

GCFP 96th Annual Convention
The Sheraton Erie Bayfront Hotel
55 West Bay Drive, Erie, Pa. 16507
Minutes of the Annual Business Meeting, April 27-28, 2026

The 96th GCFP Annual Business Meeting was called to order at 8:31 AM at the Sheraton Erie Bayfront Hotel, Erie, PA by **GCFP President, Patricia Wolanski**. A quorum was declared.

The **District X Director, Martha Alexander**, offered the invocation. The assembly stood for the presentation of colors made by the Gannon University Pride of PA ROTC, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States led by **2nd Vice President, Mary Hetrick**, and the singing of the National Anthem led by **Betty Wist, Assistant District VIII Director**.

President Wolanski thanked District VIII for planning the GCFP 96th Annual Convention, “MystERIE by the Bay,” and welcomed everyone to the convention. **District VIII Director and Convention Co-Chair, Bonita Herman**, welcomed all to the 96th GCFP Convention and recognized **Convention Chair, Joyce Milberg**. District IV Director, Carla Kelly, responded. District VIII planned and worked very hard to create an experience that is both outstanding and truly memorable.

The **Parliamentarian, Angie Raitano**, read the Convention Rules on page 4 of the program booklet and the assembly voted affirmatively. **Adopted**

The **2026 Convention Chair, Joyce Milberg**, moved the adoption of the GCFP 96th Convention Program with changes, and the assembly voted affirmatively to adopt the GCFP 96th Convention Program. **Adopted**

The **2026 Convention Registrar, Dorthy Yard**, presented the Preliminary Credentials report. CAR-SGC Director-1, former CAR-SGC Director-1, GCFP State President-1, Former GCFP Presidents-6, GCFP Board members -47, GCFP Members-210, NGC Life Members-42, CAR-SGC Life Members-22, GCFP Life Members-47, Flower Show Judges-46, Gardening Consultants-24, Environmental Consultants-22 and Landscape Design Consultants-23, Guests-26.

President Wolanski introduced visiting **Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs, Inc. Director, Beverly Kazickas**. She then introduced the **2025-2027 GCFP Officers**: Patricia Wolanski – President, Mary Hetrick – 2nd Vice President; Deborah Davis – Recording Secretary, Vivian Hall – Treasurer, Sheila Croushore – Financial Secretary. She also introduced Appointed Officers Flossie Narducci (Corresponding Secretary) and Angela Raitano (Parliamentarian) and Appointed Members Lori Pancione and Jane Kruse.

President Wolanski introduced **former GCFP State Presidents**: Dorthy Yard – President, 2007-2009; Angie Raitano, President 2009-2011; Gail Manna, President, 2011-2013; Joyce Milberg, President, 2019-2021; Sheila Croushore, President 2021-2023; Leeanna Ryba, President, 2023-2025. President Wolanski recognized those serving on the GCFP Board; CAR-SGC Board and the NGC Board. She thanked these devoted and dedicated individuals. At the Monday luncheon, she recognized Brenda Moore, Past NGC President, and her husband.

President Wolanski introduced **Protocol Chair**, Haddie Webber, and **Protocol Vice Chair** Lee Ann Ishman. President Wolanski introduced **2026 Convention Chair**, Joyce Milberg, and **2026 Convention Co Chair**, Bonita Herman, and **2026 Convention Page**, Mary Jo Garner. Those on the GCFP Board, the CAR-SGC Board and the NGC Board were recognized.

President Wolanski appointed the **2026 Resolutions Committee: Karen Wychock and Sheila Croushore**. The assembly voted positively to accept the appointments.

President Wolanski introduced the **Convention Timekeeper, Ginger Hunsicker**. A cell phone alarm bell was the signal to finish reporting, that is, three minutes for district directors and two minutes for selected committee chairs. She proposed the appointment of the **Committee to Approve the Minutes of the 2026 GCFP Convention, Barbara Brand, Organizational Studies Chair; Dorthy Yard, Organizational Studies Co-Chair; Marilyn Small, KG Online Editor**. The assembly voted its approval.

President Wolanski called for the report of the Committee to approve the 2025 Convention Minutes. The Committee was: Nerita Brand and Mary Jo Gardill. Deborah Davis, Recording Secretary, gave the report in their absence. The minutes of the 2025 GCFP Convention, held on April 7-8, 2025, were reviewed and approved by the 2025 Approval Committee and distributed electronically and posted on the GCFP website.

REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS

President, Patricia Wolanski, reported that it is hard to believe that one year has passed since her installation. In May, she had the honor of attending the National Convention in South Carolina, where she witnessed the installation of our National President, Donna Donnelly. It was inspiring to gather with garden club members from across the country and to represent The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania on the national stage. Throughout the year, she was privileged to attend several Blue and Gold Star Memorial dedications – always solemn and meaningful reminders of our mission and patriotism. She was also delighted to join three clubs in celebrating their anniversary milestones, each one a testament to the strength and longevity of our organization. Early in her term, she established regular Officers' Meetings with my First and Second Vice Presidents. These Zoom meetings allow us to share ideas, address questions, and ensure we are aligned in purpose and direction. She values their counsel and collaboration. We have conducted two Board Meetings this year, each blending productivity with fellowship. Our first featured a 1960's – 70's theme, complete with period attire, wool pin flower crafting, trivia, and a costume award – a reminder that our work can be joyful as well as purposeful. Our October Board Meeting showcased a horticulture specialty show, highlighting the talents and expertise within our membership. That same meeting also led to an opportunity to appear on a local television station to promote our flower show and invite the public to attend. Opportunities like this help broaden awareness of who we are and what we do – one of her goals! Looking ahead, our June Board Meeting will offer more fun as we celebrate our Nation's Birthday with Hat's Off to America. Everyone is welcome to attend – we are not all work and no play! September was spent traveling across Pennsylvania for our District Annual Meetings – truly one of the highlights of my presidency. Meeting our members where they are, hearing their stories, and witnessing their dedication reinforces why our federation is so special. Unfortunately, she was unable to attend our October CAR meeting due to unexpected family health issues. She was deeply grateful to my Second Vice President, Mary, who stepped in seamlessly and represented us beautifully. Throughout the year, she has remained in close communication with our chairs, particularly those leading key initiatives. Our Healing Art program, Sprouts and Seedlings – which has grown from one to fourteen groups, our upcoming Pennsylvania Garden Party in June, our Theme Gardens, our Design and Horticulture Webinars, and our Garden Book are all moving forward with care and creativity. You will be hearing more about these exciting projects from the respective chairs. One of her primary goals has been to keep us connected, informed and engaged. She hopes that "Pat's Pop Ups", the Keystone Gardener, and our new communication system tailored to reach all club members are helping us achieve that goal. GCFP, we have a special 5th grade pen pal from New Mexico. The girl wrote the sweetest letter asking about gardening in Pennsylvania. Pat Wolanski responded with information and a few gardening stickers to share with her classmates. The child's letter is a wonderful reminder that youth are our future, and children should always be

encouraged to garden and appreciate nature – and that is how we embrace the future! Pat is grateful for your support, your energy, and your shared commitment to our mission. Together, we are making our Keystone a gemstone – one project at a time.

