



## GCFP District VI Newsletter



3rd Quarter, 2022

# Seedlings

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### Director's Corner

Janice Davis, District VI Director

*"The garden is a love song, a duet between a human being and Mother Nature." -- Jeff Cox*

My garden is singing our love song. All the flowers join the chorus with the Clary Sages singing a magnificent solo. It is striking in the garden, with tall purplish blue flower spikes. Flowers are held on panicles which contain four to six blooms each.



Salvia sclarea, Clary Sage, is a biennial herb native to the Mediterranean and parts of Europe. The first year the plant is a rosette. The second year the flower stalk is produced. The plant usually dies after blooming. It is present every year in my garden because of volunteer seedlings, but is easily controlled. Clary Sage is deer resistant and attracts bees and other pollinators; two reasons you may want to consider adding it to your garden.

The flowers and leaves can be used in flavorings and teas as well as aromatherapy applications. The plant yields an essential oil called Clary Oil or Muscated Sage.

As the Clary Sages fade who will step up and continue the solo? Could it be the colorful Daylilies or perhaps the white Hydrangeas with their assortment of forms?

(Continues on page 2)

### 2022 District Calendar

- Aug 3—Bedford GC Flower Show
- Aug 10 --District VI Board Meeting Perkins, Johnstown, PA
- Sept. 9—District VI Annual Meeting, Somerset GC
- Oct.10-11 GCFP Board Meeting Wyndham, Boalsburg PA
- Nov 2-3—CAR-SGC Convention

Articles, events and happenings concerning District VI may be submitted to:

Mary Lou Colussy at [lalou46@aol.com](mailto:lalou46@aol.com)  
Next Seedlings by November 1, 2022

A special thank you to Nerita Brant, *Seedlings* Proofreader

## Director's Corner (cont. from page 1)

I guess I need to get down to business. Spring has been a busy time in District VI. Several clubs installed new teams of officers. I was privileged to be invited to do the installation services for The Garden Club of Johnstown, Patton Garden Club and Weeders and Seeders Garden Club. New administrations bring growth, innovative ideas, service, and friendship, all strengthened by the joy of working together.

Plant sales were sponsored by Blair, Patton, and Somerset Garden Clubs. I was able to visit two of the sales and came home with many treasures. Indiana Garden Club held their much-anticipated May Mart. I can still taste the famous mushroom sandwich and strawberry pie, real treats for the taste buds!

June saw the District VI Board getting together for a summer gathering, "All About Nature." The sun prevailed, board members and guests had the opportunity to enjoy scrumptious food, greet old and new friends, have fellowship together and take part in nature activities. I have so enjoyed collaborating with these amazing ladies over the past two years.

It is difficult for me to believe that my term as District Director is coming to an end. This is my last message as District VI Director. I cannot thank you enough for permitting me to serve as your Director, what an honor! It has been a remarkable experience. The support and assistance from club members has been remarkable and deeply appreciated. Thank you, ladies, for your countless kindnesses and expressions of friendship.

Deb Stumpf will be installed as District VI Director at the District's Annual Meeting on September 9th. I wish her the best and offer my assistance with the transition.

My hope is that you have been inspired to explore the magnificence and wonders of Nature. The peace you will discover is a genuine blessing in our troubled world.

*"Nature holds all the answers  
– go outside and ask some questions  
– open your heart and listen to the response.  
Amethyst Wyldfyre*

**"Study Nature, Love Nature, Stay Close to Nature"**

## CAR-SGC Conference

7 Super Blooms that Changed Our World  
November 2-3, 2022  
Seven Springs Mountain Resort

Join us in beautiful Laurel Highlands for a Super Conference  
7 Super Blooms 7 States/Areas 7 Springs =  
A winning combination

### TOURS

Tour the Flight 93 National Memorial  
Fallingwater – a Frank Lloyd Wright house

### WORKSHOPS

Seasonal Succulent Designs - Tonya Young  
Planting for Birds & Pollinators - Marcy Cunkelman  
New and Exciting Houseplants - Ron McIntosh  
NGC Exhibition Table Designs – Chris Leskosky  
Williamsburg Christmas – Janice Davis  
Creating from Your Own Garden – Fran Lansberry

### DINNER SPEAKER

"Roses and Tulips and Sunflowers – Oh My!?!" –  
Tom Huston

VENDORS – Many!!

Hotel reservations may be made for November 1-4  
at special conference rates by phoning Seven  
Springs Resort at 814-352-7777.

Registration Form on CAR-SGC and GCFP  
websites

### 2022-2024 District VI Slate of officers

Director: Deb Stumpf, Indiana GC  
Asst. Director: Mary Lou Colussy, Patton GC  
Treasurer: Rene Hrescak, Blair GC  
Asst. Treasurer: Karlice Makuchan, GC of Johnstown  
Secretary: Wilma Light, Weeders & Seeders GC  
Asst. Secretary: Paula Miller, Indiana GC

## FYI

**Powdery mildew** is a fungal disease that affects a wide range of plants. Powdery mildew diseases are caused by many different species of fungi in the order Erysiphales, with *Podosphaera xanthii* (a.k.a. *Sphaerotheca fuliginea*) being the most commonly reported cause. Powdery mildew fungi reproduce both sexually and asexually. Milk has long been popular with home gardeners and small-scale organic growers as a treatment for powdery mildew.

### How to beat powdery mildew:

Milk is diluted with water (*typically 1:10*) and sprayed on susceptible plants at the first sign of infection, or as a preventative measure, with repeated weekly application often controlling or eliminating the disease. Studies have shown milk's effectiveness as comparable to some conventional fungicides. The exact mechanism of action is unknown, but one known effect is that ferroglobulin, a protein in whey, produces oxygen radicals when exposed to sunlight, and contact with these radicals is damaging to the fungus.

## CLUB ACTIVITIES

### BCGC Flower Show

**Bedford  
Garden Club**

**The Bedford County Garden Club  
Horticulture Specialty Show  
August 3, 2022  
from 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Presbyterian Church Hall  
115 East Penn Street  
Bedford, PA**

### GC of Johnstown Flower Show

**Garden  
Club of  
Johnstown**

## “A Patriotic Summer”

An NGC Standard Flower Show



Presented by

**The Garden Club of Johnstown**

July 29, Friday 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

July 30, Saturday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Free and Open to the Public  
Wheelchair Accessible

A Patriotic Summer Flower Show spanning two days – allow enough time to enjoy all the displays and fireworks of nature's colors.

