

Autumn 2026

Nine's News

From District IX of *The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania*
Member NGC and CAR-SGC

Director's Message

As I write my final report as District IX Director, I realize just how difficult it is to put these past two years into words. Serving this FINE District has been one of the greatest honors of my garden club life.

I have watched our nine clubs educate, beautify, conserve, serve their communities, win awards, welcome new members, and accomplish things that continually made me proud. We planted, planned, volunteered, raised money, solved problems—Nothing that a good raffle and a good dessert would not help solve. But through it all, we laughed, worked together, and made some wonderful memories.

What I will treasure most is not the awards, meetings, reports, or projects—it is all of you. The friendships I have made, the support you have given me, and the laughter we have shared mean more than I can say. At our Annual Meeting, when it came time for me to say “District Nine is FINE” for the last time as your District Director, I thought I was prepared. I wasn’t. Those words suddenly represented nine clubs, hundreds of members, two unforgettable years that I will truly cherish.

So I may no longer be your District Director, but a piece of my heart will always belong to District IX. Thank you for trusting me, laughing with me, and definitely putting up with me, and allowing me the privilege of representing you. District Nine was FINE, District Nine is FINE, and District Nine will always be FINE.

Stacey Ivoll, District IX Director 2024-2026- “Stacey” 



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Coming Events

Oct. 20, 2026

Tentative District IX Board Meeting
11:00 AM
location TBD.

Nov. 21, 2026

Nature's Bounty & Greens Sale
Tusca-Ridge Garden Club
Frye Transportation Garage
9:00-12:00

Dec. 5, 2026

“Greens & Gifts”

Moon Twp. Garden Club
9:00 AM- 3:00 P.M.

Robin Hill Center, Moon Twp.

Dec. 9, 2026

Fox Chapel “Glitter & Glow”
7:00 - 9 PM
Fox Chapel Golf Club

January 5, 2027

Deadline for submission to winter
edition of IX's News

March 16, 2027

Tentative District IX Board Meeting
location TBD.

Nine's News Editor: Suzan Vandertie
svandertie@comcast.net

Committee Reports

Japanese Knotweed: A Villain with a Voracious Appetite

In the mid-1800s, English gardeners were captivated by the beauty of a plant that would eventually become one of our most troublesome invasive species.

Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) is native to eastern Asia. It was introduced to England in the mid-1800s as a prized ornamental plant. By the late 1800s, we just had to have it. Japanese knotweed made its way to the United States, where it was planted for its beauty and later promoted for erosion control along roadsides and embankments. Even honeybees have found a use for it, turning its nectar into a dark, rich honey considered a sought-after delicacy.

But Japanese knotweed has a serious dark side. It grows with remarkable speed and persistence, quickly overtaking gardens and native vegetation. By the early 1900s, its invasive nature was becoming apparent. Unfortunately, by then, it was already too late. Today, Japanese knotweed is classified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as a noxious weed.

Japanese knotweed is notoriously difficult to eradicate. There is no quick fix, but with persistence, it can be controlled without chemicals. Repeated cutting combined with heavy smothering can eventually exhaust the plant's energy reserves, although it may take 3 – 5 years, or longer. For large infestations, however, you might want to call in a crew of goats!

That's exactly what Shaler Township is doing. For the past two years, the aptly named "Chew Crew" has been brought in as seasonal employees. These hungry goats go right to work tackling Japanese knotweed, the natural way.

I recently met the goats' owner Monica Shields, her son Joe, and the 'Crew' while walking through Facett Fields in Shaler. Monica and Joe stop by frequently to check on their charges and to monitor their knotweed-annihilation progress. Once an area is sufficiently mauled down, Joe and Monica fence off a new area of dense knotweed and lead the Crew to their next assignment. In just a few days, they move on again.

Capricious, LLC (www.capriciousgoats.com), Monica's targeted grazing business, has 7 – 8 Chew Crews working throughout western Pennsylvania and into Ohio and West Virginia. Each Crew includes about 8 - 10 goats. Goats are

typically called in to tackle areas overrun with knotweed or poison ivy, but they can also help control a variety of other aggressive weeds.

It can take several years to bring a heavy infestation under control. Left unchecked, Japanese knotweed can easily reach heights of 9 feet or more. When the goats move in, they chomp away at the green stalks and leaves. Without those leaves, the plant cannot use sunlight to make food through photosynthesis. The roots remain alive, however, so the plants will return the following year. But repeated grazing weakens them, making them less vigorous and preventing them from reaching their former heights.