The **1st Vice President, Tonya Young**, was absent and had no report.

The **2nd Vice President, Mary Hetrick**, reported that it was her pleasure to welcome you all to my hometown of Erie for our MystERIE GCFP Convention. Your attendance is so appreciated! For all who travelled any distance to join us we thank you! This officer has attended all of their Convention Committee meetings and is aware of just how hard they have worked to ensure a successful convention. Since being installed at the 2025 GCFP Convention this officer has attended the June and October GCFP Board Meetings held at the Wyndham Garden in Boalsburg, PA. She has scheduled the meals and gathering spaces for both 2025 and for our June and October meetings to be held there in 2026. As Second Vice President, she continues to assist GCFP Officers with scheduling and hosting Zoom meetings. She has assisted with the monthly District Directors zoom meetings with our GCFP 1st Vice President and the November 2025 Leadership Workshop. To date she has scheduled and help facilitate 12 zoom meetings. According to this usage the Zoom meeting vehicle seems to be allowing very successful statewide communication. This officer held a zoom meeting for all the GCFP Club Presidents on October 27th. This was the first of its kind. It is an attempt requested by President Pat Wolanski to have direct contact with all the club presidents simultaneously. Last June my fellow officers joined me here in Erie to join Presque Isle Garden Club's 75th Anniversary celebration aboard the Victorian Princess Riverboat Cruise. Other celebrations included attending a Gold Star Memorial Dedication on I 80 East hosted by Districts VIII and IX. Also, a Blue Star Memorial Dedication in May at the PA Welcome Center on I 81 N in Greencastle PA hosted by District IV. It was her pleasure to join President Wolanski and First Vice President Young on the 2025 Tour of Pennsylvania during August and September. This time with all our fellow garden club members has been the highlight of her position to date. Each of our ten Districts' hospitality, project reports and programs are so interesting and inspiring. In October this officer attended the 2025 CAR SGC Conference, "Maryland: America in Miniature" in Cambridge, Maryland. It was this officer's honor to represent President Wolanski in her absence.

The **Recording Secretary, Deborah Davis**, reported that minutes for the June, 2025 Combined Finance and Investment Committee, the Executive Committee and the full Board and for the October, 2025 Combined Finance and Investment Committee, the Executive Committee and the full Board were prepared. It has been a pleasure to serve.

The **Treasurer, Vivian Hall**, reviewed details of Financial Statements received from **Financial Advisor, Cindy Layton**. The **GCFP Statement of Financial Activity May 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026**, stated income from **Total Membership Dues** was \$48,043.50. Other Support, including the 2025 Convention Proceeds allocated \$21,274.25 to GCFP and \$7,124.75 to District XI, totaled **\$23,505.51 Total Other Support**. **Total Interest** was \$518.23. **Total Income** was \$72,067.24. **Total Expenses** from Total General and Administrative, Chairman's Expenses, Keystone Gardener, Memberships, and Officer's Allowances were \$65,122.72, which resulted in a positive Variance of Income vs. Expenses of \$6,944.52. She reviewed the **GCFP Asset Summary as of March 31, 2026** showed Total Checking and Savings equaled \$31,357.61. **Total Advances Receivable** pertinent to the 2025-2027 Conventions was \$4,100. **Petty Cash** was \$100. **Total Current Assets** were \$53,863.81. **Plant A Tree/Penny Pines including Investment Account** was \$22,292.03.

The **Financial Secretary, Sheila Croushore**, reported the GCFP Dues Account activity, Somerset Trust, for the Fiscal Year – 2025-2026:

Beginning balance 05/01/2025		\$100.00
Deposits: Member dues	\$45,610.00	
Affiliate dues	\$140.00	
New Members	\$2,167.50	
Total Receipts/Balance	\$49,917.50	\$48,017.50
Disbursements		
Transfers to Treasurer	(\$47,917.50)	
Ending Balance 04/01/2026		\$100.00

The **Corresponding Secretary, Flossie Narducci**, reported that since our last GCFP Board Meeting, condolences have been sent to the families of Judy Warn, Kay Leto, Judy Vehse, Helen Breslin, and Lee Gittens, all members of GCFP. Also, condolences were sent to Gail Manna, Advisory Council member on the passing of her mother. Condolences were also sent to the family of Carol Norquist, who was the Media Coordinator of National Garden Clubs, Inc. who passed away. Several members – all of whom have suffered the loss of a loved one, their husband. They are Audrey Williams, Betty Pisano, Gwen Barrett, Vivian Hall, Barbara Andrus, Sue Semple and Pam Walsh. Get-well wishes were also sent to Tonya Young after a fall and a concussion and to Iris Cisarik who had knee surgery. Birthday wishes were sent to GCFP President, Pat Wolanski.

The **Parliamentarian, Angie Raitano**, had no report.

REPORTS OF THE DISTRICT DIRECTORS

The **District I Director, Pamela Walsh**, reported that District I clubs have focused on many activities this year including many Sprouts and Seedlings days. Spade and Trowel helped preschoolers make Mothers' Day arrangements, Covered Bridge Garden Club partnered with a Montessori School to teach students about daffodil flowers and bulb planting, Uwchlan Garden Club made terrariums and salad gardens, and Four Seasons Garden club meets with elementary students weekly to plant and eventually harvest vegetables. Radley Run has a wonderful holiday luncheon and fashion show each December. They donated \$5250 to both West Chester University and to Williamson College of the Trades for students studying Botany and/or Horticulture from the proceeds of this event. Springfield started a new tradition this September, a Harvest Festival, to further educate the public about horticulture, flowers, vegetables and floral designs. Four Seasons started a new website; Villanova loves to learn and enjoyed a speaker who taught them about window boxes and not your usual containers; Garden Club of Bala Cynwyd made holiday garden gnomes at their December meeting; and several clubs had very successful Holiday and/or Spring plant sale fund raisers. District I clubs have held flower shows throughout the year, and several are preparing for future shows. We also hold a District I flower show every other year. This year our show will honor the 250th anniversary of our country with "Celebrating a Nation of Artists" to be held at Longwood Gardens on September 18-20, 2026. We are privileged to be able to use this venue to promote our district clubs and GCFP at this event which is open to all visitors to the gardens during those days. Uwchlan, Elverson, and Spade and Trowel Garden Clubs were part of the recent PHS Philadelphia Flower Show. Several ribbons of all colors were won by individuals from these clubs, and Spade and Trowel won several ribbons for their Doorway entry. Many members also volunteered in various capacities and several members were judges. We are lucky to be so close to this legendary flower show. Several District I clubs are busy preparing for the GCFP Garden Party. On June 20th. Springfield Garden Club, and a combined Villanova Garden Club and Garden Club of Bala Cynwyd will be hosting their tours. And then on June 27th.

Uwchlan Garden Club and Spade and Trowel Garden Club will be open for visitors. We hope to see members and friends from across the state. District I always has FUN!

