

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
June 9-10, 2025

REPORTS OF BOARD COMMITTEES continued in alphabetical order following the listing in the 2025-2027 Directory Issue. The meeting opened at 9 AM on Tuesday.

501 C-3 Exempt/990 Reporter, Lisa Wagerer, was absent and had no report.

Awards Chair, Marilyn Small, and **Awards Co-Chair, Sheri Lowry,** reported that she and Sheri enjoyed presenting awards at the convention in King of Prussia. We hope that your recent wins and honors will prompt you to submit applications again this year. Hopefully, we inspired other clubs to apply as well. Results of all awards forwarded to NGC will be announced in the July issue of the Keystone Gardener. The results of all awards forwarded to CAR-SGC will be announced in the November KG issue, after the fall CAR-SCG Conference. There will be enough changes to the GCFP Awards Manual to warrant a **new edition**, which will be posted to the website by mid-July. Please check the updated manual and accompanying documents on the website under "Awards." We are excited to announce a new award that was recently approved, which will delight clubs that do floral design. Similar to the Horticulture Achievement Award, it will be offered to clubs or a club member for a series of outstanding floral design programs at club meetings. Look for the **Floral Design Achievement Award** in the updated Awards Manual posted on the website by mid-July. We will also be adding a "**Youth Activities**" category in the Special Recognition State Award section. The next upcoming awards are District Awards, due by August 1. The District Exceptional Horticulturists go to Joanne Celaschi; the Forget-Me-Not and Laurels should be sent to your District Director. Again, all award information is on the GCFP website. We look forward to receiving your applications!

Bee Gap Chair, Bonita Herman, reported she thought she knew mostly everything about the Leafcutter Bee. Especially that it was not a native bee. Well, you learn something new every day. Out of the 4,000, species of Native Bee, about 242 species of leafcutter bee are native to North America, plus the alfalfa leafcutter bee, that has been established in North America for its agricultural services. Only the female leafcutter has special pollen-collecting hairs, called the scopa. The males do not help transporting pollen back to the nest, so they do not need these special hairs. These bees are only active in your garden about 4-6 weeks, beginning late spring to summer. They are known for cutting the leaves of plants to build and seal the nest. The female protects each nesting chamber by surrounding it with cut leaves and flower pieces. Females will not nest if they do not have a reliable source of suitable leaves nearby about 30 sq. ft. If you see a semi-circular type of cut into your leaves, it is from a female leafcutter. These minor cuts DO NOT harm the plants. Bees and flowering plants have evolved together for millions of years. Leaves preferred are soft, flexible leaves, stay during the summer month, and free from pesticides and other chemicals. Go native plants and other good examples are; Asters Hosta, Lilac, Peas, Beans, Redbud, Sunflowers just to name a few. They are a cavity nester and lay eggs similar to the Mason Bee. She lays a single egg directly on the pollen and seals the chamber with a leaf wall. The egg becomes a larva and it will spin a waterproof, silk cocoon. It will turn itself around in the cell so the head ends up facing the next entrance as it is spinning. It will stay dormant in this prepupal stage, then as the weather is constantly over 70-80 degrees the rest of the development will take place until it becomes an adult and emerges. Males first then females. And it starts all over again.

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Birds, Butterflies & Conservation Chair, Marcy Cunkelman, was absent and had no report.

Blue Star Memorial Chair, Karen Faust, reported this has been a wonderful year in the Blue/Gold Star Marker Program. Only ½ year has gone by and we've celebrated three Marker Dedications and two more coming soon! She is often asked how many Markers stand in our State. Currently, we have 118 dedicated or ordered from Sewah. In May, two Blue Star Highway Markers and one Gold Star Marker were dedicated. The July KG Online has featured each of these dedications with pictures. Please take a few minutes to read all about them. We will dedicate the first Gold Star Marker at a PA Welcome Center on July 16. This is on Interstate 80 at Mercer (West Middlesex) as you enter PA from Ohio. What makes this marker unique is that two GCFP Districts (VIII and IX) have divided work/expenses and done something to support the mission of Gold Star Families. She highly encourages other Clubs and Districts to do the same. Pictures and details will be in the November edition of the KG Online. Additionally, Bedford Garden Club plans a Fall Dedication and Penn Cumberland Garden Club's Marker is scheduled for Dedication in August. My interest now turns to the three remaining PA Welcome Centers that need a group to sponsor them. The first is located at the **Northampton, I-78 Westbound**, ½ mile west of PA/NJ border, Easton. The second is located at **Delaware Water Gap**, I-80 West: exit 310, Delaware Water Gap. The last Welcome Center is located at **Fulton I-70 West**: I-70 westbound, ½ mile north of the PA MD border, Warfordsburg. Please ask to talk at your Club and District meetings to see if lining our Welcome Centers can become a part of your plans. No doubt, the prices will increase on January 1, 2026. She is more than happy to help with any details, recommendations or ideas that may help you with a decision to place a marker.

Blue Star Memorial Central Assistant, Jane Howe, reported that since 1945 the Blue Star Memorial Marker has been a visible sign of our gratitude. The Gold Star Memorial is a tribute to Gold Star Families whose loved one paid the ultimate price defending the United States of America. There were three dedications in the month of May: York Garden Club, District X/Penn DOT at I-70 West Virginia/ Pennsylvania border both dedicated Blue Star Markers and Blair Garden Club dedicated a Gold Star at the VA Medical Center in Altoona. Even though the weather did not co-operate, each was a very moving ceremony. Any club wishing to place a marker, can find the info on the NGC website or contact Karen or me if you have any further questions. It is best to send me an e-mail (jhowe223@verizon.net), or if by phone, please leave me a message. Let us honor all who serve or served our great country.

Blue Star Memorial East Assistant, Honey Bawduniak, reported that being new to this position, she contacted the Chair, Karen Faust and introduced herself via email. Karen updated me on the upcoming Blue Star Memorial dedications and her plans for two more coming into Pennsylvania from New Jersey. She contacted the District Director from Districts II/III, Claire Kukielka via email detailing the locations of the rest stops for future Blue Star memorials. We spoke by phone, and Claire will locate the Garden Clubs in her District where these rest stops are situated. We all plan to meet in person here to discuss further plans. She welcomes inquiries from clubs in the Eastern part of the state about a Blue or Gold Star Memorial. Information can also be found on the National Garden Club website.

Book of Recognition Donations Chair, Joyce Hoek, reported that in October 2024, she received donations of \$50 and in March 2025, I received donations of \$150. She has not received

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any donations since then. The names of those honored are published in the Keystone Gardener. Donations are always appreciated and will be used, as needed, for the expenses of the GCFP. You can donate in memory of, in honor of, or in appreciation for someone. **The donation form can be found on the GCFP website under “Forms”.** The form is helpful to me. Please consider a donation to the Book of Recognition.

