The First Bloom

THE GARDEN CLUB FEDERATION OF PENNSYLVANIA



Jane Nyiri, Garden Club of Springfield

Tri-Annual, October 2026

The First Bloom

OCTOBER 2026

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Cover Photo: Jane Nyiri, Garden Club of Springfield

All District I members are encouraged to submit a gardening article, personal gardening recognition or other pertinent information to share with others.

Editor: Marilyn Small

Deadline Dates for Submission: Winter Issue -February 1
Summer Issue -June 1
Fall Issue - October 1

Member of National Garden Clubs (NGC) Donna Donnelly, President
Central Atlantic Region (CAR-SGC) Beverly Kazickas, Director
Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania (GCFP) Pat Wolanski, President



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Heather Nicholas

THE GC OF SPRINGFIELD
Marla Vanore

UWCHLAN GC
Karen Yoder

VILLANOVA GC
Meg Cave

WAYNE WOODS GC
Anne McCrary



"There is something so special in the early leaves drifting from the trees--as if we are all to be allowed a chance to peel, to refresh, to start again." ~ Ruth Ahmed

District Director's Message

Fall is the perfect time for a "reset." All of our garden clubs have kicked off their new year, and the Covered Bridge Garden Club planned and hosted a wonderful start to the season with the annual District meeting. We were pleased to welcome GCFP State officers Pat Wolanski, Tonya Young, and Mary Hetrick.

The celebration included recognition of Pam Walsh for her leadership of our District over the past two years; Nancy Cuttic, recipient of the Perennial Bloom Award; Maryann DeSanto, recipient of the Forget-Me-Not Award; Helene Reid, recognized as an Exceptional Horticulturist; and those whose work merited a Laurel. And no list of accomplishments would be complete without recognizing Marilyn Small for her amazing efforts with the program, award-winning newsletter, and so much more!

Many thanks to all of you and your clubs for supporting the statewide Garden Party, chaired by our own Nancy Cuttic, which received a Proclamation from Governor Shapiro. I was fortunate to tour many of the District I Garden Party sites over the two weekends, and it was an awe-inspiring experience.

The biennial Longwood Flower Show, "Celebrating a Nation of Artists," was another remarkable success! Fifty-two of our club members entered nearly 400 exhibits, attracting many Longwood visitors who were captivated by the creativity. A big thank-you to Maria Jacobs and the many volunteers who designed and planned this major undertaking!

We have many events ahead this fall, including the Floral Design Challenge and District meeting on November 11 at the Uwchlan Meeting House, along with a variety of club holiday events and programs. These gatherings are opportunities to come together, learn from one another, and plan how our clubs can contribute to "Plant Pennsylvania" and to President Pat Wolanski's vision of turning Pennsylvania's keystone into a gemstone.

As I put my own garden to bed in preparation for winter, it's time to take stock of what plants did and didn't do well and begin planning for spring. As gardeners, we are always learning: trying new plants and techniques, diagnosing problems (what insect or critter ate the leaves off my Swiss chard, leaving only the stems? Why did the rabbits decide dahlias were their preferred snack this year?), overcoming setbacks, and planning for the next growing season.

Let's continue to cultivate our gardens, enhance life in our communities, and develop the next generation of gardeners. I look forward to meeting each of you, learning more about your clubs, and celebrating your extraordinary talents.

And, most of all, have fun! Gardeners are always planting, planning, and looking toward the future.

Ellen

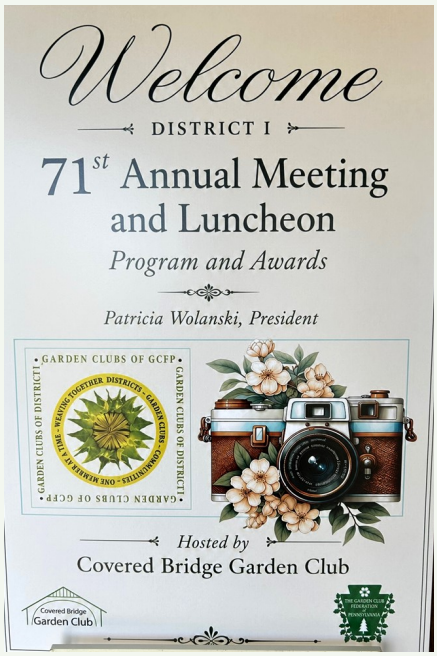
DISTRICT I ANNUAL MEETING AND LUNCHEON

Embracing a garden camera theme, Gayle Slaybaugh and her committee from Covered Bridge Garden Club did a remarkable job organizing this year's luncheon—their first time hosting! From the beautiful welcome signs and delectable pastries to the elegantly set tables—each complete with a wrapped favor for each guest—every detail was thoughtfully executed. There were 100 guests in attendance who enjoyed a delicious lunch and an engaging presentation on capturing the perfect garden photo by Rob Cardillo, founding partner of Blue Root Media, which produces *GROW,* the award-winning PHS magazine, making the event truly memorable.

District Director Pam Walsh "passed the torch" to Ellen Barron from Radley Run Garden and Social Club. Other District Officer installments were Assistant Director Sharon Richardson from Uwchlan Garden Club, Secretary Louise Sheehan from the Garden Club of Springfield, and Trearurer Mary Ann Hanagan from Four Seasons Garden Club.

Contributing to the success of the event, each club donated a lovely centerpiece for the tables, along with a wonderful item for the raffle. Bridget Lininger created the beautiful camera-themed honor design for President Wolanski.

Distinguished guests and speakers included GCFP President Pat Wolanski, First Vice President Tonya Young, and Second Vice President Mary Hetrick.







