October!

*Author: Denise Thorne, Regional Director 2025-2027
Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc.
Phone: 615-289-2138 Email: denise@tec63.com*

www.gardenclub.org

Winter Gathering

INSPIRING WINTER DECOR, NATURAL DESIGNS,
MOSS, FORCED BULBS, TOPIARIES, ANTIQUES,
VINTAGE ITEMS, AND MORE

*Benefiting Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc.
Scholarships
by Denise Thorne
Deep South Regional Director 2025-2027*

FRI **SOLD OUT** th, 2026

11:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

402 BASS ROAD
WATERTOWN, TN 37184

JANUARY
23RD
TICKETS
AVAILABLE

TICKETS ARE \$20.00 PER PERSON

MENU

ROASTED TURKEY

SAGE DRESSING

SOUTHERN SWEET POTATOES

FRESH CRANBERRY SALAD

DESSERTS

SEND CHECKS TO: DSGC TREASURER TRICIA
ORTALANO, 1104 FARRINGTON DR.
MARRERO, LA 70072-3921
PORTALANO3@GMAIL.COM

Deep South Director's Theme Project

Deadline **January 31, 2026**

“Plant the Deep South with Flowers and Trees, for the Birds and Bees”

Your club can submit an educational program for competition and recognition. A yearly total of \$500 will be awarded \$100 on each of the following topics.

1. Program based on Floral Design or Horticulture
2. Program based on Trees
3. Program based on Birds
4. Program based with Bees and/or Pollinators
5. Program promoting any of the above topics with only youth

1st Place \$70, 2nd Place \$20, 3rd Place \$10
All submissions will receive a certificate

Please submit inquiries, no more than 3 pages, to the Chairman and Director.

Inquires should be sent to the Chairman and Director:

Lana Arnold - Chairman
3441 Jasmine Hill Road
Tallahassee, FL 32311
iamag8tor@comcast.net

Denise Thorne - Director
402 Bass Road
Watertown, TN 37184
denise@tec63.com

Grant Information

Deep South Unified Project

Deadline January 31, 2027

“Plant the Deep South with Flowers and Trees, for the Birds and Bees”

State presidents can request a \$500.00 grant to promote education, increase club and public involvement or support youth programs with one of the following categories:

1. Program based on Floral Design or Horticulture
2. Program based on Trees
3. Program based on Birds
4. Program based with Bees and/or Pollinators
5. Program promoting any of the above topics with only youth

Submit your program overview by email to Cathy Perry. Your \$500.00 grant can be used for your programs.

Cathy Perry
3718 Creekwood Drive
Valdosta, GA 31602
ccperryau@mediacombb.net
404-862-9701



Deep South Convention

5 Nights
March 16 - 21, 2026

Eastern Caribbean Cruise

ROYAL
CARIBBEAN

EXPLORER OF THE SEAS



Day	Destination
Mon, Mar 16	Depart Port Canaveral, FL
Tue, Mar 17	Nassau, Bahamas
Wed, Mar 18	At Sea
Thu, Mar 19	At Sea
Fri, Mar 20	Coco Cay, Bahamas
Sat, Mar 21	Arrive Port Canaveral, FL



Starting from:

\$599 / Person
+ tax

Deposit is \$200 per person
Final Payment is due by Dec. 12, 2025



 HOLIDAY
CRUISES
& TOURS

Contact Shelley

satkinson@funseas.com

www.funseas.com/ffgc

+850-386-7327 Ext. 208

NEW NGC GRANT OPPORTUNITY

Application is open until February 17, 2026.



PLANT AMERICA: Blue/Gold Star Memorial Beautification Grant!

Help beautify Blue & Gold Star Memorials in your community!

Learn about this new grant opportunity from National Garden Clubs, Inc. in partnership with Keep America Beautiful, and submit your application today.



Join clubs nationwide in this meaningful tribute as we lead up to America's 250th Anniversary!



For more information, go to gardenclub.org

National Garden Clubs, Inc.

2026 Convention

May 4 - 6, 2026

A photograph of the St. Louis skyline at sunset. The most prominent feature is the Gateway Arch, which is brightly lit and reflected in the water in the foreground. The sky is filled with warm, orange and yellow hues. The city buildings are visible in the background, and a few boats are on the water in the foreground.

St. Louis, Missouri

**Hotel Information & link as well as Registration & Tentative
Schedule available at gardenclub.org**

Club News

&

District Events

Thanks to all who submitted photos, articles & events for the Winter edition of the *Volunteer Gardener Magazine!*

Please send your club's news, upcoming events and triumphs to:
Anna Marie Allen
annabanana7@comcast.net
text: 615-477-3030

Deadline for submissions for the Spring *Volunteer Gardener Magazine* is April 1, 2026.



TFGC DISTRICT I



District I Officers

Director:

Jackie Walker

j.walker653@gmail.com

Vice Director:

Pam Reiners

**affordablemedicalcredentialing
@gmail.com**

Recording Secretary:

Peggy Turnipseed

pjturnipseed@bellsouth.net

Corresponding Secretary:

Brenda Hise

mudville45@aol.com

Treasurer:

Lois Hobby-Clayton

llhclayton@gmail.com

Chaplain:

Barbara Dodge

dodgebj@aol.com

District I Garden Clubs

- 901 Garden Club
- Bartlett Garden Club
- Blossom Way Garden Club
- Collierville Garden Club
- Cordova Garden Club
- Dyersburg Garden Club
- Garden Club of Rosemark
- Germantown Garden Club
- Interpreters Study Group
- Kennedy View Garden Club
- Little Garden Club of Memohis
- Memphis Garden Club
- Paris Garden Club
- Pearl Hooper Garden Club
- Poplar Estates Garden Club
- Scenic Hills Garden Club
- Shelby East Garden Club
- Southwind Garden Club
- Suburban Garden Club
- Tipton Fleur de Lis Garden Club
- Trenton Garden Club



Message from the District I Director Jackie Walker



“The woods are lovely, dark and deep, but I have promises to keep and miles to go before I sleep” is a line in Robert Frost’s poem, *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*. This is the line I had to repeat as a five-year-old child standing very still and straight to my elderly neighbor before I could enter her home to create pottery with her. The stillness of winter is a sweet reminder of this time in my life. Winter brings time for reflection and planning.

Winter gives us a chance to see the “bone structure of our landscapes” as Andrew Wyeth states. In winter we make plans for adding to that structure along with fill-ins of perennials and annuals. We surround ourselves with seed catalogues and dream of spring. My prayer is that each of you endure the cold to appreciate the warmth of spring!



Jackie Walker

DISTRICT I

Dyersburg Garden Club



Dyersburg Garden Club Sponsors Peony Ridge State Marker

On the beautiful autumn morning of October 3, a group of approximately thirty community members and elementary students gathered on the campus of the Dyersburg Primary School to celebrate the placement of Dyer County's newest Tennessee Historical Marker. It was an exciting morning for those attending to see the Peony Ridge marker and learn the history of Peony Ridge and its importance to the Dyersburg community.

What began in the spring of 2023, became a two-year project for the Dyersburg Garden Club. The idea for the marker originated in the spring of 2023, as Dyer County was celebrating its Bicentennial. Mr. Earl Willoughby, Dyer County Historian, developed a list of properties in Dyer County which he deemed worthy and deserving of recognition and a historical marker. Ms. Beverlee Weatherly, a member of the Dyersburg Garden Club, was serving on the Bicentennial Committee with Mr. Willoughby and thought a historical marker for Peony Ridge would be an appropriate project for the garden club. After presenting the idea to the garden club, the membership enthusiastically agreed to pursue the approval of the marker through the Tennessee Historical Commission in Nashville.

Approval to place the marker on the Dyersburg Primary School property was sought from the Dyersburg City School Director, Ms. Kim Worley, the Dyersburg City School Board, and Mr. John Holden, Mayor of Dyersburg. With approvals given, the process to complete the application continued. Historical documentation, supplied by Mr. Willoughby, proving that the information to be on the marker was factual, was added to the application. The application was then submitted to the Tennessee Historical Commission in 2024. Due to some question from the Tennessee Historical Commission about Peony Ridge actually being the "largest peony farm in the world" in its height, additional documentation was sought from numerous resources. Unfortunately, we could not prove that fact to the satisfaction of the Commission, and the wording was changed to "one of the largest peony farms." Following the agreed upon word change, the historical marker application was approved at their next meeting.

The marker was ordered and finally erected in late September 2025.

At the presentation ceremony, Ms. Beth Feith, President of the Dyersburg Garden Club, stated, "I am proud that our club saw this project through to completion. There were roadblocks and delays along the way, but the end result is a great gift to students, parents, and our entire community." Also speaking at the presentation ceremony was Mr. Ray Smith, Chair of the Monuments and Markers Committee for the Tennessee Historical Commission. A special guest at the ceremony was Ms. Amy Moore Cresswell, great granddaughter of Mr. C. B. Ford, a one-time owner of the Peony Ridge Farm. Ms. Cresswell stated, "As a great-granddaughter of C.B. Ford, this historical marker means a great deal to me to preserve the stories of this area for our children and the generations to come. On behalf of the Ford family, we are so grateful for the hard work of all those involved who brought this project to fruition."