Civic Development Chair, Suzanne Smith-Oscilowski, reported on the Flight 93 National Memorial- Red, White and Blue Garden Status. On Tuesday morning, September 11, 2001, the U.S. came under attack when four commercial airliners were hijacked and used to strike targets on the ground. Nearly 3,000 people tragically lost their lives. Because of the actions of the 40 passengers and crew aboard one of the planes, Flight 93, the attack on the U.S. Capitol was thwarted. The Flight 93 National Memorial is an appropriate place to install a Red, White and Blue Garden in commemoration of the nation’s 250th birthday on July 4, 2026. After discussion with Flight 93 National Park Service (NPS) employees, it appears that a “traditional”, perennial/annual based garden is not desirable at this location. Instead, the Flight 93 National Memorial would like to add to their existing Resiliency Project which consists of revitalizing the trees within 40 Memorial Groves representing the 40 passengers and crew members killed that tragic day. To incorporate the “red”, “white” and “blue” aspect of the project, she proposed considering foliage, flowers and fruit to follow the patriotic color scheme and still provide a meaningful addition to the NPS vision for the land. Current conversations indicate that the Flight 93 National Memorial is receptive to this idea. Further discussions will take place in upcoming months. Please be patient as the NPS service has experienced much uncertainty around staffing and funding due to DOGE efforts since late January 2025.

Club Newsletter Awards Chair, Joyce Peterson, reported she is looking forward, toward the end of the year, to receiving the best newsletter from each garden club in the state by email. Last year all of the clubs knew they were to send their newsletters electronically though there were fewer newsletters than the year before. Hopefully, this year will bring many more.

Club Yearbook Awards Chair, Iris Cisarik, was absent and her report was read by the Recording Secretary Deborah Davis. She extended is an invitation to all GCFP garden clubs to apply for the Club Yearbook Award. Every year she says it is the easiest contest you’ll ever enter. Your yearbooks are beautiful and informative and involve a lot of work, so they should receive the recognition they deserve. Please remember to send 2 application forms (no staples or tape please) and 1 club yearbook. She hopes we receive 100 books this year! You have until December 1, 2025 to send them to her: Iris Cisarik, 1138 Wightman Street, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15217.

Convention Coordinator, Judith Schaffer, reported discussions were held on how to improve future conventions. The need to have knowledge of AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) locations at convention sites was emphasized, due to rising medical emergencies occurring each year. I also had a meeting again by zoom with a committee I formed of convention chairs to begin to update our convention manual. Thanks to Karen Wychock, Marilyn Backus, Joanne Baylis, Tonya Young and Pat Wolanski for their valuable input. Our next convention- **MystERIE of the Bay** will be held April 26,27, and 28, 2026 in District VIII. My duty now is to start proceedings for a convention in 2028.

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2025 Convention Chair, Karen Wychock, reported the 2025 GCFP Convention was entitled “A Gardening Revolution.” The convention brought together 310 GCFP members for our annual meeting. The committee wanted to offer attendees an experience that would blend Colonial history and gardening. The Germantown Colonial Dancers were a feature on Sunday afternoon. They performed in the lobby area prior to dinner. The Sons of the American Revolution opened the business meeting on Monday morning. Both groups offered an authenticity to our Colonial theme. Martha Washington joined us for our “LiberTEA Party” for Monday luncheon. She gave a woman’s perspective of the American Revolution. Attendees were encouraged dress in Colonial garb throughout the convention. Two workshops were offered on Sunday afternoon. One was a pressed flower piece and one was an origami workshop. Presentations on Monday and Tuesday included Colonial gardening, floral design, horticulture and environmental issues. The 95th GCFP Convention, hosted by District XI, was held at the ALLOY Hotel in King of Prussia, PA. The hotel was located a short ten-minute drive from the PA turnpike. The hotel was newly renovated during the pandemic so the rooms were very appealing, fresh and up to date. It had the ballroom capacity (300+) and the meeting rooms that we needed for our event. The hotel also offered us the necessary space for 10 Educational Exhibits, Registration Tables, Volunteer Table, Honor Designs, Trash to Treasure, Marketplace, Ways and Means, Garden Club Yearbooks and Workshops. Flower Show schedules are now submitted electronically so they were not on display. We asked all garden clubs within the District to donate \$100 to help defray the cost of the flowers needed for the table arrangements at all meals. The ALLOY was a linen-free hotel. We had to rent the napkins and tablecloths. This was an additional expense that we were not expecting when determining an overall price for the convention. We made up one Master Properties List for the entire convention. This listed all of our needs by date and room location. This was shared with the appropriate committee members. We named a Volunteer Chair to handle all of our volunteers. She maintained a spreadsheet that indicated the Who, What, Where and When. We had identification stickers made for all of our volunteers. A volunteer table was set up right next to the registration table. All volunteers reported to this one person. We designated one person to communicate directly with all of our speakers once their contracts were signed. She wrote their introductions and emailed them with all pertinent information. We asked all garden clubs within the District to donate \$100 to help defray the cost of the flowers needed for the table arrangements at all meals. We also asked them to donate a gift basket worth at least \$50-\$75. All were agreeable. We encouraged all clubs with our District to take out an Ad in our program booklet. We also encouraged all Districts across the state to take out an Ad. All were agreeable. We have not closed our account at this time. We are still waiting for checks to clear. We are also waiting to get a check from the Valley Forge Tourism Bureau.

2026 Convention Chair, Joyce C. Milberg, reported all of the programs, presentations and workshops have been arranged for and scheduled. The invitation to Erie was given at the 2025 Convention in King of Prussia. We deeply appreciate the cooperation we received from the attendees and convention officers in assisting to repurpose and reuse the nametag holders as well as the banners. We hope we can reciprocate for 2027’s convention. Please join us for “MystERIE on the Bay” April 26-28, 2026 in Erie PA.

2027 Convention Chair, Joanne Baylis, had no report at this time.

Environmental – Keep PA Beautiful (KPB) Chair, Judith Swanson, was absent and had no report at this time.

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Environmental - Trash to Treasure Chair, Carol McConnell, had no report at this time.

Financial Advisor, Cynthia Layton, was absent and had no report.

Floral Design/Horticulture Webinar Chair, Chris Leskosky, reported she is happy to report the very first Floral Design and Horticulture webinar was held on May 6th, and it was very well received. One hundred and seventeen attendants watched as three NGC Master Flower Show Judges; Mary Jane Martucci, Angie Raitano and Diane Hughes showcased their beautiful NGC luminary, Creative Line/Line Mass and Exhibition Table designs. Also featured was Master Flower Show Judge and NGC Horticulture Instructor Emeritus, Dot Yard who spoke about what should happen "Behind the Scenes" with your horticulture before entering a flower show. I think we all came away with new information from Dot. The next webinar will be held August 5th at 7:00 PM. She is looking for volunteers for the November 4th webinar.

Flower Show Awards and Ribbons Chair, Rosemary Gish Ebersole, was absent and had no report.

Flower Show Evaluation Chair, Mary Jane Martucci, was absent but reported on how to have your flower show evaluated. Go to **GCFP website**, click on **MORE**, slide the bar down on **Flower Show Judges Info**, get the form "**FS Evaluation Request form**". Fill out the form requesting one of three types of flower shows: **30s = Standard or Small Standard; 30d = Design Specialty; 30h = Horticulture Specialty**. Be sure to make a list of all judges, their addresses, and phone numbers. Indicate if there are any students. Send the form and a copy of your BEST schedule to Mary Jane Martucci, 911 McClelland Road, Finleyville, Pa. 15332. It will also be evaluated.

