The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

GCFP President, Pat Wolanski, called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM. **GCFP Chaplain, Margie Wolff,** gave the invocation, which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by the **1st Vice President, Tonya Young.** The roster was circulated on the first and second day of the meeting. **President Wolanski** declared that a quorum of at least 30 voting members were in attendance (Day 1: 59, Day 2: 54).

President Wolanski introduced the **former GCFP State Presidents** in attendance: Sharon Brown, Dot Yard, Angela Raitano, Joyce Milberg, Chris Leskosky, Sheila Croushore who had been present but left, and Leeanna Ryba. She also asked new District Directors to introduce themselves as well. They were: Ellen Barron – District I; Jane Kruse – District II/III; Patricia Thorsen – District IV; Joanne Fogelman – District V; Andrea Falchek – District VI; Diana Pelletier – District VII; Betty Wist – District VIII; Joane Laverty – District IX; Karen Humphreys – District X; and Mary Jo Garner – District XI.

REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS

President, Pat Wolanski, reported that since our June Board meeting, this Officer has had a very busy and rewarding three months. She had the opportunity to travel throughout Pennsylvania, visit with our members, and experience so much of what our Federation represents. She attended four Blue Star Dedications, one rededication, and one Gold Star Dedication. It is very important for her to attend these ceremonies as each one is a meaningful reminder of the service and sacrifice behind these special projects. At the invitation of the supervisor of the Perkiomen Valley School District, she toured the school district's arboretums along with members of the Pottstown Garden Club, District II/III. This is the first K-12 school in Pennsylvania with an accredited arboretum and the only K-12 school in the world with two accredited arboretums located on the main and west campuses and covering 76 acres. Who knew! Two of the schools have established storybook trails as well – so impressive! She also planted red, white and blue flowers at our township building in Worcester and at the Variety Club Camp for children with special needs, also in my township. So many of our clubs throughout Pennsylvania have done the same to show our contribution and patriotism as America celebrates its 250th birthday. Our inaugural Pennsylvania Garden Party was a tremendous success, and she is so proud of what our members accomplished together. It was wonderful to see gardens throughout Pennsylvania opened to the public and to experience the enthusiasm surrounding this new GCFP event. Most importantly, it provided our clubs not only with valuable community exposure, but also with financial rewards totaling $27,735. She had the pleasure of visiting Fordhook Farm on Mr. Ball's annual Open Day. Mr. Ball has generously supplied GCFP with thousands of Burpee seed packets, and she was especially pleased to have the opportunity to speak with him personally. She also attended the dedication of a painting for our Healing Art program at Fox Chase Cancer Center. The beautiful painting was created by Nancy Cuttic, and it was a very special She had an opportunity to see our members' talents reaching beyond our gardens and into our communities. This special program has been very successful with many pieces of artwork donated to medical facilities in Pennsylvania. District II/III alone donated 13 paintings. Our hearts are in the right place. GCFP Reads is another successful program that has received National Garden Club's attention with the Award of Excellence and a $500 check. Let's keep it going! District Directors and Presidents, please remember to pass along the book, Listening to Nature's Voice, which was provided to you to share with the next club in your District. The highlight of her summer was preparing to travel across Pennsylvania to attend each District Meeting. She always enjoys the opportunity to meet with our members in their own communities and hear about the wonderful work being done throughout our Federation. Each District is unique. The club presidents' reports, activities and

programs at each meeting have been both rewarding and educational. She also had the pleasure of seeing towns and villages she may never otherwise have had the opportunity to visit. Thank you all for your warm welcome and generosity in treating my two VP's and me to such wonderful days together. You always make us feel so special. She also enjoyed a wonderful Tri-refresher course, visiting Longwood Gardens, the Stroud Water Research Center and Mt. Cuba Center. She can only describe the course as "fabulous"! Thank you to Sharon Richardson for organizing such an inspiring and extremely educational tour. She has continued to promote Plant Pennsylvania, and was especially touched when a woman she met at a hotel during one of my travels learned about the project and became a $2,500 donor. Sometimes you never know where a conversation will lead – and that conversation led to meaningful support for our new initiative. She was also invited to attend District I's tour to David Culp's garden, which was beautiful, and participated in and judged District I's multi-garden-club flower show at Longwood Gardens. In addition, She had the privilege of judging flower shows in York, Trevose and Bethlehem. On September 17, she attended the National Garden Clubs Board Meeting. She has some additional information and notes from that meeting that she would like to share with you following her report. As the Vice Chair of Artistic Judges for the Philadelphia Flower Show, which will be celebrating its 200th anniversary this year, she is privileged to have the opportunity to invite and include GCFP judges to participate in the show. Since PHS is celebrating such a milestone, we have been promised that the show will be "epic" this year. It has been a busy summer, but more importantly, it has been a summer filled with opportunities to see our Federation in action. Wherever she has traveled, she has been reminded that GCFP is not simply an organization – it is our members, their gardens, their service, and their willingness to make a difference in their communities. And that is what makes her so proud to serve as your president.

