

The Volunteer Gardener

Spring 2026



tngardenclubs.org

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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



Greetings to you, TFGC,

Spring is here! Blackberry, Dogwood, or even Linsey-Woolsey Britches Winters cannot stop it.

Neither can they stop our members from being energized by this magnificent change of seasons. Whether it triggers memories of days with our hands in the soil or the pleasure of doing it again....we are TFGC gardeners. The sights, sounds, and feel of Spring also remind me of our responsibilities. Our Bylaws use every word possible to say this earth is entrusted to us. We are charged to learn, to educate and to protect. This specifically applies to us as TFGC members and moreover as citizens of the world. It is our purpose; it is our heritage. In the process I hope you are enjoying the support and friendship of each other. I do.

Glancing back at my first year as President, I see how you are broadly fulfilling our commission.

The Mustard Seed Camp, 3 Plant America Awards, a Zoomed Garden Study Course, and first steps to improve the safety and profitability of Racheff are highlights among many. These are only mentioned to express a range. Risking omission, I will not enumerate further. My point is to applaud the scope and initiative of our members to fulfill our mission.

This letter is brief; my garden is calling among many other projects. I do have one charge: As we move through this coming year, please foster new memberships. Look for someone you can personally nurture to become a TFGC garden club member. Be persistent. Remember that someone did it for each of us. Now it is our turn.

Sincerely,

Lelia Haley Johnson

2025-2027 President

Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.



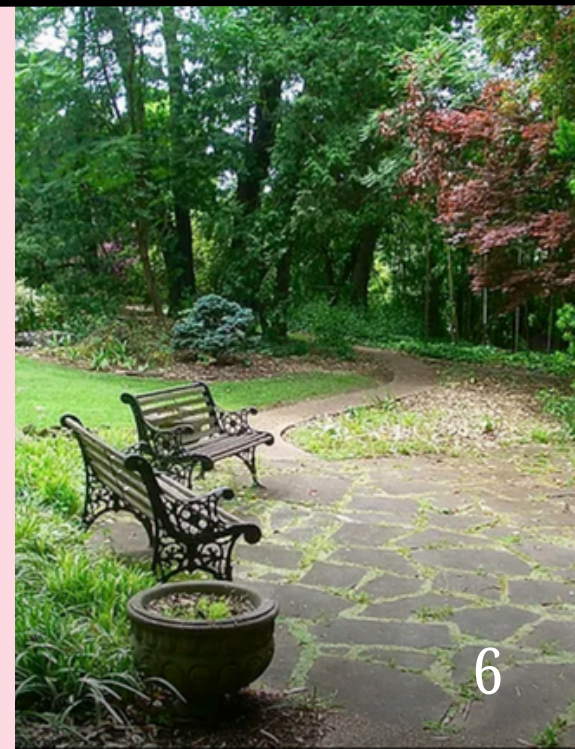


Ivan Racheff House & Gardens & Arboretum

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**





Knox County Council of Garden Clubs

KCCGC Presents

A Tea Party Honoring

AMERICA



Celebrating 250 Years of Beautification

Date: Friday, May 1, 2026

Time: 11:00 A.M. ~ 2:00 P.M.

**Place: Racheff House & Gardens at
1943 Tennessee Avenue, Knoxville, TN 37921**

Refreshments will be served. Activities to include a talk by Mary Ruden, planting large pots with red, white, and blue flowers for our partner organizations, and a patriotic scavenger hunt.

The cost will be \$15 per person.

Please make checks payable to KCCGC and send your payment by April 24th to Linda Wimbrow at 12509 Oakborough Lane, Knoxville, TN 37922

Gracious Days & Garden Clubs



By Starr Alexander

I have always been fascinated by flower gardens and “Garden Clubs”. Having grown up in the South, they evoked images of gracious ladies in flowing dresses; serving tea on heirloom china and silver while surrounded by the lovely flowering blooms of the season.

I imagined the fragrance of gardenia and roses wafting gently on a light summer breeze; the tinkle of glasses, and soft voices in the background commenting on why this flower or that bush grew better from the spring rains, or the lack of them, and other related topics. As a little girl, I yearned to be a part of that magical vision.

Many years later, I was to discover that my little girl dreams were not too far off from reality. Recently, a friend invited me to attend a meeting of our neighborhood Garden Club as her guest.

Ironically, it was the first day of summer and as we walked down the road toward our neighbor’s house, there was indeed, a light summer breeze to complement the beautiful blue sky. The dappled sunlight made its way through the grand old trees surrounding the home, completing the picture.

To my delight, everything was as I had imagined it. Our gracious hostess welcomed us and introduced me to several of the ladies already present. The meeting was being held outdoors on the patio, and the tables were set with lovely old china and silver. The delicate fragrance of gardenia greeted me from the small bloom floating in a bowl on our table.

We dined on “Violet’s Chicken Casserole”*, marinated salad, and “Betty’s Homemade Yeast Rolls”, followed by a refreshing strawberry tart for dessert.

After my images of childhood had been completely sated and the business portion of the meeting began, I realized that these ladies, although totally in keeping with all the graciousness of the South, do much more than serve tea and compare rose fertilizers...these are some very busy bees! (No pun intended).

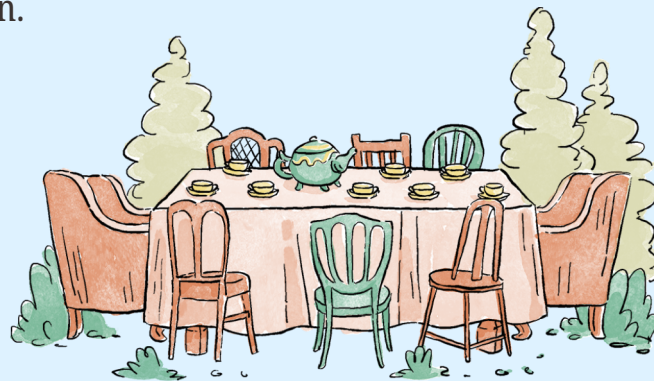


I learned a tremendous amount in the short time I was there, including the fact that these organizations are in the forefront of conservational efforts in our own Tennessee Valley area. As supporters of the Tennessee Valley River Gorge Trust, they are working to preserve the “Grand Canyon Of Tennessee”, along with numerous other projects aimed at maintaining the natural beauty of our community.

Granted, they do have annual flower shows, but even these are much more than determining who can grow the biggest and best of show. There’s a lot of creativity involved in the flower arrangements themselves as evidenced from the pictures that were shown at the meeting, and several of the members proudly showed off ribbons won for their efforts.

I also discovered that this particular club is involved in establishing and maintaining a Butterfly Garden locally as well as organizing a Junior Garden Club at one of the middle schools in our city. Many of the Junior members had also won ribbons at the recent show, including one young man who won for his entry of ornamental grasses arranged in a sneaker! It’s gratifying to realize that this type of involvement with our youth will continue interest in conserving our environment for future generations to come.

I left the meeting with a new respect for these organizations. Although I was glad to see my images of childhood transformed to reality; now when I see a small sign surrounded by flowers stating “erected by such and such Garden Club”, I’ll know it means much more, and that their efforts to beautify and conserve areas within their own community are a very special and generous way of showing their civic pride, as well as providing our towns and cities with beauty, season after season.



*Note: This article is dedicated to the memory of Violet Steffner, a most gracious lady and a member of the Hickory Valley Garden Club, who will be greatly missed.

Reprinted with permission from the Summer 1996 Volunteer Gardener Magazine.
Starr Alexander is a member of the Hickory Valley Garden Club in District III.

TFGC, Deep South & NGC News, Reports & Opportunities



TFGC

Spring 2026 Endowment Trust Fund Report

I have some good news to share. A new Endowment Trust Fund grant season is beginning with a deadline of September 1, 2026. The ETF committee has worked diligently to fine tune the grant application form and information/guideline sheet providing clarity and simplicity in navigating the grant application process. The most current ETF forms are on the TFGC website at tngardenclubs.org. Go to Resources then Forms and Publications and scroll down to Endowment Trust Fund for the Grant Application, Information/Guidelines and Rules sheet and Contribution form.

Some important things to remember are do your planning and creating a detailed budget before applying for an ETF grant. The labor of members can be figured into the budget at \$10.00 per hour. The grant is a matching grant up to \$1,000.00. If your project is \$2000.00 or more you can request the full \$1,000.00 in matching funds. If your project is less, you will ask for one half of your budget. A \$1,000.00 budget would allow you to request \$500.00 in matching funds. Grant applications will now be sent direct to the ETF Chairman instead of the District Trustee of the applicant. The Chairman will send out via email all the applications to all trustees for review. Remember to take before photos for the application and after photos for the final report when the project has been completed.

Individuals, clubs and districts are encouraged to make contributions to the Endowment Trust Fund which can be made “in honor of” or ” in memory of” someone or to give for the sake of giving to this worthy cause with all donations helping the funds to continue growing.

The ETF committee looks forward to an active grant season for 2026.

The ETF balance as of March 20, 2026 was \$200,699.85.

Respectfully Submitted,
Chris Kelyman
ETF District I Trustee & ETF Chairman

Questions?

Questions and a request for help should be directed by a club member to the trustee in their district identified with an *.

Endowment Trust Fund Trustees:

Lelia Johnson – TFGC President

LaQuita Misner – TFGC President – Elect

Marilyn Smith – TFGC Treasurer

* Evelyn Davis – TFGC Assistant Treasurer and District III Trustee

evelyndavis112@msn.com, (c) 423-364-7754

* Chris Kelyman – TFGC Trust Fund Chairman and District I Trustee cabkelyman@aol.com, (c) 901.619.4708

* Becky Fox Matthews – TFGC District II Trustee

becky@lostfrogs.com, (c) 615-838-1359

* Janet Brown – TFGC District IV Trustee

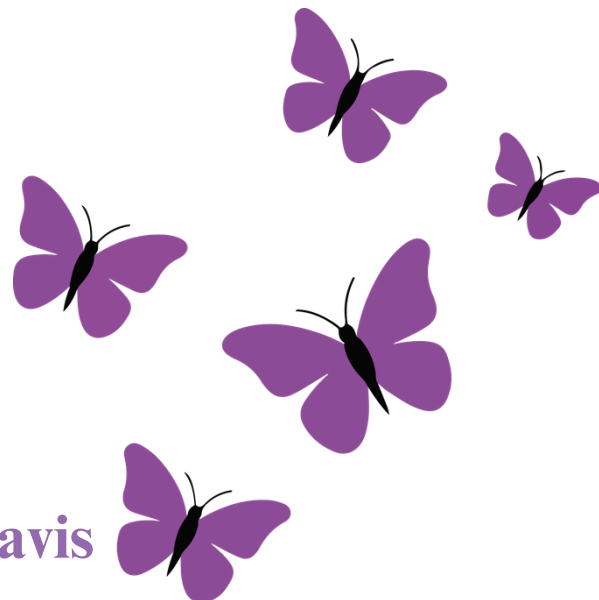
drjanw@comcast.net (c) 865-441-4477



TFGC

Endowment Trust Fund Contributions December 23, 2025 — March 18, 2026

	Donor Name	District	Garden Club	Honoring	Remembering
1	Shady Oaks Garden Club	IV	Shady Oaks Garden Club		
2	Harpeth Bend Garden Club	II	Harpeth Bend Garden Club	Lelia H. Johnson	
3	Volunteer Garden Club	II	Volunteer Garden Club		Margaret Hicks
5	Tuckaleechee Garden Club	IV	Tuckaleechee Garden Club	Our 2025-2026 Club Members	
6	Evelyn Davis	III	Garden Club of Signal Mountain		Evangelist James Haley Johnson
7.	June and Jim Gilmore	II	Volunteer Garden Club		Judy Pierce
8	Volunteer Garden Club	II	Volunteer Garden Club		Judy Pierce





TFGC



ANNOUNCING THE 2026 WINNERS

Tennessee Portion of the Smokey Bear Woodsy Owl
National Poster Contest, Chair: Phyllis Allen

Fifth Grade

1st : Lucy Mizener, McFadden School of Excellence, Murfreesboro, TN, The Optimistic Gardener's Club

2nd: Muhammad Jamal, Southwind Elementary, Memphis, TN, Southwind Garden Club

3rd: Isabella McGregory, Cordova Elementary, Memphis, TN, Cordova Garden Club

Fourth Grade

1st: Ruth Zhang, Farmington Elementary, Germantown, TN, Suburban Garden Club

2nd: Aliyah Christopher, Southwind Elementary, Memphis, TN, Southwind Garden Club

3rd: Hailey Stukenborg, Holy Family Academy, Cordova, TN, Poplar Estates Garden Club

Third Grade

1st: Sara Nguyen, Southwind Elementary, Memphis, TN, Southwind Garden Club

2nd: Jada Watson, Dogwood Elementary, Germantown, TN, Germantown Garden Club

3rd: Bransyn Limbaugh, Huntland Schools, Huntland, TN, Franklin County Garden Club

Second Grade

1st: Ava Whitsett, Farmington Elementary, Germantown, TN, Suburban Garden Club

2nd: Luna Gonzales, Southwind Elementary, Memphis, TN, Southwind Garden Club

3rd: Annalise Chu, Dogwood Elementary, Germantown, TN, Germantown Garden Club

First Grade

1st: Amelia Fernandez, Dogwood Elementary, Germantown, TN, Germantown Garden Club

2nd: Logan Davis, Southwind Elementary, Memphis, TN, Southwind Garden Club

3rd: Thomas Morrison, Holy Family Academy, Cordova, TN, Poplar Estates Garden Club

Thank you to the 9 TFGC participating garden clubs across the state of Tennessee for working with elementary students in your neighborhood schools to produce posters for this national poster contest. Please print out the participation certificate online at www.gardenclub.org: Smokey Bear contest to fill out and give to all students who submitted posters. I have the official winning TFGC award certificates and will get them to you before the end of the school year. The posters of the 1st place winners listed above were sent to the Deep South poster contest chair., Mary Ogden. Mary has not released the Deep South winners as of this date. There were 981 students contacted in 13 public schools and 1 youth organization in Tennessee with 68 posters produced for judging ,yielding 15 winners in 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in Grades 1-5.

Congratulations to the winning students, schools and garden clubs! Thank you to Chapman Highway and Paris Garden Clubs for also participating and sending posters.

**Tennessee 1st Place
Winning Posters:
Winner's Name, Grade,
School, City & Sponsoring
Garden Club**



Amelia Fernandez—1st Grade
Dogwood Elementary, Germantown, TN
Germantown Garden Club



Ruth Zhang—4th Grade
Farmington Elementary, Germantown, TN
Suburban Garden Club



Ava Whitsett—2nd Grade
Farmington Elementary, Germantown, TN
Suburban Garden Club

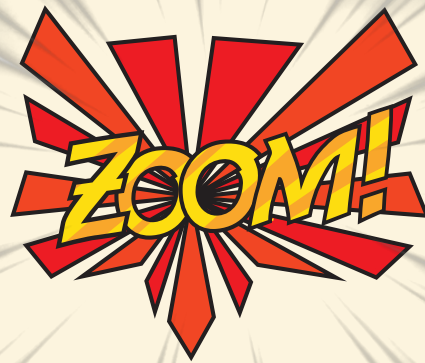


Lucy Mizener—5th Grade
McFadden School of Excellence
Murfreesboro, TN
Optimistic Gardeners Club



Sara Nguyen—3rd Grade
Southwind Elementary, Memphis, TN
Southwind Garden Club

TFGC Welcomes You on



by TFGC Zoom Chairman Diane Ryder

TFGC now has its own ZOOM account that is available for TFGC meetings. Zoom has given the members of TFGC a wonderful way to stay in touch without having to travel all over the State.

A meeting can be set up for you, and then an invitation is sent to the person (host) for that meeting. The host then sends the invitation to the invitees. On the day of the meeting the TFGC host then transfers the Zoom meeting to the meeting host.

How easy is that!!

Marilyn McDonnell has held the complete Garden Study School on Zoom in January and February, 2026.

For more information contact:

Diane Ryder – TFGC Second VP
423/505-5604
dianeryder@epbfi.com



Call to order: Lelia Haley Johnson

Invocation: Will be given by our Chaplain Charlotte Scott

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag: Led by our Parliamentarian Debbie Shaver

Welcome and Introduction of Officers

District Director Former TFGC presidents, DSGC, and our garden club presidents and members

Madam Parliamentarian do we have a Quorum?

Protocol Notes: When making a statement, motion, or question, please wait to be recognized by the chair, state your name, your district and your garden club loud enough for our Recording Secretary to hear. Members may speak twice in a debate on the same informative/or question. Time will be 2 minutes per subject.

Please review the protocol for a zoom meeting.

Appointment of readers to approve the minutes: Gloria Harris and Diane Ryder

Appointment of timekeeper: Janet Brown and Lori Emory

Adoptment of Agenda

Reports of Executive Committee and Appointed Officers: You have 2 minutes each:

I will start with the president: The past 6 months was designated to Racheff House and Gardens.

Thanks to many wonderful angels of TFGC we were able to complete several small projects and host the annual Green Tea n December 13, 2025. We added 1 member to the Racheff Committee, yet there is still room for many more.

Meetings attended were: NGC Fall Board Meeting via Zoom September 17, 2025. District III Fall meeting at the Hampton Inn Cleveland on October 27, and the same day attended a 2:00pm DSGC Board meeting Via Zoom. October 19 attend a program at Cleveland Public Library on Ladybugs. On December 10, 2025, I attended Ocoee Garden Club's monthly meeting followed by a very informative luncheon. Aldersgate Garden Club monthly meeting along with a Veterans Day celebration on November 11th, and Christmas Celebration December 5th. Participated in Wal-Mart Salvation Army ceremony where I was allowed to ring the bell.

Participate every 2nd Monday at Racheff monthly meeting and projects, our Racheff reporter will give more details.

First Vice President: Gloria Harris
Second Vice-President Diane Ryder
President-elect: LaQuita Misner
Recording Secretary: Faith Young
Corresponding Secretary: Vicki Richardson
Treasurer: Marilyn Smith

Asst-Treasurer Evelyn Davis
District I Jackie Walker
District II Becky Fox Matthew
District III Jacqueline Westfield
District IV Janet Brown
DSGC & NGC Denise Thorne

Committee Members Reports you have 2-minutes

Awards, Cumberland Trail Debbie Shaver
Conservation Camp Ann Leonard
Life Membership Charlotte Scott
ETF Report Chris Kelman
Garden Study School Marilyn McDonnell

Membership Data Base Diane Mansfield
Racheff House & Garden LaQuita Misner
Scholarship Candace Webb
Stewardship in Blooms, Butterflies etc Ann Brown

Unfinished Business:
Racheff Ways & Means

TFGC need delegates to attend the DSGC Convention March 9, via Zoom 10:00am Central time and NGC convention May 4-6 in St. Louis. Please email me if you plan to attend ASAP. Thank you
New Business :

Announcements:
March 8-11, 2026 Flower Show School II
Just a reminder please read your By-laws, Standing Rules, Duties of officers and Treasurer, and Committee Chairman a very important part of TFGC day to day operation.

Any other announcements? Hearing none?
Benediction: Charlotte Scott
Adjournment: Is there any further business to come before this meeting? If there is no objection, the meeting is adjourned!!!!!!

Thank you for supporting TFGC:



TENNESSEE FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS, INC.

Zoom Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, January 26, 2026

The Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs meeting was called to order by President Lellia Johnson at 10:01. Gloria Harris, First Vice President led in a devotional. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Vicky Richards, TFGC Corresponding Secretary.

President Johnson welcomed all and introduced Anne Leonard and Maggi Burns, past state presidents. District Directors were acknowledged. A quorum was declared.

President Johnson discussed the rules of ZOOM, acknowledged chat participants and highlighted the voting icon.

Minutes readers appointed for this meeting were Gloria Harris and Diane Ryder. Jan Brown and Lori Emory were appointed time keepers.

The agenda was reviewed and as there were no objections it was set for today's meeting.

OFFICERS REPORTS:

*TFGC President Johnson reported that her past 6 months have been designated to Racheff House and Gardens which is her president's project. She spoke to all the members who have come together and worked with her to complete several small projects and host the annual Greens Tea in December of 2025. She feels they have made progress for about 40% of the goals. One new member has been added to the Racheff Committee yet there is still room for many more. Meetings she has attended include: NGC Fall board meeting via Zoom on 9-17-2025, District III Fall meeting at the Hampton Inn, in Cleveland on 10-27, and DSGC Board meeting via Zoom on 10-27. She attended a program at the Cleveland Public Library on Ladybugs on October 19th, an Ocoee Garden Club monthly meeting on 12-10, an Aldersgate meeting along with Veterans Day celebration on 11-25, and a Christmas dinner on 12-5. She was also able to participate in a Walmart Salvation Army Celebration and allowed to ring their bell.

