



SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

(Arkansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma & Texas)

The Communicator

2024 VOL. 17— February, 2025

Sarah McReynolds, Director 2023-2025



(PHOTO CREDIT: Heather White)

THE RETREAT:

POLLINATOR PARTNERS

Please make plans to attend the SCR Convention in Albuquerque to celebrate the 2023-2025 Administration of SCR Director Sarah McReynolds.

Heather White has written a play in Sarah's honor titled "The Retreat; Pollinator Partners" which will be performed by various members of SCR. It features both their performances and

a sequence of video presentations highlighting various pollinators and environmental concerns." Both of these areas are near and dear to Sarah. The costuming alone is worth your time! Hopefully you will learn some interesting facts about pollinators – both the common ones you know and some more unusual ones, like elephants.



Message from Our SCR Director...

Plant America – Pollinate South Central



I want to let each and everyone of the members of South Central Region know how proud I am of you and your clubs for promoting the pollinators and my theme, "Pollinating South Central Region". There have been hundreds of programs and workshops all over our region, educating ourselves and others about the importance of pollinators in this world.

I have been invited and visited over twenty five clubs, districts and states that have supported this theme by buying all the pollinator merchandise for our scholarships. I want to thank each and every one of you. I think we are all realizing the importance of the pollinators in our food chain and in the global picture of our food and our future.

In the upcoming months, we will continue to visit, do programs and promote our common goal of education on pollinators. I want each of you to consider attending the SCR Convention in Albuquerque. The members of New Mexico Garden Clubs have several fun, inspirational and educational meetings planned for us. "Bee Enchanted in New Mexico" is their theme, with BEE as in pollinators. We have a skit for you, in which many of the states' officers and chairmen will be performing, which will explain my administration of promoting the pollinators. Heather White has written the script and gathered many of the pollinator costumes. This will be a fun time for all of us. Design, Historical and the Awards Programs are also going to featured. We will also install the new Director, New Mexico's Christine Longthorp, along with the other officers for 2025-2027. You will enjoy this convention and the hospitality of the New Mexico Garden Clubs, so please plan to attend.

As SCR Director I have attended many NGC Executive Zoom Meetings and have represented our four states on all occasions. I want to assure you on the National level, the schools will continue to function as always as we attempt to make a transition to a more digital form of keeping records. I am writing an article in the NGC's publication, "The National Gardener" about the future of our schools, and any new record keeping in the future. Also I helped select the NGC Scholarship recipients as part of my job on the NGC Executive Board.

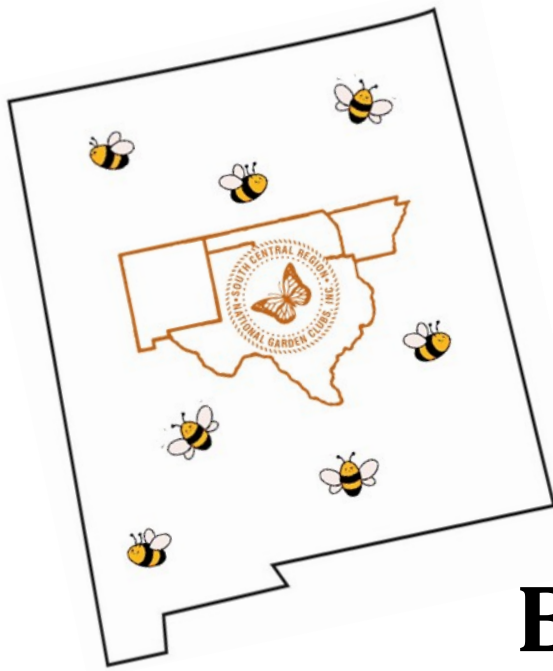
I also want to applaud each state for their work on the Blue Star and Gold Star Markers. I applied for a National Regional Award for the outstanding work our region had done to increase the blue markers as well as many gold markers. Our SCR Chairman, Shirley Tetreault has gone way beyond in leading our region with many markers, with New Mexico at the top of the list. I am proud of our region for remembering our service personnel and their families.

Keep up the good work and stay faithful to each other as we pollinate South Central Region.

See you at the SCR Convention.

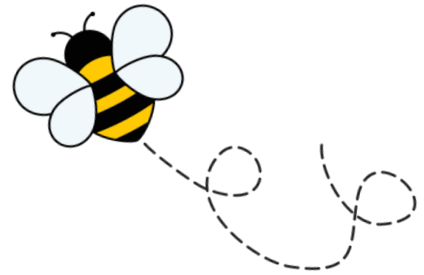
Fondly, Sarah McReynolds





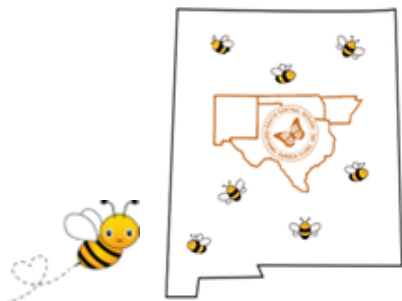
SAVE THE DATE

**Bee
Enchanted
in New Mexico**



**SOUTH CENTRAL REGION CONVENTION
IN
APRIL 16-17, 2025
Embassy Suites
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO**

**We will tour the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center,
Get Up Close and personal with Pollinators of the Night
See a great Pollinator Skit,
Learn all about Bees and Create a Bee House
And Enjoy a fabulous Design program followed by Officer Installation**



2025 South Central Region Convention **Registration Form**



SOUTH CENTRAL REGION **GARDEN CLUBS, INC.** **2025 Annual Meeting & Convention** **"Bee Enchanted in New Mexico"** **April 16 & 17, 2025**

Print Your Name As you would like it to appear on your name tag.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Garden Club(s): _____

Please mark either Early Package or Late Package:

Package includes:

Registration fee, Wednesday Tour, Lunch, Bee House Workshop, Dinner and Feathered Friends Program, Thursday Lunch, Bee & Honey Presentation, SCR Director's Reception, Installation Banquet, and after party.