Flower Show Book of Evidence (BOE) Evaluation Chair, Deb Stumpf, reported The Flower Show BOE Chairman is happy to report that the 2024 competition went much smoother. All the files were submitted digitally as were the judges' evaluations. This made the job much easier than in prior years and I commend those who submitted books of evidence. She also would like to commend the judges who sent their evaluations digitally as requested. They were not all sent in the same format, but they were there and readable which was a great help. She has prepared guidelines for the judges to use to file their evaluations digitally and have presented them to the State Judges Council. It is my hope that many of you having flower shows this year will take the time to do a digital book of evidence and submit it for an award. **The deadline for submitting a Book of Evidence is December 1, 2025. My address can be found in the awards manual. Any questions you may have may be addressed by phone or email.** All of our clubs in PA put on wonderful flower shows, so please consider rewarding your club by submitting for a reward.

Flower Show Judges Council (JC) Chair, Karen Wychock, reported President Pat Wolanski has asked us for our support of a Horticulture Specialty Show for the October 2025 Board meeting. It will be entitled, "Celebrating Nature. As you plant your gardens this summer, please plan to keep something blooming in October. You may have Chrysanthemums, dahlias, Montauk Daisies, Sedums, Asters, Celosia, Rudbeckia, grasses and branches! You can also showcase those beautiful house plants that you have growing in your home. Please plan to enter! We want to fill the Wyndham Lobby with our horticulture. Philadelphia Flower Show - Will be held February 28 - March 8, 2026. We are encouraging our judges to participate in the Philadelphia Flower

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Show. They are looking for judges for the Artistic Classes. We are keeping a list of those judges who would be interested in judging design. Pat Wolanski will be Co-Chairing the Artistic Classes. We are also encouraging judges to volunteer in the Horticult at the Philadelphia Flower Show. They can clerk for one of the judging panels. It is a great way to hone your judging skills as you clerk for experts in the field of horticulture. Karen Wychock is Co-Chair of the Horticulture Clerks and Barrier Aids for the show.

Central Area Judges Council (CAJC) Co-Chair, Roseann Varner, reported CAJC reports a membership of 30 accredited judges, emeritus judges and student judges. An Installation of Officers ceremony was conducted at the April 24, 2025 meeting by District IV Director Carla Kelly. Installed for the 2025-2027 term were: Roseann Varner, Chair; Nancy Cartwright, Vice-Chair; Susan Glassmoyer, Recording Secretary; Nancy Fulk, Corresponding Secretary; and Joanne Baylis, Treasurer. Topics and business items discussed at the April meeting included: An increase in dues for CAJC membership; The Garden Clubs of District IV are presenting a District Wide Flower on August 28, 2025 at the Hanover Country Club; providing Ways & Means tables at Flower Show School Course I with all profits to be donated to the FSS fund; costs as potential barriers to Flower Show Schools and Symposiums as attendees absorb the full cost, and also the possibility of having start-up funds available to avoid having Chairs use personal funds while awaiting reimbursement; Future meetings will be held at the Giant Food Store's Community Room in Camp Hill due to the sale of the Harrisburg Area Civic Garden Center's property; also in April, a Horticultural Specialty Flower Show entitled 'Petals Delight' was held by the CAJC. Upcoming events include: A free Flower Show Design & Horticulture Demonstration is planned for club members of District IV on June 27, 2025. NGC Accredited Flower Show Judges from the CAJC will demonstrate designs listed in August 28th District IV Flower Show Schedule. They will also discuss how to read a schedule and explain how to prepare horticulture specimens. The District IV Standard Flower Show will be held in conjunction with the District IV Annual Meeting on August 28, 2025 at the Hanover Country Club. Finally, it was my pleasure to participate in the District IV Board meeting on June 3, 2025.

Erie Area Judges Council (EAJC) Chair, Tom Huston, was absent and had no report.

Laurel Highlands Judges Council (LHJC) Chair, Sheila Croushore, reported LHJC has 15 Active Judges and 1 Judge Emeritus. On April 12, LHJC was asked to help with designs for Flower Show School Course 1 in Gettysburg on April 29th. I drove 5 designs to the school and enjoyed meeting some of the new students, other Judges and members of District IV. What a fantastic trip! LHJC has offered to help with the upcoming schools. I have received a few things of Nancy Bittner's, they will be donated as a fundraiser to FSS. On April 24th our new officers were installed by Charlotte Chrissey our outgoing Chair. Our new officers are: Chair, Sheila Croushore, VC Deb Stumpf, Treasurer, Margie Bucci, and Recording Sec, Charlotte Chrissey. At this meeting we discussed the materials handed out by Mary Hetrick on the judge coordinator duties, and the District and State FS Advisor responsibilities. We also distributed a helpful word list. Designs were discussed and the spring horticulture was impressive. A memory donation was made to the GCFP FS Schools & Symposium fund in Nancy Bittner's name. Thank you, Connie Burnley, for the email of receipt. We are having our Joint FS With PAJC on July 8th titled Girl's Trip. We are currently organizing trips to flower farms for June and August. As previously decided by LHJC We are offering FS help to clubs that do not have a Judge within their membership. We

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will be presenting our first program on June 17, 4 of us will be covering their design classes and how to display hort in their educational show.

Northeast Area Judges Council (NEJC) Chair, Christine Leskosky, reported seventeen enthusiastic members currently belong to the Northeast Area Judges Council. Our first meeting since she took office is scheduled for June 23, and it will take place at a new location: the Hazle Township Commons Building in Hazle Township. The program for this meeting is titled *"Hmm... So How Do Your Designs Stay in Place?"* We would love to know. Members were asked to bring in at least one mechanic to share with the council and teach us how they use it. A letter was sent to District Directors to be shared with their district clubs, informing them of a new initiative launched by our council. A few of our members are interested in visiting clubs during regular meetings to discuss the possibility of the club hosting an NGC Flower Show—whether a Small or Standard Show, or a Design or Horticulture Specialty Show. Our goal is to support clubs in every aspect of show organization. We're happy to assist with schedule writing or, if a schedule has already been prepared, to provide constructive feedback from a judge's perspective. We also offer guidance on clerk duties. To encourage participation, our council will surprise each participating club with a monetary gift to help cover show expenses. To ensure consistent communication during these visits, we are developing a streamlined outline for council members, based on information from the *Flower Show Handbook*. Her goal for the next two years is to work alongside council members to grow into more knowledgeable, fair, honest, and compassionate judges.

Philadelphia Area Judges Council Chair, Louise Heilig, reported our next meeting will be October 27, 2025 at the Ludington Library where we will hold a Small Standard Flower Show. The spring meeting is tentatively planned for March 23, 2026. Our membership at this time is 18 student judges and 28 accredited judges for a total of 46 members.

Pittsburgh Area Judges Council (PAJC) Chair, Marilyn Backus, reported PAJC has 23 voting members from District X, VI and VII. On April 16, we installed our officers for a two-year term. Chairman – Marilyn Backus; Vice Chairman – Sheila Croushore; Recording Secretary – Deb Stumpf; Corresponding Secretary – Margie Wolff; Treasurer – Margie Bucci. All of the role descriptions and information received from the GCFP Judges Council at the Convention were distributed. We advertised the May 7 Floral Design/Horticulture Workshop and were proud to see PAJC's judges from *Floral Rhythms*: Angie Raitano, Diane Hughes and Mary Jane Martucci. PAJC has had or will have four flower shows to be judged in Districts VII and X: The Forest Hills Design Specialty Show was March 21-22; the Joint Laurel Highlands and Pittsburgh Area Joint Flower Show will be on July 8; Great Meadows hosts *Road Trip*, on July 23; and District VII's Horticulture Specialty Show will be on July 26 in Monroeville. Martha Washington GC will have a Botanical Arts Exhibition that will not be judged on August 1-2. Most of our PAJC Judges also attend Designers' Guild. In May, we practiced Panel design, on June 13 we will work on Multi-Rhythmic; August 6 will be Still Life; and Pot et Fleur will be October 1. Four PAJC judges attended the Ohio Symposium on April 28-29. The most recent Working Procedures of PAJC were distributed to the officers for review. We received a thank you for PAJC's donation to GCFP Flower Show School/Symposium Fund in memory of Nancy Bittner. Our next meeting is July 8 at the Laurel Highlands/Pittsburgh Area Joint Flower Show.