She has participated every 2nd Monday of the month at Racheff meetings and attended Racheff projects. She plans to travel across the state for TFGC, has a family wedding coming up, and will be heading soon to Texas for a family funeral. Her upcoming schedule is busy!

*TFGC President Elect, LaQuita Misner, wanted to say a few words about how things are going. She said she now knows Lelia Johnson well, as she has gotten onboard Lelia's moving "train". Lelia has done all she can to to identify, learn all you can, set a goal, and accomplish it.

LaQuita said this her first time to be so involved up close in so much of the workings of TFGC. She said she has learned from Lelia and her energy to get things done in a fair and transparent manner. She said the state leaders are working for everyone to make TFGC fair, efficient and transparent. *Report on file.*

*Secretary-Faith Young reported the minutes from the October Fall TFGC Executive board meeting were approved by the readers and published in the Volunteer Gardener.

*Treasurer-Marilyn Smith reported a balance brought forward of \$27,546.09 with disbursements of \$2,650.08 and an ending balance as of 1-23-26 of \$29,975.44. Her report is being sent via email. *Report on file*

*Assistant Treasurer- Evelyn Davis reported that she sent the Van Guard restricted funds report by email. The leftover ETF surplus grant money from the 5% available to spend for grants was moved into the TFGC scholarship fund which now is funded for 2 years. Ongoing scholarship funding will need to be addressed as calendar sales are not sufficient. The General Investment Fund has money that does not get spent, such as the benevolent fund which has \$602.00. (This money is for cards and acknowledgements at the time of a board member's immediate family death.) The total balance of the Vanguard Restricted funds is \$160,175.78. *Report on file.*

DISTRICT DIRECTORS REPORTS:

District I Director-Jackie Walker sent a report that was read by President Johnson. On Wednesday, November 12, 2025, 4 District I garden club members traveled to Knoxville to work in the Racheff House gift shop. They worked diligently to purge and clean the gift shop for 2 days in preparation for the Racheff House Greens Tea. District I clubs were very supportive of the Tipton Garden Club Blue Star Memorial Service on Tuesday, November 11, 2025 where they dedicated a Blue Star Marker with 150 to 200 attendees. Following the service the club hosted a reception.

On January 6, 2026, two District I members attended the awards judging session in Murfreesboro.

Flower Show School II, sponsored by District I, is scheduled for March 8-10, 2026 at Memphis Botanical Garden Lynn Frank as the design instructor and Sue Kirtland the horticulture instructor.

The District I Spring Members meeting will be March 30, 2026 at the Memphis Horticulture Center.

District I has several flower shows scheduled for the upcoming months. *Report on file*

District II Director-Becky Fox Matthews will send a report after the internet is clear.

District III Director-Jacky Westfield said the holidays are behind us and she was able to attend 2 of her clubs holiday luncheons. She is now looking forward to Feb 21 for the Day of Gardening with Kelly Smith Trimble, author of Creative Vegetable Garden, as the main speaker. The Spring District meeting will be on March 31 at McCoy Farms on Signal Mountain, with information shared about the farm and a tour of the grounds. Each club is looking forward to a lot of spring activities.

District IV Director-Janet Brown said District IV has been very active this past year. They have 3 active youth clubs and one senior club. Their members have completed numerous projects and received five ETF grants. Additionally, seven clubs either hosted or participated in a flower show, the most recent being "Almost Christmas" by the Judges Council.

Unfortunately they have lost 2 clubs, EastSide Garden Club in Greenville (due to the floods last year) and 104-year old Flower Lovers club will be merging with Sun-up Garden Club. Their district is working to bolster remaining clubs, get new clubs and younger members.

District IV Director, Janet Brown, is also the ETF Trustee for that district and she reported a recent successful zoom meeting.

District IV has raised funds and ordered a Gold Star Marker to be placed at the Veterans Heritage Park in South Knoxville. Janie Bitner, past Director began this process and they plan to have the dedication ceremony in the spring or early summer of 2026.

TFGC will hold the 2027 convention in April of 2027 and Janet Brown has accepted the Chairmanship of this committee. Lori Virginia McKinney will be co-chairs and Suzan Bowman will be the Convention treasurer. *Report on file*

DSGC & NGC President Johnson read a report from DSGC Regional Director, Denise Thorne regarding the upcoming convention. The Deep South Garden Clubs convention is March 9-12 via ZOOM ending with a cruise that will have awards and banquets planned. The cruise is now closed for access and Lelia Johnson needs to know who is attending from TFGC. Jeri Melton is going, Bonnie Stockel and Marilyn McDonnell plan to attend the ZOOM Deep South Garden Clubs board meeting, and they are attending the National Garden Clubs as board members. Jan Brown plans to attend the March 9 meeting via ZOOM. LaQuita is also going to National Garden Clubs and Candace Wells plans to go to Deep South Garden Club and also to NGC May 4-6 in St Louis, Missouri. Registration for NGC is online.

Deep South Garden Clubs Director, Denise Thorne, sent her report via email so LaQuita Misner read it.

Denise Thorne reported that the NGC executive board of directors, on which Denise is an elected member, met last Tuesday, January 20, 2026. NGC President Donally reviewed her "Plant America" and she wants all Blue and Gold Markers to have plantings as the USA celebrates its 250 years. The NGC convention theme is "Meet Me in St. Louis where the River Bends and the Arch Meets the Sky". Denise encouraged TFGC to buy a program ad to show our state's support.

Denise said she will be busy in the coming months visiting all her states in the Deep South Garden Club and she recapped her activities and donations as the Ways and Means chairman for Racheff House. She tendered her resignation as chair of the Racheff Ways and Means Committee but offered her ongoing support. *Report on file.*

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

*Conservation Camp-Anne Leonard said the 2026 theme is "Mother Nature Needs You" at Beersheba Springs Assembly, an historic hotel in Beersheba Springs, Tn. The tentative dates are October 13-14 with a registration fee that is low. The event chairs, Anne Leonard and Debbie Shaver, along with event Registrar, Diane Ryder feel this is a great location, with good food, and great prices. (This was the space from 2010 and 2011 conservation camps.) Anne Made a motion that this be approved by the board, seconded by Candace Wells, and the motion passed.

*ETF-Chris Kelyman, chair reported that business for the Endowment Trust Fund continues as usual. Evelyn Davis, ETF Treasurer, continues receiving donations to the ETF Fund while Chris Kelyman, ETF Chairman, is receiving emailed copies of the contributions and checks from Evelyn and sending acknowledgements notes to those specified on the contribution form for gifts "In Memory of" and "In Honor of". This team effort is efficient and is functioning well. Evelyn and Chris continue submitting articles for the Volunteer Gardener with the most recent submission found in the Winter Edition on page 21 and 22. Chris reminded all about the beginning of a new round of grant applications with a deadline of September 1, 2026 and said that grant information and application forms can be accessed on the TFGC website (tngardenclubs.org). Evelyn's article listed contributions to the ETF October through December

2025 providing the name of each donor, their district and club affiliation and the purpose of the donation.

On Friday, January 23, 2026 all seven ETF trustees met via Zoom set up by Evelyn Davis to review the ETF Contribution Form, Matching Grant Application Form and Information/Rules Sheet. The session was about two hours with most of the time dedicated to revisions for the last two forms referenced in preparation for the new round of grant applications for 2026. The existing Rules and Information Sheet has been reorganized under specific headings while the application form has been revised to make it easier to know what should be in the project proposal. The trustees hope the revised forms will make navigating the grant application process simpler. All 3 revised ETF Forms will be on the TFGC website soon.

The ETF balance as of January 24, 2026 is \$209,444.67.

COMMENT by La Quite Misner, who said the standing rule regarding ETF needs some cleanup and she will look at that before the next committee meeting.

*NGC Gardening School, Marilyn McDonnell said this school, sponsored by TFGC, is underway. The courses are ongoing with course one completed last week and course 2 hopefully completed this week. The last 2 courses are scheduled in mid February with registration continuing. A total of 46 individuals have registered for one or more of the courses. Seventeen of those registered are from TN, 2 of the 17 are consultants refreshing their credits, the other 15 will be brand new gardening consultants as soon as they complete their courses. Ten other states are represented in the other students. Two of the students aren't members of federated garden clubs, so they are working with them and encouraging membership. The instructors have done a great job and all students have passed their tests.

*Dianna Mansfield reported on the membership date base on January 1, 2026 with 88 clubs, 2,022 current members, which include 4 inactive, 198 life members, 195 new members, and 40 associate and honorary members. She has been entering information since November (form C's didn't come in until October 2025 (2 clubs in IV have left the TFGC) Dianna will close the year out on April 1st, and then she will start on 2026 data. The forms are now online and this should speed up the process of keeping the database updated. The treasurer and membership database work together on this information.

QUESTION? And DISCUSSION: How do we notify the state TFGC of clubs who are closing or merging? Do we have a membership type that includes people who are not in Federated Garden Clubs? Some of the Garden Study participants are not in TFGC currently. Maggi Burns said a form (c) helps with clubs who are merging in TFGC. Marilyn McDonnell said the National Garden Club is working to allow virtual garden club options for those who are not in TFGC and clubs are not close enough for them to attend. LaQuita said they have a "Patron" membership for those who cannot be active and they aren't counted in their census, but they pay dues and can enter flower shows.

*Racheff House progress was updated by LaQuita Misner. She gave many, many thanks to Connie Barker from District IV who has done countless hours onsite, overseeing repairs, working on cleaning and preparing the house. Her husband Jack even repaired the kitchen sink right before the Greens Tea! The contractor lead, Hector, has been a joy to work with and the clubs who helped clean up the gift shop and prepare for the Green's Tea were wonderful. The Greens Tea was a success thanks to Denise and Karen. Virginia McKinney, D IV also got a

computer and printer set that works! Nancy Howell worked on the bulbs sale and developed a planting plan. Keys for the doors are a continuing project. LaQuita listed a group of people to thank for all the work they have done to improve the house, get grants, prioritize projects, work with the local foundations, etc.

President Johnson further stated that Evelyn Davis and Hector have a complete list of needed items and actions that are needed for Racheff. They will be coordinating and prioritizing this list. They have spent almost \$45,000 in improvements since they started this year. The Volunteer Gardener will have pictures to show the before and after progress, both inside and outside. The March meeting will have a report on this. Racheff house should be open during the Knoxville Dogwood Festival with tours led by local leaders.

*Candace Wells, TFGC Scholarship committee chairman said they have 4 recipients of the scholarships who were selected based on their academic pursuits toward gardening, environmental stewardship, soil management, and natural economy. The awards are not to exceed \$4500 per fiscal year. The current amount is set at \$1,500. TFGC now owns the scholarship in Hamilton County, Brainard Scholarship. Three are candidates for \$1,500 from TFGC and 1 Hamilton County resident for the Brainard scholarship. She named all four candidates with their focus and schools. The committee asked for approval of these 4 candidates. Candace Wells, committee chair requested that recommendations be approved by the executive board. The recommendations were approved.

*Racheff Committee Treasurer, Karen Dawson, said December was very busy at Racheff getting the meeting room ready and having the Greens Tea. Donations for Racheff from clubs have been down the last 2 years. Funding from the Wells Fargo account has been used to meet needs. She said 2025 took out \$17,124.72 which was all interest or dividends and we can't keep depending on that money. Fund raisers from the entire state are needed as currently they are about \$10,000 short from their needs to complete projects and ongoing costs. Insurance is now the largest cost with around \$8,200 a year for an insurance carrier due to past claims. The policy is paid now through September 2026. Karen would like volunteers to work on a budget committee and it was suggested that statewide membership may have someone with insurance expertise who could volunteer from a statewide base. They also need statewide representation with financial expertise. A Motion to accept Karen's report was made by Evelyn Davis with a 2nd by Janet Brown and the motion carried. Question-costs for the bulbs, greens tea, etc. indicated that some expenses were submitted from December 2024 but will be paid in January.
Report on file.

*Lelia Announced that more delegates are needed for both Deep South and NGC.

*Evelyn Davis, Garden Club of Signal Mountain, District III, made a proposal the TFGC laud and extol the extraordinary efforts of Denise Thorne as the Ways and Means Chair at Racheff for both her financial and physical efforts in attempting to support Rhacheff House and Gardens.

*State President Johnson thanked those who have been working in TFGC bylaws and standing rules. Anne and Maggi have been working on these.

The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by Faith Young,
TFGC Recording Secretary

Readers approval received via email on February 3, 2026

TFGC Endowment Trust Fund Report

January 26, 2026

Business for the Endowment Trust Fund continues as usual. Evelyn Davis, ETF Treasurer, continues receiving donations to the ETF Fund while Chris Kelyman, ETF Chairman, is receiving emailed copies of the contributions and checks from Evelyn and sending acknowledgement notes to those specified on the contribution form for gifts "In Memory of" and "In Honor of". This team effort is efficient and is functioning well.

Evelyn and Chris continue submitting articles for the Volunteer Gardener with the most recent submission found in the Winter Edition on page 21 and 22. Chris reminded readers about the beginning of a new round of grant applications with a deadline of September 1, 2026 and that grant information and grant application forms can be accessed on the TFGC website (tngardenclubs.org). Evelyn's article listed contributions to the ETF October through December 2025 providing the name of each donor, their district and club affiliation and the purpose of the donation – in memory of, in honor of or other.

On Friday, January 23, 2026 all seven ETF trustees met via Zoom set up by Evelyn Davis to review the ETF Contribution Form, Matching Grant Application Form and Information/Rules Sheet. The session was about two hours with most of the time dedicated to revisions for the last two forms referenced in preparation for the new round of grant applications for 2026. The existing Rules and Information Sheet has been reorganized under specific headings while the application form has been revised to make it easier to know what should be in the project proposal. The trustees hope the revised forms will make navigating the grant application process simpler. All three revised ETF forms will be on the TFGC website soon.

The ETF balance as of January 24, 2026 is \$209,444.67.

Respectfully Submitted,

Chris Kelyman

ETF Chairman

ENDOWMENT TRUST FUND

October 2025 - January 24, 2026

Vanguard Endowment Trust Fund Activity

VBIAXV VWENXV VMFXX

Month	Beginning balance	Deposits & withdrawals	Detail	Market gain/loss *	Income returns **	Personal investment returns ***	Cumulative returns ****	Ending balance
1/24/2026	\$210,075.36	(\$2,309.12)	🎓	\$1,570.78	\$0.00	\$1,570.78	\$6,386.03	\$209,444.67
Dec-25	\$210,201.74	\$35.00	2 Donations	-\$11,130.40	\$10,969.02	-\$161.38	\$4,815.25	\$210,075.36
Nov-25	\$210,375.92	(\$1,640.00)	2 Grant Checks Cashed 2 Donations	\$1,441.34	\$24.48	\$1,465.82	\$4,976.63	\$210,201.74
Oct-25	\$212,065.11	(\$5,200.00)	6 Grant Checks Cashed 1 Donation	\$3,469.00	\$41.81	\$3,510.81	\$3,510.81	\$210,375.92
pdf		(\$9,114.12)		(\$4,649.28)	\$11,035.31	\$6,386.03		

🎓 \$ 2,359.12 the 2025 ETF Grant Allowance Surplus Moved to TFGC Scholarship Account

- * Value change
- ** Dividends, interest, and capital gains
- *** Combined total market gain/loss and income returns
- **** Sum of personal investments over time (12/2015 - 1/24/2026)

ENDOWMENT TRUST FUND 1/24/2026 BALANCE DETAIL

Symbol	Mutual Fund	Type	AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE	AVAILABLE TO WITHDRAW	TOTAL CREDITS AND DEBITS
VMFXX	VANGUARD FEDERAL MONEY MARKET INVESTOR CL	SETTLEMENT/SWEEP	\$1,218.05	\$1,218.05	\$0.00

Symbol	Mutual Fund	Price	\$ Change	% Change	Quantity	Current Balance
VBIAX	VANGUARD BALANCED INDEX ADMIRAL CL	\$52.34	\$0.02	0.04%	2,349.84	\$122,990.36
VWENX	VANGUARD WELLINGTON ADMIRAL CL	\$77.61	\$0.15	0.19%	1,031.00	\$80,015.91
VMFXX	VANGUARD FEDERAL MONEY MARKET INVESTOR CL	\$1.00	\$0.00	0%	5,220.35	\$5,220.35

Total **\$209,444.67**

Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc

Restricted Funds

10.28.2025 - 1.24.2026

**General Investment Fund
Account 226441625**

**Vanguard Federal Money Fund
VMFXX**

Balance 10/28/2025	33,231.18
Dividend 10/31/2025	113.95
Dividend 11/28/2025	106.69
Dividend 12/31/2025	106.52
Balance 1/24/2026	<u>33,558.34</u>

President's Fund	17,000.00
Benevolent Fund	602.00
Nondesignated funds	15,956.36
	<u>33,558.36</u>

**Life Membership Fund
Account 71652486**

**Vanguard Federal Money Market
VMFXX**

Balance 10/28/2025	24,593.97
Dividend 10/31/2025	84.42
New Life Memberships, Transfer from Regions 11/03/2025	675.00
Dividend 11/28/2025	81.05
Dividend 12/31/2025	81.08
Balance 1/24/2026	<u>25,515.52</u>

**TFGC Scholarship Fund
Account 27084831**

**Vanguard Federal Money Market
VMFXX**

Balance 10/28/2025	6,904.90
Dividend 10/31/2025	23.70
Calendar/Donations Transfer from Regions 11/03/2025	1,188.00
Dividend /11/28/2025	25.74
Dividend 12/31/2025	25.95
ETF Transfer Surplus 2025 Grant Allowance	2,359.12
Balance 1/24/2026	<u>10,527.41</u>

**Brainerd Scholarship Fund
Account 51333187**

**Vanguard Federal Money Market
VMFXX**

Balance 10/28/2025	26,999.70
Dividend 10/31/2025	92.68
Dividend 11/28/2025	86.77
Dividend 12/31/2025	86.64
Balance 1/24/2026	<u>27,265.79</u>

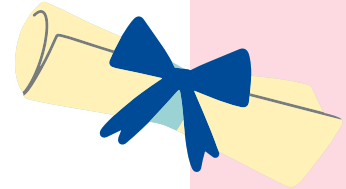
Total of All Funds

Balance 1/24/2026	<u>160,175.78</u>
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Evelyn Davis
TFGC Assistant Treasurer



Tennessee 2026 Tennessee Board of Directors Meeting Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. Scholarship Awards Report



Date: January 26, 2026

To: TFGC Executive Committee, Board of Directors and Membership

From: Candace Wells, TFGC Scholarship Chairman

Subject: 2025 TFGC Scholarship Awards Report

The Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs Scholarship Committee is pleased to report the selection of four outstanding scholarship recipients whose academic pursuits reflect our mission to promote gardening, environmental stewardship, and conversation of natural resources. These students were chosen based on academic achievement, commitment to environmental responsibility, and their stated career goals aligning with nature, soil management, plants, and environmental sciences.

This Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs Scholarship Committee is comprised of an appointed chairman and a representative from each district. They are:

TFGC Scholarship Chairman Candace Fleming Wells

District I, Vice Director Pamela Reiners

District II, Vice Director Karen Dawson

District III, Vice Director Lu Ann Carey

District IV, Vice Director Gina Clark

The Standing Rules, Section XV states the awarded amount is not to exceed \$4500.00 per fiscal year to those recommended by the Scholarship Committee and approved by the Board of Directors (BOD) if funds are available. **NOTE: A motion to increase the scholarship from \$1200.00 to \$1500.00 was approved at the 02/19/2013 Spring BOD.**

TFGC also owns the Brainerd Scholarship for a student residing in Hamilton County, Tennessee.

On behalf of the TFGC Scholarship Committee, I enthusiastically recommend three well-qualified and deserving students to receive the TFGC Scholarship of \$1500.00 each and a Hamilton County resident to receive the Brainerd Scholarship. These young people embody a deep and unwavering passion for the earth in agriculture, natural resources, environmental science, biodiversity, conservation, and environmental administration and management. Each candidate's academic achievements and dedication are underscored by their strong GPA of 3.96 – 3.25, demonstrating academic excellence.

I am delighted that the student applicants represent three Tennessee universities.