1st Vice President, Tonya Young, thanked each District Director, Club President, and member who worked diligently to organize the 2026 annual meetings. She appreciated the exceptional attention to detail reflected in every aspect of these events. Each venue was distinctive and memorable; the meals were excellent, and I appreciated the warm hospitality. Traveling more than 1,800 miles across the state provided valuable opportunities to connect with members, learn from each district, and experience our organization's unique character. Although returning home was welcome, the tour ended with many fond memories and a renewed appreciation for our members' dedication. Those connections also made it especially gratifying to hear from members who enjoyed her talk on succession planning. The positive response reinforces my confidence that the GCFP is well positioned to remain strong, united, and prepared for continued growth in the years ahead. She was especially happy that members recognized that developing and supporting our future leaders is essential, with enthusiasm and commitment evident throughout the annual meeting tour. With that momentum in mind, since June she has focused on developing our new 2027-2029 Board, judging and exhibiting for flower shows both within and outside Pennsylvania, presenting flower show design programs for clubs preparing to hold flower shows, and promoting the mission of GCFP and NGC through participation at the York State Fair and my position as a shared leader in the Horticulture Department. She participated in meetings and planning sessions for the 2027 Convention. She toured the 2028 convention location with the committee. In August, immediately after chairing the 2026 Symposium in Gettysburg, she headed to Erie, where our 2026 annual meetings began the next day. She has also been collaborating to plan design workshops for PHS's upcoming Philadelphia Flower Show. These activities have provided valuable opportunities to represent the GCFP, strengthen relationships, and advance preparations for the year ahead. Those planning efforts were further strengthened through a Zoom meeting with our new group of enthusiastic District Directors. Together, we

established the annual meeting schedule for the next two years and finalized our Zoom meeting schedule through April 2027. We discussed bylaws and standing rules, as well as the dates and differences in fiscal years within each district. The meeting included thoughtful questions and discussions. She looks to the future with energy, purpose, and optimism, and I look forward to this group being part of the team.

2nd Vice President, Mary Hetrick, reported it was indeed this officer's pleasure to join the President and the 1st Vice President to travel around Pennsylvania! She enjoyed every single District's Annual Meeting. Meeting our Federation's members is the best part of serving as an officer. She hosted the second Zoom meeting between herself and the Garden Club Presidents. Sadly, under 20 Presidents attended. The next scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, November 18th at 6:30pm. She continues to attend Zoom meetings to assist The GCFP 1st Vice President' meetings with the District Directors. Other Zoom meetings have also been scheduled and hosted for the Design/Horticulture Webinar Chair. This officer has also attended planning meetings for the upcoming 2027 Convention. Arrangements for the meals for this Board Meeting have been completed. This officer has collected funds and will pass the checks to GCFP Treasurer today. The Pucketos Garden Club Pizza Celebration gave her another chance to learn more about the Pittsburgh area clubs. She has accepted the invitation and is looking forward to attending Ingomar Garden Club's 80th Anniversary Celebration. Like your annual meetings these other opportunities grant wonderful additional time with club members of the GCFP. She is looking forward to the October CAR- SGC 2026 Conference in Cleveland, Ohio.

Recording Secretary, Deborah Davis, reported that taken the minutes of the June 8-9, 2026 Finance, Executive and General Board meetings which were approved.

Treasurer, Vivian Hall, reviewed details of Financial Statements received from **Financial Advisor, Cindy Layton**. The **GCFP Statement of Financial Activity May 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026**, stated income from **Total Membership Dues** was **$46,279.50**. Other Support, including NGC Award, income from the sale of DD and Past DD pins, book of recognition donations and tri-refresher 2026, amounted to **Total Other Support of $1,284.63**. **Total Interest** was **$107.46**. **Total Income** was **$47,671.59**. **Total Expenses** from Total General and Administrative, Chairman's Expenses, Memberships, and Officer's Allowances were **$45,047.68**, which resulted in a positive Variance of Income vs. Expenses of **$2,623.91**.

