

# Westmoreland Garden Council

## Apr., May, June 2025 Newsletter

“Where Gardeners Grow”

### **MAY MART - ON THE LAWN!!**

Friday, May 2 – 12 :00 Noon to 7:00 PM

Saturday, May 3 – 9 :00 AM to 1:00 PM

No Admission - Free Parking

### **Perennials!! Annuals!! Herbs!! Vendors!! Fleatigue!! Food!!**



Wow! What a winter we have had! Everyone is ready for a little sunshine and warm weather! Get your gardening season off to a great start! We have planned an amazing two days to kick off the month of May, so get growing!

Browse the large selection of perennials waiting for a permanent home in your garden! Elizabeth Pesci, Horticulture Chairman, has carefully chosen new species as well as perennial favorites! 100's of plants to choose from! Elevate your culinary skills and add spice to your garden by experimenting with herbs from our large selection.

Want to invite butterflies to your garden? Consider planting milkweed, parsley and dill to lure butterflies (particularly Monarchs and Black Swallowtails) and other pollinators.

In addition to our perennials and herbs, a variety of vendors will be set up to add fun and variety to our May sale.

Be sure to visit our website at [westmorelandgardencouncil.org](http://westmorelandgardencouncil.org) to see more details. There is a list of available perennials plus an order form to mail into the office. Too busy to stop in at our Mart? Simply mail in your form and arrange for pickup another time.

Vendor applications are on our website or available in the office. Cost is \$70/non-members or \$35/members, and free for non-profits. Here is a sampling of some: Greenridge Garden Club; heirloom vegetables, Bob McDonald; houseplants, Glenda Gebert; Garden in the Woods, Mellowood Farm & Greenhouse; annuals/hanging baskets, Drew Graham; Dahlia tubers, 111 Juice Bar, Laurie Sweeney; hand painted items, Karen Pontes hair accessories, Crafted Cravings; Charcuterie, and McKenna Seniors will be selling hotdogs and cookies!! We are anticipating many more vendors.

### **“SPRING IN BLOOM” SPRING TEA**



Our 20th Annual Spring Tea was held on March 15. It was a sell out with 16 tables and 130 attending. Each year the hostesses come up with new ideas for beautiful tables.

Our tea chairperson, Paula Kramer, chose “Spring in Bloom” as her theme. Many thanks to all hostesses, helpers, food preparers and bakers. Also, thanks to those that donated raffle baskets. Plans are already in motion for next year.

## Calendar of Events

- Apr. 1 Membership Mtg. —11 :00 AM  
Program by Natalie Reese from  
Cleanways—"Recycling"
- May 2 May Mart—noon –7:00 PM
- May 3 May Mart—9: 00 AM-1:00 PM
- May 6 Membership Mtg—11:00 AM  
Program by Patty Schildkamp & Wilma  
Light "Native Bees"
- June 3 Membership Mtg. —11 :00 AM  
Program by Nancy Neel from Sunny  
Sprouts
- June 11 Card Party/Game Day
- June 18 Bus Trip to Akron

All membership meetings are free and open to the public. A light lunch is also served.

### Upcoming events:

- July 1 Hannahstown Gardens
- July 19 Garden Tour 10:00 AM–4:00 PM

## Getting Ready for a Bus Trip!



We are planning a really nice trip for June 18 to Stan Hywet Hall in Akron Ohio. We will have a guided tour of the 65 room Tudor Revival Manor House,

the Corbin Conservatory and the various gardens. The gardens include an English, Japanese, Rose and Stone Quarry. There will also be some time on your own to visit the self immersive Gate Lodge Museum, which is where Alcoholics Anonymous was started.

There is a Cafe there for lunch on your own and a fabulous gift shop.

We will leave the rear of the Greensburg Garden and Civic Center at 7:30 AM and should be back by 5:00 PM. Cost is \$85.00 for members and \$95.00 for nonmembers. Call the office at 724-837-0245 to reserve a seat.



Julie Rauso, Justine Rause, Linda Harvey, Denise Lieberman, Michele Dulas, Cathy Krofik

## Katherine M. McKenna Annual College Scholarship!



We are accepting applications for our \$1,500 scholarship now! Attention members! We all hear that college costs continue to rise.

Perhaps you know of a college student who has **sought help in financing their tuition. Direct them** to our website, [www.westmorelandgardencouncil.org](http://www.westmorelandgardencouncil.org) to download an application.

Applications for the Katherine M. McKenna Scholarship will be accepted until May 31st, 2025. Students must reside in Westmoreland or its bordering counties and have completed at least one year at an accredited college or university before the deadline. Students pursuing a two, four, or a graduate degree in botany, forestry, landscaping, horticulture, or a related field such as environmental science should take this opportunity to apply. Past awardees are welcome to apply again.

Don't delay in sharing this announcement with friends and family. This is not a loan; this is free tuition money. This past year has been tough on our local students and their families. Help us get our announcement out to them. Let them do the rest of the work!