The TFGC candidates are:

Ellis Mark Opetina Gasmen 3.96 GPA
Agriculture/AgriBusiness University of Tennessee at Martin

Kaitlyn Grace Choi 3.77 GPA
Agriculture/Wildlife & Fisheries University of Tennessee at Knoxville

Kayley Miller 3.25 GPA
Agricultural Business University of Tennessee at Martin

The Brainerd Scholarship Candidate:

Keyley Bryant 3.681 GPA
Environmental Science University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Respectfully,

Candace Fleming Wells
TFGC Scholarship Chairman
P.O. Box 325
Lookout Mountain, TN 37350
423-304-3577
cfw1865@gmail.com





Summary of 2025 TFGC Membership



Ever Wonder How Many
TFGC Members We Have?

<u>District</u>	<u># of Clubs</u>	<u># of Members</u>
I	22	626
II	32	670
III	12	259
IV	22	467
<hr/>		
Total	88	2022



February 21, 2026

Day of Gardening

Program Highlights

9:30 am Registration & Coffee

**10:00 am Food Forest Coalition
of Chattanooga**
w/ Jonathan Parkes Allen

11:00 am Holly Jones
Director of UTK Kitchen Gardens

12:00 pm Lunch & Market

1:00 pm Kelly Smith Trimble
Author of *Creative Vegetable Gardener*

TFGC District III welcomed garden club members to the 2026 Day of Gardening

“The Art of Foodscaping” at the

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in East Ridge, TN.

**The Hickory Valley Garden Club provided awesome planning,
recruitment of speakers, door prizes & beautiful table
centerpieces for sale at the event.**



“Special thought went into the assembly of the centerpieces. No plastics were used. As I’m sure you know, oasis is a microplastic that gets into our environment. In its place, chicken wire and ground glass provided by ‘Overlooked Materials’ was used. The container is made of wheat straw and is food friendly. It can be used over and over.”



**Kathy Kulak served as meeting emcee, &
District III Director Jackie Westfield welcomed attendees.**





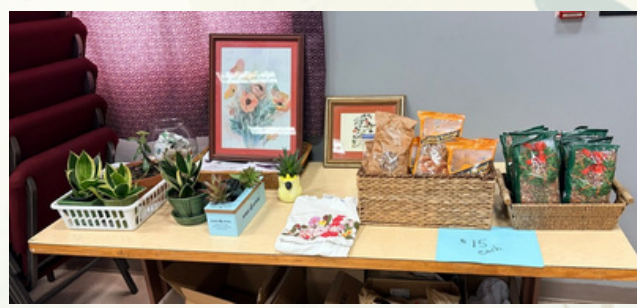
Judy Nowlin & Diane Ryder of the Garden Club of Signal Mountain welcomed attendees.



A delicious buffet lunch was provided.



Monique Lewis & Starr Alexander managed the Ways & Means Table.





Door Prizes were spectacular!



Great Vendors



Gloria Harris, Amy Candler, Debbie Shaver, Marilyn Smith & Faith Young



Dr. Jonathan Parkes Allen



The Chattanooga Food Forest Coalition is made up of neighbors who together are nurturing community food forests, community gardens, urban farms, public permaculture projects, and more. We are helping to build flourishing agroecological commons from the soil up in diverse neighborhoods across Chattanooga, Tennessee. Together we are transforming our relationships with one another, our food, and the land.

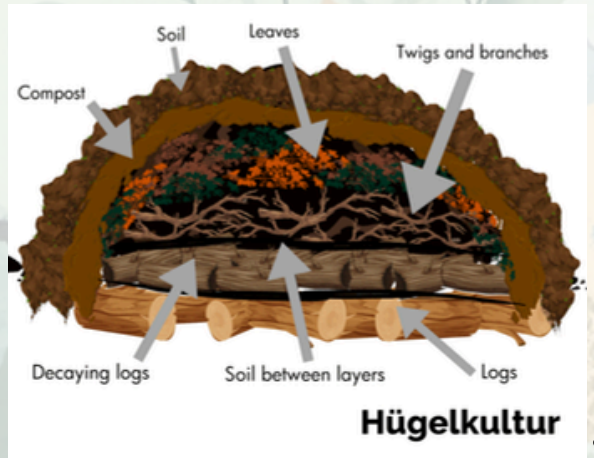
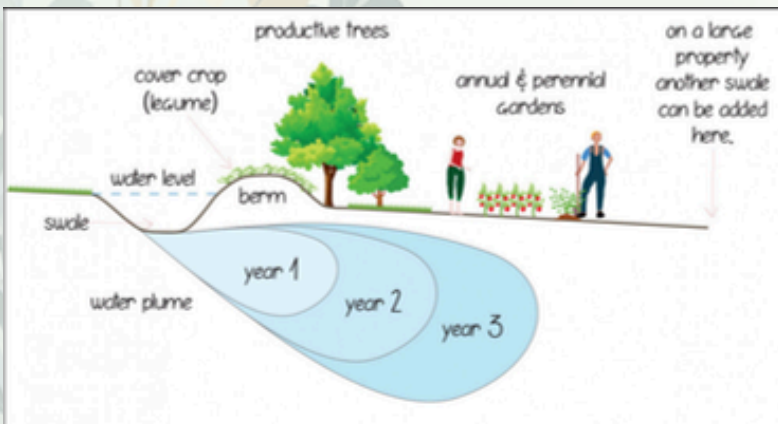
Dr. Jonathan Parkes Allen, founder & co-director of the Food Forest Coalition of Chattanooga, taught us about historical and current Food Forests in the Southern Appalachians. Native peoples did much more than tend a handful of individual crops. They practiced a cultivation system growing many edible foods that grew in abandoned fields or along the disturbed edges of the upland forest. When in season, passion flower and morning glory roots as well as the fruits of the honey locust, persimmon, pawpaw, chickasaw plum, red mulberry, wild cherry, and scuppermong or muscadine grape might have been gathered in large quantities. Likewise, the native people prepared nut-meats of all kinds, including chestnuts, black walnuts, butternuts, hazelnuts, beechnuts, and chinkapins.

In present day, a Community Food Forest was established at St. Elmo United Methodist Church in Chattanooga in December 2023, and has been thriving.



Holly Jones, Director of the UTK Kitchen Gardens, discussed various Edible Garden Projects, including the UTK's Kitchen Garden, Berm & Swale, Lavender Garden, Gravel Garden & Personal Hugelkultur.

Holly Jones



Hugelkultur

Kelly Smith Trimble, author of The Creative Vegetable Gardener encouraged us to literally “think outside the box” -- to consider alternatives to square raised beds & square-foot planting style, modeling agriculture instead of nature, and thinking only of high yields and tidy, organized gardens.

- **Try new shapes & styles of gardens—angular, circular, hexagonal design.**
- **Use and reuse different materials.**
- **“Let it bloom”—don’t always pinch or pull bolting plants that attract beneficial insects.**
- **Grow biennial veggies, flowers & herbs.**
- **“Sow your Heritage”—Plant ancestral, bioregional, indigenous and historical plants.**

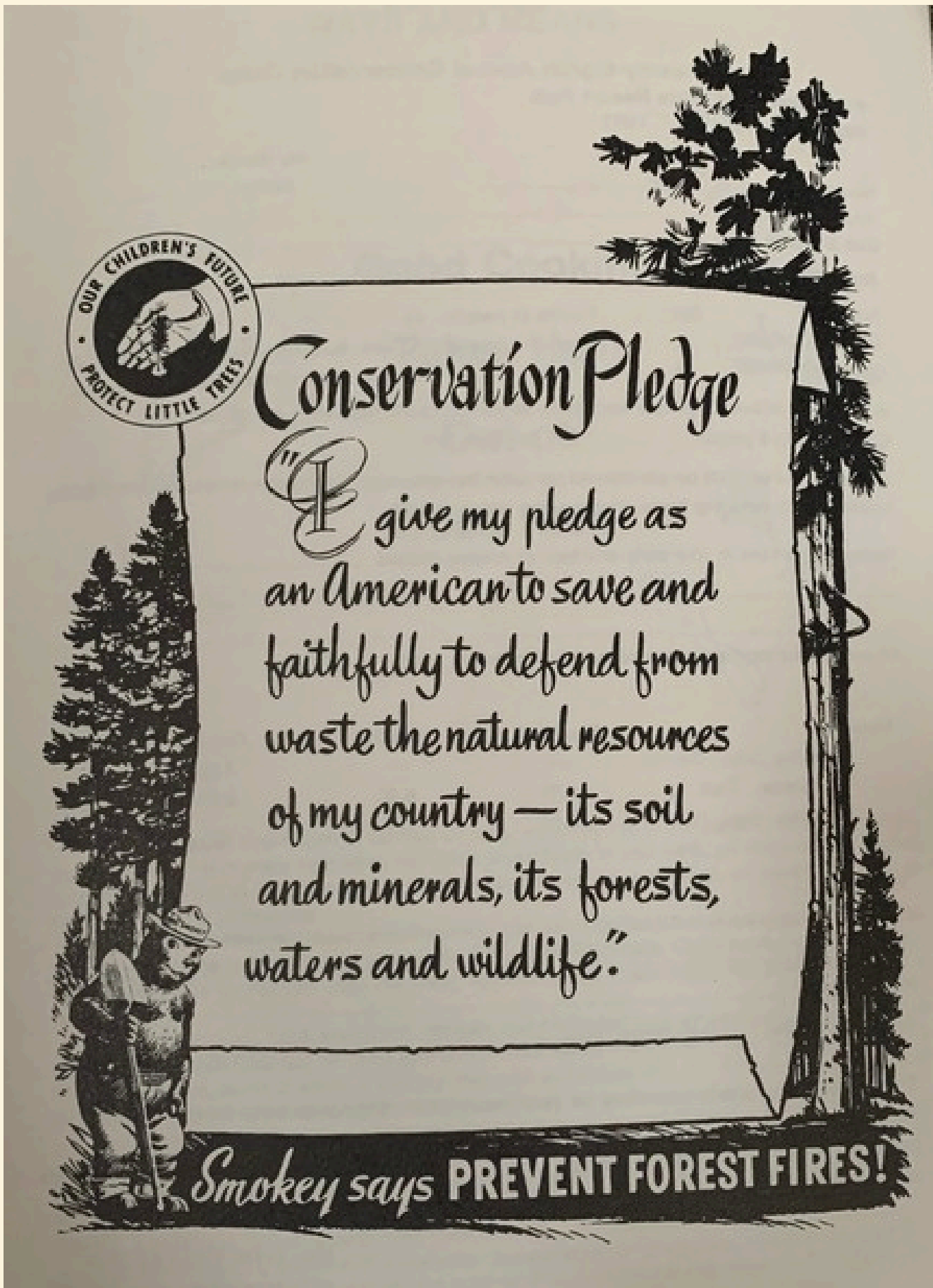
Kelly Smith Trimble



- **“Sow True”, “Southern Exposure”, “Truelove”, & “Grand Prismatic” are some great sources of heritage seeds.**



Let's Get Ready for Conservation Camp 2026!



TFGC CONSERVATION CAMP



2026



**Tuesday & Wednesday,
October 13 - 14, 2026
Beersheba Springs, TN**

Theme: “Mother Nature Wants You!”

**The venue will be the
Beersheba Springs Assembly,
an historic hotel and retreat.**

**Conservation Camp Co-chairs Debbie Shaver & Anne Leonard,
& Registrar Diane Ryder are putting together programs, activities
& nature crafts that will appeal to everyone!**

**The registration fee, which includes your room, all meals & tax,
will be a pleasant surprise in this time of skyrocketing costs.**

**STAY
TUNED!**

**List of activities & registration information
will be provided soon!**



Save the Date

April 19 – 21, 2027

**Tennessee Federation of
Garden Clubs, Inc.
2027 Convention**

“Entwined with Nature for Over 100 Years”

**Embassy Suites
West Knoxville**

Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc. News

Winter Gathering

Highlights



Deep South Garden Clubs
Treasurer Tricia Ortalano &
Regional Director Denise
Thorne



A Winter Gathering of Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc. was held on Friday, January 16, 2026 at the home of 2025 - 2027 Deep South Regional Director Denise Thorne in Watertown, TN. The publicized event swiftly SOLD OUT, and money raised at this amazing fundraising event will be used to fund Deep South Garden Clubs Scholarships. Due to the sellout, there was another similar event held on Friday, January 23rd.

The luncheon menu included Savory Appetizers, Roasted Turkey, Sage Dressing, Southern Sweet Potatoes, Fresh Cranberry Salad, Iced Fruit Tea, Hot Cider, and a variety of delicious desserts prepared by Denise.





There were also plants throughout the house that were for sale to benefit Deep South Scholarships.





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 MAR 14-16, 2027
Tuscaloosa, Alabama - Embassy Suites Hotel



PETALS OF THE PAST, ROARING 20^S NIGHT, TEA PARTY AT HISTORIC MANSION, TOUR UNIV OF ALABAMA FOOTBALL STADIUM, DESIGN PROGRAMS, GREAT FOOD, FUN, FRIENDS, AND SHOPPING

National Garden Clubs, Inc.

2026 Convention

May 4 - 6, 2026



St. Louis, Missouri

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



National Garden Week

June 7 - 13, 2026



Celebrate National Garden Week in your community!

This week is an opportunity to encourage pride in your community, interest new members and work with other groups to be part of those efforts.

Ideas to Consider:

- **Plan an educational program and/or workshop at your local library, public garden or garden center.**
- **Sponsor a hands-on “How Do You Select Flowers/Shrubs for Your Garden” workshop at an area nursery.**
- **Plan a garden tour. This is a great time to share your knowledge of growing while sharing ideas.**
- **Plan an activity with a youth group or school students.**



Club News & District Events

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



Please send your club's news, upcoming events and triumphs to the TFGC Website: tngardenclubs.org



If you have a question, text or email

Anna Marie Allen

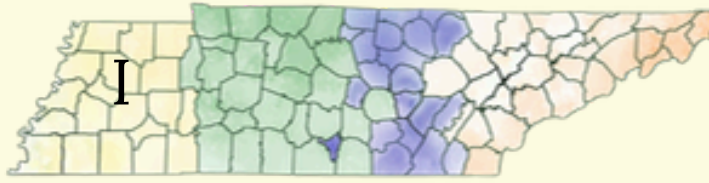
annabanana7@comcast.net

text: 615-477-3030

Deadline for submissions for the Summer Volunteer Gardener Magazine is July 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 Memphis**
- **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



Volunteer Gardener
District 1
Spring 2026

“Where flowers bloom, so does hope,” a quote by Lady Bird Johnson lightens my heavy heart as I grieve for two of my fellow garden club members who lost adult children this past month. As I spoke with one grieving mother, she explained how she had gathered greenery and other items on her farm to honor her son’s memory to make an arrangement for his casket. I had never seen such a lovely arrangement to honor her son. Flowers and plants bring comfort at such a time.

Spring bursts forth with new life! A time for renewal, a time for planting and a time for commitment to gardening activities. District 1 Spring Membership meeting was Monday, March 30th with a program presented by Shannon Hammers on “Displays and Collections for Flower Shows and Your Home.” Shannon is a member of Collierville Garden Club, Judges Council, Interpreter’s Study Club, and Shelby County Master Gardeners. Shannon is a very knowledgeable and entertaining speaker.

District 1 Flower Show School II, hosted by District 1 Judges Council, was a success with instructors Lyn Fronk as the Design Instructor and Sue Kirkman as the Horticulture Instructor. There were twenty in attendance with seven attendees testing. August is scheduled for District 1 Flower Show School III at Memphis Botanic Garden.

Germantown Garden club received a Plant America Grant to plant red, white and blue flowers on the Blue Star Memorial Marker at the Memphis Botanic Gardens for the 250th birthday of America. Congratulations Germantown Garden Club!

Suburban Garden Club had an NGC Standard Flower Show titled “Weather Update: 100% Chance of Color,” on March 25th at the Germantown Presbyterian Church. This was a well-attended event with many excellent designs. Suburban is well known for their excellent Flower Show.

Memphis Garden Club will host a GCA Major Flower Show titled “Masquerade.” It is scheduled for Saturday, April 11 from 9 am to 6 pm and Sunday, April 12 from 11 am to 5 pm. Memphis Garden Club’s Flower Shows are always outstanding and very educational.

Trenton Garden Club always has a Flower Show in conjunction with their community wide Teapot Festival. It is scheduled for April 28 from 12 noon to 2:30 pm. If you have never been to Trenton's Teapot Festival, you have missed a treat! A local doctor collected teapots from all over the world and donated them to Trenton. The collection is housed next to the local police station and is open twenty-four hours a day. There are over 600 rare teapot porcelain pieces dating back to the 16th and 17th centuries; thus, the beginning of the Trenton Teapot Festival and Trenton's Garden Club Flower Show.

Our District 1 President's Meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 18 at Memphis Botanic Garden at 10 am.

As I close and continue to pray for my grieving garden friends I think of the quote "Just like scattered seeds memories bloom forever!"

Jackie Walker

Jackie Walker
District 1 Director



DISTRICT I

Spring 2026 Membership Meeting

District I held its Spring Membership Meeting on March 30, 2026 at Memphis Botanic Garden. Members were treated to a masterclass in Horticulture Collections and Displays. The featured speaker was Shannon Hammers, a member of Collierville Garden Club, the District I Judges Council and Memphis Area Master Gardeners. Shannon set up various collections and displays with staging and powerpoint visuals to go over rules, tips and differences of the two when entering a flower show or using them to decorate the home.

TFGC President Lelia Johnson and TFGC President Elect LaQuita Misner traveled to Memphis to attend this meeting. The night prior to the District meeting, they were honored at an Italian dinner with several District I club members from Germantown Garden Club and Poplar Estates Garden Club in the home of Phyllis Allen. Both of these officers helped to hand out the TFGC awards for the Tennessee winners in the Smokey Bear Woodsy Owl National Poster Contest. Club Presidents in attendance from Cordova Garden Club, Germantown Garden Club, Poplar Estates Garden Club, Southwind Garden Club and Suburban Garden Club picked up the certificates for both the club and the student artist.

A special Memorial service was held to honor the deceased members of District I clubs for the past year. Names were read and a white rose representing each named member was placed in a vase. Barbara Dodge, District Chaplain, spoke words of comfort, and the vase was later presented to Caroline Nave as a tribute to her presence today.

Monies were collected for Plant A Tree and by Ways and Means. Clubs were asked to donate a basket centerpiece for the tables and several silent auction tables. Baskets contained items such as seeds, aprons, trowels, gloves, plants and other creative items to be sold by silent auction to benefit the needs of District I projects. A buffet luncheon followed the meeting and members were invited by the Assistant Director of Memphis Botanic Garden to tour the remaining tulip beds in bloom.



Vice Director Pam Reiners listens closely to Shannon.



Shannon Hammers explains her technique.



Shannon shows her collection.

DISTRICT I

Spring 2026 Membership Meeting



Jackie Walker opens the District I Meeting.



Jackie Walker, Pam Ellis & Shannon Hammers



Silent Auction Baskets



District I Director Jackie Walker greets Lelia Johnson & LaQuita Misner.

DISTRICT I

Spring 2026 Membership Meeting



Luisa Stubbs, District I *Plant A Tree* Chair & Kathy Russo, District I *Bluebird* Chair both of Germantown Garden Club



Lelia & LaQuita at the District I Meeting



Chris Kelyman & Evelyn Ward from Poplar Estates GC, LaQuita Misner—TFGC President-Elect, Carol Symeon & Phyllis Allen from Germantown Garden Club with TFGC President Lelia Johnson

DISTRICT I

Spring 2026 Membership Meeting



Phyllis Allen, TFGC Smokey Bear Woodsy Owl Chair with Award Winners—Chris Kelyman of Poplar Estates GC, Lucie Calvin of Germantown GC, Melissa Putnam of Suburban GC, Marianne Parrs of Southwind GC & Ann Juniker of Poplar Estates GC



Submitted by Phyllis Allen

DISTRICT I

Germantown Garden Club

Germantown Garden Club has been active at Madonna Learning Center for over 25 years. This special needs school serves adults and children from ages 4-35 years old and has an average enrollment of 80 students. These students have Downs Syndrome and other neurological disabilities. Our garden club has helped to establish 3 gardens at Madonna: the Student Vegetable Garden, a Sensory Herb Garden and a Pollinator Garden. We help students grow plants from seeds and plant the seedlings in the 8 raised vegetable beds. Students watch the plants grow and then pick the vegetables from the plants to add to their lunches. In order to help the students understand the importance of pollinators in the production of vegetables in their garden, the club gives educational classes in the school cafeteria.



In May, Germantown Garden Club members planned a pollinator activity with the school for the month of October. Monarch costumes were borrowed and display boards were made with colorful pictures. Members donated popcorn and juice boxes in kind for a treat station valued at \$85.00 and other members donated cash at \$55.00 to purchase the treats. These donations totaled \$140.00. Member participation by the club was 15 members or 60% of the club.