The **GCFP Asset Summary as of September 30, 2026** showed Total Checking and Savings equaled $31,316.39. **Petty Cash** was $100. **Total Advances Receivable** were $4,329.82. **Total Current Assets** were $51,261.50. **Plant A Tree/Penny Pines including Investment Account** was $21,292.03. A $1,000 donation to Friends of Flight 93 was done in June 2026 when funds were transferred from Plant A Tree savings account. $5,000 in donations were received for the Plant Pennsylvania project. $1,586.82 was paid to the publisher of PA Public Gardens book as an advance and $357.00 in revenue was deposited as of 9/30/26.

Scholarship Funds/Natural Disaster Funds 2026 revealed total amount of 2026 scholarship awards was $13,200 with total funds of $6,370.00 with a shortfall of $6,830.00. Total funds transferred from Stifel Investments as of 8/11/2026 was $6,830.00. Amount collected for Natural Disasters through 7/31/2026 was $2,613.21 which were remitted to NGC for Natural Disasters. A $5,000 donation was issued to "Remember Me Rose Garden" on 7/2/2026 as the first

installment. The second payment of $5,000 is to be issued in December. These funds were from Stifel Investment A/C.

The **Financial Secretary, Sheila Croushore,** reported the following:
GCFP Dues Account, Somerset Trust

Beginning Balance 5/1/2026		$100.00
Deposits:		
Member dues	$15,507.50	
Affiliate dues	$105.00	
New Members 26-27	$1,195.00	
Total Receipts/Balance	**$16,807.50**	**$16,907.50**
Disbursements:		
Transfers to Treasurer	($16,807.50)	
Ending Balance – 10/01/2026		**$100.00**

Dues were collected by August 15th, 2026.

Corresponding Secretary, Flossie Narducci, reported that since our last GCFP Board Meeting in June, condolences have been sent to the families of Judith Vuotto a member of Norristown Garden Club, and Helen Breslin, a member of The Outdoor Gardeners. Also, condolences were sent to Sharon Brown on the passing of her daughter, Stacy, and to Barbara Andon on the passing of her mother, Betty, who was 100 years old. Well wishes were sent to Vivian Hall after her cardiac replacement and to Sandra Hendricks, who had recently undergone surgery.

Parliamentarian, Angie Raitano, was present and had no report.

Mary Jane Martucci was appointed as **Timekeeper**.

The report of **Gail Manna, Chair of the Investment Committee,** was presented. The Federation Investments are doing quite well even with all the current political and world uneasiness. As of August 31, 2026, Investments totaled $755,960.65 and the total in the cash reserve is $2,821.69 for ready access. $6,830.00 had been moved over to the Treasurer to aid with 2026 Scholarships, which were paid out to the Schools in August. Mary and Karen Heltzel from Stifel, gave up-dates on all current accounts. They also discussed how events are affecting our investments, explained any changes that have taken place since our June Meeting and any new changes deemed necessary to the accounts. Stifel continues to keep our accounts up to date and in the best order deemed necessary.

RECOMMENDATIONS / MOTIONS
The Recording Secretary read each the following recommendations from the Executive Committee for Full Board approval. For each, President Wolanski explained the details and asked for a voice vote. The recommendations were:

It was the recommendation of Stifel Investments that $46,915 be invested into First Trust Diversified Target Income Unit Investment Trust with an objective of providing income and a secondary objective of capital appreciation. The yield is approximately 8%. This fund holds a mix of divided paying stocks, diversified bond exchange traded funds, and covered call writing to produce the income.

MOTION: **It was the recommendation of the Executive Committee that $46,915 be invested into First Trust Diversified Target Income Unit Investment Trust. Motion carried. APPROVED**

PENNY PINES PROPOSAL: In June, permission was given to explore using the allocated money to plant trees within our state forests. 20 emails were sent (one to each district office). Sheila Croushore only received two call backs; however, four districts reached out and spoke of how complicated it is to donate directly and referred me to Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation. She spoke to Marci Mowry, the PPFF President, and she is excited to help us find a planting in each of our districts to allocate the funds. This Foundation allocates monies to the Parks and Forest's in their twenty forests in PA. They do not plant seedling plantings which requires a lot of maintenance and has a lower success rate than if they planted maturing trees in a container or in burlap in damaged areas. The cost of each tree is approximately $150 and they do welcome volunteers to help with most of the plantings. She would like to recommend that we designate the Penny Pines monies to be distributed to the PPFF for them to use in each district. Knowing they would allow us to be a part of the projects planning and planting.

