



GARDENEWS

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Be a Steward of the Earth

The official publication of the
Federated Garden Clubs
of Maryland, Inc.

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DEADLINES:

February Issue – January 10

July Issue – June 10

November Issue – October 10

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FGCMD President: Donna Miller

“Wow” and “Whew”! Those are my sentiments after the phenomenal CAR-SGC Conference that we were honored to host October 19–22 in Cambridge, MD. Not only was it an amazing event, but it was also exhilarating and exhausting! My heartfelt thanks to all our volunteers, from greeters to ticket-takers, but especially to Co-Chairs Susie Middleton and Diana Bonner, and Tri-Refresher Chair Linda Harris.

We were also honored to have the NGC President Donna Donnelly join us. She shared with us encouraging words to continue in our mission to provide support, leadership and education. In 2026, her President’s Project is: **PLANT AMERICA – Celebrate America’s 250th Birthday by planting Red, White and Blue.** To implement this initiative, it was approved at the Fall NGC Board Meeting to allocate \$100,000 of PLANT AMERICA Grant Funds towards the planting of red, white and blue flowers at Blue Star Markers and other designated locations. More information will follow with guidelines for applying for this specific grant.

At the conference, FGCMD was also presented with these CAR-SGC Awards:

- *Town & Country Garden Club* – First Place, Small Club – Civic Development and Improvement Award, \$100.
- *Crofton Village Garden Club* – Second Place, Medium – Flower Show Schedule Award – NGC Standard Show.
- *Kent Island Garden Club* – Overall Winner – Flower Show Schedule Award – NGC Horticulture Specialty Flower Show, \$50.
- *District I* – Flower Show Schedule Award – NGC Patriotic Standard Flower Show.
- *Chestertown Garden Club* – First Place, 45-69 Members, Yearbook Award.

Kudos to you all!

Recently, I was pleased to award three of my President’s Project “Be A Steward of the Earth!” Grants to Charles County Garden Club, District II; Worcester County Garden Club, District I; and Hampton Garden Club, District III. I encourage you all to continue to “Be A Steward of the Earth!”

Lastly, at the CAR-SGC Conference, I was also humbled to be asked to give the inspiration for the General Meeting, and I will end my message with part of that, a quote from Jane Goodall:

“Above all we must realize that each of us makes a difference with our life. Each of us impacts the world around us every single day. We have a choice to use the gift of our life to make the world a better place – or not to bother.”

Let us be the ones that do bother!

The Mission of FGCMD, Inc.

The Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization, whose mission is to provide support, leadership and education for garden clubs and the public about best practices for horticulture, conservation, and landscape design. We encourage the protection of our natural resources, endeavor to create civic beauty, work for the improvement and protection of roadsides and parks, and award scholarships to further these goals.

November 2025 Gardenews In This Issue

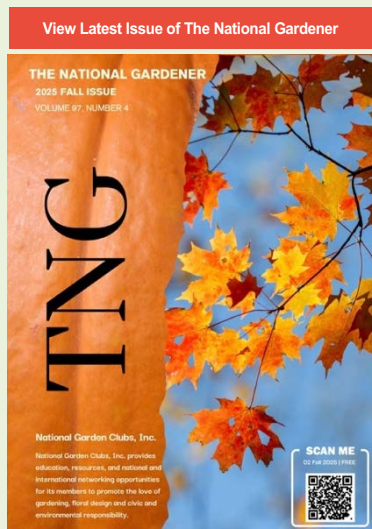
1: President's Message

"Let us be the ones that do
bother!"



3: District News

- DI: New Initiatives
DII: New Daffodil Show Location
DIII: Community Garden Support
DIV: Guilford GC Centennial
DV: District Semiannual Meeting



The FGCMMD
[President's Project](#) is
inviting you to
submit your
applications for a
"Be a Steward of the Earth" grant.

[Click here for Garden Club Grant
Application and Instructions](#)

[Click here for Donation Card](#)

[Healthy Planet Pledge for Individuals
Download Here](#)

[Healthy Planet Pledge for Garden Clubs
Download Here](#)

The deadline for the spring award is February
28, 2026 (awarded in March).

18: Committee News

Annual Meeting,
Youth Gardening Contests



20: Council News

Landscape Design
School Course 2,
Robert Lewis Baker
Memorial Scholarship



21: Member Profiles

22: Upcoming FGCMMD Events

Support our FGCMMD Scholarship Fund ... and become a Life Member!



Life Memberships may be purchased for \$75 per individual. Proceeds go entirely to the FGCMMD Life Member Scholarship Fund, which awards scholarships annually to qualified students in accredited U.S. colleges and universities.

Life members receive a **Black-eyed
Susan** pin.



Application link: fgcofmd.org/membersupport/

Download PDF: [State Life Membership Application](#)

Reminder from NGC President Donna Donnelly: Join NGC to access member resources.

Please go to the [NGC website](http://www.gardenclub.org/) to create an account:
<http://www.gardenclub.org/>

- Click on **Member Login** (upper right).
- Then click on "Create account"
at the bottom of the login page.
- NGC will send you an email link to create a password.
- Once you have saved your password, you will be able to
click on **Member Section** to see the following links: ➡



Plant America for the next 100 years!

Member Resources & Forms

The National Gardener

Administrative Forms

Board Directory

Brand Guide & Disclaimers

Financial Reports

Golden Circle

Meeting Minutes

2025 Award Winners



2025-2027



**Director's Theme
for the
Central Atlantic Region-
State Garden Clubs
(CAR-SGC):**

***Plant America:
Gardening for a Healthy
Mind, Body and Soul***

FGCMD District News

District I: Ann Street, *District Director*

District I News: New Initiatives, CAR-SGC Conference, Annual Meeting

The District I Board held its first business meeting on October 1. It was evident that the Presidents and Board Committees within the district are actively working together to ensure the success of District I. Two new initiatives were announced at the meeting:

- The *Bonnie E. Stevens Educational Award*: Sponsored by the Oxford Garden Club, this award is available by application to any member of District I. The award supports members who wish to attend one of the four FGCMD schools, providing valuable educational opportunities.
- *Trex Community Challenge Participation*: District I will be joining the Trex Community Challenge, following the example set by District V. Beginning December 1, the district will participate in recycling #2 and #4 plastics, promoting environmental sustainability within the community.

District I was excited to welcome attendees of the CAR-SGC Conference, held at the Hyatt Regency in Cambridge, MD from October 20 to October 22.

The District I annual meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2026, and will be held at Prospect Bay Country Club. Kent Russell is confirmed as the guest presenter for this event, offering guests and members an engaging and informative experience.

The Chestertown Garden Club, *Secethia Boardley-Davis, Club President*

The Chestertown Garden Club for the second time gave camp scholarships to two youths for nature camp in July (2025).

On October 7, 2025, Samantha Nestory from [Stoneleigh Natural Gardens](#) in Villanova, PA was the guest speaker at our Fall meeting. The topic she spoke about was "How Your Winter Garden Can Support Wildlife."

On November 4, 2025, Cindy King from The Mill was our guest speaker. The topic was "Moonlight Garden: Supporting the Night Shift Pollinators."

CGC will bring in the holidays with a trip to [Longwood Gardens](#) on Friday, November 21, 2025, with a special horticultural talk on Poinsettias in the greenhouse. We will decorate the town for the Dicken's Festival and provide wreaths for historic homes that will be featured on the holiday tour.

Our own holiday party this year will be a mystery party: "*Something has gone wrong with the 12 Days of Christmas.*" Members will work in teams to solve the mystery.

In January, we will ring in the New Year with "*Do You Gardener, Take This Garden?*" It's a Winter White Wedding with a flower buffet to make a variety of wedding accessories. More exciting activities are planned for the winter!

The Club has designed a New Members Packet to be given to new club members. A new brochure is being designed for the Club as well as our updates and improvements to our website. Our Community Communications Committee is seeking other ways to reach out to the Chestertown Community.



Michael Alder, Eileen Clements, Artist, & David Culp.
Eileen presented David and Michael with her painting of
their home, Brandywine Cottage.

District I: *Continued*

Dorchester Garden Club: *Sandy Lucas, Club President*

The Dorchester Garden Club has been busy! With a slate of new officers, we began our new year in April with a hands-on program titled “Design 101—Learning Traditional Mass Design.” The members were provided with a container, mechanics and flowers, and one of our members, who is a very talented designer, taught us step-by-step to create Traditional Mass Design floral arrangements. Members paid \$10 to help defray the cost of the flowers, and everyone took home a lovely floral design. We heard many positive comments about the program.