### Westmont Presbyterian Church

601 Luzerne Street, Johnstown, PA 15905

Step into the world of gardening displays and exhibits tenderly grown, nurtured and designed by Garden Club members.

- ☆ **Horticulture:** Enjoy colorful annuals, perennials, vegetables, herbs and terrariums.
- ☆ **Botanical Arts Artistic Crafts:** All items are created using a variety of flowers which will include Ladies Hat designs; pressed or dried flowers framed or displayed in 3-D art and botanical jewelry.
- ☆ **Photography:** Photos displayed with a Patriotic theme taken by Garden Club members
- ☆ **Illuminary Design:** a creative design incorporating lights for special effects
- ☆ **Underwater Design:** plant materials submerged in water.

Enjoy additional plant displays and unique designs created by members.

Garden Club meetings are held every second Monday at the Westmont Presbyterian Church at 10:00 a.m. to noon. New members welcome.



# CLUB ACTIVITIES

## Activities Around Blair County

The Discovery Garden, a project of the Skills Foundation, is an award-winning public garden located in Legion Park, Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania, adjacent to the Kids' Kingdom Play Park.

The Discovery Garden is handicapped accessible and includes a Horticultural Therapy Garden maintained by individuals from Skills of Central PA. Other specialty gardens in this inviting botanical space include the Cottage Garden, which earned the 2016 "Garden of Distinction" blue ribbon from the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society; the Time Garden, which contains one of the largest horizontal sundials on the East Coast; and the Children's Garden, which includes a potting shed, a rabbit hole tunnel and a rainbow garden. The Discovery Garden also contains the Planting Garden, comprised of raised beds planted in the spring by local elementary school students.

### Blair Garden Club



Thursday June 9, 2022 at the Discovery Garden. Mulch and planting start in the rain garden! Photos from Lisa Merschiltz.



Planting begins at the new Rain Garden



7th Street has been planted by these wonderful ladies from the Blair Garden Club. Enjoy the color it will be fantastic again this year!

## CLUB ACTIVITIES

### Pollinator Gardens

On Monday, June 13, the Evergreen Garden Club met at the Trinity United Methodist Church at 12:30 with refreshments. Program began at 1:00 pm. Marcy Cunkelman did a PowerPoint program on Pollinators and how to have a Penn State Certified Pollinator Garden.



**Evergreen  
Garden Club**

### Work at the Silas Clark House





## CLUB ACTIVITIES

The Indiana Garden Club has had a very busy Spring leading into Summer this year. We are happy to share the good news of our club growing by leaps and bounds! So far, we have a total of nine new members who have joined this year, seven of them since May! Hooray!! They each have special talents and are true assets to the club. We are looking forward to getting to know them better.

The Indiana Garden Club website, [www.indianagardenclub.org](http://www.indianagardenclub.org) was updated this spring and we will continue to work on it this year.

Our May Mart – Garden & Vendor Expo was once again a huge success. Scholarship donations from May Mart, which is our only fundraiser, increased and will allow us to give several scholarships to recipients at our annual picnic & perennial exchange in August. We will begin planning for May Mart 2023 this August as well. In addition, we have an August outing to Penguins Court, a preserve of Brandywine Conservancy, in Laughlinton, PA.

We are currently updating our logo and have had seven submissions from members, family and friends. The votes will be cast at our Annual Garden Tour/Progressive dinner in July.

### Indiana Garden Club

#### Garden of the Month

IGC recently established a Garden of the Month Program and we just published our initial award. The winner was happy to have been chosen and the Indiana Gazette provided a full page in color to cover the award given. The club plans to give this award to a resident of Indiana Borough or White Township monthly as long as weather permits.



Left to right: Pat Prushnok, Tammy Glavich, Donna Wyatt, homeowner, Fran Fails and Deb Stumpf.

#### Lavender Wand Class at June Meeting

Christina Zucca taught IGC members how to make lavender wands at club meeting in June. “Wonderful program!! Lots of fun!” remarked Asst. Director and IGC member, Deb Stumpf.



## CLUB ACTIVITIES

### PGC Standard Flower Show—“Childhood Memories”

What better way to emphasize the theme of Patton Garden Club’s July 18, 2022 Flower Show, “Childhood Memories,” than to incorporate children into the show! This is the first time a Youth Division was used in the schedule and what a success it was. Fran Lansberry and Mary Lou Colussy, Flower Show co-chairs, wanted to include young gardeners and designers into the Flower Show this year and it became a reality with a little work but lots of talent on the kid’s side. Fran guided neighborhood children and member’s grandkids to become a part of this new adventure. She held workshops for the kids to involve the budding talent of these youngsters. Fran gave a tutorial beforehand about flowers and their sizes and textures and other topics and then let their talents take charge. It was absolutely amazing! From 4-year-olds through high school, everyone took their hand at creating fantastic designs that some adults would not be able to achieve. PGC is hoping this is not a one-time anomaly but a beginning of a lifetime of enjoying nature through creative design.

**Patton  
Garden  
Club**





# CLUB ACTIVITIES

## PGC Road Trip to "Remember Me" Rose Garden

Patton Garden Club members Jeannine Cymbor, Monica Wonjo, Barb Pompa, Chris Westover, Cheryl Vescovi, Mary Lou Colussy, Jan Davis, Betty Ann Miller, Judy Letso, Melissa Hellegas, Katie Lechene and Mona Weakland, caravanned to Remember Me Rose Garden on June 16, 2022 to pay tribute to the fallen heroes of 9/11 and Flight 93. The Rose Garden is just past the entrance of Flight 93 Memorial on Route 30 in Stoystown.

The Flight 93 National Memorial was erected at the crash site, and just ¼-mile east from the entrance to the memorial sits the "Remember Me" Rose Garden. Many acres of land were purchased by the families of the heroes of 9/11 as a buffer zone around the park. The Families donated 13 acres in 2009 for the construction of a rose garden, to be a "Living Tribute" to the memory of their loved ones.