EARLY PACKAGE

(Postmarked on or before 3/24/2025) \$ 350.00 ____

LATE PACKAGE

(Postmarked after 3/24/2025) \$ 375.00 ____

NOTE: No refunds on registration after registration close of 3/24/2025. *Registration fee of \$50.00 is NON-REFUNDABLE.*

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

CREDENTIALS: *Please circle all that apply. NOTE: If you are unsure of anything, please do not circle it. Someone will help you when you register at the convention.*

NGC President, NGC Officer, NGC Chair, NGC Committee Member, NGC Life Member, SCR Director, Past SCR Director, SCR Officer, SCR Chair, SCR Committee Member, SCR Life Member, State President, Former State President, State Officer, State Chair, State Life Member, State District Director, Club President, Club Member, Flower Show Judge

HOTEL: Embassy Suite Hotel

1000 Woodward Pl NE, Albuquerque, NM 87102

Two Queens or One King \$159 (plus tax)

***Deadline for special room rate
is March 20, 2025.***

Please make checks payable to:

NM Garden Clubs 2025 SCR Convention

mail them to:

Mary Noskin, 2025 SCR Convention Registrar

7615 Guadalupe Trail NW, Los Ranchos, NM 87107

(505)238-5731 noskinmary@gmail.com

South Central Region Garden Clubs Annual Meeting & Convention



“Bee Enchanted in New Mexico”

Wednesday April 16 – Thursday April 17, 2025

at the **Embassy Suites Hotel**



NM Garden Clubs is Host for the South-Central Region Convention

If you have not been to a South-Central Region convention NOW is your opportunity! Come meet garden club friends from our region (NM, TX, OK & AR) and HAVE FUN!!!

Wednesday we will start our day with a private guided tour of the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center and all it offers (including shopping) and a special indigenous lunch.

We will return to the hotel to experience a **Bee house Workshop**, given by Christine Longthorp.

We will have some **great vendors for your shopping pleasure.**

Wednesday evening will start with a fabulous program from Wildlife Rescue on “Our Feathered Friends are Pollinators, Too!” Due to the needs of the feathered friends who will be coming for us to see, a Southwest 505 buffet will **follow** the program. ***Wear your southwestern jewelry to dinner.***

Thursday morning, we will have the annual business meeting and awards presentation.

Thursday Lunch will be highlighted by a special performance, a play “*The Retreat: Pollinator Partners*” written by Heather White of Texas, on behalf of our SCR Director, Sarah McReynolds. ***Wear your bee accessories and or yellow and black colors.***

Thursday afternoon we will have a presentation on “**All about Bees and Honey**” from NM Beekeeper, Ken Hayes. He will bring lots of things for you to buy.

Thursday’s evening will start with the **SCR Director’s Reception** followed by a **dinner banquet and design program** by NM Master Judge, and former American Rose Society Region Director, Kreg Hill, all the way from his home in Palm Springs, CA. He will create a line design, turn it into a line mass design and then turn it into a mass design. ***Wear your “Something special” outfit to dinner.***

We will end the evening with the **Installation of New Mexico Garden Clubs, Christine Longthorp**, the 2025-2027 South Central Region Director and New Mexico Garden Clubs will host an **after party** with bubbles and chocolate treats.

South Central Region Garden Clubs Annual Meeting & Convention

“Bee Enchanted in New Mexico”

Wednesday April 16 – Thursday April 17, 2025

at the Embassy Suites Hotel, Albuquerque, NM

Wednesday, April 16, 2025

8:30am Leave for Indian Pueblo Cultural Center
 9:00 am Indian Pueblo Cultural Center Tour & Lunch
 1:00 pm Return to Hotel
 1:30 pm SCR 2023-2025 Executive Committee Meeting
 2:30 pm SCR Incoming 2025-2027 Executive Committee Meeting
 3:30 pm Bee House Workshop
 5:00 pm “Our Feathered Friends Are Pollinators Too” program
 followed by dinner

Thursday, April 17, 2025

9:00 am SCR General Business Meeting
 12:00 noon Lunch and
 “The Retreat: Pollinator Partners” play by Heather White
 2:00 pm “All About Bees and Honey” program
 5:00 pm SCR Directors Reception honoring Sarah McReynolds
 6:00 pm Dinner
 7:30 pm Design Program by Kreg Hill
 8:30 pm Installation of Christine Longthorp
 9:00 pm After party for 2025-2027 SCR Director, Christine Longthorp



NM Garden Clubs' Annual Meeting & Convention

Monday April 14-Tuesday April 15, 2025
at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Albuquerque.
& WE ARE CELEBRATING OUR 75TH BIRTHDAY!