Historical Markers are not inexpensive. The Dyersburg Garden Club could not have accomplished this project without the financial support of community donors. We thank each and every person who contributed to this project.

The Peony Ridge Marker is located on the Dyersburg Primary School campus at 1425 Frank Maynard Drive. If you haven't seen it yet, we encourage you to drive by and read about the history of Peony Ridge, the people who owned it and those who worked there.



DISTRICT I

Dyersburg Garden Club



Dyersburg Garden Club members (left to right):

Ann Reaves, Maralyn Beck, Meghan Cook, Ann Delaney, Marci Weatherford, Beverlee Weatherly, Amelia Wilkes and Beth Feith

The Marker reads:

Peony Ridge

Soon after World War I, Dr. A. J. Knapp began a 200-acre peony farm on this ridge, just east of Dyersburg city limits. Soon known as Peony Ridge, it became the largest peony farm in the South and soon one of the largest in the world. Hundreds of thousands of peony blooms were shipped annually by rail to the Chicago market for Mother's Day. In the 1930s C. B. Ford purchased the farm. Peony Ridge ended massive production of peonies during World War II, although about an acre of peonies grew here until the mid-1950s.

DISTRICT I

Dyersburg Garden Club



**Members of the Dyersburg Garden Club, Dyer County Master Gardeners,
Mr. Earl Willoughby—Dyer County Historian, and Mr. Ray Smith—
Chair of the Monuments and Markers Committee for the
Tennessee Historical Commission.**

Submitted by Sherry Dunlap & Beverlee Weatherly;
photos by Marci Weatherford



DISTRICT I

Shelby East Garden Club

October 8, 2025—Club President Phyllis Agnew presided.

The Shelby East Garden Club met on October 8th at the home of member Tricia Sepko. With perfect weather, the club members met on Tricia's patio where we could enjoy viewing her lovely backyard pool and landscape.



Guest speaker, Joseph Seago from UT Agricultural Extension Service, shared information with club members on how to have healthy garden soil, noting that most nutrients in soil are depleted within 3 years. So members were encouraged to strive for healthy plant soil by adding appropriate levels of nitrogen, potassium, and phosphorus following testing of soil. Soil testing kits can be used to test the pH in soil, with an average pH of 5.5 - 6.5 as a goal to promote plant health. After answering lots of questions, Mr. Seago handed out soil test kits for each member.

An inspiring devotional on “The First Day of Fall” was shared by Jennifer Beyer. Routine committee reports were given, followed by sharing of horticulture—Spider Lilies, Beauty Berry, and Missionary (Chinese Money) Plant. Members were encouraged to use a clear-coat spray to preserve outdoor pumpkins through the Thanksgiving holiday.



As a matter of routine, club members continue community service projects, including plantings at The Morton Museum and at The Food Pantry of Collierville. Members also assist clients with flower arranging at the Page-Robbins Alzheimer's Day Care whenever Trader Joe's donates flowers in bulk.



Date of Interest: The daffodil and amaryllis bulb sale will be at the Dixon Gallery and Gardens in Memphis on November 15th.



DISTRICT I

Shelby East Garden Club



Club President
Phyllis Agnew

October 8, 2025 Meeting



Guest Speaker Joseph Seago



Hostess Tricia Sepko



Horticulture—Spider Lily



Chinese Money Plant



DISTRICT I

Shelby East Garden Club

November 12, 2025—Club President Phyllis Agnew presided.

The Shelby East Club gathered at Millstone Nursery and Shops for a wonderful presentation on wreath making. Tricia Hunt, owner/designer at Millstone, used one large green wreath to demonstrate so many possibilities for creating unique and attractive holiday wreaths. Ribbons, lights, toys, lanterns, flower picks, just about any decorative item was shown to create an attractive holiday display. One example given was to place a smaller wreath on top of a larger one, to layer 2 wreaths for more depth and interest. Ms. Hunt also showed how to add wax to amaryllis bulbs to create a show display. After cutting off roots and dipping the lower 2/3 of the bulb and colored wax and letting it cool, repeat a few times for thicker wax layers, and the bulb will have enough stored nutrients to bloom beautifully when given enough light. She also showed how to use decoupage to make the bulb even more decorative.

A devotional on “Tending the Garden” was given by Jennifer Beyer. She reminded us to tend our spiritual garden, to remove any weeds of anger, jealousy, or bitterness before they take over.

Members were given an update on tending the November garden. Activities could include planting evergreens, trees, and perennials, as well as spring blooming bulbs. Removal of fallen leaves to convert into compost, removing dead plant materials, saving seed heads, mulching and moving non-cold hardy plants inside were a few tips for fall gardeners.

Following the meeting, members enjoyed a delicious box lunch from Chicken Salad Chick, followed by shopping in the beautifully decorated holiday shop at Millstone.



DISTRICT I

Shelby East Garden Club

November 12, 2025 Meeting

Tricia Hunt, owner of Millstone Nursery in Germantown, TN



DISTRICT I

Shelby East Garden Club



November 12, 2025 Meeting



Enjoying box lunches



Phyllis Agnew



Amaryllis bulb dipped in wax
& then decoupage

Enjoying the presentation



Jennifer Beyer gave a
"Tending the Garden" devotional. 50



DISTRICT I

Shelby East Garden Club

December 10, 2025—Club President Phyllis Agnew presided.

- Members of Shelby East Garden Club were hosted in the festive home of Kim Moro for a Christmas luncheon and meeting. Along with co-hostesses, Kim served a beautiful buffet lunch accented with golden trees and deer overlooking the display of holiday foods. While at leisure, members toured all the wonderfully decorated rooms, including a music room and Mahjong holiday room. The Moro home will also be on the annual Collierville Holiday Home Tour.

Jennifer provided a devotional reminding members of how the imperfections of a Christmas tree can be overcome with decorations and similarly, how each of us can work, with God's help, to overcome our own imperfections.

Mary Malone shared advice on caring for holiday/Christmas cactus. By watering lightly only when dry to the touch, providing 8+ hours of bright indirect sunlight to promote blooms, and moving to lower light (12+ hours of darkness), with reduced watering after blooming, the cactus can provide blooms anytime between November and January. With the recent fluctuations in temperatures, members reported seeing Iris and Daisies in bloom in November.

As the December festivities wound down, members had an ornament exchange in the tradition of "Dirty Santa".

Happy New Year to all our gardening sisters (and brothers)!

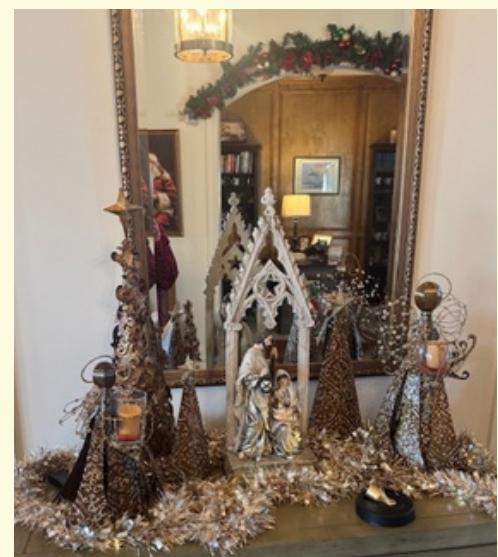


DISTRICT I

Shelby East Garden Club



December 10, 2025 Christmas Luncheon & Meeting



Submitted by Barbara McAdams

DISTRICT I

Southwind Garden Club

Southwind Garden Club brought colorful cheer to residents at Ciel Senior Living of Collierville. The seasonal pots will adorn the residents' patios all winter.



DISTRICT I

Southwind Garden Club



Excerpts from the Southwind Garden Club Facebook page

DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club

Suburban Garden Club's fall season has been jam-packed with learning and serving our community. The Club joined the Germantown Chamber of Commerce and President Melissa Putnam spoke to area business leaders about Suburban Garden Club's mission and community involvement. Elizabeth Martin, Germantown Performing Arts Center (GPAC) Flower Chair, provided several arrangements for GPAC events. Karen Lawhorn, Civic Chair, spearheaded a food drive for the club that resulted in 75 bags of food and \$400 donated to Covenant Presbyterian Church for their food drive.



Elizabeth Martin's arrangement for GPAC event



Civic Chair Karen Lawhorn delivered 75 bags of food & \$400 to Covenant Presbyterian Church's Food Drive from Suburban GC.



DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club

Many pop-ups occurred during the fall for Suburban members to gather together, learn, and enjoy fellowship. Seven members attended the District I Fall Meeting where they learned design tips from the Delta Divas and visited with fellow gardeners from across the region. Ten members popped up at Dabney's with our Horticulture chairs to learn and shop for plants that will thrive in our zone and be ready for our Flower Show. Ten members attended our pop-up at the Women's Exchange where we learned about the mission of their organization, ate lunch and shopped handmade items crafted by women.

