

# WACONIAH



Washington • Arizona • California • Oregon • Nevada • Idaho • Alaska • Hawaii

Vol. 50 No. 1

Director's Theme: "*One Green World*"



2021 – 2023  
Pacific Region  
Director  
Lana Finegold

## Director's Message

### **ONE GREEN WORLD—POLLEN PUSHERS**

Nearly one year into this 2021-23 term, I am most proud of PRGC for awarding three scholarships to deserving college students. **YOUTH are our gardening future** as climate change threatens us everywhere. At the recent NGC convention the message was clear. BIODIVERSITY is an answer. Integrating wildflowers with crops to attract pollinators makes sense. Will it become the thing to do? Can we save pollinators?

If each of us tries, we can achieve success. I know that my yard has many different songbirds and today I saw a bunny, ducks and a squirrel. **Grow your own backyard park.** Invite your neighbors and share your skills. Every time I put free potted plants at the end of our driveway, they disappear. Spread plants in your neighborhood. What we do can help green our world.

Lana Finegold, PRGC Director

### **Growing confidence**

I'm not afraid of leadership. I practice all the time.  
And if I'm very fortunate, my words come out in rhyme.  
I write my speeches word for word so goals are clearly met.  
I practice many times to see if timing's clearly set.  
I've learned to listen for the sound when microphone I use.  
I make mistakes but people help me when I am confused.  
So try your hand at leadership. You can succeed I know.  
You'll find each job rewarding. Surprise yourself and grow.

### **Pacific Region Convention**



**Save the Dates: April 17 – 20, 2023**

### **"Going Green – Together"**

WSFGC is excited to host the Pacific Region Convention at the Embassy Suites in Lynnwood, WA with its spacious guest rooms, complimentary breakfast, and happy hour.

Tours, workshops, speakers, and entertainment are being selected and planned with anticipation of a fun and educational event. Brynn Tavasci, Diane Franchini, Dorrie Carr, Jeanette Pruin, and Terry Critchlow have already been planning and researching diligently to provide the best convention ever for you to enjoy.

Please plan to attend and enjoy the special camaraderie of our region's eight states and support our region and our current Director, Lana Finegold and her mission of "**One Green World**," and our incoming Director Carol Norquist, Alaska.

### **Team Tavasci**

## **Pacific Region Life Memberships**

*By Tanja Swanson, Life Membership Chair*

During the Convention in Las Vegas I brought a Pacific Region Life Membership display with applications to be filled out right then and there, with pins and certificates to be taken home immediately. Sadly, nobody took advantage of that opportunity.

To get a Life Membership for someone is a decision that needs to be made by your State, District or Club. Next year I'll bring those certificates and pins again; then you can bring a Life membership home with you.

The cost of a Pacific Region Life Membership is \$75. And that goes to the Pacific Region Scholarship fund. Just for that it is a good decision and every Club, District or State has many members who deserve this recognition!

One Garden Club Member who deserved and received a Pacific Region Life Membership during the Convention was Mary Warshauer, our National President. I was honored to present one to her. It was so delightful to have her visit with all of us and this was a small way of saying Thank You!

I hope you will find many deserving members to say Thank You to!

[tanjandy@gmail.com](mailto:tanjandy@gmail.com)

## **Washington State Federation of Garden Clubs**

*By Anne Sullivan, WSFGC President*

It is finally Summer! Because of our cold spring and all the rain, I thought it would never come. Now it is time to really enjoy the outdoors. I have put the cushions on our deck furniture and am enjoying the bucolic views we have of the west side of Whidbey Island, the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Vancouver Island.

I recently attended the Pacific Region and National Garden Clubs Conventions. What an inspiration with all the positive energy and being able to connect and share ideas with each other. NGC has really upped their game with their website. They have included a tremendous amount of information in the Members Resources Section. One of the best parts is the Video Café. NGC also has videos on YouTube. NGC awarded *Plant America* grants as well as other grants to several Districts and Clubs. There are so many advantages to being members of PR and NGC.

Our clubs and Districts have been busy with meetings, luncheons, flower shows, garden tours, plant sales, participation in fairs in addition to their community improvement activities. We held a Symposium in Tacoma with over fifty in attendance. You do not have

to be a judge to attend. There is always valuable information. Our Convention in June was via Zoom. We are planning our Fall Board Meeting in Ellensburg, WA in August and our Winter Board Meeting in Anacortes, WA in November.

A number of Washington State clubs are celebrating 100-year anniversaries. In addition to having parties, clubs are using the opportunity to publicize the work that the clubs do for their community. Edmonds Floretum planted 7,000 daffodil bulbs around the city. They placed signage at the daffodil beds indicating that the garden club planted them and why. They also created a large display in the local library lobby describing the garden club and its anniversary. I thought that is a great idea for all of us to advertise at our local libraries. Our clubs do so much for our communities, why not publicize all that we do.

Because of WSFGC's Endowment fund, we were able to give our clubs and districts \$10,000 in grants to help finance their various projects. WSFGC also pays for the Liability Insurance for our member clubs. We were also able to supplement the funds that we receive for scholarships to award a total of \$14,000.

## **The Saguaro Cactus**

*By Robyn McCarthy, Arboreta Chairman*

While traveling through eastern Arizona I was amazed at seeing 5,000 foot mountain sides covered with saguaro forests. I had so many questions about this remarkable plant. All were answered when my husband and I visited Saguaro National Park east of Tucson.

Saguaro (pronounced "saw-WAH-row" with the accent on the middle syllable) cacti, *Carnegiea gigantea*, only grow in parts of the Sonoran Desert which ranges from



southeastern California into south central Arizona and then down into Mexico.

Studies in Saguaro National Park indicate that this is a very slow growing cactus, only gaining a few inches in the first ten years of life. The young saguaros grow under the protection of a "nurse tree", usually a palo verde, ironwood, or mesquite tree. As the saguaro grows it outlives the nurse tree which dies.

