



GCFP District VI Newsletter

4th Quarter, 2025

Seedlings



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District 2025-6 Calendar

April 15--District Meeting, Johnstown, Perkins—10 am
April 26-28--GCFP Annual Convention, Erie, PA
May 4-6--NGC Annual Convention, St. Louis, MO
June 20--Garden Party Tours
June 27--Garden Party Tours

Articles, events and happenings concerning District VI may be submitted to:
Mary Lou Colussy at
lalou46@aol.com
Next Seedlings
April, 2026

A special thank you to Nerita Brant. Seedlings Proofreader

Director's Corner

Mary Lou Colussy District VI Director

Due to my special travel plans in 2026, the 1st quarter edition of the Seedlings will not be published until my return in April. I hope this is not too much of an inconvenience to our newsletter community. Please send your articles/information to me by April 8th.

The past year has been a whirlwind of activity across our District. There have been installations of officers, Gold and Blue Star Memorial dedications and three flower shows. I have taken part and/or participated in most of them when able. I am very proud of all the accomplishments across our district!

The part that amazes me the most is the dedication and resilience of our members. We are a great district. Even though some of members are getting older, we still seem to draw in many younger folks to pick up the slack. It is this new blood that keeps our membership thriving and alive. Most have new ideas, or are willing to follow and they have the willingness to get in there and get the job done.

This year, we have three newer members that were willing to step up and take on the office of president, when there was a need. I am grateful to these ladies and I think it is a growing trend to get everyone involved. I think the secret is for our seasoned members to offer to be a mentor, so our clubs not only can thrive, but survive.

It is important to have our veteran members act as mentors not only for the position of officers but as mentors in the various committees, so that they can ease into a position of leadership. If we want our clubs to thrive and survive all the members need to take integral parts in the infrastructure of the club.

Another suggestion is to get not only adults to become new members, we should encourage youngsters to help out and eventually become part of the leadership. I have seen first-hand in my own club that the below 18-year-olds can and are willing to help wherever they are needed; you just have to get them involved and to feel appreciated. And what a great legacy you are giving to them.

The question is "What are you willing to do to keep our clubs vibrant and necessary and attract new members?"



District VI Annual Meeting August 27, 2025

Laura Jackson gave a great presentation on birds at our annual District Meeting this year. Thanks to the Bedford County GC for hosting our meeting this year.



President Pat Wolanski attended the Annual Meeting along with 1st VP Tonya Young and 2nd VP Mary



District Director, Mary Lou Colussy presented Mary Cunkelman of Evergreen GC with the prestigious Horticultural of Excellence Award for 2025!



Mary Jo Gardil conducting the Memorial Service for the District members who passed during the last year.

Annual Meeting Attendees from Somerset GC

What a meaningful day for the Somerset Garden Club at the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania District VI Annual Meeting – “Garden’s Feathered Friends” in Bedford

Our members came together with clubs from across the district to share ideas, connect, and be inspired. The Bedford County Garden Club was a gracious host, from the welcoming touches to the delicious luncheon!

The highlight of the afternoon was Laura Jackson’s program, “Birds in My Garden,” which gave us a fresh perspective on the connection between the plants we grow and the wildlife they support

We’re grateful to everyone who joined us — gatherings like this remind us why garden clubs matter: friendship, education, and a shared love of nature



Annual Meeting Attendees from W&S

Here's our group that attended the annual meeting this year. Judy Miller Ridgway , Patti Flowers Jacobina , Angela McDonnell, Patti Schildkamp , Paula Heming , Dr. Wilma Light , Sue Wolfe , Deborah Christopher and Mary Niezelski



Each of the presidents was asked to give a quick report on what we have done over the past year. President, Sue Wolfe did a great job and gave other clubs some ideas.

November Floral Webinar

The Garden Club Federation of PA is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: The Garden Club Federation of PA's Zoom Meeting

Time: Nov 4, 2025, 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Zoom Link Below

Zoom Invite

Meeting ID: 842 0604 1019

Passcode: 118245



Club Activities

Gardens of the Month for August



Our **commercial** garden of the month goes to Brandi and Justin Naugle and their Hen & Rooster Farm on Route 220 south of Bedford. They offer a wide variety of freshly picked veggies and beautiful flowers. There's a charming little shed where they sell soaps and salves. Definitely worth a stop!