MOTION: **It was the recommendation of the Executive Committee that GCFP take the current balance of the combined accounts for Penny Pines, which is $34,621.03, and allocate this money to the Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation to plant trees in Pennsylvania. Motion passed. APPROVED.**

PENNSYLVANIA GARDEN PARTY: Chair, Nancy Cuttic, reported there was an excess of $15,000 raised and suggested allocating it for grants for projects available to all GCFP garden clubs.

MOTION: It was the recommendation of the Executive Committee that the excess money ($15,000) raised from the Pennsylvania Garden Party be moved into the Plant Pennsylvania Fund for the use of GCFP garden clubs for future projects. Motion passed. **APPROVED**

GCFP President, Pat Wolanski, presented a proposal that GCFP establish a Presidential Distinguished Service Award to recognize a member or members who have provided exceptional service to the Federation and have gone above and beyond the responsibilities of their position. It would be awarded at the discretion of the sitting GCFP President and recognizes outstanding leadership, dedication, initiative and service that has made a meaningful difference to the Federation. The award would be a special presidential honor and would remain available for future GCFP Presidents to use or not use during their term.

MOTION: **A motion was made in the Finance and Investment Committee that an amount not to exceed $250 to establish a Presidential Distinguished Service Award to recognize a member or members who have provided exceptional service to the Federation and have gone above and beyond the responsibilities of their position**. **A count was taken of the votes at the Finance and Investment Committee and reported that this motion did not pass; however, after recounting the yeses and nos, it was found to have passed. The Executive Committee passed the motion and recommended to the Full Board. Motion passed. APPROVED**

GCFP President, Pat Wolanski, presented a proposal that GCFP establish a 3 Star Award that would recognize any GCFP member who achieved this worthwhile status in any of the three or four schools. This suggestion was later amended to establish a 1-2-3 Star Award.

MOTION: It was the recommendation of the Executive Committee that GCFP create a 1-2-3 Star Award that would recognize any GCFP member who has achieved this worthwhile status in any of the three or four schools. Motion passed. APPROVED

REPORTS OF THE DISTRICT DIRECTORS

Past District I Director, Pam Walsh, reported that on September 10th the Covered Bridge Garden Club hosted our annual District Luncheon with invited guests, Pat Wolanski, Tonya Young, and Mary Hetrick each giving interesting talks to the over 100 garden club members in attendance. Awards were given, raffles won, delicious food was consumed, new district officers were installed, presidents gave updates about their clubs, friends reconnected, new friends were made and a delightful program, "Through the Camera Lens", was presented by well-known photographer, Rob Cardillo. Many of our clubs take the summer months off or have fewer meetings during that time. Everyone is now up and running with new monthly programs, community outreach, and planning fall and winter fundraising. Our next District event is our now annual Fall Design Challenge, held at the historic Uwchlan Friends Meetinghouse on November 11. Each district club is invited to send a two-person team to design a centerpiece from identical flower bunches and embellishments which are then raffled off to those in attendance. Every other year District 1 is fortunate to hold a flower show at Longwood Gardens. This year's title "Celebrating a Nation of Artists" gave design exhibitors a chance to research artists and reflect their interpretation of that work. Annie Leibovitz, Andy Warhol, Alexander Calder, Anne Geddes, Keith Haring, Andrew Wyeth, Winslow Homer, Jasper Johns and Dale Chihuly were included for Design and Artistic Arts featured Georgia O'Keefe, Louis Tiffany and four American Vocalists – Taylor Swift, Pink, Cher, and Tina Turner. For the vocalists class the show schedule explained, "Design a show-stopping bustier..." and the results lived up to that with Tina Turner receiving the Blue! Members from Four Seasons, Elverson, Country Gardeners, Springfield, Spade and Trowel Uwchlan and Wayne Woods entered exhibits and along with them, Radley Run, Covered Bridge, Villanova and Bala Cynwyd supported in other ways. A big thank you to all the judges who traveled across the state to judge our show. Hopefully you enjoyed your time with District 1. She said a big thank you to Ellen for always being there throughout my term to pick up what I was missing when my husband's illness and passing took me away from my duties. It's her pleasure to introduce the new District 1 Director, Ellen Barron, from Radley Run Garden and Social Club and remind you that District 1 still has fun!!