A large group of Suburban members popped up at the Dixon to hear from Master Florist Hanneke Frankema who is known for her avant-garde style and use of color. A dozen members gathered at Denice McMahon's home to learn how to make bigger and better bows for gifts and wreaths.



Members enjoyed viewing the Delta Divas' creations at the Fall District I Meeting.



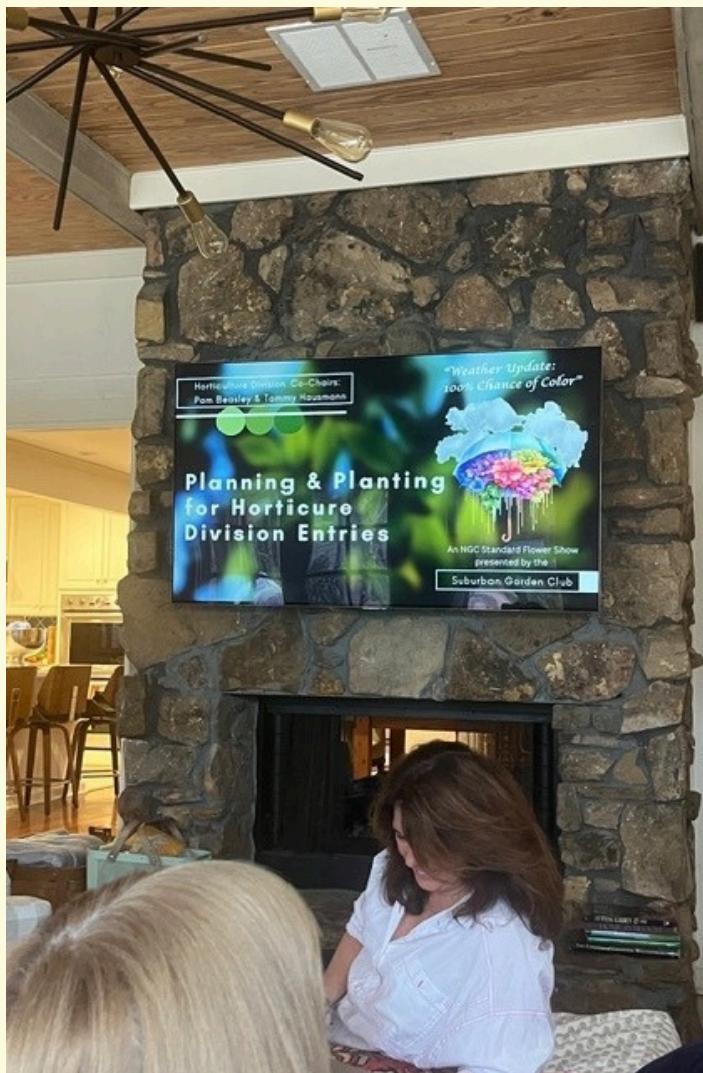
Bow making pop-up at Denice McMahon's home



DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club

Seventeen women gathered at Tammy Hausmann's home to learn how to make our spring gardens ready for our Flower Show. Tammy and Pam Beasley presented so many ideas for plants to grow for horticulture entries in our show. Suburban Garden Club is always busy gathering for all of these fun events to learn!



Our club continues to busily prepare for the Flower Show on March 25, 2026 at Germantown Presbyterian Church. This year's theme is "Weather Update: 100% Chance of Color" and is chaired by Barbara Armstrong and Nancy Klepper. We invite everyone to attend this show that's sure to delight and inspire! Look for more information in the coming months.

DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club

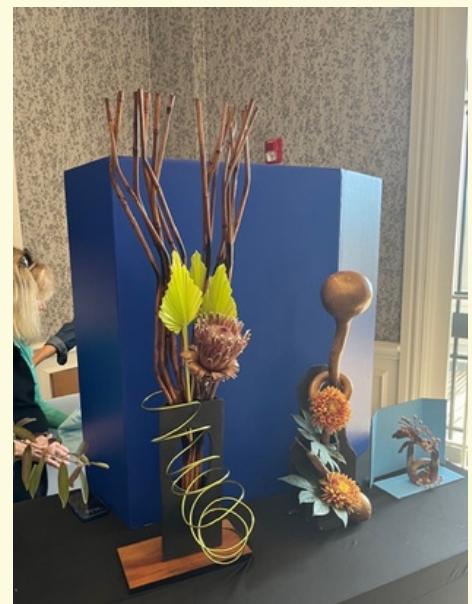
Our October meeting was held at Millstone Market and Nursery where the Club heard from owner Tricia Hunt about how to design holiday centerpieces for fall and Christmas. We thoroughly enjoyed her presentation and left inspired to design pieces for our own holiday celebrations.



DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club

Our November meeting, featured our own Horticulture Chairs, Pam Beasley and Tammy Hausmann, who gave a fabulous presentation on garden design and their approach to gardening in our zone. Both women are gifted gardeners, and we are fortunate that they share their knowledge with us!



DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club

Our December meeting was our annual Christmas party. This year's party was held at the gorgeous home of member of Julie England. Party Chair, Rhonda Beaty and Flower Chair Elizabeth Martin made it an evening to remember. The theme was "A Great Gatsby Christmas" and members donned their best flapper attire! So many outstanding outfits made the best costume award a difficult decision, but member Lea Davis was the lucky winner of a Millstone gift basket. Attendees had a wonderful time celebrating the season with friends!



Will & Sarah Bettendorf



Tammy Hausmann, Susan Sullivan, Anca Marr

DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club



Bill England, Michelle Snowden,
Mike Tutor, Lindley & Charles Buchas



Dana Kendrick & Guest



Carroll White & Anne Piper-White



Martha Mayers, Mickey & Patty Brigance

DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club



Nancy & Chuck Coe



Martha & Drayton Mayers



Lea Davis & Guest



Bill England, Anne & John McCormick

DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club



Daneise Burnette, Lindley & Charles Buchas



Meegie Glass, Beth & Jim Breazeale



Diane Callahan-Edens,
Hank & Donna Akers, Melissa Putnam



Donna Howard & Guest

District I Meetings & Events

- Executive Board Meeting—Memphis Botanic Garden

Monday, February 2, 2026 at 10:00 am

- American Daffodil Society Judging School III & Judges Refresher

Saturday, March 7, 2026

Dixon Gallery & Gardens—Memphis

For school information and registration, contact Chris Clapsadle

chrisseyec@aol.com

- NGC Flower Show School Course 2

March 8-11, 2026

Memphis Botanic Garden

For registration, contact Mary Heim at maryheim52@gmail.com

- 14th Annual Mid-South Daffodil Show

March 14 -15, 2026:

Open to the public March 14 from 2 - 5 pm and on March 15 from 1 - 4 pm.

Dixon Gallery & Gardens' Winegardner Auditorium

4339 Park Avenue Memphis

- Suburban Garden Club NGC Standard Flower Show

“Weather Update: 100% Chance of Color”

Wednesday, March 25, 2026—viewing 1:00 - 4:00 pm

Germantown Presbyterian Church

- Spring Membership Meeting—Memphis Botanic Garden

Monday, March 30, 2026 at 10:00 am

- Memphis Garden Club GCA Major Flower Show

“Masquerade”

Friday, April 10, 2026—Preview Party 7:00 - 9:00 pm—ticketed

Saturday, April 11, 2026—9:00 am - 6:00 pm

Sunday, April 12, 2026—11:00 am - 5:00 pm

Dixon Gallery & Gardens—Memphis

memphisgardenclub.org

District I Meetings & Events

- Trenton Teapot Festival Flower Show

April 28, 2026—12:00 - 2:30 pm

Trenton, TN

- Presidents' Meeting—Memphis Botanic Garden

Monday, May 18, 2026 at 10:00 am

- Shelby East Garden Club Flower Show

June 12, 2026—1:00 - 4:00 pm

June 13, 2026—10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Morton Museum—Collierville



TFGC District II



District II Officers:

Director:

Becky Fox Matthews

becky@lostfrogs.com

Vice-Director:

Karen Dawson

fdkd70@bellsouth.net

Recording Secretary:

Jennifer Kidd

jkkmd@comcast.net

Corresponding Secretary:

Kay Wells

wellsonhill@comcast.net

Treasurer:

Theresa Bray

tlbray1@bellsouth.net

District II Garden Clubs

- Beachaven Garden Club
- Ben Lomand Garden Club
- Camden Garden Club
- Clarksville Garden Club
- Country Homes Garden Club
- Evening Belle Garden Club
- First Saturday Garden Club
- Flower Growers Garden Club
- Flower Lovers Circle
- Franklin County Garden Club
- Garden Lovers Club
- Gateway Acres Garden Club
- Harpeth Bend Garden Club
- Hendersonville Garden Club
- Iris City Garden Club
- Lake Forest Acres Garden Club
- Lebanon Road Garden Club
- Leipers Fork Garden Club
- Les Candides Garden Club
- New Neighbors Garden Club
- Oak Hill Garden Club
- Optimistic Gardeners Club
- Rachel Jackson Garden Club
- Shady Grove Garden Club
- Shelbyville Garden Club
- T.A.G.S.
- Town & Country Garden Club
- Tyne Meade Garden Club
- Volunteer Garden Club
- Year Round Garden Club
- Warner Park Garden Club



Message from the District II Director

Becky Fox Matthews



Happy New Year! And a huge thanks to every District II garden club member for making our world a more beautiful place for people and pollinators!