The home of Lois Boyer of Blossom Lane, Schellsburg, has been selected as our **residential** garden of the month. She has an outstanding display of hydrangeas as well as many other annual and perennial flowers spread amongst her quaint old buildings and home. A drive to the orchard will provide a beautiful scene.



**Bedford
County
Garden
Club**

September's Gardens of the Month

September's **Commercial** Garden of the Month went to First National Bank on Juliana Street. La Rhonda Batzel and Sierra Pittman are to the left of club members Denise Wright and Micky McCahan. The beautiful bed of petunias flanking the grand entrance was planted by Forget Me Not Landscaping.



Our **Residential** Garden of the Month for September went to Homeowner Bonnie Weinhold on John Street. Beautiful cascades of petunias, mandevillas and geraniums adorn this lovely and inviting wrap around porch. Bonnie (center) is flanked by garden club members Micky McCahan and Denise Wright.

Gold Star Memorial Dedication

September 17, 2025

We had the great honor today to show our appreciation to the families of our country's fallen warriors with the dedication of our Gold Star Memorial.



Member Pat Greenfield led the effort.



Marilyn Gash honored her beloved son in law who gave his life at 22 in Afghanistan.



Bedford's honor guard on hand to display the colors and close out our program with Taps.



**Bedford
County
Garden
Club**



Rev. Jack Miller of Bedford Presbyterian church gave the invocation and benediction.

Ben Shriner spoke on behalf of B C Stone who provided the stone for our plaque.

Local singers 'In Tune' gave a beautiful a cappella rendition of our National Anthem and God Bless America.



**Bedford
County
Garden
Club**

**Bedford County Garden Club's
2025 Christmas
Home Tour**

***Candles, Snow and
Mistletoe***

December 6 and 7, 1 pm to 4 pm



SAMA Bedford
Anderson House
137 E Pitt St., Bedford



Home of
Bobby & Amanda Huxta
1688 Lutzville Rd.,
Everett



Home of
Shawn & Maryellen McGill
233 S Richard St., Bedford

**Tickets: \$15.00 until November 30
\$20.00 at the door**

Bedford County Garden Club Members also have tickets!

Candlelight, Snow and Mistletoe!

Bedford County Garden Club is hosting our bi-annual Christmas Home Tour this December. We have two lovely homes, The Southern Allegheny Museum of Art and a final stop at the Spring House Café at Homewood Estates, where there will be refreshments, entertainment and a chance to win a variety of lovely gift baskets!

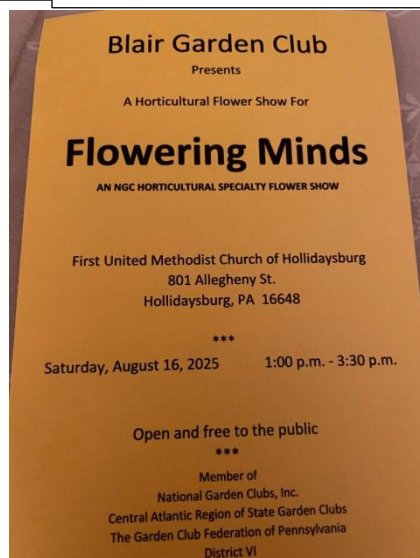
The tour is December 6 and 7 from 1 to 4 pm – a great way to kick off the Christmas Season. Tickets are available for \$15 from any garden club member, or contact Carolyn Frye, 540-535-9580 / carolyndfrye@yahoo.com . Tickets on the day of the tour are \$20.

This Home Tour is a fundraiser for our scholarship program. We look forward to welcoming you!

Garden Party 2026!

Bedford County Garden Club is participating in the GCFP Garden Party, and we want to extend an invitation to our District Club members to come see our gardens! We have 6 lovely gardens to tour on June 27. If you are considering going, please go online in January to purchase your ticket and be sure to select our club. Thank you and we look forward to seeing you next June!

Club Activities



Botanical Arts Winners

Blair Garden Club



Horticulture Winners



Horticulture



Horticulture of Excellence Winner



Horticulture



Photography

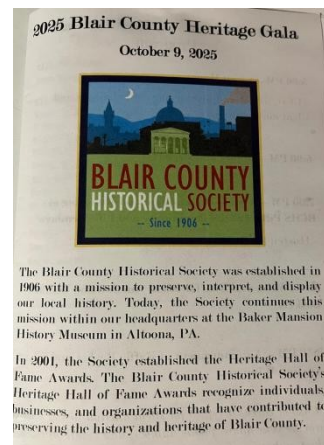


Photography

Historical Site Preservation Award

The Blair Garden Club received the Historical Site preservation award at the Blair County Heritage Gala for the work at Baker Mansion!!

