



SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

Arkansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, & Texas)

The Communicator

CHRISTINE LONGTHORP, DIRECTOR 2025-2027

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

National

June 7 - 13

National Garden
Week

September 17, 2026

Fall Board Zoom
Meeting

South Central Region

Arkansas

August 4-5

Mid-year Board
Meeting

August 24-27, 2026

Flower Show School
Course 3
Wyndham Grand Little
Rock

Oklahoma

July 21, 2026

Summer Board Meeting
Ruby Atkinson Garden
Center

July 14- 16, 2026

NGC Flower Show School
Course 2, Hilton Garden
Inn South, 8202 S 100th
East Ave., Tulsa



SCR Representing at the NGC Convention

New Mexico

September 10-13

The Native Plant Society
of New Mexico 50th
Anniversary
Silver City, NM

September 13, 9a-4p

Placitas Garden Tour
sponsored by the
Sandoval Master
Gardeners - Placitas

October 13, 2026

District I Blue Star
Marker Dedication
2701 Mulberry Street SE
Albuquerque

Texas

August 3-4

Garden Study School
Course III
San Antonio

October 13-15

Flower Show
Symposium - Dallas

October 20-22

TGC Fall Convention
Waco

October 26-28

Flower Show School
Course III - Dallas



Greetings SCR Garden Club Members:

The month of April was a whirlwind of conventions across South Central Region which began by celebrating 100 years of Route 66 in Oklahoma City with OGC at the end of March. I was asked to give a design program which was using unusual containers such as hanging brightly colored colanders, rolling pages of an old book for a book club meeting or using child's rain boots for a baby shower! Oklahoma treated me like a queen and they have begun to prepare for next April when they are hosting the SCR convention to follow their annual state convention.

I returned to New Mexico to attend "Old Mexico meets New Mexico" in Las Cruces where we were joined by Donna Donnely our National President who helped inspire newcomers understand the levels of leadership and the longevity of NGC. Our 100th anniversary will be held in Albuquerque in 2029, so put it on your calendar and support SCR member, Suzy Andregio who will be installed as our NGC President.

Within days we were on the road in a rented van, destination San Antonio for the SCR convention hosted by Texas. All four states were well represented and even with it not immediately following the state convention in Houston it was well attended. Again Donna Donnely graced us with her presence and enjoyed a morning river boat cruise before we began the business side of the conference. Great programs, a lavender farm, orchid expert, floral designer who encouraged local growers and a Blue Star/Gold Star memorial program in support of my project. I will be back to Texas for your early April State convention in 2027. As a sideline my name was changed to Christine Longhorn by many people so it stands now as my nickname!!

Three days later I was on a plane to attend the National Garden Clubs convention at HQ in St. Louis.

It was fun to see first time attendees in awe over the stunningly beautiful setting of our HQ building and to visit the Gateway Arch. Our programs were educational and meeting members from all around the country and our South American affiliates was unifying and fun. One thing that I want to encourage is more participation in applying for awards so expect to hear from me in each publication, reminding you to keep a journal of activities that show the nation how we in the South Central Region make a huge difference in our communities.

I thank all garden club members who contributed and made the effort to attend any of these conventions as your presence was noted by me and I am grateful for the support.

New Mexico, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas please keep inspiring your members and neighbors to Plant America and Keep America Beautiful as this summer celebrates 250 years of being the greatest country in the world.

Christine Longthorp (aka Longhorn)

South Central Region Director 2025-2027

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION CONVENTION

SAN ANTONIO



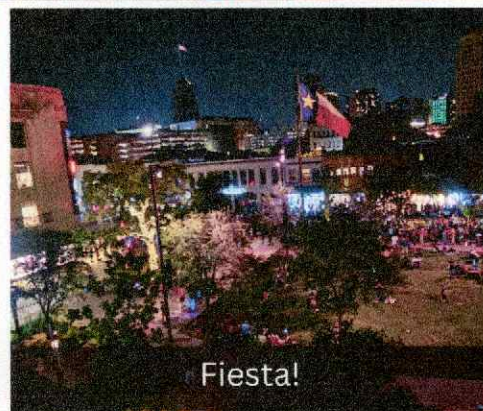
Arkansas



Texas



Nancy Rana, AR, Linda Jean Brown, TX, Donna Donnelly, NGC, Melody Mason-Spense, OK, Johnese Turri, NM



Fiesta!



Nancy Rana
Arkansas
President

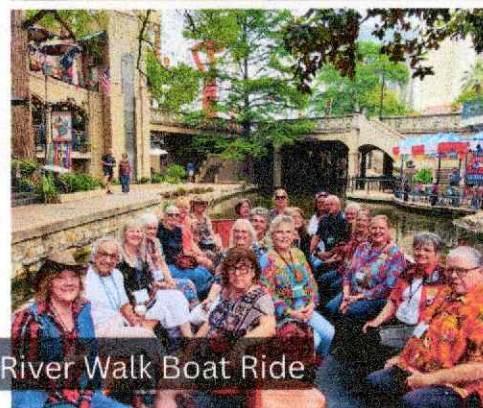


Melody Mason-Spense
Oklahoma President



Christine Longthorpe
SCR Director

New Mexico



River Walk Boat Ride

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION AT NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS

SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI





Greetings from Arkansas!

This spring has been packed with wonderful meetings, exciting adventures, and memorable accomplishments across Arkansas.