Evening Belle Garden Club member Irene Fuerer's yard was certified by the National Wildlife Federation as a Certified Wildlife Habitat.

Tyne Meade Garden Club maintains Grassmere's herb garden at The Nashville Zoo.

Leipers Fork Garden Club (LFGC) constructed a labyrinth at Hillsboro United Methodist Church in Leipers Fork.

The Year Round Garden Club maintains a rain garden at the Wilson County Fairgrounds near the entrance to Fiddler's Grove in Murfreesboro.

In July the District II Presidents' Meeting was held at Harpeth Presbyterian Church in Brentwood with a program by Ken Roberts on Robert's Rules of Order. 58 women attended, including Lelia Johnson, TFGC President, and LaQuita Misner, TFGC President-elect.

In September Flower Lovers Circle presented "Birds, Bees, Flowers & Trees" Flower Show at the Middle Tennessee District Fair in Lawrenceburg.

In October 99 women attended the District II Membership Meeting at the First Baptist Church in Joelton. Joy Boven of Simple Joy Nursery and Wonder Gift & Garden presented the program on "Planting for Biodiversity." Flower Growers Garden Club received a \$1000 check from the TFGC Endowment Trust Fund for their pollinator programs.

December brought several District II members to the "Greens Tea" at The Ivan Racheff House & Garden in Knoxville. It was my first time visiting the site, but it won't be my last. I look forward to seeing the gardens in the spring!

Congratulations to Jeri Melton on making NGC 5 Star Status, passing 32 tests plus extra symposiums, and traveling to 10 states in the process!

And we are so proud to have District II member Denise Thorne serving as the Deep South Director!

Becky Fox Matthews, District II Director

Becky Fox Matthews

District II

Beachaven Garden Club



The Club had a lovely Holiday Tea Party, with a program about tea presented by Diann Nance.



Diann Nance



Theresa Bray



Marcia Huguley



Charene Ackley Watson



Nancy Knight Salyer



Barbara Mazzei



Tina Ramsey



Sandra Watson

District II

Flower Lovers Circle

The Flower Lovers Circle met for our December Meeting and Christmas Luncheon at the home of President Nita Slater. We had a wonderful meeting, fellowship, and lunch, to which all the ladies contributed some excellent goodies! After our meeting, we enjoyed decorating boxes that Mary Ann and Nita made for the group. Mary Ann brought old

cards to be recycled as cut outs for the boxes. We then filled them with various confections of cookies and candy brought by each person. What fun we had! Each of the ladies decorated two boxes to take with them and give to whomever they chose. We also brought gifts for the Shelter Inc. All the things they may need! What a delightful day!

Merry Christmas Everyone!



Back Row: Carol Sullivan, Betsy DeJong, Mary Ann Harris, Gail Watson & Reba Ayers

Front Row: Betsy Koszut, Sheila Jones & Beth Ender



Submitted by Nita Slater

District II

Harpeth Bend Garden Club

The Harpeth Bend Garden Club's October 8, 2025 Meeting was held at the home of Margaret Reeves. Jennie Daugherty & Margaret led our program on State Parks, which was enjoyable & educational!



Hostesses Jennie Daugherty, Marsha Hunt & Margaret Reeves



District II

Lake Forest Acres Garden Club

This year, Lake Forest Acres celebrated their annual Christmas event on December 1st at the Old Hickory Country Club, hosted by members Doris Wyatt and Tracy Embry. The entire Country Club was a lovely setting, and our club would like to give OHCC a special thank you for providing the beautiful table decorations.



From top left to right: Treasurer Carolyn Ricketts, Velda Dyer, Doris Wyatt, Joan Pillow, Sandy Mahoney, Jean Smith, Beverly Lutz, Vice President Dana Caldwell, Cindy Brumfield.

Bottom left to right: Tracy Embry, Wanda Pardue, Kathy Lyon, Judy Parrish, Linda Sanders, Becky Brazier, Deanna Sydenstricker, President Anice Rouse, Cece Meador, Secretary Carol Clem, Gaye McFadden.

Submitted by Anice Rouse



District II

Leipers Fork Garden Club

Our November meeting was held at the lovely home of Clare Maness.

Clare gave us demonstrations of working with water beads. She made three arrangements—a fall design, a Christmas design, and one with fresh flowers.

Clare experimented with water beads until she knew how to make the most creative and beautiful arrangements.



Submitted by Faye Sturm

District II

Optimistic Gardeners Club

The Club was featured in the December 2025 issue of Murfreesboro VIP Magazine!

OPTIMISTIC GARDENERS CLUB

Anita Wherry, Shelby Moore and Kay Clark

Trudy Bain with Joe and Lynn Rouse

Mary McCord, Carol Hargett and Mary Richardson

Sharron Hofer, Ann Porter and Jenny Reed

Rachel Reynolds, Jan Crossett and Carole Reynolds

Jean Teeter, Barbara Forsythe and Marion Butler

Lillian Hibbett, Connor Moss and James Manning

Linda Peterson and Judy Rickman

Libby Black, Carol Ann Beasley and Dot Taylor

Ruth Taylor, Sandy Estes and Mary Lou Gadsden

Jeaneen Benedict, Wanda Copley, Beth Birdsey and Kim Sadler

Lisa Chappell and Mary Rita Sandoval

94 • VIP MURFREESBORO

November Luncheon and Meeting

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOYCE TAYLOR

The Optimistic Gardeners Club convened at Oaklands Maney Hall for its November meeting, where luncheon was graciously provided by Trudy Bain, Anita Wherry and Lynn and Joe Rouse. Prior to the meal, members submitted their garden entries for evaluation by Linda Peterson and Judy Rickman of the Garden Lovers Club.

Club President Lillian Hibbett formally welcomed attendees and led both an opening prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. She then presented an interesting program focused on a variety of herbs and spices, alongside details about a cookbook authored by members of the Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs. The event featured an educational display curated by Lynn Rouse and a plant spotlight delivered by Marion Butler. Additionally, Mary Richardson distributed Amaryllis bulbs to club members. The club remains actively engaged in numerous community projects and charitable initiatives.

For more information, visit The Optimistic Gardeners Club of Murfreesboro, TN on Facebook.

District II

Optimistic Gardeners Club

December 3, 2025 Christmas Tea & Meeting



Hostesses: Libby Black, Wanda Copley, Julia Wilson, Ruth Taylor, Lisa Chappell, Beth Binkley & Dot Taylor



Left to right photos: Sheila Byburg & the “Gardeners Christmas Tree”; Advent Wreath by Marion Butler; Wrapped Packages by Barbara Forsythe, Dot Taylor & Rachel Reynolds; Barbara Forsythe shows what to do with Sweet Gum balls.

District II

Optimistic Gardeners Club

Optimistic Gardeners donated Poinsettias to Oaklands Mansion for their Christmas events and helped with the Candlelight Tour of downtown Murfreesboro homes.



The Club ordered amaryllis bulbs so members could enjoy gorgeous flowers throughout the season.



Submitted by Lillian Hibbett

District II

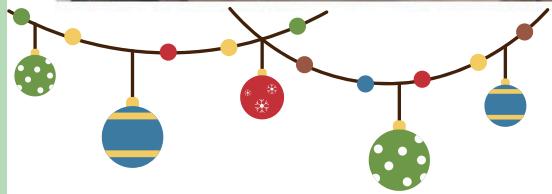
Tyne Meade Garden Club

Tyne Meade Celebrates Christmas in Style

The Tyne Meade Garden Club met December 4 at Johnson's Chapel in Brentwood.

Our members separated into four groups, each choosing a Christmas theme. Each member brought beloved colorful decorations and items for their table. All the different approaches were a delight to witness.

Club members enthusiastically participated with lots of laughter and excitement, sneaking peeks at each other's tables. To begin with, each table was covered by a white tablecloth. By the end of our decorating time, each table was a lovely display.



Dixie Riddle adds some finishing touches.



District II

Tyne Meade Garden Club



New member Andrea Shelton (left) collaborates with Betsy Abernathy and Janet Brownlee.



Group design fun with (l to r) Shannon Thurman, Sheila Turk, Carol Smith, Jan Shockey, Doris Weakley, and Monty West.

Every year, members bring toys and clothing for the Department of Children Services to distribute to foster families, and our gift table was overflowing with items.

The fun concluded with a luncheon of three different soups, salad, and German pastries.