The **NM Judges Council dinner** on Monday night will be a Challenge Design program. This is where eight designers will be given the same design container (created by Suzy Andrego) and the same exact plant materials and design mechanics. Then we will award the people's choice award for the audiences favorite design. Followed by the opportunity to bid on the designs created and take one home with you. We will also celebrate NM Judges Council birthday and have the Installation of new officers. ***Wear green to match our state logo.***

This will be a TON of fun!

Tuesday will be the annual business meeting. Followed by lunch and a recycled fashion show sponsored by The Assistance League of Albuquerque. ***Wear your denim and a Zia symbol to show your NM pride!***

Tuesday afternoon there will be a reception at the Albuquerque Garden Center, hosted by the Council of Albuquerque Garden Clubs, in honor of their 75th birthday. Lots of Birthday Celebrations this year!

Tuesday evening will bring the President's reception, the annual President's parade, the Awards Banquet, the installation of President Elect Johnese Turri. The evening will end with a big birthday party. ***Wear your semi-formal outfit (Sparkles are encouraged) to our 75th birthday party!***

Every Event will be a giant birthday celebration!

The state convention committee is working hard to make this a fabulous 75th Birthday Celebration!



NEW MEXICO GARDEN CLUBS, INC.
2025 Annual Meeting & Convention
"Happy 75th Birthday NM Garden Clubs!"
April 14 & 15, 2025

2025 NMGC Convention Registration Form

Print Your Name As you would like it to appear on your name tag.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Garden Club(s): _____

CREDENTIALS: Please circle all that apply. **NOTE:** If you are unsure of anything, please do not circle it. Someone will help you when you register at the convention.

NGC President, NGC Officer, NGC Chair, NGC Committee Member, NGC Life Member, SCR Director, Past SCR Director, SCR Officer, SCR Chair, SCR Committee Member, SCR Life Member, State President, Former State President, State Officer, State Chair, State Life Member, State District Director, Club President, Club Member, Flower Show Judge,

Please mark either Early Package or Late Package:

Package includes:

Registration fee, Tuesday Lunch, President's Reception, Awards Banquet, and installation 75th birthday celebration.

EARLY PACKAGE

(Postmarked on or before 3/24/2025) \$ 175.00 ____

LATE PACKAGE

(Postmarked after 3/24/2025) \$ 200.00 ____

NOTE: No refunds on registration after registration close of 3/24/2023. *Registration fee of \$50.00 is NON-REFUNDABLE.*

NM JUDGES COUNCIL: (not in package plan)

Monday, April 14, 2025

NM Judges Council Dinner/Program & 75th Birthday Celebration

The Judges Council Program will be a Challenge Design program, with the opportunity to bid on a design immediately following the program. Dinner will be Chicken & Roasted Pork Loin ***D inner & Program Fee*** \$ 75.00 ____

NOTE: All NMCG Members and Guests are welcome and highly encouraged to attend the NM Judges Council Dinner and Program.

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

HOTEL: Embassy Suite Hotel

1000 Woodward Pl NE, Albuquerque, NM 87102

Two Queens or One King \$159 (plus tax)

Deadline for special room rate is March 15, 2025.

Hotel Reservation Link:

[NM GARDEN CLUB](https://www.nmgardenclub.org/)

Please make checks payable to:

NM Garden Clubs 2025 Convention

mail them to:

Mary Noskin, 2025 SCR Convention Registrar



Message from Arkansas 2023-2025

President, Pam Ellis

This will be my last article as President of the Arkansas Federation of Garden Clubs. It is a bitter sweet time because I loved being President but I am ready to allow someone else the opportunity to lead. It is with changes that improvements can be made. As Gail Sheehy said, "If we don't change, we don't grow, we are not really living. Or as Dostoevsky put it, "Taking a new step, uttering a new word, is what people fear the most." The real fear should be the opposite." So, I look forward to seeing what my "After President" role will be to the AFGC, SCR and NGC. Arkansas has a busy year ahead with a lot of activities we would love to have you join us in enjoying.

February 21-22 – State Flower Show at the Home Builders Association Central Arkansas Home and Garden Show at the State Fair Ground in Little Rock.

March 24-26 – Flower Show School – Course 4 – Holiday Inn Airport, Little Rock

April 29 – 30 – AFGC Convention – Embassy Suites, Little Rock.

May 19-21 – NGC Convention – Charleston, South Carolina

August – Mid – Year Board Meeting

September – Flower Show School – Course 1

September 11 & 12 – NGC Garden School – Course 3

October – District meetings

The best thing about February is that we know that Spring is right around the corner. It's a little too early to start planting seed or annuals outside but there are somethings we can do. We are able to cut back a lot of stuff this time of the year, because most things are not actively growing. Pruning now means that when plants do wake up in the spring, they can put all their energy into the stems we do want, rather than wasting it on ones we don't. I generally begin with anything that's obviously going crazy in the wind like climbing roses, clematis and wisteria. Prune the long, scraggly stems/branches and, for neatness and stability, tie the remainder to a fence or trellis, etc. I am fond of letting the wisteria run a bit wild over the fence though! The berries are long gone from the beautyberry, so they are pruned to about 6 inches. Then I stroll through the yard and cut back any herbaceous plants I may have missed cleaning up in the fall, like mums and garden phlox. The coneflowers, hellebores and peonies can all benefit from removing dead leaves and stems, so the sun can encourage new flowers to peak out. Any stems that don't gently pull from the ground may be cut to about 6 inches. Any plant or tree that has sustained damage or is diseased should have those parts removed. As a general rule, try to cut just above a bud or node if possible.