Susie Middleton, Flower Camp Teacher

In April, we also presented one of our “Flower Camps” (workshops). The title was “Judging 101: It’s Fundamental.” It was taught by our own Susie Middleton, and she gave a brief overview of how to be a flower show judge. Our club has Mini Flower Shows at just about every monthly meeting, and the members are the judges. We felt we all needed to learn or refresh our knowledge of judging. It was so good!! And Fun!



Busy Hands

In May, we went to Harvest Drive Nursery in North Dorchester, and Kim Harper from our club and owner of the nursery taught us how to do combination planting in making a container garden. She showed us plants to use for a sun garden and shade garden. She also gave us tips and tricks on how to plant, arrange and water our container. We then shopped in the nursery, chose our flowers and made our own container gardens.

In June, we held our Annual Picnic at the home of Cindy Burns, a club member. Everyone brought a dish; we had a signature cocktail and had a wonderful time. We gave out our annual awards and were also able to meet our two scholarship winners for the year 2025.

We didn’t have an official meeting in July, but we held our second Flower Camp. The theme was “Color My World.” Participants learned how to make a monochromatic floral design. After everyone was finished, we displayed all the designs and marveled at how well all the colors “played well” with each other.

In August, we had a panel discussion on climate change. We were able to get two panelists from the “scientific” side (University of Maryland Extension agents) and two panelists from “boots on the ground” (landscapers).

In September, we continued the theme of planting natives with Jennifer Vacarro from River Keepers who presented a program on Employing Native Horticulture in Design. She gave us many alternatives to plant instead of the non-natives so that your garden can still be so beautiful and benefit not only the environment, but all the birds, insects, butterflies and the critters who want to visit your garden.

My goal as President is to provide education on many topics—and to make it FUN! (and more interactive). Our members took a survey last November that asked what they wanted to learn from our programs. We based our programs on their answers. We have tried to present a little bit of everything—from floral design to horticulture to environmental concerns to tablescapes to tea parties.



District I: Continued

Four Seasons Garden Club: Frances Follmer, Club President

This is a very busy period for Four Seasons Horticulture Projects before the frost hits our gardens. The planters at The Village of Hope have been replanted for fall. The Poplar Hill Mansion Garden will be replanted this month.

- Our November 21 Meeting will feature Mitch Mariner, who owns Delmarva Home Grown. Mitch is presenting a program on *"Bringing Your Plants Indoors and Getting Ready for Winter"*. Mitch's mission is to empower and support home gardeners and plant enthusiasts by providing expert guidance.
- The Four Seasons Garden Club will be decorating the Poplar Hill Mansion with floral arrangements for the holidays. And we will be hosting our "Yuletide Tea" for members and guest. After lunch, members tour the mansion and share a brief explanation of what inspired his/her floral design.
- Poplar Hill Mansion project – Revitalization of the serpentine Garden.

Four Seasons President's theme is "Sustaining Our Future: Growing Seeds with Our Community," which is a three-pronged project to promote our Club:

1. We have begun a new project this year in which we are donating items to the less fortunate in our community. In September, we donated school supplies to The Village of Hope and The Christian Shelter. Both organizations house battered women and children. In October, we are donating nonperishable foods to two different charities. In November, we will be donating gently used winter coats. We have plans for future months.
2. At our September meeting, three "potential-member" guests attended. We gave each guest a gift bag with a trowel and garden gloves. A card was inserted in the bag with the Club information.
3. Our fundraising project, which will be worked on during the winter, will be presented at Salisbury's Third Fridays in April and May. Third Friday is a downtown event where vendors/organizations set up tables to sell their wares. The event will give us the opportunity to present our Club to the community of Salisbury. We will also be participating in the Poplar Hill Mansion's May Fair, which is the first Sunday in May, where we plan to have our fundraising items for sale.



Frances Follmer, Nancy Craft,
Ann Street & Chip Dibbern

Kent Island Garden Club: Bobbie Bell, Club President

Our season started off with KIGC Annual Meeting March 2025, which included the installation of 2025–26/27 Board of Directors.

Topics covered through monthly programs led to our planned activities:

- Spring Garden Chores: Leading to Earth Day Cleanup in the gardens we regularly maintain:
 - Regular cleanup, [Historic Kirwan House](#) and Garden Maintenance, and
 - Completion of Phase 2 of Kirwan House Garden including a Paver Walkway.
- Ideas in using plant material to interpret art: Leading to our annual ART in BLOOM activity.
- The Meaning of Gleaning: Leading to finding gardens to glean to share harvest with the needy.
- Derby Day Table Centerpieces for Talisman Therapeutic Riding Center Fundraiser.
- Birds and their habits and differences: Leading to education and enjoyment of our environment.
- Youth Gardening: One of the fun programs was making seed balls filled with wildflowers – "Throw and Sow."
- Second visit to [Micro Flower Farm](#): Touring the maturing of farm and business. Our first visit was in 2022.
- The next two programs will be Touring an Oyster Restoration Project and creating Kokedamas (a traditional Japanese moss-covered soil ball planter).
- Partnering with Queen Anne's County Garden Club on the State House Christmas Tree.
- Christmas Decorating of Historic Stevensville.
- Wreaths Across America (making table centerpieces for the convoy participants' meals at the American Legion on Kent Island).



Judy Tucker with Young
Gardeners



Replica of Bird House at
Historic Kirwan House –
Phase 2 of the KIGC Project

District I: *Continued*

Oxford Garden Club: *Melinda Hudson, Club President*

It was a busy spring and summer for us all in which two primary themes emerged – collaboration and introspection:

- *Secret Garden Tour*. Our signature event was a great success, raising significant funds for the next two years, attracting new members, raising our profile in the community and getting to work with the most amazing gardeners. Special thanks to our friends and allies from District I clubs who volunteered to be docents! Our Secret Garden Tour also coincided with the Oxford Fine Arts 2025 and with floral designs to complement the art.



Floral Arrangement for Tables at the
Talbot Historical Society's
Plimhimmon Gala



The Growing for Others Garden
Space

- *May 2025 Memorial Day Remembrance*. Over a hundred gathered quietly to honor those who gave their lives in service, to listen to and “see” those who are still bearing the wounds and of course to tear up with Amazing Grace on bagpipes.

- *Creating Floral Arrangements for the Plimhimmon Estate Gala Fundraiser for the Talbot County Historical Society*, September 20. Led by the design doyennes Dorothy Williams, Boots Mehalic, Ingrid Blanton, Trish Reynolds, Pat Jessup, and Sue Betz, many volunteers created wonderful arrangements!

- *Assisting Talbot County GC with their fall flower show*. OGC member Marilyn Reedy volunteered to help TCGC Young Gardeners design and create “Fall Leaf Plaques” – another example of club interaction!

- *Growing for Others*. The club maintained a very productive garden space, producing a wide variety of vegetables to be shared with the Neighborhood Service Center for those in need.

- *New Survey*. The club conducted an anonymous survey of our membership for the first time in a long while. How are we doing? Are we aligned with our objectives? Many wanted more education/training in everything from design to conservation. And more visibility, not to puff our chests, but to invite more to join this remarkable club.

- *The best introspection of all – “Being in the Garden” together*. From the weekly Oxford Museum Garden to the annual Garden Party, held this year at the Chesapeake Bay Herbal Society Garden at Pickering Creek.



Ingrid Blanton Leading the Way
with the Floral Design Workshop
for the Historical Society Gala

Queen Anne's County Garden Club: *Robin Lanham, Club President*

A special thanks to Pat Jessup and Trish Reynolds for providing award training, particularly since they changed the guide last year. Our awards chairs found it very helpful.

While our club did not meet over the summer, the officers and board of directors were busy planning next year's activities:

- We are trying to start a program with a local GS troop to help them get their gardening badge.
- Pursing an Arts Bloom program with the QAC Arts Council.
- Expanding our holiday cheer by decorating Centreville, the county seat, which the club has done for 40 years, we are trying to include original county seat of Queenstown. Each town will have their Holiday activities following our decorating.
- We held a new members tea with the Officers, sponsors and executive board, giving the members some National, Region, State and District information and allowing new members to get to know the club leadership and more details about club and district activities.
- In September, we went to [Pickering Creek Audubon Center](#) where members received a 1-hour native plant lecture and walked through the meadow to see these plants in their natural environment.
- Our Youth gardening programs have been launched to foster education and personal development. One group provides instruction to eight homeschool students aged 8 to 11, while another operates in partnership with [Queen Anne's County Character Counts](#), assigning a member to a fourth-grade class at Bayside Elementary School. The program's emphasis on character aligns seamlessly with the FGCMMD objective of educating young people about conservation and environmental awareness. Core values include respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, trustworthiness, and citizenship. Lessons feature distinguished individuals such as Alice Rush McKeon, recognized as a Maryland woman of character, and Morrel Worster, founder of [Wreaths Across America](#).

