



SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

(Arkansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, & Texas)

The Communicator

CHRISTINE LONGTHORPE, DIRECTOR 2025-2027

[HTTPS://WWW.SCRGARDENCLUBS.ORG](https://www.scrgardenclubs.org)

UPCOMING EVENTS

National

May 4-6, 2026

National Convention
"Meet Me in St. Louis,
where the River
Bends and The Arch
Reaches the Sky."

South Central Region

April 27-29, 2026

"Plant America-See
How We Grow"

Menger Hotel

San Antonio, Texas

Arkansas

March 2-5, 2026

Fower Show School,
Course 2, Wyndham
Grand Hotel in Little
Rock

April 14-15, 2026

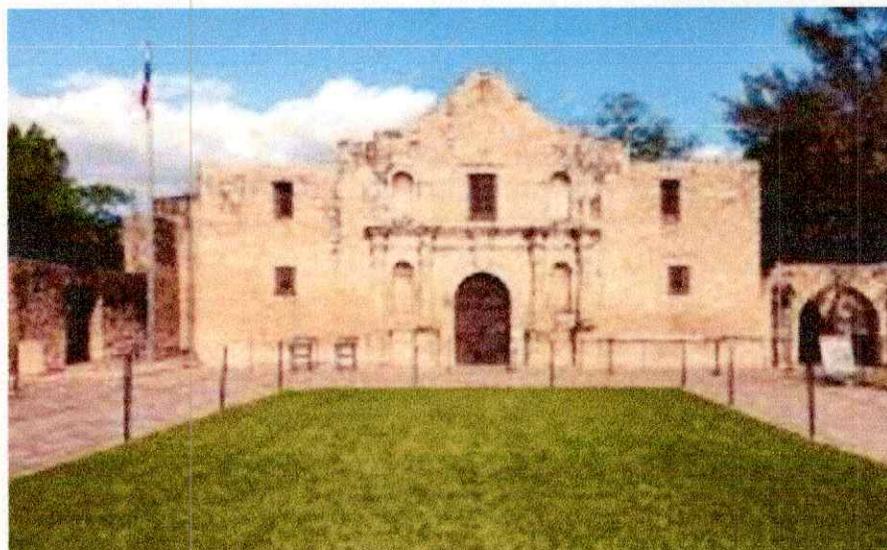
AFGC Convention at
the DoubleTree Hotel
in historic Hot Springs

"Run For the Roses"

May 19-20, 2026

Arkansas State Flower
Show **"Down The
Rabbit Hole of
Gardening"**

Wyndham Grand Hotel



Oklahoma

March 26-27, 2026

OGC Convention "Get Your
Kicks on Route 66 in 2026"
Holiday Inn Airport Express

March 10-12, 2026

NGC Flower Show School
Course 1, Hilton Garden
Inn South, 8202 S 100th
East Ave., Tulsa

May 15-16, 2026

Judges Symposium
Stroud, OK

New Mexico

April 7-8, 2026

NMGC Convention
Las Cruces, NM

**"Where Old Mexico
Meets New Mexico"**

Texas

March 2-5, 2026

NGC Flower Show
School II
Dallas, TX

April 7-9, 2026

TGC 98th Spring
Convention
Houston, TX



The New Year has started with great enthusiasm from all states. The South Central Region Convention will be in San Antonio on April 27th through 30th hosted by Texas and held at the haunted Menger Hotel just across from the Alamo.

NGC President Donna Donnelly will be attending so it will be packed with news of projects and exciting future plans for the largest non-profit organization in the nation.

Everyone who attends this convention leaves energized so come and add your special flavor to the celebration of garden clubs in our region.

New Mexico Garden Clubs is planning to rent a small bus and bring a contingent from the Land of Enchantment and some are choosing to fly. How much fun is that going to be!

In case you haven't heard, my project this term is to purchase a Gold Star marker for each state to honor mothers who have lost sons and daughters who served in all branches of the military. We recently installed one at the Council of Garden Clubs center here in Albuquerque. I will include a photo so you can see how it looks. This year it was heartwarming to see that a Christmas tree at the White House was dedicated to Gold Star moms and each state was represented with their state flower and bird plus gold stars.

To make these markers a reality, we are raising funds as usual with our Ways and Means. One of the sales is a revival of something we have done many times in the past which proved to be fun and lucrative. It is a gently used and much loved jewelry sale!

Please ask your members in these non-gardening days to sort through jewelry that is no longer worn and get it to the convention for new ownership. We in New Mexico have a state contact person to make it easy to unload as items are received.

Let's see what treasures we can sell to make our goal happen. As an aside, when we were at the reception after our Gold Star installation ceremony one of the gold star moms was talking about disposing of her jewelry and wanted ideas... well, our fundraiser was tailor made for her.

New Mexico has chosen our National Cemetery in Santa Fe as the location possibly to be placed alongside the Blue Star marker at the gate. This is purely a National Garden Club inspiration and has long been supported all across our nation so let's make it your State effort and add four more to our region.

May you all enjoy the comfort of home, family and friends and have fun making plans for your garden for the spring. See you all in San Antonio in April.

Christine Longthorp

South Central Region Director 2025-2027



**SOUTH CENTRAL REGION
GARDEN CLUBS, INC.**



2026 Annual Meeting & Convention

"PLANTAMERICA-See HowWeGrow"

April 28-29, 2026 - Menger Hotel-204 Alamo Plaza-San Antonio, TX

2026 South Central Region 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):** _____

Please circle either Early Package or Late Package:

Package includes:

Registration fee, Tuesday Tour, Lunch, Resurrection Plant workshop, Dinner and Floral Design Program, Wednesday Lunch, Red, White & Blue workshop, NGC President & SCR Director Reception and Dinner.

EARLY PACKAGE

Postmarked on or before April 3, 2026 - \$325.00

LATE PACKAGE

Postmarked after April 3, 2026 - \$350.00

NOTE: No refunds on registration after registration close of April 3, 2026. Registration fee of \$35.00 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, Environmental Consultant, Garden School Consultant, Landscape Design Consultant

BREAKFAST IS ON YOUR OWN

Make checks payable to: TGC, Inc., SCR 2026 Convention

**Mail check and registration form to: Linda Franke, Registrar, PO Box 311096, New Braunfels, TX 78131
Hotel Accommodations at the Menger: \$159.00 + tax (Parking: \$30.00 per day + tax)**

For hotel reservation use this booking link for the group rate:

Cutoff for Hotel Reservations is Friday, April 10, 2026 - NO EXCEPTIONS

CIRCLE any special dietary needs: Diabetic / Gluten Free / Vegan / Vegetarian / Allergies

Baubles, Bangles, & Bling



Calling all members to join in the fun! Collect your old, unwanted jewelry and give it to your District President. Carolyn McCabe will collect it and take to the SCR Convention in April where a silent auction will be held.



SUPPORT OUR South-Central Region Director,
CHRISTINE LONGTHORP

BY SUPPORTING HER WAYS AND MEANS
FUNDRAISER FOR HER DIRECTORS PROJECT
A GOLD STAR IN EACH OF OUR FOUR STATES.

Her Ways and Means Project is a BIG Jewelry Sale but we can't do it without your donations.

Have any bracelets, necklaces, earrings, pins, or any other jewelry that you don't wear or want anymore?? Bring it with you to Suzy Andrego at the NM Garden Clubs Convention, April 7&8, 2026.

Suzy will box it up and make it look pretty (she can even do some small repairs if anything needs it). It will go to the South-Central Region Convention, April 28-29, 2026, to be held in San Antonio, TX where it will be sold at the

BIG Jewelry Sale "Gold for Gold!"

If you can't come, send your jewelry to convention with a friend. Need a tax donation form, just let Suzy know. We need your name and address, and we will get one right over to you.



