

West Hills Ten O'Clock Garden Club History - 2024

When West Hills Subdivision was very young it boasted TEN garden clubs. According to Martha Phillips who moved here in 1958, "Everyone wanted to be in a garden club."

The area had been farming terrain, trees were relatively few, and the residents wanted to beautify the community. A beautification council was formed, and plant sales were held at the brand new West Hills Elementary School on various Saturdays to share plantings and gardening experiences.

Over the years, people's interests changed, some moved away, others returned to work. Clubs lost membership, and the Council no longer functioned. By 1971 only four garden clubs remained: Garden Lovers, Belle Fleur, Gateway, and West Hills Ten O'Clock. These four sent representatives, Mary Harper, Flo Thomas, Evelyn Bondurant, and Katherine Luton to re-establish a new council.

The Object of said Council--to coordinate the interests of all Garden Clubs and the West Hills Community Association, to foster civic improvements and landscape beautification, to encourage beautification of business establishments in the area, and to promote pride in maintaining our own community.

There was zero money, so each club contributed a small sum, and the projects began, interspersed with money-raising projects. Early residents may remember the "Christmas Cards," 4' by 8' wooden slabs, painted by Bearden High School Art Classes, installed on Winston, Wesley, and Buckingham entrances. A smaller need was for framed plaques to recognize businesses on Kingston Pike (between Papermill and Walker Springs) who beautified their areas. The eventual "Yard of the Month" selections required signs--which were stolen occasionally and had to be replaced. Other projects have included planting an Arbor Day tree at West Hills School and assisting with their plantings financially at times, also the Gazebo fund. In recent years the Mailbox Decorating Contest was added and signs made for that.

The BIGGIE was the purchase of five entrance signs in 1996. This took years of sales of Dogwood trees, pansies, geraniums, red bows, Dogwood mints, and of course, bake sales and garage sales. Total cost of the original group of signs was \$9385, with an assist at the end by Jean Teague and City Council. The last two signs, financed by a combination of WHBC and residents of West Hills and John Bynon were added in 1999 at a cost of \$4150.

It's been fun! Only two garden clubs in West Hills remain, Gateway and West Hills Ten O'Clock and the Association.

** This history was composed by Flo Thomas and Ruth McDonald
and appeared in the West Hills Community Association Bulletin in 2007.*



As a follow-up to the history of the beautification of West Hills written in 2007, now only one garden club remains, the West Hills Ten O'Clock Garden Club. The club was founded in 1955 and celebrated its 40th anniversary in 1995. The Tennessee General Assembly Senator from District 7, Richard Briggs, attended as well as the Knoxville City Council member for the West Hills district. In addition, Governor Don Sundquist's wife Martha sent a message to congratulate the club. Club members who attended the celebration are pictured here.



At the time of the 40th anniversary all members of the club were residents of West Hills. However, it is no longer a requirement for club members to live in the West Hills Subdivision. Today the club continues to support the beautification of West Hills by partnering with the West Hills Community Association to plant seasonal flowers at the West Hills neighborhood signs, attach large red bows on the neighborhood signs at Christmas, and identify and post signs for "Yard of the Month" and "Best Decorated Mailbox."

In addition to the club's continued relationship with the West Hills Community Association, it has been an active participant in the Racheff House Board of Governors and the Knox County Council of Garden Clubs. Ilza Wood has been the BOG Chairman for the Book of Recognition and Remembrance for the last 12 years, replacing June Zachary who held that position for many years. Members have also been active with the Knox County Council of Garden Clubs. Our current president, Lori Emery wrote a successful grant for the XXXXX and club member, Judy Fenton, has won prizes for her table arrangements at the last three District IV Membership meetings.



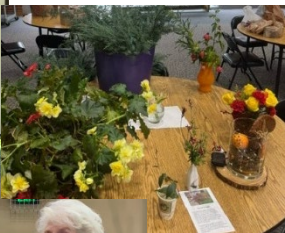
Ribbon cutting for new Dogwood Trail, Ilza Wood & WH Beautification ; Dec. 2024 Mailbox award; and June 2024 Yard of Month



2018 WH members at Racheff House Greens Tea; June Zachry receiving Iris award at 2022 District IV meeting; and Senor WH members at 2016 District IV meeting



Spring 2024 District IV WH winning arrangement and Fall 2024 District IV WH winning arrangement



2024 - Hostess food for social time before November program and meeting; program on bluebirds; exhibits; exhibit presentations by Chris Kirkland and Winifred Silvers



2024 Christmas luncheon for members.



Lori and BOG members working at 2024 Racheff House Greens Tea; Greens Tea centerpiece honoring June Zachary