District I: Continued

Somerset County Garden Club: Dana Zucker, Club President

Interactive Kickoff. The Somerset County Garden Club had a wonderful kickoff of the year with a fun interactive meeting. After a short meeting and introduction to new potential members, we paired off into groups to design small arrangements that were then donated to local nursing homes.



Guest, Regina Bell & Leigh Ann Pfautz

Each group was given identical vases, flowers and such. We then set the timer, and the chatter began. Once the timer went off, the voting began. The staff at our meeting site voted on the designs.

It was a great ice-breaking activity and a wonderful way to give back to the community.

Daffodils in the Spring. Somerset County Garden Club is known for many things daffodil...and once again the club had their fund raiser of selling a specially selected group of daffodils....



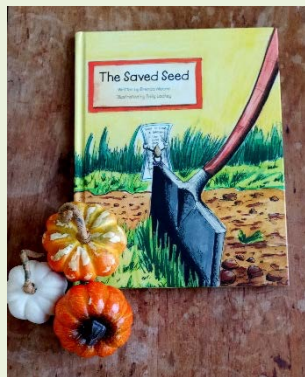
We are looking forward to a very busy November and December.



Mary Fleury and Guest

Worcester County Garden Club: Susan Fletcher, Club President

Blue Star Re-Dedication/Gold Star Dedication: This event will be held as part of the November 11th Veterans Day Program at the Worcester County Veterans Memorial, in Ocean Pines, Maryland. A catered luncheon, sponsored by WCGC, will be held immediately following the ceremony at the Ocean Pines Golf Club. Invited guests include FGCMMD State President Donna Miller; District I Director Ann Street; Carolyn MacGlashon, Chair, Blue and Gold Star Memorial Markers and Vice Chair, Nicki Schwab; WCGC active/honorary club members; Worcester County Gold Star Families; Donor Veteran Organizations; American Legion Commanders, Posts 166 & 231; Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 1091; President, Kirk Burbage Funeral Home (Granite Base) and Chairperson/Board Worcester County Veterans Memorial; Eastern Shore Veterans Cemetery Director, Dean Arcorace; and daughters of Bozy Markiewicz (deceased). Gold Star, Granite Base and catered luncheon paid entirely through donations raised.



Youth Project – Inaugural; lesson plan will incorporate NGC's "The Saved Seed" and pumpkin.

Youth Committee Project: Joan LaHayne, Youth Committee Chair, met Andrea Garcia, Educational Literacy Program, and other Community partners at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore's farm in Princess Anne on August 27, 2025. The purpose of this conference was to share ideas and resources for meeting goals for Lower Shore Environmental Literacy. The WCGC has been asked to present programs to Showell, Ocean City, Buckingham and Snow Hill Elementary Schools in Grades K and 2 that will help the schools meet their environmental literacy curriculum goals. Lesson plans and materials will be developed by the Committee members with assistance from Coastal Bays for staffing and financial support. Ideally, programs will be presented four times per year to each school, resulting in a commitment of 16 lessons. However, because this is the first year of the program, we may only pilot 1-2 schools depending on the support received from each school.

Snow Hill Food Bank: Committee Chair, Jan King/Martha Bennett applied and received a \$500 grant to design the front building landscape and purchase plants,

Building Membership: A key 2025 goal is to increase membership. Our club's attrition resulted in a 25%-member reduction due to members moving out of the County and moving to honorary status.

In May 2025, we held a Membership Open House where we asked members to bring two guests. During our September meeting, we had 11 guests. Since the membership push began, we have added five new members with many guests taking home applications at our last meeting. Currently, we have 26 Active Members, 7 Honorary Members, and 5 Associate Members. We will continue our membership drive.



CGC Grant Award – Grant funds to be used for Snow Hill Food Pantry landscaping.

District I: Continued

Talbot County Garden Club: Eleanore Denegre, Club President

TCGC transitioned to new leadership at our June Annual Meeting Luncheon. The Club experienced a full summer as our members worked in our community gardens: Frances Plate Memorial Children's Garden, Historical Society Garden, and the Easton Library Garden as well as the Five Corners Fountain Garden.

Throughout the year, our projects include floral design workshops, garden therapy, a "Going Green" Radio Podcast, Horticulture workshops, and a native Plant Sale.

Our Garden Therapy and Inclusive Gardening Programs at Easton Y include programs for those living with disabilities and a new program for those with Alzheimer's and dementia.

Flower arrangements are delivered to Hospice House and the Interfaith Shelter.

In June, several members opened their gardens for an in-club garden tour displaying their talents and horticulture knowledge.

Our recent Club travel includes the Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton, NJ and Mt. Cuba in Delaware.

We continuously benefit from workshops led by our talented award-winning members. Trish Reynolds, Susie Middleton, Ingrid Blanton and Pam Keeton recently offered superior guidance to prepare us for upcoming flower shows.



Winning Design by Madeleine Cohen, TCGC

For the first time since Covid, TCGC held an NGC Standard Flower Show on October 17. For many of the TCGC members, this was their first time participating in a Flower Show, and members rose to the occasion. We had 175 Horticulture entries. Imagine that in mid-October: 28 Floral Designs, and in the Youth Division, 27 Fall Leaf Plaques and 34 small Floral Designs. The show was a real winner!

Our Speaker Series, open to the public, began October 28 at the Talbot County Library, with the "Flower Sommelier," Christopher Barrett Sheridan presenting "*Embracing the Spirit of the Night – Designing Vespertine Gardens*." Additional open programs will begin again in January.

In December, TCGC will decorate Easton with wreaths and swags, then share homemade soup and holiday treats. We will also be creating small, decorated mugs for Meals on Wheels to be delivered by the Senior Center

Plans are well underway for the 2026 Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage in Talbot County. The Tour, which invites visitors to explore notable private properties in the area, will take place the Saturday of Mother's Day weekend – **May 9, 2026**. "This Tour is being designed to deliver an extraordinary experience in celebration of America's 250th Anniversary, showcasing the many significant historic sites in our county," says Louise Peterson, Co-Chair. "We'll feature an array of houses, gardens and grounds that are rarely open to the public. At each property, visitors can expect to see incredible floral displays creatively fashioned by the club's talented designers – a hallmark of this biennial event."

"To add to the day's experience, we will also direct visitors to drive by and discover the many historic landmarks in Oxford and St. Michaels (towns that were influential during the Revolutionary War) that tie together the day's route of discovery," says Camille Massie, Co-Chair. "Ultimately, the Club will be honored to use the proceeds generated by the Tour to help preserve the Talbot Historical Society's Neall House (ca 1804) in Easton."

Waterfront homes open to tour include Wye House (where Frederick Douglas lived in his youth) and Plimhimmon (where Anna Maria Tilghman, widow of Revolutionary War hero Lt. Col. Tench Tilghman, entertained the Marquis de Lafayette), plus Emerson Point (on the Miles River). The spectacular grounds of Harleigh Farm (on Trippe Creek) will also welcome visitors.

District II: Laura Spoeri, *District Director*

New Location for the District II Daffodil Show

Please note that a very important correction needs to be made from the last issue of *Gardenews*. The District II Perennial Bloom is Diane Smith (Crofton Village Garden Club) not Doris as was listed. Apologies to our wonderful award winner, her family and her garden club. We are proud of Diane and happy for her.

Over the summer, the district was able to identify a new location for the District II Daffodil Show. It will be held at the historic [Baldwin Hall in Millersville, MD](https://www.baldwinhall.org/). Built in 1861, the building will be a lovely venue to display the entries in the show.

To encourage more accurately identified entries, District II conducted a workshop for members on October 25th to aid in this important process. The show itself will be held March 30–April 1, 2026. Please get your award worthy bulbs in the ground now!

In early fall, both St. Mary's and Calvert County garden clubs held flower shows in conjunction with their respective county fairs. What a wonderful way to showcase their talents and recruit new members.

The District II clubs are looking forward to all the activities surrounding the holiday season including the creation of 44 hand-made wreaths to be hung around State Circle (a circular road that surrounds the Maryland State House and serves as a hub road to downtown Annapolis).