Members of the Arkansas Federation of Garden Clubs (AFGC) will be as busy as bees this spring, with a full calendar of educational programs, travel opportunities, flower shows, and conventions planned across the region.

Activities begin with Flower Show School, Course 2, scheduled for March 2-5 at the Wyndham Grand Hotel in Little Rock. Open to all, the course offers valuable training and educational opportunities for garden club members. Each club is encouraged to send a representative to gain knowledge that can be shared with fellow members. Registration information is available at arkansasfgc.net.

On March 21, the Camden Garden Club will host a standard flower show entitled "America the Beautiful!" at the Events Center at Fairview Park. The show will feature creative designs and horticultural excellence, providing inspiration for gardeners and visitors alike.

The AFGC Convention will be held April 14-15 at the DoubleTree Hotel in historic Hot Springs, home of Oaklawn Racing Casino Resort. Hosted by the Northwest District, the convention will follow the theme "Run for the Roses." Planned events include a style show, derby hats, playful "horse races," and an abundance of roses woven throughout the festivities.

April 28-29, many AFGC members will travel to San Antonio, Texas, to gather with all of our South Central Region (SCR) friends at the historic Menger Hotel. Our attendees look forward to the river cruise down the San Antonio River, as well as exploring the many historic landmarks, and experiencing the city's vibrant culture. From fiesta celebrations to renowned Texas BBQ, we can hardly wait to attend the convention.

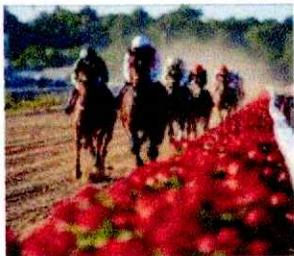
Hardly returning home before heading out again, members will then travel to St. Louis, Missouri, for the National Garden Club Convention, scheduled for May 4-6. Highlights include a tour of National Headquarters and a luncheon at the iconic Gateway Arch. Due to its close proximity, strong participation from AFGC members is anticipated.

The busy spring season will conclude with the AFGC State Flower Show, titled "Down the Rabbit Hole of Gardening," to be held May 18-20 at the Wyndham Grand Hotel in Little Rock. All five AFGC districts will be represented, with expectations of numerous horticulture entries, creative designs, botanical arts, and educational exhibits. With a wide range of opportunities for learning, fellowship, and celebration, AFGC's spring schedule promises to be both vibrant and engaging. We invite all of you to join us and we hope to see you along the way!

That's the buzzzzzz -for now!!

Nancy Rana

AFGC President



AFGC 2026 CONVENTION

“RUN FOR THE ROSES”

APRIL 14 – 15, 2026

DoubleTreeHot Springs, 4813 Central Ave., Hot Springs, AR 71913

Call 501-312-9000 Code **CDTFGC** for convention rate

\$129 + tax Double Queen until March 15, 2026

Registration Info: Make checks payable to Northwest District AFGC

Mail to Registrar: Ginny Vance, 5 Glencoe Ln, Bella Vista, AR 72715 402-707-8523 vvance1660@msn.com

Pre-registration and payment required by April 6, 2026, no exceptions

FULL Time Registration: (Includes registration fee, all events)	\$ 169	_____
One Day Registration for Tuesday, April 14	\$ 115	_____
One Day Registration for Wednesday, April 15	\$ 115	_____

All Executive Meetings will be held in the Lakeside Room

- Tuesday, April 14**
- 10:30 – 11:00 am Finance Committee Meeting
 - 11:00 – 11:30 am Executive Committee Meeting
 - 11:00 – 6:00 pm Registration
 - 11:30 – 12:00 pm District Directors Meeting

All Events in Lake Hamilton Ballroom

- 1:00 – 3:00 pm **Derby Day**
(Special Event for Club President or Designee)
- 3:00 – 5:00 pm “Spring at the Track” Fashion Show by Accessory Gallery
- 6:00 pm **Judges Council Dinner - Wear Your Derby Hat**
Program: “Roses Reimagined: Creative Ways to Use Roses”
presented by Katherine Rodocker

“Now & Then” Fashion Show Presented by Floralia Arranger’s Guild Garden Club

Wednesday, April 15

- 8:30 – 9:00 am Registration
- 9:00 am Business Meeting
- 12:00 pm Lunch
- 12:45 pm **Program: “Roses for Today’s Garden”**
presented by Carol Shockley
- 1:30 pm Business Meeting - resumes

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Garden Club: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

CHECK CLASSIFICATIONS: AFGC Member _____ AFGC President _____ State Officer _____ Club President _____

District Director _____ State Chairman _____ AFGC Life Member _____ Circle of Roses _____ Guest _____ 1st Time _____

Garvan Woodland Gardens is a short distance from Hot Springs and they will have thousands of bulbs in bloom on Thursday, April 16th. Join us for a tour of the gardens. You may extend your stay at the same hotel rate. You can also pre-pay to reserve a seat on a golf cart with a tour guide for \$20. For more information contact Ginny Vance.

Additional payment for golf cart seat \$20 _____ Make payment payable to Ginny Vance (Registrar).



Happy 2026!! I hope the year has started off wonderfully for all of you. Up here in the high country of New Mexico at 9,500 feet, it is definitely cold—but we haven't had much snow yet. Hopefully we'll see plenty by the end of January. We won't be planting anything outdoors until June, as we continue to get freezing nighttime temperatures until then!

One of the greatest honors of my role as State President has been participating in Blue Star and Gold Star Memorial dedications. Each ceremony is a deeply moving tribute, and we are looking forward to more dedications this year. Our chair, Shirley Tetreault, has even started a fun little contest for our New Mexico members—take a picture of yourself with a Blue or Gold Star Memorial, and your name will be entered into a drawing! I also wanted to share how the Albuquerque Garden Club celebrates National Garden Week through their beautiful “Share the Beauty Day.” This special day was originally known as “Mercy Day.” At that time, The Salvation Army provided decorated cans, which were brought to the garden center and filled with flowers. Individuals with disabilities decorated the cans with yarn, making each one unique.

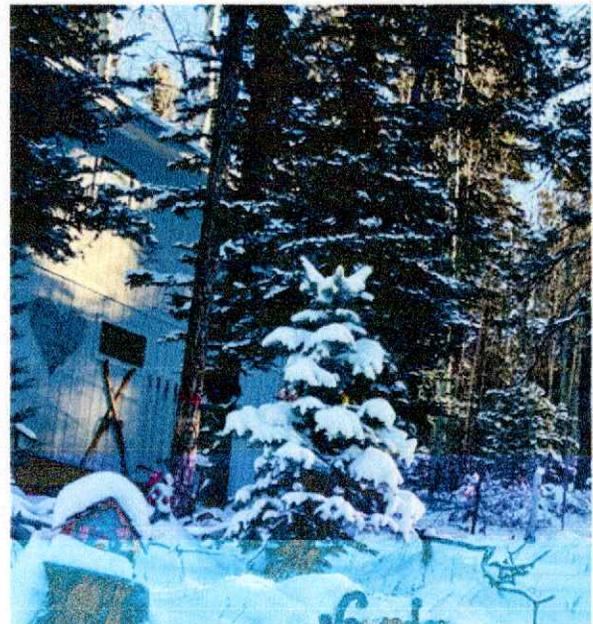
In the 1990s, when The Salvation Army was no longer able to provide the decorated cans, the many clubs at the Albuquerque Garden Center stepped in to continue the tradition. Shirley Tetreault has graciously chaired this event ever since. Over the years, it has grown into one of the most exciting and joyful events at the Garden Center. Now a two-day event, the first day is spent decorating cans, and the second day is devoted to creating flower arrangements and delivering them. In 2026, volunteers created 800 flower designs, with 40 members working together. Delivering a small soup can filled with fresh, blooming flowers brings unbelievable smiles to patients at the VA and residents of assisted living facilities.