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Flower Show Judges Credentials Chair, Nancy Cartwright, reported Pennsylvania has 91 Accredited Flower Show Judges: 18 Accredited Judges; 12 Life Judges; 61 Master Judges; 48 Emeritus Judges. 30 Judges are in Good Standing until 12/2025. 10 Judges are in Good Standing until 12/2026. 48 Judges are in Good Standing until 12/2027. 3 Judges are in Good Standing until 12/2028. New Judges: Joanne Baylis, Nancy Cuttic, Susan Glassmoyer. Deceased Judge: Nancy Bittner. Judges are reminded to fill out Form 13, 15L or 15M with your exhibiting and judging credits to prepare for your next Symposium.

Flower Show (FS) Schedule Chair, Margie Bucci, reported The Flower Show Committee is looking forward to evaluating schedules this year. As of this date she has one schedule. She encourages all clubs who have had a Flower Show this year to enter their schedule. The information on how to apply is on the GCFP website in the 'Awards Manual' on page 17, and the application is on page 27.

Flower Show Schools Chair, Joanne Baylis, reported GCFP Flower Show School Course I took place 28-30 April 2025 in Gettysburg. There were 14 students in attendance and all went very well! I am also pleased to announce that we have a small cash carryover of \$755.07 that provides a cushion for Course II. At the 24 April 2025 Central Area Judges Council (CAJC) meeting, it was voted on that the proceeds from the Ways and Means table they had setup during Flower Show School Course I would go to offsetting costs where needed. A total of \$466.50 profit was made. Also, a big thank you to the Gettysburg Fire Department Business Manager who did not charge us the full amount of \$300 per day on the hall rental. Instead she told us we only had to pay \$300 total for all three days. The success of Flower Show School Course I could not have happened without the volunteers, the various individuals who brought horticulture specimens and to those who created designs. With many judges having to renew their credentials going to either the New Jersey or Ohio symposiums, I could not come up with enough designs for the classroom and/or the point scoring exam room. The Laurel Highlands Judges Council stepped up and came to the rescue. It shows how GCFP Flower Show judges support, not only each other, but our school. Ladies, thank you! Course II of Flower Show School will be held 20-22 October 2025 at the Gettysburg Fire Department Social Hall. From instructor recommendations and student evaluation comments, the Course II schedule has been revamped. Testing will now take place the morning after each subject's instruction instead of all testing done on Day 3 as in Course I. The updated brochure can be found on both the GCFP and NGC websites: GCFP - <https://pagardenclubs.org/flower-show-judges-info> NGC - <https://gardenclub.org/school/flower-show-school-courses> Looking ahead to Course III the original dates were during the same timeframe as the 2026 GCFP convention in Erie. I was successful in getting the Course III dates changed with the Gettysburg Fire Department Business Manager and both instructors. New dates for Course III will be 13-15 April 2026.

Flower Show Student Judges Credentials Chair, Claire Leichliter, reported there are currently 16 GCFP student judges. Their information was added to the state website on May 31, 2025. 12 have completed their schedule directives. 4 are in the process of completing the necessary course work to be able to receive a schedule directive. All are available to judge and would appreciate the opportunity to earn judging and exhibiting credits.

Flower Show Symposium Chair, Tonya Young, had no report.

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GCFP History & Historian, Judy Jackson, reported she received historical notes from Sharon Brown that she and Chris Leskosky had put together, ending in 2018. In keeping with their format she added events to date. She also received quite a few National Gardeners and Keystone Gardeners from Sherry Lowry. They are a wealth of information and also so very interesting to read about the many accomplishments of our clubs and members. In the National Gardener dated July/Aug. 1955 Pennsylvania president, Mrs. Harry Fisher, Jr. reported that the GCFP was the first state to hold "A School of Garden Design." She noted a great number attended and showed a need for such a school. In the April/May issue of the GCFP bulletin consisting of 4 pages and called "The News" there was a selection called the "Anatomy of a Leader" and as we are all leaders she read this: She must be agile as a monkey because she spends so much time out on a limb. She needs a big chin so she can lead with it and a thick skin so she can ward off the stings of insult and in gratitude. She has to have strong legs so she can stand on her own 2 feet all day and still be limber enough to kneel at bedtime. She has to have a big mouth so she won't choke when she puts her foot in it and a good appetite so she can swallow her pride and eat her words. She needs a deaf ear for flattery, a good ear for criticism, and judgment enough to distinguish between the two. Most of all she needs a rubber neck so she can one turn the other cheek face reality. look back at history and forward to the future for confront the issues five face the music. Leaders: Work under more pressure than a deep-sea driver, get more criticism than a poor man with an ambitious mother-in-law, suffer more temptation than a shoplifter in a mint, expect to be everywhere at once like the chaperone at a high school prom.

GCFP Reads Coordinator, Sharon Richardson, reported she is excited to launch the GCFP Reads program by featuring a Pennsylvania author named Pam Baxter. She recently wrote a thoughtful book of 30 Nature Reflections entitled "Listening to Nature's Voice: Reflections on the World Around Us." The benefits of starting with this book include: This book directly supports the GCFP Reads objective to foster shared learning and reflection within clubs/districts as well as for Little Sprouts and the Healing Arts Initiative and the book's format is short and simple with built in questions, offering flexibility for varied uses. **IMPORTANT REQUEST:** Please send Sharon Richardson a short summary describing any activity completed in support of the GCFP Reads initiative, so they can be shared across the state. Sharonrichardson22@gmail.com (Subject Line Title: GCFP READS ACTIVITY). You are all invited to submit author and/or book recommendations for adults or youth. Please also specify Title, Author, fact or fiction. Send to sharonrichardson22@gmail.com Subject Line: GCFP Recommendation).

GCFP Seed Money Coordinator, Marjorie Sears, reported this was the busiest of years for Seeds from Burpee. Clubs asked & Burpee delivered. Finally, they filled my car with 4 boxes and said: These are all your seeds for 2025. Many BURPEE Seeds were distributed as of 3/11/2025. At GCFP Convention many attendees received seeds. Parkland Garden Club will be handing out 400 packs of seeds during their Garden Tour & I'm happy to report that these were sent by Burpee. She, this year for the first time in 6 years, missed a Seed Money Application. Fortunately, Sharlene Lehman came to the Convention and notified me right away. She contacted Cindy Layton and problem was solved. Uniontown Flower Club received their check the same as everyone else. She does confirm upon receiving an Application but theirs came and she was sorry to say that she missed it. Seed Money is not just about seeds. The latest list of recipients has already been printed in the Keystone Gardener with a brief description of their request. FREE seeds are a bonus! We still have a code from Burpee: Our coupon code is active for 2025. It is **20% off and free shipping for seeds and plants: PAGC25**. If you have any difficulty with it,

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please let me know. If you can, please treat us to photos. They make everyone so happy. Leeanna made me happy by giving me my Third PRESIDENTIAL CITATION for all the work she did on Seed Money. So happy that my Burpee contacts: Gaynor & Trish received Presidential Citations as well.