Tyne Meade Report from Doris Weakley, Shannon Thurman, and Carol Smith

District II Meetings & Events

- 36th Annual Antiques & Garden Show of Nashville

January 9 - 11, 2026

Music City Center

- Horticultural Society of Middle Tennessee Winter Membership Meeting

Monday, January 12, 2026 at 10:00 am

Speaker: Margot Shaw—Founder & Editor-in-Chief of FLOWER Magazine

Belle Meade Historic Site—The Carriage House

5025 Harding Pike Nashville

- Middle Tennessee Daffodil Society Show

March 28 - 29, 2026

Cheekwood Estate & Gardens—Nashville

- District II Spring Membership Meeting

Location & Date TBA

- NGC Flower Show Symposium

April 13 - 14, 2026

Oaklands Mansion—Maney Hall—Murfreesboro

Contact Kathy Rychen for more information—kathyrychen@gmail.com

- Horticultural Society of Middle Tennessee Spring Membership Meeting

Monday, April 13, 2026 at 10:00 am

Cheekwood Estate & Gardens—Nashville

- District II Presidents' Meeting

Location & Date TBA

TFGC District III



District III Officers:

Director:

Jackie Westfield

tndistrict3director@gmail.com

Vice-Director:

Lu Ann Carey

lucarey3@gmail.com

Recording Secretary:

Geneva Andrews

geneva.andrews@icloud.com

Corresponding Secretary:

Starr Alexander

starralexander3@gmail.com

Treasurer:

Diane Ryder

dianeryder@epbfi.com

District III Garden Clubs

- Aldersgate Garden Club
- Crestwood Garden Club
- Dayton Garden Club “Busy Bees”
- Four Seasons Garden Club
- Garden Club of Signal Mountain
- Hickory Valley Garden Club
- Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club
- Magnolia Garden Club
- Murry Hills Garden Club
- Ocoee Garden Club





Message from the District III Director

Jackie Westfield

Ladies,

The holidays are over. During the Fall there were trips, Garden tours, and holiday parties. Now it time for flower shows, Day of Gardening President's Report, and Spring meetings and welcoming new members.

But what about those of us who have itchy green thumbs. Here are some suggestions:

- Plan out your garden for the next growing period. This involves selecting seeds, plotting out where plants should go, and researching new plant varieties or gardening techniques.
- Order new seeds and bulbs while you're putting together your spring season planting plan. Consider researching companion planting pairs that thrive together. This can lead to a more productive garden in the spring and help with natural pest control.
- Prep your gardening tools during the colder months so they're ready to go when you need them come spring. If your budget allows, winter is also a great time to purchase new hand tools or repair and replace old equipment. This way, you're not scrambling when it's time to start planting.
- Add fallen leaves to your flower beds. Instead of bagging fallen leaves while performing your add them to your garden beds instead. Blow leaves into beds for a natural compost, which will break down over winter and feed the soil life beneath. Additionally, leaves give shelter to beneficial insects which virtually eliminate the need to use pesticides, ever.

Let's get busy.

Happy New Year,

Jackie

Jackie Westfield

District III

Aldersgate Garden Club



The Aldersgate Garden Club, Cleveland, Tennessee in District III continues to be involved in Community Activities and other local organizations each year. Bradley County Veterans Day Program – November 11, 2025. The Club Members present flowers to each Branch of Service as the Roll Call is given by the Leader. L-R: Charlotte Scott, Cassandra Cox, Reginia Piersaul, NeKita Blair, and Lelia Johnson.

Bradley-Cleveland Community Services – Club Members donated Blankets to the Emergency Shelter. Pictured L to R Seated Nekita Blair, Reginia Piersaul, standing Demetrius Ramsey, Executive Director; Charlotte Scott, Diane Doumbouya, Cynthia Humes, Lelia Johnson, Charlotte Timberlake, Cassandra Cox, and Billie Blair.



Several Aldersgate members attended the Greens Tea- at the Ivan Racheff House. L-R: Lelia Johnson, Jackie Westfield, and Cassandra Cox.



District III

Garden Club of Signal Mountain

The Garden Club of Signal Mountain met Wednesday, October 8, 2025 at the St. Augustine Catholic Church for a fall inspired luncheon and a most informative meeting presented by Signal Mountain's own Noel Durant. Mr. Durant is VP and Director of the Tennessee Trust for Public Lands (TPL). Members were informed with an overview of the TPL whose efforts resulted in having Chattanooga recently named as the First National Park City in our nation. This national nonprofit seeks to connect everyone to the great outdoors. The TN office, opened in 1994, has been instrumental and best known for securing access to River Park, the 100 acre Stringers Ridge Park, the South Chickamauga Greenway, and linking neighborhoods to the Riverwalk. The result is safe walking, more physically active residents, community pride and a sense of belonging. Such civic activity fosters future community leaders who engage in protecting properties and connecting diverse neighborhoods.



Left & Center: Noel Durant; Right: The Membership and Guests were treated to lunch by Hostesses, Left to right: Janet Mattice, Mary Adams, Leah Conner, Jane Welch, Club Co-President Judy Nowlin & Mary Helms.

District III

Garden Club of Signal Mountain

December 2, 2025—Colonial Apple Tree Workshop for Hostess Committee



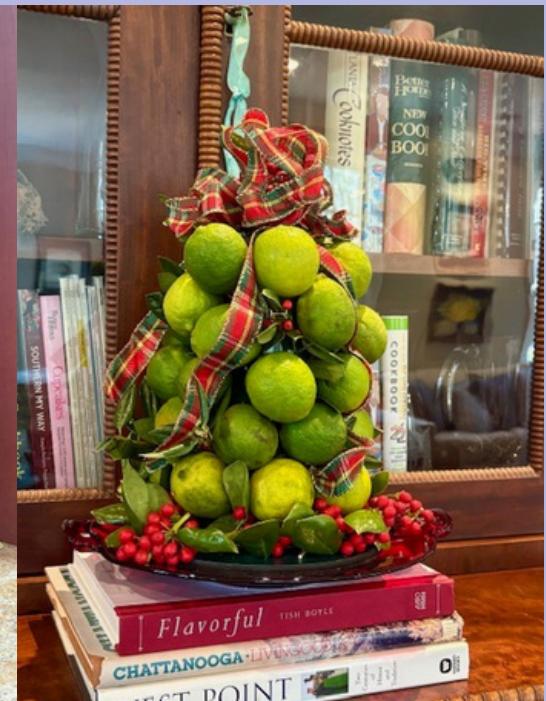
In preparation for the annual Christmas Tea, GCSM Hostess Committee held a Williamsburg Apple Tree workshop one week before the Tea. Hostess members met together to learn the best method of assembly for these beautiful holiday traditions. Leaders Deane Sprague and Jean Faircloth orchestrated the workshop and guided each attendee in the actual Apple Tree structure technique. Various tree fruits and decorative additions for inclusion in the design were discussed by Stacy Webb and Anne Hayes Pearce. Attendees arrived with their support structures and selected fruits and greenery. Learning a new arrangement skill and being with dear friends made quick work of these beautiful Colonial Holiday arrangements. Most made their way to the Christmas Tea and were on display. All of the workshop attendees left with a vow to add these Williamsburg Apple Trees to their own home's holiday decorating for years to come.

Workshop Attendees: Deane Sprague, Jean Faircloth, Anne Hayes Pearce, Carolene Perry, Levene Guthrie, Stacy Webb, Joanne Beckman, Ann Phillips, Ashley Guthrie, Jane Broomfield and Judy Nowlin

District III

Garden Club of Signal Mountain

Here are just a few of the splendid Colonial Apple Trees made in the Workshop and displayed at the Christmas Tea.



District III

Garden Club of Signal Mountain

Annual Christmas Tea

2025 Theme: A CUP OF CHRISTMAS TEA

The GCSM Annual Christmas Tea was held at the home of Anne Hayes Pearce in the beautiful Carriage Hills neighborhood atop Signal Mountain. The event date of December 10th provided a sunny day to lift spirits and enable over 80 plus ladies to attend. This annual gathering is held in recognition and appreciation of GCSM Members with invited guests always being a major part of the celebration. Anne Hayes along with the Hostess Committee planned and prepared the menu and decorations to be enjoyed at this anticipated afternoon tea. Hostess Committee members held several planning meetings and workshops weeks in advance. A major effort is the menu planning with all of the Holiday foods being prepared by each of the Hostess Committee members. The buffet was a delicious combination of sweet and savory delights displayed in the welcoming dining room utilizing imaginative color combinations and creative food plating. Every room was a Holiday inspiration with a Colonial Williamsburg feel. Garlands with dried fruit combined with fresh greenery adorned every mantle and staircase. Each room had creative decorations made from natural elements that gave decorating ideas to all attendees. A delicious fruit punch was available next to the magnificent Christmas Tree as it reflected the welcoming sunlight. Attendees were so grateful to be among friends in such a beautiful setting while enjoying delicious food. Knowing the effort given by Anne Hayes and the Hostess Committee to brighten the Holidays made this 2025 Christmas Tea a special gift to anyone lucky enough to attend.