After four or five years of Chew Crew effort, areas once overwhelmed by knotweed may finally be ready for restoration with alternative plants that can reclaim the space.

Sometimes, the best way to fight an invasive plant is to let nature do the work! And in Shaler, nature has four legs, a voracious appetite, and a serious craving for knotweed.

Until next time you can find me in the garden,

Leslie Anthony, District IX Pollinator Advocate



Japanese knotweed growing beautifully but aggressively along the banks of Little Pine Creek in Shaler.

photo: L. Anthony

Awards

Awards are a cherished garden club tradition. They recognize creativity, leadership, service, horticultural knowledge, and commitment to our communities. More importantly, they remind us that every hour volunteered, every project completed, and every idea shared makes a meaningful difference.

THE LAUREL AWARD honors members who have demonstrated exceptional achievement and gone beyond their regular club responsibilities.

THE DAFFODIL AWARD recognizes members whose dedicated service has helped their clubs "go and grow."

THE FORGET-ME-NOT AWARD recognizes a long-standing member whose dedication has enriched our organizations and communities. We have three individuals nominated for the Forget-Me-Not Award. Although only one nominee may represent District IX at the GCFP level, every nomination is a significant achievement and reflects years of outstanding service. While each nomination was truly outstanding, Sue Semple has been selected to represent District IX at the GCFP level.

We are pleased to recognize our District Club Commendations.

THE CIVIC PROJECT AWARD honors projects that provide lasting public benefits through distinguished civic or conservation work. This year, we are proud to recognize two outstanding projects. Ingomar Garden Club for its work at David Councill Park, located at the intersection of Ingomar Heights Road and West Ingomar Road and Southern Butler County for creating the Pollinator Garden at the Mars Library on Grand Avenue in Mars, Pennsylvania. Both projects are wonderful examples of civic service, environmental stewardship, and the positive impact garden clubs have on their communities.

THE DISTRICT DISTINGUISHED GARDEN CLUB AWARD is presented to clubs that offer a well-balanced year of programs, exceptional civic activities, and conservation projects. We commend the Fox Chapel Garden Club and the Shaler Garden Club for meeting these high standards.

We are also proud to honor three individuals accepted for inclusion in the GCFP Book of Exceptional Horticulturists. This prestigious recognition honors members with extensive knowledge of plant life who generously share their expertise and successful growing practices with garden clubs and the broader community.

Carol Pappas of the Fox Chapel Garden Club

Rose Romboski of the Southern Butler Garden Club

Deb Young of the Kennedy Garden Club

Thank you for helping our clubs, our communities, and District IX continue to grow and flourish. Note that GCFP AWARD Applications will be coming due soon. Please refer to the GCFP Awards Manual to find the awards that your club may be eligible to receive !!

Cheri Davison, GCFP Awards Chair



2026 DISTRICT IX AWARDS

BUTLER GARDEN CLUB

Laurels: Polly Berginc, Jill Walls, Shauna Zukowski

Daffodils: Karen Brackett, Elaine Kusick, Sherry Lynn, Mickey Stewart

FOX CHAPEL GARDEN CLUB

Laurels: Anne Reid, Wendy Mitchell, Fritz Mitnick, Cathy Ravella

Daffodils: Allison Burgan, Lynn Thompson, Alicia Cahall

INGOMAR GARDEN CLUB

Laurels: Alice Gillenberger, Chris Hawthorne, Barb Oswald

Daffodils: Karen Bolcschazy, Jean Boucek, Marie Kazmierczak, Jan Ranii-Dropcho, Sarah Spartano, Linda Szramowski, Carol Womsley, Monica Zanieski

KENNEDY GARDEN CLUB

Laurels: Nancy Zitelli, Deb Young, Sandy Saban

Daffodils: Janet Lewis, Darlene, Adamski-Werling, Rachel Raymond, Patti Harding

MOON TOWNSHIP GARDEN CLUB

Laurels: Mary Adamowski, Thelma Redick, Joanne Canan

Daffodils: Virginia Smith, Cheryl Leasure, Dottie Cloherty: Dianne Ziemba,

OAK HILLS GARDEN CLUB

Laurels: Dolly Fetterman, Beverly Olenic, Kathy Geibel

Daffodils: Jenny Clark, Marilyn Rogerson, Tanya Hackwelder, Peggy Miller

SHALER GARDEN CLUB

Laurels: Carol Koontz, Joanne Laverty, Diane Tucek

Daffodils: Judy Antimarino, Cassandra Dean, Cathy Mann, Diana McKay, Pam Rutschky, Gerry Quartuccio, Kathy Walter

Awards cont.