GCFP Schools and Credentials/Schools and Council Coordinator, Susan Glassmoyer, reported she doesn't have much to report in the traditional sense, since this position has been modified and basically created from scratch, combining several positions. So, just for this Board Meeting, she has combined my reports into one. She is in the process of creating the following taken from the job description that has been written with the assistance of Pat Rupiper, who held the same position at the National level. As Schools Coordinator, she will promote the establishment of the four (4) NGC Schools within GCFP, reminding each chairman that the schools must be voted on at an GCFP Board Meeting. Make sure that schools are being held on a regular basis, and coordinate the calendar to ensure they are held in a timely fashion but not overlapping. Also checking the NGC Website for schools that are being held by neighboring states, so to not schedule any schools too close to theirs for more successful turnout. The Flower Show School is in good shape and running efficiently, so our focus will mainly be on establishing the other three schools. The goal is to have the other three following similar procedures and protocols. She will be maintaining the credentials of the Consultants for Environmental, Gardening, and Landscape Design, and am still gathering necessary records from the previous School Chairmen. Consultants will continue to be informed when it is time for renewal. We need to ensure that a Council for each School exists, creating new councils where needed, and maintaining relationships with the councils that are already functioning. Some councils may need more than one based on the geography of the state. She will be in touch with each of the Councils that already exist to learn how each functions, and what assistance they may need. Her goal is to have these things in place within the next three months, and host our first "Tri-Council" Meeting at the GCFP Board Meeting here on October 13, 2025.

Habitat for Humanity Donations Chair, Maryan Daniels, reported that as we have, unfortunately, not had a Chair for Habitat for Humanity for a couple of years, my initial goals are to reconnect with the organization and to ascertain the current level of partnerships the PA Garden Clubs are currently experiencing with the organization. She has met with the current Chairperson of the Adams County Habitat for Humanity Committee to have a conversation of how garden clubs could assist their endeavors. Using this information, this Fall, a survey will be developed and distributed through the 1st Vice-President, Tonya Young and the District Directors to each garden club president in order to obtain a current level of partnering. This information along with the information gathered from the Habitat organization will be placed in a report returned to the Clubs that outlines what clubs are currently doing and options for other opportunities to partner. Look for the survey this Fall and please take the time to respond and return.

Horticulture Coordinator, JoAnn Celaschi, reminded that it is time to recognize the exceptional horticulturists in our clubs who have not been recognized for this award yet. A list of the previous winners of this award can be found on the GCFP website page. The nominations for this award need to be submitted to me by August 1, 2025. The nominees for this award should have grown numerous types of plants such as trees, shrubs, annuals, perennials as well as houseplants. They should be able to speak on how to grow and care for various plants. Any schooling or additional training that they received such as any of the schools provided by the National Garden

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Clubs, master gardener programs or college credits should be mentioned in the nomination but this is not a requirement. The nominee should have shared their knowledge and experiences in horticulture with club members, friends and their communities when called upon and be considered to be a knowledgeable source of information on horticulture. There is no formal application form to complete to nominate someone for this award rather an e-mail describing why this person should receive the award should be submitted to me. Included in the e-mail you must include the name of the nominee's garden club and their district. This is a noncompetitive award so more than one deserving person from a club or district can receive the award in any year. She will submit a certificate to be presented at each district's fall meeting to the winners of this award and the name of the award recipient will be added on the GCFP webpage for Exceptional Horticulturists. Please send your nominations for this award to celaschi@hotmail.com by August 1, 2025.

Horticulture Hints Chair, Grace Mitchell, reported this past year she has been almost out of commission with an unrelenting backache and unable to bend over enough to plant. This made her realize that she is not the only one whose mobility is getting more limited, so she decided to give some hort hints for gardeners with limitations. Most of these are preaching to the choir: Raised beds: They should be at least 32 inches high for easy reach. Flowers are beautiful, but let's try some veggies and herbs. Choose dwarf varieties of tomatoes to save space and make them easier to harvest. Basil is fun to plant, but harvest it before it blooms. Flowering ruins the taste of the leaves. Rosemary and sage are slow growers. Cilantro grows great and the seeds (coriander) are useful. Dill is easy to grow but can get very tall. As we age, we must make concessions, but we'll never lose our love of gardening. She left us with a couple hints about old age. You know you're old when they start calling you "young lady", and they tell you how good you look. Almost everything hurts, and what doesn't hurt doesn't work. An exciting day is finding a handicapped parking space at Walmart.

Horticulture/Trees/Liaison to PA Forestry Council, Charlotte Crissey, reported Governor Josh Shapiro and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) among other agencies, have developed a plan to help rid our state of invasive shrubs and trees by replacing them with natives. It's called the Pennsylvania Invasive Replace-ive Plan. Landowners can remove one or more invasive species and receive up to five free, healthy, native, young replacement trees. Species include redbud, serviceberry, shagbark hickory, white oak, persimmon, a variety of shrubs and more according to the Commonwealth of PA website. The plan was in effect this past year and is currently under review to decide if it should be continued. If you think this is a good idea that should be perpetuated, please voice your support by contacting any of the following: Governor's Office, 501 North 3rd Street, 508 Main Capitol Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120; DCNR Headquarters, Cindy Adams, Rachel Carson State Office Building, 400 Market St, Harrisburg, PA 17105; Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Land Conservation Department, 800 Waterfront Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15222; PA Dept. of Agriculture, Kris Abell, Council Coordinator, at krabell@pa.gov; Penn State Master Watershed Steward Program, Jodi Sulpizio, Natural Resources Educator and Master Watershed Steward Coordinator, at jrb143@psu.edu or (717)840-7408.

Horticulture Therapy Chair, Maryann DeSanto, reported we sometimes forget that Horticulture Therapy visits are not only appreciated by Seniors and Children, but also those with special needs. The Garden Club of Springfield is pleased to provide Horticulture Therapy to individuals

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of Peaceful Living of Delaware County. This organization located in Newtown Square offers a day program to adult individuals with developmental disabilities so they may engage in a meaningful life in the community. There is no limit to the positive effect Horticulture Therapy visits can have on our local communities. This worthwhile outreach program benefits all who are involved.

Insurance Chair, Lorraine Dupre, reported this Chairman is carrying on the position of Insurance Chair. The job is to act as a liaison between the clubs in the Federation and the Insurance provider: Reed, Wertz & Rodman, Inc. which renews in July. The only recent change was the bond carrier. Keystone Surety is no longer writing bonds for RWR. We moved the employee theft position bond to Nationwide for an annual premium of \$451. Requesting certificates of insurance for club events and answering Insurance related questions are the main duties. A new certificate of insurance will be posted in July after the renewal on our website.

Investment Chairman, Gail Corle Manna, was absent but she reported this Chairman is happy to say the Federation Investments have been doing quite well since our October Board Meeting, even with all the political market ups and downs. As of April 30, 2025, Investments totaled \$639,023.08 and the total in the cash reserve is \$35,925.54 for ready access. As you see, we will have funds in ready assets available for the Scholarships which will be paid out in August to the Schools of the winners. Mary and Karen Heltzel from Stifel, will be attending this Board Meeting and give up dates on all current accounts.