Coordination with the school administrator had the school providing a film on Monarch migration to be shown on a large digital board. Madonna school works with a local bee keeper to source honey that Madonna students bottle, label and sell at the school. Madonna staff set up a honey tasting station with their local honey and bread provided by the school director for dipping.

Classes rotated through 5 environmental education stations in the cafeteria every 30 minutes. Classes sat together in chairs and at tables as GGC members taught the lessons. Stations emphasized these topics: The Life Cycle of a Monarch Butterfly, Monarch Butterfly Migration Patterns, The Importance of a Monarch Way Station, Bees as Pollinators in the Garden, Honey Tasting, Monarch Migration Film and Treats for the Class.

Students and their teachers were happy to learn interesting facts about their school mascot, the Monarch butterfly: How the butterfly migrates from Tennessee to Mexico for the winter, how they love milkweed plants and nectar flowers, and how they taste with their feet! They also learned which type of clover bees love and how honey bees make honey with low water content making the honey resistant to spoilage and providing a long shelf life.

Germantown Garden Club members enjoyed the teaching experience and interacting with the students at each station. There were 7 classrooms of students that came for the lessons. Madonna teachers expressed how much they learned that afternoon about Monarchs and Bees and that they would incorporate this new knowledge into their curriculum in the coming months. GGC will continue to provide useful environmental knowledge on garden life to expand the students outdoor gardening experiences.

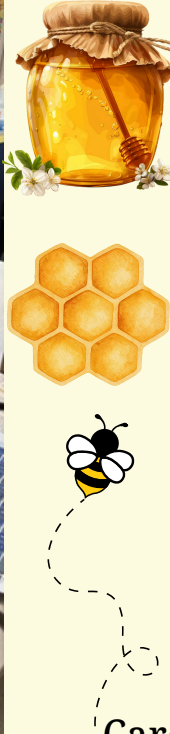


DISTRICT I

Germantown Garden Club



Honey tasting station



Carol Symeon explains Monarch migration



Madonna Learning Center
Banner



Madonna students hear the lessons.



DISTRICT I

Germantown Garden Club



Stephanie Lincoln uses the digital board to show the Monarch migration film.



Stephanie answers a question on migration.



DISTRICT I

Germantown Garden Club



Kathie explains the Monarch Butterfly life cycle.



Lucie pollinates the flower with the bee.



Lucie Calvin is ready for bee pollination.



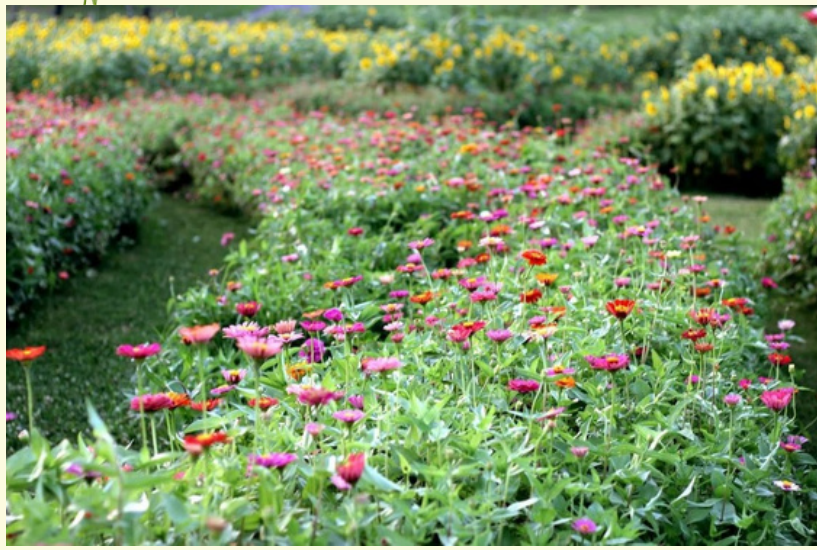
Carol Symeon, Gerry Covington & Kathie Clark take flight!



DISTRICT I

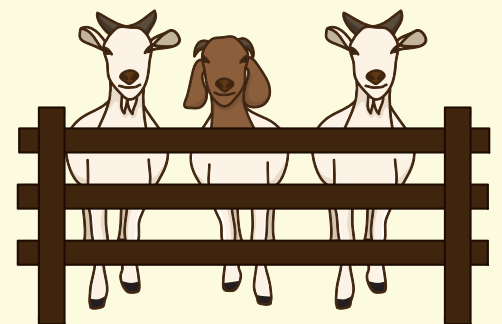
Little Garden Club of Memphis

The Little Garden Club of Memphis enjoyed a field trip last fall to **Old Brownsville Farms**, a 4th generation family farm in Bartlett, TN with a “cut your own” flower field.



DISTRICT I

Little Garden Club of Memphis



DISTRICT I

Little Garden Club of Memphis

Members of the Little Garden Club of Memphis helped the **Carpenter Art Garden** beautify their campus with spring & fall annual plantings.



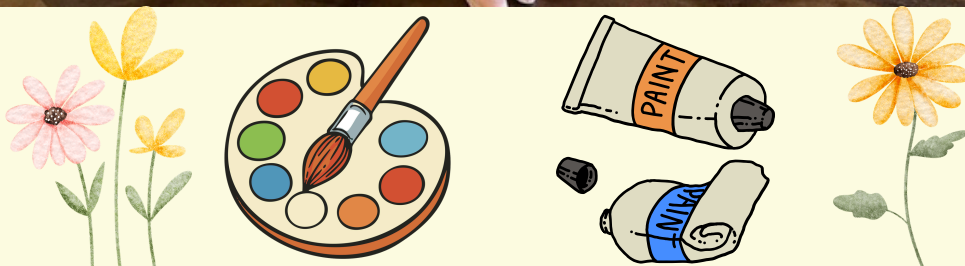
Submitted by Linda Mallory

DISTRICT I

Shelby East Garden Club

January

Shelby East Garden Club welcomed the New Year with a meeting on January 11th at Maroon Brew restaurant. Members participated in a paint party led by member Carol Clark, who is a very talented artist/painter. Works of art and proud artists are shown in accompanying photographs.



DISTRICT I

Shelby East Garden Club

The Club devotional by Jennifer Beyer referenced the ongoing generosity of gardeners—think sharing of plants and kindness. After a brief reading, Jennifer shared a favorite phrase of her mom regarding her own garden...“a gracious plenty”.

Club members shared and discussed horticulture on display from their winter gardens, including autumn fern, lenten rose and alum plant.

Flower arranging was another project of several club members who assisted clients of Page Robbins Alzheimer’s Day Care. Men and women enjoyed arranging flowers they would take home at the end of the day.



Helping out at Page Robbins Alzheimers Day Care (flowers compliments of Trader Joe’s).

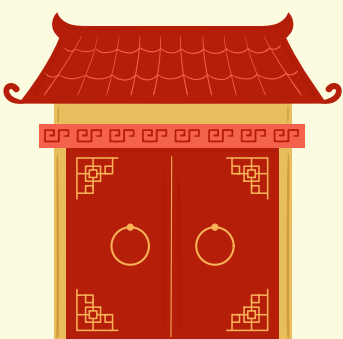
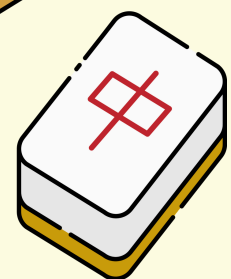
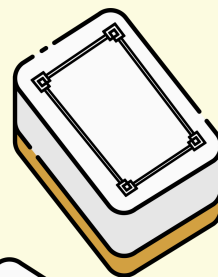
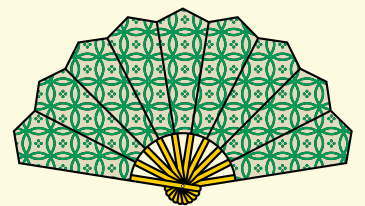
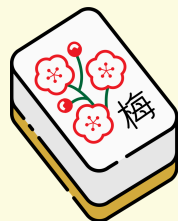
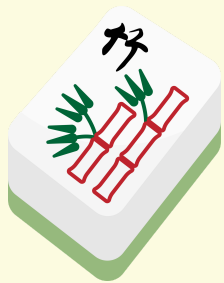


DISTRICT I

Shelby East Garden Club

In June, the Morton Museum of Collierville will be featuring displays and honoring the history of our club and its contributions to the community over many years. At the Club's upcoming June flower/horticulture show, each member will share at least 10 plant specimens from the yard and serve as an on-site hostess. Show judges will be treated to a delicious meal prepared by a couple of the club's very best chefs.

President Phyllis Agnew announced the opportunity to attend the Flower School on March 8 -10 at the Memphis Botanic Garden. Following adjournment, members enjoyed lunch, and those who had an interest played a few rounds of Mah Jong at tables provided by staff at Maroon Brew.



DISTRICT I

Shelby East Garden Club

February

On February 11, the Shelby East Club gathered at a favorite venue in Collierville, The Silver Caboose Restaurant. The program featured Floriography, the meaning of flowers and their colors. Members brought and shared photos and meaning of a favorite flower. A few of the Floriography interpretations included zinnias—thinking of friends, hyacinth—sincerity and deep love, daffodils—rebirth and new beginnings, and tulips—love and passion.



Mary Malone presented horticulture tips for late winter gardens, including the start of early seeds, a reminder to fertilize boxwoods and to remove dead wood and winter debris.

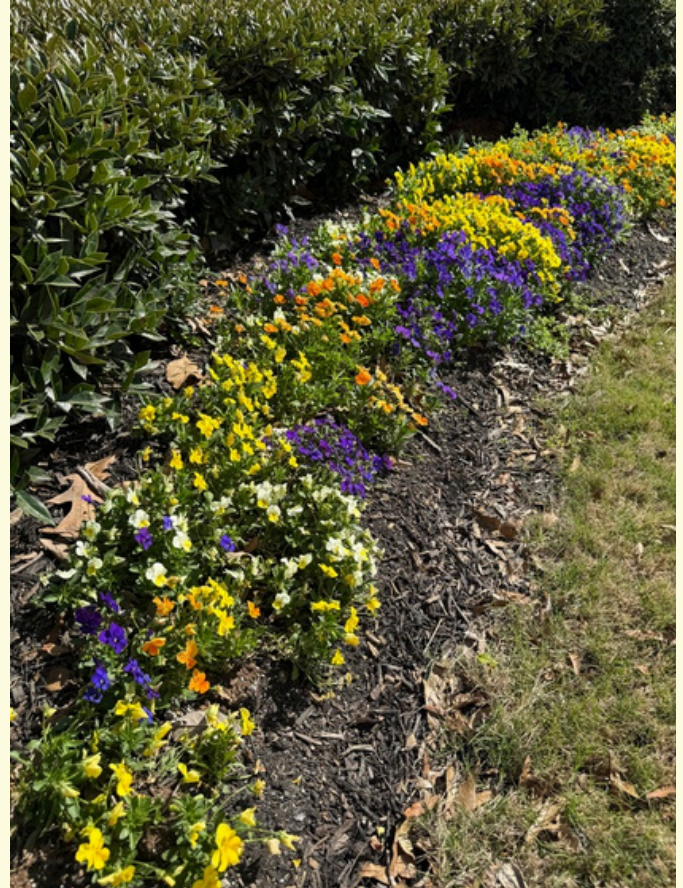
Members were reminded of the Club's show on the second weekend of June. The show will include a memorial tribute to a founding club member, Marie Bertas, mother of longtime member Judy Masserano. The venue for the show will be The Morton Museum which will be honoring the history and contributions of the Shelby East Club.

DISTRICT I

Shelby East Garden Club



Collierville Town Square Gazebo



Raised beds at the Morton Museum are maintained by the Club. 64

DISTRICT I

Shelby East Garden Club

March

On a rainy spring morning, President Phyllis Agnew welcomed members to The Memphis Botanic Garden. Cheryl Hausman, Program Chair, introduced the featured speaker, The Bartlett Beewhisperer, David Glover. David was recently featured on TV news when rescuing a stray hive from a huge piece of machinery (see photos). He is well known and knowledgeable on all aspects of the life cycle of honeybees and their importance in nature. As one of 500 beekeepers in Shelby County, TN, David presented an engaging talk on the very vital role of the honeybee.



Club President Phyllis Agnew called the meeting to order.



Members socializing before hearing the Bartlett Beekeeper



DISTRICT I

Shelby East Garden Club



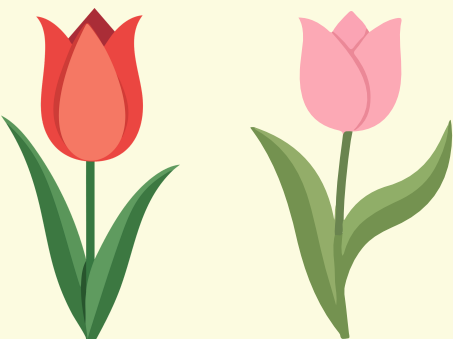
Early March at the Memphis Botanic Garden



The Bartlett Beekeeper rescuing a stray hive. The bees landed on him rather than flying into the box.



Spring Beauties: Liz & June at the Memphis Botanic Garden



The honeybee is an essential pollinator of fruit, vegetable & nut crops. Seventy percent of global agricultural production is dependent on the work of over 4000 species of bees which boost crop yield. Hive loss, a very real threat to our food supply, is caused by a killer mite that causes collapse of hives, by loss of habitat and wide use of pesticides. To support the bee community, members were encouraged to plant native pollinators, to reduce the use of chemicals in their gardens, and to buy products from local farmers using bee friendly practices.

Mary Malone demonstrated a method of early seed start up using empty milk jugs as mini-garden houses. Seeds can be planted in the bottom of a jug with about 2-3 inches of garden soil added, then put outside to begin seed germination. Once small seedlings are growing and the threat of frost is past, seedlings can be planted in pots or in the ground.



DISTRICT I

Southwind Garden Club

Southwind Garden Club members volunteered for 901 POPs (Petals of Purpose). The organization repurposes flowers from weddings and events and shares them with groups such as nursing homes, schools and hospitals to spread joy.

Beautiful flowers, beautiful volunteers, and beautiful purpose!



Today
I CHOOSE
joy



DISTRICT I

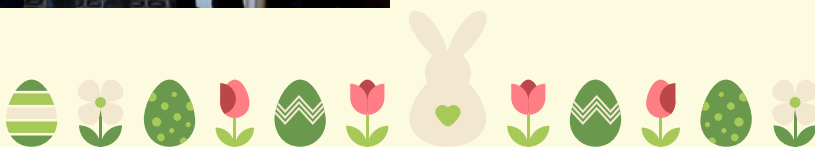
Southwind Garden Club



DISTRICT I

Southwind Garden Club

Southwind Garden Club had a fabulous March meeting, with John Mark from John Mark Enterprises (JME) giving an informative and entertaining presentation about bows, floral arrangements and so much more!



DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club

Ron Daniels spoke to the Suburban Garden Club in Germantown, TN on February 4, 2026 about his book **Rose Therapy—My Journey of Growing & Caring For Roses.**



DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club

Suburban held a super fun and festive Southern Avenue Valentine's Day Pop-Up!



We had a fabulous time with Suburban member and Southern Avenue owner Melissa Kimbrough and her incredible staff looking at beautiful tabletop options for all occasions and seasons.

It was amazing to see Melissa expertly match up Denice McMahon's, Patty Brigance's and Anne Piper's existing china with beautiful new ideas! A long table was exquisitely laid out with the most beautiful mix and match place settings of placemats, chargers, dinner plates, salad plates, napkins and napkin rings—as well as pretty centerpieces.

We were treated to delicious desserts from Molly Hilderbrand, who works at Southern Avenue and operates [_madebymolly](#) on Instagram. • ————— ♥ ————— •



Submitted by Melissa Putnam

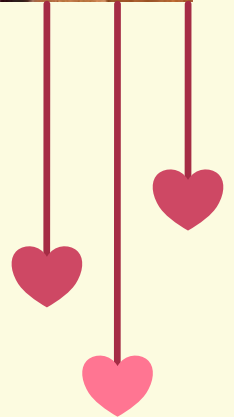
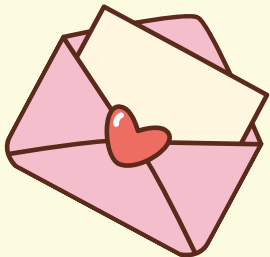
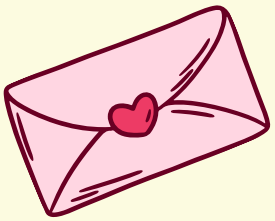
DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club



DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club



DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club

In March, Suburban held a *Pop up* for members to have their colors done by member Micky Clippard. Micky helped each member who attended find her colors using the *Color Me Beautiful* seasons. Members who attended left knowing what colors flatter them and bring out their beauty. Thanks to Micky for this fun afternoon!



Micky speaks to (from left) Melissa Putnam, Barbara Armstrong, Diane Callahan-Edens and Patty Brigance.



DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club

Suburban's March Meeting featured speaker Kevin Coble of *Le Fleur* in Memphis. His floral designs are well-known and popular in Memphis. Kevin delighted the club with his imaginative designs and use of color and texture. He provided members with lots of inspiration going into our Flower Show!



Kevin Coble of *Le Fleur* speaks to Suburban.



Members (from left) Martha Hester, Ellen Rardin, Elaine Hare, Priscilla Alexander, & Claire Shapiro hear from Kevin.



Kevin taught the club how to use greenery in imaginative ways.



DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club



Many thanks to our *March Tea Table* (from left) Carol Martin, Maggie Cobb-Boyd, Lise van Stolk, Susan Labovitz, Jo Lawson, Donna Akers, Blanche Williams, Angie Osborn, & Ellen Rardin.



Lunch provided by our *March Tea Table*!



A club favorite design



DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club

Our fabulous Flower Show, *Weather Update: 100% Chance of Color*, was held March 25, 2026 at Germantown Presbyterian Church. Many, many thanks to our chairs, Barbara Armstrong and Nancy Klepper, for putting on a show we are so proud to have hosted for the Germantown community. We had over 400 community guests attend this free show. Despite having an early spring show and some weather issues, Suburban members showed up with hundreds of examples of horticulture from our yards and homes. A special thank you to Horticulture Chairs, Pam Beasley and Tammy Hausmann, who hosted many workshops about horticulture and encouraged members to plant early spring plants in their yards. Tammy led our first ever Youth Division and we had many entries from youth in the community. Member Sarah Bettendorf, who is the Director of St. George's Preschool, even had an entire preschool class enter our show. The class was delighted to receive ribbons, and we hope that they continue to be interested in horticulture and botanical arts! Member Martha Hester deserves recognition for her hard work running the horticulture entry process and working 12 hour days leading up to the show and then hosting the judges' luncheon in her home! Finally, tremendous thanks to our staging chair, Peggy Gattas, who worked tirelessly for several days decorating for the show.



Peggy Gattas, our Staging Chair,
in front of one of her fabulous designs.



Entry decor by Peggy Gattas

DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club



Umbrellas, in keeping with our weather theme, indicate the entrance.



Staging near the entry



Another fabulous staging design!



An amazing installation by Nancy Klepper & Susan Labovitz

DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club



Umbrellas full of flowers decorated the show.

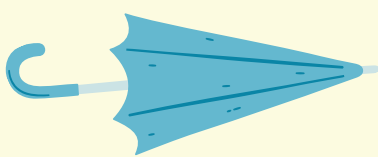
Back from left: SGC Vice President Rhonda Beaty, Germantown Alderman Sherrie Hicks, Germantown Vice Mayor Mary Anne Gibson, SGC President Melissa Putnam. Front: Peggy Gattas, Flower Show Staging Chair



Our Horticulture room overflowed with entries.



Local residents enjoy the free flower show.



DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club



Youth Winner,
Louisa Ozier



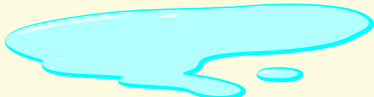
Dana Kendrick won the
President's Award & The
Designer's Choice Award
with her stunning design.



Sarah Stewart's rainboot



Anne Piper-White's design



Kitty Stimson's visitor won the
Botanic Arts Artistic Crafts rosette.

DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club



Jo Lawson won the *Gayle Schuler Award* for her azaleas.



A special *Award of Appreciation* was presented to Jan Rochelle who works tirelessly on all SGC publications like the Flower Show Schedule.



Melissa Putnam's *No Wetlands, No Ducks* won the Educational Display Award.



DISTRICT I

Suburban Garden Club



Jo Lawson's design



Martha Mayer's design



Nancy Coe's Tea Tray



Our wonderful after party for spouses & guests was chaired by Anne Piper-White & Susan Labovitz.