The **District II/III Director, Claire Kukielka, reported that** District II/III continues to be busy. Whether sponsoring community vegetable gardens, children's gardens (Kudos to South Schuylkill for their efforts on maintaining two), rose, butterfly gardens, and Monarch Way Stations our members remain devoted. Parkland Garden Club has been ambitious in support of Pat Wolanski's Healing Art project. They have contributed multiple donations to various local healthcare facilities. Allentown Garden Club has a ministry that creates bouquets for sick folks and Reading Garden Club has one for hospice patients. We also support Horticulture Enrichment in a big way. Bethlehem Garden Club brings flowers and fellowship to three nursing homes and Kings Daughters. They also support the Morning Star Memory Café in support of patients and their families with memory problems. We are an entrepreneurial group and it is not unusual for clubs such as Monroe Garden Club to advertise and raise money through their local businesses through the sale of electronic media on their website. In addition to soliciting sponsorship within their community, the Reading Garden Club sponsors a plant sale in early summer that draws in thousands of dollars. (They do this with the support of the Reading Museum and they have created a quasi cult following.) Speaking of community, the Milford Garden Club supports their community's beautification by placing and caring for multiple seasonal (24) pots throughout the community. Milford also helps with yard maintenance at Grey Towers, a national historical site. Others such as Hazleton Area Garden Club meet monthly at their local arts league providing a beautiful floral arrangement that is auctioned off. The art league and Hazleton Area Garden Club then split the proceeds. We hold plant sales that not only provide beautiful blooms but also educate the community on care. Upper Perkiomen Garden Club participates in a weekend fair that supports the arts in their community. South Schuylkill also holds a large plant sale where they not only sell their wares but cultivate new members. We take interesting trips that are varied: we visit such venues as the Philadelphia Flower show, the Scott Arboretum, and we take trips to the Hudson Valley where we can visualize Ichabod Crane riding his horse. We visited the New Jersey Grounds for Sculpture, Longwood Gardens, Wheatland, (home of president James Buchanan), and Chanticleer. We have also attended trips to the Peace Valley Lava Farm (EGC), Andalusia Historic House, Gardens, and Arboretum, and Jenny Rose Cary's home. We host flower shows, garden tours, and pop-up gardens. We have interesting programs and speakers such as Renee Tucci and Keith Phelps. Our clubs' membership shares their expertise teaching subjects such as Design with Nine for audiences at the Allentown Fairgrounds. Other programs of interest include a talk on hydroponic gardening, and Ikebana. While we appreciate the beauty of gardening, we also focus on the science behind it. Emmaus Garden Club (as well as several others) has had Jack's Fertilizer provide the ABCs of Plant Nutrition. Our own members are very philanthropic. Almost every club offers one, two or three scholarships (Pottstown) for young people. Many of our clubs support youth programs. Many of our clubs support Blue Star Monuments. Hazleton has a program where a wreath is placed at all patriotic holidays. We participate in great district challenges such as Trash to Treasure, and collect data for programs such as the Citizen Science project where we have chosen to support the Bird Watch and Water Conservation programs. We host webinars on for programs on migratory birds and groundcovers that substitute for mulching. Some of our clubs are celebrating milestone birthdays such as 70 (PGC) and 75 (AGC) 85 (SSGC)and 99 years (Monroe).

The **District IV Director, Carla Kelly, reported that** District IV had two clubs change officers where she performed the installations, plus a third where the former District Director Joanne Baylis stepped in. District IV had the annual financial review of our Treasurer's records. It would be instructive for the GCFP to have a template from the accountants at the GCFP of exactly what the Treasurer's spreadsheet and reports should look like. She attended two club's December

holiday fundraisers as a guest. District IV's January Board meeting was on Zoom. The club presidents have been very willing to contribute their thoughts on the direction our district should go in programming, support of clubs, and activities. The Assistant District Director, Melanie Markowski, helped me take the ideas and come up with a detailed plan of how our District programming which includes education and leadership workshops should be offered, based on the 10 clubs meeting dates and their large fundraiser dates. However, she personally had a series of consuming home repair events on our 100-year old home and just could not execute those plans. She promised the Assistant District Director that she would assist her during her term and continue the timeline we had set up for these workshops. In the meantime, the Nominating Committee had trouble finding a candidate who was qualified as a former member of the board or club president to accept the upcoming A.D.D. role. She was asked and accepted to step back and take that role to support the new D.D. in September. One of our goals in these workshop series is to develop leadership and specifically administrative skills so that willing members are qualified to step up when positions open. This is an ongoing effort.

The **Assistant District V Director Joanne Fogelman**, reported for **District V Director, Joyce Wenner**, that the Clubs of District V were again busy this past year in working for their communities. Alexandria GC did clean up and planting for Fire Prevention Week and Heritage days. They promote native planting and pollinator gardens. They had an informative program on Beekeeping. To attract new members, they attend local events and give out information on their club. They had a plant sale and they do a seed library. Duboistown GC plant and maintain in the city's park. For Arbor Day they plant a tree in honor or memory of a club member. They hosted the 2025 Annual Meeting where they celebrated 90 years as a garden club. McEvensville GC had a project where they shored up a wall for a small garden at the local community center. An outstanding program was held on Ticks and Lyme disease. For Arbor Day they planted a Serviceberry Tree that is native to the area. Standing Stone GC maintains 5 community gardens and are adding 2 more this year. They are helping rejuvenate the Welcome to Huntington Garden sign at Portstown Park. This project in 2026 will be the third year of working on rejuvenating the gardens. Mifflin County GC has a beautification program where they maintain a garden around the Flag at Victory Park in Lewistown. They had an interesting program on Evergreen Trees. They held a Tea that was very successful and the proceeds went to the scholarship program. Heritage GC does a beautification project where they plant pole baskets in downtown Troy. There was an interesting program called "Water Conservation and Rain Gardens". They have a recycling project called "NEX TREX BAGS TO BENCHES". The bench this year will be dedicated to the memory of Judy Warn who was a club member and a former District V Director. All the clubs of District V are busy in their communities with projects. And always looking for new members. They do this with Facebook, newspaper articles and putting out information on their clubs and community events.