Keystone Gardener (KG) Editor/Advertising, Nancy Hannum, reported the new Keystone Gardner Editor, Nancy Hannum, was installed in April 2025 and in May the new Apple computer and InDesign program were installed and ready to begin work on the Keystone Gardener, print edition. Emails requesting bios and pictures for the directory edition were sent out. By May 25th all but one were returned to the new g-mail account, kg.gcfp@gmail.com. The past editor, Karen Wychock, spent time instructing the new editor on how to input text using InDesign. Tonya Young was instrumental in obtaining information about District Directors. The Database Manager, Joanne Baylis, sent the complete up to date directory information that was then uploaded into the issue. Next, the photos needed to be inserted. It is very important to note that any photos you use for the KG or your own newsletters that have children featured, you need to have a Photo Release form on file with your club for each child. Karen Wychock helped with this task. Information about the GCFP Flower Show School was obtained. Jane Comroe and Marilyn Small agreed to proofread. The projected date for press release is mid-July.

Keystone Gardener (KG) Online Editor, Marilyn Small, reported the May issue of the KG was sent out with the new GCFP Connects system. She hoped everyone received their copy. If not, you can always find the latest issue on the GCFP website under "News." The July issue is approaching quickly, with a deadline of June 15 for submitting your information and reports. She is always afraid she will not going to have enough content. If you think your committee report is newsworthy enough for the full membership and would like it published, please email it to me by June 15 in a MS Word document. Original articles are also welcome! Speaking of deadlines, by the actual deadline, she already has most of the format and anticipated content set up. That gives me time to finish shortly after the deadline date, allowing the proofreaders enough time to edit before distribution. So, not only does the early bird get the worm, it also gets prime space in the newsletter. There is also a section named "Keystone Events" for any major upcoming club or

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district events you want to share. I'm sure there are some flower shows and garden tour events this summer and fall that you would like to advertise. The next issue after July isn't until November. While going through some old hard-copy KG's starting from 1972, she noticed some changes made through the years. Look for the History of the Keystone Gardener in the July issue. Thank you to Marilyn Backus, Jane Dodson, Angela McDonnell, Karen Wychock and Dorthy Yard for their proofreading.

Landscape Design Laurel Highlands Council (LDLHC) Co-Chairs, Sheila Croushore and Sue Konvolinka, reported the Laurel Highlands Landscape Design Council met on May 14th to plant a few plants that MJ Gardill brought and evaluated the garden. We are planning to organize a mulch day and add more shade plants.

Landscape Design Western PA. Council Chair, Angie Raitano, reported the Landscape Design Society of Western Pennsylvania met in the fall of 2024, for the first time since the COVID pandemic. We visited the Botanic Garden of Western Pennsylvania, where we walked near the pond area of the garden and lunched at the new Visitors Center. Our first meeting in 2025 was a recent visit to the Rachel Carson Homestead in Springdale, Pa., where we viewed a brief video about the life of Rachel Carson and her crucial role in helping to focus concern for the effects of industrial chemical waste on the environment and, with a docent, we toured the home and garden, which has Landmark designation. LDS plans two more meetings during 2025: A visit later in June to the "Remember Me" rose garden and the 9/11 Memorial in Stoystown, Pa.; and a visit in September to the Tarentum Japanese Garden in Pittsburgh.

Leadership Workshops Chair, Kay John, was absent and had no report.

Liaison to PA Horticulture Society (PHS), Flossie Narducci, reported there is a new initiative brewing at PHS regarding a Garden Contest/Celebration but details have not yet been formalized. When they are (hopefully by our October meeting) I will submit a report then.

Life Memberships, State/Regional/NGC Donations Chair, Jan Olsen, reported there have been two new Life Members since the convention in April 2025. GCFP life memberships –Jan Olsen – The Garden Club of York – District IV; National Garden Clubs – Betty Pisano – Penn Cumberland Garden Club – District IV. She has made packets of information about Life Memberships for the District Directors. She thought this would be a way for the District Directors to promote Life Memberships in their clubs.

Membership Chair, JoAnne Fogelman, reported that since our Last GCFP Board Meeting in October 2024 she has received 43 inquiries from NGC and 2 from GCFP regarding people interested in joining a garden club in PA. One of the inquiries from District VIII was starting a new garden club in Ridgway, PA and wanted guidance. District XI had the most inquiries, 12. District I – 8; District II/III – 7; District IV – 9; District V – 2; District VI – 1; District VII – 0; District VIII – 2; District IX – 4; District X – 1; District XI – 12.

Memory Book Chair, Rose Romboski, reported It is never too early to send photos or articles of events you have shared with GCFP President Pat! Blue Star Memorial Marker dedications/Garden Club Luncheons/Annual Meetings, etc. or anything that you capture a moment with President Pat. She will receive this 'memory book' at the end of her term. Please

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do not wait until the last minute to send me items. She will be sending reminders but it's always good to share info with me when it happens. Thanks so much!

National/Regional Projects Chair, Eileen Hoover, reported more than 250 Plant America grants have been awarded since 2017, totaling \$225,000 dollars. Grants are awarded up to \$2000 dollars each. But you must apply. Applications are open from April 1st until October 15th. Application forms are online.

Natural Disaster USA Donations Chair, Kathy Crossman, reported Donations from Garden Clubs and Districts in Pennsylvania from 8 April, 2025 to 9 June, 2025 -Natural Disasters/USA: \$ 720. These contributions were received from: Hanover Garden Club, Bethlehem Garden Club, Biglerville Garden Club, Ingomar Garden Club, Spade and Trowel Garden Club, Garden Club of Johnstown and The Garden Club of York. All checks have been forwarded to Vivian Hall, GCFP Treasurer. Natural disasters continue to affect all parts of our country and so there is a constant need for our assistance in restoring gardens and parks. Last year, the National Garden Club (NGC) was able to provide grants in total of \$7,723 and continues to receive new applications for aid following hurricanes, tornados, and floods. We can take pride in knowing our continued generosity is helping to restore hope to our fellow gardeners! She hopes to have an update of this year's grants at our next board meeting. She has emailed requests to all directors to encourage their clubs to consider a contribution to NATURAL DISASTERS,USA during the upcoming club year. The need for aid from this fund is ongoing!! District chairmen and Club Presidents need to remind their treasurers that contributions to these funds must be made payable to GCFP with the notation "Natural Disasters USA" on the lower left memo line. She is also encouraging all Club Treasurers to include their email address with their contributions so that she may send their receipt electronically.

GCFP Nominating Committee Chair, Joyce C. Milberg, reported the 2025-2027 GCFP Nominating Committee met for the first time at this meeting. We have nothing to report to the full Board at this time.

Organizational Studies Co-Chairs, Barbara Brand and Dorthy Yard, reported the co-Chairs of this committee met via zoom with the GCFP officers and the Advisor during the months of January, February and March, to review the Board of Directors (BOD) Manual. Of primary focus were the "Standing Rules and Procedures." The Standing Rules have been updated, and clarifications and corrections made. Prior to this meeting, the pending document has been shared with the GCFP Board for their review. The BOD Manual is also being updated with new and updated job descriptions, as well as essential information and contacts. All Board members are urged to download the BOD Manual and refer to it often.

