

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

REPORTS OF BOARD COMMITTEES in alphabetical order followed the listing in the 2025-2027 Directory Issue. Some reports were given on Monday afternoon and more were given when the meeting resumed at 9 AM on Tuesday.

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

Awards Chair, Marilyn Small, and **Awards Co-Chair, Sheri Lowry,** reported Awards Season is Approaching! They are excited to begin receiving your award applications soon! Please remember that three organizations offer awards: GCFP, CAR-SGC, and NGC. Each has its own manual available on its respective websites and on the [GCFP website](#). NGC award applications are due December 1. GCFP and CAR-SGC deadlines vary throughout January. Be sure to consult the GCFP manual for specific due dates and requirements. The updated GCFP Awards Manual was posted on the GCFP website's Awards page as of July 1. We've streamlined the content and incorporated additional documents to make the application process more user-friendly. The only major change this year is with the application cover sheet. GCFP Awards—use the [GCFP Application Cover Sheet](#). CAR-SGC Awards—use the [CAR-SGC Application Cover Sheet](#). NGC Awards—use the [NGC Application Cover Sheet](#). Regardless of which application form you use, all NGC and CAR-SGC applications must be submitted through the state chairs - Sheri and Marilyn. Do not send them directly to NGC or CAR-SGC. This year's Governor's Trophy is open to Small Clubs (1-20 members). The Book of Evidence for this award is due by January 15. **Important Reminder:** Every club should have a signed photo release form on file for each member. Additionally, any photos featuring children or non-club members must be accompanied by a signed release. These forms can be found in the ["Forms Library"](#) on the GCFP website. We're looking forward to seeing your outstanding submissions!

Bee Gap Chair, Bonita Herman, reported *Lasioglossum* is the genus of Sweat Bees, the largest genus of bees with more than 1,900 species worldwide including Antarctica. 280 species in North America and 72 species found in Pennsylvania. They can be solitary, communal, eusocial (the highest-level organization of society) and even parasitic. Sweat bees thrive in various habitats from forests, meadows, and urban gardens. Sweat bees are a ground nesting bee burrowing into dry, sandy, or cracked soil in vertically branched shafts connecting the brood cells or others will nest in rotting trees. A colony species, the nest size will vary from a single queen with only a few worker bees, to a nest of over four hundred worker bees. After mating the female has her nest with shafts and places the pollen ball and lays a single egg of top, then lines the brood cells with a glandular, waxlike secretion (some species line the whole nest). In about 2 days the egg hatches into a larva and starts feeding on the pollen ball. Larva growth is fast and changes into 5 instars. This metamorphosis takes 17-40 days from egg, larva, pupa/cocoon, to adult. The solitary species may produce multiple generations/year and others only 1/year with the queen overwintering in the colony. This is probably why we see sweat bees from spring to now. Sweat bees are overlooked as Native Pollinators, due to their size. But since they are a small forager they crawl deep into the plants' reproductive system that bigger bees cannot reach, which increases cross-pollination. They visit so many different varieties of plants, carrying dry pollen and nectar on scopa from their hind legs using buzz pollination or transference to other flowers. As with all bees, human growth, urban sprawl, loss of fields, overuse and misuse of pesticides, erosion and competition from invasive species all cause a direct risk to reproductive growth of these valuable insects. We all know what we should do—but are we really educating and teaching as we should, after all, we are state garden club's members?

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

Birds & Butterflies & Conservation Chair, Marcy Cunkleman, reported Hummingbirds are still passing thru daily, since April. One to three seen in past week, chasing each other from flowers and feeders. This is getting late and she expects after the frost and colder temps, they will be showing up sporadically. But, if you leave up your feeders until at least 2 weeks after your last sighting, there is a chance for a straggler to show up or even better, a Rufous Hummer or another variety from the west. If you see a rusty color, there might be a good chance of having a Rufous hummer at your feeder and flowers. Native Jewelweed has been a great attractor, along with salvias, cupheas and zinnias and Mexican Sunflowers. Best year ever for the monarchs. Everyone was seeing them everywhere, many eggs and caterpillars on the host plant Milkweed. They are now on their way to Mexico. Some concerns with the nor'easter pushing them out to sea. Tagging at Cape May was postponed until the storm passes thru. Monarchs follow the east coast and much damage was done to the nectaring flowers and habitat. Still waiting to reports from damage to habitat and how many were lost due to the storm. Speaking of Monarchs, they have added even more radio tagged adults in all parts of the US. You can check out Monarch Watch or Journey North for more info on how to pick up the signal by blue tooth and track their journey. Have not had time to try and see if any are passing thru PA. Bucket list is to see a Monarch roost where number of Monarchs land in a tree or shrub in large numbers to rest overnight or make it thru bad weather. Another hope is to find a tagged monarch and report to Monarch Watch and see where it was tagged. Let's hope the migrants make it safely to Mexico and can winter over in larger numbers this year. Rest and winter over until they start their journey north in mid-February. Remember to be mindful of the insect and critters that are wintering over in leaves, plant stems and other protected areas. Leaf blowers are not for clearing leaves from under trees and shrub or your garden. They will destroy cocoons, frogs, salamanders, insects and other critters using the leaves for protection from the winter elements. Leave your plant stems and seed heads for natural food for the birds and mammals and the overwintering insects and eggs. Pick up sticks and branches to make a brush pile near bird feeders for protecting small birds from predators. Cover with pine branches for added protection and throw some quality mixed seed for the sparrows and other ground scratchers. Gather seeds from native plants and winter sow to plant or share with others. There are many varieties of native asters and goldenrod the these are the life-saving nectar for the pollinators, especially after frost. Someone will share these plants or seeds, along with other natives like Ironweed, Joe-Pye-weed, coneflowers, mist flowers, to name a few. Remember to plant host plants, nectar and fruit bearing trees and shrubs to offer food and shelter all year.