Many of District II clubs participate in making the wreaths for display. In addition, one club from each of the five counties in the district, along with clubs from across the state, will be decorating a tree for display inside the State House. Both traditions are very important to the district.



Photo Source: <https://www.baldwinhall.org/>

Bayside Bloomers Garden Club, *Susie Johnson, Club President*

The Bayside Bloomers Garden Club is joyfully marking its 10th year as a federated garden club—and what better way to celebrate than with a calendar full of friendship, flowers, and community spirit?

The anniversary year began on a fun note with a field trip on September 13 to [Heron's Meadow Farm in Woodbine](#)—Maryland's first and only tea farm. Members enjoyed sampling flavorful teas while learning about the art of growing, harvesting, and processing tea leaves. It was the perfect blend of education and enjoyment to start the season.

At the heart of the Bayside Bloomers' mission is community outreach, reflected in our ongoing project, *Operation Plant More Natives*. Two years ago, the club partnered with Our Shepherd Lutheran Church—where they meet free of charge—to transform parts of the church grounds into native gardens. What began as a simple beautification effort has blossomed into a pollinator haven. Club members lovingly maintain these gardens, giving back to the church while enhancing the natural beauty of the community.

Looking ahead, the Bayside Bloomers have an exciting lineup of events planned through June 2026. Members will enjoy engaging programs on topics like conservation, restoration, and entomology for gardeners, as well as field trips to Longwood Gardens, Hillwood Estate, Museum and Gardens, and David Culp's renowned Brandywine Cottage.

The club will also continue the beloved traditions of fundraising and community service, including creating holiday floral arrangements for patients at Hospice of the Chesapeake, for example.

As the Bayside Bloomers celebrate this milestone year, one thing is certain—it will be a stellar season filled with learning, laughter, and the joy of giving back through gardening.



Bayside Bloomers GC Members at Heron's Meadow Farm in Woodbine, MD

District II: *Continued*

Chesapeake Garden Club, *Debbie Nisson, Club President*



Author and Artist: Jean Brinton Jaacks,
CGC Members: Pat Durbin, Kate Kramer

The Chesapeake Garden Club (CGC) began the new year with a presentation by author and painter, Jean Brinton Jaacks. Ms. Jaacks' book, *Paint Like a Butterfly*, details her pollinator garden showing off numerous visitors and blooms in her garden.

At the end of the month, CGC members manned a booth at the Calvert County Fair where visitors learned more about the CGC, and members answered questions about plant care.

Ten members attended the District II Fall Conference where the Club sold "oyster shell ornaments" and decorative hand-painted vases. At the October meeting, a hands-on opportunity for all members will be held to make their own personalized ornaments.



CGC Members at Calvert County Fair: Terri Devine, Jan Enrico



With the cooperation and encouragement of Fairview Branch Library, the CGC will hold a fall demonstration afternoon on Saturday, November 8. Guests will learn how to make a pinecone wreath, fall centerpieces that transition to holiday pieces, oyster shell ornaments and a children's craft project.

The CGC will decorate the [Captain Avery Museum, Shady Side, MD](#), for the Christmas holidays. Oyster shell ornaments made at the October meeting by the members will be part of the decorations.

It's a busy fall!

Naval Academy Garden Club, *Debbie Cronin, Club President*

Continuing a Long-standing Service: As the Navy celebrates its 250th anniversary, the Naval Academy Garden Club (NAGC) prepares to celebrate its own 91st anniversary. As the season advances towards the festive holiday season, the NAGC will be decorating the Academy gates with large wreaths and swags for the sixtieth time, each one lovingly made by club members.

New Project: Since 1992, the Naval Academy Garden Club has maintained three public gardens, as part of [GreenScape](#), an initiative sponsored by the City of Annapolis. Recently, the NAGC launched a Youth Gardeners program, partnering with the Book of Life Academy, which is located across the street from the Stadium Gardens that the club has cared for since 1992. The 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students from Book of Life Academy join with our volunteers to care for the gardens.

With guidance from club members, the students learn about the best planting and watering techniques, the importance of native plants, what species live in or visit the garden, why Monarch butterflies need milkweed plants, why we use Latin to name flora and fauna, how plants help us breathe, and how we can help our environment. In the spring, club members will continue to lead garden-related projects with these students, including painting rocks with images of creatures that live in or visit the garden.



Rocks Painted by 5th Graders
at Book of Life Academy

District II: *Continued*

Shipley's Choice Garden Club, Luisa Agriesti, Club President



The Shipley's Choice Garden Club had a busy start of 2025 with the Fall Plant Sale at the end of September and decorated our community monuments along with new ground planting for the fall.

We also have a scheduled field trip on October 24 to the [Margaret Cleveland Nursery and Walter Gardens](#) in Baltimore, to learn more about the pollinator gardens fall plants.

We will participate at the [Hammond – Hardwood House](#) historical home for the Holiday Decorations and making wreath for the State Circle.

We are excited for the visit to the Assisted Living Well facility in Pasadena to work with the residents on fall floral arranging on October 17. We had a "Fall Garden Planting" program from the University of Maryland for our October meeting and will hold a Christmas Greens Workshop in December to make decorations for the community monuments.



Members Busy with Fall Plants Sale and Monuments Decorations

St. Mary's County GC (SMCGC), Beth Bonifant, Club President: Maryland House & Garden Pilgrimage

If your club is in District II, you've probably heard me talking about the [Maryland House & Garden Pilgrimage \(MHGP\)](#) by now. It's an association that many FGCM members are familiar with, yet few may realize the long history and deep affiliations between these two organizations.



In 1929, several Baltimore members of FGCM were invited to attend Virginia's Garden Week. The Garden Club of Virginia president approached her friend, Mrs. Duncan Brent, vice-president of the FGCM about hosting a Maryland tour the following year. During that first pilgrimage, 37 sites in seven counties participated. The monies raised were gifted to the Virginia club and used to construct a small brick garden house at Stratford Hall. This generous gesture was commemorated with a brass marker inscribed "1930 – a gift from the Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland."

The FGCM tours were very well received, and it was decided to continue them while retaining all future proceeds for Maryland projects. Income from the second pilgrimage in 1931 funded the planting and beautification of the five main highway entrances into DC to celebrate the approaching 200th anniversary of George Washington's birth. By 1936, FGCM decided to make the Pilgrimage committee permanent. While the Pilgrimage began as an FGCM committee, it later formed a separate entity incorporating in the State of Maryland in 1954.

Through the years, FGCM remained the heart of MHGP, hosting tours each spring. As often happens when time passes, memories and history slowly fade. Unfortunately, this year amongst all five tours held throughout the state, SMCGC was the only club to sponsor a tour.

SMCGC members presented the check of the tour proceeds to Tiny Taylor. Tiny has been a SMCGC member since the early 1960s. She celebrated her 100th birthday this year and is still an active member of the club. She is also a founding member of the tour's special project and recipient: The Society for the Preservation of St. Ignatius.

As the current vice-chair of MHGP and president of SMCGC, I am hoping to renew the special kinship that once existed. Other organizations will continue to participate hosting tours, but we miss our old comrades and experts in FGCM. The challenges associated with hosting a tour are understandable, but like so many other projects our clubs participate in, the rewards can far outweigh them.

Currently, MHGP is looking for sponsors to host the 2027 tours. If your club is interested or would like to learn more about what this entails, please contact me at 301-861-6112 or Lbethbonifant@gmail.com. We are happy to come speak with your club about any questions you may have. Please know MHGP will be there to support all tours clubs may endeavor to hold.



SMCGC Members Presenting the Tour Proceeds to Tiny Taylor (third from left).

Next year during the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States, seven tours are scheduled to run April 25–June 13.

Visit www.mhgp.org for locations, tickets and more information about this historic annual event.

District III: Mary Ellen Pluemer, *District Director*

Evergreen Garden Club, *Pat Vandrey, Club President*



Evergreen Members Attending Wildly Native Flower Farm

On Tuesday June 10, 2025, members carpoled to the Wildly Native Flower Farm in Chesterfield, MD for a presentation and opportunity to create our own arrangement. Wildly Native Flower Farm growers make floral arrangements both fresh and dried as well as wreaths. They also provide wedding arrangements.



Our members made beautiful flower arrangements at Wildly Flower Farm.

Work continued in June for the Evergreen Garden Club members who are working in collaboration with the park rangers responsible for the Carter Archer Historic Mansion at Susquehanna Park in Havre de Grace. They are landscaping the outside

areas, painting trellises, and planting containers in preparation for the Mansion to reopen after the pandemic.

