



Buds & Blooms

GCFP District II/III November 2022 Newsletter

From the Director's Pen

Jane Kruse, District Director, GCFP District II/III

It was quite an honor to have four Seeds of Service Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania Presidential Citations given out at the District II/III Annual Meeting by GCFP President Sheila Croushore. Your work to support "Watching our Youth Bloom" initiative has not gone unnoticed. District II/III topped the state! Those receiving the citations for years 2020-22 are:

Parkland Garden Club – for their many activities involving youth in their community. Arbor Day trees to first graders, Boy Scouts helping with butterfly garden, corsages and boutonnieres for disabled teen prom night, sponsor youth garden club and Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl involvement.

Monroe County Garden Club – offers scholarship for youth to attend Kettle Creek Environment Center summer school.



DD Jane Kruse, Claire Kukielka, Ellen Phraner, Liz Steen, GCFP Pres Sheila Croushore

Ellen Phraner, member of Monroe GC, developing and maintaining Bryant Street Park in Stroudsburg with neighborhood youth, bug bingo and rock painting fun, activities for Girl Scout badges. *Her involvement was recorded on WNAP TV Home and Backyard in August 2022. She was recipient of "Sweet Pea" award given by District II/III.*

Milford Garden Club – work with high school special education in flower and vegetable gardening.

As the year winds down, most Clubs have been able to come together out of the cold hands of COVID. The pandemic may be over, but the coronavirus is still around with its variants. We are thankful that we could get together in June and September to celebrate our love of gardening. Milford Garden Club did a great job of hosting the day. If you did not have time, walk the streets of Milford and look "beyond the garden fence" to the wonderfully maintained properties. Congratulations on 85 gardening years.



GCFP President Sheila Croushore, District Director Jane Kruse, Corresponding Secretary Wendy Webber Welsh, Assistant Director Gail Blasko, Recording Secretary Janet Hurlbrink

Welcome to the newly District II/III Officers and Committee Chairs. We will set the sail for steady course and handle the bumps and waves as they come.

As December arrives, look to pagardenclubs.org for award applications. Select "awards" for the Awards Manual and related forms. Send in your club yearbook and newsletters for judging. It is time to approach schools to be part of youth drawing or writing contests. Club sizes have changed to 1-20 member for small, 21-50 for medium and 51 plus for large. Most applications are to be sent by email with the correct year form.

Perennial Bloom Award

The best awards are those which come unexpectedly. Audry Stengel was busy keeping Pottstown Garden Club moving and loss of presidents, she had no time to think of anything else. Her other way to thank her than with the Perennial Bloom Award. "The evidence for her consideration is the grace with which she has circumstances of the last two year" wrote JoAnn Waddell. Gainfully church, running the Program Committee as well as serving as Club aging parents and chronically ill husband, gardening is the avenue forward through COVID friends could think of no most compelling endured the employed, active in her President, caring for her her choice.

Well done, Audry!



JoAnn Waddell and Audry Stengel

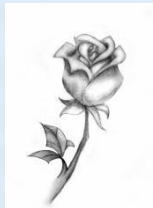
What is the **Sweet Pea Award**?

New to District II/III, the Sweet Pea Award is a way to recognize work of gardeners behind the scenes as they routinely work to make the community more beautiful. Ellen Phraner of Monroe County Garden Club has worked diligently to get a vacant corner lot turned into the Bryant Street Park in Stroudsburg. She regularly engages children in gardening and fun activities as well as offers opportunities for Girl Scout badges. Don't be surprised to hear "Hi, Ellen" as youth walk home from school. She is a "sweet pea".