The **District VI Director, Mary Lou Colussy**, reported that District VI is alive, well and growing not only in number, but in interest! District VI is composed of eight clubs within seven counties in the Laurel Highlands. Although expansive, we work as cogs in a well-oiled machine, with the newsletter, "*The Seedlings*" keeping the membership well-informed of activities around the District. Some of the most outstanding activities include: **Blair GC**: Dedication of a Gold Star Memorial Marker at the Veteran's Hospital last Memorial Day weekend. Also notably celebrated 75 years as a federated garden club. **Bedford County GC**: Dedication of a Gold Star Memorial Marker during September, 2025, hosted the Annual district Meeting at the end of August, 2025 and the continuation of their bi-annual Christmas Home Tour. **Evergreen GC**: One of the District's smaller garden club, hosted their Annual Tinsel Time with great revues and a massive attendance. Club members worked with the Special Needs campers at Camp Orenda at the Lion's Health Camp. They supplied fresh flowers and greens from their gardens and the campers made arrangement for their special dinner to end the session of camp. Arrangements were used to

decorate the tables and campers were able to take home after the special evening. **GC of Johnstown:** Co-sponsored a Johnstown holiday tradition with the Old Westmont Neighbors, a tour of five beautifully decorated historic homes in Westmont, PA. in December! Also participated and spearheaded many community projects across the Johnstown area. **Indiana GC:** Sponsored their 50th annual May Mart this past year, with rave reviews. Also conducted an NGC Flower Show— “Birds of a Feather” in August, 2025; bringing back the talents of their members, which lay dormant for many years. **Patton GC:** Highlights of this club’s endeavors were focused on the youth of the local Middle School. Members worked with the children of floral arrangements, make holiday wreaths, aiding in their growing and knowledge of hydroponics in their classroom last May. In addition, the “Corner Lot” the club’s community garden is well-maintained and a focal point of the town. **Somerset GC:** Continued their tradition of Uptown Planting and keeping the plants vibrant and well-maintained throughout the season. They are looking forward to the nation’s 250th anniversary in which they plan to celebrate this year. **Weeders & Seeders of Ligonier:** Had a classroom experience for their upcoming in-house Flower Show, with judges from the LHJC providing the members with valuable knowledge and tips for their next members only Flower Show. Also, held their first-ever Tea Party in June. The highlight was members modeling their favorite garden attire and demonstrating their favorite garden tools. All in all, it was an exciting, fact-filled, fun-filled year across the District, garnering interest throughout the communities!

The **District VII Director, Marilyn Backus**, reported that District VII is located in eastern Allegheny and western Westmoreland Counties and currently has 274 members in 11 clubs. Since April 2025, District VII’s goal has been to increase membership by enlivening, and increasing interest and options to participate in club activities through the District VII Board meetings. For instance, since April 2025: **1.** District VII held its first Horticulture Specialty Flower Show, *Dog Daze*, in July with 10 out of 11 clubs providing 39 volunteers and 34 exhibitors. Building on this experience, the District Board agreed to encourage interested members to participate in the Pittsburgh Area and Laurel Highlands Judges Councils’ joint patriotic flower show on Friday, July 17 at the ballroom of *The Lamplighter* restaurant. **2.** The District’s first car day trip in recent history to Indiana, PA private and public gardens attracted 17 individuals from 5 clubs in 6 carpools. **3.** Collaborations between clubs occurred. Burrellton and Pucketos partnered and are planning for the PA Garden Party on June 27 with District VII endorsement. The District VII Flower Show paired experienced clerks with inexperienced clerks, and expert classification chairs with novice exhibitors, across club lines. **4.** In club programming, four clubs invited a Pittsburgh Area Judge to demonstrate how to prepare horticulture entries for the District VII Flower Show while a public presentation at Monroeville Library included members from five other clubs. Two clubs invited a design specialist to present a floral design, table artistry or botanical arts example. **5.** District VII’s Calendar of Events continues to promote other districts’ clubs and affiliate events in addition to our own so that nine district clubs were represented at the Pucketos GC Fundraiser, seven clubs participated in the Landscape Design Society at the Rachel Carson Homestead tour and several clubs’ members attended Westmoreland Garden Council’s Garden Tour and its tea and GC of Munhall’s bus trip to the Philadelphia Flower Show. The 2025 Annual Meeting had 63 members in attendance compared to 41 members at the 2025 Spring Membership Buffet Luncheon. This year’s Spring Buffet Luncheon prepared by the Board attracted 59. Burrellton GC won the District VII Trash to Treasure with an amazing Erie Canal barge. Board members’ consignment tables enlivened our district meetings as did floral designs exhibited by Judges, Joyce Peterson and Iris Cisarik. Joyful Bloomers previously displayed two Healing Art pictures just donated to Kane Regional when GC of Monroeville donated two pictures to Gerold Medical Wellness Associates.

The **District VIII Director, Bonita Herman**, reported WOW! What a year! 2 years of me talking and emailing CONVENTION, CONVENTION, CONVENTION! And now it is here. What a ride! Mostly very bumpy and as soon as it got to be a smoother ride, BAM! We hit a pothole, and

anyone who lives up here in Erie knows what kind of potholes we have. She thanked all the clubs for their loyalty, dependability, sleepless nights, and commitment to the “MystERIE by the Bay” convention. District VIII is Great. We now have ten clubs in our District, but eleven in the Federation with over three hundred members and we have our Erie County Council of Garden Clubs as our affiliate. Like all of you, our clubs are getting ready for their annual flower sales, which are just around the corner. Hopefully, it will get warmer. Due to the rising costs of plants, soil, and other necessities, the clubs had to add bake sales, raffles and even garage sales to their fundraising needs for the betterment of their clubs. We have two clubs functioning without a president and, although it may not be ideal, so far it is working. Clubs are working, participating with each other, such as, jointly sharing a flower show and having picnics, meetings, and other functions. Years ago, it was not like that, your club functions and yearbooks were regarded as a most guarded secret. Now we are more open and sharing. Often go to other clubs’ meetings, share ideas while still able to keep your club’s special identity to the community. Slowly things are changing and you all know what I say and honestly believe is “If nothing changes, nothing changes.” My district, whether they see it or not, is changing and will continue to change for the better. And another thing you always hear me say is “DISTRICT VIII IS GREAT”

The **District IX Director, Stacey Ivoll**, reported that Garden clubs throughout our **FINE District** continue to make an impact through education, beautification, environmental stewardship, and of course, community service. Our clubs hosted educational programs on topics such as biodiversity, poisonous plants, backyard birds, watershed conservation, wild bees, and fireflies—none, I am sure, quite as good as last night’s program. Our **FINE members** also participated in horticultural therapy, field trips, workshops, and hands-on learning experiences that promoted gardening and environmental awareness. We learned a lot, got a little dirty, and had a whole lot of fun—because that is how **FINE gardeners** do it. District Nine’s members maintained and enhanced gardens in parks, churches, libraries, and community spaces. Several **FINE clubs** are undertaking renovation projects to restore gardens and have installed irrigation systems—because even gardeners know you cannot rely on Mother Nature to remember watering day. Clubs also strengthened community partnerships at outreach events, including one event that brought in 24 potential new members just by giving away one of those bud vases you find at Goodwill. Now that is one **FINE** way to grow membership. One of our clubs has surpassed 1,000 pounds of plastic bags and has already started working toward their next 1,000 pounds for more park benches. Another club collects athletic shoes that are turned into playgrounds and running tracks. We like to say nothing goes to waste in District **FINE**. One of our clubs hosted a garden tour that sold over 200 tickets and netted over \$6,000. Fundraising events like this garden tour and plant sales along with other special events provide the funding to maintain what is needed to support our clubs. And let’s be honest, gardeners will always show up if there are flowers, friends, food and maybe a raffle basket or two. At our recent **Member’s Day Out**, we held our luncheon at a small independent theater to watch “*Gardening for Our Planet*.” The film reminded us how we can continue to be **FINE stewards** of this great state of Pennsylvania. Together, these efforts reflect the dedication, creativity, and service of our garden clubs as they continue to beautify our communities **because District NINE is FINE**.