We began our busiest season with the Arkansas Federation of Garden Clubs (AFGC) Annual Convention in historic Hot Springs. Known for its horse racing tradition, Hot Springs provided the perfect setting for our "Run for the Roses" convention. We were treated to outstanding presenters who shared their expertise and passion for roses. Members donned festive derby hats, enjoyed a delightful style show, and cheered on our club presidents as they raced adorable pool noodle horses in a spirited competition that brought plenty of laughter and fun.

One of our most exciting developments is the formation of the Arkansas Zoom N Bloom Hybrid Garden Club, which will begin meeting in August. This innovative club combines both virtual and in-person participation, allowing members from across Arkansas and beyond to join. Our goal is to reach individuals in remote areas where garden clubs may not be accessible, increase membership, and provide educational opportunities to a broader audience. We are also pleased to welcome a new club, Grow Native Bella Vista, to our Arkansas garden club family. We invite all of you to join us and follow updates on our website, Arkansasafgc.net.

Our next adventure took us to another historic city in a neighboring state. The Garden Clubs of Texas hosted a fun-filled South Central Region meeting in San Antonio. Highlights included a guided riverboat tour and time spent enjoying the beautiful River Walk. Eleven Arkansas members attended, and we were thrilled to receive numerous awards. We extend our sincere appreciation to our state awards chairmen, Sherrie Eoff and Debbie Main, whose dedication and hard work contributed greatly to our success.

With only a quick turnaround, we were off to St. Louis for the National Garden Clubs Annual Convention, "Meet Me in St. Louis." We are especially proud of our award-winning members, Ronna Smith, Rose Schultz, and Nancy Voyles, who participated in the NGC Patriotic Petite Flower Show, "America the Beautiful." Twelve Arkansas members represented our state, and we were delighted when our own Debbie Main received the SCR Service and Recognition Award. We also congratulate Rose Schultz on receiving well-deserved recognition for her achievements, along with several other awards that will be formally presented at our next state meeting.

Our final major project of the spring was producing our state flower show, "Down the Rabbit Hole of Gardening," written by Teresa Shannon. The show featured nine classes of designs, botanical arts horticulture, botanical arts design, horticulture exhibits, and educational exhibits. We came very close to achieving our goal of 400 horticulture entries. We greatly appreciated the participation of our members, the support of our out-of-state judges, our vendors, and our corporate sponsors. The countless compliments and accolades received are a reflection of the dedication, creativity, and hard work of AFGC members throughout the state.

As summer begins, I wish my fellow state presidents and all our garden club members a season filled with relaxation, inspiration, and joy. I look forward to all that we will accomplish together as we prepare for another amazing year ahead.

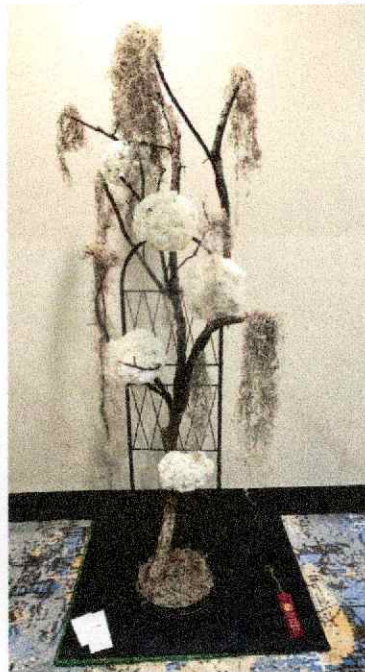
Warm regards,

Nancy Rana

President, Arkansas Federation of Garden Clubs

DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE OF GARDENING

Arkansas State Flower Show



ARKANSAS SCR AWARDS



AWARD	CLUB SIZE	CLUB	STATE		Sponsor
COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENTS					
CE-1	Large	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	First Place	Carolyn McCabe
CIVIC DEVELOPMENT					
CE-5	Large	Bell Vista GC	AR	Third Place	
LANDSCAPE DESIGN					
ENVIRONMENT & CONSERVATION					
EC-1	Large	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	Second Place	
FLORAL					
FD-2	Large	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	First Place	Dallas Fl Show Judges Founders G
GARDENS					
G-1 A 2	Large	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	First Place	Sherrie Eoff
PUBLICATIONS					
DIGITAL					
MAE-3	Large	Bella Vista Garden Club	AR	First Place	Nancy Voyles
PUBLICATIONS 3-12					
MAE-4 B-1	Large	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	First Place	Rose Schultz
PUBLICATION SMALL					
MAE-4 C-3	Small	Arkansas Federation of Garden Clubs Inc.	AR	First Place	
BROCHURE SINGLE CLUB					
NATIONAL GARDEN CLUB					
MAE-5	Large	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	First Place	Nancy Rana
YOUTH PROGRAM					
YW-1-D	Large	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	Second Place	
ARBOR DAY					
SCR-1	Medium	Benntonville GC	AR	First Place	Rose Schultz
FLOWER SHOW					
SCR-2	Small	Hughes Town & Country	AR	First Place	Judy Grotts
YEARBOOKS					
SCR-4	Large	Bella Vista Garden Club	AR	Second Place	
YEARBOOK THEME					
JR GC YEARBOOK THEME					
SCR-7	Large	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	First Place	Gwen DeWitt
MEMBER OF HONOR					
SCR-6	Large	Debbie Main, Garden Club of Rogers	AR	First Place	
		Garden Club of Rogers	AR	First Place	Sarah McReynolds