People tend to be timid with pruning and, oftentimes, don't take off enough. So, prune back to where you think it should be – and then cut back one bud further. Be brave!!

Stay Safe and Happy Gardening

Pam Ellis, Arkansas President



Message from New Mexico 2023-2025 President, Debra Sorrell

"Grow Through What You Go Through"

Have the other states in our region had winter?! In New Mexico, we have had above average temperatures for most of December and January. Now we are in February and it's still pretty warm. Of course, to go with those temperatures, there has been no significant precipitation either. We would love rain of any kind but, for us, it's all about snowpack. We are high mountain desert – our soils are largely sandy and don't retain what little rain we get. If our mountains are not covered in snow most of the winter, there is no spring runoff. No spring runoff means that the lakes, streams and reservoirs don't refill. Those water resources are necessary to sustain any kind of agriculture, to provide water to towns around the state and to deliver legally obligated water to other states. I heard on the news the other night that we have just had the driest year in 40 years and the warmest in recorded history. The strain of "climate change" is becoming more and more apparent everywhere. Epic droughts and floods, record setting temperatures, a foot of snow in the deep south, devastating hurricanes and fires.....all add up to bigger and bigger challenges for gardeners, just in their own back yards! It has put a whole new spin on my theme "Grow Through What You Go Through". Gardeners are resilient, though. I am anxious to see how these climate issues change what we do and how we have to adapt to get it done.

I attended the 39th Annual "Think Trees New Mexico" conference here in Albuquerque. The focus is on training and education credits for people in the tree industryarborists, landscapers, trimmers, garden maintenance crews, etc. But, the information was fascinating and so relevant to the interests of NGC. Trees are important and valuable and necessary. Just like us, trees are showing signs of stress from the new norms of climate. Incredibly, I heard a talk on soils (usually fairly boring) that made me want to quit everything I'm doing and move to Oregon to become a soils scientist under this guy!! I'm 72 so that's not very practical but, it is always fun to be inspired by someone so passionate in their field! Two amazing arborists from right here in New Mexico began this conference in 1986 (they are both still involved) and this last week it was attended by 425+ people from several states!

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The Fall meetings have all passed and I'm sure that everyone knows by now that Suzy Andrego, from our state, has been selected as the National 2nd VP nominee. We are so proud of her and excited to share her with the rest of the country (for a little while). It is a tremendous honor for Suzy, who has devoted most of her adult life to Garden Club. BUT.....it is also a great honor for the State of New Mexico and South-Central Region. It has been a very long time since the National President came from a more western state. I hope that the region will support and help with her future administration. We are looking forward to Suzy's influence and input on the national level.

Congratulations, Suzy!!

After the holidays settle down, winter is a slow season for many who long to have their hands in the dirt. It seems to be a time to stay in, out of the wind or cold, and peruse your seed catalogs for treasures to plant in the spring. UNLESS you're on a committee that is planning two conventions! The planning for the 2025 New Mexico State convention (April 14-15, 2025) and the 2025 South Central Region convention April 16-17, 2025) has been hot and heavy for the last few weeks. Both will be held in Albuquerque, and we couldn't be more excited. For SCR, there will be amazing speakers, a field trip to the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, receptions, a skit, vendors, friends and fun to be had by all! The festivities will conclude with the installation of our new SCR Director, New Mexico Past President and club member, Christine Longthorp. I would like to officially invite ALL the members from Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas garden clubs to come and check out this part of the region. We are looking forward to showing off the unique culture and landscapes of the Land of Enchantment and to welcome you as our guests. Be sure to look for the registration form in this publication. We would LOVE to have you for both conventions! If you're coming to Albuquerque anyway, give yourself some extra time to soak in the area (and the food!) and attend the New Mexico Annual Spring Convention, too. Four days of fun! We would love to have you! Please join us!!

Debra Sorrell, New Mexico Garden Clubs President



**THANK YOU to ALL who Support
the South Central Region Awards
with funding!!**





Message from Oklahoma 2023-2025 President, Carolyn McCabe

“Green Grows the Garden— Plant OK”

Well, we got what we asked for, cooler weather – and how. Our gardens are resting now as, hopefully, all of us are. This is the time to reflect on the past year and congratulate ourselves and others on accomplishments. It is also the time to look forward to the new year and begin formulating plans for the year to come.