SOUTHERN BUTLER COUNTY GARDEN CLUB

Laurels: Cassie Stopar, Linda Puhulla, Leanne Marino

Daffodils: Debbie McFarland, Lynne Kunes, Judy Meyers
Ruth Moody, Jesse Taylor, Carol Short, Donna Hall,
Judy McConnell

TUSCA-RIDGE GARDEN CLUB

Laurels: Melissa Alexander, Stacey Ivoll

Daffodils: Betsy Brown, Marion Feher, Pennie Johnson,
Karen Guandolo

FORGET- ME-NOT NOMINATIONS

Judy Fritzges, Fox Chapel; Sue Semple, Shaler; Judy Robert-
son, Tusca-Ridge

Membership

Dear District IX members,

I am writing to let you know that District IX is Fine main-
taining an impressive membership of 442 dues paying
members. Our district now consists of 5 medium clubs and
4 large clubs ranging from our smallest, Oak Hills with 25
members to our largest, Shaler with 77 members. With the
loss of Edgeworth and Greybrooke since 2023, our total
member count has decreased accordingly. But District IX is
Just Fine!

Our clubs continue to grow which is so important!
Welcome to the 34 new participants who have joined us
since last August. Enjoy shopping at Quality Nursery with
your gift card knowing that this small token represents our
excitement about your membership commitment.

I wish to remind you that the 3 Rs of membership:
Recruiting, Retaining and Revitalizing are as important as
ever! They provide the fertilizer for growth. It's obvious
that each club's Recruiting methods are working. Perhaps
it's your visibility with banners and business cards. Perhaps
it's your community projects that are fascinating and fun.
Perhaps it's your willingness to be open to new ideas and
welcome new friends.

Retaining your valued members is just as vital for your
club's future and for the future of our district. Showing
gratitude for a job well done or allowing a voice in the
decision-making process empowers members to feel that
they belong and are valued.

Revitalizing members can be as simple as sharing an up

close and personal interview
or recognizing individuals
for their talents. Recogniz-
ing 50 years with a club is
one way to shine a light on
those special people in our
organization. Announcing
this year's District Golden
Girl: Loretta Daczowski of
the Moon Township Garden
Club! Congratulations to
Loretta for 50 years sharing
her joys of digging in the
dirt with all of us.



L. Daczowski

As District IX continues to blossom, let us treasure always,
in all ways our "mature blooms" along with our "new
buds"!

Sincerely,



In Memoriam for District IX Deceased Members August 29, 2026

*A butterfly lights beside us like a sunbeam
And for a brief moment its glory
and beauty belong to our world...*

*But then it flies on again
and although we wish it could have stayed,
We are so thankful to have seen it at all.*

As the days of summer slowly fade away, we treasure the
A fragrance of each flower, the melody of every song bird
and the delight of a butterfly in flight. Across the globe,
butterflies are a symbol of transformation and the journey
of the soul. Many cultures associate butterflies with their
loved ones. Butterflies teach us to shine brightly; they
bring us hope.

Let us pause to joyfully honor the departed souls of District
IX who have moved beyond our earthly world this past
year. Let us be thankful for their beautiful friendship and
generous contributions. We remember:

Mary Ann Fenio
Lois Mellott
Janet Platt
Elaine Poliziani
Wesley Semple
Elsie Standley

*What we once enjoyed and deeply loved, we can never lose,
for all we love deeply becomes a part of us. Helen Keller
Marcia Welsh, District IX Membership Chair*

2026 Forget Me Not District IX Award Winner

Congratulations to Susan Semple whose leadership, integrity, and unwavering commitment to service embody the very highest ideals of our organization.

Sue's journey with the GCFP began long ago. Over the years, she has built an undeniable reputation as an exceptional leader across every tier of our federation—serving as District IX Director for two terms, stepping up as GCFP Corresponding and Recording Secretary, and dedicating years to organizing a record-breaking state convention. In recognition of this monumental dedication, she was honored with the prestigious State Perennial Bloom Award in 2020.