ARKANSAS NGC AWARDS



AWARD	CLUB	STATE	AWARD
Community Gardens			
CE-1	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
Roadside Plantings			
CE-4	Bella Vista Garden Club	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
Beautification Project			
CE-5	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
CE-5	Bella Vista Garden Club	AR	Certificate of Commendation
Landscaping of Public or Religious Grounds			
CE-8	Bella Vista Garden Club	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
Conservation Activities			
EC-1	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
Conservation Education			
EC-2	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
Floral Design Program			
FD-2	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
Container Gardens			
G-1	Bentonville GC Youth Committee for Junior Gardeners	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
G-1	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
Membership Awareness			
MAE1	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
Website A			
MAE 2	Bella Vista Garden Club	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
Digital Media Presentation			
MAE-3	Bella Vista Garden Club	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
Publications			
MAE 4 B	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	Certificate of Commendation
MAE 4-C	Arkansas Federation of Garden Clubs Inc.	AR	Certificate of Commendation
National Garden Week			
MAE 5	Hughes Town & Country GC	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
MAE 5	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
Youth Garden Club Outstanding Sponsor			
YW-1	Garden Club of Rogers	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
Outdoor Planting with Youth Garden Club			
YW 3	Bentonville Garden Club	AR	Certificate of Commendation
Horticulture Education for Youth			
YW 8	Bentonville Garden Club	AR	Certificate of Appreciation
Environmental Education Project with Youth			
YW 9	Garden Club of Rogers		Certificate of Appreciation



PLANT AMERICA

"Growing Together, Blooming Forever"

Summer has arrived in Oklahoma in full bloom—bringing renewed energy, fresh growth, and just enough pollen to remind us we're alive and gardening! Our season opened beautifully with the Oklahoma Daffodil Show, followed by the NGC Standard Flower Show – Early Iris Show, themed "Color My World with Iris." Up next was the NGC Design Specialty Show, "Welcome to Oz," April 25–26 during the Iris Festival—it was filled with creativity, excellence, and just a touch of magic.

Flower shows are thriving across our state, and it shows! A tremendous thank you to Michael Kowalchuk for his outstanding leadership across the North Central District and for serving as Convention Co-Chairman—clearly proving that sleep is optional during garden club season. Alongside the Oklahoma City Council of Garden Clubs, Judges Council, and affiliated societies, these collaborative efforts continue to elevate both visibility and impact.

Our recent Convention preparations kept us busy—but what a success it was! (I think we all earned a little extra sunshine after that one.) We were honored to welcome Suzy Andrego, Christine Longthorp, and Robin Pokorski, whose presence and expertise added tremendous value to our experience.

My sincere appreciation goes to our Board of Directors, District Presidents, clubs, and members for your leadership, chairmanship, and dedication. Thank you for supporting our youth contests, for your continued encouragement, and most importantly—for showing up. You helped make Convention bloom beautifully.

Now the doors are swinging wide open to an exciting season ahead—and if your calendar looks anything like mine, you may need a second one just for garden club events! The next two months are filled with opportunities to connect, learn, and grow. I was honored to attend Flower Show School Course 1 in Tulsa, where education and enthusiasm were on full display. These programs are essential in developing future leaders, and we look forward to continuing with Course 2 in Tulsa.

Special recognition goes to the Northeast District (NED) for their leadership in bringing Flower Show Schools forward, and to Brenda Michael Haggard for her dedication on her correspondences with the Ouachita National Forest to check on our seedlings—because someone has to keep those trees in line!

Across our districts, momentum continues to build. The North Central District (NCD) thrives through strong leadership and impactful flower shows. The South Central District (SCD) is growing membership and establishing new clubs under the leadership of Dina Atnip, First Vice President, and Jo Wood, Second Vice President—who clearly know how to grow both plants and people. The Northwest District (NWD) is hard at work preparing for the Wildflower Workshop & Tour (WFWS), while the Southwest District (SWD) is held several flower shows, including the Walters Dahlia Garden Club Flower Show on May 2.

Looking ahead, our "Meet Me" events continue to connect us in meaningful and fun ways—because let's be honest, we all love a good road trip with a purpose. And here's your sign... when you see me in the little red car on Facebook, it's time to "Meet Me!"

- May 29 – Draper Farms, Guymon (Membership Drive & Program)
- May 30 – Wildflower Workshop & Tour (WFWS), Black Mesa
- June 2 – OSU Botanical Garden, Stillwater + Bustani Plant Farm

Our calendar continues strong:

- Summer Board Meeting – July 21, Rubye Atkinson Garden Center

Each opportunity reflects our commitment to education, leadership, and continued growth—and yes, a few extra miles on our cars!

As we move forward, I am truly grateful for each of you. Your passion, dedication, and willingness to grow make Oklahoma Garden Clubs stronger every day. Summer reminds us that what we plant together continues to bloom—and the future is bright.

Together, we are truly PLANT AMERICA – Growing Together, Blooming Forever!