*photographs by Kathy Townley and Ellen Phraner FB page

To Liz Steen,
Thank you for the many years of compiling
the Buds and Blooms Newsletter for District II/III.
You have done a remarkable and thankless job.
The results have been a wonderful supplement to
keep Garden Club members informed and connected
to one another.
Best in your future endeavors "peace girl".
All 641 gardeners of District II/III



Bethlehem Garden Club

Bethlehem Garden Club is keeping busy with lots of activities. We can now finally go back to doing our Horticulture Therapy at both Allentown and Bethlehem Cedarbrook Nursing Homes, Moravian King's Daughters Home and Morning Star Cafe. These outreach efforts bring much joy to their residents!

We've had two wonderful speakers so far this year. In September we watched and listened to Deborah Pomroy, floral designer and educator. She demonstrated how to use armatures in our designs and gave us so many great ideas to try.

I was 'buzzing with joy' with our October speaker. Rob Roeshman, Master Beekeeper, was our presenter. He taught us everything we need to know about honeybees and beekeeping. Since the theme of my presidency this year is the importance of bees, I was thrilled to learn as much as I could about how to protect and maintain our precious honeybees.

We are looking forward to our November speaker, Terry Kloiber, who will present 'Artistic Creations with Gourds'. Terry is a nature-themed artist with a studio near Wind Gap, PA where she has been creating her gourd art for many years.

Once again we are working with Historic Bethlehem to decorate over 20 trees which are found in all our downtown Moravian historic buildings. The theme this year is games and many of our members are having fun coming up and making tree ornaments to match their game. Come visit Bethlehem during the holidays. There is so much to see and do!

Wishing you all a joyous, healthy holiday season!

Liz Lorenz, President, Bethlehem Garden Club

Emmaus Garden Club

Favorite Programs

Jenny Rose Carey --- excellent speaker. Has several books. She also invited our garden club to view her garden, which several of us did. It was amazing!

Bring your favorite tool --- a very popular meeting where the members brought their favorite tool and spoke about it. We learned alot from each other.

Becky Short,
President



Milford Garden Club

The Milford Garden Club has had many interesting and engaging speakers over the years and some of our favorites have been Ken Druse, Marta McDowell, our local greenhouse growers and florists, have also been very generous with sharing their knowledge over the years, as well as our own members, some who are Master Gardeners or have a special skill in design, crafting or horticulture. Of course, my most recent favorite was Kurt R. Brown as Frederick Law Olmsted at our recent District II/III September meeting. It was such a gift to end my tenure as Milford Garden Club President celebrating with a community of spectacular and like minded people and to be “edu-tained” by Kurt. His energy and talent were truly inspiring to me!

(photos by Audrey Angelella/FB)



Liz Steen, President

Garden Club of Reading



Welkenweir Mansion and Grounds, located just south of Pottstown proper. A 197-acre nonprofit arboretum, garden, mansion, and conservation area. It is part of the Hopewell Big Woods. Added to NRHP in 2001. It is open to the public daily without charge. Colonial Revival Architecture. Opened in 1940. Walking trails.

1368 Prizer Road, East Nantmeal Township, Pennsylvania
610-469-7543 Check website or call for tour info and hours.



John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove, located in Audubon near Norristown. More than 175 species of birds on grounds. 5 hiking trails. Lovely new interactive modern visitor center with gift shop. Mill Grove facility for having an event or just a place to eat your bagged lunch. With a very informative guide, visit the Historic House with more museum artifacts, artwork, amazing murals and photography display. Do a birdwatching trek and get great tips for birdwatching. Lots of fun and a beautiful setting.:

1201 Pawlings Rd., Audubon, PA 19403: 610-666-5593: Check website or call for tour info and hours



Berks Nature / the Nature Place / Angelica Creek Park, a nonprofit conservation environmental organization. Land preservation, water protection, trail management, community gardens, tree planting, Eco-Camp, education programs, etc. Beautiful unique green building for multiple uses: meetings, events, Nature Place for children, environmentally sound practices around walking trails and park.