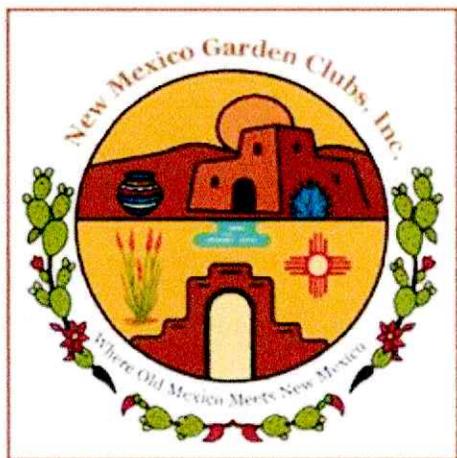
The New Mexico Judges Council is also buzzing with excitement as they prepare to pin six newly accredited judges. We are incredibly proud of these ladies. Becoming an accredited judge is a significant commitment, and they completed the process with flying colors. We are fortunate to have so many knowledgeable judges eager to put their expertise to use. I'm attaching the New Mexico Call to Convention and warmly invite you all to attend. I'm especially excited to be attending the SCR Convention as well as the National Convention. I truly look forward to all that 2026 has in store and to continuing the meaningful and inspiring work we do together.

Warmest wishes,

Johnese Turri

PRESIDENT NEW MEXICO GARDEN CLUB





NMGC State Convention for 2026
April 7th and 8th
Las Cruces, NM

Get ready for camaraderie and fun at the upcoming NMGC State Convention for 2026!

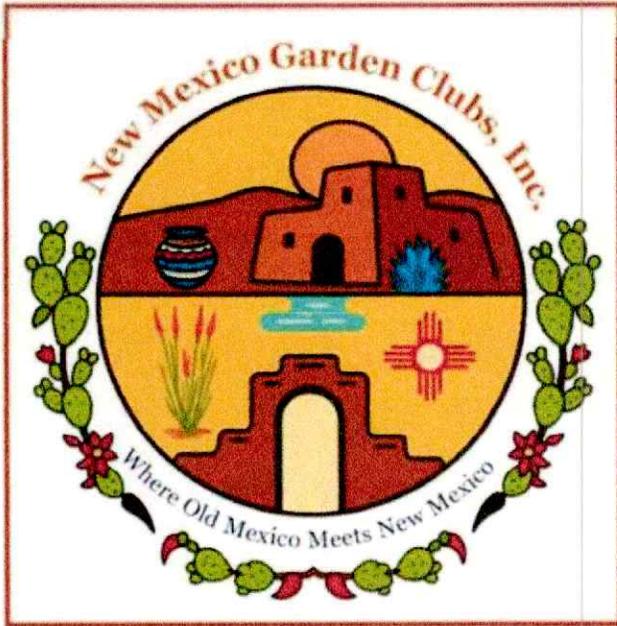
We at District IV are excited to be welcoming you to sunny Southern New Mexico. The Hilton Garden Inn in Las Cruces will be your destination on April 7th and 8th.

To our great pleasure and the highlight of our convention, our **National Garden Club President, Donna Donnally** (see page 1) will be attending, and we want to put our best foot forward and welcome her to our state and show that even in our desert climate, we have dedicated gardeners.

This will be our NMGC President, Johnese Turri's first convention and she deserves support from every one of us. The convention committee has been working diligently to make this a convention to remember. We also want to announce that you will be able to register online and use your credit card both for registration and any silent auction purchases.

So, mark your calendars now and come to **"Where Old Mexico Meets New Mexico"**.

Book Your Hotel: <https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/newmexicogardenclubs-2026-convention/>



2026 New Mexico Garden Clubs State Convention Registration

April 7-8, 2026, Las Cruces, NM

Full Name*

First Name

Last Name

E-mail*

example@example.com

Phone Number*

Address*

Street Address

Street Address Line 2

City

State/ Province

Postal/ Zip Code

Club Name(s)

Credentials: Please Circle All That Apply *

NGC President NGC Chair
NGC Life Member
Past SCR Director
SCR Chair
SCR Life Member
Past State President
State Chair
State District Director
Club Member
Environmental Consultant
Landscape Design Consultant

NGC Officer
NGC Committee Member
SCR Director
SCR Officer
SCR Committee Member
NMGC State President
State Officer
State Life Member
Club President
Flower Show Judge
Garden Consultant
Guest

Events, Circle *

April 7 Judges' Banquet and Program, Bulgogi Pork Entree	\$60.00
April 8 General Meeting, Lunch, Tour, Presidents' Reception, Awards Banquet	\$175.00

Dietary Requirements, Circle

None	Vegetarian	Vegan
Diabetic	Gluten Free	Other

Awards Banquet Entree Selection, Circle

Grilled Salmon	Tuscan Chicken
----------------	----------------

Registration Deadline

Registration Deadline is March 20, 2026

Print Form, Complete, and Mail Check

Mail completed form and check made payable to "NMGC District IV" to:
Linnea Egbert, Registrar
4327 Mission Bell Avenue
Las Cruces, NM 88007

* Required Field

HOTEL: The Hilton Garden Inn Las Cruces, 575-522-0900 Option 0, 2550 Don Roser Drive, Las Cruces, NM 88011. Room Rates \$155.00 + tax. To insure room rate book reservations by March 7th, 2026.
Hotel Booking Link: <https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/newmexicogardenclubs-2026-convention/>



PLANT AMERICA

"Growing Together, Blooming Forever"

A JOYFUL CLOSE TO 2025... AND A BLOSSOMING START TO 2026!

The Oklahoma Garden Clubs wrapped up the year in sparkling fashion—festive Christmas parties, acts of kindness, and the Oklahoma City Council's dazzling Holiday Flower Show, "Christmas Memories." The event shimmered with 40 inspired designs, including a charming new diorama class, Cartoon Christmas, and thanks to the generosity of our members and guests, over 600 donated items and \$650 in contributions brightened the holidays for local families. With hearts full and hands busy, we turn the page to 2026, where districts across Oklahoma are already blooming with flower shows, programs, workshops, and initiatives that embrace the spirit of PLANT AMERICA.

The North Central District is preparing for a full and exciting season, beginning with its Annual Spring Meeting on Friday, February 13 at the Will Rogers Garden Exhibition Center in Oklahoma City. This free, full-day gathering features breakfast, a silent auction, a horticulture program with Allan Storjohann, a membership development workshop, and an inspiring floral design program by Rose Schultz. NCD is also proudly hosting the 97th Annual Oklahoma Garden Clubs State Convention—"Get Your Kicks on Route 66 in 2026" on March 26–27 in Oklahoma City, promising two days of learning, fellowship, and delightful surprises.

The North East District sends cheerful New Year greetings from its president—back on her feet and ready to lead a vibrant new season. Celebrating the message, "PLANT AMERICA: Plant a seed today for a better tomorrow," NED continues with an active calendar: programs at the Tulsa Garden Center, a January meeting in Jenks, and the much-anticipated NGC Flower Show School Course 1, coming March 10–12. Workshops—soon to debut with a fresh new name—begin in January and continue through spring as members prepare for the Tulsa Garden Club Flower Show on September 19, 2026.

In the Northwest District, excitement is building as plans take shape for the President's "Meet Me in Guymon" Event and Wildflower Workshop Black Mesa Tour, scheduled for May 29–30, 2026. This two-day adventure will highlight Oklahoma's dramatic western landscapes and rare native flora—an event already drawing enthusiastic attention statewide.