Submitted by Melissa Putnam





MASQUERADE

A GCA Major Flower Show

April 10-12, 2026

| Dixon Gallery & Gardens

Memphis, Tennessee



The Trenton Garden Club
presents the

2026 Trenton Teapot Festival Flower Show

Free & Open to the Public

Tuesday, April 28, 2026

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Staged at the

First United Methodist Church

500 South College Street

Trenton, TN 38382



Trenton Garden Club members have collected
plant cuttings that will be for sale at reasonable prices at the show.





District I
Presidents' Meeting
Memphis Botanic Garden
Monday, May 18, 2026
10:00 am



**WOVEN
THREADS OF GARDENING AND COMMUNITY**

**AN NGC STANDARD
HORTICULTURE DIVISION SHOW
PRESENTED BY**

SHELBY EAST GARDEN CLUB

**HELD IN THE MORTON MUSEUM
196 N. MAIN STREET, COLLIERVILLE, TN 38017
(901) 457-2650**

**FRIDAY JUNE 12, 2026
1:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.
SATURDAY JUNE 13, 2026
10:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.**

OPEN AND FREE TO THE PUBLIC

**MEMBER OF
NGC, INC.,
DEEP SOUTH GARDEN CLUBS INC.,
TENNESSEE FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS INC.,
DISTRICT I**

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



District II garden clubs offered a wide array of engaging programs in the past year, as reflected in clubs' Presidents Reports. Sessions spanned topics such as garden design, native plants, recycling, composting, bee keeping, plant propagation, insects, apples, orchids, roses, tulips, coneflowers, and hummingbirds. Programs highlighted the language of flowers, plants of the Bible, the history of Smokey Bear, the history of fascinators, Intarsia woodworking, women in horticulture (Stone Root Landscaping), Mushlove (mushroom varieties and growing), MTSU Center for Cedar Glades Studies, TN Smart Yards, garden whimsy, garden therapy, sensory gardens, reviving houseplants, native host plants, tips for attracting birds and pollinators, the flowers of Christmas, winter planting, the health benefits of herbs and spices, The Jimmy & Roselyn Carter Gardens, and Who was Ivan Racheff?



Fun events included A Christmas tea featuring *Camellia sinensis*, White Elephant Sales, Dig & Potting Day for scholarship plant sale, plant swaps, vase exchange and design challenge, and silent auctions. Garden clubs toured Gibbs Garden and other botanic gardens, state parks, Amish farms, landscape nurseries, tree farms, vineyards, and went on wildflower walks. Hands-on workshops developed new skills with Tea with the Mad Hatter (making teacup designs), Make & Take Petite Garden Containers, making lavender wands, and creating collages, dried flower cards, petite designs, wreaths, Bejeweled Nosegay Designs, and underwater designs with fish bowls.



Such a diverse array of programs demonstrates our garden clubs' strong commitment to education, horticultural advancement, and our love for nature!



Becky



District II

Franklin County Garden Club

Franklin County Garden Club recently held our **Seed Library**. Free locally collected seeds were separated and packaged by club members. Angie, Mary, Cheryl & June posed with seeds they prepared.



The Club partners with the Crimson Clover Master Gardeners Association to make The Seed Library, founded in 2022, a success.

District II

Franklin County Garden Club

Daffodil bulbs planted last fall at the Franklin County Senior Citizens Center in Winchester, as part of the club's 2025 Garden Therapy Project, made a stunning display this Spring!



Submitted by Lola Eslick

District II

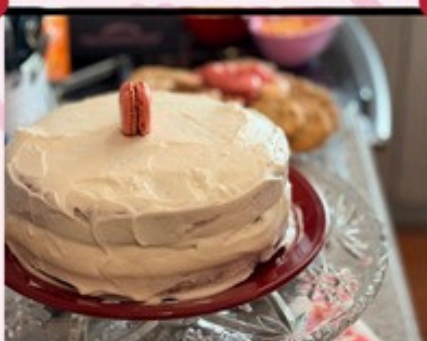
Harpeth Bend Garden Club

Harpeth Bend Garden Club

February 11, 2026 Meeting

The club met at the home of Marsha Hunt for a Valentines Soup & Sandwich Luncheon, meeting & 2026 planning survey.

Kandee Walker gave a presentation on "The Resurrection Garden" as a possible Easter project.



Red Velvet Cake... Yum!!

District II

Harpeth Bend Garden Club



Robin Nash & Beth Harlow help Joan Bailey celebrate her recent 90th Birthday!



Robin Nash, Mary Dorning & Jean Pickard congratulated Joan.



Left: Guest Marisa Borchers, vice-president Kandee Walker & secretary Marsha Hunt



Right: "The Resurrection Garden" by Millstone Nursery

District II

Oak Hill Garden Club



Oak Hill Garden Club



Laura Wilczek & Kay Flynn

Laura shared details for cultivating the Shamrock, Oxalis, along with a handout. Kay shared photos of her garden and detailed information on how to grow hydrangeas.



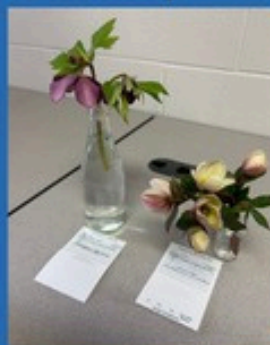
Nancy Hunter shows Georgia Harper a photo of her favorite flower, the Calla Lily Zantedeschia aethiopica.



Kathy Means, Carole Ann McCormick, and Nancy Hunter shared photos of their favorite flowers and gardening books. Gayle Jaggers shared her favorite house plant, the Zebra Plant, Calathea, with a handout.



Kay Flynn explains how to exhibit a Hellebore plant for a flower show.



Hellebore
horticulture

Submitted by Gayle Jaggers

District II

Optimistic Gardeners Club

Optimistic Gardeners Club February 4, 2026 Meeting

Hostesses:
Trudy, Jeanen,
Kay, Jeanne
& Kim



A beautiful dried wreath
was given to Lillian Hibbett
by Trudy Bain.



A delectable Valentines luncheon



Submitted by Lillian Hibbett; photos by Julia Wilson

District II Optimistic Gardeners Club



Club president Lillian Hibbett presented an educational exhibit on the Northern Cardinal. Pictured left to right: Mary McCord, Lillian Hibbett, & Rachel Reynolds



Xeriscape Educational Exhibit by Jenny Reid



District II

Optimistic Gardeners Club



**Beautiful table centerpiece arrangements were fashioned
in ribbon embroidery purses!**



District II

Optimistic Gardeners Club

Tussie Mussies

A "Tussie Mussie" is a small handheld Victorian-era bouquet, or posy, traditionally composed of fragrant flowers and herbs.

Used to convey secret messages through the "language of flowers" and to mask unpleasant odors, these small bouquets were often held in silver holders or tied with doilies.



Trudy Bain, Jenny Reid & Rachel Reynolds



Julia Wilson, Jan Crossett & Anita Wherry



**Ruth Taylor
led the demonstration**



Sandy Estes, Trudy Bain & Carol Anne Beasley



District II

Town & Country Garden Club

In February, our club met to put together the agenda for the year. Pace Pope was our hostess at the Community Center. Our February program was “Types of Snake Plants” *Sansevieria (Dracaena trifasciata)*.




Jane Hundley & Denise Thorne



In March we met at the home of Jane Hundley, where we enjoyed a fantastic luncheon. We then learned “How to Keep Orchids Healthy”. Members brought blooming daffodils from their gardens to celebrate the coming of spring.



Left to right: Pat Gaylean & Denise Thorne; Flower Designs; Orchids Display
Submitted by Club President Karen Dawson



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

TFGC DISTRICT II SPRING MEMBERSHIP MEETING



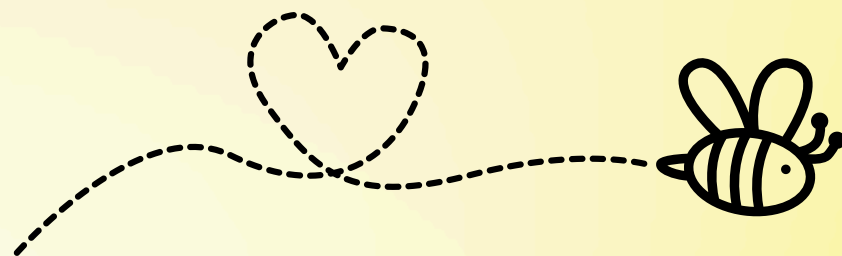
Speaker: Theresa Singer, PhD
"Solitary Bees in a Honey Bee World"



APRIL 29, 2026
10:00 AM



BRENTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH
7777 CONCORD ROAD
BRENTWOOD, TN 37027



**REGISTRATION INFORMATION
COMING SOON**



**District II Ways & Means Table Sales by
Town & Country Garden Club**

Garden Lovers Club

presents

“Little Things Mean a Lot”

An NGC Petite Small-Standard Flower Show

Friday, September 11, 2026

Show Viewing Hours 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Staged at *Through the Grapevine* (Suite 190)

630 Broadmor Street, Murfreesboro, TN 37129-0902

Admission is free and open to the public
Handicapped Accessible

Affiliated with National Garden Clubs, Inc.

Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc.

Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.

District II of Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.

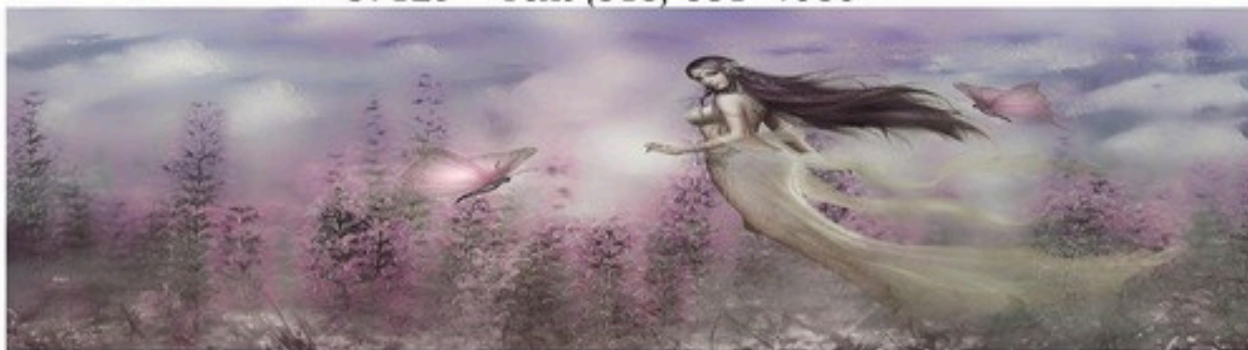
Whimsical Gardens

An NGC Small Standard *Outdoors* Flower Show
for the Community

~Presented by Flower Growers Garden Club~

Saturday, September 26, 2026
12 pm ~ 3 pm

Home of Kim Orrand, 1922 Saddlebrook Drive, Murfreesboro TN
37129 ~ Text {615} 631-4060



Free~Open to the public, Handicapped Accessible

Affiliated with: National Garden Clubs, Inc. Deep South
Garden Clubs, Inc. Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs,
Inc., District II

***All District II Garden Clubs are invited to
enter*** ~ {Please contact Kim Orrand text {615} 631-4060
for the complete Schedule}

Horticulture Division I {container grown succulents,
decorative foliage, cut flowering & herb specimens}

Design Division II {18 creative designs}



The Rachel Jackson Garden Club presents



An NGC Petite Small-Standard Flower Show
Friday, October 16, 2026

Staged at *Through the Grapevine* Banquet Suite 190
630 Broadmor Boulevard
Murfreesboro, TN 37129-0902

Show viewing hours 1:00 pm until 2:30 pm

Show closes at 2:30 pm

OPEN AND FREE TO THE PUBLIC



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,

It's springtime in East Tennessee

*Tulips are budding,
Daffodils bursting,
Robins are building a nest,
And the apple tree's are blooming.
Oh, I love the springtime the best!*

- Denise Rogers



Now we can get out and see what needs to be done in our gardens, getting ready to prune, plant and move things around. However, in the mist of everything don't, forget the humming birds are coming.

So here are a few steps to remember. Most migration maps say that they should arrive in our area around the April 1-15. However, some news reports have already reported sightings in our area.

Be sure to clean your feeders, so they will have a reliable source of food. It will be helpful in the spring when the flowers they like to feed on are not fully bloomed in our area.

Place your feeder near flowers but 20 feet from your home, near places they can perch, however do not place them around flowers that attract bees.

Finally, make your own food for your feeder. Here the simple recipe:

¼ cup of sugar

1 cup of boiling water

Whisk water and sugar together until sugar is dissolved. Cool to room temperature, then fill the feeder and hang. Note: Do not use brown sugar, molasses, or honey or red food coloring.



I captured this picture in my yard last year.



Ladies, let us get busy and have a happy spring.

Jackie

Jackie Westfield 105

District III

Aldersgate Garden Club

The Aldersgate Garden Club kicked off this Spring with a program presented by a new member, NeKita Blair, on February 27th. Her program was focused on *Blossom With Love—Growing African Violets*. The three care steps she goes by are: No direct light; Watering every 16 days; and keeping the temperature setting of 68 -100 degrees F. NeKita said that even though she has not had success in growing African Violets, she is not giving up. We are so excited with our new member, and will continue to encourage her to never give up!

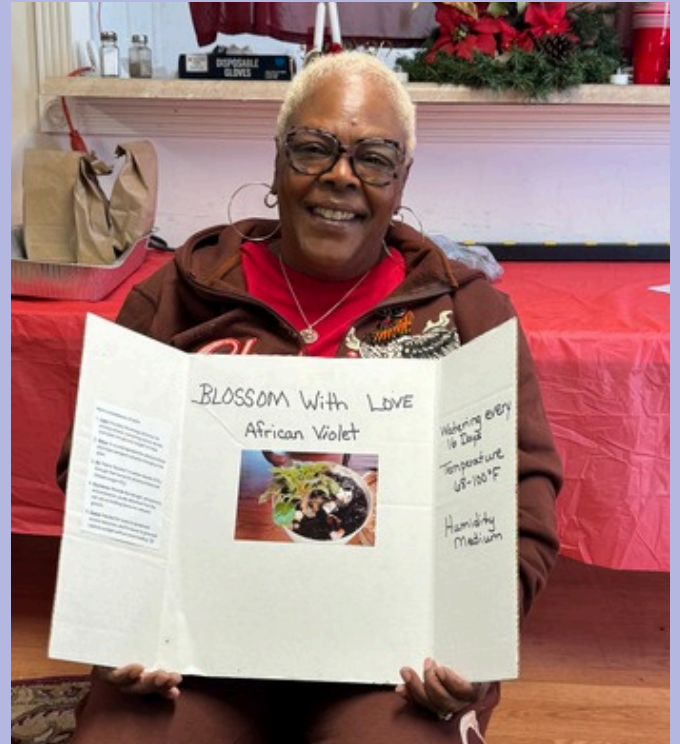
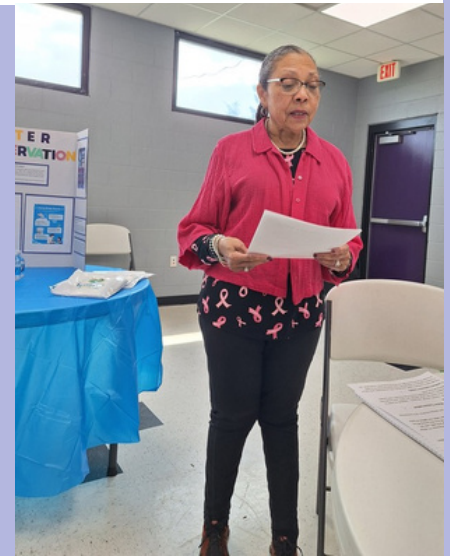


Photo 1 - Members supporting her are: L-R: Joan Steward, Kay Cox, Charlotte Timberlake, Jackie Westfield, Cynthia Humes, Billie Blair, Lelia Johnson and Seated, NeKita Blair.

District III

Aldersgate Garden Club

Aldersgate GC strives to learn and teach others about gardening. Kay Cox provided another educational program on March 27th at the College Hill Recreation Center. Kay's program was on Water Conservation – Tips to save water: The meaning of water conservation means using water wisely and avoiding wastes. It's about protecting our water resources. Every living being—humans, animals, and plants depends on water to survive. Without it, crops can't grow, animals can't drink, and humans face health problems. Conserving water ensures that this basic need remains available for all forms of life.



Kay Cox presents program information.

L-R standing: Charlotte Scott, Jackie Westfield, Kay Cox, Billie Blair, Cynthia Humes, & Joan Steward.
Seated: Regina Piersaul.



Door Prizes & Lunch Bags

Submitted by Kay Cox

District III

Dayton Garden Club “Busy Bees”



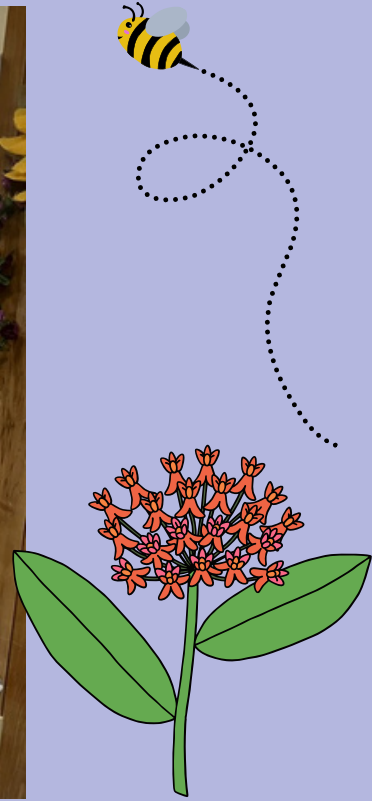
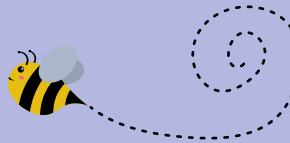
Club president Amy Candler & Jonathan Joban

Jonathan Joban, Master Gardener & Landscape Designer, spoke at the club's February 2026 meeting about incorporating native plants into our landscapes.



District III

Dayton Garden Club "Busy Bees"



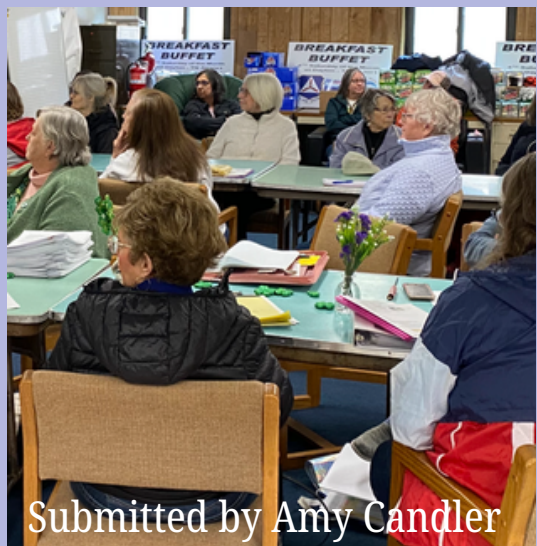
A scrumptious lunch was enjoyed by all!

District III

Dayton Garden Club “Busy Bees”

The Dayton Garden Club “Busy Bees” held their March Meeting at the Mark Anton Airport in Dayton, TN.

Marla Monroe was our guest speaker. She presented a wonderful powerpoint and shared her knowledge of foraging for medical herbs and food sources in Eastern Tennessee. Following her presentation we had a fabulous potluck lunch followed by our business meeting.



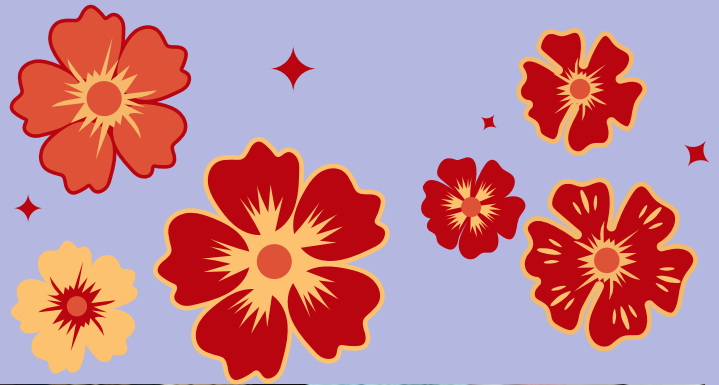
Submitted by Amy Candler

District III

Garden Club of Signal Mountain



The Garden Club of Signal Mountain membership met on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at the St. Augustine Catholic Church and were greeted with a nod to the Chinese New Year with handmade decorations and a savory lunch of Chinese chicken salad, spring rolls, a peach-shaped steamed bun with red bean filling, and a fortune cookie treat. The hostesses transformed the serving and eating tables with delicate red, pink, and white tissue paper flowers, Chinese lanterns, a Chinese zodiac chart, and chopsticks for the delicious meal.



