

GARDEN CLUB FEDERATION OF PENNSYLVANIA

District I

The First Bloom



A quarterly publication of

GCFP District I

Winter 2024

The First Bloom

WINTER 2024

In This Issue

- 3 Nancy's News
- 4 GCFP Convention Info
- 5 Convention Trash to Treasure
- 6 National Garden Clubs Info
- 7-12 Club News
- 10 2024 Longwood Flower Show
- 13-14 Club News
- 15 PHS Philadelphia Flower Show Info
- 16 *The Interesting Tradition of "Telling the Bees"*
- 17 District I Meetings and Kids' Corner
- 18-19 *The Great Backyard Bird Count*
- 20 Plant America Month
- 20-22 Gardening Info
- 22 District I and GCFP Calendar

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

Editor: [Marilyn Small](#)

Deadline Dates for Submission: Spring Issue April 15
Summer Issue July 15
Fall Issue October 15
Winter Issue January 15

Member of the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania (GCFP)
Central Atlantic Region - SGC (CAR-SGC)
National Garden Clubs (NGC)



DISTRICT I OFFICERS

DIRECTOR

Nancy Cuttic
ncuttic@comcast.net

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Pam Walsh
pamyoga@aol.com

TREASURER

Eleanor Tickner
ehtickner@verizon.net

RECORDING SECRETARY

Louise Sheehan
4lsheehan@gmail.com

CLUBS and PRESIDENTS

GC OF BALA CYNWYD
Sharon Fullerton

THE COUNTRY GARDENERS
Alexandra Brock

COVERED BRIDGE GC
Bridget Lininger

ELVERSON GC
Carol Simonetti

FOUR SEASONS GC OF
KENNETT SQUARE
Mary Ann Hanagan

RADLEY RUN GARDEN &
SOCIAL CLUB
Ellen Barron

SPADE & TROWEL CLUB
Beth Vinyard

THE GC OF SPRINGFIELD
Louise Sheehan

UWCHLAN GC
Pam Walsh

VILLANOVA GC
Laurie McGrath

WAYNE WOODS GC
Colleen Gassert





Nancy's News

*“Nature is painting for us, day after day,
pictures of infinite beauty.”*

~ John Ruskin

And just like that, the holidays are over! Our clubs were quite busy in December with seasonal activities and sales. Our members enjoyed fun times and wonderful camaraderie as is evidenced by the club news and photos.

As we brave the cold and snow this winter, don't forget to **feed the birds**. Some days they wipe out my entire bird feeder in eight hours, but I don't mind. Black oil sunflower seeds seem to be the favorite. Check out interesting information on birds in this newsletter.

Bees are the topic for our February District meeting. Bonita Hermann from District VIII is an expert on mason bees. She has a fabulous presentation prepared for us. Your president will forward the zoom link closer to the February 22 date.

While a few of you have greenhouses, I pull out my **poor man's greenhouse** from the basement which consists of two clear Rubbermaid bins with clear lids. I line it with newspaper and in go my little seed starter pots along with my hopes for successful sprouts.

Be sure to check out the **plant sales** and **horticultural events** listed in this newsletter. April and May will be here before we know it!

Assistant Director Pam Walsh and I are scheduled to continue our **“Tour de District”** this spring with scheduled visits to your club meetings. We look forward to meeting you and sharing with you some information about our district and GCFP. Our only fall visit was to **The Country Gardeners** to cut flowers from a cutting farm. I loved my bouquet so much, that I did a painting of it that I included here for you. The celosias were dropping seeds on

my kitchen counter so I gathered them and will plant some in my poor man's greenhouse and scatter the others later in my garden so that I will have a remembrance of the wonderful time that I had with these lovely ladies.

Please consider attending the **GCFP Annual Convention** that will be held from April 7 – 9 in Lancaster. It's a drivable distance and has much to offer. This convention will feature a tri-refresher, a flower show, renown speakers, and shopping. The ever-popular Trash to Treasure competition will take place, so get your creative juices flowing!

Information is available on the **GCFP website** and in your printed copy of the **Keystone Gardener**, Convention Edition. I look forward to seeing you in Lancaster!

As is typical for PA weather, we can expect to fluctuate between arctic blasts and 50 degree temps. Whatever the forecast, I hope that you embrace this beautiful season. Be well.

~ Nancy



Oil, 16 x 20



GCFP 2024 CONVENTION

PETALS AND PATCHWORK April 7 - 9, 2024

Doubletree by Hilton, Lancaster

Hosted by District IV
Joyce Crider, Chair
Tonya Young and Delores Nolt, Co-Chairs



REGISTRATION FORMS IN THE KEYSONE GARDENER WINTER EDITION

Register Early to attend your first-choice events.
Registration deadline is February 23, 2024

- Wildflower Tour and Lunch
- Medicinal Herbs Workshop
- Food and Beauty of Amish Gardens
- Alcohol Ink Jewelry Workshop
- Flower Show
- Marketplace with Vendors
- Karl Gercens of Longwood Gardens
Sunday Dinner Speaker
- Wildlife Gardenscaping
- Creating Fun Planters
- A Picnic in the Orchard
- Flourishing through Sustainability
Monday Lunch Speaker
- Unusual Bulbs
- Scented Geraniums
- Victory Gardens
- Dr. Richard Olsen, "An Arboreal Amble"
Monday Dinner Speaker
- Knockout Natives
- Stormwater Management
- Late Season Natives
- Steven Cox of Longwood Gardens
Monday Lunch Speaker - Floral Designs