The Southwest District began 2026 with a moment of pride and celebration. The City of Walters honored former OGC State President MaryAnn Holman for her decades of service and leadership, establishing the MaryAnn Holman Beautify Walters Fund, which will provide \$1,500 annually for community beautification. The South Central District ended 2025 on a lively note with a Halloween-themed fall meeting attended by State President Melanie Mason-Spence. Membership is flourishing with the addition of the Lake Texoma Garden Club, which kicked off the year with a special program alongside the Blue Thumb organization. February brings a highlight as former OGC President and Accredited Judge April Pratt presents a program on flower show arrangement techniques. The district eagerly anticipates its Spring Convention on March 12, 2026, in Shawnee.

Across Oklahoma, we continue to embody our statewide mission of Growing Together, Blooming Forever—through education, service, community, and the beauty of gardening.

Let's Grow Something Beautiful Together

Melanie Mason-Spence

President - Oklahoma Garden Clubs



Get Your Kicks on
ROUTE 66
in 2026!

Oklahoma Garden Clubs
 96th Annual Convention
 Hosted by NORTHCENTRAL District
 Oklahoma City
 March 26&27, 2026

HOLIDAY INN OKC AIRPORT
 4401 SW 15th
 Oklahoma City, OK 73108

call 405.601.7272 and mention code "OGC"
 or use this link: <https://tinyurl.com/mu6xrvjy>

For special pricing of \$104 (plus taxes and fees)
 Breakfast is included for hotel guests.
 All others will pay \$11.00
 Deadline for this special rate is **March 11, 2026**

Any late reservations will be at the standard room cost
No exceptions.

There is an airport shuttle to and from the hotel.
 Self-parking IS COMPLEMENTARY.

For information contact; Michael Kowalchuk
mjkow24@gmail.com or #405.590.7935



TENTATIVE Schedule:

Thursday, March 26

Registration begins at 8:00 a.m.

Tours begin at 9:00 sharp, Myriad Gardens & First Americans Museum – lunch is on your own (an award-winning restaurant is at the First Americans Museum <https://39restaurant.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Lunch-edit-827.pdf>)

- 2:30 Executive Board Meeting
- 4:00 Design Workshop, Suzy Andregio, NM "Off the Grid" (make & take design)
- 5:30 Reception honoring Melanie Spence, OGC President & Christine Longthorp, SCR Director
- 6:00 Banquet – Speaker: Hugh Stout, Stout Gardens at Dancingtree, "All About Irises" Honoring Life Members: OGC, SCR & NGC (WESTERN Dress)

Friday, March 27

Registration begins 8:00 a.m.

9:00 a.m. Official Opening of Convention
 12:00 Luncheon – Judges Council Hosting

- o Speaker: Christine Longthorp, Design Program
- o Awards Ceremony & Memorial Service to follow
- 3:00 Workshop – Jar Lanterns with pressed flowers
- 5:00 Silent Auction ends
- 5:00 Reception, Special Music by Gathan Graham (well-known pianist)
- 6:00 Banquet - Speakers: Terry & Ashton Lopp, Windswept Farm & Gardens, "All About Daylilies" (RED, WHITE & BLUE Cocktail/Business dress)



As mentioned in the last issue of The Communicator, TGC, Inc., District VII members and President Linda Jean Brown are very excited to be South Central Regions Spring Convention hosts April 27-29, 2026.

The Committee members are working tirelessly making sure all the preparations are in order for the best outcome. Not only will the four State Presidents from SCR be in attendance, we are excited to have our SCR Director, Christine Longthorp presiding over the meetings. If that is not enough, we are honored to have our National Garden Club President, Donna Donnelly in attendance. Talk about a convention with our wonderful leaders. This will be the convention of all conventions. Texas is definitely up to this challenge.

The convention will be held at the Historic Menger Hotel steps away from the famous San Antonio, TX River Walk. Make sure to bring your comfortable walking shoes. You will definitely be glad you brought them as we plan on getting our "Steps" in as we walk the famous River Walk. In addition to our meetings, vendors, workshops there is always time for shopping.

Breakfast will be on your own and I highly recommend Schilo's German Restaurant and Deli a short walk from the hotel. This family owned business has been serving customers since 1917.

As this year gets underway, I wish everyone a happy, productive and healthy new year.

Texas has just completed another Environmental School at Ft. Parker State Park in Mexia, TX. We were thrilled to have in attendance Oklahoma Garden Club President, Melanie Mason-Spence and her daughter Novelyn. I was totally surprised when I walked in and saw them. Melanie must want to be one of us. Oh, she is...Our Sister state!

My hope is that we continue to do what we love to do, play in the dirt and plant seeds and then sit back with a cool drink and watch the plants put on a beautiful show for us.

And speaking of shows, Texas Garden Club, Inc. members are planning their Spring Standard Flower Shows all across the state at this time. This is always an exciting event as we see our members creativities as they compete in the design section of the flower show. The Horticulture section always brings questions of what is that called? Will it grow in my area? We encourage participation in our shows so we can continue the tradition that has come before us. Not to mention, our NGC President Donna Donnelly's incentive for garden clubs who stage their first time flower show.

Our Blue Star Gold Star Memorial Marker Chairman, Bobbie Mason, is doing a great job promoting this important project. She is currently working with our three presidential libraries in Texas that we hope to be able to provide markers at their locations. Those locations are Dallas(SMU – George W. Bush) , Austin, (LBJ) and College Station (George H.W. Bush).

In addition garden clubs are being asked to sponsor markers by businesses wishing to have them placed in Texas this year.

I look forward to attending those important dedications during my presidency along with Mrs. Mason.

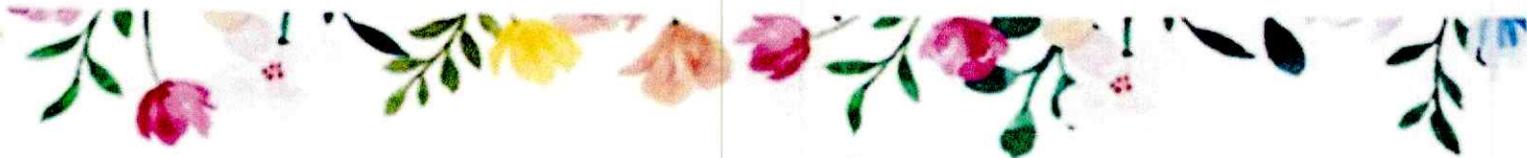
I love to see my bulbs coming up knowing in the near future they will be in bloom.

Nothing is more satisfying to us gardeners than to see the beauty we have planted after the winter has come and gone. With that being said, until we see each other again this year,

Happy gardening y'all:

Linda Jean Brown

President, Texas Garden Clubs



Texas Garden Clubs, Inc. 98th Spring Convention
April 7-9, 2026

Houston Marriott North - 255 North Sam Houston Parkway East, Houston TX 77060

Texas Garden Clubs Convention 2026-\$129.00 per night +tax +fee

Phone: 281-875-4000, Press 0 - Reserve by March 23, 2026

Name on Badge _____

Address _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Club _____ Affiliate _____ District _____

REGISTRATION DEADLINE: MARCH 23, 2026

Registration starts April 7, 2026 @10am - 5:00pm - Other days: 8:00am - 5pm

Registration Fees

Entire Convention - \$45.00 \$ _____
 One Day - \$30.00 \$ _____

Tuesday April 7, 2026

Meetings: Trustee 1:00pm - Finance 2:00pm - Organizational Studies 4:00pm
 Meals on your own

Wednesday April 8, 2026

Executive Board Meeting 9:00am - Board of Directors Meeting 10:15am
 Lunch 12:00pm - \$32.00 \$ _____
 Program 12:45pm - John Thomas, Owner of Wild Seed Farms
 Nominating Committee 2:00pm
 Workshop 3:00pm - Zentangle Art, Brenda Pearson - \$10.00 \$ _____
 Dinner 6:30pm - \$50.00 \$ _____