Pennsylvania Garden Tour Chair, Nancy Cuttic, reported GCFP thanks and supports our members by offering clubs an opportunity to host a Garden Tour. This initiative is designed to not only assist clubs in fundraising, but to celebrate the beauty of local gardens, raise awareness of GCFP and local clubs to recruit members and to foster collaboration among members. The

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dates are Saturday, June 20 and 26, 2026. Tickets will cost \$25. There will be an 80/20 split of ticket sales for each club. For every \$25 ticket sold, \$20 will be earned by the selling club. If a club sell 50 tickets, they will earn \$1,000. A \$25 ticket will provide admission to up to 14 gardens over 2 days. Interested clubs should: Identify 6-7 show worthy local public or private gardens by September 30, 2025. All types are desirable: pollinator, rock, water gardens, Old English, rose, etc.; Brief descriptions and a photo of each garden due by October 30, 2025; appoint a Club Garden Tour Liaison to report to Garden Party Chair; appoint a Sponsorship/Ad Chair to assemble a committee to solicit ads and sponsorships for the tour booklet from local businesses, garden centers, etc.; sell tickets to general public, garden and plants societies through the PA garden party Registrar. GCFP will provide the tour booklets, directional signs, posters handle ticket sales and registration. The tour program booklet will contain map of GCFP Districts, small photo and description of each garden b area, sponsorships, ads, info about GCFP and joining a local garden club. There will be awards to further increase revenue for some clubs: Clubs with the highest ticket sales: 1st - \$1,000, 2nd - \$750, 3rd - \$500. Clubs with the highest ad revenue: 1st - \$1,000, 2nd - \$750, 3rd - \$500. Non-Participating Clubs ticket sales: 1st - \$300, 2nd - \$200, 3rd - \$100. Let's share the beautiful gardens in our state while boosting our club treasuries and spreading GCFP awareness. It's a WIN-WIN situation!

Pennsylvania Resources Council (PRC) Chair, Mary Lou Colussy, reported many provisions within Act 101 created unintended impacts, actually *limiting* the growth of Pennsylvania's recycling system and a pathway towards zero waste and a circular economy. We can make Pennsylvania the national recycling leader that it was over 35 years ago when our elected officials passed Act 101 by updating our state's law and using many of the best recycling practices being successfully used around the country today. Visit prc.org for more information.

Plant-A-Tree/Penny Pines Donations Chair, Nancy Lambert Fulk, was absent and had no report.

Personnel Chair, Betsy Smith, had no report.

Pollinator Restoration Program Chair, Barbara White, reported that pollinator week is June 16--22, 2025. Pollinator week is an annual celebration in support of pollinator health that was initiated and managed by pollinator partnership. It is time to raise awareness for pollinators and spread the word about what we can do to protect them. In 2015 NGC began a partnership with the national pollinator garden network with a goal of identifying one million gardens working to assist in restoring critical pollinator pollinations. We can provide food and habitat for pollinators in our home gardens, as well as our public gardens, youth, schools, churches, nursing homes, business, and government offices projects that have areas for pollinator gardens. That's the obvious places to start and maintain gardens but now let's take it a step further. Attend township meetings; pressure the brain-dead township supervisors to stop cutting & weed spraying along the back roads to allow the natural wildflowers and butterfly weed to return and flourish. You couldn't wait to get in your yards this spring to rake the leaves that gathered this winter! Leave the leaves on the ground. Raking leaves will disturb our insects that are nesting there. For the next 2 years she will be reporting pollinator services nation-wide; reporting on registered pollinator friendly gardens that are maintained by GCFP members; inform our members of presentation and publications of our Penn State master gardeners; how to get NGC and Penn State pollinators

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certified. Need pictures and \$10.00 pollinators are trying to work hard for us----but that goes both ways--let's work hard for them.

President's Project – Pennsylvania Celebrates Nature and Embraces the Future Awards – Healing Arts Chair, Barbara Campbell, reported the purpose of this project is introduce our Healing Art Program to Healthcare Facilities / or Schools. There is a part of our brain the orbitofrontal cortex (OFC) that is affected by aesthetic experiences, like art or beauty. It triggers activity in a network of brain regions including the OFC. Marilyn Backus sent me an article from The Epoch Times about how Nature has shown to have a calming and restorative effect, especially in health care settings, a well-chosen garden image could provide patients, families and staff with a sense of peace and comfort. There was a study done at a hospital where a group of patients of similar age and medical issues were placed on the same floor and one group faced a brick wall and the other a grove of trees. The group that faced the grove of trees asked for less pain medicine and recovered earlier than the group facing a stone wall. Donating a garden photo or painting to a health center as a form of healing art in the name of The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania would be a meaning and thoughtful gesture and also align beautifully with the Federation's focus on Celebrating Nature. It could serve as both a gift to the community and a reflection of the Federations' values, reinforcing the idea of gardens as places of healing and growth. The Federations' name on the donation would also raise awareness of our organization's work and contributions to the well-being of others. How to donate our art- Identify the right contact. Find out who is in charge of patient services, community outreach, and facility management. This could be the hospital's administration, a patient care coordinator, or head of the art therapy program. What are the needs of the facility: What is their environment, patient demographics, and whether they have any existing art program. Introduce the GCFP and describe your club, its mission and your theme "Celebrate Nature-Embrace the Future". Highlight any relevant past projects or community work. Describe the Healing Art Project-Explain the concept of placing artwork of gardens and plants in the facility. Emphasize the benefits of nature-inspired art for healing, such as reducing stress, improving mood and aiding in recovery. Give them details and information about the type of artwork, the size, how it will be installed, and any maintenance requirements. Offer flexibility in working with their space and needs. Highlight the positive impact on patients and staff, and how this can enhance the facility's environment. Mention any potential press or recognition for the facility's involvement. Initial contact: Send a formal email or letter (on GCFP letterhead) to introduce the project and request a meeting. Attach a proposal and ask for further discussion or questions if needed. Prepare a presentation if a meeting is scheduled, it can be visual presentation of the artwork or photo. Be prepared to discuss how you project can be tailored to their specific environment and answer any logistical or financial questions. Final Steps, if they agree to move forward, outline the next steps, including timeliness, installation processes, and any legal or administrative paperwork. Express Gratitude: Whether they accept or decline, thank them for their time and consideration. Maintain professionalism and thoughtfulness. I am very pleased to say we have our first donation to the Healing Art Project. Marilyn Backus donated two painting by Betty Fisher, who is a well-known artist, in western PA. Nancy Cuttic also donated one of her paintings to be used for the Healing Art Project. The paintings will in a doctor's office with a label stating who it was donated by. There is a letter that is available to use when you are going to contact a health care facility or school. She would appreciate having photos of the art work you are donating and where it will be placed. A label will be sent to you.

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President's Project – Pennsylvania Celebrates Nature and Embraces the Future Awards – Community Gardens Co-Chairs, Arlene Reagan-Harris and Marge Eberz reported this committee has completed the following tasks: In May we attended the District XI meeting and presented ideas for community/ theme gardens to the District XI clubs to consider establishing in their area. We suggested the following types of gardens: Red, White and Blue Garden, a sensory garden, a colonial medicinal garden, a pollinator garden, and a children's garden. We suggested a children's garden could be a Pizza Garden and showed a diagram of a circular garden divided into six sections. Peppers, onions tomatoes, parsley, oregano and basil would be the featured plants. We submitted an article to the Keystone Gardener describing the Children's Pizza Garden; this included a diagram of the garden with the featured plants in each section. We also mentioned other gardens that gardeners might consider establishing.

Program Resources Chair, Diane Quinn, was absent and had no report.