JHNowlin

Hostess Committee: Deane Sprague (Chairman), Jean Faircloth, Lavene Guthrie, Jane Bromfield, Carolene Perry, Karen Glendennig, Ashley Guthrie, Ann Phillips, Joanne Beckman, Mary Ellen Mazo and Anne Hayes Pearce



District III Meetings & Events

- TFGC presents: 2026 Day of Gardening “Foodscaping”

Saturday, February 21, 2026

9:30 am - 2:00 pm

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

822 Belvoir Avenue Chattanooga, TN 37412

- District III Spring Membership Meeting

Location & Date TBA

- Garden Club of Signal Mountain Flower Show

“Best in Show: Fabulous Flowers and Faithful Furry Friends”

Chairman: Anne Hayes Pearce

Friday, June 5, 2026

Viewing Times TBA

Signal Mountain Presbyterian Church

612 James Blvd. Signal Mountain, TN 37377

- District III Presidents’ Meeting

Location & Date TBA



TFGC District IV



District IV Officers

Director:

Janet Brown

drjanw@comcast.net

Vice-Director:

Gina Clark

gclarkx4@gmail.com

Recording Secretary:

LaQuita Misner

lqmisner@aol.com

Corresponding Secretary:

Gina Barnett

ggbarnett@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer:

Sandy Barnes

barnessandy834@gmail.com

Asst. Treasurer:

Grace Clark

graceaclark24@gmail.com

District IV Garden Clubs

- Arissa Garden Club
- Chapman Highway Garden Club
- Crestwood Hills Ladybugs
- Dixie Highway Garden Club
- Eastside Garden Club
- Flower Lovers Garden Club
- Garden Guild Garden Club
- Harrogate Garden Club
- Kanunsita Garden Club
- Knox County Council of Garden Clubs
- Lakemoor Hills Garden Club
- Lenoir City Garden Club
- Mountain Laurel Garden Club
- Norwood Garden Club
- Noweta Garden Club
- Sevierville Garden Club
- Sun-up Garden Club
- Shady Oaks Garden Club
- Tuckaleechee Garden Club
- Town & Country Garden Club
- West Hills Garden Club
- Valley Beautiful Garden Club

Message from the District IV Director

Dr. Janet Brown



TFGC District IV Director's Winter Message

Winter- when our gardens lie fallow and plants rest and await spring to burst forth in bloom and plenty. I hope that you all had a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. This is a time, after the Holidays, when we get a chance to replenish our minds and bodies and also get ready for more activity in the spring. Seed catalogues have been arriving and plots are being planned, both personal and as club projects. Remember the January 1st deadline for award applications. Almost every club has completed some project that is award worthy, so get those applications in!!

Another important date is January 20th which is when the Club President's reports are due to District Directors. I look forward to reading about all the achievements of each club this year.

Also, start asking your club members to get their dues in as soon as possible. TFGC dues are payable April 1st and delinquent after June 1st. According to TFGC procedures, if a club is delinquent in paying dues, they are not eligible for awards. You do not want to miss that opportunity. Forms can be found on the TFGC website: www.tngardenclubs.org

I will soon be asking every club in our District as well as all the TFGC Districts to participate in the planning and execution of the TFGC Convention in 2027. It is an honor to have the convention in District IV, so we want this convention to be a memorable one.

As always, If you need anything, do not hesitate to contact me.

Janet Brown
TFGC District IV Director

Janet Brown

District IV

Chapman Highway Garden Club

The Chapman Highway Garden Club had a wonderful program by Elle Colquitt on Garden Photography! It was packed full of great information, then we had our Annual Christmas Potluck Feast. We had such a wonderful time!



District IV

Dixie Highway Garden Club



Dixie Highway Garden Club met at Stanley's Greenhouse in Knoxville.

Front Row—left to right: LaQuita Misner, Donna Brown & Club President Judy James
Back Row—Left to Right: Linda Ford, Ann Fritts, Victoria Deckard, Jennifer Williams,
Frances Powell, Virginia Price, Myra Leichtweis, Lisa Braunreuther, Glenda Mabry,
Linda Pickle, Amy Hinton & Kathy Lassater.



Abby Stanley Jerrolds
provided a wealth of
knowledge at the meeting.



District IV

Harrogate Garden Club

Harrogate Garden Club's Fall Display at the Independent Grocers Alliance parking lot in Harrogate was a triumph! Lots of planning, hard work and dedication have brought you this display to enjoy 24/7. Thank you to all those who assisted in putting this fall creation together for all to enjoy!



District IV

Lakemoor Hills Garden Club

Each year, the Lakemoor Hills Garden Club gathers for a lively Fall Fellowship Social. It is a special evening where members bring a guest to share in the fun and fellowship (and hopefully inspire a few new recruits to join our blooming community!)

This year's gathering took place in Tanya and Buz Copeland's enchanting sunken garden, a stunning setting on their working farm. Guests mingled among the flowers and gardens while being greeted by some very special residents—Annabelle, Fergus, and Dolly, the Copeland's charming Scottish Highland cows.



View of the house built in 1941.

It has been lovingly preserved by the Copelands with many original features still in use.



Dolly



Fergus



Annabelle



Tanya Copeland cuts the dessert cake.



Tanya Copeland & Kathy Proctor enjoy a discussion about the many unusual birdhouses.

District IV

Lakemoor Hills Garden Club



Lakemoor Hills members spent the morning making mailbox toppers and swags with materials from their gardens. These are sold to neighbors for funds to beautify Lakemoor Hills.

Left to Right: Randy Kerns, Kathy Proctor, Fran Thomforde, Linda Haynes, Cindy McLaughlin, Gina Bond & Tanya Copeland.



District IV

Mountain Laurel Garden Club

At the September meeting, Mountain Laurel Garden Club celebrated their 50th Anniversary since the club was founded in 1975 by Mrs. Hal Robinson and Mrs. Garney Scott. The club is blessed to have original members Nancy Robinson and Mable Keller Brown still active in the club. Members enjoyed anniversary cake and ice cream and presented Mable Keller Brown, Joyce Stafford, Sandy Vandenberg, Angie Caldwell and Marilyn Johnson with crowns for being in the club 20 years or more.



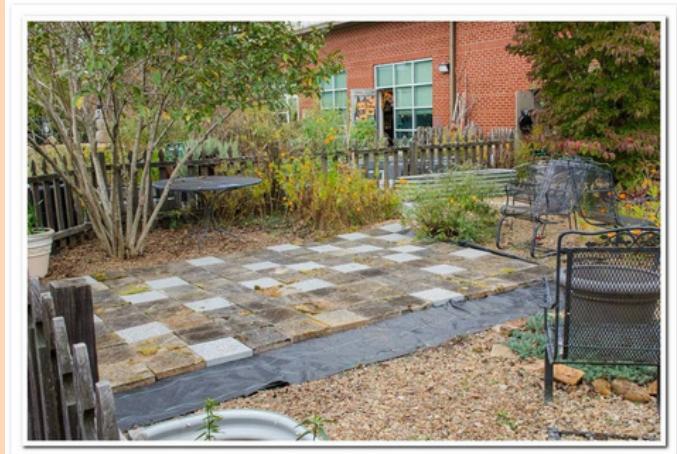
Joyce Stafford, Sandy Vandenberg, Mable Keller Brown,
Angie Caldwell & Marilyn Johnson

District IV

Mountain Laurel Garden Club



Members Lisa Phipps, Valerie Hendrix, Angie Caldwell, Bobbie Flower, Kim Pilas, Carol Morton, and Sandy Vandenberg worked with Fairview students to make pinecone bird feeders at the annual Fairview School Fall Festival.

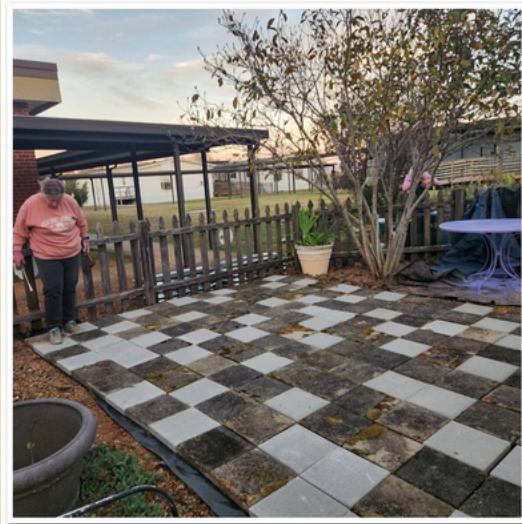


With winter approaching members continued working in the pond area at Fairview Elementary School to build a larger patio to accommodate two table-and-chair sets. Signs were purchased for the garden to remind students to leave leaves and stay pesticide-free to protect pollinator insects.



District IV

Mountain Laurel Garden Club



Valerie Hendrix, Kim Pilas, and Carol Morton are making good use of the tools Ames granted the club.