On July 1 and again on September 4, 2025, Evergreen Garden Club members arrived at the Citizens Care Facility in Havre de Grace to spruce up their courtyard for the enjoyment of the residents. Participants included Lynn Crothers, Patrice O'Connor, Gretchen Loewke, Beverly Jones, Phoebe Durst, Ingrid Kupferman and Karen Matthews.



Club Members at the Carter Archer Mansion: Belinda Karas, Patrice O'Connor, Brenda Holloway, Lynn Crothers, Gretchen Loewke, Ann Bennett, Beverly Jones and Phoebe



Members Attending the Citizens Care Facility



Work completed at the Citizens Care Facility.



Lynn Crothers Painting the Trellis

Photo Credits: Karen Matthews

Hampton Garden Club, *Chris Neas, Club President*



HGC Members at Nemours Garden and Estate

Our September outing was truly a special one—15 of us gathered at Nemours Garden and Estate. Despite the forecast, the weather cooperated, and we had a fantastic day together. We were treated to a guided tour by Ken, the outstanding head gardener. His knowledge and enthusiasm brought the history and gardens to life.

The estate and grounds were simply breathtaking. It was such a joy to experience them as a group.

Afterward, we continued the fun with lunch at Buckley's Tavern. The food was delicious, the service warm and accommodating, and it was the perfect way to wrap up the day.



Nemours Garden and Estate

District III: *Continued*

Hill and Stream Garden Club, Karen Amy, Club President



H&S GC Members at God's Grace Garden,
St. John's Episcopal Church

Maintenance, weeding and mulching continue at the Club's adopted garden, God's Grace Garden, at St. John's Episcopal Church, where monthly meetings are also held. On a warm, sunny Saturday, many dedicated volunteers came out to weed and spread 2-1/2 yards of mulch, making the garden a more inviting place to relax and enjoy nature. (Photo courtesy of Rita Talley)

Recently the club traveled to Roots Country Market in Manheim, PA. Members enjoyed shopping for fresh fruits and vegetables as well as colorful mums, pumpkins and gourds to enhance their fall gardens. (Photo courtesy Amy Krebs)



Roots Country Market

Lutherville Garden Club, Pam Engle, Club President



The Annual LGC Fall Fest and Holiday Bazaar along with the Providence United Methodist Church's Women's Holiday Bazaar is on Saturday, November 22, 2025, 10am to 2pm at 1320 Providence Road, Towson MD. Please come and enjoy holiday themed decor, arts and crafts vendors and many more festivities!

The LGC Trackside Garden, located at Front and Seminary Avenues in Lutherville, MD is under new leadership! The LGC welcomes Mary Kerney and Dawn Slaughter, as new club Chairpersons, to maintain and support this community garden enjoyed by many.

A big thank-you to members Char Monfried and Jo-Anne Kreiner for handing this beautiful legacy garden over to our new Chairpersons!

Town and Country Garden Club, Sheri Hairston, Club President

From native plants along the Appalachian Trail to identifying troubling invasives and foraging to using environmental-friendly botanical dyeing materials from plants and its parts to celebrating our annual scholarship winners, **Town & Country Garden Club** had a busy spring and summer focusing on Environmental Awareness, Cultivars and Civic Development.

The two high school annual fundraiser scholarship winners, Shayla Carpio Gonzalez and Greeley Aleshire, are also college graduates with an associate degree. Each graduate was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship. The Scholarship Awards Presentation was held at the Historical Society's Miller House with an afternoon tea following the introduction.

Art in Bloom this year was a great success for the [Washington County Museum of Fine Arts](#)' Annual Fundraiser held at the museum. Regional floral designers interpret a specific art piece into fabulous arrangements and are on exhibit for the community at large starting with an exclusive Preview Party. Club members volunteered as floral designers, greeters and docents, bartenders and overall jack-of-all-tradeswomen in helping the museum make this the highest turnout fundraiser since its inception.

Coffman Nursing Home Gardens received a good spring and summer cleanup and planting of annuals and perennials from our members who suited up for the digging, raking, more digging and some more raking!

Our spring and summer season concluded with our annual summer picnic at the farm of our member, Karen Hamilton where we celebrated the red, white and blue!



District IV: *Baltimore City Clubs*

Guilford Garden Club, Beth Gregory and Kathleen Truelove, Co-Presidents

The Guilford Garden Club is celebrating our centennial this year. From a 1925 directory of the original members, we compiled a map of the homes in Guilford, the Baltimore neighborhood where they lived. At the time, it was a new residential development.

On October 19, a group of our current members took a walk using that map to see where our founding members lived. The attached photo is in front of the home of the only member whose first name appears in the directory of original members—because she was an unmarried woman. She owned the house, inherited from her father, and her name was Miss Stella Hunting.



Guilford Garden Club Members in Front of One of the Original Guilford Homes

District V: *Mary Heizer, District Director*

District V Semiannual Meeting



Silver Fancy Bonsai Display

District V held their semiannual meeting on October 9, 2025 at Holly Hills Country Club. Susan Simonson, [Antietam-Conococheague Watershed Alliance \(ACWA\)](#), spoke about the report card on the health of the Antietam Watershed, which eventually leads into the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay. In addition, Rob Schnabel, [Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#), spoke about Regenerative Farming practices and how they improve the health of the land and therefore, the Chesapeake Bay. Three clubs showcased their displays. The Silver Fancy Garden Club display highlighted the Art of Bonsai. Special guests from FGCMMD included FGCMMD President Donna Miller, Randy Low, Diana Bonner, Carolyn Braverman, Susie Middleton, and Ann Street.



Our table centerpiece's theme was "Colors of the Maryland Flag."

Awards Presented to District V Garden Clubs

Several awards were presented at the recent Semiannual District V meeting held on Thursday, October 9 at Holly Hills Country Club in Frederick. Congratulations to the District V Garden Clubs on your well-deserved awards!

The Awards presented were as follows:

- Certificate of Appreciation Award presented to Carroll Garden Club for the 2025 Flower Show and Program Design.
- Certificate of Appreciation Award presented to Mountain Laurel Garden Club, CE-6 Community Project with Native Plants/Wildflowers.
- Certificate of Appreciation Award presented to Green-walled Garden Club, CE=6 Permanent Community Improvements.
- Award presented to Green-walled Garden Club for the sponsorship of the 2024 Recycled Sculpture, a Reindeer, and presented to Cailin Neuuah, 1st Place 5th Grade.
- Award presented to Tasker's Chance Garden Club for the sponsorship of the 2025 Smokey Bear Woodsy Owl Poster Contest, 4th Grade, Honorable Mention.

The Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland, Inc., the National Garden Clubs, Inc. and Garden Club Publications / Yearbooks were sent to the District V Awards Chair by the established calendar due date of October 15. District V Garden Club Presidents and Awards Chairs are encouraged to submit nomination applications for the Perennial Bloom Award to the District V Awards Chair by 12:00pm, **February 1, 2026**. The awards will be presented at the District V Annual Meeting in March, 2026.

District V Attends CAR-SGC Conference on the Eastern Shores of Maryland

District V representatives attended the CAR-SGC Conference in Cambridge, MD October 19–22, 2025, which was hosted by the FGCMMD. Many seminars and presentations included "Creating a Water-Smart Landscape," "Layers of the Forest," "The Hows and Wows of Longwood Gardens" and many more. The final day included a tour of [Blackwater Wildlife Refuge](#), [Horn Point Laboratory](#) and [Oyster Hatchery](#) and Layton's Chance Vineyards.

The highlight for District V was the costume night where we dressed as Bird-Watchers. We thought our costumes fit in with the theme of the CAR-SGC conference.

Bird Watchers from District V (L-R): Front Row: Margaret Cornell, Mil Tenny, Laura Wakefield, Deborah Hutton, Jenny Casasco, Mary Heizer, Laura Johnson.

Back Row: Lynn Walter, Jim Hutton, Terry Conner



District V: *Continued*

Cross Country Garden Club, *Debra Dear, Nancy Grabowski, Club Co-Presidents*

Cross Country Garden Club members went to [Surreybrooke Gardens](#) in Middletown, MD, on Friday, June 13. We got a great tour from the owner, Nancy Walz. She even accommodated two of our members who couldn't walk that far, by taking them around in her golf cart.



We saw all the beautiful gardens, colorful borders, beautiful containers planted up with very creative color themes. The greenhouses were full of unusual plants and succulents, and the garden center was great.

It's neat when you can find out from the owner how she put the garden together from scratch. She has a story about every outbuilding and how everything came about. We were all inspired by the unusual species of plants on display, and she gives you the story about how she obtained all of them.