When she joined the Shaler Garden Club in 2015, she brought a wealth of experience that instantly strengthened our organization. For years, she has worn many hats simultaneously. As our Parliamentarian since 2018, she has been our trusted anchor for governance, bylaws, and contractual agreements. Leveraging her professional background in banking, she provided meticulous fiscal oversight as the Finance and Audit Chair for seven years before stepping into her current role as our dedicated Treasurer.

Her talents don't stop behind the scenes. She single-handedly helped move our club into the digital age by chairing the Technology Committee and launching our website and social media presence. She is a certified environmental champion, transforming her own landscape into a registered Pennsylvania Pollinator Friendly Habitat to inspire others. Yet, despite her high-level leadership, she remains one of our most dependable, hands-on volunteers—whether she is running registration for major district meetings or quietly staying late to clean up after a meeting.

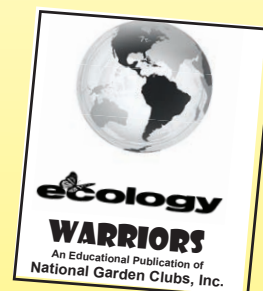
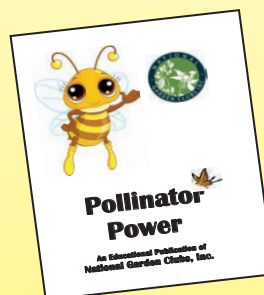
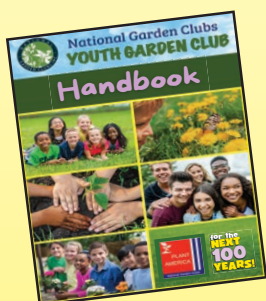
Sue exemplifies the highest ideals of Garden Club membership through her leadership, integrity, professionalism, and unwavering commitment to service. Her contributions have strengthened not only the Shaler Garden Club but also District IX and the GCFP. She is a respected mentor, a dedicated volunteer, and an outstanding ambassador for the mission of our organization, making her exceptionally deserving of this award.



Goodies from NGC

Did you know that NGC, one of our parent groups, sponsors all sorts of competitions and educational opportunities for students of all ages? You can gain access to any resources on their website but the most fun part in my estimation, is the section with Youth Activity resources. To get there go to: gardenclub.org, click on "Projects," click on "Youth & Scholarships," locate "Activities and Resources" at the bottom of the page.

Once there you will have access to four resources that provide fun and information for elementary age kids and older. Look for the following resources, then download the PDF file to your computer. Once you have the file, you may print as many copies as you need for whatever activity you are planning that includes children. *SMV*



PLANT PENNSYLVANIA an initiative of The GCFP

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania is pleased to introduce the PLANT PENNSYLVANIA Grant Program, a statewide initiative that provides financial assistance to GCFP member clubs for new and ongoing projects that enhance Pennsylvania's communities through environmental stewardship, civic beautification, conservation, and educational gardening.

The purpose of the project is to encourage innovation for sustainable projects that improve local environments while increasing public awareness of The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania and its mission. Through this initiative, GCFP seeks to support projects that educate the public, inspire community involvement, and create lasting environmental benefits throughout the Commonwealth.



Projects that are eligible for the grant include:

- ✓ Pollinator and native plant gardens
- ✓ Community gardens
- ✓ Public landscape enhancements
- ✓ Tree planting
- ✓ Habitat restoration
- ✓ Rain gardens
- ✓ Butterfly and wildlife habitats
- ✓ Educational demonstration gardens
- ✓ Environmental education programs
- ✓ Community beautification programs

Deadline Approaching

Innovative ideas that improve local environments and educate the public are encouraged. The examples listed are intended as guidance and not intended to limit creative proposals.

To make a strong grant proposal, successful projects demonstrate:

- ✓ Community benefit
- ✓ Environmental impact
- ✓ Conservation and sustainability
- ✓ Public education
- ✓ Volunteer involvement
- ✓ Long term maintenance
- ✓ Visibility of GCFP in the community.

Projects should leave a lasting positive impact while showing the work of Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania clubs.

How much money is available?

Every two years - Amount listed is the minimum.

2026 - \$2,500 2027 - \$5,000 2029 - \$5,000 2031-TBD

The number and amount of grants will depend on the quality of the applications and available funding.

Application Deadline:

year 1 - THIS YEAR! October 1, 2026 Year 3: October 1, 2027 Year 5: October 1, 2029

Club Reports

Butler Garden Club

In between our prominent plantings and maintenance of gardens throughout our community this spring and summer, we put most of our energies into our biennial Summer Garden Party fundraiser.