Thank you, Scholarship Committee

## Deal or No Deal!



Whether you enjoy card games or board games, make plans to attend our 2nd annual card party/game day! It will be held on Wednesday, June 11 from 11:00—2:30.

Come alone or round up some friends. Bring your favorite game(s) or borrow some of ours.

For \$30 you can enjoy a fun afternoon, bottomless tea & coffee, delicious salads, delectable desserts and a chance to win one or more door prizes!!

*"The love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies."* ~Gertrude Jekyll

## Easy Assist to Native Bees by Sandy Truckner



We all want to help pollinators. And here is an easy way we can do so. Simply delay cleaning up our gardens until temperatures are reaching 50, probably some time in late April or early May. Right now in all those dead plant stems in the garden mason and other native bees are spending the winter. When it is warm enough they will chew their way out, mate, and begin the process again.

Kelly Riley in her column in the Farm and Dairy writes “Most people don’t realize that 80% of native bees nest in dead plant stems. Each stem can house up to 20 pollinator larvae which spend six months developing before emerging as fully formed bees”. This usually happens in mid April into May. I have this date down pretty solid because a couple years ago the mason bees in the barn were emerging from the bamboo home which was tied near the lambing pens. So not only were there new babies in the pens, there were new bees flying around the pens too. Mason bees generally don’t sting but it was a bit bothersome. Needless to say I moved their bamboo tube home elsewhere.

So if we clean up our garden too soon, or worse yet, have already done so last fall, we might be needlessly eliminating a generation of native bees in our yard.

Kelly goes on to say that “mason bees, leaf cutter bees, native wasps, and other beneficial insects also rely on these natural habitats to complete their life cycles”. Butterflies and moths such as swallowtails and fritillaries usually overwinter in chrysalises or pupas in the garden and wild areas. It is only too easy to cut down and rake out the plant material they are adhering to.

Another beloved insect we can help by this practice of leaving plant litter is the fire fly. Fire flies overwinter in leaf litter or just under the soil surface. Not only do they play an important role in pollination they are exciting to watch when they light up. Just north of here Allegheny National Forest holds an annual Firefly Festival during the last week in June. This date coincides with the mating displays of over fifteen different species of fireflies that call Allegheny National Forest home.

So if you’ve noticed a decline in fireflies in your yard, you might want to leave your leaves in your gardens and encourage your neighbors and friends to do the same.

Let’s all take pride in our gardens decorated with dried plant material and leaves. So much so that when we see a winter garden neat and devoid of any plant residue, the next thought becomes, “What happened to all their native bees and butterflies and fireflies?”

If you just can’t stand to leave all those plant stems sticking up every which way, you could cut them off and bundle them with twine and set them in a similar setting to await the emergence of this year’s pollinators.

### A Day in the Tropics



Our biennial garden tour, “A Day in the Tropics”, will be held on Saturday, July 19 from 10:00 AM-4:00 PM.

This is a great way to spend the day by meeting great gardeners in their home environment. It’s an ideal way to get new ideas and learn about home gardening techniques.

Tickets will be sold directly from the Westmoreland Garden Council office, which is open on Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Prices are \$25.00 in advance or \$30.00 day of the tour. Call 724-837-0245 for more info.

### Clustered Mountain Mint



Botanical name of this pollinator favorite is *Pycnanthemum muticum*. Voted as 2025 perennial plant of the year by Perennial Plant Association members, is also known as clustered mountain mint, blunt mountain mint or short-toothed mountain mint.

Clustered Mountain Mint is a pollinator favorite, attracting beneficial insects and is widely used in butterfly and herb gardens. It grows 2 – 3 feet tall in dense clumps and loves the sun. It will tolerate some shade and blooms with white or pink flowers, adding a bright pop of color. Some people crush the leaves and rub them on the skin to prevent mosquito bites and keep ticks at bay.

Bonus! Clustered Mountain Mint repels deer and rabbits with its strong mint scent. That strong scent adds a sensory addition to any garden.

**Westmoreland Garden Council**  
**951 Old Salem Road**  
**Greensburg, PA 15601**

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 10:00-3:00

Phone: 724-837-0245

Website: westmorelandgardencouncil.org.

email:

Co-Presidents: Carla Rusnica, Diane Dale

Vice President: Paula Kramer

Newsletter Editor: Diane Dale

**WESTMORELAND GARDEN COU 2025**  
**ASSOCIATE MEMBER - NEW MEMBER RENEWAL FORM**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
New \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \$20 \_\_\_\_\_

Annual dues run from January 1 to January 1. Please make checks payable to:  
Westmoreland Garden Council, 951 Old Salem Rd., Greensburg, PA 15601

My interests are: \_\_\_\_\_ Gardening \_\_\_\_\_ Floral Design \_\_\_\_\_ Butterfly Garden \_\_\_\_\_ Workshops  
\_\_\_\_\_ Grounds \_\_\_\_\_ Social Media

**Our Mission Statement**

*The Greensburg Garden Center is a non-profit educational organization whose goals are to support and educate our members and the community in horticulture, conservation, and related areas and provide an annual scholarship. GGC serves Westmoreland County and surrounding communities.*