A big Congratulations go to Judy Grotts this month. Judy has been awarded the National Garden Clubs, Inc., Designer of the month! Judy is from Chandler, Oklahoma and a former NGC South-Central Region Director. She has been a long-term member of Cushing Gladiolas Garden club (since 1970) and a member of Tulsa Garden Club since 1996. She is also a member of National Floral Arrangers, CFFA and Dallas Flower Show Judges Founders Group. Judy was influenced to become a gardener by her grandmother Mary Hoffman and Pauline Jenkins. She loves to create any floral design type but her favorite design type is Creative designs, where she can incorporate plant material from her own gardens. Judy loves giving design and horticulture programs to local garden clubs, design clubs and many out of state garden and design clubs, traveling to help spread the love of floral design. Judy is a very active National Garden Club member. She is a Master Flower Show Judge, a Garden Study Consultant, an Environmental Consultant and a Landscape Design Consultant. She is a Five Star Member of National Garden Clubs (this means she has achieved Master status at all Four NGC schools). One of her favorite parts of floral designing is seeing the joy and excitement in people's eyes and hearing all the fabulous comments when people see the designs that are being exhibited. Judy's advice to new garden club members & floral designers is to have fun when designing and never be afraid to fail!

Congratulations also goes to the Tulsa Garden Club for receiving a Plant America Grant. Woo Hoo.

Our state youth coloring contests are in full swing, as well as the President's Project showing how and encouraging youth across the state to garden.

I'd like to thank all the clubs that sponsored NGC flower shows this past year and the designers along with new designers that entered their designs. There can be no shows without you! The next show will be held on February 22nd, **“Celebrate Presidents Day”**, at the Rubey Atkinson Garden Center, in Midwest City, hosted by the Oklahoma Council of Flower Show Judges.

(Continued on page 12)



Message from Texas
2023-2025 President,
Lee Taylor

“Choose your path and make a difference “

Hope each of you enjoyed memorable times with family and friends during Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's celebrations and also made your attainable 'RESOLUTIONS' for the coming year.

Things are progressing at Texas Headquarters. We are preparing for an Open House February 23 showing what we have to offer to vendors in the area. Our event planner, Alisa Russell-Sykes has been busy coordinating dates and lining up events...our commitment and hard work are coming to fruition. Many thanks to the members of our great state for your loyalty to and support of Texas Garden Clubs, Inc. as we emerge better and stronger than ever with our financial position leveling off.

I had the distinct pleasure of visiting Rose Garden Club of Medina in October to help them celebrate their 75th Anniversary. Their community support was amazing as evidenced by the attendance. This was such a special treat as I got to meet so many new people.

Our State Fall Board Meeting was held again at Headquarters, October 22-23. In the area of Awards, National Garden Clubs made a few changes in Youth Awards by reinstating the Youth Essay Contest and also expanding the Poetry Contest Grade Eligibility from K-9 to K-12. Wishing all clubs the best of luck on their awards...it is their time to shine.

We are working on a new project being developed by National Garden Clubs, Inc. to place a Blue and/or Gold Star Marker at each Presidential Library in the United States. Texas needs markers at three libraries...Lyndon B. Johnson (Austin), George H. W. Bush (College Station) and George Bush (Dallas). This project has been turned over to Bobbie Mason, our State Blue Star Marker Chair... and she has hit the ground running... everyone is already hard at work and will be keeping me posted on progress.

If you ever have a chance to attend the Houston Federation of Garden Clubs Winter GALA, make an extra effort to attend in December... it felt just like being in a “Winter Wonderland” as if you were transported to the North Pole with soooo many wonderful holiday delectable sweets as well as many prizes and raffle items available for Christmas shopping. The program was simply amazing...Christmas floral designs... and

(Continued on Page 12)

(Continued from page 10) Spring and early summer will be busy for all of us. I will be attending the South Central Region Convention, hosted by the New Mexico Garden Clubs in Albuquerque, on April 16th and 17th. I will also be at the Oklahoma 2025 State Convention in Lawton on April 24th and 25th along with the annual State Wildflower Workshop on April 26th hosted by the Southwest District and I'm looking forward to seeing all of you at the NGC Convention in Charleston, South Carolina in May.

Carolyn McCabe

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the floral arrangements were auctioned off at the conclusion of the GALA.

On a more somber note... the City of Fort Worth has done a "180" after offering to work with us in any way possible to resolve the ownership of the property owned by TGC located at the Botanic Gardens. They have filed a lawsuit again claiming to own the land. We have engaged an attorney and are committed to ending this matter finally. He understands our position and is committed to helping us.

Two years can certainly fly by at break-neck speed. The second Spring Convention will be here April 1. I am looking forward to seeing each of you in Nacogdoches and getting a chance to catch up. Christine Fincher, Judith Bussey and the District III Team are really working extremely hard to make our experiences in the oldest city in Texas both fun and memorable ones, especially located at the historic Fredonia Hotel. This will be my last State Convention as Texas' State President. It has been both a privilege and an honor to serve.

Check out the TGC and NGC Websites for information on the dates of schools. Environmental School (Course 3) will be held January 10-12, 2025, Fort Parker State Park, Mexia (Sarah McReynolds); Flower Show School (Course IV) will be held in January 27-30, 2025, United Way 12300 Parcels Crest Drive, Stafford, (Regena Williamson, Chair); Landscape Design School February 10-11, 2025 George H. W. Bush Library, College Station (Michele Wehrheim, Chair); and Gardening School (Course 4) will be held February 3-4, 2025) San Antonio Garden Center (Karen Taylor, Chair). There is always something new to learn each time you attend. Whether you choose ZOOM or "In Person classes," you will not be disappointed. Our Instructors are top notch.

The Spring Calendar is full of Conventions. April 1-4 will be the TGC Spring Convention in Nacogdoches, April 16-17 will be the South Central Region Spring Convention in Albuquerque, and May 18-22 will be the National Garden Club Convention in Charleston.