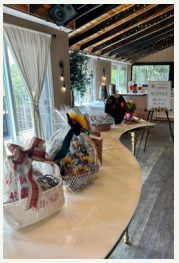




























2026 DISTRICT I AWARDS ANNOUNCED AT THE LUNCHEON

FORGET-ME-NOT
Maryann DeSanto
GC of Springfield



EXCEPTIONAL HORTICULTURIST
Helene Reid
Uwchlan GC



DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S SPECIAL RECOGNITION
Ellen Barron
Radley Run G & S C



PERENNIAL BLOOM
Nancy Cuttic
Uwchlan GC



Laurels

Garden Club of Bala Cynwyd
Joan Kokoska
Pat Whitmore

The Country Gardeners
Alexandra Brock
Maria Kotch
Bonnie Kushnerick
Margie Stern

Covered Bridge Garden Club
Marianne Hubbert
Gayle Slaybaugh

Elverson Garden Club
Laura Alden
Lisa Cherpanich
Keith Simonetti
Mike Walls

Four Seasons Garden Club
Beth MacMillan
Bob Smyth

Spade and Trowel Club
Karen Burns
Meredith Dragish
Beth Vinyard

Radley Run Garden & Social Club
Vicky Zajac

The Garden Club of Springfield
Anne Brandt
Kate Foster
Carol Wiegle

Uwchlan Garden Club
Carol McConnell
Kate Morrison-Teeter
Becky Zeeger

Villanova Garden Club
Roseann Murray

Wayne Woods Garden Club
Cathy Koffs
Mary Ann McGowan
Ellen Schmidt

DISTRICT I NOVEMBER 11 MEETING



All Members are Invited
Design Challenge: Fall Floral Arrangement
9:30 a.m.
Hosted by: District I and Uwchlan Garden Club

Uwchlan Meeting House
5 N Village Avenue, Exton

Sign Up by October 23 - Ellen Barron evbarron@hotmail.com

2026 DISTRICT I LONGWOOD GARDENS FLOWER SHOW

September 18-20, 2026

Congratulations on a successful and fabulous "Celebrating a Nation of Artists" Flower Show to:
Chair **Maria Jacobs**, Uwchlan Garden Club
Design Chair **Nancy Cuttic**, Uwchlan Garden Club
Horticulture Chair **Sharon Richardson**, Uwchlan Garden Club
Botanical Arts Chair **Pam Walsh**, Uwchlan Garden Club





District I Blue Ribbons and Awards

Division I Design

Section A. Classes 2 and 3

Andy Warhol



Denise Royal
Uwchlan GC

Alexander Calder



Alex Dulchinos, Uwchlan GC
Designer's Choice Award

Section B

Class 4. Anne Geddes



Maryann DeSanto
GC of Springfield

Class 5. Keith Haring



Valerie Burgess, Uwchlan GC
Table Artistry Award
Award of Design Excellence

Class 6. Andrew Wyeth



Terry Miller, Uwchlan GC

Section C

Class 7. Winslow Homer



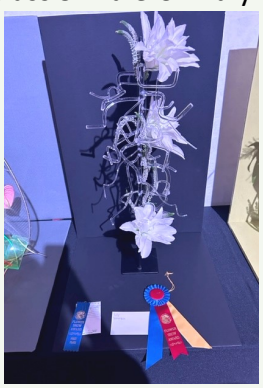
Pam Walsh, Uwchlan GC

Class 8. Jasper Johns



Meredith Graves
Spade & Trowel Club

Class 9. Dale Chihuly



Carrie Schreffler, Uwchlan GC
Tri-Color Award

Division III Section A Artistic Crafts

Class 10. Georgia O'Keeffe



Becky Zeeger, Uwchlan GC

Division III Section A Artistic Crafts

Class 11. Louis Tiffany



Jeanne Hutchinson
Elverson GC

Class 12. Tina Turner



Maria Jacobs, Uwchlan GC
Artistic Crafts Award

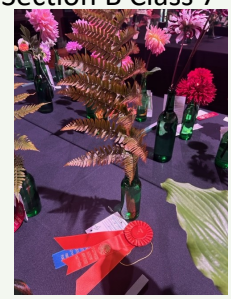
Division II Horticulture - Award of Merit

Section A Class 6



Terry Miller, Uwchlan GC
Award of Horticultural Excellence

Section B Class 7



Linda Southerling
Four Seasons GC

Section C Class 14



Sharon Richardson
Uwchlan GC

2026 DISTRICT I LONGWOOD GARDENS FLOWER SHOW

Division II Horticulture - Award of Merit

Section E Class 20



Linda Horner
Elverson GC

Section E Class 24



Bonnie Kushnerick
The Country Gardeners

Arboreal Award

Section G Class 31



Kate Sevensky
GC of Springfield

Grower's Choice Award

Section H Class 34



Lynn Betson
Elverson GC

Horticulture Sweepstakes - **Susan Keeley, Elverson GC** Design Sweepstakes - **Carrie Schreffer, Uwchlan GC**
Longwood Gardens Award of Excellence - **Terry Miller, Uwchlan GC**

Division II Horticulture Blue Ribbons

Section A. Annuals in Bloom

Class 1.0 - Karen Burns	Spade & Trowel Club
Class 4.0 - Sunny McGeorge	Spade & Trowel Club
Class 5.1 - Meredith Graves	Spade & Trowel Club
Class 5.2 - Chris Tarlecki	Uwchlan GC
Class 6.1 - Terry Miller	Uwchlan GC
Class 6.2 - Paula Elisio	Wayne Woods GC
Class 6.3 - Susan Keeley	Elverson GC
Class 6.4 - Susan Keeley	Elverson GC
Class 6.5 - Ruth Kofke	Uwchlan GC

Section B. Annuals Grown for Foliage

Class 7.1 - Carol McConnell	Uwchlan GC
Class 7.2 - Beth Vinyard	Spade & Trowel Club
Class 7.3 - Kate Sevensky	GC of Springfield
Class 7.4 - Linda Southerling	Four Seasons GC
Class 8.1 - Chris Tarlecki	Uwchlan GC
Class 8.2 - Vanessa Peterson	Elverson GC
Class 9.0 - Marcia Bitner	Elverson GC
Class 9.1 - Chris Tarlecki	Uwchlan GC
Class 9.2 - Maria Jacobs	Uwchlan GC
Class 10.0 - Lynn Betson	Elverson GC

Section C. Bulbs, Corms, Tubers

Class 11.0 - Marla Vanore	GC of Springfield
Class 11.1 - Linda Horner	Elverson GC
Class 12.0 - Karen Burns	Spade & Trowel Club
Class 14.2 - Sharon Richardson	Uwchlan GC
Class 14.3 - Chris Tarlecki	Uwchlan GC
Class 14.4 - Sharon Richardson	Uwchlan GC
Class 14.6 - Susan Keeley	Elverson GC
Class 14.7 - Terry Miller	Uwchlan GC
Class 15.0 - Beth MacMillan	Four Seasons GC