The saguaro's outside flesh is fluted like an accordion with alternating ribs and furrows that allow the plant to expand and contract. With ample rain the flutes expand. When the desert is dry, the saguaro uses its stored water and the flutes contract. Because most of a saguaro is made up of water, a large plant may weigh 80 pounds for each foot of its main trunk. This tremendous weight is supported by a circular skeleton of interconnected, woody ribs. The number of ribs inside the plant correspond to the number of flutes on the outside of the plant. An adult saguaro of about 125 years of age may weigh 8 tons.



Arms on the saguaro may begin to appear at the age of 60 to 75 years. If there is little precipitation, it could take 100 years before the arms appear. Most saguaros grow to a height of around 30 feet. In early summer, at the age of about 35 years it produces cream-colored blossoms which are normally found at the terminal end of the main trunk and arms.

White-winged doves, lesser long-nosed-bats, honeybees, and moths feed on nectar and pollinate as they go. Gila woodpeckers and gilded flickers make nest holes in the trunk and large arms. Deep red fruit ripens in July and is food for doves, bats, javelina, and fox.



Arizona's native plant protection law protects all cacti on public and private lands.

Without a special permit from the state or permission from an owner, one may not destroy, dig up, mutilate, collect, cut, or harvest saguaros of any size.

Only the Tohono O'odham (Desert People) have the privilege of harvesting the fruit to make a syrup, jelly and ceremonial wine.



### ***West Indian Manatee, Trichechus manatus***

*By Georgia Zahar, Endangered Species Chairman*



© Marcel Huijser

Manatees are mostly found in Northern South Africa, Central America & Greater Antilles. They can also live along the Florida Coast.

This species of Manatee is also known as the North American Manatee. This particular Manatee was listed as endangered in the 1970's, when there were only several hundred left. Thanks to significant efforts by federal, state, private and nonprofit organizations, they are now reclassified from endangered to threatened.

This Manatee reaches up to 10 feet long and weighs 800-1200 pounds at adulthood. It has a prehensile

snout, like its relative the elephant, for grabbing vegetation and bringing it to its mouth. It feeds on vegetation 4 – 8 hours a day and consumes 5-10% of its body weight per day.

Because Manatees evolved in habitats without natural predators, they lack predator avoidance behavior. They are frequently solitary creatures.

What an incredible animal!

### Penny Pines

*By Claudia Hambacker, Penny Pines Chairman*

I have sent a letter to each State President requesting the name and contact for their Penny Pines Chairperson. Some States have responded and I appreciate this. Responding was Nina Blonski, California and Sharon Davis, Arizona; I am waiting to hear from the other States in our Region. A second request has gone out. Some States might no longer have a Penny Pines Chairperson.

The process has been streamlined and individual garden clubs may send their Plantation donations directly to National Garden Clubs or chose to send it directly to another agency. Thus there is less of a need for a Penny Pines Chair. However, there continues to be a need for an advocate in each state. The devastation from mega fires, insect infestation, and horrible storms demonstrate the need for a Penny Pines Chairperson (PPC) more than ever. The position of "Cheerleader"/advocate needs to continue to ensure the mission of the program continues. Education, writing articles for the State newsletters, and highlighting the dire need to increase the number of donations to reforest are important. A Penny Pines Cheerleader keeps eyes and ears open for messages the crowd may be sending and can change a "don't care attitude" into one that can be used to rally greater participation. We are at a serious point: TREES NEED US! The Foresters, Fire Fighters, and you, know we need to care for our planet.

The pandemic has taken a toll on every State Garden Club in one way or another. Membership has fallen in some states and entire clubs have folded. The pandemic and new lifestyle of remote working is here to stay. So, although it is easier said than done, our adaptation skills and resilience have been and will be challenged. Now more than ever we need concerns about our planet and humanity to bring us together. Gardening is one "old time" enjoyment that benefits us, keeps us healthy, and supplements our tables with good and nourishing food. It has always been a joy to

share crops with others and see the look on their faces when presented a bunch of onions, lettuce, radishes or posies that has been home grown. It is all worth the dirty nails, the muddy shoes and the sweat and stink of perspiration.

Our journey from seed collection to planting a seedling will continue in the next article. I have made contact with Kayla Harris at the Bend, Oregon Seed Extraction Facility. She is the author of several articles and has mentioned a few educational opportunities that might be good for District, State or Region meetings. Have a good summer and stay cool.

### Nevada Garden Clubs

*By Marci Brown, Nevada Garden Clubs President*

We now have 11 Garden Clubs in our membership. They are very active and working toward each of their particular goals. We were at a standstill during the Covid Pandemic; however with the ability to meet again there is much happening.

Our goal has been to renew club friendships and to rebuild our memberships. Our garden clubs are spread out in the Southern Nevada area: Boulder City, Las Vegas and Henderson. Membership is a priority and many clubs reported new members.

Some of our garden clubs have recessed for the summer. We had a very exciting season with many flower shows; all were well presented and attended beyond our expectations. Our friends and neighbors were so welcome to visit our events.

We finished our Garden Club season with our Annual Spring Meeting in June. Our National President, Mary Warshauer, visited us and encouraged us to continue to make April a permanent Plant America Month. She gave a short talk and enjoyed a spectacular lunch prepared by Kristie Livreri for our meeting.

Vicki Yuen, Recording Secretary, introduced Bob Morris, who received the National Garden Clubs Award of Excellence. He displayed the plaque he was awarded at the National Garden Clubs Convention in Orlando, Florida.

Master Gardener Glenda Bona spoke to us about using the herbs we grow. All in attendance took away a great deal of information on how to prepare the herbs for personal use.

Judy Stebbins, Awards Chairman, presented many Awards to our members. These Awards were National as well as Regional and State.

Kristie Livreri, Nevada Blue/Gold Star Chairman and Marci Brown and Vicki Yuen attended the installation of a Memorial Highway Marker in Caliente, Nevada on Memorial Day. The local VFW provided a delicious luncheon for all attending. The residents of this town were so happy with the Marker; there was even talk of forming a Garden Club.

April 25-27, 2022, we held our Pacific Region Garden Clubs, Inc. 78<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention "Respect the Region-Recycle, Reuse, Repurpose". The convention took place at the Nevada Garden Club Center, Las Vegas. Approximately 80 people attended. We conducted our business, ate well and enjoyed all.