[CONVENTION INFO](#) CAN BE FOUND ONE THE [GCFP WEBSITE](#)

HOTEL RESERVATION INFORMATION

[Double Tree Resort by Hilton Hotel Lancaster](#), 2400 Willow Street Pike, Lancaster

Room Rate \$139 + 11% tax per room

Includes breakfast for double occupancy

GROUP CODE: PETALS (deadline for group rate is March 7, 2024)

QUILT RAFFLE TICKETS ON SALE NOW

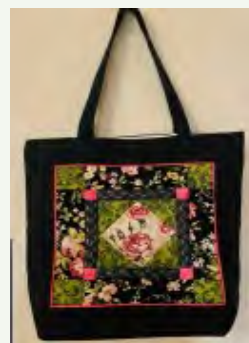
\$10 per ticket Contact your [District Director](#)



1st Queen Quilt



2nd Iris Wall Hanging



3rd Tote Bag

GCFP 2024 CONVENTION TRASH TO TREASURE CONTEST "In A Milkwork Garden"



Lancaster County produces 2.1 billion pounds of milk annually (1776 farms). Lancaster ranks 1st in PA and 10th in the country in milk production. The contest is based on reuse and repurposing milk cartons and dairy containers in crafting a patchwork with a garden theme.

SPECIFICATIONS

1. Entry to be a mounted Patchwork, Appliqué artwork which can also be framed (optional). It can be multi-dimensional (eg: extended petals, leaves design, etc.).
2. Dimensions: No larger than 14" X 14." Height Limited to 14". Can use 11"x14" repurposed frame. The entry can also be displayed on an easel stand.
3. Weight: No more than 15 lbs.
4. Materials: All type of repurposed materials used for milk containers including cartons, plastics and glass (which can be painted). 20% of the design may be other materials (glue, paint, beads, etc.).
5. Each entry must include a 3 x 5 card: Front: Title and a list of materials used. Back: District, Garden Club, Designer(s) name and mailing address. Entry may be work of more than one person.

ONLY ONE ENTRY FROM EACH DISTRICT

All District I Entries are to be submitted to DD Nancy Cuttic by March 23.

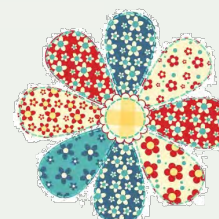
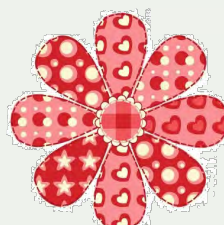
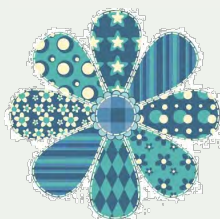
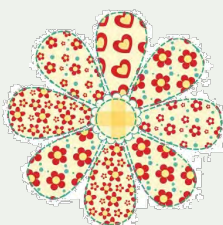
Selection method is determined by the district. District entries selected for Convention competition must be submitted on Sunday, April 7 from 11-5 PM at the Doubletree Resort by Hilton Hotel. Judging will be at 5:15 PM. Entries are not to be judged under the same standards as a flower show.

Trash to Treasure Co-Chairs: Naser and Marsha Chowdhury

Email: chowdhnm@gmail.com Phone: 484-432-6386

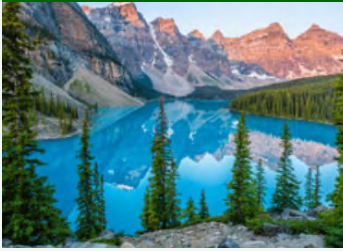
SCALE OF POINTS FOR JUDGING

Conformance (fits within stated dimensions, wt.)	.....	20 pts
Artistic Concept (creative use of recycled materials)	....	50 pts
Expression (interpretation of theme)	.....	20 pts
Execution (workmanship)	.....	10 pts
TOTAL	.....	100 pts



NGC SCHOOLS INFO

Environmental



Gardening



Flower Show

Become a Flower Show Judge!



Landscape Design



For more detailed info and registration

go to <https://gardenclub.org/our-schools>

Subscribe to *The National Gardener*

The official publication of National Garden Clubs published quarterly. Subscribe [HERE](#)

NGC's GRANT and PROGRAM INFORMATION

Espoma - Organic plant foods and soils

Applications accepted from Oct. 1, 2023, through May 31, 2024

[Apply HERE](#)

Ames Tools - Free garden tools for your club!

Applications accepted from Jan. 1, 2024, through Mar. 1, 2024

[Apply HERE](#)

Native Plant and Wildflowers Educational Program

Up to \$500 is available to be used toward an educational program on the subject of native plants and wildflowers.

More Information [HERE](#)

Plant America - Landscape for Wildlife

Have your garden registered as a NGC Certified Wildlife Habitat

More Information [HERE](#)

Plant America Community Project Grant

Helps enhance and beautify our public areas and community gardens.

More Information [HERE](#)

Plant America, Feed America

Focused on donating produce that NGC's members have harvested from their own gardens.

More Information [HERE](#)

Plant America - Plant for Pollinators

Support birds, bees, and other insects. Certify your pollinator garden.

More Information [HERE](#)

Natural Disaster Grant

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

More Information [HERE](#)

Youth Pollinator Gardens Grant

Up to \$200 is available for projects that include educational materials on the vital role pollinators play in nature and youth involvement

More Info [HERE](#)



2024 NGC CONVENTION

"Colorado the Beautiful"

June 2 - 5, 2024

The Westin Westminster
Westminster, Colorado

[CONVENTION DETAILS HERE](#)

CLUB NEWS



GARDEN CLUB OF BALA CYNWYD - Sharon Fullerton

Happy 2024 to All!