Section D. Perennials

Class 16.0 - Karen Burns	Spade & Trowel Club
Class 17.0 - Carrie Schreffler	Uwchlan GC
Class 18.0 - Kate Sevensky	GC of Springfield
Class 19.0 - Susan Keeley	Elverson GC
Class 20.1 - Kate Sevensky	GC of Springfield
Class 20.2 - Linda Horner	Elverson GC
Class 20.3 - Susan Keeley	Elverson GC
Class 20.4 - Meredith Graves	Spade & Trowel Club
Class 20.5 - Carrie Schreffler	Uwchlan GC

Section E. Herbs. One variety not to exceed 3 stems

Class 21.0 - Carol McConnell	Uwchlan GC
Class 22.0 - Terry Miller	Uwchlan GC
Class 23.0 - Pat Neff	The Country Gardeners
Class 24.1 - Bonnie Kushnerick	The Country Gardeners
Class 24.2 - Terry Miller	Uwchlan GC

Section G. Cut Branches

Class 28.0 Linda Southerling	Four Seasons GC
Class 29.0 - Beth Vinyard	Spade & Trowel Club
Class 30.0 - Maria Jacobs	Uwchlan GC
Class 31.0 - Kate Sevensky	GC of Springfield
Class 32.1 - Meredith Graves	Spade & Trowel Club
Class 32.2 - Susan Keeley	Elverson GC
Class 32.3 - Linda Horner	Elverson GC

Section H. Container-Grown House Plants

Class 33.1 - Fran Wilson	Spade & Trowel Club
Class 33.2 - Susan Keeley	Elverson GC
Class 33.4 - Louise Sheehan	GC of Springfield
Class 34.1 - Marilyn Small	Uwchlan GC
Class 34.2 - Lynn Betson	Elverson GC
Class 34.3 - Maria Jacobs	Uwchlan GC
Class 35.1 - Terry Miller	Uwchlan GC
Class 35.2 - Nancy Cuttic	Uwchlan GC

NGC SCHOOLS

Environmental



Gardening



Flower Show

Become a Flower Show Judge!



Landscape Design



For more detailed info and registration go to
https://gardenclub.org/our-schools

NGC GRANTS and PROGRAMS

Please log in as a member to be able to see information on all of the grants listed. gardenclub.org

"Blooming Beginnings" Flower Show Award
To clubs hosting their first ever NGC Flower Show. Receive a Brick Paver in the NGC Path of Success at NGC Headquarters in St. Louis, Missouri. More info HERE.

NGC Video Café -- Free videos on Gardening Tips, Club Resources, Floral Design, Webinars, and more! More info HERE.

Espoma Grant
Receive Espoma plant food and potting soils to support your club's projects. - October 1 - May 31 More info HERE.

Ames Tools Grant
Apply for high-quality tools to help your club complete its projects efficiently. January 1 - March 1. More info HERE.

Natural Disaster Grant
Apply for garden-related restoration efforts to replant parks, and municipal gardens due to natural disasters.

More Information **HERE**.

Youth Pollinator Gardens Grant
Up to $200 is available for projects that include educational materials on the vital role pollinators play in nature and youth involvement
More Info HERE. Youth Pollinator Power Book HERE

Plant-A-Tree - formerly Penny Pines
New donation process guidelines. HERE

Native Plant and Wildflowers Educational Program HERE
Up to $500 is available to be used toward an educational program on the subject of native plants and wildflowers. More Information **HERE**.

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The official publication of National Garden Clubs published quarterly. Subscribe HERE

2027 NGC CONVENTION

May 13 - 17, 2027

Madison, Wisconsin

CLUB NEWS

COVERED BRIDGE GARDEN CLUB

Kathleen Tauber

Our club season normally runs from September through May, concluding with our yearly plant sale. This year we extended to June, wrapping up with a garden tour offered by one of our members, and it was an experience well worth it. As we proceeded from meadows to bog pond to raised strawberry beds and other areas in between, we enjoyed our private tour of a truly unique site in Malvern. Liz Tankel has invested years of thought and planning with a bit of serendipity to create a beautiful and interesting collection of plantings and garden creations.

Our community projects continue with our pollinator gardens at the Duportail House in Chesterbrook and at the senior center (BVAA) in Phoenixville. Both are supported financially by the club. The former was designed by one of our members who is a trained horticulturist and planted and maintained by the Duportail staff. The latter has been planted and maintained by a member and her spouse but a garden committee is being assembled of seniors who frequent the center and have enjoyed the plantings. In addition, two planter pots were donated by a local nursery, and they frame the front door, greeting all who enter. Both the pots and the garden were on view for participants of a BirdTown garden tour in June that began at the center and the center's 50th anniversary celebration in May. A representative of Journeyworks was available during the tour who could explain the garden's pollinator plants that were purchased from that organization.







THE COUNTRY GARDENERS

Janet Fassbender

The Country Gardeners have plenty of interesting projects to keep them busy this fall!

"A Fall Affair" Tea Fundraiser takes place on November 12 at the Temenos Retreat Center in West Chester - see separate posting for details on purchasing tickets. (Page 21)

Shortly thereafter, on November 20 and 21, the club is organizing three wreath-making workshops at the Middletown Library. The December program will be a Horticulture Therapy project with the residents of the Fair Acres Geriatric Center. And as always, the Blue Star Markers will be decorated for Veterans Day, November 11, honoring the men and women of all branches of the military.

FOUR SEASONS GARDEN CLUB

Mary Ann Hanagan

In June, Four Seasons held our annual community event at the Kennett Library. For the last three years, Garden Week at the Library has been celebrated with a presentation by Leah Brooks, horticulturist from Mount Cuba Nature Center. Leah had an excellent slide presentation on "Specialist Pollinators." This event is always well attended by the community, and the Library enjoys hosting our presentations each year.

July was a great month at the Gathering Place at Kennett. Our annual floral design workshop was well attended, with 22 seniors participating. The workshop continues to grow each year, and it is always a pleasure to work with and spend time with the participants.

August featured our Annual Picnic, held at Old Stone in Cartmel, a beautiful old stone house full of character. Members provided a variety of delicious dishes, making it a special occasion.