Melanie Masar-Spence



AWARD	CLUB SIZE	CLUB	STATE	
COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENTS				
<i>Beautification Project</i>				
CE 5	Large	Tulsa GC	OK	Certificate of Appreciation
Website - A				
MAE 2				
<i>Publications</i>				
MAE 4	Large	Tulsa GC	OK	Certificate of Appreciation
<i>National Garden Week</i>				
MAE-5	Large	Tulsa GC	OK	Certificate of Appreciation
YOUTH PROGRAM				
<i>Horticulture Education for Youth</i>				
YW 8	Large	Tulsa GC	OK	Certificate of Appreciation
YEARBOOK THEME				
SCR-5	Small	Amaryllis GC	OK	First Place
	Large	Tulsa GC	OK	First Place



AWARD	CLUB SIZE	CLUB	STATE	
COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENTS				
<i>Beautification Project</i>				
CE 5	Large	Tulsa GC	OK	Certificate of Appreciation
<i>Website - A</i>				
MAE 2				
<i>Publications</i>				
MAE 4	Large	Tulsa GC	OK	Certificate of Appreciation
<i>National Garden Week</i>				
MAE-5	Large	Tulsa GC	OK	Certificate of Appreciation
YOUTH PROGRAM				
<i>Horticulture Education for Youth</i>				
YW 8	Large	Tulsa GC	OK	Certificate of Appreciation



New Mexico had our 76th Convention this year in Las Cruces, New Mexico. It was truly a joy to welcome members from across our state and to hear about the many inspiring and impactful projects taking place within our clubs. Our members are incredibly creative and generous in sharing their knowledge, and our members devote countless volunteer hours to improving their communities—and it truly shows.

We were especially honored to have National President Donna Donnelly and her husband join us. What a delightful couple! Her message on behalf of National Garden Clubs was both inspiring and filled with exciting updates for the future.

We also attended the South Central Region Convention in San Antonio, where it was especially exciting to celebrate our very own Christine Longthorp serving as Director. It was wonderful gathering with members from the other three states—we truly have such creative, talented, and fun gardeners throughout our region. And what a treat it was to stay right along the beautiful River Walk!

The following week took us to St. Louis for the National Convention. This was my second National Convention, and once again it was such a joy reconnecting with friends and meeting new friends from across the country. I truly love gathering together, sharing stories, exchanging ideas, and enjoying each other's company.

Touring the headquarters was absolutely wonderful. The grounds were beautiful, and I especially loved walking the "Pathway to Success" lined with state bricks. The flower show was also incredible, and we were so proud to have four of our New Mexico gardeners receive awards.

Gatherings like these are truly what gardening is all about—sharing ideas, encouraging one another, forming friendships, and celebrating our love of gardening together as we continue to "Plant America for the Next 100 Years."

Before I close, I'd like to share a little tip to help keep your plants happy and hydrated while you're away for a few weeks, as I was during convention season. All you need is a large container of water and some natural rope or yarn (non-synthetic works best). Cut a length long enough to reach from the water to your plant, with a little extra to sit in the container. Give the yarn a good soak, gently wring it out, then place one end in the water and tuck the other into the soil. It will slowly wick water into the plant—like a quiet little lifeline while you're gone. I usually have a neighbor peek in after about a week, just to make sure the water level hasn't gotten too low.

Here's to coming home to happy, thriving plants!

Johnese Turri, President

New Mexico Garden Clubs



*Johnese
Easy
Wicking
System*





SCR has just completed its 95th Spring Convention held in San Antonio, TX. It was fast, furious, and a fun time filled with activities, workshops, and general assembly where we were informed of the up and coming changes that will affect us and put us more in the "know" of things around us.

The River Walk Cruise was most informative. We received a history lesson the schoolbooks failed to mention. We had fun workshops consisting of "Resurrection Plants" and "Red, White, and Blue" wreath making. Our programs were amazing as well. If I told you everything that goes on at our conventions it would take all the excitement and mystery out of your coming. So, I will just leave it at that! You must consider attending an SCR Convention near you. Next year, May 22-23, 2027 Oklahoma will be our host state in the Tulsa area. So, won't ya make your reservation and come see for yourself?

I will briefly let you and the general assembly know what I have done in the past 10 months as Texas Garden Clubs President.

The first challenge was on July 4, 2025 when the horrific flood came through Kerr County and towns in this county. One club in particular, Hunt Garden Club, where the most damage occurred caused Daddy and I to go to Kerrville, Hunt and surrounding areas to see first hand what had been done. We met with some townspeople of Hunt for a tour of the Guadalupe River and saw the results of the disastrous flood. Later we met with Hunt Garden Club and discussed what the immediate needs were. I came back to East Texas and NGC President, Donna Donnelly had contacted me asking what could be done on a national level. She said, I have prayed and prayed but feel there is more I can do. I knew immediately the type of President we had as she touched my heart deeply with her concern. So, she gave me a contact and I sent the information to the Hunt Garden Club President, Cindy Janke. And the next thing I know the NGC National Disaster Relief Fund immediately sent a check to help out. It was the first check received and President Donnelly touched my heart with her concerns and kindness for others and I am forever grateful for her immediate acts.

Next Oklahoma Garden Club State President, Melanie Spence contacted me and once again, a nice check was sent to another of our projects that was hit in Kerrville, Tx, the Riverside Nature Center. My Texas garden club members when asked to donate, did not disappoint and they too gave generously. So, thank you to each of you for your kindness and generosity.

My two year Project "Spreading Wildflower Seeds all across Texas" was put into action as I traveled to District Conventions. They were given large bags of wildflower seeds, instructions and guidelines. Daddy wanted to help with my project. So, I asked for \$100.00 for each District and he says oh no, that is not enough and I asked how much then and he said \$200.00. I reminded him of 10 Districts in our State and was he able to take this on. So, 1st place winner from each District will receive a nice check in the amount of \$200.00 at the end of my term. Last month, I received a really cool letter from a 5th grade student in Lovington, NM telling me of the types of flowers and things that they can grow out there in New Mexico, and could I give some examples of what we grow down here in Texas. And if I had something I could send to the kids it would be nice.