**Patton  
Garden  
Club**



## Patriot Park Memorial

Patton Garden Club members drove to the Patriot Park Memorial only a mile from Flight 93 on Route 30, Stoystown after the visit to the Remember Me Rose Garden. It is a field of Honor the Veterans of the Global War on Terrorism and their families. The Field of Heroes Flag display contains one flag for each service man or woman who has died in the line of duty since 9-11. Over 7,000.





# CLUB ACTIVITIES

## Uptown Planters Look Great!

May 26, 2022

What a beautiful day for planting flowers! And that's exactly what the members and Friends of SGC did in uptown Somerset, and at various locations throughout town. The town once again looks blooming lovely, and just in time for Memorial Day weekend.

Thank you to everyone who turned up to help today, and a special shout out to Somerset Public Works Director Travis Hummel who checked in with his team and ensured that all the plants were well watered (and will continue to do so throughout the summer).

**Somerset  
Garden Club**



## CLUB ACTIVITIES

On **April 19<sup>th</sup>**, the Weeders and Seeders Garden Club was enlightened by our own entomologist, Andrea Kautz (of Powdermill Nature Reserve), presenting "*Gardening with Caterpillar Hostplants to Enhance Biodiversity*". She also demonstrated how to "get on the map" in Doug Tallamy's "Homegrown National Park. Following the program, members, Angela McDonnell and Patti Flowers-Jacobina discussed highlights of the GCFP 2022 conference they attended. Angela stated that it was a wonderful convention, especially learning about a new manmade floral foam, and informed us that our club won 2 awards from the GCFP. The Flower Show Schedule was awarded a 1st place and 3rd place for the club yearbook in the 45-69 member category. Patti enjoyed the presenter Doug Tallamy and came away with the quote "Garden as if Life Depends on it" She also enjoyed the Plastics Prevention Program.



### Weeders and Seeders

At the **May 17** meeting, Weeders and Seeders officers were installed by Janice Davis, Director of District VI. A special reading was conducted for each officer and an herb was presented that related to the office held. Thank you, Janice, and guest Mary Davis, for traveling to Ligonier for the installation! Preceding the meeting, new member, Michele Dulas, presented the very interesting "*The Soil Food Web*" to members. Members were treated to a variety of foods using asparagus.



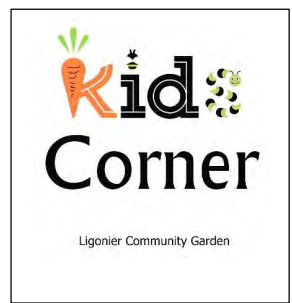
Jan Davis of District VI installed the Weeders and Seeders 2022 officers on May 17<sup>th</sup>.  
 Treasurer – Wilma Light MD,  
 Media Secretary – Judy Ridgway,  
 Recording Secretary – Mary Niezelski,  
 Vice President – Mary Leppold and  
 Co-Presidents – Patti Schildkamp and Deb Christopher.  
 (Patti S. is missing from Picture)



## CLUB ACTIVITIES



The GCFP award-winning (2020), **Kid's Corner**, that teaches gardening skills to Ligonier area children ages 6 through 8 began its new season on **May 18th**. Operated by Weeders and Seeders member, Judy Ridgway, and Barli Ross, previous member, the program is in its third year. Weeders and Seeders members assist Judy and Barli during the weekly class.



Weeders and Seeders members, along with Penn State Master Gardeners, participated in the **May 21<sup>st</sup>** Special Feature at the Ligonier Country Market. Children planted a pollinator garden, assisted by members, and info was shared with the public on SLF and pollinators. On **June 25<sup>th</sup>**, at another Ligonier Country Market Special Feature, the focus was again on pollinators. A pollinator scavenger hunt and info about having a garden certified as a "Pollinator-friendly" by Penn State, were some of the topics.

**Weeders  
and  
Seeders**



Members traveled to the Johnstown area for a Rhododendron Rhapsody Field Trip **May 25** and then again on **June 21** for the club's July meeting, picnic, and garden tour at the beautifully peaceful residence of new member Sue Wolfe.





### District VI Picnic in the Park

District Director, Jan Davis hosted a summertime picnic for District VI board members at the Patton Community Park on June 22, 2022. Meat and drinks were provided and attendees brought their favorite covered dishes. Jan also conducted a Flower Pounding workshop and a fun gardening trivia game as well. Afterwards members were invited back to her house to tour her lovely gardens. A lovely time was had by all. Thanks, Jan, for a wonderful day!





## Caring for Ornamental Grasses in the Fall

Avoid cutting or fertilizing your grasses now, but prepare for spring maintenance

By Dr. Andy Pulte



'White Cloud' muhly grass (*Muhlenbergia capillaris* 'White Cloud', Zones 6–10) is in full bloom, while the rest of the garden fades into autumn. *Photo: Andy Pulte*

Taking center stage in many Southern gardens in fall are the artful plumes of ornamental grasses. The graceful seed heads of a variety of species should be in full glory as we march into a much-anticipated autumnal break from the hottest part of summer. However, as you look around your garden, you may take note that there is much to do. Fall cleanup is upon us, annuals are not looking like they once did, and leaves are in the process of giving way in the more temperate parts of the South.

This post is a timely warning that ornamental grasses are not to be fiddled with as soil temperatures cool. Why is this? First, most if not all the most popular ornamental grasses we use in Southern gardens are of the warm-season variety. Simply put, this means they are actively growing during warmer temperatures and slow to a halt in cooler weather. Later, as some of us experience freezing temperatures, these grasses will go completely dormant.



Wait until spring to cut back your grasses, like this pink muhly grass (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*, Zones 6–10). *Photo: Andy Pulte*

### Wait until spring

With grass species that are on the verge of dormancy, fertilizing during fall is basically worthless. One of two things can happen depending on the weather and where you live. First, if the plant is still actively growing, it may spur on fresh growth that will not be adequately hardened off before winter. Second, if dormancy is not far off, the plant will not have the ability to take up fertilizer in a dormant state. Wait until spring.

Also, during this time of year you will see a multitude of articles and online information about dividing perennials. And it is true that ornamental grasses are perennials. However, avoid dividing warm-season grasses in the fall. As they move into dormancy, they will not be able to put on adequate roots to establish themselves in your landscape. Wait until spring.