We ended last year with a sustainable design, hands-on demonstration program presented by **Louise Heilig**. This was very educational and a fun way to create a design and chat with members at the same time. Photos to the right.

Our first activity for the new year was a horticultural workshop on January 24. Members mounted live plants to a wooden board. This workshop will be one of the classes in our upcoming October 2024 Flower Show.

On February 1, we begin the second half of the club season entertained by a long-time club member and her husband narrating a program of their travels across the country.

The PHS Flower show team is very busy finalizing our design for one of the Front Stoop classes in the March Flower show.

Upcoming excursions are Stoneleigh in April and Welkinweir in May. We will tour both the estate houses and grounds.

At April's meeting, we will learn the art of origami. Members will create a butterfly, flower stem, tulip, and iris by folding origami paper. Our May meeting is all about Honeybees and Beekeeping. We will end our season with a luncheon at the Overbrook Country Club in June.



THE COUNTRY GARDENERS - Alex Brock

The end of the year was quite a busy season for the Country Gardeners. We were again invited to decorate two rooms for the Thomas Leiper house, in cooperation with several other local clubs. This event was originally created by our own late Marilyn Blatter, based on her remarkable friendship with Mrs. Wycoff, from the Friends of the Thomas Leiper house.

At the end of November, we hosted two wreath-making workshops at the Middletown Free Library, followed by a greens sale at a vendor event on December 2, sponsored by the Middletown Township. All events were sold out, and we were asked to repeat these wonderfully creative events again next fall! It was remarkable to see people so excitedly participating and/or purchasing items made with natural greens.

All these events allowed us to connect with other members, create interest in our club, and share the knowledge, including the making of pyramid trees and winter wreaths with others.

Come join us next time!





COVERED BRIDGE GARDEN CLUB - Kathleen Tauber

Our end of October meeting was a trip to the Tyler Arboretum where we had a tour of the gardens followed by a picnic lunch. It was a great opportunity to enjoy the fall colors, and we were lucky enough to enjoy it all on a sunny day. Our tour was entitled "From Woodlands to Meadows."



Our Holiday sale for paperwhites and amaryllis continued from mid-October through mid-November. The profits went toward programming and our community outreach contributions, which as mentioned before include the Phoenixville Senior Center, the historic Diamond Rock School, and the Valley Forge Park Alliance.



November offered members the opportunity to make watercolor notecards under the guidance of watercolor artist Pam McKee. Arrangements for the meeting reflected the holiday season and winter.

Our December luncheon was held at the Overbrook Country Club. Table decorations were crafted by member **Kathy Guinan** who appears in the photo far left. Members contributed gift cards to be distributed to St. Mary's Franciscan Shelter in Phoenixville.



THE GARDEN CLUB OF SPRINGFIELD - Louise Sheehan

November and December were busy times for our club. We began November with a guided tour of Jenkins Arboretum in Berwyn. We enjoyed seeing the seasonal garden plants and learning about them and the history of the arboretum. The tour ended with a visit inside that had a display of posters warning about the dangers of climate change.



Our November meeting always features a flower designer. This year we invited Bernie Miller who demonstrated how to arrange flowers, using the theme *Dining with Flowers*. Following his presentation, his designs were raffled off to members and guests,

November is also the time when we decorate Colonial Plantation at Ridley State Creek Park. As per specifications from the Plantation,

we only use natural materials for the decorations, which our members gather themselves.



We decorated two houses in December: Waynesborough Manor House in Paoli and Leiper House in Wallingford. At our December meeting we held a mini-flower show and wrote holiday cards for residents of Sterling House, as part of our Horticulture Therapy program. Under the direction of our design chairperson, our members made a holiday arrangement using natural greens and cranberries.



Carol Simonetti

In late November, our members were once again delighted to participate in decorating Hibernia Mansion for their annual Holiday Candlelight tours. The event was not held for several years due to Covid. The 2023 theme was "Victorian Life" in ruby red. First year member, **Trudy Moore**, graciously agreed to chair the event. Members decorated the dining room, hallways, and foyer of the mansion.



Carol Simonetti, Wendy Fox, Mary Wickerham, Linda Horner, Patricia Beaton, Kathy Duncan, Sharon deGaray



Paul Sheetz

Our annual Holiday party was January 20 at the home of members **Paul and Patricia Sheetz**. Paul and Pat look forward to opening their home each year to welcome all club members and spouses.

The 2024 EGC Philadelphia Flower Show entry is in the Store Windows Competitive Class. The task is to create a Philadelphia-themed store window under the Class title "Open for Business." The 2024 committee is composed of flower show veterans and members who are participating in the show for the first time. 2024 chairs are **Lisa Cherpanich** and **Mary Wickerham**.

Members will install our store window at the Philadelphia Conventions Center on Feb. 29 and March 1. The Show will be open to the public March 3 – 10, 2024, and marks Elverson Garden Club's 18th consecutive year of competition in the show.



FOUR SEASONS GARDEN CLUB - Mary Ann Hanagan

In November we made fall arrangements in wooden boxes. They were perfect for Thanksgiving.