This past year, 2024, has been a hard year for many of our garden club members. Illness and death have altered so many members' lives. Thoughts and prayers are with you now as well as prayers for comfort and strength throughout the new year ahead. The best is yet to come!!

Blessings to each of you,

Lee Taylor

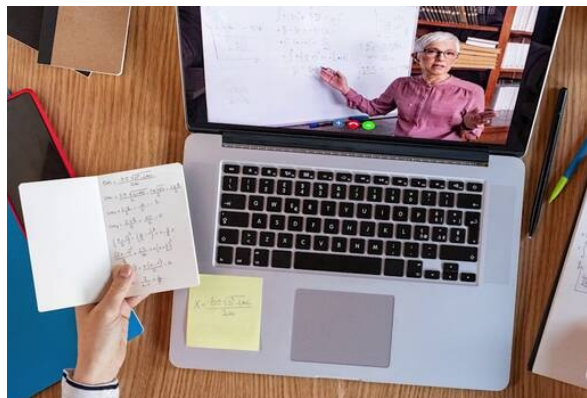
National Garden Club Schools, Judy Grotts, Chairman

Environmental School:

Offers: Unique opportunities for individuals passionate about protecting the planet.

Mission: To promote environmental literacy, encouraging students to appreciate and conserve the natural world.

Focus: On land, water, and air conservation, the school emphasizes sustainable development and the interconnectedness of all living things, making it an ideal choice for anyone eager to make a positive environmental impact.



Gardening School:

- **Duration:** Four courses totaling 2 days of instruction, followed by an exam for those seeking NGC Consultant accreditation.

Topics Covered: Includes botany, soils, pruning, plant identification, tree and shrub care, fruits, vegetables, lawns, pests, and local ecological topics. Special focus on reconciliation ecology, backyard habitats for endangered species, and working with youth.

Landscape School:

- **Goal:** Equip students with the tools to create beautiful, easy-to-maintain gardens. Encourages students to be more engaged in political decision-making related to landscaping and environmental awareness.

History: Founded in 1958 with a high standard for horticulture education.

Flower Show School:

- **Duration:** Four courses, each lasting 2–3 days, focused on horticulture, design, and flower show procedure.

- **Purpose:** Ideal for those looking to become flower show judges, chair shows, or simply learn more about flower shows.

- **Topics Covered:** How to select, groom, and exhibit plants, the art of writing flower show schedules, judging procedures, and principles of floral design. instruction prepares students to judge various types of flower show exhibits (traditional, creative, tables, etc.).

Goal: Equip students with the skills needed for judging flower shows, understanding award processes, and hosting successful shows.

For more information go to the NGC home page, click on schools and select the one you're interested in, then click again to learn more. Don't forget to Check the Schools Resource page for a course near you or one you would like to attend.

By Pam Grotts

To continue our tour of the Horticulture Division of a flower show – let's talk about another class that can add a lot of interest to a flower show – the Collection.

Collections, unlike displays are not, available for club competition – but, from the viewpoint of the sponsoring club – a Section of all collections is a way to showcase available related plants that can be grown in the immediate area to the public. Not to mention it allows the sponsoring club to award a Collector's Showcase Award if they so desire – adding an opportunity for horticulture exhibitors to secure one more available Section award, not always offered.

As a committee wanting to include a section of collections, there are considerations that must be addressed.

Advance registration – this will go a long way to being able to plan the necessary space required.

Staging – a sizable consideration for collections in that the exhibitor will be placing their entry, not the placement clerks. Space! Collections require ample space and maybe a way to spotlight the horticulture division. How and where collections are staged should also be in an area where the exhibitors are not interfering with the placement of other entries.

A second item to remember in staging is that the required relationships will likely dictate the space. A collection of cut arboreal specimens will always take more space than a collection of cut tea roses.

Classification – there is a potential for additional time for each collection to be examined by the Classification Committee and decisions should be made in advance to address the additional time it may take.



Collection of Coleus , NM State Fair, 2013

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So, what is a Collection? A collection (found in NGC FS HB) is defined as an exhibit of specimens judged for their cultural perfection. A few (Not all!) of the requirements to enter are:

An entry or exhibit consists of a minimum of five (5) different specimens exhibited in individual containers or give the appearance of being individually exhibited.

Read your Schedule as it will identify if the class is for cut or container grown specimens.

The specimens **MUST** be related in some fashion such as by family, genus, similar characteristics.



Collection By David Robson



Collection by Suzy Andrego

It is important for the Schedule writer to remember that a section should have Similar relationships. A section might be all foliage or blooming collections with the classes identifying the specific types of relationships – annuals, arboreal, Bromeliads, the writer is limited only by what is being currently grown in the area!

The Schedule will also need to be well defined identifying what relationships are allowed. Is it looking to show off plants with similar characteristics such as culinary herbs or maybe it is a chance to show off the local bounty of heirloom tomatoes?

(Continued from Previous page).

Don't forget there must be at least three classes of collections in a section to be able to offer the Collector's Showcase Award.

This relationship must be identified by the exhibitor on a card.

Again – pay attention to your schedule, the relationship will be identified there and your job is to simply make sure it is on your card. Consider making it the header of your current scientific designations card.