Finally, do not cut back your ornamental grasses now. For me, the most important reason is a visual one. Winter is coming, and you are going to appreciate having the dormant seed heads, leaves, and stocks of your grasses to add winter interest to your garden. There is a beautiful aesthetic to the decay of a garden, and it should be enjoyed. Also, wildlife enjoy dormant ornamental grasses—birds feast on seeds and use their canopy for winter cover. Beneficial insects and future beneficial insects in the form of eggs overwinter in stems as they wait out the cold. As a last benefit, the extra protection of their own foliage helps protect ornamental grasses from winter injury. When it comes to cutting back warm-season ornamental grasses, again, wait until spring. (Continues on following page)

### Caring for Ornamental Grasses in the Fall (cont.)



Little bluestem (*Schizachyium scoparium*, Zones 2–9). Cut back grasses to right above the crown of each plant. *Photo: Andy Pulte*

#### What to do when spring arrives

As far away as it may seem as fall begins, spring will come back around again next year. This is basically the only time of year ornamental grasses should be messed with in the garden. They do benefit from being cut back once a year, and spring is the perfect time to do it. Actual timing will vary based on location and on conditions from year to year, but I cut back ornamental grasses just as I anticipate new seasonal growth is about to emerge. I remove the entirety of the foliage above the main growing point (crown) of each individual plant. I do this with manual hand-held hedge clippers. However, it can be done other ways, including with the use of gas or electric hedge clippers or even judicious burning where local regulations allow. You can utilize the old tops of your grasses as mulch at the base of existing plants. Getting this mulch away from the top of the plant but composting it in place around the base can thwart weeds and add nutrients back into the soil.

Spring is also the absolute best time to plant ornamental grasses. As soon as the fear of frost is behind you and soil temperatures warm, take the opportunity to add ornamental grasses to your landscape. With the whole season to establish themselves, they will go into the following winter as robust, maturing plants.



Make note of how grasses look in bloom in the fall, like this 'Northwind' switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum* 'Northwind', Zones 5–9), and take that knowledge with you when deciding which grasses to buy in the spring. *Photo: Andy Pulte*

#### Take note this year

An unfortunate truth is that many retail nurseries have given up on selling ornamental grasses. And if they haven't, they sell them in the fall, which is the absolute worst time to plant them. The reason behind their scarcity during the spring is that not many ornamental grasses look good in pots. They look like nothing special in the spring and are scraggly as the season progresses. So as these beauties crescendo this fall, you need to take notice of those you like and make notes. Spend some time during the coldest months learning about the grasses that caught your eye and their growing requirements (most like a lot of sun by the way). Next spring, arm yourself with the list you made, and make sure ornamental grasses are a part of your landscape in the years to come.

*Andy Pulte is a faculty member in the Plant Sciences department at the University of Tennessee.*



## WHAT GOES INTO A FLOWER SHOW?

By Mary Lou Colussy  
Accredited Flower Show Judge

### Picking a Theme

- Brainstorm Possible Theme Topics
- Decide How You Will Adjust Topic to Fit Your Schedule
- Adjust Each Division and Classes of Schedule to Reflect Theme

### Use the Strengths of Your Club to Adjust Your Horticulture

#### Division

- Pole Your Members as to the Horticulture Available
- Divide Classes to Specimens Available to the Time of Year and for Growing Zone
- Avoid Putting in Classes That Won't Be Filled
- Diversify Classes to Reach all Your Members
- Allow for Standard and Unique Specimens in the Classes

### Don't Forget the Design

#### Division

- Allow For the Originality of Your Members' Strengths When Deciding Which Classes to Include in the Schedule
- Include Some Novice Design Classes as Well as Advanced Classes
- Make It Interesting for the Attendees

### It Takes a Village

- Don't Allow the Committee to do Everything
- Get Help from All the Members
- Encourage Members on the Fringes to Get Involved
- Spread the Work Around

### Don't Expect Everything to Run Flawlessly

- It Takes Preparation
- Explain Job Assignments Ahead of Time
- Use a Blueprint/Plan to Refer to Before Show

### Picking the Players

- **Staff Your Committees According to Members' Strengths or Willingness**
  - ✓ Flower Show Chairmen
  - ✓ Schedule Chairman
  - ✓ Staging Chairmen
  - ✓ Design Entries Chairman
  - ✓ Horticulture Entries Chairman
  - ✓ Youth Entries Chairman
  - ✓ Classification Chairman,
  - ✓ Design Consultants
  - ✓ Placement Chairman
  - ✓ Judges' Chairman
  - ✓ Clerks Chairman
  - ✓ Awards Chairman
  - ✓ Publicity Chairman
  - ✓ Hospitality Chairman
  - ✓ Photographer
  - ✓ Worker Bees

### Identify Designs That May Be Confusing or Advanced

#### Example: Low Profile Design

- A three-dimensional design incorporating three (3) or more design techniques.
- Completed design must be at least four (4) times as long and/or wide as it is high
- Design to be viewed and judged from above
- Identify the techniques by naming them on the required plant material card
- Design techniques are not limited to the those discussed, but must be identified!
- Design is not limited to one container (ex. stretch, duo, etc.)

### Provide Practice Design Classes for Novices

### Have Meeting(s) Before Actual Flower Show to Calm Members Worries or Queries

## DO YOU HAVE THE PERSONALITY TRAITS OF A GARDENER?

KIMBERLY@THEHEARTYGARDEN.COM

Source: <https://theheartygarden.com/gardening-personality-traits/>

Gardening is one of the most popular hobbies around the world. Studies have shown a regular dose of gardening can improve human health by reducing depression, anxiety, and body mass index and increasing life satisfaction and quality of life.

In my experience, I've learned that certain personality traits can help me succeed in this hobby. For some, these traits come naturally, and to others, they will form as they fall in love with gardening.

There are different types of gardens that people love and nurture. Examples include flowers, herbs, fruit, vegetable, rain, and butterfly, to name a few. If you are contemplating whether to start gardening, questions can arise.

Why would you want to do it? Is it for the thrill and reward of growing healthy food for yourself? Do I want to look out my window and proudly soak in the beautiful splash of color, and at the same time, show it off to my neighbors? Alternatively, am I looking for a free form of therapy?