Four Season's September meeting was made possible by two of our members, Soraya Goldstein and Diane Siebold. Under their guidance, we made our own topiary arrangements, and Diane made a fall floral arrangement in a tall glass vase with various beans and fall foliage.





WAYNE WOODS GARDEN CLUB

Anne McCrary

As the new Wayne Woods Garden Club year begins and autumn settles into our gardens, it's the perfect time to enjoy the beauty of the season while looking ahead to another year of growing, learning, and sharing together.

Our September kickoff meeting featured a Build-Your-Own Cider Bar where we created hot apple cider combinations from a variety of spices, fresh herbs, fruit juices, and citrus peel mix-ins. We had fun taste-testing each other's custom creations and trying to guess their special blend of mix-ins. Hot apple cider with fresh mint, lemon juice, and allspice was very refreshing!

October's meeting is a hands-on workshop for houseplants in need of a little rescue. Our garden club will be dividing and repotting member house plants to give them the TLC they need to grow. We're all looking forward to digging in the dirt and taking home happy healthy plants to brighten the coming winter days.

Looking ahead, other activities scheduled for October include a Blue Star Marker clean-up, a Meals On Wheels workshop, and a field trip to the John James Audubon Center. It is a busy Fall!

VILLANOVA GARDEN CLUB

Meg Cave

What stood out as Project #1 this summer? You may have guessed it: **The Garden Party! And why?**

First, it was a **collaboration**. Working with the Garden Club of Bala Cynwyd, we each found three gardens, and though not really planned, each one was totally different. As the only two clubs in the district who came together as partners, we would encourage others to do the same if another Garden Party is planned.

Second, **it broadened our reach into the community.** It got our name out there and generated interest in what we do. Mostly, we used social media to advertise the tours, and it worked well.

Third, it was an opportunity to **meet new gardeners and experienced ones.**

The payoff quite literally also was $250, recognizing our placing 3rd in ticket sales in the small club category, plus $900, which was our share of the per-ticket sale. Notably, the Garden Club of Bala Cynwyd received the same dollar amounts.

Truly, the Garden Party was a thrill, and we thank Nancy Cuttic and her team, the advertisers, Lorraine Troiano and her club, and, of course, our members!





Elverson Garden Club

Growing together since 1929
Elverson, Pennsylvania 19520
Cultivate love and friendship as your choicest blooms

- Debbie Wright

June began with our own Vanessa Peterson, who shared her knowledge and experience growing microgreens and sprouts. We began our path to healthful eating by sampling some microgreens, and then planting our next batch to take along.



Our annual July picnic was quite an event! Club member Mike Walls hosted at his home, where we toured gardens and learned all about growing cut flowers. We were then treated to a flower truck brimming with blooms, and each person was able to create a bouquet to take along. There were so many happy faces!

Our summer experiences continued with garden tours at several different members' homes, and a tour of a professionally designed ecological garden. We also learned some amazing facts about Green Roof growing from Herb Hamilton, and ergonomic techniques to avoid injury in the garden from an occupational therapist.



Club members continue the maintenance and improvement of the Detterline Hall gardens. Here is a group of dedicated planters, after adding some prize-winning lilies to the gardens.

Many club members participated in the District I Longwood Gardens Flower Show, entering design and hort classes, as well as volunteering to help at the show. A few highlights: Sue Keeley took top hort honors with 46 points and the Horticulture Sweepstakes Award; Linda Horner received an Award of Merit, and Lynn Betson received the Grower's Choice Award.

Fall will find us continuing to learn. Upcoming topics include: Seed Starting, Designing for the Holidays, and Gardens Around the World. Once again, we will be decorating the Hibernia Mansion for holiday tours. Members will also be busy planning our Philadelphia Flower Show 2027 exhibit.

Radley Run Garden Club

51st Annual Luncheon and Fashion Show
Thursday, November 19, 2026, at 10 a.m.
cabi clothing will present their fashions and accessories
Vender Boutique & Raffle Basket Ticket Sales (Cash Only Please)
Lunch is served at 12:15 p.m. Cash Bar
Contact amjames55@gmail.com

RADLEY RUN GARDEN and SOCIAL CLUB

Muriel McDaniel

Although September is the beginning of our season, various committees have been working all summer on our chief fundraiser--our 51st Annual Luncheon and Fashion Show. They have been choosing menus, creating centerpieces, assembling gift baskets, and writing invitations. This event is part of our mission to support horticultural education, with proceeds benefitting two area colleges--Williamson College of the Trades and West Chester University. It will be held at Radley Run Country Club on Thursday, November 19. For more information, contact amjames55@gmail.com. Deadline for reservations is November 7.



GCFP President Pat Wolanski installing Ellen Barron as District I Director

We are also proud to announce that at the GCFP Annual Meeting, our own Ellen Barron, was installed as District I Director. During the past year, Ellen was busy serving as our Garden Club President as well as Assistant District Director! Also at the meeting, Vicky Zajac received a "Laurel" for her work on our club's finances.



Our members also enjoyed several lectures at our meetings by Norman E. Donoghue II, author of *Prisoners of Congress – Quakers in Exile 1777 – 1778*. This month, Ava Borowski from the Mt. Cuba Center will speak on Autumn Native Perennials. We also have two trips planned--the Barnes Arboretum and Henry Schmieder Arboretum.



GCFP CONVENTION 2027

April 19 - 21

DoubleTree Resort by Hilton Hotel Lancaster

Joanne Baylis, Convention Chair

THE GARDEN CLUB OF SPRINGFIELD

Louise Sheehan

The Garden Club of Springfield is celebrating a special milestone—our **95th anniversary!** The club was organized in November 1931, and we proudly continue its tradition of gardening, education, community involvement, and friendship.

This has been a busy and enjoyable summer, with opportunities for members to share their gardening with the community.

On June 20, seven members of the Garden Club of Springfield opened their gardens to the public as part of the Pennsylvania Garden Party. **Jan Coppola, Deb Watson, Maryann DeSanto, Lois Sellers, Marla Vanore, and Kate Sevensky** welcomed visitors, while **Jane Nyiri** shared the Boys and Girls Club Gardens of Chester.