Two of our newer members took the reins and chaired our event. We had spectacular baskets, terrific silent auction items, a profitable 50/50 and enjoyable vendors to fill our shopping fixes. What really excelled for us though, was an inaugural bake sale! The gorgeously packaged member-baked items flew off the tables and we were a couple hundred dollars short of a four-digit profit! Note to self – bake sales DO work! Another terrific profit was made from the stunning centerpieces created by one of our members with Hybrid blue delphinium from Ecuador; blue South American hydrangea, and white ranunculus from another member's cutting garden in the Butler area.

Our featured speaker was a cheese monger at the former beloved McGinnis Sisters grocery stores. She showed those in attendance how to display, how to pair and how to add "wow" to a charcuterie platter.

Let me say that our profit for the event increased by 30% from previous years and this is our sole generator of funds for us to distribute in the form of grants to local worthy organizations needing horticultural assistance. In turn, our club members recently voted to provide support for six local organizations in the form of:

- landscaping materials and outdoor enhancement space at a local museum and inpatient facility
- greenhouse supplies for a local school to assist in starting a composting program
- school field trip grant support to visit a local environmental education center
- support for equipment for a Monday Morning Maintenance Crew at an 88-acre public park for its grounds-keeping.

Many months and many hands go into making this event a success and we appreciate the dedication of our club members coming together for this stellar event.

Susan Morgus, President, BGC



Fox Chapel Garden Club

Tennis Shoe Recycling 2026



Collecting sneakers now through September 30th, 2026!

The Fox Chapel Garden Club is collecting used sneakers and putting them to good use via the Nike Reuse-A-Shoe Program. Look for large colorful recycling boxes at local gyms, golf clubs, schools, libraries and churches!

Your old sneakers will be recycled and used to build tennis courts, playgrounds and running tracks! Cleats cannot be accepted.

Gently used sneakers will be donated to Second Harvest and The Free Store. Thank you for your help!

Scan for locations!



Questions, contact me:

www.foxchapelgardenclub.org

The Fox Chapel Garden Club's mission is to further the appreciation and knowledge of horticulture and gardening, and to advocate sound environmental stewardship.



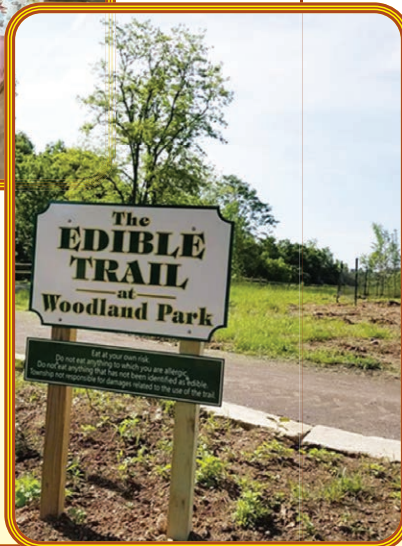
Fox Chapel Garden Club

The Fox Chapel Garden Club's summer certainly did not disappoint; it was full of club featured "Pop Up" events. These events are planned and executed by members with only a week or so notice, come if you can. Each offers our members a unique opportunity to learn and see what's growing in our community. We typically have anywhere from 8 – 20 members enjoying these gatherings.

This summer's list included:

- "Secret Garden Tour" of a neighbor's garden
- A firefly display in Karel Ulizio's Garden
- A stroll along the edible trail at Woodland Park in O'Hara
- A tour of a residential native garden
- Harvesting garlic with member Friz Mitnick

We have two upcoming events: a tour of "Garfield Community Farm" and McCahill Park led by member Cathy Ravella.



We also conducted business in preparation of our club's most cherished event, Glitter & Glow, scheduled for December 9th. Please visit the FGGC website for more details. "G & G" chairs Kristen Fox and Nancy Knauss held their kickoff meeting. That was followed by members Karen Kieve and Barb Mullen holding a "G & G" workshop preparation assessing containers, ribbons, and other embellishment items. This is ALWAYS finished with a most delicious lunch – thank you ladies! Gardenfest will be held May 8th, 2027, and our co-chair Christina Horchler is busy collecting/recycling choice garden pots to use for our spring plant sale.