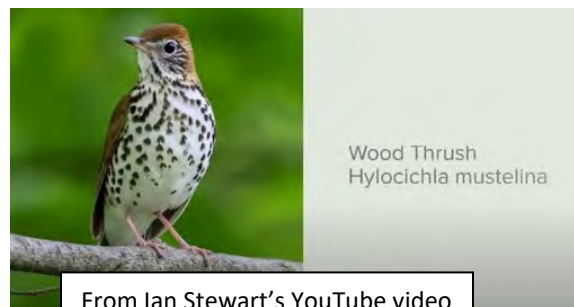
We held our fundraiser, which is a Christmas Centerpiece Workshop on the first weekend in December. This year we also had a 50/50 raffle, sold arrangements, and baked goods. All of which were quite successful.



In December we also had our annual Christmas Party. It was a pot luck dinner followed by a Pollyanna gift exchange.

Our program in January was a zoom meeting. Nobody likes to drive in the cold and dark for an in-person meeting. Ian Stewart, an ornithologist at the Delaware Nature Society, gave an excellent presentation about how birds interact with

non-native plants. He presented some interesting studies and inciteful information. I highly recommend his presentation to clubs interested in the birds or the environment.





RADLEY RUN GARDEN CLUB - Ellen Barron

This year's Luncheon and Fashion Show was held at the end of November and was a huge success, raising almost \$13,000 for Horticultural scholarships at Penn State, West Chester University, and the Williamson College of the Trades. Club members made seasonal table center pieces, which guests were invited to take home to grace their own holiday



tables. The raffle baskets raised nearly a further \$4,000 from tickets purchased by our 226

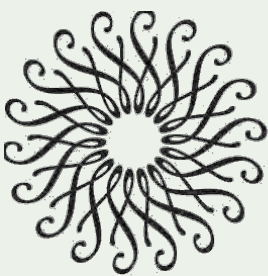
attending guests. The fashion show was hosted by Ruthie's of Ronks, PA with the apparel stylishly modeled by our club members.



January brings the annual "no-program" meeting, which this year will be held at Fava restaurant instead of the usual potluck format in a member's home. Our program chair is working to incorporate more "hands-on" projects into our monthly programs.

Our next trip in March will be to the Rockwood Historic House and Garden in Wilmington. Within its parklike setting is a walled garden, which by March will hopefully show signs of spring bulbs. Trips later in the spring are planned for Williamson College of the Trades and Chanticleer.

2024 DISTRICT I FLOWER SHOW AT LONGWOOD GARDENS



The next District I sponsored Flower Show at Longwood Gardens will be held **October 4 - 6, 2024**. This is a change to October based on Longwood's schedule and the predicted grand opening of their fantastic new exhibition spaces.

We have an experienced, dynamic team leading the 2024 show:
 Chair Wendy Fox, Elverson & Uwchlan GCs
 Vice-Chair Maria Jacobs, Norristown & Uwchlan GCs
 Vice-Chair Nancy Cuttic, Wayne Woods and Uwchlan GCs
 Past Chair Janet Fassbender, The Country Gardeners

All clubs in District I are encouraged to not only participate as exhibitors, but with the many opportunities to volunteer during the show.

In the coming months, clubs will be contacted for sponsorship as we rely on our District I clubs to help with the expenses of putting on such a large show. As the theme and classes are developed and schedule approved and printed, it will be made available to all clubs.

We look forward to your involvement in an exciting, challenging show. Questions may be directed to **Wendy Fox**, ladyfox@me.com



SPADE AND TROWEL CLUB - Beth Vinyard

The Spade and Trowel Club began the busy holiday season with **Sandy Yeatman** organizing members to create floral arrangements, designed by **Beverly Schmitt**, for the Kennett Symphony's annual fundraiser, The Brantwyn Classics, held in October.



Inspired by **Mara Tyler**, our members enjoyed designing and creating a pumpkin fairy garden using a variety of greenery at our October meeting.

In conjunction with Kennett Collaborative and led by **Laura Benincasa**, members planted many street barrels in Kennett Square with holiday greenery.

Shannon Hevener, with **Leigh Kelleher, Julie Fellingner, Meredith Dragish** and **Jill Lapenta's** assistance, directed our members to create and sell arrangements, bundles, wreaths and amaryllis, along with hand-made ornaments and candle votives at the Kennett Square Holiday Village Market on December 3-4.

In mid December, **Suzanne Pusey** organized our members to create festive holiday arrangements for Heartland Hospice Services and Friends Home Residents.

Chaired by **Heather Nicholas**, the committee is happily planning our entry for the Philadelphia Flower Show. We are entering the Front Door class for the first time, which is "Front Stoop - Join the Party!"



BIRTH MONTH FLOWERS



February
Violet



March
Daffodil



April
Sweet pea



UWCHLAN GARDEN CLUB - Pam Walsh

UGC hosted a wonderful speaker in November, Andrew Schenck of Sam Brown’s nursery in Paoli. His program was titled “Bare Naked Conifers.” It was a fascinating presentation about deciduous conifers. We learned about the many kinds of dawn redwoods and bald cypresses and how he fell in love with them at a young age. His photos of these magnificent trees, especially the ones taken during the fall season, inspired many of us to put them on our wish list of trees to add to our landscapes.

In December we did not have a program, but instead held a luncheon at the Whitford Country Club. We celebrated the success of our Christmas Fair, enjoyed a delicious meal, and socialized with our friends in the club.

UGC has been very busy since the last newsletter. We enjoyed working on another very profitable Christmas Fair and Raffle for the Meetinghouse Trust. We netted over \$9,600 from the fair and the raffle proceeds were \$1470. The real fun was found in the days before December 3, when we started preparations, with holiday music playing and treats, and the opportunity to socialize with our new members and long-term members as well.