Many club members volunteered as helpers at the gardens, while others invited friends and family to enjoy the tour. Visitors came from the Springfield community and farther away, including members of other **District I Garden Clubs**. Everyone agreed it was a wonderful event and an opportunity to showcase our gardens and our club!

For the first time, our members hosted a table at **Springfield National Night Out** in August. The event featured local vendors, organizations, and emergency services and was well attended. Our members enjoyed meeting people from the community and introducing them to the Garden Club of Springfield.



On September 12, a beautiful late summer day, our second annual **Harvest Festival** was held. Many community members came out to enjoy the festivities and support the club. Visitors could purchase fall plants, crafts created by club members, gently used items, and home baked goods. An educational display featuring plant and flower specimens highlighted our members' horticultural knowledge. A children's corner, with pumpkin painting, was especially popular with families.

Another September highlight was the **District I Flower Show.** To prepare our members, **Kate Sevensky** hosted an educational program at her home where we learned about selecting and entering horticultural specimens for the show. Seven club members entered designs and horticultural specimens: **Jeannie Cammerota, Maryann DeSanto, Jane Nyiri, Kate Sevensky, Louise Sheehan, Marla Vanore, and Deb Watson.** Their efforts were rewarded with numerous awards! Several members volunteered as clerks and hostesses during the show. Everyone was impressed by the creativity, talent, and beauty on display.





Our September meeting brought everyone together for a **95th Anniversary Celebration.** Members enjoyed an anniversary cake and other refreshments and perused historical scrapbooks. We also celebrated the Flower Show award winners, our Laurel award winners, as well as **Maryann DeSanto,** recipient of the District I 2026 Forget Me Not award. Adding to the festivities, Samantha Nestory, Stoneleigh Engagement Manager, presented a program on pollinators. Her presentation was a reminder of the important role gardens play in supporting the natural world.

UWCHLAN GARDEN CLUB

Karen Yoder

Uwchlan Garden Club had a productive summer season, beginning with several members opening their private gardens to the public as part of the successful Pennsylvania Garden Party initiative.

Six members also hosted pop-up garden tours, inviting other members to participate in guided tours of their gardens. Light refreshments were served during the tours. Members enjoyed the experience and gained ideas and inspiration for their own gardens.

The summer season also featured several inspirational speakers.

- In June, David Culp shared his extensive collection of "50ish" perennial flowers he could not live without.
- In July, Kathy Cole, an avid gardener, showcased her cutting garden, which she has transformed into a small business.
- In September, Greg Tepper shared his enthusiasm and expertise in exceptional design, with a particular focus on small arrangements.

Summer garden trips included visits to several outstanding private gardens, including those of Steve Van Valin, Wayne Guydon, Gary Erb, Kathy Cole, and David Culp's Brandywine Cottage.

Monthly meetings continued to include club business updates, horticulture lessons, and educational critiques of the "Design of the Month."

Sprouts and Seedlings planted an herb garden.

Several members assisted Horticulture Therapy with floral designs at Simpson Meadows Retirement Community.

Our Community Outreach program remained active, planting and maintaining planters at the Downingtown Library and the Brandywine Active Aging Center.

This year's scholarship was awarded to a relative of a club member who is pursuing a degree in biology with academic goals of continued studies in cancer research.

In commemoration of our nation's 250th anniversary, the York Fair hosted a flower show with the theme "Growing a Nation." Three club members created a period dried-flower grouping and received third place ribbon.

The summer concluded with the District I Flower Show at Longwood Gardens. Uwchlan was well represented, with several members submitting and winning horticulture and design entries in a variety of categories.

Congratulations to all of the members who received ribbons, including those who earned top awards such as Design Excellence, Designer's Choice, Artistic Crafts, Tri-Color, Award of Merit, Table Artistry Award, Award of Horticultural Excellence, Design Sweepstakes, and Longwood Gardens Award of Excellence!





District I Wins Big with the PA Garden Party

Nancy Cuttic, Chair, Pennsylvania Garden Party

President Pat Wolanski's vision for a statewide garden tour became a reality at the end of June. The event showcased 89 beautiful private and unique public gardens attracting visitors from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and Delaware.. Of the 12 statewide tours offered, 4 of them were from District I clubs.

- Spade & Trowel Club
- Garden Club of Springfield
- Uwchlan Garden Club
- Garden Club of Bala Cynwyd joined with Villanova Garden Club

The tour achieved its goals of increasing GCFP visibility, showcasing Pennsylvania gardens, creating membership opportunities, supporting local businesses, and providing host clubs a framework in which to earn money to boost their treasuries. There were 27 Club Liaisons and Ad Coordinators and over 300 volunteers statewide who coordinated garden preparation, tour promotion, ticket sales, advertising, and visitor hospitality.

As a result of the tour:
- $24,300 in advertising revenue was generated
- 1,200 tickets were sold
- $9,000 in prize money was awarded
- $27,375 was distributed to host clubs

Highest ticket sale winners from District I were:
1st Place Large Clubs -- $1,000 to Uwchlan Garden Club
2nd Place Small Clubs -- $750 to Spade & Trowel Club
3rd Place Small Clubs -- $500 to GC of Bala Cynwyd/Villanova GC

Feedback from our District I clubs was highly positive. The Cassat Garden of the Garden Club of Bala Cynwyd counted over 300 visitors! Guests inquired about the possibility of future statewide tours as this event was very favorably received. The PA Garden Party truly made our Keystone a Gemstone!

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Horticulture Therapy - Maryann DeSanto, The Garden Club of Springfield

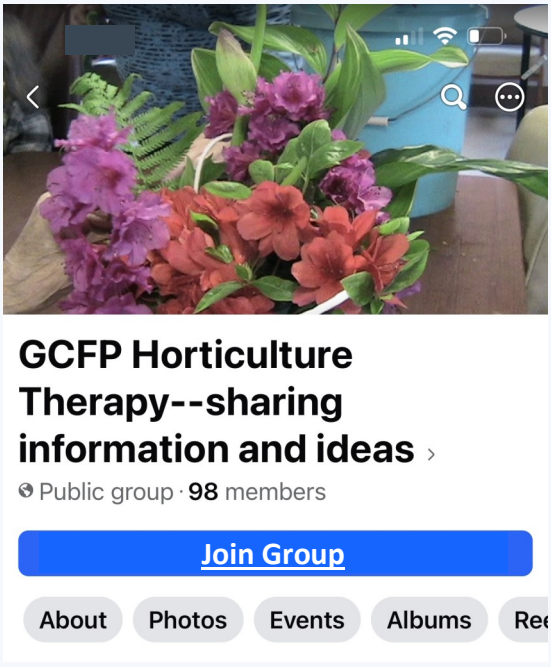
Working in our gardens—or even simply visiting them—has been shown to benefit both the mind and body. Yet, few nursing home residents have the opportunity to visit gardens or spend time outdoors enjoying the beauty of nature.