### *Tri-Refreshers*

**August 9-10, 2022** – Michigan – by ZOOM

Sponsor: [www.migardenclubs.org](http://www.migardenclubs.org)

**November 5, 2022** – Turlock, California

Sponsor: Valley Lode District; Chairman Berni Hendrix

### *Do You Know What a "MRF" Is?*

*By George Unrine*

We learned at the Pacific Region Convention that a MRF is a Material Recovery Facility. It is the place where the contents of your mixed item recycle bin are processed to sort and package materials that can be reused by product manufacturers. At this MRF the materials of interest are paper/cardboard, plastic, glass, and aluminum/steel.

Of course, these are not the only things people place in their recycle bins. They may place anything into the bin that they think can be recycled. Two very common things mentioned by our guide were watering hoses and clothing. These things may be recyclable - but not at this MRF. Any items not usable by a MRF are removed and forwarded on to the land fill. They cause extra work for the people maintaining the machinery and working on the processing line.

The MRF we visited was not the largest by size but was the largest in terms of material processed each day. Processing is done along a line of conveyor belts that move the material through the three floors of a football field size building. Machines and people work to sort the material into the four categories of interest. Among the properties machines use to sort the material are size, weight, dimension (2D or 3D), visual, and magnetic. These properties cause the material to be diverted to the correct processing streams. Several dozen workers catch what the machines miss.



The output of each stream is then packaged for manufacturers that the MRF has contracts with. Manufacturers purchase the packaged material as raw ingredients for their products. While the sorting process need not be perfect, it is very important that the MRF maintains contamination levels that are acceptable to the manufacturer. If these levels are not maintained, the MRF will lose the contract.



You can help the environment by following the recycling instructions provided by the city in which you live. Not all MRF's have the same capabilities. The best suggestion I received on the tour is to place small items in clear, plastic bags. Bags will be ripped open if workers can see inside, otherwise if they are not clear, the bags will be tossed for safety concerns. I didn't think to ask if they really want to rip open a bag of shredded documents.

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**Cindy Carey** is a GEM because of her excellent leadership as chairman of many of Western District's activities. She is chairman of our Home and Garden Plant Sale and the Open Horticulture Dept. at the Yuma Co. Fair. She is also president of Pecan Grove Garden Club. Cindy is a truly valuable member of our district.

~ AZ. Western District

## American Robin

By Ann Kronenwetter, Bird Chairman

Scientific name *Turdus migratorius* - Migratory songbird of the true thrush genus.

Named after the European robin because of its reddish-brown breast, the European robin belongs to the Old World flycatcher family. The European robin has a color pattern similar to the American robin; it is much smaller and the red on the breast is a bit brighter but doesn't go as far down on the belly.

Color: American robin adults are dark gray above with their head, wings and tail almost black. Their outer feathers are tipped with white. The robin's breast is light brown to rich dark brick red. Their throats are streaked blackish and whitish. The females have a paler head. The juveniles' underparts are tinged with cinnamon and heavily spotted with brown. Some robins appear more pale or whitish. Leucism is a genetic condition where birds produce less than normal amounts of normal pigment.

Size: 8-11 inches in length, wingspan of 12-16 inches, weigh 2 1/3 – 3 ounces.

The wings have a pointed shape, the most common shape for birds that migrate using a flappy flight. Robins have been clocked flying from 20-36 m.p.h.

The tail is medium-length for quick steering as they fly through branches.

The American robin's syrinx (song box) has complex muscles allowing it to sing a rich complex song that can carry for long distances. The song is a series of rich caroling notes, rising and falling in pitch producing a very high pitch and then a whistling note.

The beak is short and yellow with a gray tip.

There is a broken white eye ring that surround dark eyes. Robins can see things at a farther distance and may be able to see a wider spectrum of colors than humans.

Robins' hearing is more finely tuned than ours and they can hear higher pitched sounds.

Sturdy legs with muscles designed for running or hopping allow them to speedily evade predators, and they can efficiently cover open ground while hunting.



The esophagus is exceptionally stretchy to allow the birds to eat huge quantities of berries.

Range: Breeds from Alaska east across the continent to Newfoundland, Canada and south to California, Texas, Arkansas and South Carolina. Winters north to British Columbia and Newfoundland, Canada.

Migration: Robins migrate in flocks often by day.

Habitat: Towns, gardens, open woodlands and agricultural land. American robins are naturally attracted to areas where people live, as grass provides a great feeding ground and a protected place where they can nest.

Nesting: Nest is a cup of grasses, twigs, debris worked into a mud-sealed foundation lined with fine grasses and plant fibers. 6 inches across and 4-6 inches high. Often the nests are reused. Site on horizontal branch of tree or shrub, 5 to 25 feet above the ground. Nests can also be found on ledges of houses, barns or bridges. The eggs are pale blue and usually number four. The eggs are incubated by the female for 12-14 days. The young are born with their eyes shut and first open their eyes around 5 days after hatching. Both parents feed the young mostly insects and earthworms. The parents are very aggressive in defense of the nest site. They produce a series of alarm calls that distract predators and cause the nestlings to duck low in the nest to go undetected. The young leave the nests 14-16 days after hatching. Robins can have up to 3 broods each year.

Diet: Robins eat a mixture of fruit, berries, earthworms and insects such as beetles, grubs, caterpillars and grasshoppers. The diet usually consists of 40% insects and 60% fruit and berries.

Robins roost together in trees.

Life span: 6 years.

State Bird: Connecticut, Michigan and Wisconsin have named the American Robin their state bird.

The flocks of American Robins come to my garden and eat the fruit of the Crabapple tree, Serviceberry tree, Elderberry and wild chokecherry plus the berries of the Thimble berry, Salmon berry and Currant bush. Enjoy watching and hearing the American Robins in your garden!



**Terry Critchlow** is a GEM because she was there, she helped and she cared.

~ Jeanette Pruin

## **Oregon State Federation of Garden Clubs**

By Cheryl Drumheller, OSFGC State President

This year has been quite different as several of our meetings were held on Zoom, and not in person, due to the Covid virus. However, we were fortunate to attend the Fall Board of Directors Meeting 2022 and the annual Convention in person. With Covid, and membership aging out, came the decrease of membership. But on the bright side, there were two-hundred and ten new members this past year! I am so proud of the garden clubs that continued meeting!