Gardeners possess a unique combination of traits. They appreciate the unpredictability of mother nature and the ambition to grow plants that may or may not make it to maturity. If the plants survive, gardeners are kindheartedly generous and will proudly share their bounty with others.



Mother Nature is an unpredictable phenomenon a gardener needs to try to understand. I live in USDA Zone 6a and the transition zone in the Kansas City area. We experience the four seasons, and it sometimes brings erratic weather. When you think temps will stay in the high 80s to low 90s where my tomatoes and peppers live the high life, then BAM! The temps hit 100s, and the flowers stopped growing. Then the next week, we experience the fabulous 70s. All these temps are within one month during the summer!

A gardener grows patient and learns to appreciate and forgive the ever-changing season mother nature brings us.



Patience is a nonnegotiable personality trait when it comes to gardening. When you sow a seed, don't expect it to germinate overnight (well, some can). It usually takes days and, at times, weeks. Some vegetable crops are ready to pick within 50 days from planting, such as kale, but pumpkins can take up to 120 days, or garlic which can take up to 240 days. Then you have perennial berries. Then we plant strawberries and blueberries; recommendations state to pick off the flowers in the first growing season.

It's so the plant's energy goes into growing healthy roots and plants. Allowing the plants to grow vegetatively for a year can produce more abundant fruit and harvest the next growing season.

Learning to wait and, at times, coping with loss is a reality for a gardener. However, these losses may help develop a new trait in our lives of dealing with failure and trying again, maybe using a disease-resistant or a variety perfect for your zone. Choosing to look for a better solution for the next growing season creates curiosity.



**Curiosity comes with wanting to be a successful gardener.** When I began to garden 25 years ago, my journey started by growing basil in a pot for my commercial-bought spaghetti sauce. When I didn't kill off my basil, I became curious about what else could grow. Gardeners want to produce a beautiful flower garden, abundant vegetables, or the freshest herbs in their favorite dishes.

So, then the question arises, "What can I plant to achieve my goals?" and "What if I change the location where I planted my tomatoes? Will I get a better yield?"

(Continues on next page)



## DO YOU HAVE THE PERSONALITY TRAITS OF A GARDENER?

(Continued from previous page)

Curiosity emerges when faced with the challenges of seeding, growing, dealing with pests and weeds, and of course, mother nature will give you the drive to observe, research, learn, and experiment. You'll take notes on how it went, then adjust or repeat for the next growing season. Gardening will give you the hope and the drive to succeed.



The proverb by William Hickson, "*If at first, you don't succeed, try, try again.*" I feel that this quote should be the motto for gardeners.

The term "drive" occurs when gardening frustrations kick in. Which, for me, is at almost every stage from seeding to post-harvest handling. Whether it be getting my seeds to germinate, plants to come out of dormancy, wildlife breaking through my barriers and eating all my produce, the armyworms, snails, grasshoppers eating the plants for lunch, or the plants die off. What's worse is that I have no clue what caused it.

As frustrated as I get when these things happen, I know I love to garden and the benefits that come with it, which gives me the drive to try and try again.

The curiosity to learn how a plant may grow in your garden provides you with the purpose to want to succeed. Hope and expectation will kick in once you figure out how to grow and nurture that perfect tomato or the most beautiful-looking zinnia.



As a gardener settles into finding a plot and sowing that first seed in the ground, hope and expectation naturally take over. Therefore, the desire wanting to succeed in this hobby.

Patience will be tried, and you'll discover the act of faith as you take a seed or tiny transplant, plant it in your garden, nurture and care for it as you revel at the changes of the plant that will hopefully reward you at the end of beauty and bounty. Gardening gives you the hope that it reflects your personality and the expected hard work you've put into it to reap the reward.



When some gardeners set out to begin this hobby, showing compassion and generosity to others may not have been on their minds. Caring for a garden can be a solo gig. However, gardening reminds us that the world does not revolve around only humans.

The sense of responsibility and nurturing a living thing can encourage us to be less self-absorbed. Perhaps it's being **outside and enjoying the fresh air** or the feeling of accomplishment that you have grown an abundance of produce that tastes delicious. You will want to share the fruit of your harvest or brighten someone's day with your inspiring cut flowers.

As a gardener will tell you, sharing seeds, plants, and produce that brings a smile to your neighbors and friends gives joy, pride, and enrichment in their lives.

If you don't possess all of these personality traits before you begin gardening, that's ok!

It can be intimidating for a beginner, but you don't need to go big. In fact, this hobby is easy to give it a test drive. All you need is a garden container, soil, and your first plant. Care for your plant by placing it in a sunny window and watering it.

As it grows, smiles will form, spirits will lift, and the possibility of new personality traits will blossom.



## What Makes Cut Flowers Last Longer?

Everyone has heard some trick to keep a bloom-filled vase beautiful. We find out which ones really work

By Mae Lin Plummer Fine Gardening – Issue 163

Source: [https://www.finegardening.com/article/what-makes-cut-flowers-last-longer?source=W4489ENL&tp=i-1NHD-BC-YjS-1mGEMF-1o-W33U-1c-118g-1iHVUw-17bowODbiZ-gXD1u&sourcekey=W4489ENL&utm\\_campaign=fine-gardening-eletter&utm\\_source=eletter&utm\\_medium=eletter&utm\\_content=fg-tips-eletter&cid=133514&mid=1629265403](https://www.finegardening.com/article/what-makes-cut-flowers-last-longer?source=W4489ENL&tp=i-1NHD-BC-YjS-1mGEMF-1o-W33U-1c-118g-1iHVUw-17bowODbiZ-gXD1u&sourcekey=W4489ENL&utm_campaign=fine-gardening-eletter&utm_source=eletter&utm_medium=eletter&utm_content=fg-tips-eletter&cid=133514&mid=1629265403)

One of the great joys of gardening is taking beautiful blooms from favorite plants and placing them indoors to brighten a room. Cut flowers, however, can quickly lose their beauty. A quick internet search yields a wide variety of methods claiming to prolong the life of cut flowers. Most of the methods involve adding something to the water in the vase, usually items found in the average home: bleach, lemon-lime soda, vinegar, and others. Many recipes combine two or more ingredients intended to add food and delay decomposition, and include cultural practices, such as trimming stem ends at an angle under running water as well as refreshing the water every two days and retrimming the stem ends. It quickly becomes overwhelming.