As garden club members, we can help fill this void by bringing the benefits of horticulture directly to them and creating a meaningful sensory experience. Research shows that exposure to flowers, greenery, gardens, and the act of arranging flowers can have a calming effect and promote a sense of well-being.

Horticulture Therapy can be a very rewarding experience for GCFP members involved with this program. When visiting residents, along with presenting a design or craft, consider including a short presentation on the origins of the holiday you are celebrating or highlighting one of the flowers in your design with facts about its variety and care.

For more ideas, visit GCFP's Horticulture Therapy Facebook page, *GCFP Horticulture Therapy*, or contact me if you would like a presentation on how to initiate a Horticulture Therapy program in your club.

DOES YOUR CLUB SPONSOR HORTICULTURE THERAPY?
Join the GCFP Facebook Page



COMMITTEE REPORTS Continued

AWARDS - Marilyn Small, Uwchlan GC

Awards Season is Almost Here!

Deadlines are approaching, with NGC awards due starting December 1, and CAR-SGC and GCFP awards due in January. Be sure to review all relevant awards manuals. For specific deadline dates, check the updated GCFP Awards Manual available on the GCFP website.

The District I Forget-Me-Not recipient, Maryann DeSanto of The Garden Club of Springfield, and the Exceptional Horticulturist, Helene Reid of the Uwchlan Garden Club, will be published in the November Keystone Gardener Online.

Important Reminder:

Every club must have a signed photo release form on file for each member to cover photos in awards submissions, newsletters, and Facebook pages. In addition, any awards submission with a photo that includes children or non-club members must be accompanied by a signed release. All necessary forms can be found in the "Club Use Forms" section of the "Forms Library" on the GCFP website.

As always, if you have any questions about awards, please contact me mmsmall@comcast.net.

GCFP Awards Page on the GCFP Website
pagardenclubs.org

Seed Money

Marjorie Stillwell Sears
Old York Road GC, XI

Be sure to apply for **"Seed Money"** for your planting projects. Application deadline is February 16, 2027.

Winners will be announced at the Convention in April.

You can access the fillable Seed Money Application from the GCFP Website under "Awards."

Seed Money Application

WAYS AND MEANS

Linda Southerling, Four Seasons Garden Club
Nancy Cuttic, Uwchlan Garden Club

The raffle held at the GCFP Annual District I Luncheon was a huge success due to the contribution of items from clubs and members. An assortment of items from artwork to fragrant gift packages resulted in a record number of tickets sold.

Special thanks to the Covered Bridge Garden Club for a fabulous luncheon and to all attendees.

PHS LIAISON - Sharon Fullerton
GC of Bala Cynwyd

2027 Theme: *Iconic*

"Iconic," the 2027 PHS Flower Show theme, celebrates people, places, objects, and ideas that are famous, widely recognized, and symbolic of a particular time or culture. For inspiration, consider iconic design styles, historic landscapes, and heirloom plants—along with Philadelphia's own historic gardens and enduring symbols, including the Liberty Bell and the Rocky statue. Check the website phsonline.org for exhibit information.

Volunteer Opportunities

PHS is seeking volunteers for several show roles:

- Clerks
- Barrier Aides
- Recorders
- Stager

Volunteering is a rewarding way to support the show—and enjoy an early-morning look before the crowds arrive. For details, visit phsonline.org or email volunteer@pennhort.org.

Workshops and Key Dates

PHS has scheduled workshops and presentations in both Horticulture and Design. Consult the Exhibitor's Guide, also available online, for dates, times, and locations.



Member Preview Day:
March 12, 2027

Flower Show:
March 13–21, 2027

COMMITTEE REPORTS Continued

ENVIRONMENTAL - Janet Fassbender, The Country Gardeners

Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership

In 2018, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation set a goal of having 10 million trees planted in Pennsylvania to improve water quality in the rivers and streams that feed into the Chesapeake Bay Watershed. Pennsylvania is one of six states that contribute to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and has more than 85,500 miles of waterways that flow into the Chesapeake Bay.

As of May 2026, approximately 8.7 million trees have been planted in Pennsylvania. Chester County has contributed 22,503 trees toward that goal. Only part of Chester County lies within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, while more rural areas of Pennsylvania have contributed substantially more trees.

Although every tree planted contributes to improving water quality, large numbers of trees planted together can significantly reduce more pollutants than sparsely planted areas. A forested riparian buffer, which consists of trees planted along a stream bank, can reduce 50% of nitrogen, 65% of phosphorus, and 80% of sediment when the buffer is 35 feet wide.

Keystone 10 MILLION TREES PARTNERSHIP

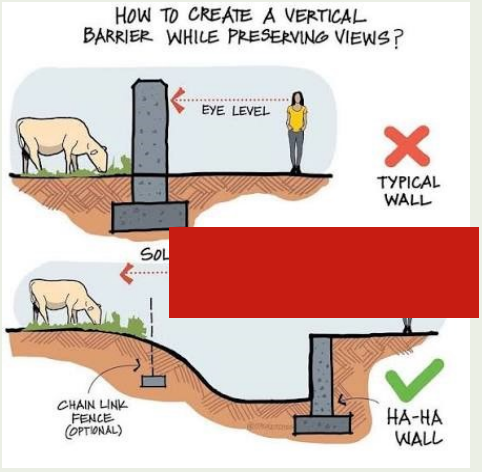
The Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership offers **free trees to Pennsylvania residents** during planting season. A minimum of 25 trees is required, and priority is given to Pennsylvania counties located within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

For more information, click on Keystone 10 Million Trees.

HAVE YOU EVER YEARD OF A HA-HA WALL/FENCE?

A ha-ha fence is a sunken boundary wall or ditch that keeps farm animals out of a yard while leaving the outdoor view completely open. It looks like a normal, open lawn from a distance.