Dorsey Hall Garden Club, *Ann Drnec, Club President*



Over the past two years, the Dorsey Hall Garden Club has been working on reestablishing a community garden in the Village of Dorsey Hall. During this time, the club has focused on digging out loads of stubborn garlic chives and other invasives and replacing them with native selections. In addition to this task, we were always hauling water to the garden and trying to fill our rain barrel, which was a never-ending task.

Over time, a neighbor who lived adjacent to the garden would come out and talk to our members. Last year, she generously offered to help us with our watering dilemma. She offered to lend us her long hose to fill the barrel and water the garden as needed. This has made a huge difference to the success of the garden.

This year, our wonderful neighbor, Stephanie, passed away. As a show of our appreciation for her friendship and love of gardening, the club held a tree dedication in her honor. A dogwood tree was planted and presented to family members. Stephanie will always be remembered for her generosity and kindness by members of our garden club. Her last request was, "make the garden beautiful," and that will continue to be our goal.

Mount Airy Garden Club, *Barbara Rogers, Club President*



Love-lies-bleeding
Amaranthus
caudatus

For over 30 years, the Mount Airy Garden Club has judged horticulture and floral design entries at the [Damascus Community Fair](#), which this year was held September 5–7 at the Damascus Volunteer Fire Department Activity Center, Damascus, MD. Each year, six garden club members meet at the fair's exhibition hall to evaluate entries submitted by preschoolers, elementary children, teenagers and adults who participate in this yearly event.

This year, there were a record, combined 512 entries! We are delighted to see the increased interest in horticulture and floral design being fostered in the Damascus community across age levels.

Our volunteer judges for 2025 included Mary Boldt, Marjorie Scheibel, Mary Hutchins-Danna, Cathy Hoover, Mary Wormell and Sandi Mennerick. By unanimous decision, the 2025 Grand Champion in Horticulture is a Love-lies-bleeding Amaranthus caudatus, also known as Tassel Flower, Velvet Flower, Foxtail Amaranth etc.



From Left: Barbara Zellers – Damascus Community Fair organizer, Mary Boldt – MAGC member/judge, Marjorie Schiebel – MAGC member /judge, Lori Mayhew – Damascus Community Fair Organizer, Mary Hutchins – Danna – MAGC member/ judge, Cathy Hoover – MAGC member/judge, Mary Wormell – MAGC member/judge, Sandi Mennerick – MAGC member/ judge

District V: Continued

Mountain Laurel Garden Club, Barbara Harris and Deborah Hutton, Club Co-Presidents

Ongoing Speaker Series: MLGC continues to attract new members of all ages. We believe much of that success comes from our ongoing commitment to education, conservation, and environmental stewardship. Each month, during our general meetings—now held at the Performing Arts Center at Garrett College—we feature a guest speaker who brings valuable insights and expertise on topics that align with our themes: Restorative Gardening (Club); Regenerating Our Mountains, Streams and Gardens (Division V); and Be a Steward of the Earth (FGCMD).

During the October meeting, Melissa Nash, Garrett and Allegany Project Manager with the Maryland Forest Service, presented “Prescribed Fire = Good Fire, Using Fire as a Land-Management Tool,” on how the Forest Service conducts prescribed fires to manage the forests in Garrett County, MD. Melissa works with private landowners to develop and implement Forest Stewardship plans for their forested properties, coordinates both rural and community tree planting projects, conducts prescribed burns, responds to wildfires, works with a variety of local and regional organizations related to forestry, and serves as secretary of the Garrett County Forestry Board.



Melissa Nash spoke to 60+ members of MLGC on the strategy of prescribed fires in Garrett County.

The Speaker Series continues during our general meetings through June with the following speakers:

- November 18, 2025, Jessica Klotz, MLGC Member, will present **“Butterflies of Maryland,”** an overview of the common and threatened butterfly species that exist in Garrett County along with their host plants to promote the use of native plants in gardening. Garrett County is home to 108 species of butterflies, including a rare butterfly called the West Virginia White.
- March 17, 2026, Cory Heyman, Owner, Mighty Yough Farms, McHenry, MD will present **“The Mysteries of Mushrooms and their Relation to Soil Health.”** Cory will tell us about the importance of mushrooms and fungi as they relate to the natural ecosystem, and how they can add value to gardening, food systems, and other surprising issues.
- April 21, 2026, Nicole Zinn, MLGC Member, will present **“A Way back to Natural.”** Nicole, Practical Herbalist, will discuss the practical and medicinal uses of some of her favorite plants in our area.
- May 19, 2026, Patty Jones, MLGC Member, will present **“Adaptive Gardening.”** Patty will provide general tips, tools, and techniques, along with best posture and movement practices for gardening to exercise our muscles and joints gently and safely. Just as there is “right plant, right place” there is “right tool, right movement.”
- June 16, 2026, Michael J. Raupp, University of MD Entomologist, will present **“You Can Aid and Abet Mother Nature's Hit-Squad to Keep Insect Pests at Bay.”** Your landscape and garden can be a refuge for beneficial insects that provide the vital ecosystem service of biological control, the natural system of putting a beatdown on plant-damaging pests. Meet wicked wasps, bodacious beetles, fierce flies, and other arthropod allies as they provide vital functions and enhance the sustainability of landscapes and gardens. Learn simple steps to enhance the abundance and contributions of beneficial insects and ways to conserve them in gardens. Explore organic approaches to managing key insect and mite pests including they use of OMRI listed insecticides.

Tasker's Chance Garden Club, Margaret Cornely, Club President

Tasker's Chance Garden Club's Youth Gardening Committee Chairman, Dreda Kelley, presented the National Garden Clubs, Inc. and the U.S. Forest Service's Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl Youth Poster Contests to fourth graders at Centerville Elementary School in Frederick. Fourteen students submitted posters for the contest. The posters were collected on October 21. One entry placed third at FGCMDC.

This poster won first place at FGCMDC. It went on to place at CAR-SGC, and it received an Honorable Mention at the NGC competition. Certificates were presented to the students who participated, and awards were presented to the winners. All the students learned about the effects and prevention of wildfires even if they did not submit an entry.



District V: Continued

Green-walled Garden Club, Julie Howell, Club President

The Green-walled Garden Club, in planned partnership with Celebrate Frederick, participated in this year's annual May "Beyond the Garden Gates" Garden Tour, Saturday, May 17 & Sunday, May 18.



High Glen Gardens, Frederick

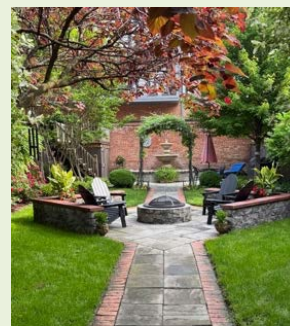


The home garden of Angela and Mark Mayer, Frederick.

Five private Frederick homes and five public gardens were open to the public to explore the elegant, whimsical, inventive gardens and stunning landscapes beyond the gates of these settings.

This year, three Green-walled Garden Club members opened their homes for the "Beyond the Garden Gates" Garden Tour. Their gardens included the following:

- *The Garden of Judy & Bruce D'Agostino:* A delightful, relaxed garden with stone-raised beds, a peaceful pond by the terraced brick patio with a variety of large goldfish, and a Potager-inspired kitchen garden of herbs, vegetables and flowers. The homeowners are replacing and adding native and pollinator-friendly shrubs and plants in their garden.
- *The Garden of Shelley and Jerry Johnson:* A casual garden with two large maple trees that provide summer shade for the patio to relax and view a variety of whimsical items including handmade bird houses, antique ladders and bicycles placed throughout the garden, flowers and plants.
- *The Garden of Jane & Robert Litterini:* A casual and family living space with multiple sitting areas and garden views. Featuring an original rock landscape that highlights the geometric privacy wall, the garden utilizes natural stone and gravel landscape. A modern flagstone patio, shaded by a large oak tree canopy, and a cedar gazebo offers garden and backyard view of the variety of flowers and plants.



The home garden of Leslie and Daniel Cardenas, Frederick.

A favorite of Frederick residents and visitors alike, the "Beyond the Garden Gates" Garden Tour has grown to draw over 800 visitors annually and has raised thousands of dollars for local garden clubs and multiple beautification projects in and around Frederick.