It was a great honor for the club and it's all due to the hard work BGC does to help out at the Mansion year after year. Congratulations!!

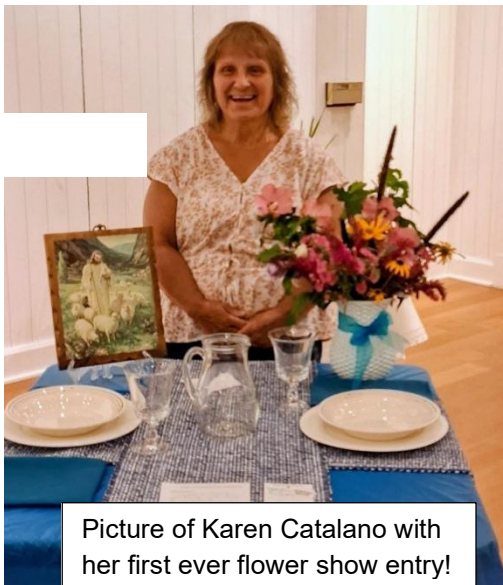


Blair Garden Club Members Cleaned Up 7th Street Garden

Members prepared this garden for the upcoming winter. It's hard to believe summer is over and winter is just around the corner. BGC is already planning and looking forward to next year's garden. This garden provides an area of beauty in a busy traffic area. Thank you all those who stop as they pass by to say thank you and let us know how much they love this garden. Also thank you to Western PA conservancy and the city of Altoona for their help and support with this garden.



**Blair
Garden
Club**

Club Activities

Picture of Karen Catalano with her first ever flower show entry!

Marie Price checking out the Horticulture at the Indiana GC Flower Show on August 1, 2025

**Heritage Garden!**

Look what was blooming at the Heritage Garden! those who aren't familiar with the garden, it's located on the IUP campus by the North Dining Hall. Come & visit the garden!



**Evergreen
Garden
Club**

Everyone likes to walk through The Heritage Garden



Club Activities

Laurel Award Winners: This award is designed to recognize district or individual club members for outstanding achievements that go “above and beyond” the regular responsibilities of office or committee.

Pictured left to right: Sheri Lowry, Andy Fedore, Charlotte Crissey and Bob Wilkie.

**Garden
Club of
Johnstown**

New members as of August, 2025.

Pictured left to right: Becky Miller, Kim Haluska, Connie Alexander, Janet Cooper, and Donna Prothero.

Missing from the picture: Roxie Hauger and Jane Rodgers.



**OLD WESTMONT NEIGHBORS HOLIDAY HOME TOUR
AND GARDEN CLUB OF JOHNSTOWN HOLIDAY MARKET
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6TH**



Enjoy a Johnstown holiday tradition with your friends as you tour five beautifully decorated historic homes in Westmont, PA.! Sponsored by the Old Westmont Neighbors, the annual home tour is planned for Saturday, December 6th, with tour time choices of 12:00 and 2:00 PM.

Tickets are \$35 apiece and are available online by visiting the OLD WESTMONT NEIGHBORS Facebook Page or at <https://give.nonprofit-partners.org/event/2025-old-westmont-holiday-home-tours/e729741>.

**Garden
Club of
Johnstown**

The Garden Club of Johnstown has partnered with the Old Westmont Neighbors to create a Holiday Market Open House at the Westmont Presbyterian Church Social Hall, 601 Luzerne St., Johnstown, 15905, from 11:00 to 4:00. Club members will register tour participants, distribute tour maps and credentials, and provide complimentary refreshments. (Parking is available behind the church.)