Past District II/III Director, Claire Kukielka, reported **We Promote Environment and Foster Community:** We volunteer at historic gardens such as the one at the Miller House. This German 4 square garden with native plants, vintage roses and herbs is maintained by the Bethlehem Garden Club and visited by the public. South Schuylkill Garden Club awards the Helen Moyer Award annually since 2021. This eponymous award was created to honor past president of South Schuylkill Garden Club who was devoted to community beautification and sustainability given since 2021. Monroe Garden Club member Ellen Phraner gave her talents and time to Bryant Street Park in Stroudsburg which is now renamed Ellen's Garden in recognition of her devotion. It goes without saying, that Milford Garden club's efforts in their historic town with their creation and maintenance of twenty-plus planters in the town and their efforts working on the grounds of historic Grey Towers Mansion do not go unnoticed. Bethlehem Garden Club places high value

on serving those in need and this is exemplified with their routine visits to three nursing homes, Moravian King's Daughters and quarterly visits to the Morning Star Memory Café. **We are Philanthropic:** Multiple clubs provide scholarships for youth attending college in a horticulture or related field. We have multiple clubs donating produce to local food banks. Parkland Garden Club donated approximately 1500 pounds this year. Upper Perkiomen GC contributes to food banks as well. Milford GC collects and contributes at Thanksgiving via a food drive; they also visit local nursing homes at Christmas with gifts. We sponsor youth activities in a big way; this includes Parkland Garden Club's noteworthy emphasis on Smokey the Bear, Parkland and Hazleton's support of girl scout troops, Hazleton Area Garden Club's support of HARP, another youth focused endeavor as well as their support of foster kids. Allentown's Junior Garden program holds activities twice a year for small children where they create their own masterpieces. **We are Entrepreneurs:** Monroe Garden Club makes money by soliciting sponsors on their web page and recently hosted a plain art garden tour where local artists demonstrated their artistic abilities and donated a percent of the profits to Monroe Garden Club. Parkland Garden Club realized a profit of $11,600 with their Star-Spangled Garden Tour. The Garden Club of Reading hosts a plant sale each year that reaps in thousands of dollars. This business-minded club is now reviewing quotes to implement an irrigation system in the Reading Public Museum where they maintain the perennial gardens. **We take road trips:** We visit sites such as Morris Arboretum, NCC grounds and gardens. We visit the Sophia Coxe house where the members learned of the importance of this historical site while sipping lemonade and eating tea sandwiches. We visited the Warwick Furnace Lavender and the Hope Hill Lavender Farms. **We are Life Learners with Education and Programming which is extremely diverse. We hold Garden Tours and flower shows:** Kudos to Bethlehem Garden Club's fabulous Midsummer's Night Garden tour and Parkland's Star-Spangled Garden tour. The Emmaus Garden Club hosted an amazing Anniversary Garden tour this year and are already working on their flower show for next year. Upper Perkiomen GC, Hazleton Area GC, and Parkland Garden Clubs all hosted pop-up garden tours. **We are Scientific:** Diana Rudloff and the Upper Perkiomen GC has put District II/III on the map with their coordination of the Citizen Science projects. We track birds in late fall and winter and monitor rainfall during spring and summer. This information feeds into a national center educating public on scientific process while addressing problems on environment and health hazards.

Newly installed District IV Director, Pat Thorsen, updated on District IV activity in the last two months. For a variety of reasons, a new Director and a new Assistant Director had to be installed. At the annual meeting of District IV on September 3rd, she was installed as Director and Pam Paulus was installed as Assistant Director. Pam and Pat will spend the next weeks learning what has to be done. We will work at developing communication with the presidents of the eleven District IV clubs. In the next few weeks, she will be visiting the Biglerville Garden Club, the Linglestown Community Garden Club, and the Harrisburg Garden Club. The incoming treasurer Karen Markel has worked with the outgoing treasurer to transfer the responsibility of District IV's funds. Joanne Baylis and her committee have been planning the 2027 April annual convention in Lancaster.

Newly installed District V Director JoAnne Fogelman reported on behalf of District V Director, Joyce Wenner, that the clubs of District V are very active in their communities. They take pleasure in helping to keep their communities attractive and welcoming to all visitors and they do this through their clubs Civic Beautification program. Alexandria Club had a busy year. They were involved in the Heritage Day Festival. At Christmas time they helped decorate Christmas trees at the Historic Society. In the spring they had their annual plant sale with the