So, I packed up so much Texas stuff and sent it directly to her at her school with a letter answering the questions asked of me. Hopefully, I will get a response from her.

Linda Jean Brown

President, Texas Garden Clubs

TEXAS SCR AWARDS



COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENTS						
CE-1	Small	Super Seeders GC	TX	First Place	Jim & Linda Lawson	
CE-1	Large	Mesquite GC	TX	Second Place		
CIVIC DEVELOPMENT						
CE-5	Medium	Hondo GC	TX	First Place	Suzy Andrego	
CE-5	Large	Mesquite GC	TX	Second Place		
LANDSCAPE DESIGN						
CE-8	Medium	Hondo GC	TX	First Place	Suzy Andrego	
ENVIRONMENT & CONSERVATION						
EC-1	Large	Hunt GC	TX	First Place	Melanie Spence & April Pratt	
FLORAL GARDENS						
G-1	Small	Friends of Oak Cliff Parks	TX	First Place	Sherrie Eoff	
G-1	Medium	ARP GC	TX	First Place		
G-1	Large	Kingwood GC	TX	Second Place		
PUBLICATIONS						
DIGITAL						
MAE-3	Small	Friends of Oak Cliff Parks	TX	First Place	Nancy Voyles	
MAE-3	Medium	Bluebonnet GC	TX	First Place	Nancy Voyles	
PUBLICATIONS 3-12						
MAE-4 B-1	Medium	Columbus GC	TX	First Place	Rose Schultz	
MAE-4 B-1	Large	Hunt GC	TX	Second Place		
PUBLICATION SMALL BROCHURE SINGLE CLUB						
MAE-4 F-1	Medium	Hondo GC	TX	First Place	Shirley Tetreault	
MAE-4 F-1	Large	Mesquite GC	TX	First Place	Shirley Tetreault	
NATIONAL GARDEN WEEK						
MAE-5	Medium	Bluebonnet GC	TX	First Place	Nancy Rana	
YOUTH PROGRAM						
ARBOR DAY						
SCR-1	Medium	Frankston GC	TX	Second Place	Debi Harrington	
SCR-1	Large	League City GC	TX	First Place		
SCR-1 DIV II	Large	Houston Fed. Of GC	TX	First Place		
FLOWER SHOW YEARBOOKS						
SCR-4	Small	Comal Garden Club	TX	First Place	Gwen DeWitt	
SCR-4	Medium	San Angelo GC	TX	First Place	Gwen DeWitt	
SCR-4	Large	Sunnyvale GC	TX	First Place	Gwen DeWitt	
YEARBOOK THEME						
SCR-5	Large	Designers & Diggers Garden Study Club	TX	Second Place		
JR GC YEARBOOK THEME						
MEMBER OF HONOR						
SCR Sweepstakes						
	Small	Friends of Oak Park	TX	2 1st place	Sarah McReynolds	
	Medium	Hondo	TX	3 1st place	Sarah McReynolds	

TEXAS NGC AWARDS



CE-2 <i>Roadside Plantings</i>	Mesquite GC	TX	Appreciation
CE 4 <i>Beautification Project</i>	Ingleside GC	TX	Certificate of Appreciation
CE 5 <i>Community Project with Native Plants/ Wildflowers</i>	Rose Garden Of Medina, TX	TX	Certificate of Merit \$ 100
CE 6 <i>Conservation Activities</i>	Hearthstone GC	TX	Certificate of Appreciation
EC 1 <i>Wildlife Survival</i>	Friends of Oak Cliff Parks	TX	Certificate of Appreciation
EC 3 <i>Container Gardens</i>	Hunt GC	TX	Certificate of Appreciation
G 1 <i>Therapy Gardens</i>	Arp Kingwood GC	TX TX	Certificate of Appreciation
G 3 <i>Membership Awareness</i>	Hondo GC	TX	Certificate of Appreciation
MAE 1 <i>Website - A</i>	Kingwood GC	TX	Certificate of Appreciation
MAE 2	Columbus GC	TX	Certificate of Appreciation
<i>Digital Media Presentation</i>	Hunt GC	TX	Certificate of Appreciation
	Texas GC District IV	TX	Certificate of Appreciation
	Bluebonnet GC	TX	Certificate of Appreciation
MAE 3 <i>National Garden Week</i>	Bluebonnet GC	TX	Certificate of Appreciation
MAE-5 <i>YOUTH PROGRAM</i>	Bluebonnet GC		Certificate of Appreciation
<i>Youth Garden Club Outstanding</i>			



Thanks to the following ladies for agreeing to judge the SCR Scholarships.
 The committee included: April Pratt Oklahoma, Heather White Texas, Anna Koonce Arkansas
 The applicants were from the three states of Arkansas, Oklahoma and Texas. New Mexico had no applicant.

Sophia Mahmoud (Arkansas) - Was a solid candidate; she is majoring in Earth Science with Urban and Regional Planning. She has a 4.0 GPA and volunteers with her university food pantry community garden. She has contributed to maintaining the garden beds and has provided educational materials to promote fresh healthy produce. She has received the Arkansas scholarship will receive the NGC Scholarship Scholarship.