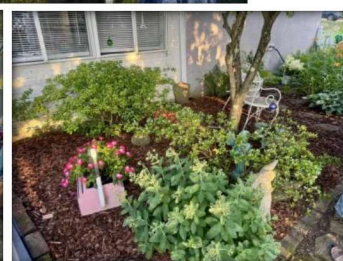
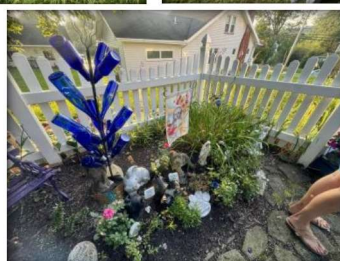
In addition to the Holiday Tour Registration, the **Holiday Market** will include:

- A Holiday Gingerbread House Display
- A Display of Holiday Tablescares
- Gingerbread Houses for Sale
- Holiday Ornaments
- Holiday Centerpieces
- Gardening Gift Bags, Amaryllis and Paperwhite Bulbs
- Raffles: Glamour Galore, Basket Raffle, and 50/50

Whether you are a tour participant or an interested guest, we invite you to enjoy our holiday exhibits, shop for unique gifts, try your luck with our raffles, and enjoy a holiday treat at the Garden Club of Johnstown Holiday Market Open House. If you need more information, please contact Mary Jo Gardill @ 814-241-8902, or Sheri Lowry @ 814-243-3456.

Club Activities**Garden Tour**

On July 21st, we held our club garden tour and progressive dinner. Thanks Kate, Chuck and Diana and Judy for hosting. It was a beautiful night to tour the gardens eat amazing food and spend time with garden club friends.



**Indiana
Garden
Club**

2025 IGC Scholarship Winners

Congratulations to our 2025 scholarship winners Hannah Arone, Maksym Conjelko, John Bruner, Elizabeth Bruner, Anna Layden, and Sadie Palfrey.

IGC Flower Show—August 1, 2025

Birds of a Feather



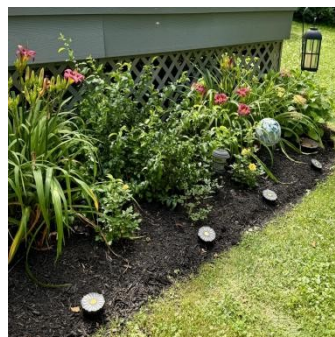
**Indiana
Garden
Club**

IGC Garden of the Month for August

Congratulations to Donna Sabbia August's Garden of the Month



Winner



2ND ANNUAL SPILL THE TEA

IGC members spend a few hours sharing tips, tricks, and tools that have made their garden a success over this past gardening season. IGC Mary Margaret Congelko hosted and members brought food and tea to share. This year, we added a seed exchange for anyone who wanted to participate. It has been a fun way to wrap up our gardening season!



**Indiana
Garden
Club**



Club Activities

Gardens of Distinction

Judy Smychynski, Bakerton



Sons of Italy, Patton



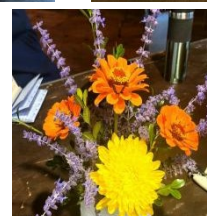
John & Carol Schenk



**Patton
Garden
Club**

Floral Challenge

PGC members were challenged at their August meeting to come up with a floral design with greens, flowers and their own imagination. These are just a few of the designs that were created!



2025 Garden Tours

Photos by Christine Rodriguez.

On August 25, 2025 Patton Garden Club members had an enjoyable evening touring various Gardens of Distinction in the area. The first was the gardens of Jill and Tim Little, also our local beekeeper.



Patton Garden Club

The second was an unusual entry, since it was maintained near the Sons of Italy building, Tony Pompa spearheading and maintaining the gardens.



Finally, but not the least, the gardens of Joyce Eckenrode rounded out our Garden Tours



Club Activities

The Somerset Garden Club is about more than plants—we're neighbors who love to explore local treasures together. From walking trails like Kimberly Run to tending Uptown planters, we're a group passionate about growth, friendship, and making Somerset bloom.

**September Meeting**

A huge thank-you to Salt + Light Meadows for their presentation on maple syrup & flower bouquets and growing was as inspiring as it was seasonal! It was such a great reminder that pinching has purpose — sometimes you need to cut back in order to flourish. Nothing is wasted, and everything is a lesson.

Also at the meeting, Club Laurels Forget-Me-Not Award were presented along with celebrating the talented members through the Amanda E. Dowie Dried Arrangement competition. The creativity and craftsmanship on display were truly lovely; — special kudos to Violet Curuso for taking home first place!



**Somerset
Garden
Club**

Club Activities**LET'S HAVE SOME FUN!****An NGC Small-Standard Flower Show**

On Sunday, August 3rd, W&S Garden Club held a flower show for members only at the Loyalhanna Watershed Nimick Family Education Center.

"Best of Show" the Sweepstakes Award, was given to Mary Niezelski. This award is earned by having the most points. Points are derived by the amount of places you have taken.... in other words, certain points for blue ribbons, red ribbons etc. Mary had some beautiful entries.