I confess that I am a bit of a lazy gardener. For cut flowers, I arrange them in a vase, add water, and throw them out individually when they start to look bad. Cutting the stems at an angle (a common practice) and adding a little something when they first go into the vase seem reasonable to me, but I'm not going to do much more than that. Most home gardeners whom I've met seem to be willing to expend about the same level of effort. So, with that in mind, how do the household additives or plant-food packets compare with just plain water? I decided to conduct an experiment to find out.

In the end, were the results enough for me to change my lazy ways? For cut flowers from a store that come with a packet of plant food, absolutely. But at home, with flowers from my garden, most likely not, unless a special occasion necessitates it—a really long special occasion. Fortunately, I live in a region with a long growing season and have a lot of flowers to replenish my vase.

### How the test was done

I set up an experiment at the UNC (University of North Carolina) Charlotte Botanical Gardens to test six additives against plain water. These treatments were recommended on multiple websites, and they include sugar for food plus an antibacterial agent—the two things that cut-flower preservatives are designed to supply. I used freshly cut flowers to best mimic a gardener's experience and because store-bought flowers are often pretreated in some way. I recorded data daily for 15 days on the quality of the flowers and rated them with a number system: 2 was "good," meaning they looked like I had just picked them; 1 was "acceptable" in that they were good enough to keep in the container; and 0 meant that they were wilted or shriveled to the extent that they needed to be removed.

I chose flowers commonly grown in home gardens that also make good cut flowers: sunflower (*Helianthus* cv., annual), celosia (*Celosia argentea* cv.), and lisianthus (*Eustoma grandiflorum* cv., USDA Hardiness Zones 8–11). (Continued on following page)



#### Sunflower

Similar plants:  
Shasta daisy (*Leucanthemum* × *superbum* cvs., Zones 5–8); aster (*Symphotrichum* spp. and cvs., Zones 4–8)



#### Lisianthus

Similar plants:  
Rose (*Rosa* spp. and cvs., Zones 2–11); peony (*Paeonia* spp. and cvs., Zones 3–8)



#### Celosia

Similar plants:  
Amaranth (*Amaranthus* spp. and cvs., annual); yarrow (*Achillea* spp. and cvs., Zones 3–9)



## What Makes Cut Flowers Last Longer?

(Continued from previous page)

### The Experiment

Water—the control group

**Average:** 6 to 14 days

**Results:** Plain water was great in overall quality—up to a point (average of 7 days)—but began rapidly declining soon after. The water in the container stayed fairly clear for most of the experiment, and the flowers lasted nearly as long as those treated with FloraLife Flower Food 300.

### Trial Days vs. Average Rating—Cut Flowers in Water

**KEY**

**CELOSIA**     ●

**SUNFLOWER**     ●

**LISIANTHUS**     ●

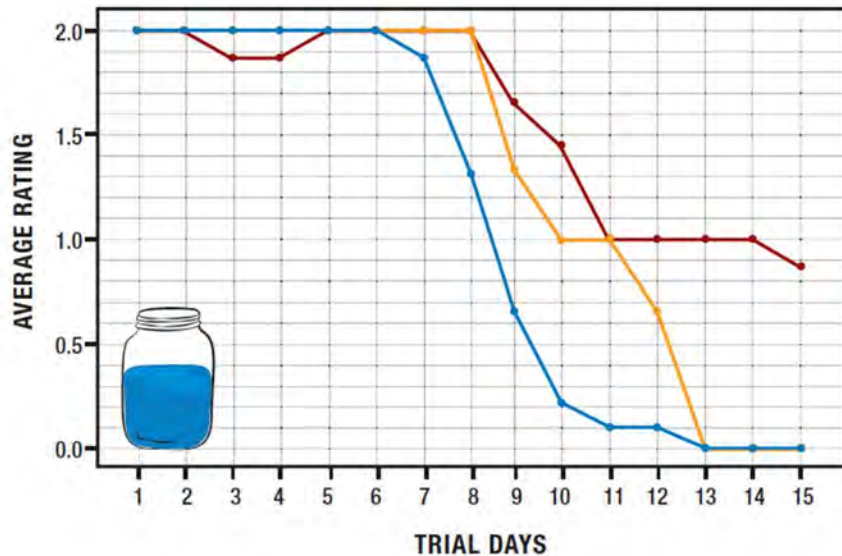
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**RATING SYSTEM**

▶ **Good = 2**

▶ **Acceptable = 1**

▶ **Poor = 0**



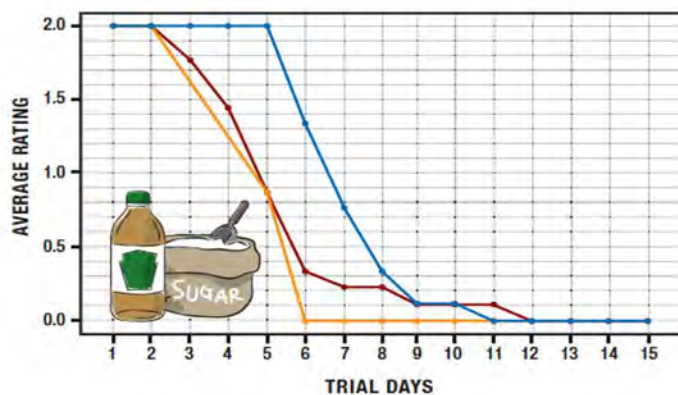
### Vinegar and sugar

**How much:** 1 Tbs. sugar and 2 Tbs. vinegar per quart of water

**Average:** 2 to 7 days

**Results:** This treatment produced the least favorable results, with flowers starting to wilt by day 2. Stems started turning brown at the bottom and moved upward toward the flower across all flower types—the quickest being the sunflowers. I attribute this to the sunflowers' large stem size, which absorbed the treatment faster than the other flower types. Lisianthus took the longest to show impact, which I believe supports my theory.