Thursday April 9, 2026

General Assembly Meeting 9:00am/Presentation of Colors 9:30am
 Memorial Service 11:30am
 Lunch and Youth Awards 12:00pm - \$32.00 \$ _____
 Program-1:30 PM- Program: Jay White, Publisher of *Texas Gardeners Magazine*
 Design 3:00pm - Houston Area Flower Show Judges - Free
 Workshop 4:00pm - Felt Flowers - \$20.00 \$ _____
 Dinner and Adult Awards 6:30pm - \$50.00 \$ _____

TOTAL DUE \$ _____

Circle any special dietary needs:

Diabetic Gluten-Free Vegan Vegetarian Other

Send registration (with check payable to District IV) to:

Madeleine Rogers
2002 Sierra Street
Kemah, TX 77565
281-684-4957

Credentials	
<input type="checkbox"/>	NGC President
<input type="checkbox"/>	Former NGC President
<input type="checkbox"/>	NGC Chair
<input type="checkbox"/>	SCR Director
<input type="checkbox"/>	Former SCR Director
<input type="checkbox"/>	SCR Officer
<input type="checkbox"/>	TGC President
<input type="checkbox"/>	Former TGC President
<input type="checkbox"/>	TGC Officer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Trustee
<input type="checkbox"/>	TGC Chair
<input type="checkbox"/>	District Director
<input type="checkbox"/>	Club President
<input type="checkbox"/>	Club Member
<input type="checkbox"/>	Club Alternate
<input type="checkbox"/>	Affiliate Member
<input type="checkbox"/>	Council President
<input type="checkbox"/>	First-time Attendee
<input type="checkbox"/>	Spouse
<input type="checkbox"/>	Speaker
<input type="checkbox"/>	Guest
<input type="checkbox"/>	Landscape Design Cons.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Environ. Studies Cons.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gardening Studies Cons.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Flower Show Judge:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Master
<input type="checkbox"/>	Life
<input type="checkbox"/>	Accredited
<input type="checkbox"/>	Student
<input type="checkbox"/>	Emeritus
<input type="checkbox"/>	NGC Life Member
<input type="checkbox"/>	SCR Life Member
<input type="checkbox"/>	TGC Life Member

Chase Away the Winter Blues with an Herbal Craft Project

Sherie Clarkson

When the weather outside is cold and dreary and you cannot get outside in the garden, do the next best thing and create an herbal craft project. It will make those long days go by fast and before you know it is Spring! Well maybe not that fast.

One of the easiest crafts I have found is a miniature culinary herb wreath. I have done programs for several garden clubs, and they have all enjoyed it and it is amazing the creativity that shows. And there are only a few necessary supplies needed. The creativity comes from the design and the number of herbs used.

First, you will need a small wreath. I like to use the small grapevine wreaths about 6 inches across. These are found in almost any craft store or online. And if you have a good supply of grapevine, you can make your own. Next, a glue gun and glue sticks make it easy to attach the herbs. You can use wire or string, but I have found the glue works the best. Just be sure and not burn yourself or something else. Always put down newspaper when working with this so it does not get on bare surfaces from the drips. And any kind of ribbon or string to make bows and to hang the wreath. I like to use raffia as it comes in many different colors and gives the wreath a natural look.



Next comes the herbs. You can use about any culinary herbs but some work better and last longer. Here is a list of my favorite ones to use –

- Rosemary - When fresh, this herb is easy to bend and shape onto the wreath. Stick the end between the wreath layers and it will stay better. Plus, rosemary has a wonderful smell and fills in nicely.
- Thyme – Either English thyme or Lemon thyme works well. Depending on if you want a savory taste or a more lemon taste. With its trailing habit, thyme makes the wreath appealing.
- Parsley - Italian or Flat-Leafed Parsley has much more flavor and is the one most used in cooking, but the Curly-Leafed is prettier, so it just depends on what you are using it for or just go ahead and use both.
- Oregano – Spicy herb used mostly in Italian cooking. There are many different types to choose from. I like Greek oregano the best for cooking but use your own taste. There is a Spicy oregano that is really good if you like hotter.
- Sage – Most of us know this herb from Thanksgiving in the dressing but it has many other uses such as in meats such as sausage, soups and stews, cornbread and of course stuffing. A member of the Salvia family, there are many different varieties.
- Chives – There are two types of chives, onion and garlic. The onion chives bloom the purple flowers in the spring and have a much more delicate onion taste. They make a wonderful pink colored vinegar. Garlic chives have a much heavier garlic taste and bloom a white flower in the late summer.
- Mint – Once again, mint has many different varieties to choose from. There are two families of mint, peppermint and spearmint. All mints come from these two parents. Peppermint is the one that contains menthol which is the medicinal property. A cup of peppermint tea is helpful with digestive problems plus it tastes good also. Spearmint is known for being in toothpaste and gum and in mojitos and Mint juleps.

These are just a few of the culinary herbs that will make a cute wreath. The wreath can be hung in the kitchen and the herbs clipped off as needed. These also make nice hostesses' gifts for any cook or gardener. Once dried, you can continue to use them



Blue Star/Gold Star Memorial Markers!

Did you know that we are getting ready to celebrate America 250? That means that it is so important that we make sure that our markers are clean and the landscaping around them is fresh and colorful. Now is an excellent opportunity to prepare and plant for the upcoming spring season. I would love to hear from you and see pictures of what you are doing in your state.

Did you know that this program began in 1945 to honor the men and women serving in the Armed Forces during World War II. We are a part of this! We can honor them everyday by keeping this program strong.

Did you know that I am proud of everything you do and I want to see and hear more about your efforts. Call me or text me (505) 259-2263 or send me an email ammasangels@comcast.net I would love to hear from you.

Shirley Tetreault

South Central Region – Blue Star/Gold Star Chair



OKLAHOMA

TEXAS

NEW MEXICO INSTALLED SCR'S
NEWEST BLUE / GOLD STAR
MEMORIAL



ARKANSAS

WINNING NGC FLOWER SHOW EDUCATION EXHIBITS

Pamela M. Grotts

In the vibrant world of the National Garden Club, Inc. (NGC), flower shows are more than just a display of beauty—they are a masterclass in nature. While the Horticulture and Design divisions often steal the spotlight with their towering delphiniums and avant-garde arrangements, the Education Division serves as the intellectual heart of the show. And although Horticulture is my assigned topic, it can and often does bleed into this division of an NGC Flower Show. I've decided to open this article to discussion as the Educational Exhibit is often times hard for the schedule writer to develop, hard for the Exhibitor to prepare, and hard for the Flower Show Judge to interpret.

Educational Exhibit – What is it?

An Educational Exhibit is a competitive display designed to instruct the public and club members on specific goals of the NGC, such as environmental conservation, floral design techniques, or horticultural excellence. If you are looking to share your passion and perhaps take home the coveted **Educational Top Exhibitor Award**, here is how to prepare a winning exhibit.

1. Understand the Requirements

The first step is to consult the NGC Handbook for Flower Shows and your specific show's Schedule (the "law" of the show).

- **Space Standards:** To be eligible for a Top Exhibitor Award in a Standard Flower Show, an exhibit must typically occupy at least 18 square feet of surface area (6 square feet for Petite Shows).
- **The "Hooks":** Every exhibit must have a clear theme or title. It should be "self-explanatory," meaning a viewer can walk away with a new piece of knowledge without needing a guide to explain it.
- **Plant Material:** While the focus is information, the NGC emphasizes fresh plant material. Incorporating living specimens rather than just photos – incorporating the plant material into the exhibit so that it adds "distinction"—a key judging criteria.

2. Choosing Your Topic

- A schedule writer has to discuss topics, titles, and themes for Educational Exhibits with the Show Committee and exhibitors of educational topics that fit into the title and theme of the show. This is an opportunity to show the cohesion between all divisions and provide show attendees with a seamless view into National Garden Clubs, Inc. Having educational exhibits that do not fit the Flower Show theme will essentially break the rhythm and flow.