Each and every one of the members that entered, whether they won a ribbon or not, they were winners. You were a winner just by being there and just by entering, we loved seeing everyone's displays. And we learned so much from this.

The design category, of course is always a highlight. In that category, first places were taken by Deb Bruzda, Patti Schildkamp, Mary Niezelski and Paula Heming. Second place winners in the design category included Kate Nuernberger, and Angela McDonnell twice.

Deb Christopher received a first place and an Award of Merit for horticultural excellence with her entry of a cup plant flower.

In addition, the first and second place winners in the design categories included Andrea Kautz, Judy Ridgway, Sue Wolfe, Wilma Light, Diane Coleman, Carol Nicely and Barry Miedel. There were many, many third-place awards as well as honorable mentions.

Congratulations to all of the winners.

**Weeders &
Seeders
Garden
Club**



Club Activities

August Activities At our August meeting, we learned about Native Groundcovers by Master Gardener Deb Christopher. The benefits are astounding and there are choices for all different types of landscapes. We invited the public to attend this presentation and ended up with a couple new members!

Why Native Groundcovers?

- Suited to local soil and climate, and more apt to thrive in local conditions
- Help stabilize and improve the soil, and reduce water runoff; many native plants have deep roots that can draw up minerals from lower soil horizons
- Support ecological services and provide habitat for native insects, amphibians, birds, mammals with whom they have evolved over millennia
- Provide nectar and pollen for pollinators
- Serve as host plants for bees, moths, butterflies and other beneficials
- They can help us reduce the amount of lawn in our landscapes

September Activities

We held one of our garden-related workshops at the home of Judy Ridgway in early September. Judy organizes and hosts these workshops for our members to not only learn and create, but to also socialize. This is a great way to keep members engaged and interested in our club. Judy's latest project was creating cement leaves which everyone thoroughly enjoyed.



At our September meeting, members (and sisters) Holly Leechalk and April Faris provided a delightful program about jewelweed and how to make soap with it. Since the soap has to cure for a few weeks, each member present will receive a bar of soap at the next meeting. Small tins of salve were available to take home and each member could scent their soap with an essential oil they had chosen.



**Weeders &
Seeders
Garden
Club**

HOLIDAY 2025 FUNDRAISER

The Lynch Creek Farm online fundraiser for the Weeders & Seeders Garden Club is now open!



Lynch Creek Farm makes beautiful fresh wreaths, centerpieces, garland, table-top Christmas trees and more! They also have top-quality items for Fall/Thanksgiving. You can purchase this long-lasting holiday decor for yourself and as gifts which can be shipped directly to the recipient.

Our club receives 10% of every purchase made using



the link below (including sale items). When our campaign page loads, click on the “SHOP” button located to the right of “Weeders & Seeders Garden Club 2025”:

<https://lynchcreekfundraising.com/campaigns/396445>

Our fundraising campaign is open until December 14, 2025 and will benefit our Scholarship Fund. We greatly appreciate your support and wish you a Happy Holiday Season!

**Weeders &
Seeders
Garden
Club**

Flower Pounding

Did you know that you can transfer the color from flowers and even leaves onto fabric by beating them with a hammer? Flower Pounding, gardener's stress relief or dyeing with your garden's bounty? Ah, perhaps a bit of both. The natural pigments pounded into properly prepared fabric can make a lovely piece of art, and allow you to let off a little steam at the same time.

To begin you need to have a piece of fabric that has been prepared for dyeing, as this is simply a method of natural dyeing. 100% cotton works best. You can either buy fabric already prepared for dyeing at most fabric stores - 100% cotton - or you can prepare any cotton fabric you have by the following method:

Wash fabric in hot water using your regular detergent and two tablespoons of washing soda. Run the rinse cycle two or three times to remove all the washing soda.

Place the fabric in a large bucket. Add **two cups of hot water and 1/4 cup of alum** for each yard of fabric. You may need to add a little more hot water. Stir until the alum dissolves and let stand until cool.

In a separate cup mix **½ cup hot water with 1 teaspoon of washing soda** for each yard of fabric, mix into water holding fabric - this will fizz a bit. Let stand overnight, rinse and spin, hang out to dry. Iron while still damp for best results.

