2026 TFGC Endowment Trust Fund Grant Recipients

Congratulations goes to the 4 clubs and one district receiving matching grants from the TFGC Endowment Trust Fund for 2026. Matching grants were awarded to District I, Garden Club of Rosemark and Germantown Garden Club also in District I while Busy Bees Dayton Garden Club in District III and Tuckaleechee Garden Club in District IV rounded out the five grant recipients. The matching grants ranged in value from $1,000.00 to $357.50 and the total amount awarded to the five clubs combined is $2,957.50.

Both District I and The Garden Club of Rosemark will each use their grant money to refurbish a Blue Star Marker. District I ‘s marker is located at the Memphis Botanic Garden installed in 2007 while the Rosemark Marker was dedicated on April 4, 1998 and is located in the Rosemark community. Mr. Tom Snellings of Historical Restorations Markers who is approved by the NGC will be contracted to do the work restoring the two markers to their original pristine condition. The restorations should be good for the next twenty years. These two projects promote Civic Development and Historic Preservation, two of the purposes of the TFGC as stated in its charter and bylaws.

Germantown Garden Club will use their grant money to establish a new bluebird trail in the area of Municipal Park. The location of the trail will provide citizens with the opportunity to learn about bluebirds which became the city bird for Germantown several years ago. The Germantown Garden Club will present programs for children at the library about how to care for bluebirds so its population can continue to grow. Hopefully the programs will encourage children and their parents to establish one or more bluebird boxes in their own yards. The Germantown Parks and Recreation Department and the Shelby County Chapter of the Tennessee Bluebird Society will determine the placement of the bluebird boxes with this combined effort further strengthening the relationship between Germantown Garden Club and the City of Germantown. The club will monitor the boxes, make repairs and report the bluebird activity (eggs laid, hatched and nestlings fledged) to the Shelby County Chapter of the TBS who will report the numbers to the TBS. This project promotes Endangered Species, one of the TFGC purposes.

The Busy Bees Garden Club will use their grant money to enhance their beautification project of the Dayton, Tennessee Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center. The plants and shrubs already installed are resilient and easy to grow incorporating native plants, providing a great display of color and a habitat for pollinators.

Phase two partially funded by the grant will include starter native plants, native flower and pollinator seed, a pollinator hotel, materials for a free library box, a garden bench, and signs for the description of plants, their purpose and names. This project promotes the TFGC purpose of Landscape Design.

The Tuckaleechee Garden Club will use their grant to enhance the landscaping the garden club currently maintains at the Townsend Elementary School’s flagpole and school sign. The grant will

also allow the garden club to add new landscape to the left side of the school entrance doors. Upon completion of the landscape project, the students, school staff, parents and visitors will be greeted with color, texture and a pleasing landscape which will offer interest throughout the changing seasons. This project like the Dayton Garden Club project promotes the Landscape Design purpose of the TFGC.

Hopefully, the new grant projects will offer inspiration for other clubs to apply for TFGC Endowment Trust Fund Grants in the 2027 application cycle. The trustees look forward to awarding more grants next year helping our TFGC Garden Clubs to make a positive difference in their communities while creating an awareness of the good work and value of garden clubs. If your club is not ready to embark upon a new project with a grant application, you can still participate in the ETF grant program by being a financial contributor. Donations can be made to the fund in any amount in memory of someone, in honor of someone or because you believe in the value of the ETF and want to make a difference and want to see the funds remain viable. The Trust Fund depends upon all of us for its success so why not donate TODAY. Go to tngardenclubs.org, click on resources, forms and publications and scroll down to ETF where you will find the current ETF Contribution Form. The ETF trustees thank you in advance for your financial support!

Submitted by Chris Kelyman

District I ETF Trustee and Chairman