A winning exhibit starts with a compelling "Why?" Narrow your focus to a specific, actionable topic. Broad themes like "Gardening" are too vague; instead, try:

- **Conservation:** "How to Build a Rain Garden to Prevent Runoff."
- **Horticulture:** "Propagating Succulents: From Leaf to Life."
- **Design:** "The Geometry of Traditional Line Designs: Understanding Line and Space."
- **Environmental:** "Pollinator Corridors: Linking Urban Gardens."

3. Design and Staging: The "Rule of Three"

Judges look for visual impact and "scannability." Think of your exhibit like a museum kiosk or a professional infographic.

- **The Layout:** Use a tri-fold board or professional backdrops. Place your most important information at eye level.
- **Visual Hierarchy:** Use large, bold headings for your main points, medium text for sub-points, and small text for details. If a judge has to squint, you lose points.
- **Three-Dimensionality:** Don't just stick photos on a board. Use "props" such as gardening tools, soil samples, or physical examples of the plant material discussed. Elevate items on risers to create depth.

4. Tips and Tricks for Success

To move your exhibit from a "Blue Ribbon" to a "Top Exhibitor Award," keep these insider tips in mind:

- **The 30-Second Rule:** A viewer should be able to grasp your main message within 30 seconds. If it takes longer, your layout is too cluttered.
- **Font Choice:** Use clean, sans-serif fonts (like Arial or Helvetica). Avoid "busy" scripts that are hard to read from three feet away.
- **Color Palette:** Limit yourself to three main colors. Use colors that reflect your theme—earth tones for composting, or bright florals for a pollinator exhibit.
- **Accuracy is King:** Double-check your botanical names. Ensure genus and species are correctly italicized (e.g., *Rosa rugosa*). Incorrect labeling is a common reason for point deductions.
- **Interactive Elements:** If the show allows, including "Take-Away" materials like QR codes for more info or simple printed brochures. This extends the educational impact of your work.
- **Technology:** The current world offers so many new messages from transporters. Take advantage of opportunities to incorporate things like electronic photo albums,

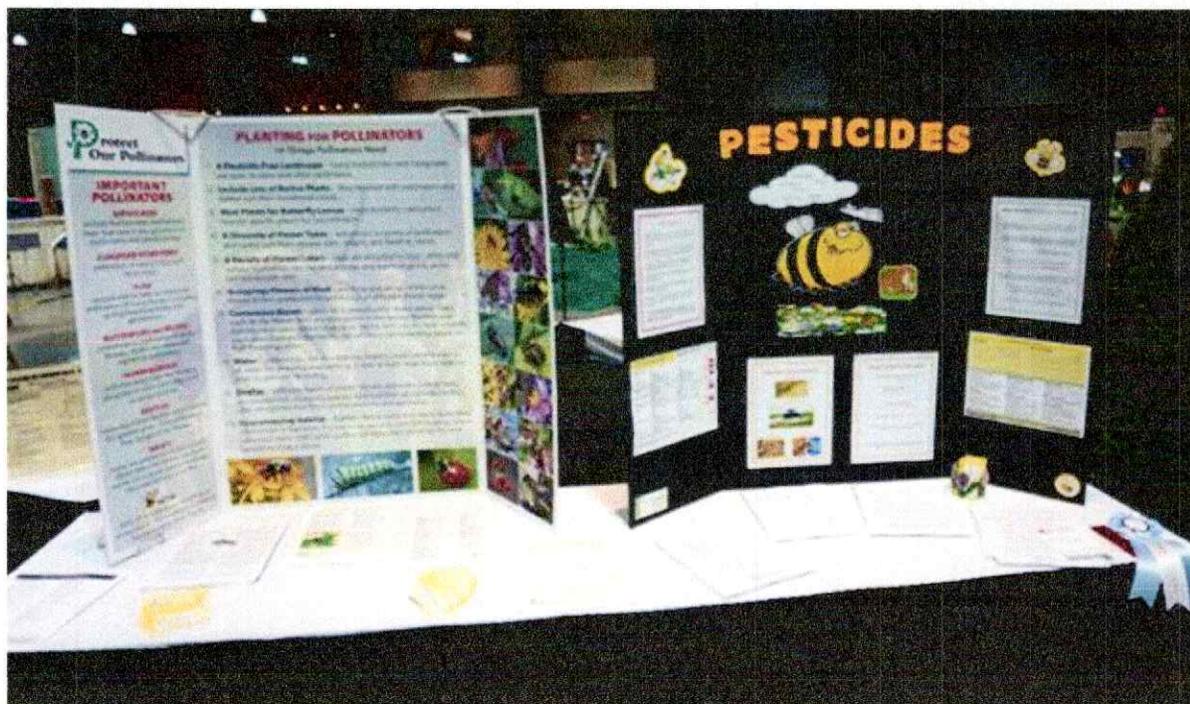
5. The Scoring Rubric

Judges use a **Scale of Points** to evaluate your work. Generally, the breakdown is:

- **Educational Value (25 pts):** Is the information clear, accurate, and useful?
- **Staging (25 pts):** Is the exhibit organized and attractive?
- **Creativity and Expression (20 pts):** Does it show original thought?
- **Conformance (10 pts):** Does it follow all the rules in the Schedule?
- **Distinction (20 pts):** The "wow" factor—superior craftsmanship and plant quality.

Final Thoughts

Preparing an Educational Exhibit is a labor of love. It requires the precision of a scientist and the eye of an artist. By narrowing your topic, focusing on clean visual communication, and ensuring botanical accuracy, you can create a display that doesn't just win ribbons—it inspires change in your community.





EDIBLE PLANTS

Lablab purpureus

Purple Hyacinth Vine Plant:

The young leaves and seed pods can be eaten raw, but the mature seeds can be a little toxic if not properly processed. They can contain cyanogenic glucosides.



Hyacinth beans are edible legumes used in many cuisines, with young pods eaten like green beans and mature seeds requiring thorough boiling to remove toxins before being used in curries, stews, and stir-fries. While often grown as ornamentals in the US, they are a staple vegetable in tropical regions, where leaves, flowers, and beans are all consumed, sometimes even fermented into noodles or tofu. Proper preparation is key, as raw or undercooked mature seeds contain toxins, but cooked beans are a good source of protein.

EDIBLE PARTS AND PREPARATION

Young pods: Can be eaten raw or cooked like green beans (stir-fried, steamed, boiled).

Mature beans: Must be soaked and boiled in at least two changes of water to neutralize toxins before eating. They can then be added to curries, stews, or roasted as a snack.

Leaves: Young leaves can be cooked and eaten like spinach.

Flowers: Also edible and used in some dishes.

Culinary uses

Curries and stews: A popular addition, often with spices like ginger, garlic, and coconut milk.

Stir-fries: The tender pods work well in stir-fries.

Soups: Used in soups, including sweet soups in Vietnam.

Snacks: Roasted or fried mature beans can be a snack.

Safety note

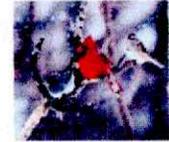
Toxicity: Mature, dried seeds contain cyanogenic glycosides. (natural plant-based toxins found in over 2,000 species, including cassava, sorghum, and stone fruits, which release hydrogen cyanide (HCN) upon injury or digestion) Cooking them thoroughly is essential to make them safe for consumption.





WILDLIFE HABITAT GARDENING

SCR Chairman, Terri Waterman, terriafgc@gmail.com
Ways to Help Winter Birds



1. Leave leaf litter lying on the floor of your gardens.

Most overwintering songbirds spend much of their time foraging through the leaf litter on the floor of your garden, looking for the tiny insects and insect eggs that will sustain them throughout the long cold. If you painstakingly clean every leaf off your garden in the fall, you are destroying the birds' main food source.