Blue Star Memorial Chair, Karen Faust, reported that we still need sponsors for Highway Memorial Markers at three of our Interstate Highway Welcome Centers. They are located at: Interstate 78 West - Northampton, ½ mile west of PA/NJ Border. Easton; Fulton - Interstate 70 W - ½ Mile North of PA/MD Border - Warfordsburg, PA; Delaware Water Gap -Interstate 80 Exit 310. Our Clubs can choose to place a marker anywhere in the State. It is not limited to your own geographical area. Welcome Centers are ideal because they have a lot of foot traffic and therefore are sure to spread our message. Penn Dot does all the heavy lifting, storing, installing and maintenance. They even plant a flower bed. It doesn't get much easier. This summer she attended two beautiful dedications: **June 3, 2026 - Garden Club of Johnstown** - Gold Star By-Way Marker. This Garden Club had already dedicated a Blue Star By-Way Marker at the War Memorial and added the Gold Star marker nearby. It was a lovely ceremony with local citizens stopping by and watching. **June 23, 2026 - Franklin County Gardeners in cooperation with Oil City Garden Club** - Gold Star Memorial Marker - VA Medical Center, Home Depot Parking

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

Lot, Franklin, PA. **August 1, 2026 - Biglerville Garden Club-** Blue Star Highway Marker, Harbaugh-Thomas Library, Biglerville, PA. **Future 2026 dedications include: Nov. 11, 2026 - Burrellton GardenClub** - Blue Star By-way Marker -Burrellton War Memorial.

Blue Star Memorial Central Assistant, Jane Howe, reported when cleaning out her GCFP Blue Star Memorial folders, she happened upon a very interesting fact. In 2010, the Mifflin County Garden Club dedicated the 54th Blue Star Memorial in Pennsylvania. We are so proud of our many garden clubs for they have doubled and almost tripled that number today, 128 memorials and beautiful dedications have ensued. Memorials placed on the Turnpike, at museums, court houses, parks, ball fields, zoos, libraries, schools, retirement homes and any other club-approved appropriate places. In the spring, we bring those memorials to life with beautiful plantings and now that is fall, we must put them to sleep gracefully with the clearing and cleaning of the memorial. In this way, we are honoring our Veterans year-round. Let the snow make your memorial sparkle.

Book of Recognition Donations Chair, Joyce Hoek, reported receiving **donations in May 2026 to recognize four members**. The names were published in the July 2026 issue of the Keystone Gardener. You can donate in memory of, in honor of, or in appreciation for someone. Notification is sent by mail to the person who has been recognized, or to a family member if the person is deceased. As always, the names of those honored are published in the Keystone Gardener. The donation form can be found on the GCFP website under "Forms. The form is helpful to her. Donations are always appreciated and will be used, as needed, for the expenses of the GCFP. Please consider a donation to the Book of Recognition.

Civic Development Chair, Suzanne Smith-Oscilowski, was absent and had no report.

Club Newsletter Awards Chair, Joyce Peterson, reported that most newsletters come in by email during the month of November and she is looking forward to them. They are all so diverse and interesting and the committee finds it hard to rank them even with the Rubric. She hopes that the District Directors send a notice encouraging their clubs to email the clubs' 2026 newsletters by December 1. Thank you, Directors, for your help in this regard.

Club Yearbook Awards Chair, Iris Cisarik, reported that her wish for 2026 is that that we will receive 100 club yearbook applications for the Yearbook Award. It is the easiest contest you will ever enter. The deadline for applying is December 1, 2026. If you have never applied, let her know if you need any questions answered. GCFP website has the application you will need and you only need 1 application now instead of 2. The application still goes to the state and Central Atlantic Region for being judged. Your club's application comes to her and her address is on the Pennsylvania GCFP Cover Sheet.

Convention Coordinator, Judith Schaffer, reported On September 30 she met with convention chairs and state officers via zoom. Meeting prior to state boards gives us more time to discuss issues and plans. We can then do follow-up in-person discussions at the actual board meetings. Our motto for future conventions is –"IT'S WORTH THE COST!" Each convention provides programming which is not available due to costs to our districts and clubs. Conventions are to educate our minds to better serve our clubs and communities. We realize that HOTEL prices, FOOD costs and GAS charges at the pump keep increasing beyond our control. Providing

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

convention rates to you as early as possible, so that you can plan to budget, is within our control. Anticipate more INFORMATIVE EMAILS about the 2027 convention and READ them. This jar is to hold her travel money! Putting aside a little each week will help her cover the convention costs. She plans to be in Lancaster in April, 2027. IT'S WORTH THE COST!"

2027 Convention Chair, Joanne Baylis, reported that during the district annual meeting season, she traveled with the GCFP officers to the various ten districts across the state. These visits provided an opportunity to meet with members throughout the districts, share information about the 2027 Convention and encourage participation and support for the event. These visits were very successful, with the overall response being extremely positive. Feedback regarding the speakers and activities was especially encouraging, with attendees expressing their appreciation for the quality of the programs and workshops. The opportunity to personally promote the 2027 Convention helped build enthusiasm and momentum for the upcoming event. Overall, visiting each district was a rewarding experience and provided an excellent opportunity to connect with garden club members.

Environmental – Keep PA Beautiful (KPB) Chair, Judith Swanson, had no report.

Environmental - Trash to Treasure Chair, Carol McConnell, reported for **2027 GCFP Convention - Trash to Treasure Challenges. Plant, Grow, Bloom. A Summer Bouquet.** Start by thinking of what flowers you will be planting this spring and what your flower gardens will look like this summer. Could you share some of your flowers in a bouquet with us? Keep it simple! Using a milk, cream, or coffee creamer container (16 ounces to 24 ounces) for a vase, could you gather some flowers to share with us. Use recycled materials (soda bottles or cans, milk jugs, candy or gum wrappers, fabric, yarn, buttons, jewelry, straws, lids or any other fun materials) to share what your flowers – real or imagined – may be this summer. Specifications: Dimensions: No taller than 15". Weight: Less than 20 pounds. Materials: Any type of repurposed material (plastic, wood, metal, glass and stone) may be used. As much as 20% of the design may be paint and glue. Each entry should include a 3" by 5" card. Front: Title of entry and list of materials. Back: District, Garden Club, designer(s') name(s), and mailing address. Entries may be the work of more than one person. Only One Entry from Each District. Selection method is determined by each District. Entries must be submitted by Sunday, April 18, for judging at 5:00 p.m. Not to be judged under the same standards as a flower show. Scale of points for judging: Conformance (height, width, weight) - 20 pts; Artistic Concept (creative use of recycled materials) - 50 points; Expression (interpretation of theme) - 20 points; Execution (workmanship) - 10 points = TOTAL – 100.

Floral Design/Horticulture Webinar Chair, Chris Leskosky, reported the fifth Design and Horticulture Webinar was held on August 5th and featured a diverse range of NGC floral designs, along with horticulture guidance on how to properly enter fruits, vegetables, cacti, and succulents in a flower show. We also learned some very informative facts about Baptisia and Penstemon, followed by a video showcasing a beautiful collection of hostas. As of the date of this report, more than 500 people have viewed the webinar on YouTube! The webinar is available for everyone to view. Since it is posted through my personal link, you must have the link in order to watch it. President Pat sent the link to all GCFP members through Constant Contact, so if you were unable to join us live, be sure to check it out. You will receive a link for the next presentation after it is held live. Our next webinar is scheduled for November 4th. This presentation will feature fall and

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

Christmas designs, along with some interesting videos on the decorating of historic homes. We will also learn how to make an oyster Christmas tree! This will be our final presentation, so she would like to thank all of you who supported me and President Pat's project. It has been such a pleasure working with our President and all of the presenters. She is truly grateful for the opportunity and for everyone who helped make these webinars a success.