profits helping their fundraising events. Duboistown Club had their biannual yard sale. They had a flower show, the theme being "Let Freedom Ring." They partnered with McEwensville Club. They also had a display at the Bloomsburg Fair. They are planning more events for the coming holiday season. Mifflin County Club celebrated our Country's 250 birthday by having a party with a beautiful cake to salute the history of our country. They had a "Trash To Treasure" sale as a fundraiser. They are planning a Christmas party at a club members home where they will celebrate 90 years of being in the Garden Club Federation of Pa. Standing Stone Club began their year with a project that supports the National Garden Club theme "Plant America for the next 100 years". For their Civic beautification program they care for many gardens around town. They partnered with volunteers and local businesses to help them care for two special gardens. McEwensville Club had a thanksgiving program that put the holiday spirit in their members. They had a mother and daughter team speak on Garden Journaling. The club partnered with Duboistown Club to put on a flower show. The club will also have a display at the Bloomsburg Fair. Heritage Club will be hosting the District V Annual Meeting, with the theme "Rooted in 250 Years of Freedom." They will also be at the Bloomsburg Fair with displays. They also do a recycling program called NEX TREX which they are very successful with. In their Civic Beautification program, they put hanging baskets in their downtown area which they maintain. District V will have new officers this year. JoAnne Fogelman being District Director. JoAnne will be very competent in this position.

Past District VI Director, Mary Lou Colussy, reported District VI has been energetic this summer. There have been flower shows, road tours, community gardens' planting and upkeep and a Gold Star Memorial Marker dedication. All our little elves have kept busy and active. Some of the most outstanding activities include: **Blair GC** hosted the Annual District Meeting with speaker Kat Claar in Martinsburg. **Bedford County GC** held a flower show "Red, White and Bloom" is a toast to America's 250th Birthday! **Evergreen GC** kept community minded with activities with the college and camps. **GC of Johnstown** dedicated a Gold Star Memorial Marker and held a flower show in entitled America: From Sea to Shining Sea. **Indiana GC** held their annual May Mart this year om May 16th, have a Greenhouse Crawl on May 30th with five greenhouses on the agenda and introduced a Bloom Buddy Program. Bloom Buddies are secret garden club members who exchange kindness throughout the year by sending birthday cards and small gifts to one another. **Patton GC** hosted a Flower show – "3 Ring Circus"; held their annual Plant Sale and participated in road tours including Garden in the Woods and Buttermilk Falls and various local members' gardens. **Somerset GC** continued their Uptown beautification planting projects. **Weeders & Seeders of Ligonier:** maintain many community outreach projects throughout their area, including a program on terrariums for the seniors at Ligonier Gardens. In conclusion she wanted to keep the lines of communication open between our district clubs. She believes District VI is the best because we work together and are available to all members when needed.

Past District VII Director, Marilyn Backus, reported District VII is located in eastern Allegheny Co and western Westmoreland Co, has about 268 members, eleven clubs and one affiliate. As she closes out her two-year term, she was pleased to see 25 new members had joined our district VII clubs that had hosted a variety of activities, or supported our sibling clubs and the District network in their efforts. And since June we had fun at our State Party Garden Tour hosted successfully by Burrellton and Pucketos clubs and visited by most of the district VII clubs. Verona club also hosted a successful twelve garden tour. Also, at the Pittsburgh Area and Laurel Highlands Judges Councils' Joint Flower Show and *The Lamplighter's* Colonial Luncheon on July 17 in *The Lamplighter* Ballroom. Thirty district VII members participated by helping to stage,

exhibit or visit the show, and three historical societies staged their educational tables. We had the most visitors and participants ever at the joint flower show with16 people from district X, and ten from district VI. She was most surprised by a member who traveled from District X's Giant Oaks to help her at 6 AM to stage the show! At the Annual Meeting at *The Lamplighter's* ballroom and buffet was made special by our GCFP Officers and Joanne Baylis's Lancaster Convention Preview, more of the Board members' consignment tables, eighteen door prizes of potted mums, and the live floral design program, which concluded with the raffle of five designs. Many attendees liked the club presidents' summary paragraphs in the meeting brochure instead of their traditional verbal reports. We were also pleased by the attendance of five District IX Kennedy Township Garden Club members, who also won some of the raffles. President Pat installed new and former district officers, including District VII's newest District Director: Diana Pelletier, who has been president of Highland Park Garden Club and a member of the district VII Board since 2020. She is retired from social work, her club travels to programs at various sites, and she is also a member of a local meet-up group and is consequently very well-traveled in western Pennsylvania. She is an excellent baker and treats the board and members with her cakes and cookies. She will be working with Assistant District Director, Iris Cisarik, of The Garden Club of Forest Hills, who also bakes wonderful cookies. Iris was District VII Director from 2012-2014. She looks forward to your energy and ideas for GCFP and District VII. Congratulations!