### Trial Days vs. Average Rating—Cut Flowers in Sugar and Vinegar



## What Makes Cut Flowers Last Longer?

(Continued from previous page)

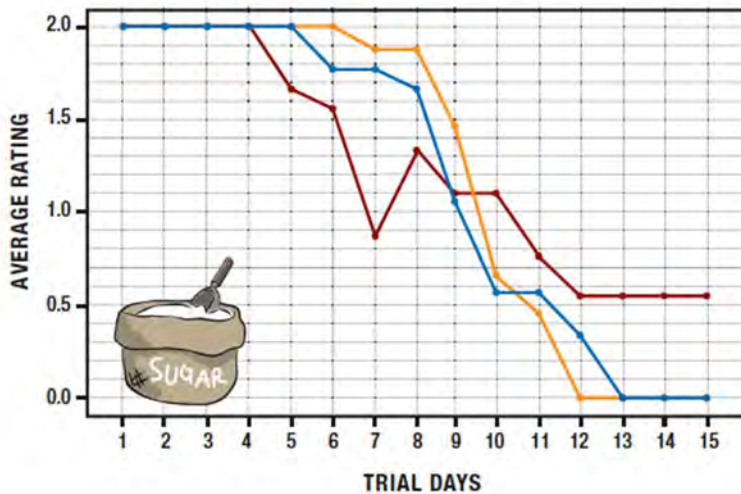
### Sugar

**How much:** 1 Tbs. per quart of water

**Average:** 5 to 10 days

**Results:** The flowers did well overall until about day 6, which is when I noticed leaves beginning to wilt on some of the celosia stems. The same eventually happened across all the flower types. The flower petals themselves did not appear to be affected. So, the flowers lasted, but they didn't look great over the long haul (or as good as those treated with FloraLife).

**Trial Days vs. Average Rating—Cut Flowers in Sugar**



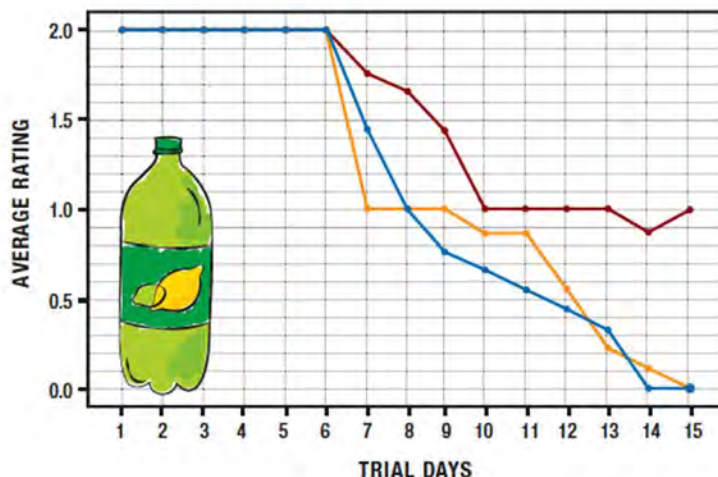
### Bleach and sugar

**How much:** 1 Tbs. sugar and ½ tsp. bleach per quart of water

**Average:** 7 to 10 days

**Results:** While the flowers generally managed to last through the duration of the experiment, I noticed brown spots and blotching on the leaves. This is what affected the overall quality. The flower petals seemed unaffected by the bleach. The container water stayed pretty clear throughout the experiment.

**Trial Days vs. Average Rating— Bleach and sugar**





## What Makes Cut Flowers Last Longer?

(Continued from previous page)

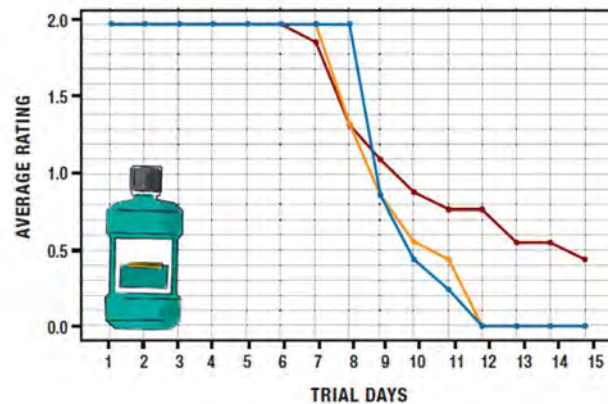
### Listerine

**How much:** 1 Tbs. per quart of water

**Average:** 7 to 9 days

**Results:** The benefit of using Listerine is its antibacterial qualities. This treatment had a similar result as the plain water control group: It did well up to a point, then declined rapidly. The downside with this treatment was that I could smell the Listerine without having to put my nose up to the container, masking any pleasant fragrance from the flowers.

**Trial Days vs. Average Rating—Listerine**



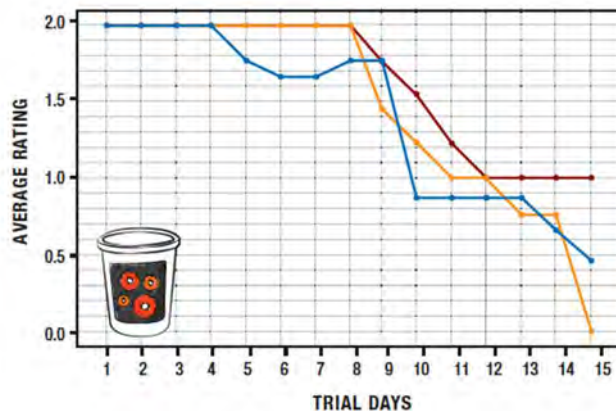
### FloraLife Flower Food 300

**How much:** 2 tsp. per quart of water

**Average:** 9 to 14 days

**Results:** Flowers treated with FloraLife Flower Food 300 lasted the longest and looked the best—and the water remained clearest. The ingredients in FloraLife are proprietary, but the company’s website describes this product as containing “a sugar for nutrition, an acidifier to lower the pH of the water, and a class of compounds called stem absorption enhancers.”