Greens were cut from our lawns and communities, with permission of course, and one of our members had two huge evergreen trees taken down for us to use as well. We used the greens to create machine and handmade wreaths, inside arrangements, outside arrangements, hanging baskets, and many variations of swags. Bundles of greens were also sold so our customers could use them however they wanted. We personalized the wreaths with bows and other adornments. Members decorated skates and skis as well. Our bake table and raffle were quite successful and our hypertufa snowmen were a hit. **Mary Whitesel**, our long-time chair, was especially pleased with the number of members who contributed in some way. It was successful only because of the hard work and dedication of all the members of Uwchlan Garden Club.



Marie Rising, Raffle Table



Linda Donnon and Karen Yoder Bake Table

We look forward to the new year and the great programs and events we have scheduled including our next two speakers. In January, Steve Van Valin will speak on “Plants with Multi-Seasonal Interests,” and Joanne Voelcker, owner of Mt. Airy Lavender in Coatesville, will present “Let’s Talk Lavender” in February.



COMMITTEE REPORTS



Awards

Marilyn Small, Wayne Woods GC

December and January award deadlines are past. We'll have to wait for the Convention in Lancaster, April 7-9, for the results. Good Luck to all District I clubs who entered.

If your club did not enter any applications for awards and would like to do so next year, please contact me for information and help. In the meantime, you can look over the [GCFP Awards Manual](#), and other documents and accompanying information on the GCFP Website under "Awards."

Still eligible to submit for consideration are:

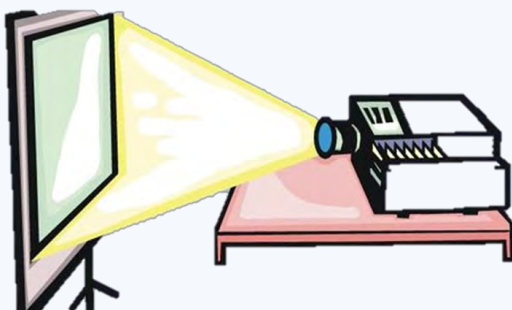
1. **Seed Money** for a special horticulture, gardening, or community project. Get the application [HERE](#). Deadline is February 15, 2024.
2. **Perennial Bloom Award**, due to your District Director by March 1, 2024. District Directors - send your district's awardee name and photo to me (as State Awards Chair) by March 15.
You can find Perennial Bloom Award information on Page 9 of the [GCFP Awards Manual](#).
3. President Leeanna Ryba's **Seeds of Service President's Project Award** is available this year. Check eligibility and requirements [HERE](#). Deadline is June 15, 2024.

If you have any questions about awards, please contact me mmsmall@comcast.net.

DID YOU KNOW?

District I owns a projector for use within the district for presentations.

Contact Nancy Cuttic, District Director
ncuttic@comcast.net



Horticulture

Sharon Richardson, Uwchlan GC

We are so incredibly lucky to live in the Garden Capital of North America. We live in an area that is close to 40 gardens, many of which have free programs as well as horticultural courses and floral design courses. I've attempted to gather information for as many free programs and up-coming plant sales for this spring. If you are aware of other annual events that I missed, please contact me so that I will include them in future publications.

Horticultural Events

- March 9: [Garden Wise, York County Master Gardener Symposium](#)
- March 23: [Hardy Plant Society March into Spring Symposium](#)
- April 7: [Jenkins Arboretum](#) Daffodil Show
- April 27: [University of Delaware AG Day](#)

Plant Sales

- March 15 **Deadline** for [York Conservancy Seedling Sale](#)
Orders must be submitted by **March 15**;
Seedlings must be picked up on **April 11**
2065 Parkersville Rd., West Chester, PA
- Apr. 26-27: [University of Delaware Plant Sale](#)
- May 2: Covered Bridge GC, 1909 Welsh Valley Road, Malvern Pre-order deadline is April 10.
- May 4: [Ladew Gardens Garden Festival](#)
- May 4: Garden Club of Springfield, Old Central School House, Saxer Avenue, Springfield
- May 4-5: [Jenkins Arboretum Plant Sale](#)
- May 4-5: [Tyler Arboretum](#) Plant Sale
- May 9: Philadelphia Unit of the Herb Society of America Plant Sale, Yellow Springs
- May 11: Uwchlan Garden Club Plant Sale, 8 am-2 pm
Uwchlan Meeting House, Lionville
- May 10-11: [Landisville Valley Herb and Garden Faire](#)
- May 11: [Greater Philadelphia Dahlia Society Tuber Sale at Longwood Gardens](#)
- May 11-12 [Brandywine Conservancy Native Plant and Seed Sale](#)

Upcoming Dates

- April 22** Earth Day **June 14** National Gardening Day
April 26 Arbor Day **June 17-23** National Pollinator Week
May 18 PA Native Species Day

COMMITTEE REPORTS Continued

PHS Liaison

Sharon Fullerton, Bala Cynwyd Garden Club

Philadelphia Flower Show

March 2-10

Pennsylvania Convention Center

Calling all floral designers! There are numerous openings in many of the arrangement classes. The classes that are filled are 129-L, 119, 121, 124 and 110-S. A list of the classes has been emailed to the club presidents for distribution to their members. If you have been thinking about exhibiting, now is the time. I am happy to help with any questions.

If you are exhibiting in Horticulture, first entry day is Thursday, February 29 and Friday, March 1. Additional entry days are Monday, March 4 and Thursday, March 7.