Listed below is information pertaining to the Oregon State Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.

Projects – Promise Trees Project – During the Fall of 2020, there were fires that destroyed more than 4,000 homes in Oregon. The homeowners lost everything, their belongings, and their homes. The Promise Trees Project was established to give \$50.00 vouchers for trees to these homeowners as they rebuild their homes. Our hope is that trees will give them a sense of place and a promise of a happy future.

Events – OSFGC Convention 2022, and three Blue Star Memorial Dedications (BSM)

President's Goals – Planting two pollinator gardens per club and visiting all fourteen districts during my two-year term.

Annual Report – Theme; "Promote our Pledge, Protect our Pollinators"

1. Total State Membership – 1918
2. Number of new members - 210
3. Number of Districts – 14
4. Number of Clubs – 69
5. Number of State Board Members – 85
6. Significant Accomplishments (including special events) – Stayed connected and informed with District Directors and Club Presidents through monthly Zoom meetings. Attended District Fall and Spring Meetings, and Blue Star Memorial Marker Dedications.
7. NGC Programs we participate in - Blue Star Memorial Marker Dedications, NGC Membership Mondays, Life Membership Program, Gardening School Program, and Penny Pines Program.
8. Best or most unique method to increase club participation/membership - I have found the

most unique method offered to increase club participation/membership within the State is using a questionnaire. The members can annotate what their interest is as a member of the garden club and become involved. The best way for the garden club to increase their membership is personally inviting friends, relatives, and co-workers to a meeting or activity.

9. NGC Schools offered - Our state offers Gardening School and Flower Show Schools annually.
10. There were thirteen Scholarships given, totaling \$16,900.
11. We participate in NGC Grant Programs.
12. We hold virtual meetings, and Programs.
13. I attended seven of fourteen District Meetings and two Blue Star Memorial Marker Dedications.
14. I designed a Grocery Tote Bag with my theme, "Promote our Pledge, Protect our Pollinators." Each bag sells for \$3.00, with \$1.00 going to the Promise Trees Project.
15. I attended the Pacific Region Garden Clubs Convention in Las Vegas, April 25-27, and the NGC Convention in Orlando, FL, May 16-19.

## **CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS**

The OSFGC Convention 2022 was hosted by Rogue District Garden Clubs, June 13-15. The theme was "Inspiring Future Leaders," led by Immediate Former Pacific Region Director, Robin Pokorski. She inspired us with her time-tested leadership program, planned just for us. Robin presented a variety of tools, helpful hints, and a little laughter as she shared ways to grow ourselves personally, encourage teamwork among our members, and build our memberships.

In keeping with my President's theme "Promote our Pledge, Protect our Pollinators" we had a terrific lineup of speakers to inspire us to focus on our air, water, forest, land, and wildlife.

There were special awards and presentations, drawings, workshops, self-guided tours, and time to socialize with our gardening friends. There were floral designers' creative designs and an abundance of

horticulture, not to mention very nice items for sale in the Boutique Mall.

We enjoyed a fun-filled few days to celebrate all that the Oregon State Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. had to offer; new things to learn, ideas to share, friendships to nurture, good food, easy listening entertainment, and lots of fun!

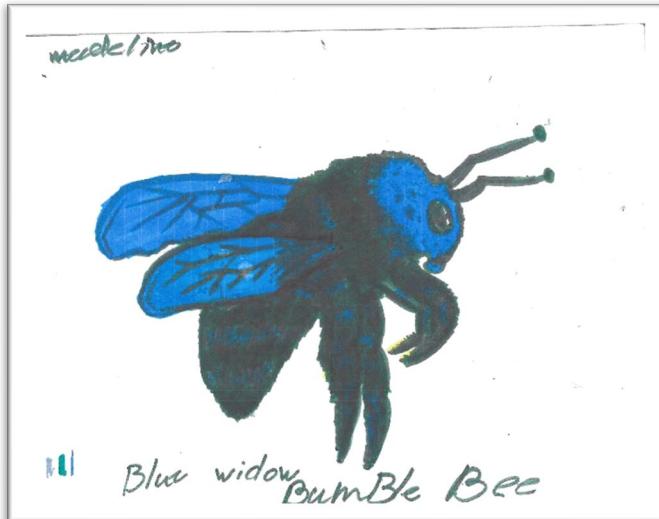
We came away from Convention 2022 inspired!

I am very proud to be the Oregon State Federation of Garden Clubs President.

### **2022 Youth Pollinator Poster Contest**

*By Terry Critchlow, Youth Pollinator Poster Contest Chair*

Pollinator Power! We all know the power of our pollinators and the peril many of them face today. Garden Clubs across the region are promoting pollinator gardens and pollinator conservation. This youth contest is made to complement any youth program. Conservation and environmental responsibility is being taught by our youth educators in many venues. Don't forget to include this contest at your youth presentations. The award year ends Dec. 31, 2022. Deadline to the region is not until March 1. Plenty of time for your club, district and state to judge the posters. 1st place winners per grade are sent forward for competition. Please go to the PRGC website for more information and photos of the 2021 winning posters.



This winning poster is titled Blue Widow Bumble Bee by Madeline Harvey, sponsored by the Dufur Valley Garden Club in Oregon.



**2023 PRGC Convention - Team Tavasci**

~ Terry Critchlow

### **What are Conservation and Sustainability?**

*By Judy Shelton, Conservation Chair*

Conservation is the act of preserving, guarding, or protecting something, the safekeeping of a thing or preservation, while sustainability is simply the ability to sustain something.

#### **What can we do to help with the water shortage?**

**1. Use energy-efficient, water saving devices.** Install low-flow shower heads and low flush toilets.

**2. Run your dishwasher and laundry only when it is full.** Older models of washing machines can use up to 40 gallons per wash. Dishwashers can use 10-15 gallons of water per cycle.