Placement of the exhibit is the responsibility of the exhibitor or club who is exhibiting.

Placement is crucial for this entry. Don't forget – your objective is to present culturally perfect specimens that have been groomed, conditioned, and placed strategically to their best silhouettes.

Each specimen must be correctly and clearly labeled with current scientific designation.

As an exhibitor, in order to “lead” the judges through your entry, consider preparing an additional card or legend that will clearly identify not only the specimens but also the location of the specimens in the entry.

These are just a few, and you can find the rest of them on page 60 of your hardcopy Handbook or page 71 of the digital.



Display by Suzy Andrego

Is a Collection a Display? No and in comparison, collections focus more on the horticulture being exhibited and no consideration for the artistic effect of the exhibit. This means the judges are looking at EACH specimen in your collection and providing an individual score for each one. They are not addressing any points for design artistry. The scores are not averaged, and EACH specimen must secure a score of 95+ for the exhibit to be eligible for the Collector's Showcase Award.

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Display by Isabel Olsen

Only one more important item to point out to any club considering adding a section of collections to their next show – **TIMING** – it is easy to issue a schedule these days and if a section of collections is your goal, give your exhibitors plenty of time to plan those five plants. The exhibitors are going to put in a lot of work bringing their plants along, and giving ample time for them to secure the necessary number of plants to satisfy the ownership requirements is crucial for success!



Chesapeake Bay Garden Club Collector's Showcase Winner, 2021

Herbs Grow in Water

By Sherie Clarkson, Herb Chairman

During the winter months you may miss the fresh herbs that you can snip from your herb garden outside your door. However, with the cold weather, these herbs are not always available, especially if the weather has been freezing. But fear not, as there are many herbs that can be grown inside on a sunny windowsill or under a grow light. Many herbs that can be grown in water, making them perfect for indoor or small-space gardening. Then when it warms up, they can be transferred outside to the herb garden or into a container as they will have plenty of roots. These include rosemary, oregano, thyme, basil, sage, parsley, chives and lemon balm.

You can use regular canning jars or if you have some more decorative jars, that will be fine. Or you can order a fancy kit online.

Fill them with water and place a cutting of the desired herb. This method of growing herbs is called hydroponic gardening. This is a mess-free and pest-free method to enjoy fresh herbs all year long.



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Here are four reasons for growing herbs in water.

To have a convenient supply of fresh herbs in the kitchen. In spring, summer and early autumn, the vegetable garden will be filled with favorite culinary herbs. Yet when in the middle of cooking, running out to the garden to harvest herbs is not always the easiest. A steady supply of herbs like basil, thyme, oregano and mint, clipped in jars of water on the kitchen windowsill are ready for cooking.

To propagate herbs like basil, mint and lemon balm. Many herbs can be propagated by planting stems in water. Depending on the type of herb it may be just a few days or a month or more. Either way, it is a fantastic method for increasing your herb plants.

To enjoy a mess-free and pest-free harvest of indoor herbs. Keeping pots of herbs indoors can mean spilled potting mix, splashed water when irrigating and fungus gnats flying around the house. Growing herbs in water is the solution to these issues as it is a mess-free and pest-free growing technique.

Many herbs can be grown for months in water. Fresh herbs like oregano, lemongrass, mint and basil can be kept in water for weeks and months! In fact, many herbs thrive in water.

So, give growing herbs in water a try. You might find you use your herbs more since they are right there on hand and then when you are ready to move them outside you have a healthy plant with a nice clump of roots to take off growing. Plus, it is a good way to brighten up your kitchen during the winter months.

DOWN THE GARDEN PATH, Gwen DeWitt Garden Consultant

I just got back from Environmental School at Fort Parker State Park. It always seems to be held on the coldest days of the year. Since we stay in the group camp barracks, you need to supply all of your bedding. I take my electric blanket along with sheets and an extra blanket. Even though the barracks have heat - when your bunk is next to windows, it gets nippy when temperatures plunge to 25 degrees.

I love attending the school seeing old friends, making new ones, and always learning something new. Our oldest student was in her mid-80s while our youngest 33. We had interesting classes, hands on projects and a hike. Everyone pitches in to bring snacks and beverages (some of which are made from grapes). We had fresh homemade cream of mushroom soup made by one of the attendees that raises mushrooms – delicious! The school is a time to celebrate and learn about the Earth and how we can take care of it.

We had a fascinating class on Monarchs. Nancy Galloway, a graduate from our Environmental School, was the presenter. Nancy is so enthralled by Monarchs, that she has taken more training and received certifications for all things concerning the ephemeral creatures.

Early Saturday morning, we were delighted with the sight of hundreds of snowy white pelicans landing on Fort Parker Lake. It was an amazing sight. That is the joy of visiting our state parks – the chance to connect to nature.

Assistant Superintendent, Fort Parker State Park, Leah Turner was a presenter giving us a class on the Great Blue Heron and their rookery located in the park. The birds return each year to nest. She led us on a hike to view the rookery from across the lake. The birds have a wing span of six feet. Only saw one of the large birds on this trip. Personally, after one of their brethren killed one of my koi, they haven't been one of my favorites!