Please note that cars will need to be moved by 8:30 a.m. each morning the show is open even though you are allowed to be on the show floor until 9 a.m. Contact Gabrielle Baugh at gbaugj@Pennhort.org and let her know you will need to park somewhere else for the last half hour.

Exhibitor packets containing Set Up/Tear Down buttons, maintenance tickets, and parking passes will be mailed out this month. If someone is helping you with a design or carrying plants on entry days, let Gabrielle know you will need an additional Set Up/Tear Down button.



WINTER BIRD FOOD

- unsalted peanuts
- black sunflower seeds
- black oil sunflower seeds
- black Soldier fly larva
- suet



www.GardenClub.org

Seed Money

Marjorie Stillwell Sears

Be sure to apply for "Seed Money" for your planting projects. Application deadline is February 15, 2024.

Winners will be announced at the Convention in April.

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

[Seed Money Application](#)

Did You Know?

Spanish Moss is not a moss; it is actually a bromeliad, the same as succulent houseplants and pineapples. AND, it's not from Spain either! It is native to Mexico, South America, America and the Caribbean. French explorers in the United States were reminded of Spanish Conquistadors' long beards when they saw the moss and gave it the name Spanish Moss.



PHS PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW

The following Arrangement Classes are still open for the 2024 Show Applications to enter the Arrangement Classes of the 195th PHS Philadelphia Flower Show to be displayed in the Pennsylvania Convention Center between March 2 – 10, 2024. The *Exhibitor's Guide* is available to view at PHSONline.org/the-flower-show/participate/exhibit/artistic-classes.

FRIDAY, MARCH 1 – MONDAY, MARCH 4 (4 days)

(removed Tuesday, March 5, 6:30–6:45 am)

100-OP OPEN PLATFORM—LINKED

A stretch design. Use of PHS pedestals is optional. Stretch Design: a design composed of two units of unequal size, joined by a prominent stretch component. Length and strength of stretch component (which may extend in any direction) must be appropriate to other components and to its prominent role. Smaller unit must appear to have been forcibly pulled away from the larger unit. Dynamic tension is important.

102-S SMALL NICHE—LINE DANCE

Judges' Clipper Challenge Class: Flowers and all other materials are provided at the Show; bring your own clippers. The class is open to judges only. Note: Only one exhibitor per entry.

125-G GALLERIA—WHERE IN THE WORLD?

A design interpreting a poster of an ecosystem provided by PHS.

TUESDAY, MARCH 5 – THURSDAY, MARCH 7 (3 days)

(removed Friday, March 8, 6:30–6:45 am)

103-OP OPEN PLATFORM—BEFORE THE PARTY/

AFTER THE PARTY: A duo design, Use of PHS pedestal(s) is optional. Duo Design: a design in one or two containers joined to appear as one. The design is organized as two designs, back-to-back. Each side has a separate design title and appears as a distinctly different design.

104-M MEDIUM BACKED PEDESTAL—ALL TOGETHER NOW

Master/Novice Class: Must be created by two exhibitors—one with a minimum of five years of experience entering the Arrangements Classes at the Philadelphia Flower Show and a newcomer with one or fewer years of experience at the Show.



TUESDAY, MARCH 5 – THURSDAY, MARCH 7

Continued

105-S SMALL NICHE—CONNECTED

Floral foam is not allowed in this design .

117-BP BACKED PLATFORM—SHOW YOUR PRIDE

A pedestal design to be staged on a PHS pedestal (provided at the Show) measuring 12" x 12" x 32". Design not to exceed 7'.

126-G GALLERIA—BRIDGING GAPS

130-L LARGE BACKED PEDESTAL—GARDEN PARTY

An exhibition table. Floral foam is not allowed in this design.

Exhibition Table: a display using the components of dining in an artistic presentation as a coordinated design. The practical service of food should not be implied.

FRIDAY, MARCH 8 – SUNDAY, MARCH 10 (3 days)

(removed Sunday, March 10, after the Show closes)

108-OP OPEN PLATFORM—CELEBRATING

TRADITIONS Garment and accessory design ensemble celebrating a particular culture. Name your country. No duplicates. Dress form provided by PHS. The accessory may consist of dried material only. Accessory to be staged on or against a 12" x 12" x 32" PHS pedestal positioned to the left of the dress form. Note: Up to three exhibitors per entry are permitted in this class.

127-G GALLERIA - ENTANGLED

APPLY HERE: https://PHSjoin.formstack.com/forms/2024arrangement_entries



Thank you to Janet Fassbender for sharing this interesting article.



The Interesting Tradition of “Telling the Bees”

“Telling the Bees” is a tradition in many European countries, and while they may vary a little, the tradition involves informing the bees about significant life changes, like deaths, births, and marriages. Starting in the mid-1800s, many families followed the strange tradition of telling the bees. They believed that bees were the link between the physical and spiritual worlds, and negative things would occur if they didn’t inform the bees of significant events, such as deaths and marriages. Dive deeper into the interesting tradition of “telling the bees.”

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BEES AND HUMANS

Although the relationship between bees and their keepers has led to plenty of folklore, the link goes beyond superstition. In fact, humans rely on bees to pollinate a majority of the most popular crops. Without bees, there would be a catastrophic domino effect of extinction up the food chain.

The consequences of losing a beehive are much deeper than a lack of honey; they may be life-threatening (but there are ways to [save a failing beehive](#)). The belief in “telling the bees” further emphasizes the deep connection between humans and this particular insect and is one of the many [reasons to become a beekeeper](#).