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

Flower Show Evaluation Chair, Mary Jane Martucci, reported on how to have your flower show evaluated. Go to **GCFP website**, click on **MORE**, slide the bar down on **Flower Show Judges Info**, get the form "**FS Evaluation Request form 11-8-21 (PDF)**". Fill out the form requesting one of three types of flower shows: **30s = Standard or Small Standard; 30d = Design Specialty; 30h = Horticulture Specialty**. Be sure to make a list of all judges, their addresses, and phone numbers and indicate if there are any students. Send the form and a hard copy of your BEST schedule to Mary Jane Martucci, 911 McClelland Road, Finleyville, Pa. 15332. It will be evaluated by a panel. This is not a request for an award but to see if your flower show is good enough to apply for an award. Since the evaluating judges will tell you if your show is good enough, you must be prepared to make a book of evidence. This has new rules that now require digital sending.

Flower Show Book of Evidence (BOE) Evaluation Chair, Deb Stumpf, reported the flower show book of evidence Chairman is happy to report that she has received a larger number of flower show evaluations this summer and is looking forward to receiving a lot more books of evidence this year. She applauds all of you for putting on such worthy flower shows: I know how much work they can be. A goodly number of them have a patriotic theme so competition will be tough this year. It may mean a difference in the ribbon you receive from the GCFP, but please remember if your book scores 95 or above it is still submitted for national competition. All Books of Evidence are to be submitted digitally to her at logansmimi56@yahoo.com by December 1, 2026. As always, she is available to answer any and all questions by phone at 724-388-5811 or by email at logansmimi56@yahoo.com. She looks forward to receiving your books.

Flower Show Judges Council (JC) Chair, Karen Wychock, reported this is a combined report of the six area Judges Councils from across the state. These include the Central Area headed by Roseann Varner, the Erie Area headed by Linda Morrison, The Laurel Highlands Area headed by Sheila Croushore, The Northeast Area headed by Christine Leskosky, the Philadelphia Area headed by Louise Heilig and the Pittsburgh Area headed by Marilyn Backus. In commemoration of our Country's 250th birthday, garden clubs and councils across the state have been celebrating with patriotic flower shows. Pittsburgh and Laurel Highlands Councils - "Its Bloomin' America;" Erie Council - "Let's Celebrate America;" Central Area Council - "Birth of a Nation – America at 250;" Trevoese Horticultural Society Philadelphia Council – "Red, White and Bloom." Many of our judges across the state attended the Gettysburg Symposium on August 24-25. Members found it to be well organized and informative. The Symposium helps to keep our judges current with their credentials and improves their skills in judging a standard flower show. Pennsylvania currently has 85 Accredited Flower Show Judges; 19 Accredited Judges; 11 Life Judges; 55 Master Judges; 24 Emeritus Judges. The NGC Flower Show Handbook was just updated this week. Councils were asked to address the recent changes and updates in the handbook with their judges so that they are aware of these changes when

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

judging shows and keeping their credentials up to date. Questions coming directly from the councils concerning these changes will be discussed so that all judges are in accordance with these changes. Judy Binns will be our presenter at the April GCFP Convention. Judy is a member of the Salisbury GC, a former President of the Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs, an NGC Accredited Master Flower Show Judge and an NGC Flower Show Design Instructor. Judy has served on the NGC Board of Directors since 2007 and currently serves as the Flower Show Schools Chairman.

Flower Show Judges – Laurel Highlands Council, Sheila Croushore, reported that on July 8th the LHJC hosted the Pittsburgh Area JC to a pot-luck picnic at the home of Sheila Croushore. We discussed and finalized the upcoming Flower show hosted by Pittsburgh. On July 17th LHJC participated in the Joint Flower show hosted by Pittsburgh Area JC. “It’s Bloomin’ America” was a great success. Marilyn Backus did a fantastic job. Pittsburgh offered a Colonial Lunch with reenactments and had local historical centers present with education displays. In August our Council supplied designs for the symposium. In September we had two members Judging the Longwood Gardens District 1 Flower Show, and one member Judge the National Capitol’s Flower Show at the National Arboretum. On September 23rd we met at Perkins to discuss our Flower Show for 2027, along with starting the slate for officers taking office in the Spring of 2027. The new portal for FS information. She discussed an issue. Topics of discussion: can hydroponics be placed in Flower Shows, other than orchids are climbing exhibits allowed to use a trellis or other support, where can a Hosta flower be exhibited in a show. The next meeting will be our Christmas Luncheon in December.

Flower Show Judges Credentials Chair, Anita Lehman, reported that Pennsylvania has **85** Accredited Flower Show Judges. **19** Accredited Judges; **11** Life Judges; **55** Master Judges; **24** Emeritus Judges. **13** Judges are in Good Standing until 12/31/2026. **36** Judges are in Good Standing until 12/31/2027. **30** Judges are in Good Standing until 12/31/2028. **6** Judges are in Good Standing until 12/31/2029. Judges are reminded to fill out Form 13, 15L or 15M with your exhibiting and judging credits to prepare for your next Symposium. Judges Credentials Chair: Anita Lehman Cell: 215-870-9568 Address: 516 Dawes Lane, Ambler, PA. 19002

Flower Show (FS) Schedule Chair, Margie Bucci, was absent but reported receiving three schedules to evaluate. You can find the fillable application on the GCFP website. Click on more, then click on “Flower Show Judges’ Info”, download the ‘FS GCFP Application Schedule Award’. Follow the instructions on the application. The deadline for submission is December 1st.

Flower Show Schools Chair, Joanne Baylis, reported our last GCFP Flower Show School, Course IV will be held 26-28 October 2026 in Gettysburg. Frances Thrash, our Design instructor, will be teaching Mono-botanic and Tapestry designs. Heidi Muschick, our Horticulture instructor will be teaching Vegetables with a special focus on Winter Squash as well as Collections. It has been her pleasure and privilege to serve as the GCFP Flower Show School Coordinator. Throughout these four courses, she has had the opportunity to meet so many wonderful instructors, students and GCFP judges. The support and assistance from various Judges Council members has been invaluable and contributed greatly to the success of our state’s Flower Show School. She is truly grateful to everyone who has helped make these courses such a rewarding experience and looks forward to celebrating our final course together in Gettysburg.