Jeanine Hegwood (Oklahoma) - She is a garden club member and member of a plant society. She is involved with Oklahoma Daffodil Society, Tulip Garden Club and the Oklahoma Iris Society. She has plans to become a food producer, agricultural scientist, and educator. She wants to solve food insecurity, as well produce and develop horticulture and field crops. She is working on a major in Plant Systems and Resource Sustainability. She has received the Oklahoma scholarship will go on to receive an NGC Scholarship.

Michael Cook, BS, MS, and PhD Candidate.

Michael was an undergraduate horticulture major at Texas A&M University, and pursued extracurricular activities in the Horticulture Student Club as well as serving for Extension as a Master Gardener. He earned a Masters in Grape Growing and Wine Making - Viticulture - at Fresno State in California. He has been a full time Extension Horticulturalist for 55 counties for nearly a decade and returned to school, commuting to College Station every week from Dallas to take classes and continue as an agent. Upon graduation he plans to remain as a professor and Extension specialist in Texas. A truly outstanding candidate for the SCR Scholarship and ultimately an NGC Scholarship as well.

All three applicants have been awarded their state scholarships and all three applicants will be NGC Scholarship recipients.

SCR Scholarship Chairman, Sarah McReynolds



Lavender bath soak is to relax your whole body with essential lavender oil, Epson salt, & baking soda.

Recipe:

1 cup Epson salt

1 cup baking soda

10 - 12 drops of essential lavender oil

Mix together well.

Can use food grade pink (cupcake icing color drops) to make a safe color in jar.

Paula Copt Duplant
SCR Chaplain





Tony Huffman Environmental Concerns

The Environmental Impact of Fast Fashion

Fast Fashion refers to a business model characterized by a rapid design, production, and marketing of inexpensive clothing.

Fast fashion companies focus on low-cost garments that replicate the latest fashion trends. The industry dries up water resources and pollutes rivers and streams. Eight-five percent of their textiles go to the landfill each year. Even washing clothes releases 500,000 tons of microfibers into the ocean each year - the equivalent of fifty billion plastic bottles.

The time it takes for a product to go through the supply chain, from design to purchase, is called lead time. In 2012, Zara was able to design, produce, and deliver a new garment in two weeks, Forever 21 in six weeks, and H & M in eight weeks. Shien, from China, has garments ready to sell in just 10 days. This results in the fashion industry producing obscene amounts of waste.

The fashion industry is the second largest consumer of water among the industries, requiring about 700 gallons to produce one cotton shirt and 2,000 gallons of water to produce a pair of jeans.

Synthetic fibers, like polyester, nylon and acrylic take hundreds of years to biodegrade. The average American now generates eighty-two pounds of textile waste each year. The production of leather is the most toxic in all the supply chain because of the chemicals used to tan leather. Many of these chemicals are not biodegradable and contaminate water sources.

The social impact of fast fashion is alarming. Eighty percent of apparel is made by young women between the age of eighteen to twenty-four, working seven days a week for barely enough money to just exist. In many diverging countries, sales and profits often take credence over human welfare. The solution is to purchase quality fashion. Purchase clothing made from more substantial fabrics - wild silk, organic cotton, linen, hemp, and lyocell. One way shoppers can combat fast fashion is to purchase quality clothing from second hand sellers. Avoid needless consumption.



Down the Garden Path

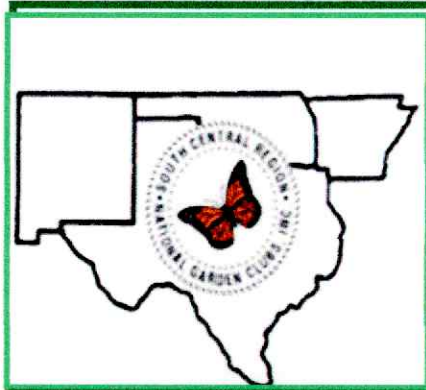
Spring is done – hot humid weather has arrived. Along with the rains and hot weather, we now have an influx of mosquitoes. Make sure you empty anything that will hold water. Use mosquito dunks in birdbaths. Keep your grass cut and shrubbery trimmed to reduce places for the evil little vampires to hide out.

El Nino isn't supposed to arrive until mid-summer, but the weather has certainly changed. Recent rains and sunshine have created perfect conditions for most plants; you can hear the grass growing! While the succulents aren't so happy, a few have melted, the tropical plants are thriving.

The hibiscus and orchids are covered in buds and blooms and the oaks have an abundance of new growth. With so many shade trees, I'm always looking to add color to the shade garden. With that in mind, I planted sixty 'Carolyn Whorton' Caladiums a few weeks ago. They have unfurled their leaves to provide a splash of pink. The red 'Cardinal' Caladiums are just pushing up through the soil and will soon provide more color to the outdoor sitting area. I added containers of 'Southern Charm,' 'Candyland' and 'Poka Dot' caladiums to provide splashes of color to the shade garden. Still haven't planted 'White Christmas' – it will have to wait until I get back from Headquarters in Fort Worth. The rains and a busy schedule delayed planting but the weather conditions are perfect for the showy leaves.

Thanks to the late rains, we have a few wildflowers. Please don't cut them until they are seeded out. It's been a hard year for them; allowing the plants to seed will insure wildflowers for next year.