**3. Go easy on your sprinklers and gardening hose.** Make sure your sprinkler system is not watering your driveway, sidewalk or house.

**4. Turn off the tap when not in use.** Keeping the water running while brushing your teeth wastes about 4-5 gallons of water.

**5. Install a water softener if you have hard water.** Get your water tested. If you are having issues with rinsing off soap in the shower or salt stains on your glassware your may have hard water and are using more water especially in the shower.

**6. Fix plumbing leaks.** Keep watch on your utility bills. Leaky plumbing may be the cause of unusual increases.

**7. Soak your dishes in warm water first.** Soaking your dishes is more effective than scraping them in running water.

**8. Cut those long showers short.** How about cutting those extra minutes in the shower or filling your bathtub only half full. Not only will you use less water, but you will also save money on water heating bills.

**9. Use drip irrigation to water your plants.** Try drip irrigation as your plants will have enough water consistently. Garden hoses and sprinklers tend to

overwater. Much water can be lost to evaporation and runoff.

**10. Reuse water for landscape gardens.** Rinse your fruits and vegetables in a bowl of water rather than running water. The water can then be used to water indoor house plants or outdoor pots of flowers.

### Water in a changing climate

It is uncertain how climate change will affect rainfall patterns. However, the direction of change and current impacts are largely known.

From lengthy droughts in California to floods that rocked Southeast Asia at the end of last year, **water** is at the heart of natural disasters that occur more frequently as the climate changes.

Protecting the environment for the coming generations begins with more effective **water** management today. As the world warms, climate change can threaten ecosystems and environments that protect vital **water** resources, limiting access to them even more.



Kudos to all the **committee members and volunteers** at the PRGC Convention held in Las Vegas, Nevada, in April. GEMs all of them! Well done, it was a wonderful event.

~ Michele Noe

### Award of Excellence Recipient Bob Morris

By Vicki Yuen, WACONIAH Editor

The Award of Excellence (AOE) is the highest achievement award presented by National Garden Clubs, Inc. Each year, NGC awards up to three Awards of Excellence to individuals, organizations or institutions who make significant contributions to the missions and goals of NGC, including public education, water conservation, use of native plants, etc.

NGC encouraged Nevada to submit an application for the AOE. After some thought, we decided that Bob Morris would be a suitable candidate. Many of us in Nevada have heard him speak to our clubs, or we read his weekly column in the Review Journal or subscribe to his blog, Extreme Horticulture in the Desert.

I took on this application process, and interviewed Bob at one of his projects, the Ahern orchard. This is on a several-acre piece of property owned by the Ahern organization, which had water rights that were not

being used. Bob persuaded Ahern that he could establish an orchard there, with the produce going to local food banks. He started with plums and pluots (plum-apricot hybrid). He has since planted apples, grapes, palms and other fruit trees. He also teaches classes on tree pruning there.



He worked for many years to develop the Master Gardener orchard on the north end of town, and still gives instruction for the Arizona Master Gardener program. He has also worked overseas to help guide farmers in Asia and the Middle East on best practices.

I managed to carry his passion about his projects through onto the application, and we were absolutely thrilled that NGC gave one of its AOE's to Bob. He was not able to attend the National Convention to receive this award, due to a family emergency. But we did present it at our Nevada Garden Clubs Spring Meeting, with our National President Mary Marshauer making the presentation.

This is indeed a tremendous honor for Bob, for Nevada Garden Clubs and for the Pacific Region.

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**Kristie Livreri and Vicki Yuen** are GEMS because as members of the Nevada Garden Clubs, Inc., and co-chairs of the PRGC Convention held in Las Vegas, Nevada, April 25-27, they did a fantastic job pulling it all together.

~ Michele Noe

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## The Mojave Desert

By Judy Unrine, Pollinator Chairman

Whether traveling by car, plane, train, or bus, members arriving in Las Vegas, Nevada were treated to a dry, dusty landscape. The Mojave Desert, a landscape seeming devoid of water and color, stretches miles and miles into the horizon.

What a surprise for those asking about the dead, brown shrubs to learn that they are actually alive and doing their part, even during climate change, to keep the desert alive.

At a distance the Creosote bush can't be appreciated, yet with closer examination the dark green, lustrous leaves and golden flowers make for an attractive combination of color and life.



Far from being a dead landscape, the Mojave Desert, located in the American Southwestern States and Mexico, is considered one of the most diverse habitats of

North America, stretching from the Pacific Ocean to Alpine meadows.



On our drive to the Pacific Region Convention in Las Vegas we stopped at Joshua Tree National Park. The Joshua Tree, *Yucca brevifolia*, has a unique shape that mimics a tree with branches that appear to be arms. Each tree is different and can grow between three to nine feet tall before branching. At maturity they can grow 20 to 70 feet tall.

They weren't blooming, but when they do, spiky leaves and lush, creamy white blooms emerge at the



end of the arm. To bloom, they require a period of cold weather dormancy.

There are many pollinators in the desert. Flies and bees buzz, hummingbirds drink nectar, all attracted to blooming plants. But there is only one tiny insect that pollinates the yucca, the Yucca moth, genus *Tegeticula*. The Yucca moth

transfers pollen between flowers. The insects lay their eggs inside the pollinated flower. When the larvae hatch, they feed on some of the seeds. The rest of the seeds are dispersed by the wind.

As we drive by, we can see that besides being a beautiful, haunting habitat, the Joshua Trees play an important role in the ecology of the area. Broken bodies litter the desert floor, providing homes for



burrowing insects and birds, shade for tiny seedlings, and ground protection for tiny mammals.

## An Arbor Day Tree

Submitted by Judy Stebbins; Author Unknown

What will you be when we're old and gray,  
Dear little tree that we plant today?  
"I will be the savings-bank of the squirrel and mouse -  
For robin and wren, an apartment house -  
The dressing-room of the butterfly's ball -  
The locust and katydid's concert hall -  
The schoolboy's ladder in pleasant June -  
The schoolgirl's tent in July noon  
And my leaves shall whisper to them merrily,  
A tale of the Gardeners\* who planted me."