Candlelight House Tour – Frederick, Maryland

The Green-walled Garden Club of Frederick will again participate in the Candlelight House Tour, sponsored by Celebrate Frederick / Visit Frederick. The tour will be held Saturday, December 6 from 4:00 to 9:00pm, and on Sunday, December 7 from 12:00 to 4:00pm. Members of the Green-walled Garden Club will decorate the home of Rupert and Amanda Gardener, 104 Clarke Place, Frederick, one of six homes that will be on the Candlelight House Tour. The home was built in 1895 by Harry Bowers as a personal residence and the first house on the block with the decorative style known as Victorian Queen Anne. Highlights of the home include a gas lantern, speaking tube, stained glass and etched windows, a claw-foot tub and an Oriel bay window.

The Candlelight House Tour is a self-guided walking tour that takes visitors inside these private homes that are elaborately adorned with holiday décor throughout historic Frederick (i.e., architectural nuances, decorations and historical significance of these magnificent homes).

The theme of the holiday decorations by the Green-walled Garden Club in the Rupert and Amanda Gardener home is "Candy, Candyland, and Small Children's Books." The decorations will include various whimsical candy-related holiday homemade and personal ornaments; winter green garlands, including winterberry, juniper and holly; and exquisite floral displays and beautiful flower arrangements.

Advance tickets are \$25.00 per person, tour day tickets are \$30.00, and a Home & Garden Tour package is \$40.00.

For more information, visit www.CelebrateFrederick.com/Events/Holidays/Candlelight-House-Tour/.

Committee News

Annual Meeting: *Betty Reeves, Chair*

Please Take Note & Mark Your Calendar: The annual meeting is moving from the 4th Tuesday in March to the **4th Tuesday in April**. As many garden clubs do not meet in January, February or March, and many club members do not return from winter vacations until April, **the FGCMD Annual Meeting will be held April 28, 2026.**

Annual Meeting Program: *Linda Harris, Program Laïson*



Our program for the FGCMD Annual Meeting on **April 28, 2026** will be titled “Night Sounds of Mountain Maryland,” presented by Kevin Dodge, Professor and Director of the Natural Resources and Wildlife Technology program at Garrett College in far western Maryland.

Kevin will present an entertaining and educational introduction to the different hoots, toots, peents, and peeps heard after sunset in the Central Appalachians.

Weaving together facts, stories, and sounds, Kevin will recreate a night in the mountains of western Maryland.

Conservation and Environmental Awareness: *Carolyn Braverman, Chair*

Have you had pushback from an HOA if you wanted to convert all/part of your lawn to a meadow or a wildlife-beneficial area? Maryland House Bill [HBO322/CHO368](#), “Real Property - Restrictions on Use - Low-Impact Landscaping,” passed on October 1, 2021 will back you up. See www.Maryland.gov for a more information. [Chapter 368 of HBO322 has the details.](#)

Bill Summary: “Low-impact landscaping” means landscaping techniques that conserve water, lower maintenance costs, provide pollution prevention, and create habitat for wildlife. Such techniques include bio-habitat gardens designed to attract wildlife and pollinator gardens designed to attract pollinator species.

Restrictions on use may not impose unreasonable limitations on low-impact landscaping as long as the property owner (1) owns or has the right to exclusive use of the property and (2) maintains and regularly tends to the low-impact landscaping. Unreasonable limitations on low-impact landscaping include provisions that significantly increase the cost of low-impact landscaping or significantly decrease the efficiency of the techniques.

At the recent District V semiannual meeting October 9, Rob Schnabel, [Chesapeake Bay Foundation](#), gave a presentation about Regenerative Farming, as opposed to Sustainable Farming. The difference was very interesting, as the former method concentrated on improvement going forward, rather than maintaining current methods. It is important that farming can be profitable, as well as beneficial, and these practices can help farmers be successful. You can learn more about this practice at Noble Institute: www.noble.org and Natural Resources Defense Council: www.nrdc.org.

The Climate Action Committee has published an October issue concentrating on our birds.

The FGCMD [President's Project](#) is looking forward to receiving your applications for a “*Be a Steward of the Earth*” grant.



[Click here for Grant Application and Instructions](#)

[Click Here for Donation Card](#)

[Healthy Planet Pledge For Individuals Download Here](#)

[Healthy Planet Pledge For Garden Clubs Download Here](#)

The deadline for the spring award is **February 28, 2026** (awarded in March).

Committee News Continued

Natural Disasters: *Charlotte Pennington, Chair*

A natural disaster is "a major event brought about by natural processes of the Earth that causes widespread destruction to the environment and loss of life."

NGC established the [Natural Disasters USA Fund](#) in 1997 to receive contributions from garden club members to aid in replanting parks, community gardens and other municipal areas. The FGCMD Natural Disasters Committee encourages donations from our Statewide garden clubs. Having each garden club contribute an average of one dollar per member helps with these efforts. Please know that even without horrific weather events we still have disasters that affect our communities. The grants through Natural Disaster USA Funds will aid many in needed areas.

We appreciate your donations, and Federated Garden Clubs thanks you. To make a donation, make your check payable to FGCMD; include **Natural Disasters USA Fund** in the memo line, and mail it to:

Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland, Inc.

P.O. Box 65172

Baltimore, MD 21209

Attn: Natural Disasters USA Fund

Contact Donna Lawson at 410-396-4842 with any questions.

Scholarship Opportunities for College Junior/Senior and Master's Degree

For the current academic year (2025–2026), FGCMD awarded \$7000 to three students to pursue undergraduate degrees intended to lead to a career related to the mission of our organization. Significant funds will be available to award for the 2026-2027 academic year. Application deadline is **February 1, 2026**.

Sophomores and juniors attending an accredited college or university and master's degree students are eligible to apply. Criteria include the following: Applicants must have a GPA of 3.25, be a resident of the State of Maryland and a U.S. Citizen or Permanent Legal Resident attending full time in the U.S. Applicants must be majoring in one of the following fields of study:

- Agronomy, Agriculture Education
- Biology
- Botany
- City (rural and urban) Planning
- Environmental Conservation
- Environmental Management
- Floriculture
- Forestry
- Habitat or Forest/Systems Ecology
- Horticulture
- Land Management
- Landscape Design
- Plant Pathology/Science
- Wildlife Science

Please encourage eligible students to apply for this wonderful scholarship opportunity.

For more information, contact Richelle Emerick, emerick@wans.net.

Youth Gardening and NGC Contests: *Jenny Henry, Chair*

Each year, the NGC will run the youth contests and will publish them on the website for easy access to people who are interested in the projects. The contests are Poetry, Essay, Recycled Sculpture and Poster.



Poetry Contest

Poetry: The new NGC Poetry Theme for 2025 – **PLANT AMERICA for the next 100 years.** (Grades K–9) A winning poem with the annual theme from NGC will be selected for each grade level.

Essay: High School Essay Topic for 2025 – **Should edible insects be harvested as a food source from our garden?** (Grades 9–12) Submit a 600- to 700-word essay. FGCMD and CAR-SGC only.

Recycle/Sculpture Contest – Encouraging Youth To Keep Our Planet Green (Grades 4–8) Submit a photograph of the sculpture created by the student from recycled, reused and reduced materials along with the [Youth Sculpture Contest Entry Form](#).

All entries are submitted to NGC Recycle Sculpture Chairman: [Tricia Mitchell](#).

Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Poster Contest – (Grades 1–5) Create a poster with the theme from NGC: **“Only You Can Prevent Wildfires”** or **“Lend a Hand Care for the Land”**

For information about the poster contest, contact the National Garden Clubs, Inc., national coordinator for the poster contest, Terry Critchlow at tcritchlow@aol.com or the Forest Service national coordinator for the poster contest, Iris Velez at iris.velez@usda.gov.

We hope that more clubs will reach out to their local youth and help educate the importance of gardening, to share the joy of harvest and to bring more beautiful blooms for generations to come.



Poster Contest

Council News

Landscape Design: *Betty Reeves, Chair; Linda Harris, Co-Chair*

Landscape Design Council Awards

Annually, the Landscape Design Council awards three types of awards:

- Landscape Work at a Public Site; 1st Place, \$150.00, 2nd Place, \$100.00, third place, \$50.00 and honorary mention, \$25.00.
- The Mae Scott Tapestry Landscape Award is awarded to an individual's home or a garden club's planned and maintained project, for a cash award for \$250.00, first place and \$150.00, second place.
- The Habitat for Humanity Award may be presented to an FGCMDC garden club for work at a Habitat for Humanity Site for an award of \$200.00.

Garden clubs and garden club members can put in for any of the Landscape Design Council monetary awards annually by completing the [LDC application on the FGCMDC website](#) and submitting the application to the LDC chairman by November 1.