In August, we launched our Tennis Shoe Recycling Program in our community led by chairs Michelle Donahoe and Susie Williams. No summer is complete without our member social held at Beechwood Farms with our loved ones.

Proud to be a part of this vibrant organization.
Melissa Johnson, President, F C G C



Ingomar Garden Club

Spring arrived in a flurry of activity, and the Ingomar Garden Club hit the ground running! We began with clean-up at David Councill Park and Edith's Garden, preparing for another beautiful growing season.

The UPMC Passavant planters and flagpole area soon burst with hundreds of colorful annuals. Our newest project, the Children's Learning Garden at Northland Public Library, has surpassed expectations. The librarians have been very complimentary of our themed planters, and we are delighted to see this project come to life for children and families.

Tim Miller led a meeting with the McCandless Girl Scouts, sharing the history of David Councill Memorial Park and teaching the girls about caring for flower gardens. They planted Shasta Daisies, took home flower pots and seeds, and earned their garden badges.

A special "Golden Shovel Dig" ceremony was held at David Councill Park. McCandless Township planted two trees—a pink dogwood celebrating IGC's 80th Anniversary and a native redbud honoring McCandless' 175th anniversary.

In June, we explored sustainability before touring Carrie Furnace and Rivers of Steel. In July, we visited the beautiful Sahli Nature Park Monarch Butterfly Reserve.

As gardeners, we are always learning—about nature, our community, and each other. And perhaps the best lesson of all is:

"Learn something new, live life fully, and always make time for a little fun along the way!"

Be Happy,

Eileen Miller, President, IGC





Kennedy Garden Club

Community is of utmost importance to the members of the Kennedy Garden Club. Our members are not only "digging in" to beautify and sustain our lovely gardens but also to bring enduring value and beauty to our monuments, parks and fountains in our communities.

The KGC planted and is maintaining a red, white and blue themed garden surrounding a large fountain and flag monument in Kennedy Twp. This small park is dedicated to our first responders. It includes fire, police, and EMS professionals.

We are proud to display a selection of photos and share our commitment. The Garden Club Federation of PA has presented a certificate to our club in recognition of participating in the 2026 Plant Pennsylvania program and establishing a theme garden. Congratulations to us!

Our KGC members have had a wonderful experience in participating in a ParTEA at the August meeting. The entire speaker committee, led by Nancy Zitelli, was busy planning this educational and enlightening event. Deb Young, one of our Master Gardeners, encouraged our members to bring T-cups, dress in tea party attire and sip on cold and hot garden grown teas! Everyone was impressed and bedazzled by the fabulous centerpieces and enjoyed tea party delicacies. We are proud of the love and energy in creating this memorable event!

We are proud to have partnerships with Parks & Recreation for Community Days and the Robinson Library in 2026 in bringing joy and happiness to our local communities and families!

Barb French, President, KGC



Moon Township Garden Club

Bloom where you are planted literally defines summertime with MTGC! The Fleur de Lune Garden at Robin Hill continues to be transformed with color and greenery thanks to the diligent garden committee who plant, water and weed weekly. Opportunities abounded this summer for community visitors to experience its beauty.

Over 100 adults enjoyed the Petals and Pours Event, sipping wine while learning about the plants thriving in their midst. Members new and old socialized at Friends and Family Night. In conjunction with Moon Township Library, Storytime in the Garden enabled children and parents alike to learn all about pollinators through stories, crafts and butterfly sightings! A joyful memorial service and tree planting commemorated the life of our dear departed friend, Elaine Poliziani.

Networking and club promotion also blossomed this summer under the supervision of the Membership and Communication Website teams. Membership worked with Embroidery Pittsburgh to design a garden tote complete with our logo along with an updated version of our club aprons and denim shirts for individual purchase. Business cards with our tagline and social media contact information allow MTGC to be easily accessible.

Check out our creatively redesigned website at www.moontownshipgardenclub.org You will discover exciting features including news, announcements, garden "blogs", volunteer opportunities, an "Ask the Gardener!" section, and a separate Members only section. It is engaging and loaded with information!

A road trip to the Clayton Mansion at The Frick Pittsburgh and buzzing by Half Crown Hill Orchard apiary provided more opportunities for friendships to grow and summertime fun to blossom!

Marcia Welsh, Second V. President, MTGC



Oak Hills Garden Club

The OHGC had a productive summer. The June meeting was held at the Sons of Italy in Butler celebrating our country's 250th anniversary. Our own Dolly Fetterman showed us how to make a patriotic arrangement from everyday items. After a delicious lunch, cupcakes were served sporting sparkling candles. Patty Black led a rendition of Happy Birthday and God Bless America and all joined in.