The **District X Director, Martha Alexander**, reported that District 10, we keep coming through, again and again! It’s astounding, we’ve had a good run. And whatever we do, we always have fun! Our **Spring Tea in Paris** was quite the thing. It was a great way for all to celebrate spring. As tour guide, she took them to the Mona Lisa at the Louvre. Then we partied all day at the Moulin Rouge. We competed in building the Eiffel Tower, where some members found their special power. We dined at a Michelin star that we scored, and it was fantastique, zut alors! Our **Trash to Treasure** “Drop Anchor and Read What You Love” is a mighty contender sent from above. With the next generation we share our passion, for gardening will never go out of fashion. Our

Sprouts and Seedlings – they learn and they grow. They build bird houses, and work in our gardens you know. **Programs** on bug hotels, mushrooms, rare trees, wine box planters, microgreens, cut flowers, if you please. So many **gardens** we tend to with care. We work till we sweat and get dirt in our hair. Community, pollinator, historic and blue, we work so hard even though we are few. Meals on Wheels, speaker series, and holiday mugs; our **community service** promotes many hugs. **Awards**, we're on it like never before, wait till you see what we have in store. We celebrate members for all they achieve. We do wonderful things. We've even been known to make up some new, Jump right In, and heart and soul to name just a few. Our **Garden Party tours** we will proudly display as so many visitors are coming our way. In **Flower Shows** we continue to shine as our clubs produce Hort and many designs. 3 of our clubs have regular shows. This year all can participate, so who knows? Our **traditions** are magical like our Tinsel Tea, our garden markets, and the flea. Thrift shop fashion show, and South Hills FUN Raiser don't you know. Our **Blue Star memorials** are increasing in number, we hardly have time to even slumber. For our **Scholarships** we do raise money, our recipients think we're a pot of honey. In **Garden therapy** we help with design, our kids and seniors think we're divine. With **new members** we are happy to share, so many are coming 'cause they know that we care. We honor those members who have reached the beyond as we welcome new members who come in strong. So you see what we have achieved. District 10 has done more than we've ever believed. For it's true what they say about our dear District 10, we just keep coming through again and again!!

The **District XI Director, Flossie Narducci**, reported that in preparation for Spring, Countryside Gardeners participated in a Winter Seed Sowing activity. Gardeners of the Crooked Billet hosted a Craft Day where they decorated birdhouses to sell at their annual Plant Sale. Geering up for Spring both The Outdoor Gardeners and Trevoise Horticultural Society invited Jenny Rose Cary to present "The Essential Guide to Bulbs". Norristown Garden Club hosted 5 Hort and 2 Floral Design Workshops. Old York Road Garden Club purchased new planters for the Jenkintown Train Station and participated in the Abington Library Garden Festival by selling tulips and beautiful spring bulbs. Swedesford Garden Club is collaborating with the North Wales Library regarding meetings and community projects and enjoyed a lecture on 18th century PA German Kitchen Gardens. Our proximity to the Philadelphia Flower Show, enabled each of our clubs to participate at the Show as advisors, exhibitors, volunteers or Chairs of a Class. Countryside Gardeners invited a Flower Show Ambassador to do a presentation on what is involved with various horticulture classes and how to enter the Flower Show. Our Garden Club of Phila. was honored with the Rosemarie Vassalluzzo Artistic Sweepstakes for earning the greatest number of points in the Artistic Section. Their club was also featured on the cover of the PHS Grow magazine, accompanied by an article about their Fall Flower Show. In an effort to recruit new members, Gardeners of the Crooked Billet placed sign-up sheets at several venues, such as an Earth Day Fair and Farmstead Park Community Day. Four Lanes End Garden Club launched new marketing material with a trifold brochure, a new website, a new club swag as well as a new shirt for visibility when participating at community events. Norristown Garden Club welcomed 23 new members at their Spring Luncheon. With this being the Sesquicentennial year, many clubs are planting red, white and blue flowers, like Garden Club of Bristol Borough as they plant in their town's gateways. Four Lanes End Garden Club will bring a historical theme to life by artistically painting pots and urns in the patriotic colors. Trevoise Horticultural Society will host a patriotic flower show "Red, White and Bloom" in August. District XI is looking forward to participating in President Pat Wolanski's Garden Party with Countryside Gardeners, Old York Road Garden Club and Norristown Garden Club.

REPORTS OF THE BOARD CHAIRS

The **Flower Show School Chair, Joanne Baylis**, reported that since the 2025 convention, a total of three Flower Show Schools have been successfully conducted in Gettysburg. Each course has maintained an average enrollment of approximately 15 students. Our Flower Show School has attracted a diverse group of participants from across the region. Students have attended from Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, Ohio and Pennsylvania. The most recent Flower Show School, Course III, concluded two weeks ago. A notable outcome from this course is that five (5) students from Pennsylvania are expected to advance to the level of student judges, contingent upon receiving passing grades. The advancement of these five (5) students is particularly significant in light of the ongoing transition within the judging community, as many current flower show judges are moving to emeritus status. The addition of new student judges helps sustain and strengthen the pipeline of qualified judges, ensuring continuity. The next Flower Show School, Course IV, will be held 26-28 October 2026 in Gettysburg. The brochure can be found on both the GCFP and NGC websites: GCFP - <https://pagardenclubs.org/flower-show-judges-info> and NGC - <https://gardenclub.org/school/flower-show-school-courses>.

The **PA Garden Party Chair, Nancy Cuttic**, reported that GCFP is hosting a true gardener's delight this June! Fifteen clubs are showcasing **90 stunning private and unique public gardens** across 12 counties on the last two Saturdays in June, from 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM—rain or shine. For just \$25, a ticket includes a beautiful **160-page, full-color tour book**, which also serves as the admission pass for both Saturdays to all participating gardens statewide. Tickets are available by check or credit card by visiting the GCFP website or using the QR code provided on posters and social media. This impressive tour book was created and edited by Marilyn Small of the Uwchlan Garden Club, with Marj Sears of the Norristown Garden Club leading a successful ad campaign supported by many participating clubs. Kathy Costello and Connie Burnley, both of Norristown Garden Club, are handling ticket sales. Sheri Lowry of Johnstown Garden Club serves as Treasurer and Sandy Benedict of the Garden Club of York has provided tech support. To encourage ad sales, host clubs competed for awards based on revenue: **\$1,000**: Uwchlan Garden Club (District I) and Great Meadows Garden Club (District X); **\$750**: Norristown Garden Club and Old York Road Garden Club (both District XI); **\$500**: Penn-Cumberland Garden Club (District IV) and Spade & Trowel Club (District I). Similar incentives are also in place for clubs generating the highest ticket sales. An active publicity campaign has been underway, including posters for local businesses, outreach to plant societies, and a strong social media presence. The goal of the PA Garden Party is to showcase the beauty of our state, strengthen connections within garden clubs, attract new members, and provide a meaningful fundraising opportunity for participating clubs. We're excited about the potential of this statewide tour to shine a spotlight on GCFP as an innovative and forward-thinking leader within the National Garden Clubs community.