My latest botanical crush has all the elements of a good mystery novel filled with earnest researchers, break-ins and double dealing. A nursery I order from recently sent out an article on a mysterious small shrub, *Synsepalum dulcificum*, commonly known as the Miracle Berry. The shrub and its small red berries will, like magic, temporarily change your taste perceptions. After swirling the slightly sweet pulp in your mouth for a few seconds you can bite into a lemon slice and it will taste sweet. The lemon hasn't suddenly become sweet – the berry changes



Gwen Dewitt

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your perception with the effect lasting up to 90 minutes. The article referenced vinegar tasting like apple juice after the use of the sweet pulp of the Miracle Berry. The tropical plant comes to us from the Gold Coast of West Africa, where it's called agbayun and it has been a part of the local food culture for centuries. The Yoruba people use it in fermented palm wine and acidic corn bread to make it palatable. French explorers documented this phenomenon in 1725. It remained a horticultural curiosity as the berry didn't ship well and was difficult to cultivate outside of its native range.

The fodder for a good mystery novel begins in the 1960s and '70s, when a small group of intrepid American researchers and entrepreneurs thought the berry's active compound (glycoprotein) could be used to replace artificial sweeteners. They called the compound miraculin.

Bob Harvey, the main researcher, along with several partners developed a new company, raising money to establish plantations in Jamaica and Puerto Rico to grow enough shrubs for commercial production of the berries. They came within weeks of launching a national product line when in 1974 they received a letter from the FDA ordering an immediate halt to all interstate shipments of their products. The company collapsed and went into bankruptcy.

The intrigue comes in the weeks before the letter – a mysterious late-night break-in at the company headquarters followed by an anonymous article in a Jamaican newspaper which trashed the company's products leading to its collapse. The researchers and scientists who worked closely with the berry isolating the active compound maintain there was no basis for the ban.

In 1985, an article by Nathaniel Tripp for Horticulture magazine found that the FDA's own contact had told Harvey the product could legally go to market. Which brings us to the possible shenanigans. The ban came just as their product was about to become a serious competitor to the sugar and artificial sweetener industries!

The nursery I order from received a letter in 2025 from Stephen Dennis, whose father was a horticulturalist for Miralin. His father figured out how to grow the berry commercially in greenhouses and on tropical farms. Stephen sent the



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nursery a fifty-year-old packet of Miralin chewable tablets, one of the few still in existence, along with a magazine article documenting the mysterious rise and fall of the venture. The berry's seemingly magical ability to alter sour things turning them sweet intrigues garden writers and articles continue to appear in magazines like Fine Gardening, Horticulture, and Martha Stewart's blog.

There are several nurseries in South Florida growing the plant commercially. Miracle Fruit Farm grows them with 99 percent going toward oncology patients. Chemo and radiation commonly cause a metallic, off-putting taste that makes food nearly inedible, creating a serious problem with nutrition for patients. Miracle berry's glycoprotein can mask those flavors, making meals appetizing. The farm works with approximately 44 oncology hospitals and outpatient clinics across the country. For patients interested in their products, the farm ships freeze dried tablets through their website, oncology pharmacies, clinics and even Amazon.

Needless to say, a Miracle Berry shrub is now in a container in the garden. It has tiny white blooms and one red berry. I eagerly look forward to harvesting and trying out the fruit. Will keep you updated on my new adventure raising these magical berries! Happy Gardening!





The Art and Science of Subdividing Horticulture Classes

The Horticulture Division is the bedrock of any National Garden Clubs (NGC) Flower Show, celebrating the skill of local growers and the dazzling diversity of the plant kingdom. In a standard show, the written schedule functions as the "Law of the Show," mapping out predefined sections and classes. However, nature rarely conforms to neat, predictable lists. On the morning of a show, an influx of varied plant specimens often arrives at the registration tables.

To ensure fair competition, the NGC Handbook for Flower Shows grants the Horticulture Classification Committee Chairman the authority to dynamically subdivide classes. This process ensures that distinct cultivars do not compete directly against each other, maintaining a level playing field for judges and exhibitors alike.

Purpose of Subdividing

The primary goal of subdividing is to protect the integrity of the NGC Standard System of Awarding. According to NGC rules, judges can award only one first place (blue) ribbon, one second place (red) ribbon, and one third place (yellow) ribbon per class or subclass.

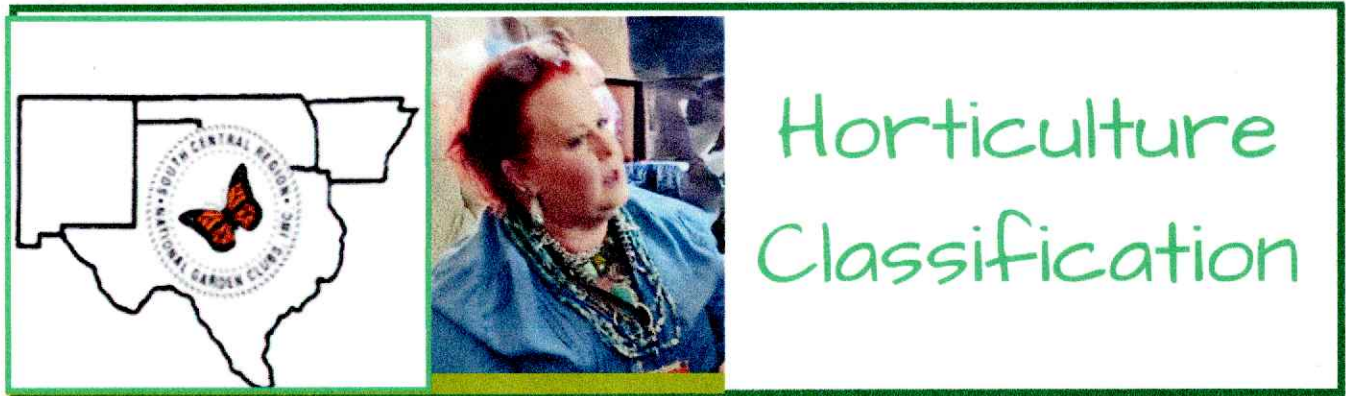
If a broad class—such as the genus *Rosa*—receives 20 entries ranging from micro-miniatures to giant hybrid teas, forcing them to compete together is fundamentally unfair. It would prevent excellent specimens from receiving due recognition. Subdividing solves this by splitting the crowded class into smaller, botanically logical subgroups. This gives every unique plant type a fair chance to be judged against its true peers.