575 St. Bernardine St., Reading, PA 19607 610-372-4992 Check website or call for tour info and hours

Have fun! Tracy Sabocheck, President

South Schuylkill Garden Club

“Paw Paw: The Forgotten Native Fruit”

Paw Paw: The Forgotten Native Fruit,” is a delightfully informative program that takes the listener from soil to salivating. Larry Moyer, PSU Master Gardner, presents a power point program on the history, propagation and of this delectable fruit. Carol Haldeman, PSU Master Gardner, discusses how the Paw Paw can be used in a variety of baked and preserved goodies with complementary sampling for all to enjoy. This program is one for clubs to add to their program calendar. It is a seasonal program for when Paw Paw are ripe, they do not hold for any length of time. Best to schedule your program for the months of September and October. Larry can be contacted at 570-385-4423 or retflour@verizon.net and Carol can be reached at 570-345-2423 or chaldyjr@gmail.com .



Upper Perkiomen Valley

The UPVGC offers four “speaker” programs each year, two in the Spring and two in the Fall. We hold these meetings in the evening and invite the public. The following two speakers were favorites this year and attracted larger than usual audiences. We are already scheduling both for meetings in '23.

In October, Thom Mrazik, a Montgomery County Master Gardener, presented his program *Fall Tree Care –Health Check, Plant, Prune*. As a garden club in Montco, we rely heavily on our county’s Master Gardener Speaker Program for our guest speakers. Other counties may offer similar programs.

<https://extension.psu.edu/programs/master-gardener/counties>

Karen Campbell, a macro-photographer, is one of our favorite speakers after she presented *Discovering our Garden Pollinators* in March. Specializing in insects and their favorite native plants, Karen shares her amazing photos to accompany her talks. You can learn more about Karen and her programs at her web site.

<https://focusonnatives.com/>

Diana Rudloff, President

Wyomissing Area Garden Club

The Sacred Oak of Oley



The Oley valley where this sacred Chinkapin Yellow oak tree (*Quercus Muhlenberg*) is located was home to European settlers who arrived in the early 1700's. They were primarily French Huguenots, German farmers and Swedes pushed north from their Wilmington, Delaware settlements. The Leni Lenape had villages in this valley long before this arrival.

Lime deposits underlying the area are prevalent. There were many old lime kilns, quarries, iron ore mines and furnaces in the area. The furnaces consumed vast amounts of charcoal which makes the longevity of this tree more remarkable.

This tree was known to early residents as the Sacred Oak. It's on a small farm just off Friedensburg Road at the edge of the field in a recessed area created by the Monocacy Creek. The proximity to this creek is thought to be perhaps the prime reason for its longevity.

There is a Leni Lenape legend that a chieftain's beloved wife took ill and known remedies were not working. He prayed at the base of the oak to the Great Spirit for a cure. Many stories abound of similar events including reaching peace pacts with enemy tribes. Such claims exist for several hundred years by the Leni Lenape and many others.

The Sacred Oak stands 87 feet tall with a girth of 22 feet and a canopy spread of 111 feet. It is estimated to be 500-700 years old.

Current owner, Christopher Hartman, and township leaders have taken steps to bring back the oak to good health and protect it. Public access is limited to twice annually, once in the Spring and again in the Fall. In 2022 access was granted only in the Spring. The public is also requested not to leave personal items around the tree. The effects of these actions have helped as foliage is fuller and acorn production has improved. Anyone seeking further information regarding the Sacred Oak may contact The Oley Valley Heritage Association, P.O. Box 401, Oley, PA 19547.

Kathy Grube, President

A NOTE ABOUT GCFP AWARDS

It is time to prepare and submit applications for GCFP awards offerings. All needed information and materials are found at the GCFP website pagardenclubs.org under the selection of AWARDS. Most are due by December 1. With few exceptions, submit awards electronically to the designated person, most will be Sheri Lowry. It is suggested that another person read the application before submitting it to catch errors. Use a consistent heading such as the club name and award number in all correspondence "Spade #3-A". Club initials are hard to follow as many initials become duplicated across the state. Additional information attached to the end of the newsletter.

Give Thanks