*Golden Gardens, Mar/Apr 1992, Vol. 60 No. 5*  
\* changed from "children"

This poem and the one on the next page were read at our tree planting at the Pacific Region Convention.

## GEM Note Card Sale

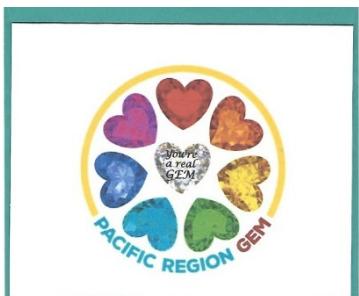
By Michele Noe, GEMs Chairman

### GEM NOTE CARD SALE – Too good to overlook!

Recently at the PRGC 78<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention held in Las Vegas, Nevada, April 25-27, 2022, participants were able to take advantage of an offer to purchase three **GEM** note cards for the bargain price of **three for \$10, a savings of \$5!** This offer has been extended to those unable to attend the event. If you would like to benefit from this pricing option, please email me at [PRGCGEMS@gmail.com](mailto:PRGCGEMS@gmail.com). If you act quickly\*, I'll include a unique bonus of **three limited-edition custom-designed GEM Stamps.com** postage stamps.

\*Offer expires September 1, 2022, or while supplies last.

Your consideration is appreciated.



Discounted postage rate approved by USPS.

Stamp may be used on any mailing.

Email orders accepted with payment to follow.

## Pacific Region States' Websites

### PacificRegionGardenClubs.org

Washington:	<a href="http://WAGardenClubs.com">WAGardenClubs.com</a>
Arizona:	<a href="http://AZGardenClubs.com">AZGardenClubs.com</a>
California:	<a href="http://CaliforniaGardenClubs.com">CaliforniaGardenClubs.com</a>
Oregon:	<a href="http://OregonGardenClubs.org">OregonGardenClubs.org</a>
Nevada:	<a href="http://NevadaGardenClubs.org">NevadaGardenClubs.org</a>
Idaho:	<a href="http://GCII.org">GCII.org</a>
Alaska:	<a href="http://AlaskaGardenClubs.org">AlaskaGardenClubs.org</a>
Hawaii:	None

## Youth Projects

By Tanja Swanson, Youth Projects Chairman

Another Fun Youth Activity: Recycled Sculptures, An activity you can do outside a school setting.

We in Klamath Falls, Oregon have a good relationship with our libraries, so we used their meeting room. The library did the advertising for our Recycled Sculpture events. Our Club collected everything from toilet paper rolls, plastic containers, bottle lids, old CD's to Kleenex boxes and anything else we could think of.

We arranged boxes all along the walls and sorted our treasures. Then we set up tables with glue guns with a Garden Club member behind every glue gun. Someone suggested having a bowl of ice cubes ready, because glue guns are hot, but we haven't had any problems.

Kids of all ages were invited. And the fun began!

We did one of these on a Saturday and one during Spring break. Both were well attended.

National Garden Clubs has a Recycled Sculpture contest and I hope they change the rules. 1) The age group should be expanded to include younger kids. We had very enthusiastic six year olds and even younger children make sculptures. 2) Why only allow such small sizes? We had middle schoolers make enormous projects... a picture is a picture. And 3) now that I think of it, perhaps they can even add group projects.

Don't forget to get all the info and a photo release form signed!

Try this; you'll have a lot of smiling faces and perhaps something to enter a youth contest!

## I Am a Tree

By Judy Stebbins, written around 4<sup>th</sup> Grade in the 1950's

I am a tree  
No one knows me.  
I live in the wood  
Like every tree should.  
My branches I wave  
Gentle breezes I crave.  
In Spring my flowers bloom  
and the sun and the rain help me grow.  
When my leaves start to weep  
I prepare for a sleep.  
I am a tree  
No one knows me.

## 'Musky' the Muskrat

By Madeline West, Environmental Concerns Chair

Muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*), Family Cricetidae in the Order Rodentia

"Yes, I may be called musky because I secrete a musky secretion that males use to mark their territories and to attract mates during breeding season. But I really can be good for the environment."

The Pacific Northwest Region Muskrats.....

**Alaska:** Decades ago, short, brown spikes of hybrid and invasive cattails started growing in wetland areas, becoming dense and crowding out sedges, wild rice and rushes. They have left no room for ducks to nest or fish to swim. The cattails cross-pollinated with the native varieties and before long the offspring had supplemented the parent species, becoming mats of floating cattail as large as the size of 4 football fields, breaking off and drifting for miles before colonizing new bays. This has created navigational hazards, invisible on GPS maps, smashing into docks and blocking off boaters inside coves.

- A side note: University of Minnesota retired professor Dan Svedarsky co-authored a report on how the muskrats really made a dent in opening the cattail in the marshes of Waconia, Minneapolis. He detailed how the muskrat cleared out areas around their (muskrat) huts and increased the amount of open water by 50 percent. But as the cattail recedes, seeds that have been dormant for decades sprout again and native plants return. Biologists are counting on the voracious appetite of the muskrat to contain this cattail invasion.

Enter the lowly muskrat---who weighs 2-4 lbs. (about the size of a large rat) and measures up to 14 inches in length. Their coats are beautiful fur on their skin which makes them distinctive from common rats and a soft dense underfur of guard hairs of two layers that produce the color of the upper parts. Feet and tail are brown or black and they can swim under water for 12 minutes. They burrow into the banks making an underwater entrance.

They have a strong musky odor. Their fur traps air to keep them warm and this allows them to float in water.



Even though Muskrats are an important part of native ecosystems, their burrowing and foraging activities can damage agricultural crops, native marshes and water control systems, such as aquaculture, farm ponds and levees, significantly impacting agriculture crops like rice that rely on consistent water levels for growth. Damage from eating agricultural crops, crayfish, and mussels impacts fish and wildlife. They are one of 12 furbearers trapped in Alaska. They can extend their feeding areas by constructing "pushups" which are piles of vegetation deposited on the surface of the ice over an opening and they bring vegetation to these pushups and eat it there.