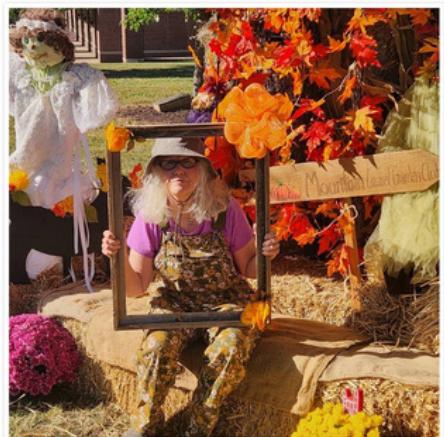
The annual Halloween fundraiser auction was held at the home of Sandy Vandenberg. Witches, bats, spiders, rats and members in costume made for a fun evening

Carol Morton, Kim Pilas, Sandy Vandenberg, Angie Caldwell, and Valerie Hendrix showed members the check received from the Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs Endowment Trust Fund Grant for the second year.

District IV

Mountain Laurel Garden Club

Mountain Laurel members again created Fall displays on Maryville College's campus, continuing our 15+ year tradition.



District IV

Mountain Laurel Garden Club



Mountain Laurel Garden Club held their Christmas Party at the lovely home of Shannon Stafford. Sage Mend and Joyce Stafford served as hostesses. After a wonderful potluck meal, Shannon's husband, Chris led us in a dirty Santa gift exchange. For our Christmas giving this year, members gave donations to Tremont for providing environmental education and fostering a love for the outdoors. Donations were also given to Meals on Wheels and Empty Pantry Fund. Mountain Laurel wished all our fellow gardeners a Merry Christmas and a Wonderful 2026 !

Submitted by Sandy Vandenberg

District IV

Sevierville Garden Club

Club Events - Oct crafting, Wears valley Fall Fest



Decorating pumpkins was fun!
The wind on Sunday was not!



Brookdale Garden

District IV

Shady Oaks Garden Club

Shady Oaks Flower Show a Great Success!

Shady Oaks Garden Club of Johnson City hosted an NGC Standard Flower Show Sept. 25-26 to rave reviews. The show was entitled "Autumn: Transformation of Light and Color" and it really lived up to that title. There were four divisions, 13 sections, 49 classes, 177 entries, and 3 educational exhibits. The show was adjudicated by 9 judges. We had nearly 100% participation by club members who worked hard for months to pull off this event. The show took place in Fischman Art Gallery and the surrounding botanical and landscape artworks complimented the show.

Division I: Horticulture



Division II: Design

Petite Cascade



Petite Creative Line



Petite Framed Spatial



District IV

Shady Oaks Garden Club

Still Life "Back to School"



Illuminary: "Friday Night Lights"



Duo Design (Side 1) "Trick..."



Duo Design (Side 2) "...or Treat"



District IV

Shady Oaks Garden Club

Division IV: Botanical Arts

Creative Hanging Design—Wreath



Collage "Fall Fusion"



Topiary



Co-Chairs of the flower show Jan Taylor and Barb Sims did an amazing job bringing the show from an idea to a reality. We can't thank them enough for their leadership and hard work.

Fischman Gallery owner and SOGC club member Nancy Fischman



Submitted by Janet D. Brown

District IV Meetings & Upcoming Events

- District IV Executive Board Meeting

Friday, February 27, 2026—10:00 am

Fox Den Country Club

12284 North Fox Den Drive Knoxville

- District IV Spring Membership Meeting

Friday, March 27, 2026—9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Fox Den Country Club

12284 North Fox Den Drive Knoxville

- District IV Presidents & Treasurers Meeting

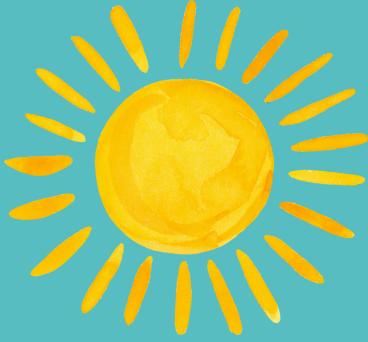
Friday, May 8, 2026—10:00 am

Ivan Racheff House & Gardens

1943 Tennessee Avenue Knoxville



Youth



Gardening

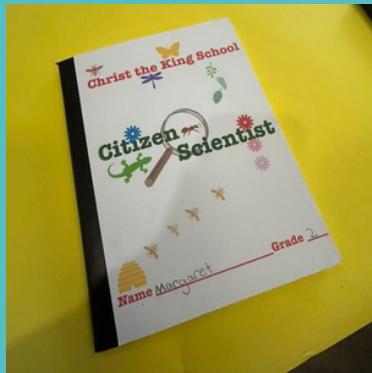


Evening Belle Garden Club

District II



The Club provides 2nd Graders at Christ The King Elementary School in Nashville with instruction on creating bird feeders and recognizing birds native to Tennessee through the Citizen Scientist Program.





Excerpts from Evening Belle Garden Club Facebook page.
Youth photos releases on file.

Chapman Highway Garden Club

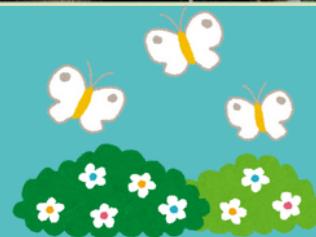
District IV

Youth Gardeners

by Dianne Forry



The children in the Boys & Girls Club at South Knoxville Elementary School have “Garden Club” as an alternative activity again this school year. At present there are 13 children participating once a week for an hour. During this season, the group is still harvesting summer vegetables and herbs and also planting cool season vegetables. We begin each session with a game about an aspect of gardening, then proceed to workstations where we amend soil, weed, plant, and water. Each gardener gets to take home produce and flowers if they want. The favorite activity seems to be watering, so building on that, we have begun a watering schedule for new plantings on dry days. We are anticipating a great year with this enthusiastic group of young gardeners!



Submitted by Dianne Forry for the District IV August Newsletter & used by permission from Suzan Bowman. Dianne Forry & Carol Linger—Youth Gardening Coordinators

Does your garden club involve Youth in programs & projects?

Share your Youth Gardening Project
in the Volunteer Gardener!

Email details & photos to:
annabanana7@comcast.net



Unless there are signed release forms from parents,
the youths' faces will be obscured in the photos.

Special Feature

Jeri Melton: National Garden Club Five Star Status



At the recent TFGC Board of Directors meeting, President Lelia Johnson recognized TFGC member Jeri Melton, who is the first Tennessean to have achieved the NGC 5 Star Status while being a resident of TN! I started in August 2011 with Landscape Design School put on by Cae Daly and Sandi Eichenberger in Knoxville, TN. My friend and inspiration is Cae, who is one of the original 5 Star members in the nation, and believed to be the only one alive. Since that beginning, I have passed 32 tests, attended extra symposiums, and traveled to 10 states.

In traveling the many states I have made some lifelong friendships!

I have learned about alligators, dirt, plants, hurricanes, weather, floor designs and so many other things that space will not permit me to tell you about. There are two other 5 Star members in TN. Virginia Pennington is active and Cae Daly is emeritus, but both started their quest in other states and completed it in TN.

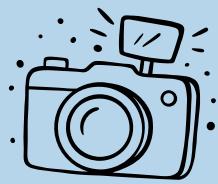
Five Star is the highest award in the NGC program. Attaining this status requires completing Flower Show School, Garden Study School, Environmental School, and Landscaping Design School. Upon completion, you then go through all 4 schools again 4 more times, achieving a status of "master" in each school. I am now certified to judge Landscapes, Flower Shows, make recommendations for public and private gardens and give advice on Environmental Issues.

I encourage everyone to join me in this wonderful wild and fun ride. When Lila Mullins asked me to join the Iris City Garden Club many years ago, I could not have foreseen how immersed I would become in gardening and learning. I could not have done this without my wonderful friends in Garden Club and my husband Bob. We gave up time together so I could travel.

He is looking over the precipice of Heaven.