[Broad Class: e.g., *Rosa*]

— [Subclass A: Hybrid Tea] — (Blue, Red, Yellow Ribbons)

— [Subclass B: Miniature] — (Blue, Red, Yellow Ribbons)

— [Subclass C: Floribunda] — (Blue, Red, Yellow Ribbons)



The Art and Science of Subdividing Horticulture Classes (cont.)

Criteria for Creating Subclasses

The Classification Chairman relies on specific, distinct plant traits to divide a single class. Under NGC guidelines, classes can be subdivided by the following characteristics:

- **Genus, Species, and Cultivar:** The absolute standard for subdivision. A broad class of the genus *Hosta* is instantly split by specific cultivars (e.g., *Hosta* 'Halcyon' versus *Hosta* 'Sum and Substance') to prevent vastly different leaf sizes from clashing.
- **Color:** Entries can be separated by their visual hue. For instance, a class of *Zinnia elegans* can be cleanly divided into Subclass A (White/Cream), Subclass B (Pink/Rose), and Subclass C (Yellow/Orange).
- **Form and Structure:** Subdividing by growth form prevents unfair anatomical advantages. In dahlia (*Dahlia*) classes, specimens are frequently divided by their distinct structures, separating pompon types from dinnerplate or cactus types.
- **Size:** Physical dimensions provide a natural dividing line. Container-grown plants are routinely split by pot diameter (e.g., pots under 6 inches versus pots 6 to 8 inches) to ensure structural harmony on the staging tables.

Rule of Three

The operational trigger for subdividing a class is the "Rule of Three". When **three or more specimens of the exact same cultivar, color, species, or distinctive feature** are entered into a generalized class, the Classification Chairman splits them off into their own independent subclass.

For example, if a generalized "Any Other Worthy Flowering Perennial" class receives twelve mixed entries—including three identical stems of *Echinacea purpurea*, those three coneflowers are extracted. They form a new, dedicated subclass: "Class 14a: *Echinacea purpurea*". The remaining nine mixed perennials stay in the parent class to be judged together. This keeps the competition tightly focused and organized.



The Art and Science of Subdividing Horticulture Classes (cont.)

Procedural Workflow on Show Day

Subdividing is an intense, fast-paced dance executed during morning registration before the judges arrive. The workflow requires clear communication between the Classification Committee, the Entries Committee, and the Staging Committee:

1. **Intake and Verification:** The exhibitor presents their specimen with an entry card displaying the correct botanical binomial name.
2. **Classification Review:** The Classification Committee inspects the plant material to verify its physical health and ensure the botanical naming is accurate.
3. **Physical Placement:** The entry is moved to its designated class on the exhibition tables.
4. **Spotting Crowded Classes:** The Classification Chairman continuously scans the tables for any clusters of three or more identical specimens.
5. **Forming the Subclass:** The Chairman officially creates the subclass, updates the master show record, and adds clear alphabetical suffixes (such as Class 4a, 4b) to the display signs.

Impact on Judging and Awards

Subdividing directly shapes how judges evaluate the show floor and distribute top honors. Each newly created subclass is fully eligible for its own set of first, second, and third-place ribbons. This greatly expands the number of blue ribbons awarded across the division.

A high density of high-quality subclasses benefits exhibitors and makes the show far more vibrant. It elevates the caliber of competition, paving the way for elite top-tier awards like the **Award of Horticultural Excellence** or the **Arboreal Award**.



The Art and Science of Subdividing Horticulture Classes (cont.)

Organizational Unit	Definition	Ribbon Allocations
Section	A broad category (e. g., Perennial Cut Flowers)	Eligible for Section awards (E.g. Award of Merit)
Class	A specific group listed in the schedule (e.g. <i>Echinacea</i>)	Yields one set of ribbons if it is not subdivided
Subclass	A dynamic division created on show day (e.g., <i>echinacea purpurea</i>)	Yields a full complement of ribbons (1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd).

Educational Value to the Public

NGC flower shows are deeply rooted in community education. A messy, un-subdivided horticulture class offers little educational value to a guest. If various types of the genus *Capsicum* are grouped into a single class, a visitor cannot easily spot the differences between cultivars.

When the Classification Chairman separates them cleanly into distinct subclasses—such as *Capsicum annuum* 'Bell' or *Capsicum annuum* 'Jalapeño'—the display turns into a highly educational botanical exhibit.

Visitors can clearly observe how specific varieties differ in form, skin texture, and color. This fulfills the core mission of the NGC: fostering a deep, structured appreciation for horticulture and the natural world.

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

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