Materials Needed:

- Variety of Fresh Flowers and Leaves'

Best Flowers for Flower Pounding

Daisies
Dandelions
Geranium petals or leaves
Lantana
Marigolds
Pansies
Petunias
Pentas
Plumbago
Rose petals

Not all flowers are suitable for pounding. Flowers with particularly thick petals such as tulips don't work well as they tend to smear. Flowers with many petals such as roses need to be take apart so that you can pound the petals individually. Daisy like blooms need to have their centers removed and all flowers need to have stems, calyxes, pistils and stamens removed. White flowers don't work as they have no pigment to impart to the fabric.

The best time to pick the flowers is after the dew has dried, but before the heat of the day. New blooms have more color than older.

You can also use leaves, and newer leaves pound much better than older, although as they age, you get the veins and edges and that can be interesting. Autumn leaves will pound out interestingly, the colors being old, but newly released from the covering of chlorophyll.

- Prepared white, cotton fabric (muslin works well)
- Wax Paper
- Masking Tape
- Hammer
- Wooden cutting board

Instructions:

It is best to work on a hard surface. Cover your work surface with wax paper. Use masking tape to hold your wax paper in place. Start out by arranging the flowers and/or leaves onto the wax paper in whatever design you want them to appear on their fabric. You can also just lay out one flower or leaf at a time.

Carefully lay the fabric over the flowers and/or leaves. Use masking tape on the edges to hold the fabric in place. Gently pound on the fabric over the flowers and/or leaves and see the flower colors bleed through onto the fabric. Continue to pound the flowers and leaves until you get the desired results. Set your fabric aside to dry completely or iron on both sides for two to five minutes with a hot iron (cotton setting) to set the pigments using a paper towel over surface so as to avoid ruining your iron. At this point, you'll find that the paler pinks are fading fast and that some of the yellows have pretty much disappeared. The easy solution is to pretend that you meant for that to happen, or you can use colored pencils or fine Sharpie to outline and add some subtle highlights. Make sure you iron again after you use the colored pencil so that the fabric will open up to accept that pigment.

You can use the fabric to make pillows, frame it to make pictures, make several to use in a quilt, or even applique it onto a shirt or other fabric item. You can also use this technique to transfer color to paper. Make unique stationary, invitations, book marks, and much more. Hand wash only if necessary!



All of the information needed by the host clubs is available on the National Garden Club website gardenclub.org/smokey-bear-woodsy-owl-youth-poster-contest.

Local winning posters must be received before **January 20, 2026** and sent to the State Garden chairperson poster contest chairperson Betty Grossheim GCFP Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Contest Chairperson sophiesmom1991@yahoo.com

2026 Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl Poster Contest INFORMATION

Hosted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service and the National Garden Clubs, Inc., this contest is an opportunity for local garden clubs to connect with their communities and may be used to promote their local or State garden club, attract children and their parents, and raise awareness of the importance of caring for the environment and preventing wildfires.

- Only children from first through fifth grade can participate. You can reach out to schools, scout troops, after school programs, youth programs, and similar groups.
- Students should be reminded to check spelling as posters with spelling errors will be disqualified.
- The following information must be written on the back of each poster: The student's name, grade level, garden club name, garden club contact name address, phone number, school, teacher's name, school name, parent or guardian name and address, phone number and email. (Should school policy preclude giving students' addresses and phone numbers, please include the school address and phone number.)
- Or use the free downloadable label found at www.symbols.gov/ngc-poster-contest.
- Local garden club coordinators for the Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl Poster Contest should contact their State or regional poster chairman to get the promotional package. You can also download the promotional package from the National Garden Clubs, Inc., website, www.gardenclubs.org or from www.symbols.gov/ngc-poster-contest.
- Every participating child should receive a certificate of participation. Certificates can be ordered for free at www.symbols.gov or www.symbols.gov/ngc-poster-contest.
- Local and State Garden clubs' poster coordinators are encouraged to organize recognition ceremonies.
- If there is a Forest Service office nearby, they can help facilitate the presence of Smokey Bear or Woodsy Owl at your recognition ceremony. You can find your nearest Forest Service office by visiting www.fs.usda.gov.
- We encourage participants and/or local, State, and regional chairpersons to make copies of the posters before submission.
- The five posters that compete for the national grand prize become property of the Forest Service. They ARE NOT returned to participants.
- For information about the poster contest do not hesitate to contact the National Garden Clubs, Inc., national coordinator for the poster contest, Terry Critchlow at tcritchlow@aol.com or the Forest Service national coordinator for the poster contest, Iris Velez at iris.velez@usda.gov.