**Trial Days vs. Average Rating-- FloraLife Flower Food 300**



Mae Lin Plummer provides community education and horticultural workshops for the UNC Charlotte Botanical Gardens. She is also the owner of The Laughing Garden, a landscape-design and horticulture-consulting company in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Photos, except where noted: courtesy of Mae Lin Plummer. Top photo: Steve Aitken. Illustrations: Abigail Lupoff



**REGISTRATION – CAR-SGC CONFERENCE, NOVEMBER 2-3, 2022**  
**Hosted by the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania**  
**“7 Super Blooms that Changed Our World”**  
**7 Springs Resort, 777 Wagonwheel Drive, Champion, PA 15622**  
**Phone (814) 352-7777**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name on Badge: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

State Garden Club: \_\_\_\_\_ Medical/Dietary Restriction: \_\_\_\_\_

**Credentials:** (Please check all that apply)

\_\_\_\_\_ Garden Club Member

\_\_\_\_\_ Guest/Spouse

**NGC:**

\_\_\_\_\_ President

\_\_\_\_\_ Former President (Years) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Board Member (Title) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Life Member

**CAR-SGC:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Director

\_\_\_\_\_ Former Director (Years) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Board Member (Title) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Delegate

\_\_\_\_\_ Life Member

**CONSULTANT:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Flower Show Judge

\_\_\_\_\_ Environmental

\_\_\_\_\_ Gardening

\_\_\_\_\_ Landscape Design

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION (NOVEMBER 2-3):** for Workshops, Vendors, Exhibits, 4 Meals (Please check all that apply)

\_\_\_\_\_ Full (Both Days) \$275 (Tours not included) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Part Time Registration Fee: \$50 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Wednesday Lunch \$40 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Thursday Lunch \$40 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Tour - Flight 93 Nat'l Memorial \$50 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Tour – Falling Water \$82 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Tours leave hotel center lobby at 1:30 pm and return at 5:30 pm (Fuel surcharge maybe be required for tours)

\_\_\_\_\_ Dinner & Speaker \$75 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Late Fee (after 9/30/22) \$50 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**WORKSHOPS Wednesday**

10:30-11:30 am

\_\_\_\_\_ A - NGC Table Designs by Chris Leskosky

\_\_\_\_\_ B – Planting for Birds and Pollinators by Marcy Cunkelman

4:00-5:00 pm

\_\_\_\_\_ C – Succulent Designs by Tonya Young

\_\_\_\_\_ D – New Exciting House Plants by Ron McIntosh

5:00-6:00 pm

\_\_\_\_\_ E – Williamsburg Christmas by Jan Davis

\_\_\_\_\_ F – Creations from Your Garden by Fran Lansberry

Return form to Registrar Rose Rombosky at [roro@zoominternet.net](mailto:roro@zoominternet.net) or 118 Preserve Valley Rd, Cranberry Twp, PA 16066. Checks should be made **PAYABLE TO: CAR-SGC 2022 CONFERENCE**. Deadline for registration for the conference and hotel is September 30, 2022. Full time registrations will have priority over part time registrations. No refunds after October 15, 2022.



**CAR-SGC CONFERENCE**

**Hosted by the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania  
"7 Super Blooms that Changed Our World"**

**Schedule for NOVEMBER 2-3, 2022**

**Wednesday Nov. 2**

Registration	8:00 – 11:30 am
Finance Committee	9:45-11:15 am
Workshop A and B	10:30 – 11:30 am
Lunch	11:30-1:00 pm
Vendors	1:00 – 7:00 pm
Executive Board	1:00 – 2:00 pm
Full Board	2:30 – 3:45 pm
Workshop C and D	4:00 – 5:00 pm
Workshop E and F	5:00 – 6:00 pm
Leadership Dinner	
(By Invitation Only)	5:30 pm

**Thursday Nov. 3**

Registration	8:00 – 11:30 am
Continental Breakfast	7:30 -- 8:30 am
Roundtable Discussion	8:00 – 9:00 am
Vendors	9:00 am – 7:00 pm
General Membership	10:00 – 11:45 am
Lunch	12:00 – 1:30 pm
Tours	1:30 – 5:30 pm
Cash Bar	6:00 – 7:00 pm
Dinner with Keynote Speaker	
	7:00 – 9:30 pm
Closing	

From the EAST – PA Turnpike to Somerset Exit 110, Get on RT 31 W

From the WEST -- PA Turnpike to Donegal Exit 91, Turn onto RT 31 E to Seven Springs

Directions are clearly marked to the resort

Room reservation MUST be made by September 30 for special Conference rate of \$129 + 11 % tax per night Nor Nov. 1 -4. Call 814-352-7777 or 800 – 452-2223 (sales)

**GARDEN CLUB FEDERATION OF PENNSYLVANIA**  
**DISTRICT VI**  
**ANNUAL MEETING**  
**“A Harvest Picnic”**  
**Friday, September 9, 2022**  
**The Heritage**  
**3487 Copper Kettle Hwy.**  
**Rockwood, PA 15557**

**9:00 A.M. REGISTRATION: Coffee, Tea & Goodies, Fabulous Raffles & Super Grab Tables**

**9:45 A.M. Business Meeting Begins**

**Installation of Officers**

**Noon: Lunch**

**1:00 P.M. Business Meeting Continues**

**1:30 P.M. Program**

**3:00 P.M. Raffle Ticket winners announced**

**LUNCH MENU Buffet Picnic Meal, dessert, coffee, hot or iced tea.**

**Please indicate any Special Dietary requirements on your reservation.**

**COST: \$23.00 includes lunch, taxes, & gratuity**

**Make checks payable to: SOMERSET GARDEN CLUB**

**PROGRAM - “New and Amazing Houseplants” by Ron McIntosh – “Former WJAC–Green Grower”**

**Driving Directions: Take Rt. 281S in Somerset to New Centerville. Turn right on Copper Kettle Hwy. for .6 miles to The Heritage Barn**

**Any questions call Nerita Brant @ 814-445-2840 or email colonel38@comcast.net**

**Detach and send check for \$23.00 to: Nerita Brant, Registrar, 122 Rachel Lane, Somerset, PA 15501-9303**

**Make checks payable to: SOMERSET GARDEN CLUB**

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**District VI Annual Meeting**  
**Friday, September 9, 2022**  
**RESERVATION Deadline: August 30, 2022**

**(PLEASE PRINT)**

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Garden Club** \_\_\_\_\_

**State Board Member, Garden Club Member, or Guest (Please circle)**

**Dietary Requirement?** \_\_\_\_\_