Garden Club of Springfield
Founded 1931 Federated 1933

The Garden Club of Springfield Invites You to
a Floral Design Demonstration on Wednesday, November 18

Presentation by:

Tonya Young, First Vice President, The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania

10 a.m., Design Presentation, Design Raffle, and Refreshments

First Presbyterian Church of Springfield, 356 Summit Road, Springfield

Guests $7 admission at the door.

RSVP to Jan Coppola jan.coppola@yahoo.com by November 11.

COMMITTEE REPORTS Continued

SPROUTS & SEEDLINGS

Kate Morrison-Teeter, Uwchlan Garden Club

The goal of Sprouts & Seedlings activities is not simply to keep children busy with a gardening project; we want them to understand why things grow, to ask questions, to make observations, and to develop a genuine curiosity about the natural world. To extend the learning beyond the workshop, each session should include a participant handout on the activity, it's purpose, and a learning objective, along with a list of recommended reading, supporting the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania's reading initiative.

Learning by Doing

Here are some projects that I did with my Sprouts & Seedlings group:

This past winter: **pinecone bird feeders.** They strung cranberries, dried oranges, and millet to hang. They discovered connections between plants, wildlife, and the environment and helping birds through a tough winter.

In the spring, they created **terrariums**. They built miniature ecosystems and learned about moisture, growing conditions, and the environments plants need to thrive.

For our **summer herb garden**, children experienced the satisfaction of growing something they could see, touch, smell, and eventually use. Gardening became a sensory experience as well as a lesson in growing food with recipes included.

This fall, we will explore one of the most fundamental processes in gardening: **germination**. Using alfalfa seeds, the children will watch a seed transform before their eyes. Within days, what looks like an ordinary little seed begins to swell, develop roots, and produce new growth. It is a simple activity, but it offers a wonderful opportunity to observe one of nature's processes firsthand.

District I—Let's Share What We Are Growing!

I am honored to have been asked to help report on District I Sprouts & Seedlings programming, and I look forward to learning from the many wonderful programs taking place throughout our district.

I would be happy to support any club that has questions, is looking for ideas, or would like to start or expand a Sprouts & Seedlings program

- What is your club doing with Sprouts & Seedlings?
- What programs have been particularly successful?
- What activities have captured the children's attention?
- What have you learned along the way?

When we come together as a district, we don't need to reinvent the wheel. We can share our ideas, build on one another's successes, and learn from our experiences.

After all, gardening is about planting, nurturing, and sharing—and that is exactly what we can do for the next generation of gardeners.

Regards, Kate Morrison-Teeter
katherineteeter@gmail.com 484-356-8456 – cell







DISTRICT I BLUE STAR MEMORIALS

1948 Rose Tree Park, Upper Providence Township, Delaware County near Media, PA, sponsored and paid for by **District I,** in cooperation with District 6-0 of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and dedicated on February 18, 1948. (Blue Star Highway Marker)



Wayne Woods GC

1976 Intersection of Route 202 and South Gulph Road on the southeast corner, King of Prussia, Montgomery County. Sponsored by and paid for by the **Wayne Woods Garden Club,** District I, and dedicated on October 25, 1976. It was removed during construction and refurbished in 2004 and rededicated on October 18, 2005.

1992 Valley Forge Service Plaza, milepost 324.59 eastbound. Sponsored and paid by **District I** and dedicated on January 24 1992. (Blue Star Highway Marker - PA Turnpike)

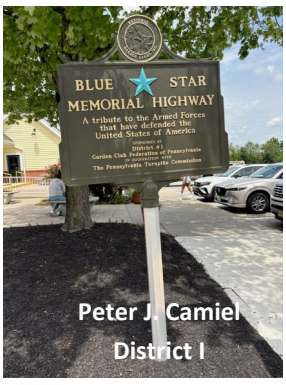
2006 Boeing Company, U.S. Route 261 and the Industrial Highway, Eddy Stone Borough, Delaware County. Sponsored by **District I** paid for by Principal Financial Group and dedicated November 9, 2006. (Blue Star Highway Marker- PennDOT District 6-0)

2007 Penn DOT Delaware County Welcome Center, Route 1-95 (northbound), Lower Chichester, Delaware County. Sponsored by **District I** and paid for by JoAnn Coates of Four Seasons Garden Club of Kennett Square. Dedicated April 18, 2007. (Blue Star Highway Marker-PennDOT District 6-0)

2007 Springfield Veteran's Memorial Park, 331 W Springfield Road (SR 320), Springfield, Delaware County. Sponsored by **The Garden Club of Springfield**, District I, and paid for by a grant from Principal Financial Group. Dedicated on April 27, 2007. (Blue Star Memorial Marker)

2009 PennDOT Park and Ride Business 30 and US Route 202 in Frazer, Chester County. Sponsored and paid for by **District I.** Dedicated on April 30, 2009. (Blue Star Highway Marker-PennDOT District 6-0)

2011 King of Prussia Service Plaza, Turnpike milepost 328 (Westbound). Sponsored and paid for by **Districts I & XI** and dedicated on November 11, 2011. (Blue Star Highway Marker-PA Turnpike)



Peter J. Camiel
District I

2014 Peter J. Camiel Service Plaza, Turnpike Milepost 304.8 (Westbound) Elverson, Chester County. Sponsored by **District I** and paid for by NGC Sage and Roses Fund Grant and dedicated on June 17, 2014 (Blue Star Highway Marker – PA Turnpike)

2016 Uwchlan Meeting House 1756, Lionville, PA. Sponsored by and paid for by **Garden Class of The Women's Community Club of Uwchlan, now Uwchlan Garden Club,** District I. Dedicated October 7, 2016. District I (Blue Star By-Way Marker) Rededicated by the Uwchlan Garden Club July 5, 2026.