Links to Award Applications:

- [Landscape Design Award for Public Places](#)
- [Habitat for Humanity Award](#)
- [Mae Scott Tapestry Landscape Award](#)

All award applications are due November 1.

Background on the Landscape Design Program from the FGCMDC Website

The Landscape Design Program was established in 1952 by The National Garden Clubs, Inc., to develop in its membership a greater appreciation of the environment, both natural and manmade, and to advance the fine art of gardening, landscape design and the study of horticulture. After a series of four courses, the garden club member is eligible to become a Landscape Design Consultant and may join a Landscape Design Council after two courses by paying dues of \$10.00 annually.

Landscape Design School Course 2: March 25 & 26, 2026, DoubleTree Hotel in Columbia, MD

The [Landscape Design Council](#)'s next Landscape Design School, Course 2, is scheduled for **March 25 & 26, 2026** at the DoubleTree Hotel in Columbia, MD.

This course will include classes on the following:

- Designing for Pollinators & Wildlife
- Plants in the Landscape
- Accessible, Enabling & Therapeutic Gardens
- Structures in the Landscape
- Redesign of Areas
- Development of North American Landscape Design
- Preservation of Historic Sites & Structures
- Overused, Often Invasive Plants & Native Alternatives



Photo from the Course 1 Session, May 7–8, 2025

The school brochure will be available soon. Check the [Landscape Design Council website](#) for updates.

Robert Lewis Baker Memorial Scholarship: *Betty Reeves, Chair*

The Robert Lewis Baker Memorial Scholarship is a one-year \$10,000 scholarship given annually providing grants to a college/university junior, senior, or graduate student, majoring in the study of—and with the intent of a career in—Ornamental Horticulture or Landscape Architecture.

Students must be enrolled for a minimum of six graded hours of classes. If more than one qualified applicant applies for the scholarship, the grant will be divided among the qualified candidates.

If you know of a qualified student majoring in higher education, please inform them about the Robert Lewis Baker Memorial Scholarship. The application can be found on the [Scholarships](#) page of the Federated Garden Clubs of MD website.

The application deadline is **February 1, 2026**.

Member Profiles

In this and future issues, Gardenews will be featuring profiles of FGCMd members as time and space allow. As many Gardenews staff are new to our roles, we will start by introducing a few of us in each issue to provide a bit of background on our careers and experiences in the gardening universe.

More Gardenews staff profiles to come in 2026...

Jenny Henry, Gardenews Representative, District II

Club: Shipley's Choice Garden Club (2015)



Jenny Henry has been a member of FGCMd since 2001 with the Severn River Garden Club and has moved around the counties many times. Now she and her family have settled in the Shipley's Choice community, and they are happy to not move again. Jenny has been an active member of Shipley's Choice Garden Club of District II for the past 10 years and has worked as a volunteer in church and other community organizations.

Jenny loves art and floral design. She also loves gardening and is happiest immersed in the garden connecting with the nature. Her many other interests often make her forget that she only has 24 hours a day.

Jenny is currently serving as an Assistant Director of District II and is the Youth Gardening Chair for the state. She enjoys working with people and serving in whatever ways she can to help reach out to people and spread the word about the good works that FGCMd is doing for the people in the state of Maryland and the opportunities our many programs provide for engaging youth and helping people to learn and study.

Vickie Rasmussen: Gardenews Representative, District III

Club: Hampton Garden Club (2024)

Growing up in the foothills of northern Georgia, I was surrounded with the aroma of fresh southern pine. My love of the outdoors, magnolias and gardening continued to grow as a young adult. Attending the University of Tennessee, trips to the Smoky Mountains where mountain laurels and ivy grew along rushing spring streams deepened my love of nature. After college, I moved to Maryland where I have lived for the past 37 years. Gardening around my own home is a love and passion which I continue to enjoy. Being a part of the Hampton Garden Club seemed only a natural extension of my passion and love of God's handiwork. Only being in the club for a year now, I have enjoyed learning and experiencing many programs and outreach opportunities. As District III *Gardenews* editor, it is my privilege to share all that our clubs are doing in District III. Thank you for this opportunity (and the aroma of the Maryland pines, which will always hold a special place in my heart)

The Gardens of Maryland Photo Gallery



Photo from Somerset
County GC

In addition to the photos in your news items, send us (<http://gardenews@fgcofmd.org>) photos of your favorite garden spots in your yard, in your district or anywhere in Maryland. For now, take another look at these photos from District clubs, and challenge your botanical taxonomy expertise to identify the photos below.



Photo from
Dorchester GC

Photos in the Wild: Can you identify these plants?

Upcoming FGCMMD Events in 2026

Check the calendar on the FGCMMD website (<https://fgcofmd.org/calendar/>) for updates on scheduled events.

January 13	State Board Meeting via Zoom.
February 4	District I Board Meeting, 9:45am, Chesapeake College, Cambridge Center, 416 Race Street, Cambridge, MD.
February 9	Garden Photography Zoom Workshop: <i>Prune Your Photos</i> , 1:00pm. More Information
March 4	District I Annual Meeting, 9:45am, Prospect Bay Country Club, 311W Prospect Bay Drive, Grasonville, MD 21638. Kent Russell, the Garden Guru, will present "The Sensational Spring Garden."
March 5	District V Annual Meeting, Holly Hills Country Club.
March 6	District III Annual meeting, Valley Mansion, 594 Cranbrook Rd. Cockeysville, MD.
March 13	District II Annual meeting; Comfort Inn, Bowie, MD.
March 25 & 26	Landscape Design School, Course 2, DoubleTree Hotel in Columbia, MD. More information coming.
March 30, 31 and April 1	The District II Daffodil Show and Standard Flower Show. Please note new location at Historic Baldwin Hall, 1358 Millersville Road, Millersville MD 21108. For information, contact Liz Williams mliz.williams825@gmail.com .
April 28	97th Annual Meeting, Turf Valley Conference Center, Ellicott City, MD.
May 4–6	NGC Convention, St. Louis MO, hotel and registration information TBA.
May 9	Talbot County Garden Club's Maryland House & Garden Pilgrimage / Talbot County tour will celebrate America's 250 th Anniversary by showcasing the many significant historic sites in the county, including an array of houses, gardens and grounds rarely open to the public. Waterfront homes open to tour include Wye House (where Frederick Douglas lived in his youth) and Plimhimmon (where Anna Maria Tilghman, widow of Revolutionary War hero Lt. Col. Tench Tilghman, entertained the Marquis de Lafayette), plus Emerson Point (on the Miles River). The spectacular grounds of Harleigh Farm (on Trippe Creek) will also welcome visitors. Tours and lunch will be available at Third Haven Friends (Quaker) Meetinghouse (1684) in Easton, with drive-through tours of historic Oxford and St. Michaels. Tickets and details will be available in the new year. talbotcountygardenclub.org .
May 11	Garden Photography Zoom Workshop: <i>Harvest Your Best Shots</i> , 1:00pm, More Information
May 12	State Board Meeting hosted by District III.
June 18	District I Flower Show, The Packing House, 411-A Dorchester Ave., Cambridge, MD.
September 8	State Board Meeting hosted by District IV.
September 24	Kent Island Garden Club Small Standard Flower Show, Kent Island Library, 200 Library Circle, Stevensville, MD.

Other Upcoming Events in 2026

An Invitation to FGCMd from Virginia Federated Garden Clubs (VFGC): **Come to our Convention 2026 – April 20–21 in Williamsburg, VA**

Come and help us celebrate all that is Virginia – the 2026 convention promises to be filled with guided Garden Tours of the Colonial Era, including lunch at a historic tavern; a fantastic, invigorating design program presented by Francine Thomas – New Zealand’s Designer of the year for 2025; opportunities to celebrate America’s 250th Anniversary of the American Revolution! Not to mention seeing old friends and meeting new friends.



“Virginia: Inspiring Past, Bright Future,” the theme for the 2026 convention, will be this and more. Our future will look different at this convention, more than at any other, so plan to come and experience the future, while honoring our past. What could be better than doing this in Williamsburg, VA?!



The featured floral designer, Francine Thomas, represented New Zealand on stage with a fantastic floral display at the World Flower Show in Ireland; she has travelled throughout New Zealand and all-around Australia, Wales, and Great Britain. In the USA, she has demonstrated, taught and judged from Rhode Island to Orlando. Francine won New Zealand Floral Art Designer of the Year for 2025, as well as Australian Designer of the Year 2018 and 2022.

Check the VFGC website (<https://viriniagardenclubs.org/annual-convention/>) for registration details.