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

Flower Show Student Judges Credentials Chair, Claire Leichter, was absent and had no report.

Flower Show Symposium Chair, Tonya Young, reported GCFP hosted a Flower Show Symposium on August 24–25, 2026, in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Our instructors were Lynn Fronk and Pam Braun. Lynn taught the Design program, which included Low-Profile Designs and Abstract Designs, with an allied topic on Design Mechanics and Techniques. Pam taught the Horticulture program, which focused on judging Fruits, Nuts, and Vegetables, as well as Broad-Leaf Evergreens. Her Allied topic was Grooming Mechanics. Classes were held at the Gettysburg Fire Department on North Stratton Street. Our GCFP Judges Council sponsored the symposium with a \$3000.00 donation. The donation was requested to offset symposium costs and ultimately reduce the cost to attendees. She is pleased to report that we accomplished this goal. The Registration Fee was \$125.00 per person for the full course with credit. \$115.00 for the full course without credit. Single-day attendance: \$70.00, including lunch. 49 people attended. 16 judges for credit, and she is pleased to report they all passed. 26 judges audited; 7 attended without credit. Everyone passed. David Robson, NGC Flower Shows and Flower Show Schools Committee Vice Chair, directed her to hold all tests until an issue that directly affects our PA symposium is resolved on their end. It has nothing to do with anything on our part. When she is notified, she will return the tests, and advancements will be recognized. A Ways and Means table for the benefit of Flower Show Schools netted \$658.00; one-half of the silent auction profits went to the GCFP Judges Council Fund, totaling \$220.00. All judges who entered designs will receive \$50.00 toward expenses. The remaining balance, after NGC fees, postage, and other expenses are paid, will be added to the FSS account for future schools.

GCFP History & Historian, Judy Jackson, was absent and had no report.

GCFP Reads Coordinator, Sharon Richardson, reported as the holidays approach, GCFP READS invites us to think beyond the usual gifts. A beautiful book can inspire a new garden, introduce a child to the wonders of nature, or provide hours of pleasure during the quieter days of winter. A magazine subscription is another gift that keeps arriving—and inspiring—all year long. But how do we find the best books? The librarian at Longwood Gardens recently shared several excellent resources with GCFP READS. The Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries presents annual Literature Awards recognizing outstanding books in botany and horticulture, while the American Horticultural Society selects exceptional new garden books through its annual Book Awards. The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's McLean Library also maintains excellent recommended reading lists. And don't forget the children on your list! The American Horticultural Society's Growing Good Kids Book Awards recognize outstanding children's books about plants, gardens and ecology. The Blueberry Awards highlight some of the best nature and climate books for children ages three to ten and beyond. The American Library Association and McLean Library also offer recommended reading lists for young gardeners and nature lovers. For a gift that continues throughout the year, consider a magazine subscription. Longwood's library subscribes to favorites including *The American Gardener*, *Fine Gardening*, *Horticulture*, *BBC Gardeners' World*, *Gardens Illustrated*, *The English Garden*, *The Garden* and *National Geographic*. Children love something special arriving in the mailbox, too! *Ranger Rick* offers age-appropriate nature and wildlife magazines from preschool through age twelve, while *National Geographic Little Kids* and *National Geographic Kids* introduce young readers to animals, science and the natural world. Through GCFP READS, we hope to encourage members not only to garden and protect our

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

environment, but also to keep reading, learning and sharing what they discover. This holiday season, perhaps one of the most meaningful gifts we can give is a good read. **Where to find great reads? Council on Botanical and Horticultural Libraries Annual Literature Awards -** https://cbhlib.clubexpress.com/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=469075&module_id=798607; **American Horticultural Society — Book Awards -** <https://ahsgardening.org/ahs-book-awards/>; **AHS Growing Good Kids Book Awards -** <https://ahsgardening.org/growing-good-kids-book-awards/>; **Blueberry Awards — Children’s Nature & Climate Books -** <https://epl.org/blueberry-award/>; **American Library Association — Gardening Books for Children -** <https://www.ala.org/alsc/publications-resources/book-lists/gardening-list-2024>; **Pennsylvania Horticultural Society — McLean Library Reading Lists -** <https://pennhort.libguides.com/index.php?b=s>.

GCFP Seed Money Committee Chair, Marjorie Sears, reported this is a great year for “seed Money”! There are both extra dollars and extra seeds! The seed in “Seed Money: stands for an idea, a dream, a need. It can be used for a community garden, a watering system – you need it, you got it! Her passion happens to get caught up in seeds. It’s because she lives just a few miles from Burpee Headquarters that she showed up at Fordhook Farms knowing that the owner was going to be there to meet the public. That was seven years ago. Sometimes Burpee loves me, but sometimes she wears them out. In the beginning of this year, their 2025 seeds were gone. Luckily, she received 2026 seeds for this year’s GCFP Convention. Thirty days ago, she learned through Burpee that their sales department decided to give their left-over 2026 seeds to a large food bank with warehouse space and we were allowed to help ourselves. As a result, she has made nine trips to North Wales for seeds. Because of the abundance of seeds, she has herb seeds so you can have your own herb garden. Please pass them on to someone who will love having them if this is not your thing. She is so happy to have seeds on a back table that need to be started before the April convention. Please help yourself. Be generous. Plant an extra row for a food bank across PA!!! Warning! Wash your hands after playing with seeds.

GCFP Schools and Credentials/Schools and Council Coordinator, Susan Glassmoyer, was absent and had no report.

Habitat for Humanity Donations Chair, Maryan Daniels, was absent, but reported that she wishes she could report that clubs, any club, has taken advantage of the State funds to assist in a project with a local Habitat for Humanity committee. PLEASE announce to your clubs that any size partnership with Habitat can be fully or partially funded by State level Habitat funds. The application is on the GCFP web site. Funding can happen any time of the year. Any questions, feel free to contact her as her email and phone number are in the registry.

Horticulture Coordinator, JoAnn Celaschi, reported there were seventeen new names of Exceptional Horticulturists added to the GCFP website for 2026 from seven districts. They were all well deserving of recognition for their knowledge of horticulture and the sharing of their knowledge with their clubs and communities. JoAnn thanked those who submitted the nominations for this award.