District VIII Director, Bonita Herman, stated that District VIII is great, but how great is great? We now have ten clubs in District VIII, making us about three hundred members. In 2025-2026 we gained twenty-three new members. So, just what do all these clubs do for themselves and for their communities? Much like all other clubs we have fundraisers. Plant/flower, bake sales, auctions, garden garage sales, selling fresh greens holiday wreaths and door swags, passing around a donation jar, annual garden tours, raffle baskets and 50/50's to mention a few. Now they have all this free money, but we know nothing is free, because there is no income from the amount of time and effort that goes into making the fundraisers a success. OH, Darn! The clubs use this money for scholarships, and if there are no recipients, they offer it to the district's scholarship fund. We gave a total of $4600.00 to students and obtained $4000.00 for the district's fund. There were only two flower shows this year, but several have theirs every other year and 2026 was not their year. Five clubs have horticulture therapy programs at long term facilities. Two club have a Sprouts and Seedling program, but many clubs have individual youth programs or projects with Girl & Boy Scouts, grow a sunflower contest and weigh it to see who had the heaviest sunflower, giving their own pine or other tree sapling and watch it grow. One club has been doing this for over 20 years and the now adults say their trees are still growing. What a special experience for all these youths. All the planning, planting, pulling and maintaining the over 25 and more community gardens, street planters and the special "Garden of Hope" that is near a cancer wing at a local hospital, that all the clubs have been doing for years. As if physical work is not enough, our reducing numbers of members give monetary donations to the community's libraries, public gardens, food pantries, fire and police departments, YMCA playground garden, decorated wreaths for churches. a wildlife preserve and various other organizations. Oh, also ---A state convention!!! Some special projects include Pat's Healing Arts Program, Adopt a Highway, book clubs and organizing bus trips are some of the future plans. When people ask, what does a garden club do? My answer is, what doesn't a garden club do? Now, you all know why she says DISTRICT VIII and its three hundred members are GREAT!

Newly installed District IX Director, Joanne Laverty, reported for District IX Director, Stacey Ivol, that it has been her pleasure to be the District Director for District IX for the last two years. During these two years our district has faced many dilemmas. Nine always comes out fine. She is happy to turn the directorship over to the very capable and lovely hands of our new district director Joanne Laverty. So for the very last time Joanne can say for me District Nine is Fine!

Past District X Director, Martha Alexander, and newly installed District X Director Karen Humpreys reported: One more time, I'll make it rhyme; But now I have a partner in crime. One thing to know about District 10: We keep coming through again and again. Stupendous, tremendous, amazing to view, Resplendent, transcendent in all that we do. Glorious, uproarious, shining with light, We illuminate brightly—we're simply a delight. Now it is time to pass on the gavel, To a new DD who will learn to travel. Meet Karen, our new leader, who is ready, Part of our family, cheerful and steady. Our Annual Meeting was joyful, though fleeting, With eighty-two laurels earning warm greeting. For hort, forget-me-not, butterflies bright, Attendance rose high, like a kite in flight. Thirty-one tulips for members brand new, All eager to join our welcoming crew. Our garden tours were rich with allure, Each one inviting, inspiring, and pure. Some gardens bloomed red, white, and blue, With patriotic colors, proud and true. Backyard ponds, chickens, and Kat the mule, Showed our southwest habitat, lively and cool.
Our flower shows were stunning and bright, With so much beauty to ponder in sight. Summer gatherings brought picnics with smiles, A favorite tradition that stretches for miles. Our fundraisers are unique you know, A rummage sale at a flower show. Tinsel Tea sparkles with glitter and glow, Getting us ready for winter and snow. That many fine plants have been lovingly sold. To give away for causes like gold. Most of all, scholarships help us give, So promising students may learn, grow, and live. Our programs included "Plant Some Joy," A wonderful theme for all to employ. We proudly maintain our Blue Star markers, Welcoming travelers, friends, and day parkers. Our community gardens are full and bountiful, With vegetables shared, both useful and plentiful. Our club size may be medium to small, But together we stand as tall as them all. Mad as a hatter, clever as a sprite, No one should underestimate our might. Even our humblest clubs agree, It is worth heading southwest just to see How much we accomplish with only a few, As much as the largest and busiest crews. So here's to our dear District 10, Still coming through again and again.