The Country Gardeners

2022 PA Veteran's Museum, 12 East State Street, Media, PA. Sponsored and paid for by **The Country Gardeners** (established 1949) Lima, PA. Dedicated July 1, 2022. (Blue Star By-Way Marker)

DISTRICT I MEMBERS COMPLETING NGC SCHOOLS

National Garden Clubs Four Star Member - Completing All Four Schools
Sharon Richardson, Uwchlan Garden Club

Flower Show Judges

Valerie Burgess, Uwchlan GC
Nancy Cuttic, Uwchlan GC
Wendy Fox, Uwchlan & Elverson GCs
Laura Gregg, GC of Bala Cynwyd
Louise Heilig, GC of Bala Cynwyd
Denise Schalleur Klein, Spade & Trowel Club
Terry Miller, Uwchlan GC
Sharon Richardson, Uwchlan GC
Gretchen Riley, GC of Bala Cynwyd
Pam Walsh, Uwchlan GC
Barbara White, Uwchlan GC

Emeritus FS Judges: Kay Leto, Four Seasons GC; Elise Payne and Nancy Heckscher, GC of Bala Cynwyd

Student FS Judges: Carrie Schreffler and Chris Tarlecki, Uwchlan GC

Gardening

Sharon Richardson, Uwchlan GC
Mary Jo Schlomann, Uwchlan GC
Carrie Schreffler, Uwchlan GC

Environmental

Carrie Schreffler, Uwchlan GC
Sharon Richardson, Uwchlan GC

Landscape Design

Sharon Richardson, Uwchlan GC
Mary Jo Schlomann, Uwchlan GC
Carrie Schreffler, Uwchlan GC
Darlene Snyder, Uwchlan GC

A Fall Affair



Join The Country Gardeners
for a delicious
English Afternoon Tea

Sandwiches, Scones, & Desserts
Prosecco and Tea

Raffle Baskets & Prizes

$ 45

Temenos Retreat Center
West Chester, PA

November 12, 2026
12-2 pm



For tickets: Country-gardeners.square.site
Questions: countrygardenlima@gmail.com

CHRISTMAS FAIR

UWCHLAN GARDEN CLUB
Saturday, December 5, 2026
8:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Fresh Cut Local Greens
Handmade Wreaths, Swags, & Planters
Holiday Centerpieces & Outdoor Decor
Homemade Treats
Kids Korner, Raffle & More!

1756 Uwchlan Meeting House
5 North Village Avenue
Lionville, PA (GPS—Exton, PA)



SAVE the DATE

DISTRICT I BUS TRIP TO THE PITTSBURGH AREA

Departs on Monday, May 17

Some Major Highlights:

Phipps Conservatory

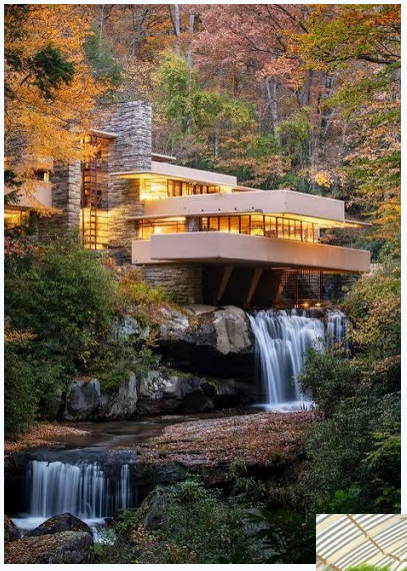
Flight 93 Memorial

Frank Lloyd Wright's

Fallingwater and Kentuck Knob

Pittsburgh Botanic Garden and more!

Watch for full brochure in your email.









YOUTH CORNER

LONGWOOD GARDENS

GREEN CAREERS EXPLORATION DAY

November 2

* Grades 9-12 *3 hours
* Interactive sessions with Longwood's staff
* Gain career insight while experiencing the gardens
* Meet career shadowing graduation requirements

More Info HERE

SCHOOL & YOUTH WEBINARS

More Info HERE

FAMILY LEARNING

October 10 @ 10 a.m. - Ages 5-14
Protecting our Feathered Friends
More Info HERE

TEEN VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

More Info HERE

INTERNSHIPS FOR U.S. STUDENTS

More Info HERE

MORRIS ARBORETUM & GARDENS

LEARN AND DISCOVER FOR KIDS & FAMILIES

YOUTH TOURS AND ADVENTURES

More Info HERE

DISTRICT I SEPTEMBER MEETING AND LUNCHEON HOST ROTATION

2027	Four Seasons Garden Club, Sept. 9, 2027
2028	Radley Run Garden and Social Club
2029	Garden Club of Springfield
2030	Villanova Garden Club
2031	Wayne Woods Garden Club
2032	Uwchlan Garden Club
2033	The Country Gardeners
2034	Spade & Trowel Club
2035	Elverson Garden Club
2036	Garden Club of Bala Cynwyd
2037	Covered Bridge Garden Club

UPCOMING DISTRICT I CLUB EVENTS

Open to the public. Support our fellow clubs.

November 12

The Country Gardeners - *A Fall Affair* Tea. Tickets $45. countrygardenlima@gmail.com

November 18

Garden Club of Springfield - Floral Design Demo by Tonya Young. 10 a.m. Guests $7.

November 19

Radley Run Garden Club's Annual Luncheon and Fashion Show at Radley Run Country Club benefitting scholarships. Tickets $60. Contact Ann James amjames56@gmail.com

November 20 and 21

The Country Gardeners will host three wreath-making workshops at the Middletown Library. Register at countrygardenlima@gmail.com

District I Meeting and Presentation

February on Zoom

Watch for info about a date and speaker
for our February meeting.

Keystone Gardener

Official Publication of the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania

Get all the latest GCFP news and info at your fingertips: May, July, November.
Check out GCFP's Keystone Gardener online newsletter (KG Online) **HERE**.
Get the password from your District Director.

NGC, CAR-SGC, GCFP, and DISTRICT I 2026-2027 CALENDAR

October 19-20	CAR-SGC Conference, Independence, OH
26-28	Flower Show School, Course IV, Gettysburg
November 4	GCFP Floral Design and Horticulture Webinar on Zoom, 7 p.m.
11	District I Meeting and Floral Design Challenge, 9:30 a.m.
12	The Country Gardeners' A *Fall Affair* Tea
18	Garden Club of Springfield's Floral Design Demo
19	Radley Run Garden Club's Annual Luncheon and Fashion Show
20-21	The Country Gardeners' wreath-making workshops
December 5	Uwchlan Garden Club's Christmas Fair
April 19-21	GCFP Convention at the DoubleTree Resort by Hilton in Lancaster