Horticulture Hints Chair, Grace Mitchell, stated: “Well folks, this is it. After over 20 years on this board, I have told you everything I know. No more hort hints. Oh, if you insist, just a couple more. If you want to water your houseplants while you are on vacation- put a bucket of water in

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

your bathtub and set your plants around it. Cut strings long enough to put one end in the soil and the other in the bucket. You aquarium owners, when you clean your tank give that wastewater to your houseplants. For distinctive containers, remember anything you can poke drainage holes in will work. Teakettles, watering cans, coffee cans, etc. The more unusual the better. A floral preservative some swear by is adding a teaspoon of gin or vodka to the water in your vase. What you do with the rest of the bottle is confidential.

Horticulture/Trees/Liaison to PA Forestry Council, Charlotte Crissey, was absent and had no report.

Horticulture Therapy Chair, Maryann DeSanto, reported working in our gardens or even visiting them has been proven to be beneficial to the mind and body. Few residents of nursing homes have the opportunity to visit gardens or even be outside to enjoy the scent of spring air or experience the first chill announcing that Fall and Winter are on the horizon. As Garden Club members we can fill this void by bringing to them horticulture that will be a seasonal sensual experience. Lilacs or roses in Spring along with mums and fallen leaves in the Fall will invoke seasonal memories for them. Research shows that being exposed to flowers, greens and gardens, and the act of arranging flowers has a calming effect on everyone. Horticulture Therapy can be a very rewarding experience for our GCFP members involved with this program. It can also be very challenging for the volunteers to continually research new and creative ideas that will both entertain and stimulate the senses. One idea is to include, with the design or craft, a short informative talk on a horticulture-related theme and include a presentation along with it. If your design is holiday related, a short talk on when and how the Holiday began and how it is celebrated. Another would be to highlight a particular flower or herb with photos and explain its origin and care. To enhance the idea, bring specimens of a flower or herb so they can experience the scent and touch of each one. Our members are constantly finding creative ways to share their love of horticulture and show their compassion for others. For more ideas view our Facebook page, GCFP Horticulture Therapy, or contact her if you would like to have a presentation on how to initiate a Horticulture Therapy program in your club.

Insurance Chair, Lorraine Dupre, reported this chairman is carrying on the position of Insurance Chair. The job is to act as a liaison between the clubs in the Federation and the Insurance provider: Reed, Wertz & Rodman, Inc. The current policy period is from 7/25/2025 thru 7/25/2028 with Cincinnati for General Liability & Inland Marine Policy. The total annual premium is \$12,827. Requesting certificates of insurance for club events and answering insurance related questions are the main duties. There was a question about whether or not wine can be served at one of the gardens on the GCFP Garden Party. The wine would be served as a courtesy, not purchased. The answer was since the GCFP is not in the business of manufacturing, distributing, selling, serving, or furnishing alcohol, there is liability coverage. If this becomes a regular operation, a liquor liability policy will be needed. On May 12, 2026 the Pottstown Area Garden Club reported a club activity incident where a member fell, hit her head and was taken to the hospital. The good news is "all is well". It turned out to be a minor incident. Currently, no medical reimbursements have been submitted.

Investment Chairman, Gail Corle Manna, was absent but reported this Chairman is glad to say the Federation Investments are doing quite well even with all the current political and world uneasiness. As of August 31, 2026, Investments totaled \$755,960.65 and the total in the cash

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

reserve is \$2,821.69 for ready access. \$6,830.00 had been moved over to the Treasurer to aid with 2026 Scholarships, which were paid out to the Schools in August. Mary and Karen Heltzel from Stifel, attended and gave up-dates on all current accounts. They also discussed how events are affecting our investments, explained any changes that have taken place since our June Meeting and any new changes deemed necessary to the accounts. Stifel continues to keep our accounts up to date and in the best order deemed necessary.

Keystone Gardener (KG) Editor/Advertising, Nancy Hannum, was absent but reported that the next print issue of the Keystone Gardener will be the 2027 Convention issue. Joanne Baylis and Nancy Hannum have communicated about the particulars needed to prepare this issue. If you have any announcements that you would like included, please send them to kg.gcfp@gmail.com. November 1, 2026 is the deadline for the Convention issue.

Keystone Gardener (KG) Online Editor, Marilyn Small, reported the next issue of KG Online will be published on November 1—just a few weeks away! Watch for it in your email. Believe it or not, I actually started working on placing articles in it in August! It takes months to put the whole thing together. The cover photo contest has been catching on, and she has recently received many submissions. An independent person chooses the cover – not Marilyn. I enjoy showcasing our many talented photographers and beautiful flowers and garden scenery, so keep them coming! The full state membership would be very interested in your committee report. Club Presidents and District Directors are also invited to submit reports on special projects, events, or anything you feel is newsworthy and worth sharing with the full state membership. Don't forget about the *Keystone Events* section! It's a great opportunity to promote your upcoming flower shows, garden tours, or holiday fundraisers. Please consider submitting a short blurb to help spread the word. The submission deadline is next Thursday, October 15. Please send your reports as MS Word documents (not in the body of an email). The next issue after November will be May 2027. If anyone is attending the CAR-SGC Conference in Ohio, please take pictures (especially a group photo) and send them to her. A big thank you to proofreaders Marilyn Backus, Jane Dodson, Angela McDonnell, Karen Wychock, and Dorthy Yard.

Landscape Design Central, Barbara Campbell, reported the Landscape Design Council is planning a field to Rodale Institute on October 13, from 10:00 am to noon. There will be a guided one-hour tour on a golf cart. Rodale Institute is a non-profit organization that supports research into organic farming. The cost of the tour is \$15. After the tour of Rodale Institute, we will be going to Clover Hill Winery for a tour of the winery. There will be wine tasting as part of the tour. The tour will be approximately 45 minutes. A bag lunch should be brought with you. Cost of the winery is \$10. If anyone is interested in attending, contact Barbara Campbell at barbarac45@aol.com or 610-432-3313 as soon as possible. The council also puts out a quarterly newsletter.

Landscape Design Laurel Highlands Council (LDLHC) Co-Chairs, Sheila Croushore and Sue Konvolinka, reported the Laurel Highlands Landscape Design Council met to weed the Flight 93 Chapel Children's peace Garden on August 19. Two of us worked for 3 hours to weed the garden. On August 26, the same two members unloaded two yards of mulch and planted sedum.

Landscape Design Western PA. Council Chair, Angie Raitano, had no report.

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

Leadership Workshops Chair, Kay John, had no report.