District III

Garden Club of Signal Mountain

The program, conducted by local photographer Mark Gilliland, was centered around teaching the basics of exposure and framing of nature and flower photos. Members shared their cellphone photos with the audience while Mark critiqued the strengths and needs of the pictures to capture the best photos possible. The tips should come in handy as members submit their best entries for the photography division of our club's June 5, 2026 Flower Show "Best in Show: Fabulous Flowers and Faithful Furry Friends".



Speaker Mark Gilliland with members Donna Morrison and Tweedie Griswold

District III

Garden Club of Signal Mountain



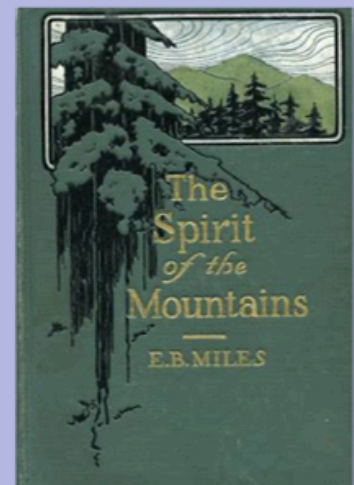
Hostesses (left to right): Anne Hayes Pearce (kneeling), Dolores Murphy, Melissa Nimon, Linda Stafford, Judith Paul, Stacy Webb, and Samantha Ward

District III

Garden Club of Signal Mountain

At the February 25th meeting of the Garden Club of Signal Mountain, members gathered at the Saint Augustine Catholic Church to hear the panel discussion by Artist Anne LSB Davis, Member Leah Conner, and Member and McCoy Farms Director Melissa Nimon, present information about Emma Bell Miles, focusing on her family life, her writings, and her artwork.

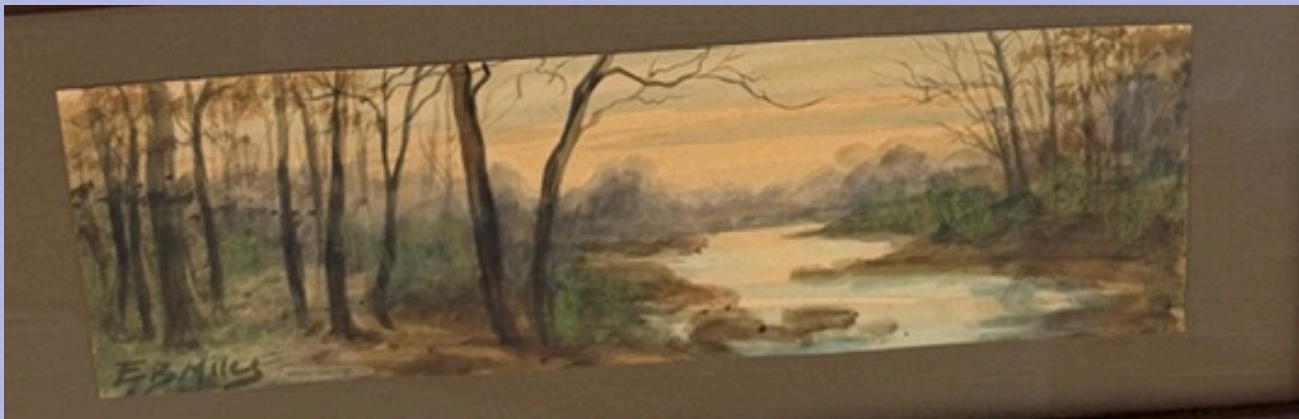
Emma Bell Miles was an American writer, poet, artist, and naturalist known for her vivid portrayals of life in the southern Appalachian mountains. Born in Indiana and raised on Walden's Ridge in Tennessee, she developed a deep appreciation for nature and mountain culture that shaped her work. Despite financial hardship, illness, and personal struggles, she published widely in national magazines, and wrote essays, poetry, and fiction that documented the language, music, customs, and daily lives of Appalachian communities. Her most celebrated book, The Spirit of the Mountains (1905), blends memoir and cultural observation to offer a sympathetic and detailed portrait of mountain life. Though she died young from tuberculosis at age 39, her writing remains valued for its literary quality and its early documentation of Appalachian culture.



District III

Garden Club of Signal Mountain

Her artwork can be seen at the Signal Mountain Library, the Walden Town Hall, UTC Special Collections and McCoy Farm and Gardens. McCoy also has some of her books available. The McCoy/Bachman home is open to the public the second Sunday of each month, from 2:00 - 4:00 pm.



An original painting by Emma Bell Miles



Local Artist Anne LSB Davis
with painting by Emma Bell Miles



Program presenters Anne LSB Davis,
Member Leah Conner & Member Melissa Nimon with a
painting of Emma Bell Miles painted by Anne LSB Davis

District III

Garden Club of Signal Mountain



Hostesses for the nature themed luncheon were: Left to right: Margie Rowland, Ione Farrar, Anne Leonard, Mary Tidwell, Eleanor Dobson, and Debbie Garvich.



Hand crafted/nature themed table decorations

District III

Garden Club of Signal Mountain

The Garden Club of Signal Mountain members were treated to creatively decorated tables at the annual Spring Luncheon on Wednesday, March 11, 2026 at the Signal Mountain Golf & Country Club. Beautifully designed hats with fresh flowers and gardening accessories were made by Club hostesses to adorn each table. The annual Spring meeting included a heartfelt thank you to outgoing Officers and a humorous Installation of the incoming new Officers.



District III

Garden Club of Signal Mountain



Past and present officers pictured left to right:
Debbie Garvich, Tweedie Griswold, Anne Hayes Pearce, Dolores Murphy,
Linda Stafford, Jane Bromfield & Judy Nowlin.



Hostesses in their fascinator hats left to right:
Naomi Lindsey, Cindy Wilkerson, Anne Hayes Pearce, Melissa Gee,
Stacy Webb, Diane Ryder, Tweedie Griswold, & Judy Nowlin.



District III

Hickory Valley Garden Club

If you've ever said "I love orchids, but I can never keep them alive" ...then you definitely missed out on our last meeting! In March, members met at Signal Mountain Nursery to learn more about different species of orchids and how to take care of them. Thank you to Donna for teaching us more about such a beautiful plant! Now we know exactly how to keep our orchids alive!



District III

Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club

The Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club collects clothing and funds to purchase warm clothing and various food, snacks, and gift items for Santa to distribute to the patients at Moccasin Bend Mental Health Institute. The clothing helps the patients to survive periods of homelessness that most residents experience after they are discharged from the mental health facility. The Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club maintains the planters on both sides of the front door and the fenced-in walkway. Club members arrange flowers for the six nursing stations for Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, and summer. The Lookout Mountain Beautiful is honored to have been taking care of patients for numerous decades and providing help in times of need, helping them remember they are not forgotten.



District III

Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club

The Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club met December 3, 2025 at the beautiful, merry, and festive home of Glenda Warren. The theme for the meeting was **“English Tea Around the Christmas Tree”**. The Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club members gathered around the Christmas Tree to select their 2026-2027 Officers, exchanged Christmas ornaments, listened attentively to the stories behind the menu, and celebrated this festive season with a most proper British Afternoon Tea. With heart and laughter, ho-ho-ho, their jolly food committee created delicious traditional tea sandwiches and home-baked sweet treats with fresh herbs and spices to delight everyone. The members left with visions of creating their own Garden Teatime at their homes and with a menu card that shared the history of each culinary herb.



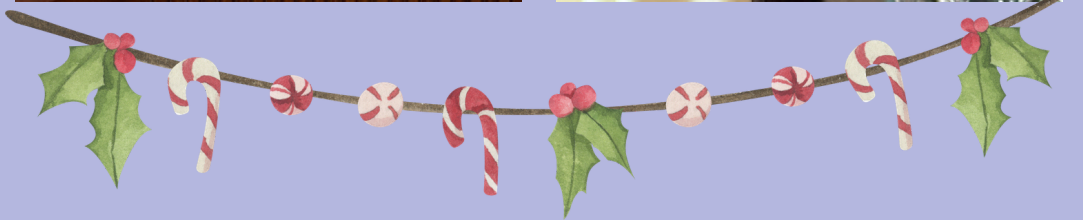
District III

Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club



English Tea around the Christmas Tree
Homemade Tea Sandwiches
Free Range Egg Salad w/ Sprouts on Grain
Pimento Cheese w/ Pink Lady Apple on Cran-Walnut
The Queen's Coronation Curried Chicken
English Cucumber w/ Cream Cheese
Roast Beef w/ Horseradish & Arugula
Scottish Smoked Salmon w/ Cream Cheese, Dill & Lemon

Scrumptious Sweets
Merry Christmas Cookies
Homemade Traditional Scones w/
English Clotted Cream & Strawberry Jam
Macarons



Best In Show:

**Fabulous Flowers
and
Faithful Furry Friends**



**June 5, 2026
2:00 to 4:00PM**

Signal Mountain Presbyterian Church

The Garden Club of Signal Mountain

National Garden Club Small Standard Flower Show



The Dayton Garden Club
presents

“Healing Beauties”

An NGC Petite Small -Standard Flower Show

Friday, July 24, 2026

Staged at the *Rhea County Welcome Center*

107 Main Street
Dayton, TN 37321

Show Viewing Hours 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Open and Free to the Public

TFGC District IV



District IV Officers

Director:

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lqmisner@aol.com

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Gina Barnett

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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



Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs
District IV
Director's Report Spring 2026



It has been a very busy winter for this Director, TFGC, and your District Board. The TFGC 2027 Convention committee including myself as chair, Lori Emery and Virginia McKinney as co-chairs and Suzan Bowman as Convention treasurer, along with Lelia Johnson, TFGC President and LaQuita Misner, TFGC President Elect, have been busy visiting possible venues for that convention. We have finally reached a decision! I am happy to announce that the TFGC 2027 Convention will be held April 20-21 of 2027 at the Embassy Suites in West Knoxville. The theme of the convention, with thanks to Carole Whited, is "Entwined with Nature for over 100 Years". Now the really hard work begins and we will need help from all DIV members.

The Gold Star Marker to be placed at the Veterans Heritage Park in South Knoxville has been ordered. Placement has been approved by the Parks Committee. We are awaiting approval from the Knox County Commission. We will be planning the dedication ceremony for spring or early summer.

TFGC District IV had a display at the Dogwood Arts House and Garden Show at the Knoxville Convention Center for three days on February 6, 7, 8, 2026. Volunteers from our District helped me man the booth and provide information to the public about our District and Ivan Racheff House and Gardens. Visitors expressing an interest in joining a garden club or starting a garden club either left their contact information or took a TFGC DIV brochure and my business card. I will be contacting those who left their names and attempting to link them with a garden club near them.

You can begin applying for Endowment Trust Funds grants any time now. The new forms will be available on tngardenclubs.org website in both printable and fillable forms. We hope to see many grant applications from our district. I know that there are many needed projects out there.

Janet Brown

Janet Brown
TFGC District IV Director



District IV

Harrogate Garden Club

Harrogate Garden Club participated in the Arbor Day
2026 Tree Giveaway at Harrogate City Hall.



District IV

Kanunsita Garden Club

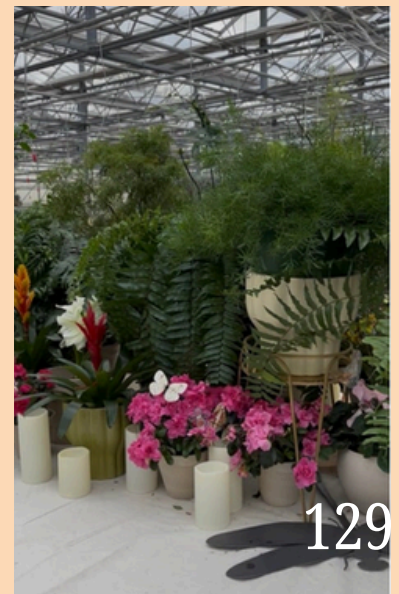
The Kanunsita Garden Club of Athens, TN raised funds for Community Involvement with a silent auction and festive holiday luncheon at our December meeting.



District IV

Lakemoor Hills Garden Club

In February, members of the Lakemoor Hills Garden Club volunteered in support of the Ronald McDonald House “Beat the Winter Blues” fundraising event. The group had a wonderful time helping transform Stanley’s Greenhouse with table decorations reminiscent of garden meadows and twinkling woodlands. The plants were provided by Stanley’s, and our club members were able to be designers for a night with Stanley’s providing the inspiration. This is the club’s second year supporting the RMH of Knoxville’s annual event, which was once again sold out, and provides funding to support families whose children are receiving medical care in Knoxville.



District IV

Mountain Laurel Garden Club

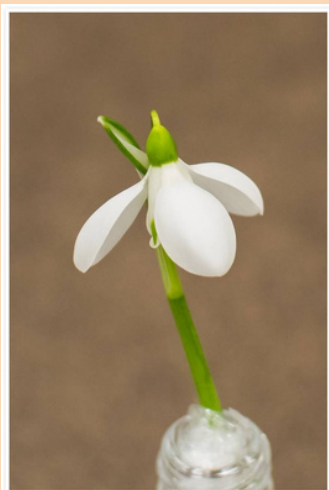
Mountain Laurel Garden Club has been busy planning for their June flower show and securing great programs for 2026. With all the work we do at Fairview School, it was decided to use a child's theme for the flower show this year. The February program was presented by our own Angie Caldwell. Members were instructed on how to assemble wind chimes by recycling tin cans and leftover paper napkins. Cans were washed, holes drilled on top and napkins decoupaged onto the cans. Members came up with some very creative wind chimes. Our March meeting will be discovering what wildflowers are blooming and having a picnic in the mountains.



Angie Caldwell showing members how to make wind chimes.



Guest, John Cento, checking out members' horticulture.



District IV

Mountain Laurel Garden Club



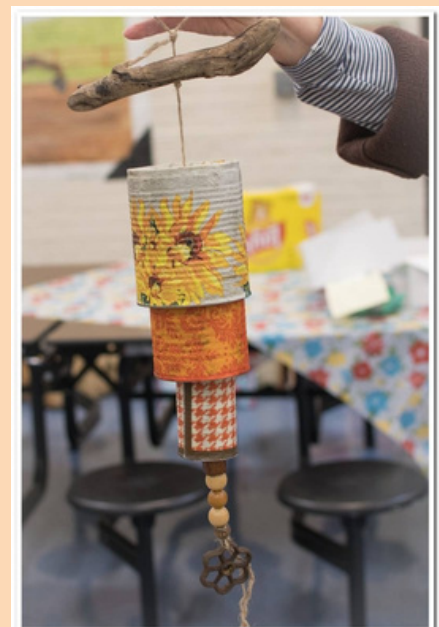
Books that will be used for June flower show
“Gardening Through a Child’s Eyes”



Kim Pilas with her creation



Mable Keller Brown shows off her wind chimes.



Decorated cans

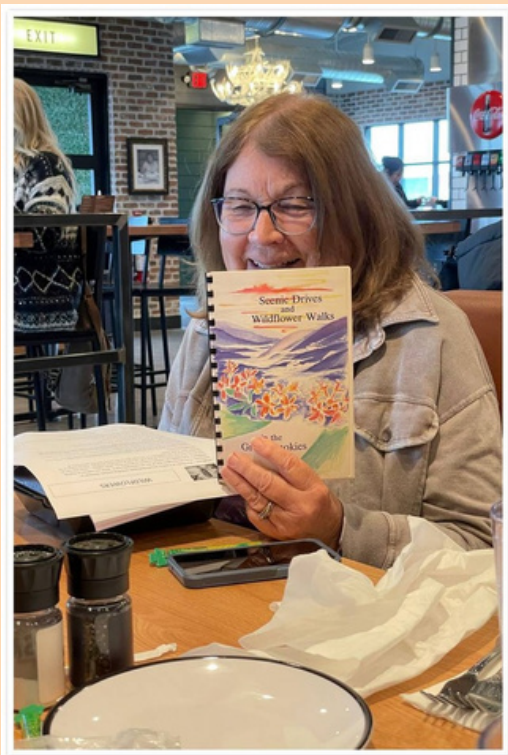
District IV

Mountain Laurel Garden Club

March 



Mountain Laurel had planned a wildflower walk and a picnic for their March meeting, but Mother Nature went from a sunny day to a cold snowy day causing a change of plans. The meeting was changed to a restaurant with member Sandy Vandenberg presenting a short program on wildflowers, with book recommendations and a handout with interesting facts and good hikes to see wildflowers.



Kim Pilas & Brenda Gregory checking out the wildflower books

Sandy Vandenberg presenting the March wildflower program



District IV

Mountain Laurel Garden Club

Members are busy digging plants for the annual plant sale on Saturday April 25th and making plans for the upcoming June flower show. Now that the weather has warmed up, work has started once again in the Fairview Gardens. Members have been weeding, redoing the entry pavers to the pond area and spray painting the patio table and chairs. “Don’t Mow the Daffodils” signs have also been put up at the school.



Carol Morton weeding a flower bed

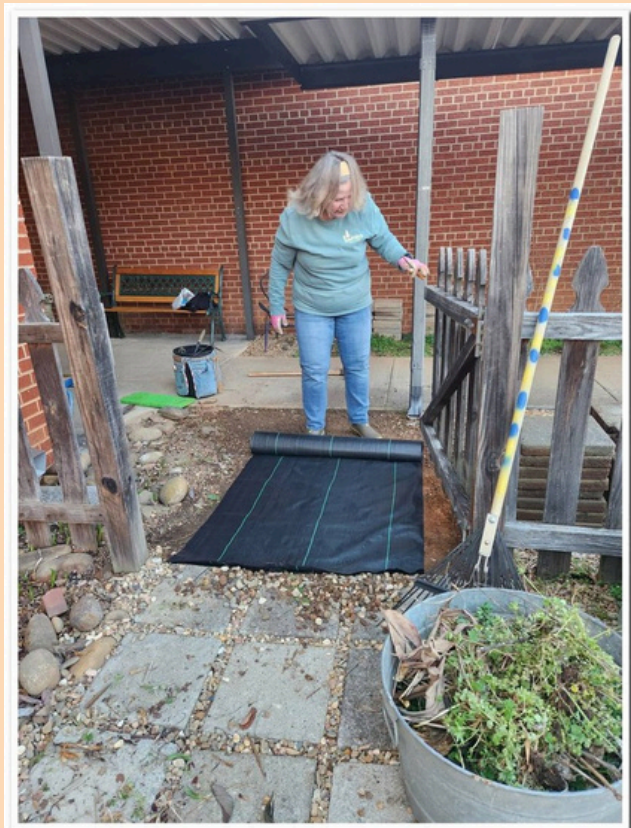


Angie Caldwell spray painting patio furniture

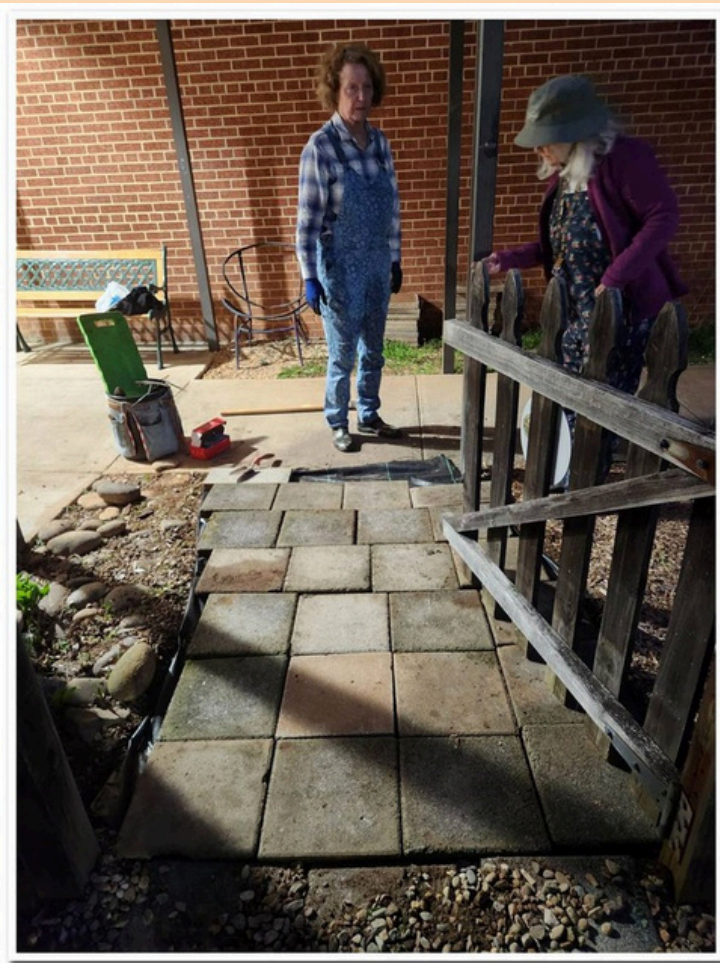


District IV

Mountain Laurel Garden Club



Valerie Hendrix installing weed barrier in the entryway to the pond



Carol Morton & Angie Caldwell admiring Valerie's work on the entryway



Angie Caldwell putting up the club's Daffodil sign



District IV

Norwood Garden Club

Norwood Garden Club held our meeting at the "Beehive Assisted Living Center" on January 15, 2026.