The May plant sale was a financial success and Jenny Clark reported that over 3,700 tickets were bought for the raffle baskets. We want to thank Jenny for her many years of hard work providing this successful feature for the plant sale.

The July meeting was held at the Field House Restaurant in Cabot. This was an important business meeting. It is time to find potential nominees for next year's officers. Four wonderful members elected to be nominated: Carol Kravits – President, Monica Huselton – Vice President, Peggy Miller – Treasurer, Debbie Rose – Secretary. Thank you all for your support. Wait, not only do we have new officers for next year but four new members were introduced!

We ended the summer with our annual pot luck picnic at Alameda Park. After a wonderful lunch we proceeded to elect our new officers for next year and approve the recommendations our Community Improvement committee made for donating this year's plant sale proceeds. Local needs (18), gardens, and of course our scholarship fund at Butler Community College, will receive funds.

The summer events were filled with good food, company and serious business for the future of our garden club. We are looking to the fall for less serious business and more fun events.

*Melissa Jacoby,
President, OHGC*



Shaler Garden Club

Greetings from the Shaler Garden Club! As we transition from summer bloom into late August, our members have been incredibly busy sowing seeds of community connection, education, and philanthropic growth across District IX.

We officially kicked off our sunny season in June with our beautiful, annual Summer Solstice dinner. This cherished tradition allowed members to gather, celebrate the longest day of the year, share stories of individual backyard triumphs, and toast to the peak of the growing season.

July brought an extraordinary milestone with our highly anticipated Great Gardens Tour. Featuring stunning local properties showcasing pollinator-friendly landscapes and native designs, this year's tour was our most successful to date. Thanks to our generous community and dedicated volunteers, 100% of the proceeds directly benefit the Shaler North Hills Library, supporting quality educational programming and grounds maintenance.

Giving back remains at the root of our mission. This summer, our members hosted an interactive floral craft workshop at a local senior residential facility. We helped residents assemble beautiful floral displays some of which were then graciously shared with a local hospice. Members also tapped into their artistic sides during a creative mosaic workshop, crafting unique garden art pieces.

Community education flourished through our public outreach. We were thrilled to host an engaging public presentation on the Stormy Oaks Nature Conservancy, which gave attendees a captivating look at native wild birds. At our August meeting, we enjoyed an exceptional program on landscape design, led by our very own Claudia Bernardo.

To round out our schedule, we organized an outdoor field trip to the breathtaking Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens in early August. Members enjoyed an inspiring morning immersing themselves in world-class gardens, gathering countless fresh ideas to take back to our own home plots.

We look forward to a bountiful autumn of learning and planting ahead!

Mary Jo Clayton, President, SGC





S. Butler County Garden Club

Our Vice President and Master Gardener, Donna Hall, recently presented our “The Buzz About Honey” program. She shared the history of honey and the health benefits of local honey, hosted a tasting of various honey types, and even dressed for the occasion.

This year’s garden tour fundraiser featured beautiful gardens and welcomed both new and returning visitors. A garden club from Sharon, PA even chartered a bus to attend the tour!

To celebrate National Garden Week, we decorated the Mars Library Pollinator Garden with yarn critters created by Cranberry Creations. This fun and educational display highlighted the vital role of pollinators. It was so popular that the library requested we keep it up for a children’s summer reading program scavenger hunt.

We recently hosted the District IX Annual Meeting at the Cranberry Highlands Golf Course. This successful event was the result of extensive planning that began in January, led by our co-chairs, Rose Romboski and Karen Faust.

We would like to extend a special thanks to Judy McConnell for creating the beautiful, handmade conversation starters for each place setting. In line with our “Native Plants” theme, the centerpieces featured native plant materials, including Paw Paw trees, common blue violets, and white wood asters, beautifully adorned with four types of butterflies corresponding to each host plant. We also enjoyed an engaging presentation by Jennifer Senchak on Paw Paw trees and their vital role in the habitat restoration of the zebra swallowtail butterfly.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this meeting a success.