Liaison to PA Horticulture Society (PHS), Flossie Narducci, reported that as the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society looks ahead to its 200th Anniversary, they are excited to share an important update: PHS will be moving to a new headquarters at 1900 Market Street in Philadelphia in early 2027. They want to make sure that friends and members of PHS will make a note of the new address when visiting or mailing correspondence to PHS. The new headquarters will bring together many of the resources and spaces that support the PHS community, and at the same time, offer PHS more opportunities to gather, connect and collaborate with those who make PHS' work possible.

Life Memberships, State/Regional/NGC Donations Chair, Jan Olsen, reported there have been three new GCFP life members since the June board meeting: Kathy Petruska, Garden Club of Munhall, District X; Stacey Ivol, Tusca-Ridge Garden Club, District IX; and Martha Alexander, Great Meadows Garden Club, District X. The list of Life Members on the GCFP website has been updated. It includes members garden club and district for those that the information was available. The District Directors have been sent a list of life members in their district. She brought with me life membership applications for GCFP, CAR-SGC and National Garden Club.

Membership Chair, JoAnne Fogelman, reported inquiries from NGC have picked up a little. Even though the NGC inquiries are going directly to a club, most of the info from the clubs is outdated. She is also sending the inquiries to the District Director to check if the person has been contacted. Since June's Board Meeting, received 17 inquiries: District I – 2; District II/III – 1; District VI – 5; District V – 1; District VI – 0; District VII – 1; District VIII – 0; District IX – 1; District X – 3; District XI – 3.

Memory Book Chair, Rose Romboski, was absent, but reported that it is that time of year to send photos and share memories of you or your Garden Club members with GCFP President Pat Wolanski. The memory book is a scrapbook of photos, written notes and memories collected over the two-year term of our State President. The memory book will be on display at the GCFP Convention in April and then given to Pat as a gift. Please send this chair any printed photos, written notes or memories that you would like to have placed in the book. Be sure to list the names of people in the photos and the date/place of the event. Thanks to those of you who have already sent items. This chairperson is requesting items to be received by December 31, 2026 to Rosemary Romboski, 118 Preserve Valley Drive, Cranberry Township, PA. 16066 or roro@zoominternet.net.

National/Regional Projects Chair, Eileen Hoover, was absent and had no report.

Natural Disaster USA Donations Chair, Kathy Crossman, reported donations from Garden Clubs and Districts in Pennsylvania from **June, 2026 to 5 October, 2026: Natural Disasters/ USA: \$798**. These contributions were received from: GCFP District VII, GCFP District X, Gettysburg Garden Club, and GCFP District IV. All checks have been forwarded to Vivian Hall, GCFP Treasurer. Natural disasters continue to affect all parts of our country and so there is a constant need for our assistance in restoring gardens and parks. Last year, the National Garden Club (NGC) was able to provide grants in total of \$22,784 and continues

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

to receive new applications for aid following hurricanes, tornados, and floods. We can take pride in knowing our continued generosity is helping to restore hope to our fellow gardeners! I have emailed requests to all directors to encourage their clubs to consider a contribution to NATURAL DISASTERS,USA during the upcoming club year. The need for aid from this fund is ongoing!! District chairmen and Club Presidents need to remind their treasurers that contributions to these funds must be made payable to GCFP with the notation "Natural Disasters USA" on the lower left memo line. She encouraged all Club Treasurers to include their email address with their contributions so that a receipt may be sent electronically.

Organizational Studies Co-Chairs, Barbara Brand and Dorthy Yard, reported this committee is pleased to report that the updated GCFP Bylaws, as approved by the GCFP Membership in April 2026, have been posted on the GCFP website, and can be found under the tab "More" and "Information Resources."

Pennsylvania Garden Tour Chair, Nancy Cuttic, reported President Pat Wolanski's vision for the first statewide PA Garden Tour became a reality on the final two Saturdays of June. The event showcased **89 private and public gardens across 12 counties**, attracting visitors from throughout Pennsylvania as well as New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland. The tour was supported by major sponsors including **Bartlett Tree Experts, Phipps Conservatory and Longwood Gardens. Fifteen host clubs, 27 club liaisons/ad chairs, and nearly 300 volunteers** coordinated garden preparation, promotion, ticket sales, advertising, and visitor hospitality. Their efforts also produced a **157-page full-color tour book**. The tour achieved its goals of increasing GCFP visibility, showcasing Pennsylvania gardens, creating membership opportunities, supporting local businesses, and providing host clubs a framework in which to raise funds. Incentive prizes were awarded for advertising and ticket sale achievements.

Highest ticket sales awards were:

	Large Clubs	Small Clubs
1st place \$1,000	Uwchlan Garde Club I	Countryside Gardeners XI
2nd place \$ 750	Norristown Garden Club XI	Spade & Trowel Club I
3rd Place \$ 500	Penn-Cumberland GC IV	GC of Bala Cynwyd/ Villanova GC I

As a result of the tour: \$24,300 in advertising revenue was generated; 1,200 tickets were sold; \$9,000 in prize money was awarded; Distributed to host clubs was \$27,375; Host clubs received \$15 for each \$25 ticket sold. Feedback from participating clubs was highly positive, especially in the eastern part of the state. Members valued the teamwork and camaraderie, the opportunity to showcase local gardens, and the financial benefit to their clubs. Many visitors expressed interest in seeing another statewide tour in the future. The PA Garden Party truly made our Keystone a Gemstone!

Pennsylvania Resources Council (PRC) Chair, Mary Lou Colussy, reported recycling (as an industry) is the collection, separation, recovery and sale or reuse of metals, glass, paper, organic waste, plastics and other materials which would otherwise be disposed or processed as municipal waste. Recycling (as a process) involves breaking the material down into smaller pieces that can be used as feedstock in another manufacturing process. Examples are the shredding and pulping of paper; melting glass; shredding or melting plastic; composting organic waste. Reuse can be defined as actually reusing an item for which it was originally intended (remember glass soda bottles?), or refabricating items into other useful products (purses out of old license plates).

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

Plant-A-Tree/Penny Pines Donations Chair, Nancy Lambert Fulk, was absent, but reported by asking how many members attending here today has sent a donation for planter tree? Did you send her notification that you paid for plant a tree? She has not received anything. Her name and address are in our directory if you would be so kind to please send the information or call. Her phone number is listed also but so she could have a report for the next meeting. Please send her the information.

Personnel Chair, Betsy Smith, was absent and had no report.

Pollinator Restoration Program Chair, Barbara White, was absent but sent pictures of good pollinator gardens to be circulated among those attending.