Protocol Chair, Haddie Weber, thanked this Administration for the honor of serving as your Protocol Chair and Lee Ishman as Vice Char. A very special thank you for your cooperation in then seating assignments for all meals and meetings. A few reminders: Remember it is God before Country. The GCFP President is to be recognized FIRST by asking the members to stand and give a warm welcome. In addressing the board, it is Madam President. Convention registration form, make sure that you fill in board position. This facilitates the registrar on membership to the GCFP State Board.

Publicity Press Book Awards Chair, Linda Freedman, reported the publicity press book is similar in that we want to let others know of our garden club activities and accomplishments. We do many things to improve our communities and our environments. Our clubs work with seniors and children. We plant and tend historic gardens. There are flower shows and holiday house tours. Here is your opportunity to showcase your club and win an award. Simply collect clippings from any publication mentioning your club from January through December 2026 and arrange them chronologically in a folder. Recommended is the Oxford heavyweight press guard report cover or similar folder with brads (no notebooks). Clear plastic covers will protect your pages. Number your pages and include a table of contents. The criteria will be in the Keystone Gardener and on the GCFP website. She recently created a similar book to commemorate 90 years of Old York Road Garden Club featuring information about luncheons and teas with locations of venues. It was fun to look back and see the lists of attendees, menus and what prices used to be. Think of when you created your own scrap book or photo album for a graduation, wedding, new baby or other special occasion. She invites all clubs to prepare a Publicity Press Book and apply for this award. There will be four categories according to club size. Mail booklets along with a self-addressed stamped envelope large enough to hold your booklets so they can be returned to you. Judging will take place in January. Thank you and have fun with this year-long project. Go for it.

Sage and Roses Donations Chair, Vivian Abel, was absent and had no report.

Scholarship Committee Chair, Sandra Hendricks, reported all district directors, scholarship chairs, club presidents, and garden club members are encouraged to relay information to local high schools, colleges and clubs in their districts. The updated information will be on the GCFP website by September or October for the 2026/2027 school year. The winners are announced at the 2026 convention. Scholarships are \$1,000 each and the students are for those who plan to

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further their education in the required subjects. The applicant must be a resident of Pennsylvania and must be sponsored by a federated garden club but need not attend the Pennsylvania school or college. All information will be on the website.

Scholarship Donations Chair, Linda Southerling, thanked all clubs, districts and individuals who have supported GCFP scholarships with donations to the scholarship fund. Always remember to use the on-line form, from the GCFP website, when making a donation and, wherever possible, indicate an e-mail address for acknowledgments, including emails for acknowledgement to the families of the honorees. Our goal is to eliminate the use of USPS wherever possible.

Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Chair, Betty Grossheim, reported at the recent GCFP State Convention it was an honor to list the 2024 Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Contest winners and to show their posters via Power Point at the Awards Dinner. It was also an honor to meet some of the local garden club chairpersons for the contest. They were justifiably proud of their students being state winners. My plan for this report was to ask for the help of the entire board and especially the District Directors, to help increase participation in this year's contest. I do want to do that, but there is one caveat to that: As of now, she is unsure when and if there will be a contest. When the Forest Service website did not have any updated information about the contest, she contacted the USDA official in charge of the event asking when it would be available. She stated, "due to significant changes in government regulations, the approval process has become more complex. Every aspect of the project, from design to distribution, now requires the approval of the Office for Government Efficiency, a process that is beyond the control of us in the Forest Service and our Secretary of Agriculture's Office." My new plan is to contact all the District Directors when this is resolved. She will be asking you to spread the word to your local clubs encouraging them to participate. Remember, the participants can be from any group, if the participants are in the ages of 1st through 5th grade. Last year we had over 1700 participants but only from 4 garden clubs. This year let us increase this number and help the next generation preserve our natural environment. Also, please look in the Summer Keystone Gardener for an update about this year's contest. Late summer is the time to start planning so that you can arrange with your student group to schedule a program and creative time to complete the posters. She can be reached via her email: sophiesmom1991@yahoo.com. And look forward to helping you any way she can.

Sponsorship Committee Chair, Marjorie Sears, reported this past year, she contacted 147 places of business and came away with 55 Ads, Merchandise or Gift Cards for food to be placed in our Gift Bags. Burpee seeds: 205 Mexican Sunflowers & 145 Zinnia; 350 Four O'Clocks; 350 Cilantro; 375 4th of July Tomatoes. Total Donation for Food = \$325.00. Total Collected = \$8249.72 (including Duluth & Wegman's water)

Sprouts and Seedlings Chair, Cheryl Brumbaugh, reported this is a follow up note to the new Seedlings and Sprouts Program. Pat's vision of having every garden club in the state connected to a youth program is a grand idea and one that we could fulfill by spreading the word. The form to register a youth garden group can be found on the GCFP website by clicking on the Forms Library. Any group size would be eligible and just as a tiny seedling, the group can start small and grow as interest develops and the program is nourished. It takes committed adult gardeners. Consider groups of scouts, church youth groups, school students, and children with disabilities.

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The importance and benefits of youth gardening cannot be understated as these are our gardeners of tomorrow. The GCFP "Sprouts and Seedlings" program can offer you some start up advice and resources to begin your youth program. Contact me at smsschoolgarden@gmail.com. Send your forms to me and the \$2 registration fee for your youth group to get started.

Tours Chair, Sharon Richardson, reported there are thirty people registered for the trip to Italy, departing on September 29th.

Tri-Refresher Chair, Sharon Richardson, reported C.A.R. (Central Atlantic Region) will offer a Tri-Refresher as part of their annual Fall Meeting October 20-22nd. Please put this on your calendar to avoid scheduling conflicts even if you don't plan to attend. GCFP is planning a Tri-Refresher in the Brandywine Valley in the fall of 2026. Watch for further details at the October GCFP Board Meeting.

GCFP Webmaster, Vina McLeod Rudolph, reported she does intend to change the Password for the website, effective July 1, 2025. Please do not publish this new password in any type of communication, let's only share it verbally. If you forget it or have trouble with it, please send Vina an email with your telephone number, and Vina will call you, and help you. The price for publishing it, is genuine Belgium Dark Chocolate. Why? Because Vina will have to change the password and make about 20 phone calls to get the word out. That deserves really good chocolate. Her normal day to update the website with all the information that's been emailed to me, is Sunday. If it's a critical change that must happen right away, it needs to be sent to the GCFP President first, it will be up to her to approve it and send it on to me. There's not much that is critical when it comes to a garden club website, so please choose wisely. District Newsletters and Annual Meeting Calls must be sent to me by the District Director. She needs to know that they have approved it, and that it is the Final Copy. She skims over these documents, but she doesn't proofread them. She will make the Calls online fillable forms before she puts them on the website. She will email you back when she is done and let you know what page the information is on.

Youth Activities Co-Chairs, Chris Hawthorne and Barbara Oswald, reported the theme for the essay contest has not been posted as of yet. The 2025-2026 poetry theme is "Plant America For The Next 100 Years". The deadline to be received by us in the mail is Monday December 1, 2025. Please remember that no inappropriate entries will be accepted for consideration and will be discarded.

Wildflowers Chair, Diane Hughes, reported this year the wildflowers have been beautiful! All of the trilliums, violets, phlox before the leaves emerged were spectacular. Our nature trails put on a great show. Now is the time to see the native orchids. Remember: People and concrete are the threats to our wildflowers.

Zoom Educator, Sandra Benedict, was absent and had no report.