The President's Project – Healing Arts Chair, Barbara Campbell, asked “**Why do the Healing Arts Project?**” **It has been proven: Nature in Art reduces stress and anxiety.** Looking at art can significantly reduce stress hormones like cortisol in your body and lower your heart rate. **Boost Mood:** Looking at art triggers the release of dopamine and endorphins, fostering happiness and feelings of well-being. **Enhance cognitive function:** Experiencing art sharpens memory and strengthens memory pathways. It also enhances creative thinking, problem- solving skills, and focus. **Promote social connection:** Providing opportunities to connect with others with shared experiences and discussions. When you contact a facility, please let them know how art in nature will benefit their facility. Please fill out the form that is on the GCFP website and send it to her so she can keep a record of what clubs have donated artwork and who donated the artwork.

Please take pictures if you can. Marilyn Small makes a label for the art work. Contact her with any questions. She is trying to keep the data for this project. She thanked all clubs who have participated.

The Sprouts/Seedlings Chair, Cheryl Brumbaugh, was absent but reported that every child needs an opportunity to dig in the dirt and discover the world around them. In the past year she has happily received 14 Sprouts and Seedlings applications. The garden clubs in Pa working with youth groups have children with ages ranging from pre-school to age 18. She was pleased to share some of their reported activities which will hopefully inspire some new groups to join: Growing flowers or vegetables from seed; Learning about nutrition; Planting and Maintaining gardens either in schools, churches, or pre-schools; Composting; Planting seeds and small tree saplings in containers for young gardeners to take home and nurture; Making bird houses;- Planting and creating designs for raised beds in a community; Creating flower designs and arrangements in mugs or containers in school classrooms for students to take home; Involving their youth gardeners in plants sales, encouraging entries into Club flower shows; Educating about Insects, plant biology, pollination, and environmental stewardship. A youth-involved garden is one of 90 gardens across the state that will be featured in the Pennsylvania Garden Party for Great Meadows Garden Club in District X, of which Martha Alexander is District Director. Your Garden Club can sign up to be a part of Sprouts and Seedlings by submitting the application found on the GCFP website. Send in the application with a check for \$2 and your club will receive \$50 as a start-up for your youth club and support as needed. There are also T shirts available for \$11. We welcome all clubs to join and start a youth gardening group!

The Habitat for Humanity Chair, Maryan Daniels, reported that during the past year, Habitat for Humanity has been revitalized as a GCFP program. A questionnaire was sent to all clubs to assess a baseline of understanding and involvement with the program beyond cash donations. This questionnaire indicated a general lack of knowledge about local Habitat for Humanity organizations and little active involvement within a club's catchment area. As a result of the questionnaire, a Habitat for Humanity Fact Sheet was developed and placed on the GCFP web site at the bottom of the NGC project page. This Fact sheet has information on how to locate your local Habitat for Humanity organization and examples of projects to stimulate your imagination and ideas. It was also found that there were funds in the GCFP accounts from previous Habitat for Humanity actions. These funds are available to clubs, just for the asking, to assist with Habitat for Humanity projects. These funds are NOT for monetary donations but rather for a more "hands on" – visible to the community – projects. Projects that center around one or more areas such as education, design, provision of plants/mulch/soil amendments, volunteer assistance in actual planting, or even some new equipment for a homeowner like a wheelbarrow or a hose. The application form for GCFP funds, up to \$200, to support your project is available in the Forms Library under the Club Forms section of the GCFP web site. All of this information and the application form was sent to all members via "Pat's Pop Up's" on February 17th. If any club needs more information, please contact me, Maryan Daniels, at the web site located in Keystone Gardener.

The GCFP Reads Chair, Sharon Richardson, reported to launch President Wolanski's GCFP Reads Initiative, we distributed 10 copies of *Listening to Nature's Voice: Reflections on the World Around Us* to each District Director. With 30 beautifully crafted essays, this book sets the tone for reflection and inspiration. We are especially grateful to author Pam Baxter for her enthusiastic support—attending Annual Meetings in Districts I and XI, participating in our Garden Tour at two locations, and joining us here at Convention. Sharon asked Pam to stand so that you will recognize Pam; please find an opportunity to welcome her today. Clubs across the state embraced the initiative with creativity and purpose. Highlights include: Newsletter features with book reviews and recommendations; Nature and gardening book swaps; Library partnerships for educational programs; Youth engagement through reading paired with planting activities;

Voluntary book clubs outside regular meetings; Invitations to local garden writers to speak to our members at their meetings; Article-based discussions that spark meaningful dialogue. Her own club held its first Book Fair at our local Barnes and Noble; we raised over \$2,600 while introducing the public to our State Garden Tour, our plant sale, and our club activities—demonstrating the outreach potential of this initiative. As Chair, Sharon has supported these efforts by fielding questions, offering suggestions when requested, and sharing ideas through writing articles in various publications. Now, we look ahead. In year two, we will feature your projects on a dedicated section of our website. Please submit your activities via email with the subject line: “Please post GCFP Reads Activity.” At next year’s Convention, we will showcase an exhibit celebrating your innovation and impact. Thank you to all who participated. For those yet to join—please jump in! There’s an opportunity for every club to participate in GCFP Reads. Let’s continue to grow together.

The President’s Project – Theme Gardens Co-Chairs, Arlene Reagan and Marge Eberz, reported that in fall 2025 a presentation on Children’s Pizza Garden and a Red, White and Blue Garden was presented to the District XI Garden clubs. Articles on these two types of theme gardens were sent to the online editor of the Keystone Gardener for the fall edition. In February 2026, copies of Red White and Blue Gardens were distributed to members of Norristown Garden Club. In March 2026 an article on Colonial Kitchen Gardens with Medicinal Plants was submitted to the online editor of Keystone Gardener for the May issue of Keystone Gardener. A power point program on colonial gardens with medicinal plants and their uses was given at the March meeting of District XI Garden Club.