President's Project – Pennsylvania Celebrates Nature and Embraces the Future Awards – Healing Arts Chair, Barbara Campbell, reported she was happy to report the Healing Arts Project has been well received. A group of us went to Fox Chase Women's Cancer Center where Marge Sears arranged to have Nancy Cuttic's original art work donated to the Woman's Cancer Center. Also, she went with Helen Papathnasiou to donate an original digital photo to Bradford Young Dental Office in Allentown, PA. The Estate of Mildred Schorr donated two paintings to Bishop Morrow Personal Care home, Leechburg, PA. These are current donations along with previous donations. At this point twenty pieces have been placed in different medical facilities. Seven garden clubs have donated pieces of art work. It is very rewarding to go into nursing homes, hospices facilities, where the residents look at the art work and react to it. When pictures are placed in medical offices the pictures help beautify the environment and it promotes the GCFP. She encourages every club to try to donate a piece of art work to a medical facility, because it has been proven that looking at nature reduces stress and anxiety, boost mood, enhances cognitive function, and it helps promote the GCFP. Please contact her with any questions.

President's Project – Pennsylvania Celebrates Nature and Embraces the Future Awards – Community Gardens Co-Chairs, Arlene Reagan-Harris and Marge Eberz were absent, but reported that since the last Board meeting these chairs have made Certificates of Participation for the garden clubs in Pennsylvania that created and planted theme gardens. Many of them were Red White and Blue Gardens, The Certificates are being distributed to the clubs by Pat Wolanski. We also requested pictures of these gardens. Since the last Board meeting an article on Historic Kitchen Gardens with medicinal plants was submitted and printed in the last online issue of the Keystone Gardener.

Program Resources Chair, Diane Quinn, was absent but reported Program Resource Reporting is underway and has been going well. Several clubs are sending their excellent program recommendations to her on email. She is in the process of compiling them into the existing excel spreadsheet. Once it is complete, she will send it to Vina, our webmaster, so it can be shared on the website for all members to view. This document is password protected so you will need to enter our GCFP password to view the document. Reminder to all club presidents to share their programs with her so that they will be included in the updated 2027 Program Resource. This is a wonderful opportunity for program chairs at all our clubs to view the document and gain program ideas for next year. The original program resource document has also been updated to include GCFP members who are also speakers. Thank you to the GCFP Leadership team,

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

Keystone Gardener, KG Online, Vina and all the Club presidents for spreading the word about this valuable resource.

Protocol Chair, Haddie Weber, reported that in the last few weeks our State Officers attended each District's Annual Meeting. Most Directors were compliant with protocol. A few reminders: God is first; Pledge of Allegiance; The GCFP President is to be recognized FIRST by asking the members to stand and give a warm welcome; In addressing the board, it is Madam President. Protocol for recognizing State Officers and program speakers in serving lunch: If it is a buffet, the state officers, and program speaker are to be served first. If it is a sit-down lunch, the state officers and program speaker tables are to be served first. In completing Convention registration form, make sure that you fill in board position. If you are serving in two positions, two district, etc. please indicate that on the form. This is very important. The Registrar and the GCFP President are able to recognize those serving these positions. At convention you will have special recognition from our GCFP President for your service to the GCFP Board. Also, a special thank you to my Co-Chairman Lee Ann Ishman.

Publicity Press Book Awards Chair, Linda Freedman, was absent but greeted enthusiastic garden club members. How is your Publicity Press Book coming along? It's that time of year for me to convince you to create and send me a Publicity Press Book. What have you accomplished this year? Linda is sure you have made the news. Tell us about it. Clip your announcements from the newspaper, Facebook, local brochures and so on. Underline where your club is mentioned. Slip your notices into clear plastic pages for safekeeping and fasten everything into a study report cover. Criteria is on the GCFP website. Publicity Press Book information is in the Summer 2025 issue of the Keystone Gardener on page 16. You will be proud working on it as you relive the satisfying moments you had showing off your talents by helping others, sharing knowledge and beautifying your communities. She is looking forward to viewing your accomplishments in January 2027. If you have never done this before, why not try something new? Thank you so much for considering this project.

Sage and Roses Donations Chair, Vivian Abel, was absent but reported many thanks to all the GCFP garden clubs and all the individual garden club members who have donated to the Sage and Roses Fund through the years. Donations to this fund go towards the maintenance of the many Blue Star Memorial markers located throughout Pennsylvania. You probably know that Lois Shuster, our GCFP President in 1987-1989, created the Sage and Roses Program. Lois served as the NGC, Inc. President in 2001-2003. Creating the Sage and Roses Fund to support the Blue Star Memorial Project was her special project during her tenure as president. The Blue Star Memorial Project was started after World War II ended. It was started by the National Council of State Garden Clubs, an organization which is now known as National Garden Clubs, Inc. The project's purpose was to honor our nation's armed forces by beautifying highways with plantings of native trees and shrubs. The program expanded to include the placing of highway markers. In two years, on February 18, 2028, we will celebrate the 80th anniversary of the dedication of Pennsylvania's first Blue Star Highway marker. Today, garden club members continue to recognize all those who have served, those who are presently serving, and those who in the future will serve in the armed forces of the United States. Donating to the Sage and Roses Fund is a wonderful way in which to thank a club member who has done something special for your club, to wish someone a Happy Birthday, or to remember someone who has passed away.

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

Contributions to the fund may be made to the Sage and Roses Fund and sent to her at the address listed in the Keystone Gardener.

Scholarship Committee Chair, Sandra Hendricks, was absent, but reported that updated scholarship material is available on the GCFP website. Application and Financial Need Forms are in a "fillable PDF" form. The changes were the \$1,000 amount to the new \$1,500 increased amount. All District Directors and Scholarship Chairpersons, Club Presidents and garden club members are encouraged to get information to local high school and college students in their Districts who are deserving and who are in need of assistance of financial help to attend college. The deadline is February 1, 2027 and awardees of these scholarships will be announced at the April 2027 convention. If you need advertising in your local paper or any other way, please do not hesitate calling or texting her. She would be glad to assist you.

Scholarship Donations Chair, Linda Southerling, was absent but asked if looking for a way to honor an exceptional member, think about a donation to the GCFP scholarship donations fund. Want to show appreciation for a member who has contributed their talent in a special way, think a donation to the GCFP scholarship donations fund. Of course, a club can make a donation to the fund for any reason. Whatever your donation, be sure to use the form from the GCFP website and specify e-mails rather than USPS addresses for responses. Thanks for all your contributions.

Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Chair, Betty Grossheim, thanked those of you who are members of clubs that participated in last year's Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Contest. At the June Board meeting we learned that two of our Pennsylvania students earned Honorable Mentions at the National Convention for their posters. That is encouraging for this year's contest. Also encouraging is that the USDA website is up and running containing all the necessary forms. The easiest way to access it is through the NGC website. It is important to follow the guidelines, especially attaching the appropriate information sheet on the back. Remember the size is poster paper 11 x 17, with proper spelling and accurate colors in Smokey and Woodsy Owl's uniforms. This year winning posters are due to her by January 22, 2027. She will accept your first and second place finishers as last year the state awards committee was able to celebrate First, Second and Third Place winners. Also please be sure to give each student that submits a poster one of the Participation Awards. These are available at the symbols.gov and she has some copies. She will be glad to help you. She printed a couple of last year's national winners for you to see.

Sprouts and Seedlings Chair, Cheryl Brumbaugh, was absent, but reported there are currently sixteen clubs with registered Sprouts and Seedlings youth groups included in their Garden Clubs. The age ranges for the youth are from pre-school through high school. She has enjoyed reading many of the activities that have been initiated this year. Some of the activities include an environmental focus such as planting trees, pollinator gardens, and other initiatives to support Plant America 250 which included some red/white and blue gardens. Some clubs introduced design with their youth. Some of the designs are then entered in the club's annual flower shows. How wonderful to give children an opportunity to showcase their work and explore their gifts. There are some clubs that have dedicated youth gardens which the children maintain by planting native and growing flowers or vegetables from seed. Many clubs introduce horticulture with their youth and grow flowers, vegetables, and herbs. Whatever you grow you are introducing children to the world of gardening and learning to care for something to keep it alive. You are helping our

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

children grow by caring for something, nurturing its growth, and developing this special relationship with nature. These are some of the most important skills and opportunities practiced in gardening. For some children, this may be their first experience involving any aspect of nature, gardening, or caring for a living thing. Our Garden Club Sprouts and Seedlings groups are the role models for children. Planting a seed and watching it grow is very empowering for children. You are helping them to explore and grow and to become the future caregivers of mother earth. This Year Pat Wolanski has asked that we Plant Pennsylvania. There is so much beauty and history in gardens and by planting with children whether it be simply to grow a plant or by planting a tree for them to nurture. Perhaps, you have a designated garden at a local school or in their community, our Garden Clubs can play an important role in the beautification of our state. If your club works with youth and you would like to join Sprouts and Seedlings, please apply. The form is found on the GCFP website under forms. Send in \$2 to register and you will receive \$50 in return for the first year to use toward your youth gardening activities. She welcomes you to join in the fun, educational opportunities, and the joy of working with youth. Together with Marj Sears, Seeds Chair, we were able to obtain various flower, herb, and vegetable seeds. Cheryl sent an email to all of the Sprouts and Seedlings members for a wish list. Cheryl was happy to report that we were able to supply clubs who responded with seeds. Let's All "Plant Pennsylvania" and Let's Dig In!

Tours Chair, Sharon Richardson, reported had no report at this time.

Tri-Refresher Chair, Sharon Richardson, reported that she is delighted to report that we held a very successful Tri-Refresher in the Brandywine Valley in September. We were fortunate enough to have beautiful weather as people arrived from all over our state as well as New Jersey, New York, Delaware and Maryland. Participants had a 3-hour Landscape Design Walk and Talk at Longwood Gardens. Coincidentally, the Greater Philadelphia Dahlia Society was holding their annual show at Longwood – imagine how beautiful that was? Some participants stayed for the evening illuminated fireworks. The next morning, we had a fascinating lecture and tour of the Stroud Water Research Facility. Stroud does amazing work in water research and would make a great field trip for clubs who are seeking more opportunities to learn about environmental issues. In the afternoon, we enjoyed an excellent lecture and walking tour of Mt. Cuba and ended on a high note experiencing a choice of 2 workshops, one on Nature Journaling and the other on Pyrography. A special thanks to Barbara Brand, our registrar, and Susan Glassmoyer, our Credential Chair for working on this project with her. They were a tremendous help. If any districts would like to replicate this program as a fun road trip, she would be happy to assist in planning a delightful visit to the Brandywine Valley. The Brandywine Treasure Passport makes it easy to visit several gardens and arboretum in the area.

GCFP Webmaster, Vina McLeod Rudolph, had no report.

Youth Activities Co-Chairs, Chris Hawthorne and Barbara Oswald, were absent, but reported on the contest information for **Poetry** grades K through 12, and Youth Sculpture: The poetry theme for 2026-2027 is "Celebrating America's 250 years with Red, White, and Blue". Poems do not have to rhyme. All entries must be typed and titled with participant's name, address and grade on back. Please remember that no dark or inappropriate poetry entries will be considered for judging! **Youth Sculpture:** Entries need to fit on an 8 1/2 x 11 piece of paper width-wise. The entry has no height limit. Grades 4 through 8. ALL materials need to be recycled. Please fill out

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania
Committee Reports
From Board of Directors Meeting
Wyndham Garden State College Hotel in Boalsburg, PA.
October 5-6, 2026

the attached form and send it with two to four 4 x 6 pictures. It will be converted to an email and sent for further judging. Some ideas to obtain contest entries are to ask to go into summer community camps, YMCA summer camps and after school programs, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts, meeting with the English Honors teacher for Poetry and the Art teacher and/ or gifted teacher for Youth Sculpture. **Please Note: All entries need to be sent in hard copy format.** No email entries will be accepted! Deadline for all entries is Tuesday, December 1, 2026. Please mail to: Chris Hawthorne, 2418 Degenhardt Road, Gibsonia, PA. 15044. Please keep in mind that mail is slower around the holidays. Please plan accordingly and mail the entries in plenty of time to meet the deadline. Please contact her if you want to check to see if the entry was received.

Wildflowers Chair, Diane Hughes, was absent but reported the dance of Pennsylvania's wildflowers that began in March is coming to a close. The Canada Thistle and Dandelion are not native but have been here so long they are considered "naturalized". The Canada Thistle was originally brought over from Europe in the 1600's by Scottish immigrants wishing to continue their homeland's tradition of including the beautiful purple thistle blossom into the bridal ceremony. Although, being naturalized throughout our region, they are considered weeds. Here we are, at the "turning of the year", when every colored leaf becomes a wildflower! Enjoy!

Zoom Educator, Sandra Benedict, was absent, but reported if you want training for your members, please contact her at sbenedict16@hotmail.com or call 717-854-6785. All training is via Zoom so people can use their own devices. Possible trainings are Zoom, PowerPoint, Word, Excel, SignUpGenius, Google drive or photos, or Doodle. If you want information about these trainings or have other areas you would like training, please contact her with your wants.