2. Provide thick growth.

- Birds take shelter in the protective boughs of evergreens or within any shrubs that provide thick growth. Juncos and tree sparrows often take shelter on the ground under the warm boughs. They especially appreciate a stand of several evergreens massed together.
- Don't burn or trash your old Christmas tree, pile it up in the garden until Spring.

3. Clean your birdhouses, then leave them up for the winter.

Many birds take shelter from the wind in an empty birdhouse. Chickadees and downy woodpeckers especially enjoy enclosed cavities. Clean out your bird houses of any old nesting material at the end of the summer. To help prevent disease and possible parasite infestation, wipe them down or spray them with a ten percent Clorox solution.

4. Provide native plants with edible fruit, berries, and seeds.

- Most native perennials provide seed heads that birds eat throughout the winter. Rudbeckia, coneflowers, Salvia, Coreopsis, sunflowers, and most daisy-like flowers are some of their favorites. Also, asters, ironweed, goldenrod, mountain mint, and many grasses provide needed food for the birds. Sure, you may want to deadhead some of these for prolonged blooms throughout the summer, but starting in late summer, let the seed heads stand.
- Native hollies, Viburnum, beautyberry, spicebush, chokecherry, and Virginia creeper do their part by providing berries for hungry birds throughout the winter. In shopping for some of these shrubs, always look for the natives. Most have non-native cousins that the birds will ignore. Ask fellow garden club members, local master gardeners, etc. for the best nurseries in your area that carry native plants for your locale.
- Some trees that provide fruit that birds love include American crabapples, serviceberry, mulberry, eastern red cedar, and dogwood. If you enjoy seeing songbirds in your garden, make it a late New Year's Resolution to add some of these plants to your property in the spring.

5. Keep bird feeders filled.

- This is the time of year when bird feeders are really appreciated. They will probably need to be refilled every day. It's important for the feeders to be close to shelter where small birds can quickly find refuge from predators; however, not so close that a cat can hide within the thick branches and then jump out to grab the unsuspecting bird.
- Keep in mind that different bird species have different feeding requirements. Some prefer a hanging feeder while others require a tray feeder. The base of a tray feeder should be screened to allow water to pass through so the seed does not get mildewed and rot.
- Suet is especially important in cold weather because it supplies fat for warmth. Woodpeckers, flickers, and nuthatches love the unsalted peanuts.

6. Provide drinkable water.

- One of the most important things is providing water. Birds need drinkable water, which is often difficult to find in icy weather. I use a birdbath heater, which has worked well for many winters. It prevents the water from freezing, even on the very coldest days. The bath is a very busy place!

All these suggestions not only help our bird friends but also provide us with entertainment on long winter days. Obviously, planting native trees and shrubs is not something you can do today, but investing in a feeder, suet holder, birdbath heater, or birdhouse is something you could do immediately. Then plan ahead to invest in at least one native tree or shrub to add to your landscape in the spring.



The Blue Whales are No Longer Singing

Tony Huffman, ASID, AIFD, PFGI TMF



Blue whales have been singing less and it could be due to climate change, plastic pollution and algae blooms. Warming oceans effect the ability of their only food supply, krill, tiny shrimp-like creatures that swim in large groups that make it easy for the whale to swallow.

Blue whale vocalizations off the central California coast have decreased by nearly 40% in recent years due to warming oceans, serving as an indicator of severe environmental stress and food scarcity. Rising sea temperatures and marine heatwaves reduce the availability of krill, forcing whales to spend more time searching for food and less time singing. This, a study published in PLOS One shows, indicates that the whales are struggling to find food, leading to a reduction in communication and mating calls. There is just not enough time left for singing. It is like singing while you are starving. With fewer sounds from these ocean giants, there is growing concern about changing ocean conditions caused by climate change.

When we have really hot years and massive heat waves, the concern is more than just about temperature. The whale ecosystem changes and we don't get krill. The animals that rely on krill are out of luck. High ocean temperatures also lead to algae blooms that kill the krill.

Massive heat waves are only going to get worse due to fossil fuel usage. Oceans act as the world's largest carbon sink, meaning they already absorb more than 90% of the excess heat from climate change. There are whole ecosystems consequences of the marine heatwaves. If whales can't find food and they have to swim the entire west coast of North America. That's a really large scale consequence. If a species is delaying reproduction because they must search for food. Researchers say the signal is unmistakable" Something deep within the ecosystem is shifting



DOWN THE GARDEN PATH

Gwen DeWitt Garden Consultant

Happy New Year! We followed tradition and ate our black-eyed peas New Year's Day for good luck. Besides, I enjoy black-eyed peas and cornbread. It always reminds me of summers spent shelling them on the front porch with my sisters. Of course, we tried to do more snaps, but momma never let us get away with that. Daddy gave the neighbors the fruits of our labor. I realize now, Daddy was teaching us a valuable lesson on being generous to our neighbors.

We certainly could use some good luck with rainfall. The forecast isn't looking very positive. Thankfully, the heavy fog is helping keeping the moisture level in the ground stable. I'm doing my part by putting out compost and mulch which also helps keep the moisture in the stable.

While driving in the countryside, I noticed the bright yellow blooms of wildflowers along the roadsides. Even during a drought, Mother Nature will provide beauty. Wildflowers have evolved over a millennium, adapting to the vagaries of our weather conditions. This highlights the importance of using native plants in your landscape.

Our native redbuds are a perfect example of using natives in the landscape. Be sure to select a Texas or Mexican Redbud in order to have success in the garden. The Eastern Redbud does well in East Texas where the soil is acidic but will not thrive in our alkaline soil. Redbuds, classic spring bloomers, are putting on an explosion of color. Come spring, their bare branches transform into rich purple flowers, developing leaf buds soon to open into glossy heart-shaped foliage. Redbud legumes, which appear in late spring, provide food for numerous bird species. Redbuds are also the caterpillar host plant for a gossamer-winged butterfly, Henry's elfin (*Collophrys henrici*). Mankind has found many uses for all parts of the tree. The acidic flowers are sometimes pickled and used in salads. In Mexico, the flowers are fried. Fluid extracted from the bark has been used as an astringent and for the treatment of dysentery.

Soon the air will be filled with the scent of grape bubble-gum, the unique scent of the Texas Mountain Laurel, another Texas native. The small shrubby tree is a beautiful addition to the landscape and perfectly adapted to our soil and climate. The dark green leaves are the perfect backdrop for the rich purple pea-type blooms. It is prized for its ability to survive drought, pests, and heat. Plump woody seed pods with hard scarlet seeds follow the cascading blooms. The beans, leaves and flowers are poisonous. I'm sure you remember as a child, rubbing the beans on concrete to make them hot and chasing brother, sister or friend with the hot beans. This charming tree also has low water requirements and thrives in our alkaline soil. It is deer resistant. Texas Mountain Laurel (*Sophora secundiflora*) serves as a larvae food plant.

A good use of what little water we have is to create a small herb garden. Herb gardens reach all the way back to cave dwellers. Cave paintings in France depicting herbs have been carbon dated from 13,000 to 25,000 BC. Growing herbs was essential to our ancestors – after all patent medicines and pharmacies were not around the corner. Many herbal remedies today are derived from three main herbal traditions – Western (Roman and Greek), Ayurvedic and Chinese. All ancient civilizations including the Mayan, Aztec and Egyptian used herbs for treating illness. American Indians used herbs for tanning and dyeing leather as well as treating illness. The Western herbal tradition was based on the Greeks and Romans. Ancient Romans and Greeks crowned their leaders with dill and laurel. Romans used dill to purify the air.

In the 5th century BC, Hippocrates, a Greek physician, listed approximately 400 herbs in common use. 65AD, Pedanius Dioscorides, a Greek physician serving with the Roman army, wrote "De Materia Medica" in which he described the medicinal uses of many herbs. It is still considered one of the most influential herbal books.