We created votive cups with a tea light to use in the resident's room. The residents learned that different flowers press better than others; for example, a couple of flowers that press well are: pansies, daisies, rose petals, tree leaves, azaleas, and ivy, just to name a few.

Then we learned that if you use anything that doesn't press well it will look three dimensional and stand out from the votive, like plastic dragonflies and butterflies.

We had a good crowd and I reminded the residents that the light would continue to shine until they remembered to turn it off.

That statement led to a song at which a lot of the residents joined in "This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine"..... which led to singing another song.

The residents were smiling and enjoying our time together, and they were treated with refreshments after our time making the craft.

Another great time at the "BeeHive".



District IV

Sevierville Garden Club



SGC Pies from January



Mare led a great meeting! And our program on forestry, tree pests and selection of garden plants was top notch!

Faye won the big doorprize!

Hosts: Jo-Jo, Chris and Dixie



And from Brookdale GC



The program in January was Indoor Gardening - Houseplants!

Nine residents attended, and one of the residents brought her violet to get repotted.

A good crowd for a cold day!



District IV

Sevierville Garden Club



Pres Karen presenting a gift to our speaker, Amanda Benoit. She taught us the importance of native plants in our yards.



Hi, Michael! We were missing Sam, so he was The Man this month!

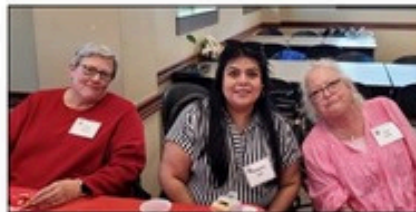


Sandy had the big smile for Jessica even before the camera!

SGC Pics from February



Faye, Ann, Joan



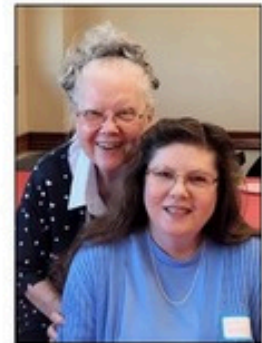
Chris, Amparo, Lisa



Hosting this month was Amparo & Vicki. Dixie was a helper.



Our newest member receives her SGC members bag. Welcome, Margaret!



Sandy brought a friend!



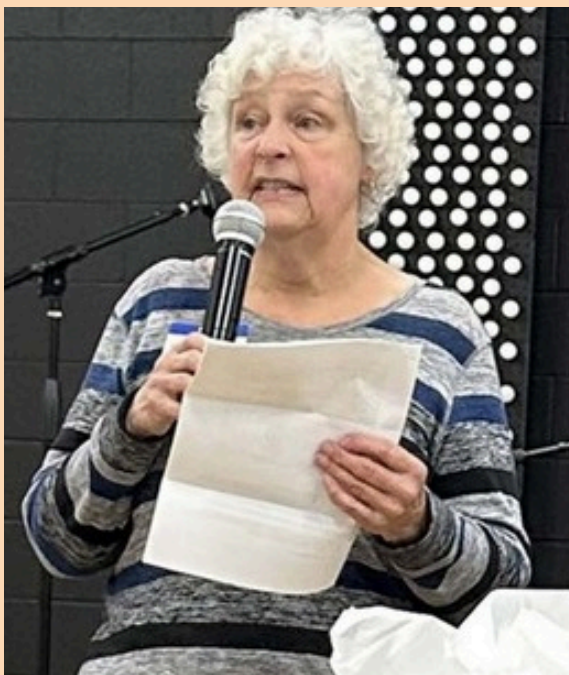
Dixie & JoJo

District IV

Shady Oaks Garden Club



For our annual charitable cause for holiday giving, the Shady Oaks Garden Club selected *The River Ministry* of Johnson City to receive \$500. This organization provides free access to showers and washing machines for needy women in our area. Additional services include free haircuts, personal hygiene products, diapers and referrals for other forms of assistance. We are proud to support this worthy organization which has helped thousands of women and children locally.



Judy Culotta presents speaker with a gift.

The January 2026 program was presented by **Betts Leach with Evergreen Garden Center of Johnson City**. She discussed *Planning Your Spring Garden* because it's not too early to start making plans! One thing she recommends is using soil conditioner which is finely ground mulch on your beds because it breaks down easily into usable organic matter.

District IV

Shady Oaks Garden Club

Shady Oaks Annual Spring Luncheon



We had 29 in attendance at our Spring Luncheon this year. Our design challenge was a table centerpiece and we had many beautiful examples to brighten our event.



District IV

Shady Oaks Garden Club

Horticulture specimens on display included two examples of Lenten rose and a nice shelf fungus.



Three prospective new members attended our Spring Luncheon, L-R Debbie Griffin, Susan Crane, and Susan DeGryse

District IV

Shady Oaks Garden Club

Work Day on the JC Library Garden Project



Stephanie Shafer, Michelle Hejny, Marty Olsen, Natalie Olsen, and Rod Houghton took advantage of a nice day to get some work done on the Children's Garden Project at the Johnson City Public Library. Have you ever seen such a cheerful bunch of workers?

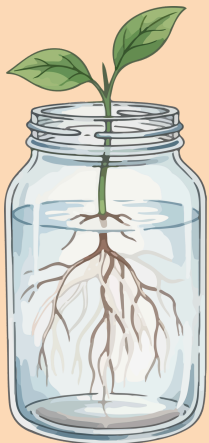


District IV

Tuckaleechee Garden Club

The Tuckaleechee Garden Club had fun at the Prop 'n Swap on Tuesday, January 6th at the Dancing Bean Coffee Shop in Townsend.

You can find us at the Dancing Bean every first Tuesday of the month, promoting plant propagation and offering free plant cuttings. Come visit us next month to grab a special plant cutting for your home and enjoy a cup of coffee too!



Left to right: Emma Newman from the Dancing Bean, with Janie Bitner & Sandra Barese from the Tuckaleechee Garden Club.

District IV

West Hills Ten O'Clock Gardeners

THE WEST HILLS TEN O'CLOCK GARDENERS January 2026

In mid-December members of the club, on behalf of the Beautification Council of the Association, drove throughout the West Hills community to identify and honor nine winners of the annual West Hills Community Holiday Mailbox contest for their holiday spirit and creativity. Recognition signs were placed in each yard and congratulatory letters were sent to each winner. Earlier in the month the five neighborhood entrance signs were adorned with festive holiday bows by the club. We are now looking forward to warmer weather and spring flowers to pick the winners for the Spring Yard of the Month.



We held our annual program planning meeting at Connie Silvey's home in January and enjoyed brunch items brought by the members. We ate our meal in Connie's wonderful garden room while we discussed and agreed upon proposed topics/potential presenters and meeting locations for April 2026 through March 2027.



Left to right: Judy Fenton, Kay Bone, Linda Holton, Terri Maples, Winifred Silvers, Nancy Cook, Connie Silvey, Patricia Harris and Lori Emery.
Photographer: Virginia McKinney



Even more food for us to share.

District IV

Presidents & Treasurers Meeting

Friday, May 8, 2026–10:00 am

Ivan Racheff House & Gardens

1943 Tennessee Avenue Knoxville





Plant Sale



Saturday May 9, 2026

**9 am to 1 pm
(rain or shine)**



at

**Fischman Gallery
133 N. Commerce St.
Johnson City, TN**



All plants and seedlings are home-grown
with tender loving care by members of

Shady Oaks Garden Club

www.shadyoaksgardenclub.org



Shady Oaks Garden Club presents:

“Petals and Pathways”

Garden Tour

and Plant Sale

Sat. May 23, 2026

10 am to 3 pm

Tour some of Johnson City’s most
amazing gardens.

\$15

Tickets can be purchased at [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) or
at 112 Belmeade Dr. on the day
of the tour.

www.shadyoaksgardenclub.org

Heavy rain date Sun. May 24

Mountain Laurel Garden Club

presents

“Gardening Through a Child’s Eyes”



An NGC Horticulture Specialty Flower Show

Thursday, June 4, 2026

4:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Pearson Springs Park Pavilion

1467 Montvale Station Road

Maryville, TN 37803

Contact phone: 865-983-7085

The show is free & open to members of the
Mountain Laurel Garden Club & their invited guests.

Mountain Laurel Garden Club is a
Federated Garden Club in District IV of the
Tennessee Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.
Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc.
National Garden Clubs, Inc.



Member Spotlight

District I: Mary Heim

“Gardener, Leader, Designer Par Excellence”

Kennedy View Garden Club

District II: Kim Orrand

“Excellence”

Flower Growers Garden Club

District III: Candace Wells

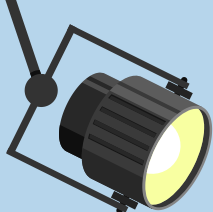
“Thank God for Candace!”

Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club

District IV: Diane Rohtert

“Gardening With Heart”

Tuckaleechee Garden Club



"Gardener, Leader, Designer par Excellence"

Mary Heim

Kennedy View Garden Club

District I

Mary Heim: Gardener, Leader, Designer par Excellence



A pop of sunshine: Mary has entered the room. She brings with her an infectious smile, years of experience, and a contagious creativity. A woman of many gifts, Mary Heim excels in all.

Her list of accomplishments is long. I first met Mary in Master Gardeners 14 years ago, where she is still involved in all things green and beautiful. And I've lost count of how many times she's been President or Secretary of Kennedy View Garden Club, where she currently serves as President...again! Participating in the American Daffodil Society for a decade, she is a newly accredited American Daffodil Society Daffodil Judge.

As a member of TFGC, Mary has written schedules for and coordinated Flower Shows, including the successful District I, "The Cowboy Way," in 2023. She served as President of District I Judges Council 2023-25. Alongside Julie Wilson, Mary has also coordinated two Flower Schools held in District I and conducted numerous design workshops for D-I club members in preparation for district flower shows. And, as a member of Ikebana International Memphis Bamboo Chapter 44, Mary has achieved Post-Instructor Level in the Ichiyo School of Ikebana.

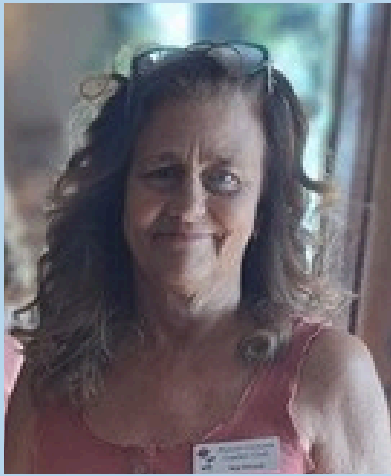
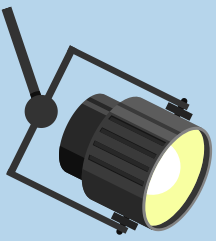
All of Mary's hard work has paid off in her award winning designs made for TNGC Flower Shows, as well as in her designs in Ikebana. And congratulations are in order, as her design, "Fireworks Over the River," will be included in the 2027 Visions of Beauty calendar.

As a friend, I have learned to expect the unexpected from Mary. She is an accomplished story-teller, continually surprising her friends with harrowing tales of her life adventures or leaving us on the floor in raucous laughter. She is an absolute treat!

Mary has programmed, scheduled, organized (and straightened out!), loved and participated in all-things garden for many years. And after her retirement from more than 32 years at St. Jude Research Hospital several years ago, she turned all her focus towards shaping herself, and encouraging her fellow members, to reach for the stars. What a privilege it is to call her friend, and to honor her in the VG Spotlight.

Anne Krekelberg
Kennedy View Garden Club





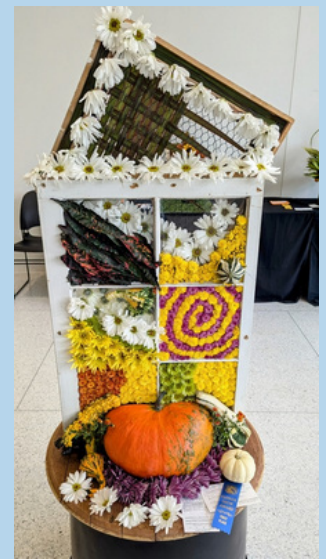
“Excellence”

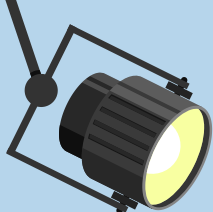
Kim Orrand

Flower Growers Garden Club

District II

Kim excels in every area as a garden club member. Her home garden is unique, and includes a greenhouse that she and her son built, as well as a pond that she designed and dug. It would be rare if Kim’s designs or horticulture did not receive a blue ribbon wherever she entered—at the State level or at FGGC meetings. Her commitment is over and above all expectations—sharing knowledge, plants from her garden, and always ready to fill in where needed with excellence. She is appreciated and loved by her fellow FGGC members, and currently serves her club as second vice president and acting secretary. We appreciate you, Kim!!





“Thank God For Candace!”

Candace Wells

Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club

District III

Thank God for Candace!

By Ann Brown, Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club

Last month, as retiring president, I was visiting with the new president of the Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club, Sharon Gadd, hoping to help smooth her transition. When I mentioned Candace, she didn't even pause before saying, with absolute conviction, “Thank God for Candace!”

I laughed, because in that moment she spoke for so many of us. It is the phrase we return to again and again—sometimes said with relief, sometimes with admiration, always with gratitude.

Candace's résumé tells the story of a woman whose leadership and devotion has touched every level of the garden club world—national, regional, state, and local. What makes her truly deserving of recognition is not only the number of roles she has held, but the depth of impact she has made on each one.

At the national level, she has championed the Blue Star and Gold Star Families Memorial Marker Program, ensuring that service members and their families are honored with dignity and permanence. In the Chattanooga area alone, she has led the establishment of two Gold Star and four Blue Star Markers—lasting tributes that strengthen the bond between community and country.

Regionally, she has guided scholarship efforts for Deep South Garden Clubs, opening doors for students across several states and nurturing the next generation of environmental stewards.

At the state level, as TFGC District III Director, she led twelve clubs with vision and purpose, launching district-wide initiatives that promoted Pollinator Gardens and Monarch Waystations—projects that will benefit ecosystems for years to come.

Locally, her advocacy, carried out through Bee City USA and the Lookout Mountain Beautification Garden Club (LMBGC), has helped advance pollinator-friendly initiatives on Lookout Mountain. She helped establish two pollinator gardens—one on the Tennessee side and one on the Georgia side of the mountain—and supported the school pollinator garden at Fairyland Elementary School. As co-president of LMBGC alongside Chrisi Hopper, she also led the creation of the “Roots and Wings” outdoor classroom with a water collection system at Lookout Mountain School in 2016 and coordinated the distribution of more than thirty native dogwood trees for club members to plant in their yards.

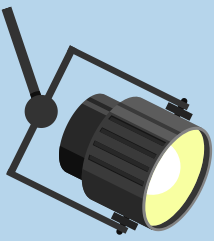
In every role, she brings passion, purpose, and a deep sense of responsibility. Her work strengthens communities, restores habitats, and inspires others to join the effort.

But Candace's influence extends far beyond her accomplishments. She is one of those rare people whose leadership is felt not only in what she achieves, but in how she makes others feel along the way. She sees the big picture without ever losing sight of the people who make the work possible. Her colleagues describe her as a natural collaborator, someone who brings steadiness simply by being present.

She leads with guidance rather than insistence, with empathy woven through every decision, and with a strength that is unmistakable yet never heavy-handed. When challenges arise, she has an intuitive sense of what needs to be done, stepping forward with a calm, capable hand even when the pressure is high. Her decision-making is courageous—transparent, direct, and grounded in integrity.

And then there is the Candace we all know and love: our “Johnny-on-the-spot,” the one who shows up exactly when you need her, ready to tackle whatever is in front of her. Whether navigating a complex negotiation or smoothing out a difficult issue, she does it with poise, resilience, and a spark of humor that lifts the whole room. Her energy is contagious, turning potential bottlenecks into moments of creativity, turning ordinary tasks into opportunities for connection, turning long days into something lighter.

Candace is the kind of person who never seeks the spotlight for herself. But as a dear friend and fellow club member, I have the privilege of acknowledging the profound difference that one remarkable woman can make. Her exceptional leadership, steadfast loyalty, tireless energy, and constant willingness to ask, “What can I do to help?” have inspired and uplifted all of us. Thank God for Candace, today and every day!



Candace Wells

Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club

District III

Candace Wells Resume

National, State, Regional and Local Leadership

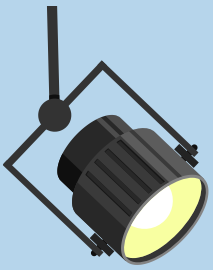
- **NGC Blue Star and Gold Star Families Memorial Marker Chair:** Candace serves as the national chairman for this program, which honors service members and their families through dedicated memorial markers across the country. She has helped establish two Gold Star Memorial Markers and four Blue Star Memorial Markers on Lookout Mountain, TN & GA and in Chattanooga, TN.
- **Deep South Garden Clubs Scholarship Chairman:** She oversees scholarship initiatives for this regional organization, which includes several southern states.
- **TFGC District III Director:** She has served as the Director for District III where she oversaw twelve member clubs. In this role, she launched initiatives for all clubs in her district to establish *Pollinator Gardens* and *Monarch Waystations*.
- **Co-President of Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club:** She supported outdoor learning for students and the planting of dogwood trees.
- **Bee City USA Committee Co-Chairperson:** As a pollinator advocate, she has promoted the creation of native plant gardens to support our pollinators and birds.

Key Advocacy & Projects

- **Pollinator Conservation:** A central theme of her work is "Save Our Pollinators," which emphasizes native (perennials, shrubs, and trees) to combat habitat loss.
- **Educational Outreach:** Wells promotes pesticide-free plants and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for public and private gardens and yards.
- **Gardening and Outdoor Learning:** Candace has long been a champion of student-centered gardening and outdoor learning. She supported the development of the pollinator garden at Fairyland Elementary School and helped create two public pollinator gardens—one on the Tennessee side and one on the Georgia side of Lookout Mountain. As co-president of LMBGC, alongside Chrisi Hopper, she also led the creation of the "Roots and Wings" outdoor classroom at Lookout Mountain School. Completed in 2016, this space includes a water-collection system and provides children with a hands-on environment to explore the natural world.

In compiling this tribute, I am indebted to the following members of the Lookout Mountain Beautiful Garden Club who generously shared their experiences and reflections: Chrisi Hopper, Glynda Warren, Penny Simmons, Sharon Gadd, Dowling King, and Kyoung-Hee Jeong.





“Gardening With Heart”

Diane Rohtert

Tuckaleechee Garden Club

District IV



Diane Rohtert: Gardening with heart

Submitted by Allison Pearson

Diane Rohtert, Tuckaleechee Garden Club, District IV, has an enduring love for nature and gardens with heart. Gardening with heart is about those who connect with nature through cultivating plants and embody qualities of nurturing, caring, beauty, and kindness. Alfred Austin summed up the heart of a gardener with his famous quote *“The glory of gardening - hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature”*. Diane is indeed an expert gardener, but her greatest gift may be graciously extending her gardening heart with generosity, kindness, and service to others.

Gardener extraordinaire. Diane dedicated the past 20 years to developing her gardening talents. Her beautiful farm showcases her gardening expertise in apple, peach, and pear orchards, berries, shrubs including her beautiful camellias, flowers, and vegetables. She raises orchids and other houseplants. Her native spring

ephemeral collection of trilliums, toothwort, phlox, shooting star, bloodroot, hepatica and more are best discovered walking her verdant, mile-long moss path she painstakingly created over the course of 2 years by carefully mixing and applying a buttermilk recipe to spur the growth of the moss. Along the way, look for creative planting combinations in her hand-crafted hypertufa containers. Diane is an avid composter and seeds her plants in her greenhouse.