**Arizona:** Muskrats can be found along most of Arizona's perennial rivers, permanent marshes and dirt lined canals. Muskrats have disappeared from some areas of the San Pedro River, only to invade other areas. Muskrats are a great resource of food and fur for humans. Here, it is the largest species in the subfamily Arvicolinse, (Arvicolids) which includes 142 other species of rodents, mostly voles and lemmings. Native to North America, they were introduced to parts of Europe, Asia and South America.

In Arizona Muskrats can be found along perennial rivers, permanent marshes and along dirt-filled canals. They eat cattail, pickerelweed, bulrush, smartweed, duck potato, horsetail, roots, bulbs, shoots, water lily, sedges, willows, arrowheads and mats of algae. They will destroy corn, sugarcane, rice and carrots when near aquatic habitats.

**California:** Muskrats are common throughout North America with each state having their own laws, regulations and ordinances regarding the hunting of Muskrats. Regulations on seasons, bag limits and type of traps or devices that can be used to take them MUST be carefully followed. Some of the largest economic losses due to muskrat damage include the state of California, Arkansas, Louisiana and Mississippi. (i.e., rice, crayfish, and vegetable crops)

**Idaho:** As of July 2018, Idaho has a new mandatory trapper education law that took effect requiring trappers who purchased their first trapping license after June 30, 2011 to attend and pass a mandatory trapper education course before they can purchase another trapping license. Idaho Fish and Game's Trapping says "Responsible trapping is critical, and the course teaches trappers how to avoid catching non-target animals, as well as how to minimize their potential impacts on other recreationists. It covers basic trapping techniques with a strong focus on safety and ethical trapper behavior. Participants must be at least 9 years of age and can register online."

**Nevada:** Muskrats can be seen along the Truckee River at Oxbow Nature Study Area and other lakes, reservoirs, marshes, rivers, streams and cities such as Carson City, Elko and Washoe. The Game department asks that if you see any muskrats, to make note of the siting and document where you saw them. Predators in this state include mink, otter, bobcat, coyotes, foxes, raptors and largemouth bass.

**Oregon:** In Oregon, muskrats originally were distributed throughout the Willamette Valley (near Portland) and coastal regions as far south as Coquille, Coos County, and east of the Cascade Range from the Dalles, Hood River County to the high mountain regions of Klamath, with Lake, Klamath, and Curry Counties showing introductions to the lakes, marshes, swamps and sloughs.

**Washington:** It can be safe to eat muskrats; it is one of the healthiest foods available as their main food source is plants.

**Europe:** Muskrats are considered an invasive alien species as of August 2, 2017, and cannot be imported, bred, transported, commercialized, or intentionally released into the environment in the whole of the European Union.

Since they can have up to 5 litters per year with 5 or more kits per litter, they possibly could be controlled and put on an invasive list in the Western United States.

#### References:

URL: Denizens/by Nicolas Brulliard- National Parks Conservation Association 777-6<sup>th</sup> St. N.W. Ste. 700, Washington, DC 20001-3723--National Parks magazine: article on Dan Svedarsky.

[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife\\_damage/reports](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage/reports)  
Muskrats-U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services, Wildlife Damage Management

<https://www.livescience.com> Facts about Muskrats

<https://Oregon> Department of Fish & Wildlife - muskrats/Alaska, Arizona, California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Europe.

AZ Western District Presidents: "You are GEMs because of your dedication and support of our AZ Western District garden clubs. You're the best!"

~ Karen Bowen



## Celebrating Arbor Day

By Karen Bowen, AZ Western District Director

Photos by Karen Bowen



Students from Palmcroft Elementary School helped Yuma city employees plant sixty-two trees for the town's recent Arbor Day celebration.



Members from Western District Garden Clubs donated funds to purchase six trees and attended the Arbor Day Tree planting held recently in Yuma, AZ.

Arbor Day found students from Pecan Grove Elementary School and Kofa High School working alongside city employees to plant sixty-two trees at one of Yuma, Arizona's most popular parks, Smucker Memorial Park. Western District garden clubs donated funds to purchase six of the trees planted. Members from the four clubs attended the celebration and were amazed at how quickly the sixty-two trees were planted.

Yuma, Arizona is a member of Tree City USA and TreeLine USA. Both programs emphasize the

importance of having trees in towns and cities to help absorb pollution, provide habitats for animals and shade to lower thermal heat. Mark Headington, Yuma Arizona Public Service (AZ's largest electric utility) Arbor Day director, stated, "APS is affiliated with TreeLine USA, a program promoting safe, reliable electric service while encouraging abundant trees in our APS service areas. We promote urban forests that provide shade and beauty in cities. APS, along with local donors, annually provides trees for Arbor Day events throughout the U.S."

The tradition of planting trees on Arbor Day dates back 150 years to 1872 in Nebraska. Julius Sterling Morton, vice-president of the Nebraska State Board of Agriculture, proposed that a day be set aside in the state for planting trees. The Nebraska Board approved his proposal, and newspapers began promoting the event.

That first Arbor Day, April 10, 1872, it is said that over one million trees were planted in Nebraska. The idea of having a special day to plant trees quickly caught on with other states; and within twenty years, all states were celebrating Arbor Day on the last Friday in April.

In 1907, at an Arbor Day celebration, Pres. Theodore Roosevelt stated that a people without children would face a hopeless future, and a country without trees would be almost as hopeless.

Many American holidays honor the past, but Arbor Day honors the future. Ten to fifteen years from now, the young trees planted at Smucker Memorial Park will provide abundant shade and wildlife habitat and will offer a pretty spot for families to enjoy being outdoors.

### ***Highlights of the Business of the Las Vegas, Nevada 2022 Convention***

*By Greg Pokorski, Parliamentarian*

- The State Presidents' Meeting and the Executive Committee Meeting were held on April 25. Prior to convention the Finance Committee met by Zoom and the Organization Study Committee transacted its business by email. The Board of Directors Meeting was held on April 26 and the Convention sessions took place on April 26 and 27.
- Assets of \$43,628.26 were reported (general checking account – \$28,818.17; scholarship account – \$14,810.09).
- The 2022-2023 region budget and 2023 convention budget were adopted.
- Amendments to Convention Procedures were adopted by the Executive Committee.