During the Roman Empire the only medicines available were based on herbs or other natural remedies. Patients could seek out physicians but health care started with treatments devised by the head of the household. The head of the household treated family and servants with concoctions like vinegar or wine for disinfecting wounds and egg yolk mixed with poppy juice and egg shell ash to cure dysentery. Roman surgeons and physicians used extracts of opium (morphine) and henbane seed (scopolamine) as pain killers.

Greek physician Galen used Buckhorn (*Rhamnus frangula*) in the 2nd century to protect against witches and demons. Today, it would more likely be used as a laxative! Hippocrates used anise to treat coughs – it is still used today. Ayurvedic style of herbal medicine comes from India. It is the holistic approach to healing that originated around 1500 BC. This form of medicine is based on the philosophy that good health is the result of natural balance. Illness occurs when an imbalance is present and used herbs, diet and natural remedies to restore balance.

Chinese herbal medicine dates back 2000 to 3000 years. It was the belief in a constant battle between the opposing forces of ying and yang. When it was out of balance, the burning of herbs near the skin (moxibustion) and herbal medicines were used to return the patient to health. There are 2000 volumes of Chinese medical classics in the US National Library of Medicine.

In the Middle Ages, herbs were used to preserve meat as well as covering the rotting taste of meals that couldn't be refrigerated. Herbs helped mask odors of people who bathed irregularly or not at all. Herbs were also scattered on the floors of castles to mask the odors of everyday living where bones from food as well as other unsavory things were tossed.

The Middle Ages didn't favor the advancement of herbs in medicine. The Middle Ages were a dangerous time for the practicing herbalist. The Catholic Church considered them witches and pagans and burned them at the stake.

In Medieval Europe, all plants were assumed to have medicinal value. During the Renaissance medical, botany and horticultural fields began to diverge. It was slow to part and didn't separate for several centuries.

I will go into herb gardening in depth with my next column. Looking for ways to get an efficient way to use our diminishing water supply.

Happy Gardening!

Gwen Dewitt



Texas Redbud can be added to salads or decorate a cake



Texas Mountain Laurel smells like Grape bubble gum



The Vital Role of Credentials in National Garden Clubs, Inc.

Judy Grotts, Master Judge

In the world of horticulture and environmental stewardship, passion is the seed, but knowledge is the sunlight that allows a community to truly flourish. For members of **National Garden Clubs, Inc. (NGC)**, earning credentials is more than just a personal achievement; it is a commitment to professional standards that elevates the impact of garden clubs across the country.

Through its four primary educational schools, the NGC provides a structured path for members to become experts, consultants, and leaders. Here are why these credentials are the backbone of the organization's mission.

1. Establishing a Standard of Expertise

NGC credentials provide a standardized, professional framework that ensures consistency and excellence. Whether a member is interested in the aesthetics of a flower show or the science of soil, the accreditation process can transform a hobby into a specialized skill set.

After meeting the Master Status of The Four Pillars of NGC Education:

- **Flower Show School:** Trains members to become **Accredited Flower Show Judges**. This curriculum covers horticulture, floral design, and the complex procedures required to chair and evaluate standard flower shows.
- **Gardening School:** Focuses on botany, plant identification, and sustainable practices, leading to the designation of **Gardening Consultant**.
- **Environmental School:** Teaches environmental literacy and conservation, certifying members as **Environmental Consultants** who can advocate for the protection of natural resources.
- **Landscape Design School:** Provides the tools to understand and execute professional-grade landscape planning, resulting in the **Landscape Design Consultant** credential.

2. Community Leadership and Advocacy

Credentials have empowered some members to serve as authoritative resources within their communities. An **Environmental Consultant** isn't just a gardener; they can be a trained advocate capable of collaborating with local governments on urban planning, native plant restoration, and water conservation.

By holding these titles, members gain the "soft power" and technical vocabulary needed to:

- Lead civic beautification projects with scientific backing.
- Mentor new club members and youth groups.
- Consult on public park designs and community gardens.

3. Maintaining the Integrity of Competition

The prestige of an NGC Flower Show relies entirely on the quality of its judging. **Accredited Judges** must pass rigorous exams and attend regular **Symposiums** to maintain their "Good Standing." This continuous education ensures that awards are given based on the highest standards of horticulture and design, preserving the integrity of the competition and inspiring exhibitors to push the boundaries of their craft. A member who completes all four NGC Schools and earns both Consultant and Judge status achieves the prestigious status of being a Four-Star Member. After becoming a master in all four schools they become a Five - Star Member.

4. Personal Growth and Global Networking

Beyond the community impact, credentials offer a clear pathway for lifelong learning. The journey from a Student Judge to an Accredited Master Judge involves years of dedicated study and practice. This pursuit connects individuals to a national and international network of experts, fostering a "lifelong community dedicated to beautifying landscapes," as noted in the NGC Membership Benefits.

Summary of Consultant & Judge Levels

Status: **Student** Requirement: Currently enrolled in the 4-course series.

Status: **Accredited** Requirement: Passed all courses/exams and met exhibiting requirements.

Status: **Life** Achieved after passing multiple refreshers over several years.

Status: **Master** The highest level of proficiency and long-term commitment.

From the first school to the last Symposium a consultant or Judge needs to keep their own records. Accidents happen things get lost; people sometime don't get the chance to pass on their records to the next chairman.

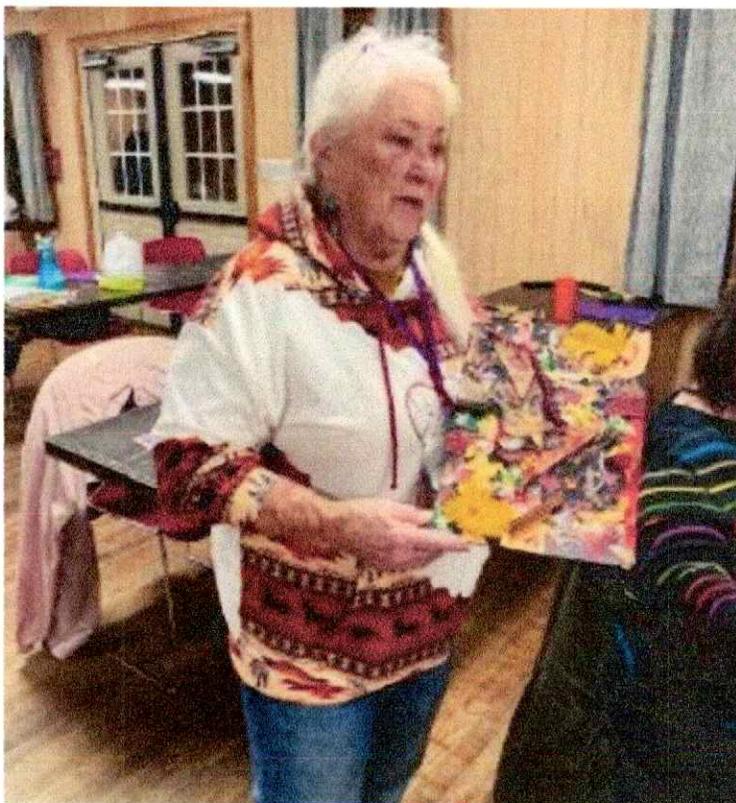
National is in the process of creating a Portal in hopes of making record keeping easier. Until then KEEP THOSE RECORDS.



Pictures from Texas Environmental School



Past SCE Director Sarah Mc Reynolds and Jennie our graduate this school



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

Password: FUTURE

South Central Communicator Editor

Pam Ellis

Communicator Email address: Pamella271@gmail.com

COMMUNICATOR article due	Communicator publish Date
February 1	February 15
June 1	June 15
October 1	October 15