Gardener heart for sharing. While Diane can grow just about anything, her greatest gift is her generous gardening heart. She shares everything! She gives generously of her time and talents as a 20+ year member of Tuckaleechee Garden club, serving in just about every officer role, including currently serving as Vice-President. Diane is currently the vegetable garden chair for the Heirloom Kitchen Garden at the Great Smoky Mountains Heritage Center, as well as the chair for the Methodist Church Garden. She donates hundreds of carefully propagated plants each year for the garden club plant sale - 500 plants in 2025 to be exact!

Diane also shares everything from her garden, including fruits, vegetables, cuttings, and transplants, with club members, friends, neighbors and anyone lucky enough to know her. A jar of her apple butter, fresh fruit, or kimchi is both a beloved and delicious gift.

Diane also freely shares her gardening knowledge. She frequently hosts workshops on the farm she shares with her husband, Roger, exploring an abundance of gardening topics: fruit tree pruning techniques; plant propagation techniques, including seeding, layering, air layering, and cuttings; harvest and food preservation; saving eastern hemlock trees from the invasive woolly adelgid; floral arranging; seed saving; and natural holiday decor, to name only a few. Her workshops offer the opportunity to learn something new in the garden, practice hands-on gardening, and enjoy her delicious, home-grown snacks, juices, and teas.

If gardening is indeed a work of the heart, Diane Rohtert surely exemplifies the gardener with amazing gardens and the kindest heart.



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**

Featured Photography



Sandy Vandenberg
Mountain Laurel Garden Club
District IV



Sandhill Cranes at the Hiwassee Wildlife Reserve



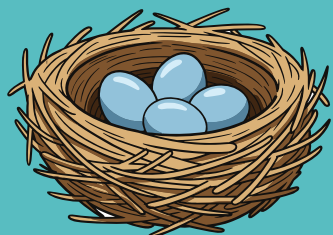
My Backyard Bluebirds Call to Me

As the evening light of winter, slowly fades in the western sky,
I hear my backyard bluebirds chattering their notes low and high.
So I go and fill their feeder, with the mealworms they desire,
Satisfied they slip away, darkness falls, and they retire.

It seems my backyard bluebirds never stray too far away,
They may go for months unseen, but are back again today.
The old nesting box is the beacon calling them from afar,
In and out the hole they go, checking that home is up to par.

Seven seasons of young birds fledging from the box they know,
My mind ponders: are you the ones that left in summer's afterglow?
It really doesn't matter, I tell myself, you are welcome all the same!
You brighten the winter day, and bring a smile when you call my name.

Phyllis Allen
Germantown Garden Club





“Optimistic Gardening”
A Poem by Sandy Estes
Member of Optimistic Gardeners Club



I hold this seed, such a miniature thing,
I’ve saved it to wait for the warm days of spring.

I choose the best spot, where I think it will thrive,
And offer it heartfelt hope to survive.

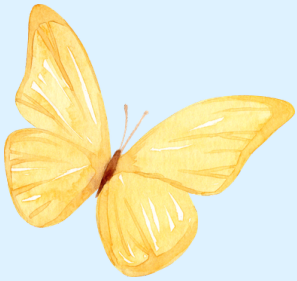
It’s future is now in God’s miracle Hands,
With many a hope for its growth in my plans.

I imagine the day when proudly I’ll pick it,
But for now it’s enough just to be optimistic.



Ode to a Butterfly

District III

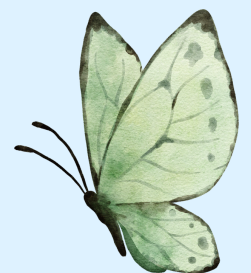


A butterfly's a curious thing
Not much body, but plenty of wing
And for protection, it's got no sting.
A butterfly's a curious thing.

Is there pattern in its random flight?
With target flowers on which to light
And territories over which to fight?
Dueling butterflies would be quite a sight.

Just how it fits into Nature's plan
I cannot say that I understand.
What is the job of this painted fan?
It cannot be just to delight man.

It does not really matter why.
In the garden when the sun is high
I think each time as one flutters by
A wonderful gift is the butterfly.



Anne Leonard—Garden Club of Signal Mountain
Reprinted from the *Spring 1999 Volunteer Gardener*

Iris

District IV

I see you standing tall and straight,
among your blades of green.

The breeze will toss you to and fro,
yet you stand so tall and serene.

Your falls fold limply at your sides,
gently flapping in the breeze.

While your standards form a perfect dome,
enclosing nectar for the insects to seize.

You come in sizes short and tall,
your colors vary too.

From yellow and gold, to violet and white,
just to name a few.

From Siberia, Japan and the Dutch you've come,
from far across the seas.

And Germany can boast a bearded one,
picked by our state as supreme.

Our little native ones that come,
in very early Spring,
Are nestled 'neath the fallen leaves,
just waiting to be seen.

And in the Fall when one might think
their blooming is all done,
Some bloom again to bring us joy
beneath Autumn's golden sun.



Special Educational Features ✨

Brazil: Visit to the National Floral Show & Meeting with NGC Affiliates (A Report by Jolly Sinha, Brentwood, TN.)

Last fall, I felt humbled to be invited to attend the greatest flower show in Latin America, I visited the wholesale flower fields and also had the privilege to meet NGC affiliates in Brazil.

1. ExpoFlora in Holambra, Brazil



The name Holambra is derived from the words **Holland-America-Brazil**. It is a municipality in the state of São Paulo in Brazil.

Brazil's Holambra region is envisioned as **"little Holland"** because it is home to a vibrant community of Dutch settlers who have brought their traditions, passion for gardening, and culinary influences to the area.



Expoflora is considered the largest flower fair in Latin America which includes gastronomy, Dutch culture and attractions for all ages.



More than 30,000 people attended this flower show.



More than **4,000** variety of ornamental and flowering plants were showcased.



Floral inspired gastronomy



The tour of the **133 acres** of Flower Fields was breathtaking! It comprises of a system of rotational planting to yield a continuous supply of flowers throughout the year for worldwide retailers. Also, was impressed by their onsite live **(online) auction** for flowers. Vendors view the offerings on screen at the flower fields and make bids.



They have an **extensive irrigation system** with a huge rain water catchment basin, that pumps water to the flower fields.

The Flower Arrangement Exhibition had stunning extensive themed floral installments-transforming flowers into works of art.



Magic Garden Tour – included a display of breathtaking themed garden rooms





"Rain of Petals", was an exceptional experience where thousands of flower petals were thrown into the air on the crowd that had gathered to receive blessings from heaven.

The Flower Parade, featured floats decorated with flowers and characters from the fair and also had music.



Typical Holland **Dance performances** further deepen the bond between Holland and Brazil.

Statistics for NGC affiliates is provided by Sandy Mangels from Brazil

2. Meeting with NGC Affiliates in Brazil



1. Sandy Mangels - (Host)
NGC accredited master judge,
FSS and Credentials Chair for Brazil,
*NGC board member of the
Vision of Beauty Calendar
Committee,*
Member of the São Paulo Garden
Club.
Member SP FS Judges Council.

2. Jolly Sinha (guest)

3. Marie Kaufmann
NGC accredited life judge,
Vice- of Clube Paulista
de Jardinagem,
Member São Paulo Garden Club.
Member SP, FS Judges Council.

NGC garden affiliated clubs in Brazil

The São Paulo Garden Club, has 48 members divided between 4 working groups. The club was **founded in 1939 by ladies from England, New Zealand and South Africa living as ex-pats in São Paulo**. This club used to operate in English but has gradually transitioned to Portuguese since 1982.

Clube Paulista de Jardinagem, has nearly double the members of São Paulo garden clubs, and also divided into working groups. This club was **founded in 1970s by Brazilians**. This club celebrated their 50th Annual Flower Show in 2024.

Jaguarão Garden Club down south. They have about 30 members as well as an active Junior Gardening Group. This club is on the border of Uruguay.

São Paulo Flower Show Judges Council. The Judges Council has 23 members, 20 of whom are still active.

4. Sonia Merkel
NGC accredited Life Judge,
Member São Paulo
Garden Club.
*Official translator of the NGC
Handbook for Flowers
Shows - from English to Portuguese.*

5. Maralice Higgins
Vice Chair member of São Paulo
Garden Club.

6. Lynden Bohlen-
Member São Paulo Garden Club.
Design Division Chair for the Annual
joint Flower Show of the two clubs
in Brazil.

Members who could not attend:

Regina Bicudo
NGC accredited Life Judge,
Chairman of Clube Paulista de
Jardinagem,
Member of São Paulo Garden Club
SP FS Judges Council,
Chairman of annual FS

Malu Toledo
NGC accredited Life Judge,
Chairman São Paulo Garden Club.
Member SP FS Judges Council

SP= São Paulo Garden Club.
FS = Flower Show

Other Highlights of NGC Clubs in Brazil

- The Handbook for Flower Shows is officially translated to Portuguese with the blessing of NGC.
- Refreshers are now virtual.
- The first class of Accredited Judges were trained in the seventies by NGC instructors from the US. Today Latin America enjoys a group of talented Spanish speaking Flower Show School Instructors.
- The last group of Judges in Brazil were trained in Spanish.
- The rest of Latin America uses the Handbook translated to Spanish.
- The clubs in Latin-America have banded together to form a group called 'COMAAI' (Committee for International Affiliate Activities).
- COMAAI has a website in Spanish <http://www.comaai.org>.
- This group just put on a virtual convention complete with virtual tours, refreshers for the various educational schools and an extensive virtual flower show with the online events taking place throughout this year.
- COMAAI also sponsors regular virtual presentations from the various countries with topics ranging from Horticulture, Design, Botanical Arts, and other topics related to NGC objectives such as landscaping and ecology.

Dilemma of the Garden clubs in Brazil.

- Just like NGC anywhere else in USA, Brazil faces similar challenges of attracting and retaining members.
- Their clubs have an older demographic, leading to concerns about sustainability and generational gaps.
- Their apprehension is as lifestyle changes - Interest in Gardening is being replaced by other hobbies.
- They fear the changes in the economy and its impact on donations and membership fees, thus limiting resources for club initiatives.

Hopefully, NGC at headquarters will come up with innovative initiatives to help out garden clubs to thrive and survive into the future!



Jolly Sinha is a member of TFGC, the Rachel Jackson Garden Club, New Neighbors Garden Club, T.A.G.S., District II Judges Council, HSMT & the Organization of Floral Art Designers (OFAD).



Living With Roses

by Morna Conway, PhD, Murfreesboro, TN

I grew up in Edinburgh, Scotland where the temperature rarely got above 70 in the summer, and winters were sometimes snowy but not arctic. The climate is considered maritime, gardening Zone 8b. Everyone had roses flourishing in their gardens, and most people had beds of roses in their front gardens, making a stroll around the neighborhood a treat for the senses during the summer and fall. Roses were everywhere, in cottage gardens mingling with tall phlox, hollyhocks, and lilies, and in formal public rose gardens. Perhaps I am remembering those days through rose-colored glasses – but the only fertilizer we used was a good application of well-rotted manure in spring. There were no insecticidal or fungicidal sprays, because there was no blackspot. It turns out that, in Scotland, prior to the Clean Air Act of 1956 sulfur dioxide levels in the air (from burning coal) were high enough to act as a natural fungicide. Once the air quality improved, blackspot became a major problem.

Fast forward several decades. I emigrated to the United States in the 70s, settling first in Maryland (Zone 7a), and later in Tennessee (Zone 7b). My gardens were always full of roses, some in beds, many in pots, acquired at local garden centers, and occasionally via mail order. That changed in the early 2000s when e-commerce provided a new way of ordering roses. My passion (or addiction?) increased drastically when I moved from my farm in Shelbyville, TN to Murfreesboro in 2021, to a house with large, and largely un-landscaped gardens in the front and back – plenty of room for new flower beds, new raised beds, and containers on the deck and against the back fence. The first winter, I planned out my first new beds (in the front) and scoured the online rose growers' catalogs and websites to find the perfect combinations of colors and forms. Each winter, I've added new beds and now have over 250 roses, most coming from Edmunds Roses, Gurney's, Jackson & Perkins, Heirloom, and Spring Hill, most ordered as bareroot for planting in spring (Heirloom ships own root potted roses).

I have had two weather-related disasters (sub-zero cold snaps that some of the younger roses couldn't endure) and one water leak, which resulted in a large swath of the front yard being dug up to reach the broken pipe and the loss of 20 hybrid teas and a number of companion plantings. I also had a plague of gophers that chomped through the roots of several rose bushes. The cure for that was to encase the roots in wire mesh, sprinkle disgusting-smelling deterrent around the flower beds, and try to motivate my two Yorkshire terriers and my Great Pyrenees to be more vigilant about critters in the flower beds (the latter did not work). We have suffered through drought, ice storms, windstorms, and incredible heat and humidity. But the

thing about roses is that, no matter how tough conditions are, they cast their magical spell – their beauty, their fragrance, their intrigue – over me, and I keep going.

Organic gardening is very important to me. I am committed to helping the pollinators survive and thrive, I recycle as much as I possibly can (food, flowers, plants, plastic, paper, glass, metal) to minimize my carbon footprint, and I use only fertilizers, fungicides and insecticides that are benign – products like Neem oil and fertilizers like cow manure, natural mint compost, bone meal, and alfalfa meal. I don't use chemicals on my lawn and leave the leaves each fall as shelter for insects. Each spring, I release thousands of ladybugs in my garden to help stop the aphids. That really works. I feed the birds year-round and I think they, in return, keep the slugs and snails, the ants and flies, the caterpillars, beetles and aphids under control.

Through endless research, for example checking the *American Rose Society's Handbook for Selecting Roses*, which assigns a score to hundreds of cultivars that have been reviewed by rose growers around the country, to see which roses are performing best, I keep myself educated. I keep careful records of all the roses I plant, which ones do best in this challenging environment, which ones are possibly better suited to cooler or less humid climates. I attend rose shows, although I do not compete (my professional life has required me to be highly competitive, and I really just want to enjoy my roses in the peace and quiet of home), and I am a member of the Nashville Rose Society, which has some wonderful programs for the rose enthusiast. In the past, I have greatly enjoyed hosting the Flower Growers Garden Club of Murfreesboro at my home.

These days, I'm fascinated by the old roses, many of which outperform modern roses in trials. My old roses include Dainty Bess (1925), Jacques Cartier (1868), Louise Odier (1851), and Louis Philippe (1834). My favorite modern roses (at present) are Elle, Oh My!, Love at First Sight, Grateful Heart, Garden Delight, Belinda's Dream, Just Joey, Sweet Rose of Mine, Summer Surprise, Crescendo, Good as Gold, and of course Peace.

Gardening with roses is my joy, and I love to show off my flower beds to anyone who passes by. If you're in the neighborhood, I hope you'll "Stop and smell the roses"!



Rosa 'Sweet Rose of Mine'



Rosa 'Oh My!'™



Rosa 'Elle'®



Rosa 'Larger Than Life'



Rosa 'Love At First Sight'

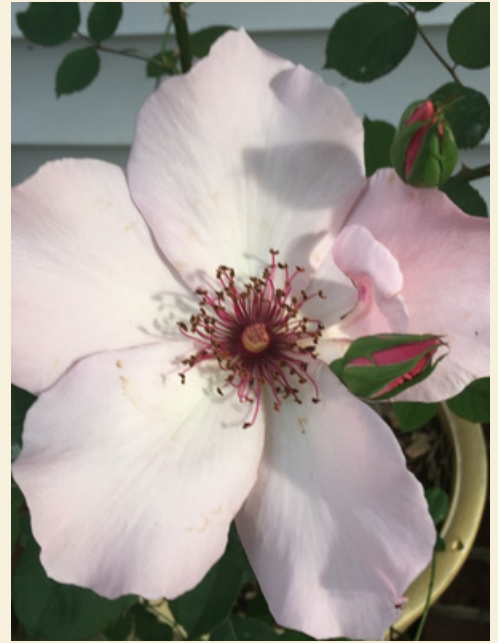


Rosa 'Painted Moon'





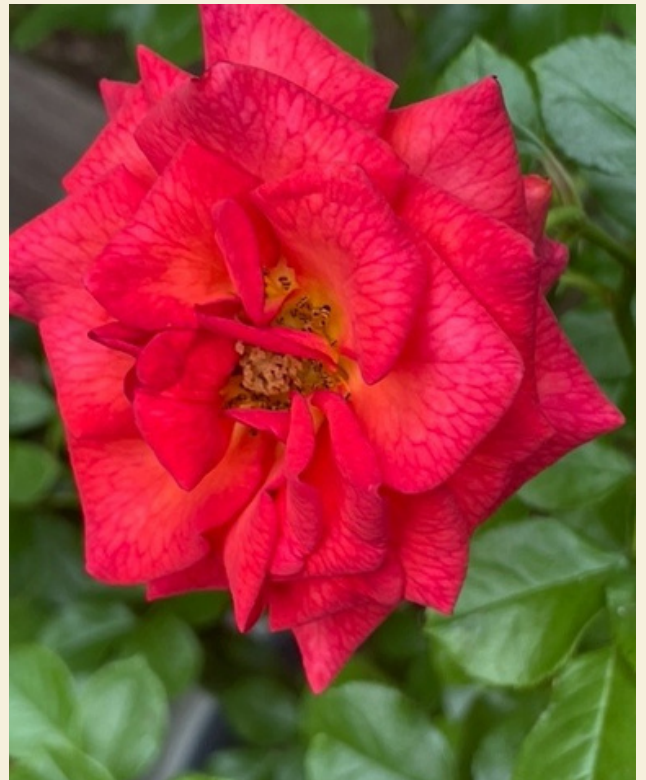
Rosa 'Cherry Parfait'



Rosa 'Dainty Bess'

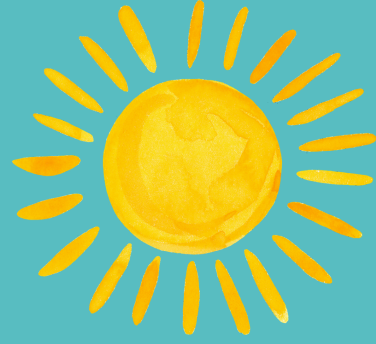


Rosa 'Good As Gold' TM



Rosa 'Ay Caramba!'





Youth

Gardening



District II

Evening Belle Garden Club



This past fall, the Evening Belle Garden Club partnered with Christ the King School in Nashville to initiate the Citizen Scientist Program with the second graders. Each month, the club introduced a new project, with the goal of teaching students about plants & nature. Susie Francescon Bateman, a Christ the King alumna, led the first session in September 2025.



THE
Hunt
IS ON



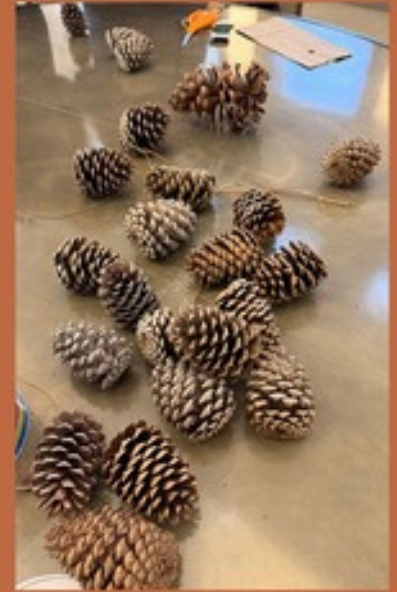
In the second session of the Citizen Scientist Program in October 2025, Evening Belle Garden Club members helped the second graders make beautiful creations with leaves, twigs, seeds and flowers!



Excerpts from Christ the King School Facebook page. Youth photo releases on file.



This Citizen Scientist session focused on teaching the students about caring for birds during the winter months by making bird feeders from pinecones.



Submitted by Asha Joyce



Franklin County Garden Club District II



Brenda Mahoney (Smokey chairperson),
Lola Eslick, Doris Crawford, Jeanie Du Gan and
Karen Rizzuti hold up our Franklin County Garden
Club winning posters for 3rd, 4th, & 5th grade.



Broadview Elementary Fifth Graders in Winchester, TN learned about birds and made pinecone bird feeders to take home. Karen Rizzuti was the Franklin County Garden Club team leader teaching the students about birds. The club is excited to welcome spring, and will be working in the school garden soon!



Submitted by Lola Eslick; Youth photo releases on file.



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.

A vibrant field of flowers, including pink and yellow daisies, is shown under a bright, glowing sun. The scene is captured in a soft, warm light, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The text is overlaid on the image in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

**PEOPLE THINK GARDENING
IS ABOUT GROWING PLANTS.
IT'S REALLY ABOUT GROWING
PATIENCE — AND PEACE.**