The **Blue Star / Gold Star Memorial Chair, Karen Faust,** reported that the Pennsylvania Marker Program experienced a fruitful year in 2025. Three markers were dedicated in May. The 14th, members gathered at Interstate 81 Northbound (near the PA/MD border) to witness District IV dedicate a Blue Star Highway Marker. On a damp and chilly May 24th, Blair Garden Club dedicated a Gold Star Marker at the James Van Sandt VA Medical Center near Altoona. Complete with a band, this was a beautiful, patriotic dedication. District X sponsored a Blue Star Highway Marker on Interstate 70 coming in from West Virginia at Claysville and Dedicated it on May 26th. This was a joint project with PennDOT. Entering Pennsylvania from Ohio at W. Middlesex/Mercer the first GOLD STAR MARKER at a Pennsylvania Welcome Center was dedicated on July 16th. This joint project of Districts VIII and IX showed teamwork at its finest! She encourages you to look at the Poster Board of the Dedication on display here at the Convention. August 2nd saw Penn Cumberland Garden Club dedicate the Blue Star Memorial Marker at Soldiers and Sailor’s Field in Mechanicsburg. This was a joint project with the Borough of Mechanicsburg. On September 18th, Bedford Garden Club sponsored a Gold Star By-Way Marker at the Public Square in Bedford. We look forward to future Dedications on June 3rd when the Garden Club of Johnstown will dedicate a Gold Star By-Way Marker at the Cambria County War Memorial and August 1st when Biglerville Garden Club will dedicate a Blue Star Memorial Marker at the Harbaugh-Thomas Library. Additional orders are needed this year. Markers on the I-70 Welcome Center at Warfordsburg (coming in from Maryland) and two Eastern PA Welcome Centers would complete our fourteen Welcome Centers. She encourages Clubs and Districts to sponsor a marker together. Please reach out to me because she will assist you through the project.

The **PA Gardens Book Chair, Karen Wychock,** asked “Looking for the best public gardens and arboretums in Pennsylvania?” Well, look no further! Our GCFP President, Pat Wolanski asked me to head her Public Gardens and Arboretum Guide Initiative. The booklet showcases the beauty of the public gardens and landscapes within our great State of Pennsylvania. You will be taken to historic estates, college campuses and state parks. These botanical destinations come alive each Spring with color, fragrance, and new growth. Woodland wildflowers emerge beneath towering trees, magnolias and cherry blossoms brighten historic landscapes, and pathways invite

you slow down and reconnect with nature. In starting work on this project, my first task was to request the help of our District Directors. They each provided me with a list of the Public Gardens and Arboretum within their own district. When there were no public gardens in their area, we listed state parks that would be of interest to our members across the state. The booklet includes a map that indicates the location of each District. It also includes the address, phone number and email address (if available) of each location. She would like to publicly thank the District Directors for their help in securing the necessary information needed for this project. Also, thank you to Marilyn Small for proofreading the document and in creating the map. This publication will be available for purchase statewide in the very near future.

The **Webinair Chair, Chris Leskosky**, thanked everyone for the cards, concern, and prayers. She truly believes she is doing as well as she is because of your kindness and support. I will miss all of you and hope you have a wonderful convention. Our next webinar is scheduled for May 11th at 700 PM. Please join us as we highlight a diverse range of NGC floral design styles, along with horticulture guidance on properly entering vegetables and fruits in a flower show. The program will also feature an engaging video on the life cycle of a butterfly, as well as a video collection of stunning photographs showcasing a variety of bird species. The following webinar will be held on August 5th at 7:00 PM. She is currently looking for designers and horticulturists to contribute by creating videos of their designs or presenting on horticulture topics. If you are interested, please contact her by phone or email, and she will provide you with the format.

BYLAWS

The **Organizational Studies Co-Chair, Barbara Brand**, presented proposed amendments to the Bylaws. At the June, 2025 Board meeting, the following amendments to the GCFP By-laws were proposed and approved by the GCFP Board of Directors at the October 2025 Board meeting. These amendments need to be approved by the GCFP membership in attendance at this Business Meeting of GCFP. Further amendment to the By-laws were proposed and approved by the GCFP Board via email in January 2026. This amendment needs to be approved by the GCFP membership in attendance at this Business Meeting of GCFP. Finally, some small amendments to the By-laws have been approved by the Exec. Committee and the BOD for presentation at this meeting without prior notice.

Part One -- Proposed to GCFP Board members at the October 2025 Meeting – Approved

Cover page	Revised and Adopted (Insert today's date) ARTICLE II Change the heading to " Objectives " Next sentence: Replace "object" with " objectives "
Page 2	ARTICLE IV Delete Sec. 2. "...shall maintain a Headquarters Office." Renumber Sec. 3 as Sec. 2 Sec. 2. A. 2. Delete comma after " Inc. " ARTICLE V Sec. 1. Delete: "All members of voting organizations shall receive the Keystone Gardener."
Page 3	ARTICLE V Sec. 2. A. Delete: "The President of the organization shall receive the Keystone Gardener." ARTICLE V Sec. 2. B. Delete: "and a subscription to the Keystone Gardener." ARTICLE VI Sec. 1. Subsection B. 1 and B.2. Pronoun update: Replace "your" with "their." Subsection C. Clarification: "No Officer may serve in two (2) GCFP elected positions during a term."

- Page 4 ARTICLE VI Sec. 2
 Subsection A.6. Clarification: "An ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominating Committee".
- Subsection D. 4 Punctuation: Change "**Board Members**" and "**Recording Secretary's files**" to possessive.
- Page 5 ARTICLE VI Sec. 2 H. 1 Add: "**and the KG Online**."
 ARTICLE VII Sec. 3 A and B. Pronoun update: Replace "**your**" with "**their**".
- Page 6 ARTICLE VII Sec. 5.A. "...Keystone Gardener **and KG Online Editors** (plural)"
- Page 7 ARTICLE VII, Sec.8.B. Add: " the **GCFP President** and the First and Second **GCFP** Vice Presidents shall be members of this committee."
 ARTICLE IX E. insert "to the recording secretary **prior to the meeting**"
- Page 8 ARTICLE IX F. Insert "may not serve in more than on (1) elected **GCFP** position"
- Page 9 ARTICLE XI Sec. 3 E. Add to last sentence: "to the recording secretary **prior to the meeting.**"

Part Two: Additional Amendment Approved by the Board via email, January 2026:

- Page ___ ARTICLE V. Membership. Sec. 1 Add:
 Subsection .A. District Membership Requirement. All Pennsylvania Federated Garden Clubs and Federated Garden Sections applying for or maintaining voting membership in the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania must also be members of their respective District and participate in District activities.

Part Three: Additional Amendments (not yet approved):

- Page 5 ARTICLE VI, delete "**Headquarters**" from article heading
 Sec.2.G.2– Insert "**President and Treasurer**"; delete "**Headquarters.**"
- Page 11 ARTICLE XVI ,Amendments, Sec. 1. Delete "**in writing**" and insert "**electronically**"
- ARTICLE XVI, Amendments, Sec. 2. Replace : "**Amendments presented without prior notice at the Annual Convention shall be limited to corrections of errors, omissions, or clarifications that do not alter the intent or substance of the bylaws, and shall require approval by a majority vote of those present and voting.**"

Page 13, Index: Delete "**Headquarters**"

The assembly voted and the proposed changes to the Bylaws passed. **APPROVED**

RECOGNITION

President Wolanski recognized the new 5 Star and 4 Star Members. 5 Star designation recognizes those who have achieved master status in all four NGC schools and continues their education and pursues a higher level of learning and skills which is an outstanding accomplishment. Joyce Wenner as recognized as our new 5 Star Member, although she was not

able to attend. 4 Star designation recognizes those who have completed four of the NGC schools, achieve Consultant and Judge Status, another impressive achievement. Sharon Richardson and Leeanna Ryba were recognized as our new 4 Star Members.