“TELLING THE BEES” The interesting tradition of “telling the bees” may originate in Celtic mythology. There were reports of the practice all across Europe before eventually traveling across the Atlantic to North America.

MARRIAGES Beekeepers were to inform the bees of any marriage in the family, and they even gave some wedding cake to the bees. Sometimes they even decorated the beehives with flowers to celebrate the new union and bring good luck to the couple. The newlyweds had to introduce themselves to the colony, or else their marriage was destined for unhappiness.

DEATHS Someone had to inform the bees whenever there was a death in the family. They would go out to the hive, knock to get the bees’ attention, and speak or sing softly of the solemn news. It was also common for beekeepers to put black fabric on the hive as a sign of mourning. The Celtic custom of telling the bees has another twist—they believed the departed person’s soul would manifest as a bee.

Failing to put the bees into mourning following a death often resulted in reduced honey production, bees leaving the hive, or bees dying.

While this practice seems trivial to many, there are several documented cases of misfortune for families who didn’t adhere to the tradition.

If you’re interested in beekeeping, The B Farm has a great selection of honey bee nucs for sale. Then, consider telling your new bee colony of all the significant events you and your family experience for a touch of good luck. Learn more about [beginning your own beehive](#) by exploring our other blogs.

The article by Crystal Card can be found [HERE](#) on *The B Farm* web page. Check out other links on the page such as “Why Bees Swarm...,” “Queen Bees vs Worker Bees vs Drones,” “7 Facts: What you need to Know about Queen Bees,” and much more. - Crystal Card, The B Farm



DISTRICT I MEETINGS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024, 7 PM ON ZOOM

Business Meeting and Speaker
 Bonita Herman, Master Gardener
 Lawrence Park Garden Club
“Mason Bees”



FRIDAY, JUNE 7, 2024, 11 AM



Business Meeting and
 Presidents’ Luncheon
 Location TBD



TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2024, 9 AM

Luncheon and Annual Meeting
 Hosted by Elverson Garden Club
 Springton Manor Farm
 860 Springton Road, Glenmore



KIDS' CORNER

MAGAZINE REVIEW by Sharon Richardson, Uwchlan Garden Club

Want to start the new year off with some nature news with your kids and/or grandkids? There are so many worthwhile subscriptions available, so even if your family is spread all over the country, you can give a gift that keeps giving



[National Geographic](#) has magazines for several ages and so does the [Ranger Rick](#) Series. My grandchildren love these. I gave my daughter's kids the age appropriate National Geographic and my son's son the parallel Ranger Rick series, and they trade off. It's a wonderful reminder that grandma's always thinking of you and hoping you are getting outside to enjoy the wonders of nature.

For other ideas on children subscriptions, check out: <https://www.raisingglobalkidizens.com/conscious-kids-magazines/>



Three Favorite Activities



POLLINATOR WATER STATION



SEED VIEWER



GARDEN SUNCATCHERS



GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT: FEBRUARY 16-19 HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO BECOME A CITIZEN SCIENTIST

Sharon Richardson, Uwchlan Garden Club

Have you ever wanted to become a citizen scientist? Do you know what it means to be a citizen scientist? Here's your chance to be part of one of the largest citizen science projects in the world!!

Scientists rely heavily on DATA. **Citizen Science Projects** are activities sponsored by a wide variety of organizations so that non-scientists can meaningfully contribute to scientific research. Citizen science projects recruit volunteers to collect data and answer real-world questions—like the effects of light pollution on the night sky, or climate change on plant growth.



One of the largest global citizen science projects is the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC). The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual four-day event during which bird watchers count birds to create a real-time snapshot of where birds are located around the world. <https://www.birdcount.org/about/>

This project was launched in 1998 as a partnership between The Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society. Birds Canada joined the project in 2009 to provide an expanded capacity to support participation in Canada. In 2013 GBBC officially became an international citizen science project.

GBBC was the first **online** citizen science project (also referred to as [community science](#) or participatory-science project) to collect data on wild birds and to display results in near real time. GBBC became a global project when participants began entering data into eBird, the world's largest biodiversity-related participatory science project. Since its official launch in 2002, eBird has archived more than 81 million bird checklists and over 1.1 billion species observations

The number of countries participating has grown to 192, with an estimated participation of approx. 385,000 people world wide. So, how can YOU get involved?

Each year the GBBC falls over President's Day week-end, **February 16-19**. You can participate as an individual, a family or a group. We are ALL invited to come together in a favorite outdoor setting and count how many birds we observe in only 15 minutes!!

There are numerous resources to help you get started. This link is very helpful: <https://www.birdcount.org/participate/>

Give it a try: YOUR PARTICIPATION MATTERS!!

Looking for something on TV to fill those long winter evenings?

Try "The Big Year" currently on Disney+ and Prime Video starring Jack Black, Steve Martin, and Owen Wilson.

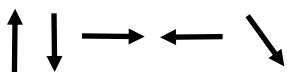
"Looking to shake up their routine lives, three amateur bird watchers compete to become the ultimate "birder" by spotting the greatest number of species within a single calendar year. But the friendly rivalry soon turns into a hilariously complicated cross-country adventure as each man begins to realize that the quest for success comes at a price, and that's not chicken feed!"



Backyard Bird Watch



Find the following words in the puzzle. Note: There are no spaces between words in the search.