Leah joined us for supper and helped with our project – making birdseed ornaments. It was a hands-on project where we made an ornament with canning rings and one using ice cream cones. We mixed unflavored gelatin, water, finely ground cornmeal and birdseed and fixed in in the ice cream cones and canning rings. After allowing the ornaments to set overnight, string was attached to hang them for the birds. A fun project that is easily accomplished with children and will provide hours of pleasure watching the birds.

We covered the rainforest and temperate forests along with endangered plants and wildlife. Each year, the Amazon rainforest absorbs 2.4 billion tons of carbon making it the “lungs of the world;” a strong reason to protect it. One of the simple things we can do for the environment is plant more trees. We need to protect our forests while managing them in a responsible way. California wildfires were a big part of our discussion. Their impact on the population of LA and the wildlife will be felt for decades.

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DOWN THE GARDEN PATH continued

Other courses included indoor and outdoor pollution, environmental ethics and how everything is interwoven. What happens in one part of the world will impact us. 10% of the oxygen we breathe comes from *Prochlorococcus*, the smallest known photosynthesizing organisms, which lives in the ocean.

The Clean Air Act of 1963, was the first congressional act to counter air pollution. There have been several updates to the act. The EPA is responsible for protection of the country while TCEQ is responsible for water and air pollution in Texas. We also have the Railroad Commission to oversee oil and gas.

One of the biggest environmental successes was the removal of lead (a neurotoxin) from paint and gasoline. Tetraethyl lead, a fuel additive from the 1920s, was banned in 1976. Lead levels in children have dropped from 85% to less than 1%. Today, lead contamination is mostly from old paint.

While we all mourned the passing of freon in our air conditioners and refrigerators along with propellants in hair spray, the new chemicals are part of the reason the Ozone Hole is healing.

While we are always hearing about how bad livestock are for the environment, one third of methane comes from wetlands, termites and plants along with all animals. Improving the diet of livestock in feeding operation can improve the quality of air. Rice production is the biggest agronomy source. Energy production and transportation is a major part of methane production. With ingenuity, scientists are finding ways to improve cost-effective ways to abate the pollution.

We conducted an experiment placing an egg in vinegar and a control egg in water. By the next day, we were able to see the thinning of the shell of the egg in vinegar. This was a simple demonstration of the effect of acid rain. Part of the class focused on nitrogen oxides and sulfur compounds and how they impact the air we breathe.

We, as individuals, can make an impact on the environment by being environmentally conscious in our everyday activities. Environmentalists will tell you to refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, and recycle. While we may not use all of those practices, we can make an impact in small ways. Reduce the number of trips to town by combining errands, purchasing items that have less packaging, reuse items or repurpose, cut down on consumption and plant more trees. We are the stewards of this earth and it is our responsibility to take care of it for future generations.

Happy Gardening!



Photos from Down the Garden Path



“PLANT AMERICA- POLLINATING SOUTH CENTRAL REGION”

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Abilene Garden Club, Texas

Each November, the Abilene Garden Club meets and decorates artificial trees for Hendrick Hospital (North side) Children's Wing and NICU. This project has been continuing for 23 years!

AGC members bring Christmas decorations that meet specifications by the hospital for safety concerns. Christmas balls must be larger than a paper towel tube; glitter is NOT encouraged.

After completing 40 trees, they are loaded into vehicles and anyone who wants may go to deliver them to the nursing staff.



Cross Plains Garden Club, Texas

Cross Plains GC is a group of nineteen enthusiastic gardeners. Each year, members meet in November to make ornaments and stockings for residents and staff at the Rising Star Nursing Home. In December, the Club will "Stuff the Stockings" with socks, lip balm, hard candies and other goodies. In between times, club members are hard at work, continuing to develop the butterfly gardens behind the community center... which boast of outdoor musical instruments and reading stations along the walking path.

Cross Plains is a small town in Texas... less than 1000 population but with great historical sites and a tireless garden club!



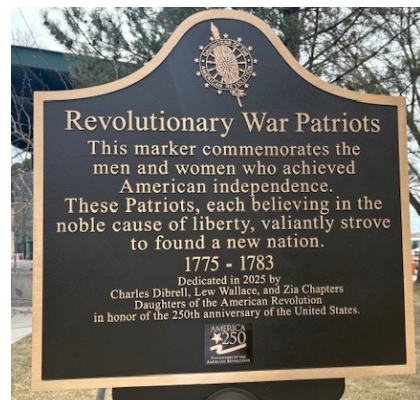
making gift tags

Blue Star/Gold Star Report, Shirley Tetreault, Chairman

Oklahoma has received their Gold Star memorial marker and is in the process of setting up a date for their dedication. New Mexico is waiting on a Gold for Roswell and a Blue Star in District IV. In addition, I was informed yesterday at the Military event in Santa Fe, NM that another Gold will be ordered for Hobbs, NM and one in Silver City, NM.



Attached are pictures of the DAR 250 memorial marker that was dedicated on Tuesday, December 11, 2025. I send these pictures to show the dedication and patriotist throughout the country. It is wonderful to see the younger generation participate in these events. We have several members that are also DAR and I thought it would be of interest of what is happening in our world today.



CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS AROUND THE REGION:

Do you have an upcoming event? Email us and let us post it here for you!

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Did you know that South Central Region has a website with lots of information, upcoming convention information and archived copies of "The Communicator" (The Official tri-annual publication of South Central Region).

Website address: scrgardenclubs.org

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