During the 96th GCFP Convention, **President Wolanski** presented **Presidential Citations** to Deborah Davis, Joanne Baylis, Joan Engle, Cynthia Layton, Barbara Brand, Dorthy Yard, Marjorie Stilwell-Sears, Karen Wychock, Marilyn Small, Sheri Lowery, Chris Leskosky, Nancy Cuttic, Joyce Milberg, Bonita Herman, and Nancy Cartwright.

President Wolanski distributed certificates to the following Clubs for their special 2026 GCFP **Federation Anniversaries** at 50/60/75/90 years:

- For 50 years of federation, Duboistown Garden Club – federated in 1976
 - For 90 years of federation, Pottstown Area Garden Club – federated in 1936
- Clubs celebrating 50, 75 and 100 year anniversaries receive a \$100 award.

Awards Chair, Marilyn Small, announced the winners of the **Club Membership Award**, which recognizes the greatest number of new members in the calendar year:

- Small Club Category – 30 or under- Landscape Design Society of Pennsylvania – District VII - gained 6 new members.
- Medium Club Category – 30-99 – Presque Isle Garden Club- District VIII gained 8 new members
- Large Club Category – 100 and above – The Garden Club of York - District IV gained 39 new members

Carol McConnell, Trash to Treasure Chair, announced the **2026 Trash to Treasure winners**: First Place – Garden Club of York – District IV; Second Place - Presque Isle Garden Club – District VIII; and Third Place – Moon Township Garden Club, District IX.

Chaplain, Margie Wolff, conducted a memorial service for those members of GCFP who have passed this past year using a candelabra of unlit candles, a bell and a separately lit candle. Each district director read their district's members' names who passed on since the 2025 Convention. When each director finished, Margie rang a bell in memory of the deceased.

The **2026 Convention Chair, Joyce Milberg**, gave announcements.

At 11:31 AM, **President Wolanski** announced that the 2026 Annual Business Meeting was adjourned until Tuesday at 2 PM, after the Judges Council luncheon.

The Business Meeting reconvened at 2:00 PM Tuesday with President Wolanski presiding.

The 2026 Convention Registrar, Dorthy Yard, presented the Final Credentials report. Former NGC President-1, CAR-SGC Director-1, Former CAR-SGC Director-1, GCFP State President-1, Former GCFP Presidents-6, GCFP Board members-47, GCFP Members-223, NGC Life Members-42, CAR-SGC Life Members-22, GCFP Life Members-47, Flower Show Judges-48, Gardening Consultants-24, Environmental Consultants-22, Landscape Design Consultants-23, Guests-45 for Total attendance (less duplications)-268.

President Wolanski introduced the **2027 Convention Chair, Joanne Baylis**, who reported everyone should mark their calendars! The dates for the 2027 GCFP Convention are **Monday, 19 April – Wednesday, 21 April 2027**. The theme will be **“Celebrating Pennsylvania, Ready, Set, Bloom”** and will include presentations, speakers and workshops that capture President Pat’s initiatives – garden party, themed gardens and healing art. And once again with District IV hosting, there will be a Flower Show. Tomorrow afternoon you will be hearing about the fantastic workshops, speakers and more that we have planned. So, why come to our convention? Because it is more than just an event – it’s an experience you won’t get anywhere else. You will have the chance to connect with garden club members who share the same interests and passions. Whether you are looking to learn something new, hear inspiring speakers or just want to have a great time, there’s something at the 2027 GCFP Convention for you. Most importantly, you will leave with new ideas, new connections and a renewed sense of motivation, so come join us.

Resolutions Committee, consisting of Karen Wychock, State Flower Show Judges’ Council and Sheila Croushore, Former GCFP President, presented the Courtesy Resolutions for the 2026 Convention: **Whereas**, the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania convened on Sunday, April 26, 2026 at the Sheraton Erie Bayfront Hotel and Convention Center, Erie, Pennsylvania for its 96th Annual Convention, and hereby acknowledges with appreciation the great effort expended in the planning and execution of this event.

Therefore, be it resolved that the members of the GCFP express their deep gratitude to Joyce Milberg, 2026 Convention Chairman, to Bonita Herman, 2026 Convention Co-Chairman, and to all committee chairmen and members of District VIII for planning and carrying out the theme, **MystERIE by the Bay**.

Be it further resolved that we extend our deep appreciation and thanks:

- To Patricia Wolanski, GCFP President for her leadership;
- To Beverly Kazickas, CAR-SGC Director for her attendance;
- To Bonita Herman, District VIII Director and all garden clubs in District VIII for their hospitality;
- To the Board of Directors for carrying out the business of furthering the objectives and purposes set forth in GCFP bylaws;
- To the State Life Members, CAR Life Members, National Life Members and Youth for attending Sunday night’s dinner;
- To Karen Wychock and the State Flower Show Judges Council for extending an invitation to attend its Tuesday luncheon and program;
- To Ken and Peggy Butler for their Sunday Evening Program, “The Dark Side of Fireflies”.
- To Neal Sanders for his Monday Lunch Program, “Gardening is Murder”.
- To Dr. Joshua Searle-White for his Monday Dinner Program, “The Invasive Species Living Next Door.”
- To Tim Farrell for his Tuesday Judges Council Luncheon Program, “It’s Elementary, My Dear”.
- To the 2026 Convention Presentation instructors: Mary Birdsong,
- To Marjorie Wolff, GCFP Chaplain, for conducting the Memorial Service;
- To all presenters of floral tributes, educational exhibits, “Trash to Treasure” exhibits, Boutique contributors, tour facilities, all who helped with preparations, and all convention attendees who traveled throughout the state and neighboring states to contribute to the success of the Convention.

Be it further resolved that we extend congratulations to:

- The Gold Seal Award Winner, Chris Leskosky

- The recipient of the Award of Honor, Karen Wychock
- The Perennial Bloom -Nancy Cuttic
- The Governor's Trophy winner, The Garden Club of York
- The recipients of the "Trash to Treasure" Contest;
- The recipients of the Youth Awards;
- The recipients of the Scholarships;
- The recipients of all club and individual awards.

Be it further resolved that the management and staff of The Sheraton Erie Bayfront Hotel, be thanked for all courtesies extended.

Be it further resolved that this resolution be incorporated in the minutes and that copies be sent to Patricia Wolanski, GCFP President, Joyce Milberg, Convention Chairman, Bonita Herman, Convention Co-Chairman.

The colors were retired by the Gannon University Pride of PA ROTC and meeting adjourned at 2:00 PM.

Deborah Davis – GCFP Recording Secretary

Ref. Vivian Hall issued Financial Statements on April 1, 2026 from Financial Advisor Cynthia Layton. Sheila Croushore sent the Financial Secretary's Reports on April 1, 2026. The proposed Bylaw amendments are incorporated in these Minutes. The 2026 Convention Courtesy Resolutions read at the close of the Convention are incorporated in these Minutes. These minutes were posted on GCFP website 5/17/2026.