Words are hidden 

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| JUNCO | CROW | PILEATED WOODPECKER |
| BLACK CAPPED CHICKADEE | STARLING | RED BELLIED WOODPECKER |
| WHITE BREASTED NUTHATCH | RINGNECKED PHEASANT | DOWNY WOODPECKER |
| TUFTED TITMOUSE | RUFFED GROUSE | HOUSE FINCH |
| AMERICAN GOLDFINCH | WILD TURKEY | MOURNING DOVE |
| HOUSE SPARROW | EASTERN BLUEBIRD | AMERICAN ROBIN |
| SONG SPARROW | CAROLINA WREN | COOPERS HAWK |
| BLUE JAY | NORTHERN CARDINAL | GREAT HORNED OWL |
| SNOWY OWL | EASTERN TOWHEE | CEDAR WAXING |

WIN A \$20 GIFT CARD TO WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED

Mail or email your completed Word Search (using all of the words) by Feb. 15 to enter a gift card drawing.

Nancy Cuttic, 327 Joshua Tree Drive, Collegeville, PA 19426 or ncuttic@comcast.net





APRIL IS PLANT AMERICA MONTH

PLANT AMERICA MONTH was initiated by former NGC President Mary Warshauer in April 2021. We will continue to celebrate Plant America Month in April during the 2023-2025 administration.

PLANT AMERICA MONTH incorporates the celebration of Arbor Day, which falls on the last Friday of April and Earth Day which falls on April 22 yearly.

PLANT AMERICA began in 2017 under the leadership of former NGC President Nancy Hargroves. NGC's focus on community centered projects and efforts brings life to PLANT AMERICA.

PLANT AMERICA encourages NGC's mission to promote the love of gardening, floral design, civic and environmental responsibility.

PLANT AMERICA projects enhance public areas, honor our veterans with Blue Star landscaping projects, educate children and adults about the joys of gardening and create pride through local, city, and county projects.

PLANT AMERICA Community Grants are available to member clubs for their projects.

PLANT AMERICA: "Plant to breathe; Plant to cool down the earth; Plant to heal yourself, physically and mentally; Plant to regain balance; Plant to live." -- Noora Ahmed Alsuwaidi

For photos, resources, downloads, and information about Community Grants, [CLICK HERE](#)

DID YOU KNOW?

Angiosperm vs Gymnosperm

Angiosperms and gymnosperms are the two groups of seed-producing vascular plants.

ANGIOSPERMS

- Flowering plants
- Reproductive system in flowers
- Seed enclosed within ovary
- Flat leaves
- Seasonal life cycle
- Has triploid tissue
- Pollinated by animals, wind, water
- Hardwood

Examples: apple, dandelion, wheat, maple, rose, walnut



GYMNOSPERMS

- Non-flowering plants
- Reproductive system in cones
- Unenclosed or naked seeds
- Needle-like leaves
- Evergreen
- Has haploid tissue
- Mainly pollinated by wind
- Softwood

Examples: pine, spruce, ginkgo, yew, cypress



10 THINGS SMART GARDENERS DO IN MARCH

gardening.org

1. Start those seeds
2. Take a soil test
3. Spread garden amendments
4. Prune dormant trees and bushes
5. Take cuttings of favorite woody plants and shrubs.
6. Start cold-hardy greens in a cold frame
7. Mulch new garden beds and large perennials
8. Clean up vegetable beds
9. Rake flower beds
10. Check fall-planted bulbs

Read the full article [HERE](#).



Happy Valentine's Day
February 14

NATIONAL
Floral Design Day
is February 28th

 A graphic for Valentine's Day featuring a bouquet of red roses on the left, a white wooden background with scattered red hearts and a red ribbon, and the text "Happy Valentine's Day February 14". Below this, there is another floral arrangement with purple and yellow flowers, and the text "NATIONAL Floral Design Day is February 28th".


Burpee provides a special coupon code (PAGC24) uniquely for GCFP leadership with 20% off and free shipping, without an order minimum and good for up to 50 seed packets at a time. At this time, it is NOT valid on plants and bulbs.

Just remember when you are submitting an order from the Burpee Catalog, add PAGC24 to the box that says "Apply Discount Code," and enjoy 20% off and free shipping.

~Marjorie Stillwell Sears

LONGWOOD GARDENS



Winter Wonder
January 20 - March 24



Orchid House



Indoor Performance Series

Upcoming Classes
Spring Field Trips
Online Learning
Professional Horticulture Program
And So Much More!



Keystone Gardener

Official Publication of the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania

Get all the latest GCFP news and info at your fingertips: May, July, November.
Check out GCFP's Keystone Gardener online newsletter (KG Online) [HERE](#).

NGC, GCFP, and DISTRICT I 2024 CALENDAR

- February 22 District I Meeting and Speaker, Bonita Herman, "Mason Bees," 7 p.m. on Zoom
- April 7-9 GCFP Convention Doubletree Resort by Hilton Hotel, Lancaster, PA
- April 26 Arbor Day
- June 2-5 National Garden Clubs Annual Convention, Denver, CO
- June 7 District I Meeting and Presidents' Luncheon, 11 a.m., location details coming soon
- June 10-11 GCFP BOD Meeting, Wyndham Gardens, Boalsburg, PA
- September 10 District I Annual Meeting and Luncheon, Springton Manor Farm, Glenmoore, hosted by Elverson Garden Club
- October 7-8 GCFP BOD Meeting, Wyndham Gardens, Boalsburg, PA
- November 15 America Recycles Day

Have Something to Say??

If you would like to submit an original seasonal gardening article to be published in the next newsletter, send it by the submission deadline date to [Marilyn Small, Editor](mailto:mmsmall@comcast.net) mmsmall@comcast.net