- Amendments to Standing Rules were adopted by the Board of Directors. Amendments to Bylaws were adopted by the membership (the convention body). All will be posted on the website.
- The appointments of board members since the 2021 Organization Meeting were ratified.
- Officers, State Presidents, and Chairmen reported.
- Members of Washington State Federation of Garden Clubs extended the invitation to the 2023 Annual Convention at the Embassy Suites in Lynnwood, Washington, April 17-20, 2023.
- It was announced that Alaska Garden Clubs has elected Carol Norquist to serve as 2023-2025 Region Director and Debbie Hinckley to serve as 2023-2025 Alternate Director.
- Total convention registration: 80 (57 full-time, 23 part-time). Voting strength: 41.

### ***Biophilia***

*By Lori Robinson, Environmental & Climate Concerns*

As Environmental and Climate Concerns Chairman I am writing articles to support Health and Wellness. "Biophilia" is the concept of merging aspects of the environment for greater comfort and health..

Plants bring comfort in your home, workplaces and anywhere else. Physical and spiritual value of plants is part of our human DNA.

Having many doctor appointments and tests can make one anxious. Gazing at aquariums with fish swimming helps one relax. Having gorgeous plants: rubber, palm, and many other species, gives a soothing visual effect and more oxygen in a negative atmosphere element. Having plants keeps people grounded.

Interior Designers, architects, planners are joining nurseries to use the concept of "Biophilia, Greenify your inside," to combine inside with outside, with natural light rather than artificial. Sensor based systems can open and close windows; sliding glass doors can bring the outside, inside. A beautiful balcony with plants can enhance the experiencing of eating meals there.



I have a garden bathroom with glass tiles for the window bringing natural light to my plants. Plants help purify the air by absorbing toxins and increasing humidity, creating healthier oxygen levels. The plants thrive in this condition and I enjoy the beauty of the environment while leisurely bathing using lavender scent soap.



Plants and humans thrive in the sunlight, getting the benefits of Vitamin D which improves mental health and wards off seasonal depression. The kitchen is usually the most used area and usually the sunniest space in your home where families congregate. Tending to your plants can enhance your mood and well-being.

Using natural textured wallpaper, wood panels, mantels, and shelving can bring the nature experience into the interior. I have a beautiful Philippine mahogany folding door, separating formal dining room and family room, which I love. The use of wood and greenery create an inviting and healthy environment for the busiest rooms in your home.

Credit: HTTPS: WSMAG.NET THE HOME 2022-03  
Biophilia - incorporating healthy, natural concepts into your design

### ***Arizona Federation of Garden Clubs***

*By Sharon Davis, President*

With only 18 garden clubs, Arizona slowly awakened from the two years of the pandemic. Our clubs met in person this past year, where we more fully engaged in community service, and started planning for some flower shows for 2023.

More importantly, at the state level, we completed a strategic planning process. A dynamic committee, representing clubs from throughout the state, spent the past year identifying five focus areas: Membership, Education, Civic and Environmental Responsibility, Public Outreach and Convention. We adopted their final report at our Annual Meeting in April and here are our Strategic Objectives for the next decade:

#### **1. Focus on Education**

We recognize that supporting our clubs and members is AFGC's highest priority. We plan to do so in a number of ways: training new officers and supporting their local efforts; reorganizing and updating our website so it is more useful to our clubs and their members; offering a dynamic biennial Convention that attracts and educates our state and club leadership; embracing new technology to make it easier for members to connect with

AFGC; and expanding NGC's school experience through Zoom to reach our geographically diverse state.

#### **2. Expand Membership**

Clubs are the lifeblood of AFGC and National Garden Clubs. We all want membership growth and in order to achieve it, we must extend our reach outside of our traditional membership efforts. Outreach to new gardeners and greater participation in civic and environmental efforts will lead to new members.

#### **3. Expand Public Outreach**

We must focus our attention on different age groups and use social media and our improved website to bring our message and programs to new constituencies.

#### **4. Finance/Fundraising**

We must reach new audiences in our fundraising efforts instead of relying on our current members to finance all of our initiatives. This will mean expanding our traditional fundraising to include the general public in our events whether they be social or educational.

Now comes the hard part – energizing our members to fulfill our new mission! We have five to ten years to transform ourselves to a more vibrant and diverse membership organization. Onward!

### ***Flower Show Schools***

*By Launa Gould, Webmaster*

**Flower Show School** – Modesto, California

Course 2 – September 24-26, 2022

Course 3 - April 14-16, 2023

Course 4 - September 23-25, 2023

Sponsor: Valley Judges Council

Chairmen: Judi Picinini and Jennifer Waite

Contact- Judi Picinini, Co-Chairman,  
23350 S Austin Road, Ripon, CA. 95366  
209-599-6821 or 209-480-6822

[jpicinini@aol.com](mailto:jpicinini@aol.com)

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History and statistics shows that lightning strikes men five times more often than women.

Some photos from the Alaska Garden Clubs Convention, Eagle Creek, AK, June 25, 2002:



Rhonda Barnklau, president, Greater Eagle River GC;  
Sharron Carlson, Alaska State president (seated)



Lana Finegold and Barbara Horner-Miller



Lana Finegold, Pacific Region Director



Lana Finegold and Chris Wood at Brown Hen Farm  
garden tour

## **DIY Bird Cage Planters**

*By Brynn Tavasci, Historian*

### **Supplies and instructions:**

For the base use any flat weatherproof recycled material that you can create drain holes in and attach wire to. (trivet, pizza pan, grill grid....)

For sides use chicken wire or similar. Shape sides of birdcage around base and attach with wire. Line with coco liner or similar.

Plant as desired. For top use domed weatherproof material or structure. (inverted planter basket, decorative organizer basket, colander, lampshade frame....)

Attach top securely but consider having to remove it for upkeep. Can create wee door at back of cage for quick fixes. Decorate for fun.

Hanging light fixture top and chain optional but cute.

3 bird cages used in flower show staging. One birdcage used outside with "Junk Yard People."



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## **Issue Deadline**

The deadline for the November 2022 issue is 9-30-22.