District XI Director, Flossie Narducci, reported the celebration of our nation's 250th Anniversary offered District XI Garden Clubs many ideas and themes for their club projects and events. Patriotic themed Flower Shows were popular. Trevose Horticultural Society staged a "Red, White and Bloom" Flower Show, Norristown Garden Club a "Happy Birthday USA' Flower Show and "Philadelphia 1776" was the theme of The Outdoor Gardeners' Show. GCFP President Pat Wolanski's Garden Party was enjoyed by many members of District XI. Norristown Garden Club received awards for most number of tickets sold and the greatest number of ads that were secured. The tour book itself holds a keepsake of information, especially the many sponsors. She sent a special thank you to Marj Sears who was responsible for procuring many of those ads. Old York Road Garden Club also selected seven gardens for the tour and Countryside Gardeners provided eight home gardens. Although Gardeners of Crooked Billet did not host any gardens for the Garden Party, several of their members volunteered to serve at the other locations. Garden Club of Bristol Borough celebrated the Sesquicentennial by touring historic Philadelphia sites including Bartram Gardens. They also partnered with the Grundy Museum for a "Plant Red, White and Blue Container program. Old York Road Garden Club also hosted an event for members to create red, white and blue flower arrangements. Our Garden Club of Philadelphia and Vicinity

raised funds to support 2 2026 scholarship recipients from W. B. Saul High School in Philadelphia where students focus on environmental and agricultural studies. The goal of Gardeners of the Crooked Billet is to increase membership through tabling events, posting on Facebook, distributing flyers and word of mouth. As a result, last year they had 27 members but currently they have 34 members. Trevose Horticultural Society is now sponsoring a Sprouts and Seedlings Junior Garden Club through a local YMCA. Tohickon Garden Club's annual fundraiser has members provide plants they have planted and nurtured to sell at the annual Tinicum Arts Festival. Some topics for their meetings included "The Worst Weeds Are Your Best Medicine" and "The Miyawak Method" a dense planting using native trees and plants to create fast growing and self-sustaining ecosystems.

President Wolanski *recessed the meeting at 4:30 PM. She asked attendees to reconvene on Tuesday, October 6, 2026 at 9:00 AM. Social time was 5:30-6 PM and a dinner buffet began at 6 PM. District Directors and their Assistants met with the 1st VP, Tonya Young, at 8 AM on Tuesday.*

REPORTS OF BOARD COMMITTEES continued in alphabetical order following the listing in the 2025-2027 Directory Issue. NOTE: THESE COMMITTEE REPORTS WILL BE POSTED SEPARATELY ON THE GCFP WEBSITE UNDER BOARD OF DIRECTORS INFORMATION, THEN UNDER BOD MEETING MINUTES.

DAY TWO – October 6, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 9:15 AM and a quorum declared. Committee reports not presented on October 5th continued until completed.

Leeanna Ryba, Chair of the Advisory Council, reported that five Past GCFP State Presidents met on October 6, 2026. The first Plant Pennsylvania Grants were awarded to: Covered Bridge Garden Club, District I, for pollinator garden enhancement; to Wildflower Garden Club, District VIII, for Scotch Hill memorial garden; to Moon Township Garden club, District IX, for Bradley Center Garden for youth; to Shaler Garden Club, District IX, for restoration of pollinator garden; and to Great Meadows Garden Club, District X, for work with youth at East End United Community. Each garden club will receive a check for $500.00.

Nominating Committee Chair, Joyce Milberg, reported in June, the Delegates to the Nominating Committee for the 2025-2026 GCFP Administration from all ten GCFP Districts have assembled a slate which we believe will admirably and harmoniously serve the members of GCFP for the next two years. Each candidate has been vetted, is qualified for the position, is aware of and has graciously accepted our nomination to serve. The slate was unanimously approved at the GCFP Board meeting held on June 9, 2016. Just to review, this is the slate of Officers for the 2027-2029 GCFP Administration: President - Tonya Young, District IV; First Vice President - Mary Hetrick, District VIII; Second Vice President – Karen Wychock, District XI; Recording Secretary – Marilyn Backus, District VII; Treasurer – Sheri Lowry, District VI; Financial Secretary – Joanne Baylis, District IV.

MOTION: A motion was made by President-Elect Tonya Young, seconded by Joyce Milberg, to nominate Nancy Cuttic as Chair of the Nominating Committee for 2027-2029. Motion passed. APPROVED

President Wolanski expressed her appreciation to everyone for their service and dedication. Her last Board meeting will be held during the 2027 GCFP Conference. The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 AM.

Deborah Davis – GCFP Recording Secretary

Ref. Vivian Hall issued the Financial Statements and on October 1, 2026. Sheila Croushore provided the Financial Secretary's Reports on September 28, 2026.