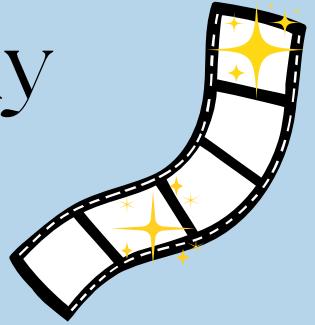
Jeri Melton

109



Featured Photography

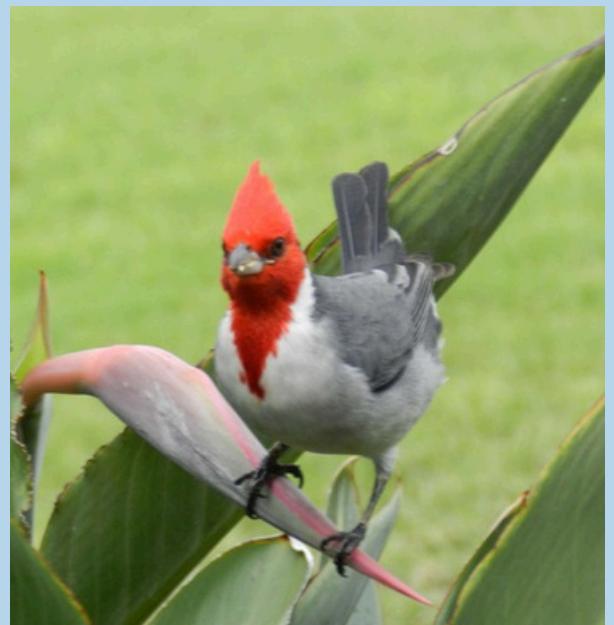
Julia Wilson



Optimistic Gardeners Club
District II



Elk at Rocky Mountain National Park



Cardinal on Bird of Paradise Plant
in Maui, Hawaii



Cactus at Phoenix Botanical Garden



Covered Bridge in Indiana

Featured Photography

Julia Wilson



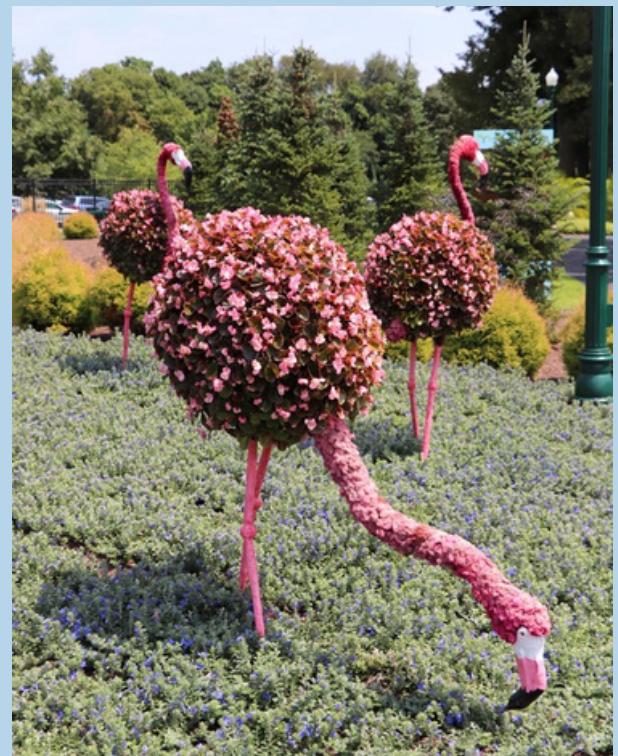
Waterfall at Top of the Rocks in The Ozarks



Chicago Flower Show



Dog Topiaries at Disney World



Flamingo Topiaries at Columbus, Ohio Botanical Garden



Member Spotlight

District I:

Barbara Gassaway: “An Uplifting Spirit”
Shelby East Garden Club

District II:

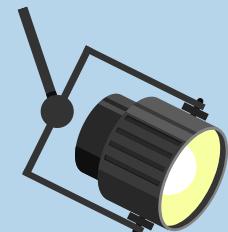
Lola Eslick: “Enduring Leader”
Franklin County Garden Club

District III:

Evelyn Davis: “Professional Volunteer”
Garden Club of Signal Mountain

District IV:

LaQuita Misner: “How Does She Do it All?”
Dixie Highway Garden Club



“An Uplifting Spirit”

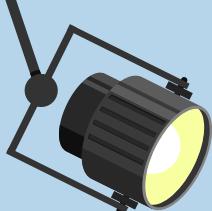
Barbara Gassaway Shelby East Garden Club District I

It is both an honor and a joy to write this letter highlighting Barbara Gassaway in the District I Member Spotlight. I remain continually inspired by the remarkable accomplishments and generous spirit of this truly humble lady.

Barbara’s quiet humility is, in fact, one of her most striking qualities. I only learned of many of her talents by chance, as she never seeks recognition for herself. Her thoughtful leadership shines through most visibly in the way she organizes our annual flower shows. Under her direction, the Morton Museum is transformed into a welcoming and enchanting space where guests are naturally drawn to linger among the beautiful arrangements, experiencing not just flowers, but a story told through color, texture, and design.

Her creativity does not stop there. Barbara paints delicate watercolor scenes—often flowers, sometimes children joyfully nestled within them—and transforms these works of art into note cards. In an act that perfectly reflects her character, she sells these cards and donates every bit of the proceeds back to our garden club, ensuring her art directly enriches the community she loves.

Barbara’s skills also extend to design and communication. She creates and prints our flyers, ensuring every club event is not only well-publicized but presented with warmth and elegance. In many ways, she is our club’s cheerleader: her energy, optimism, and enthusiasm are contagious, inspiring us all to give our best.



Barbara Gassaway Shelby East Garden Club

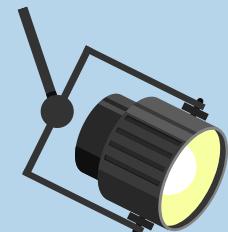


Beyond her contributions to the garden club, Barbara is an award-winning competitor in the Senior Olympics, where she has earned multiple blue ribbons. This speaks to her dedication, discipline, and zest for life. One of my fondest memories of her, however, comes from outside competitions and clubs. When my husband and I once visited her church, we looked up to the balcony and found Barbara quietly and faithfully running the computer system for the minister. That moment beautifully captures who she is: always giving, often behind the scenes, making everything work smoothly for others.

Every organization dreams of having a member like Barbara. She brings creativity, generosity, and an uplifting spirit wherever she goes. We are beyond blessed to count her as part of our garden club family, and I know she would be a treasure to any group fortunate enough to work alongside her.

Sincerely,
Kim Moro
Historian, Shelby East Garden Club





“Enduring Leader”

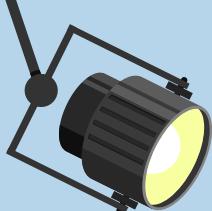
Lola Eslick

Franklin County Garden Club District II

Lola Eslick has been a member of the Franklin County Garden Club since 2012. She was recently recognized by the “Marquis Who’s Who in America” to represent entrepreneurs, leaders and business owners in the state of Tennessee. While serving three terms as president of her garden club, Lola led the Franklin County Garden Club in multiple service projects in the Winchester, Tennessee area. The club’s accomplishments and contributions to the community are phenomenal. These include maintaining a “Seed Library”, sponsorship of many Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl Poster Contest winners in Franklin County elementary schools, winning a grant to maintain an elementary school Youth Gardening Program, and inspiring future gardeners with a Library Reading Program. Dedication of a Gold Star Families Memorial Marker in 2024 was a special event for the club and community. These are just a few of the club’s many projects that have flourished under Lola’s leadership. She has also served in many TFGC offices in years past, including corresponding secretary and TFGC Grants Chairman, and is currently Grants Chairman for District II. Lola remains humble, while keeping her passion for gardening and community service as her focus. We thank Lola Eslick for her service, dedication and commitment to her club and community.



Pam Dowd, Lola Eslick & Bobbie Wolcott



“Professional Volunteer”

Evelyn Davis
Garden Club of Signal Mountain
District III

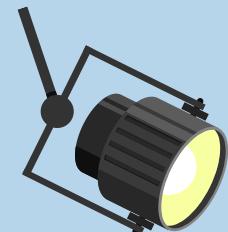


Evelyn has been a tireless worker for the Garden Club of Signal Mountain, including serving as president and just about everything else. She has held many offices and chairmanships in District III and statewide. A wiz at technical “stuff”, she has saved many a meeting and program when gremlins attacked the microphones. And she is still at it! She’s an unsung hero.

When asked about “hobbies”, Evelyn says that she gave up hobbies when she downsized from a large house on the brow of Signal Mountain and shed the paraphernalia one collects through the years. She has instead become a professional volunteer! Untethered and with a new lease on life after back surgery two years ago, she is compelled to spend her time and skills in compassionate support. Thus, Evelyn is currently devoted to her family, TFGC, the Chattanooga Area Food Bank, and The Society of St. Vincent de Paul.



Nominated by Anne Leonard



“How Does She Do it All?”

LaQuita Misner Dixie Highway Garden Club District IV

Those who know LaQuita Misner universally say “I do not know how she does it all”! The travels & energy of LaQuita are legendary—she is an active member & officer of the Dixie Highway Garden Club, TFGC president-elect, recording secretary for District IV, Interim Vice Chair for Ivan Racheff House & Gardens Committee and President of the Knox County Council of Garden Clubs. She loves everything about Garden Club! It is the source of many of her closest friendships, and allows her to be engaged in protecting the planet. It reminds her that life and where God puts us is no accident. Thank you so much for all you contribute to TFGC! You are phenomenal!



Submitted by Dr. Jan Brown



Member Spotlight

Is there a garden club member in your District who has special interests, inspires others, or has contributed greatly to your club, District, TFGC &/or community?

**Nominate that person for the
“Member Spotlight”!**

**Each Volunteer Gardener edition will feature
one garden club member per District.**

**Email photos & a brief article about your nominee to:
annabanana7@comcast.net**

9 Native Shrubs That Feed Birds All Winter

★ THESE NATIVE SHRUBS PROVIDE BERRIES + SHELTER WHEN FOOD IS SCARCE.



1. WINTERBERRY



2. SERVICEBERRY



3. VIBURNUM



4. ELDERBERRY



5. DOGWOOD



6. BAYBERRY



7. CHOKEBERRY



8. SUMAC



9. JUNIPER