Kristi Gregory, President SBCGC



Tusca-Ridge Garden Club

To forget how to dig the earth and to tend the soil is to forget ourselves. Mahatma Gandhi

This summer, members of the Tusca Ridge Garden Club have not forgotten themselves!! Our civic projects: the Cathy Holby Garden, the Two Mile Run Butterfly Garden, and the front area of the College Avenue Methodist Church, have kept us busy, especially with the rainy, weedy July and beginning of August that we experienced! The rain was welcome though, for the new Venus dogwood tree that was planted at our local riverbank park in honor of our past president, Sue Parry.

At our July meeting, members each brought along a teacup and had such fun creating little teacup fairy gardens. Such a delightful activity with a variety of results! Even those members who doubted their creativity were pleased with their outcomes!

Our August meeting featured guest speaker, Isaac Dixon, who gave us an update on our collaborative Rocky Garden project. Our beloved, late president, Ann Niemann was so involved with this project, that a special garden in their courtyard was created in her memory.

As the days of summer have been dwindling and thoughts of returning to school are near, our club members volunteered to help ready the students' garden for the new school year. Again, our members "did not forget themselves" as we toiled on a hot summer morning to weed and prune.

As the weather has cooled and some mornings have a tinge of autumn feeling, we are looking forward to our upcoming field trip to the Pittsburgh Botanic Gardens and the excitement of fall activities!

Roxanne Walker, President, T-RGC



Annual Meeting

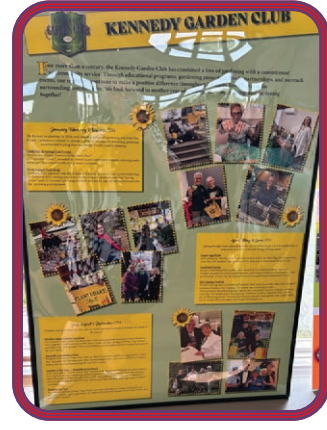
PEOPLE



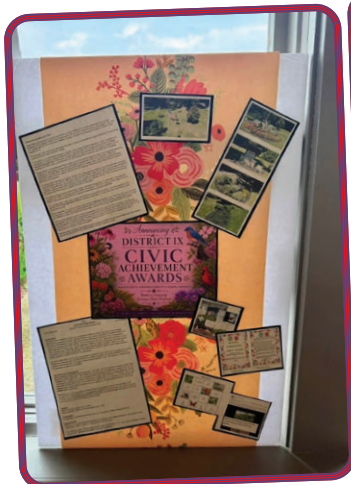
GCFP President P. Wolanski with newly installed District IX officers. L to R: Treas., D. Cella, Sec., R Walker, GCFP Pres., P. Wolansky, A.D.D., J Fritzges, D.D., J. Loverty



DECORATIONS



A W A R D S



E V E N T S

Save The Date

Fox Chapel Garden Club's
Annual Holiday Event

Glitter & Glow

December 9, 2026

7:00-9:00 p.m.

Fox Chapel Golf Club

Reservations open November 1, 2026

Learn more at www.foxchapelgardenclub.org



The Fox Chapel Garden Club's mission is to further the appreciation and knowledge of horticulture and gardening, and to advocate sound environmental stewardship.



NEW SHOPPING EXPERIENCE!

Tusca-Ridge Garden Club Annual Greens Sale

***PRE-ORDER FRESH GREEN WREATHS AND MORE!**
ONLINE ONLY - OCTOBER 1 - 18, 2026

SHOP UNIQUE ITEMS AND LOOSE GREENS.
GRAB LUNCH AND BAKED GOODS,
AND ENJOY A DAY OF FUN!

NOVEMBER 21, 2026
9 AM - 1 PM
COLLEGE AVE METHODIST CHURCH IN BEAVER

VISIT:
WWW.TUSCARIDGEGARDENCLUB.COM
OR SCAN:

KENNEDY GARDEN CLUB - FALL FESTIVAL - COME GROW WITH US

OCTOBER 3, 2026
NOON - 4:00 PM
Andrews Pavilion
Fairhaven Park, Kennedy Twp.
Rain or Shine

FAMILY FUN!

- Bake Sale
- Plant Sale
- Vendors
- Basket Raffle
- Food Truck
- Pumpkin Painting

Moon Township Garden Club
CORDIALLY INVITES YOU TO THE

Holiday Greens and Gift Shoppe

December 5, 2026
9 am to 3 pm
Robin Hill Center
949 Thorn Run Road, Moon Township

Featuring a beautiful variety of fresh and artificial centerpieces, wreaths, swags, seasonal treasures and delicious baked goods for home or gift giving.

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