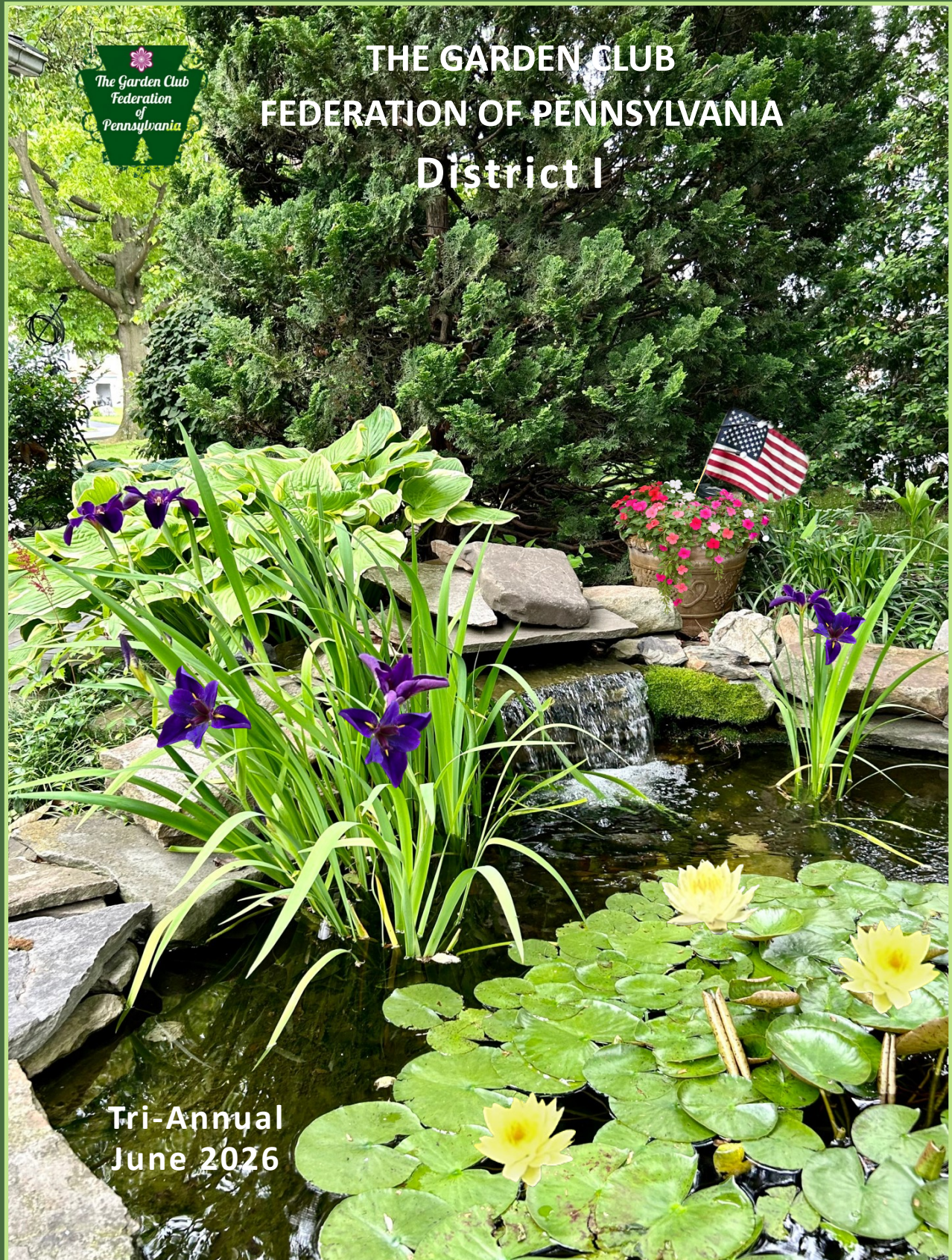


# The First Bloom



## THE GARDEN CLUB FEDERATION OF PENNSYLVANIA District I



Tri-Annual  
June 2026

# The First Bloom

JUNE 2026

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Cover Photo: Marilyn Small, Uwchlan Garden Club

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

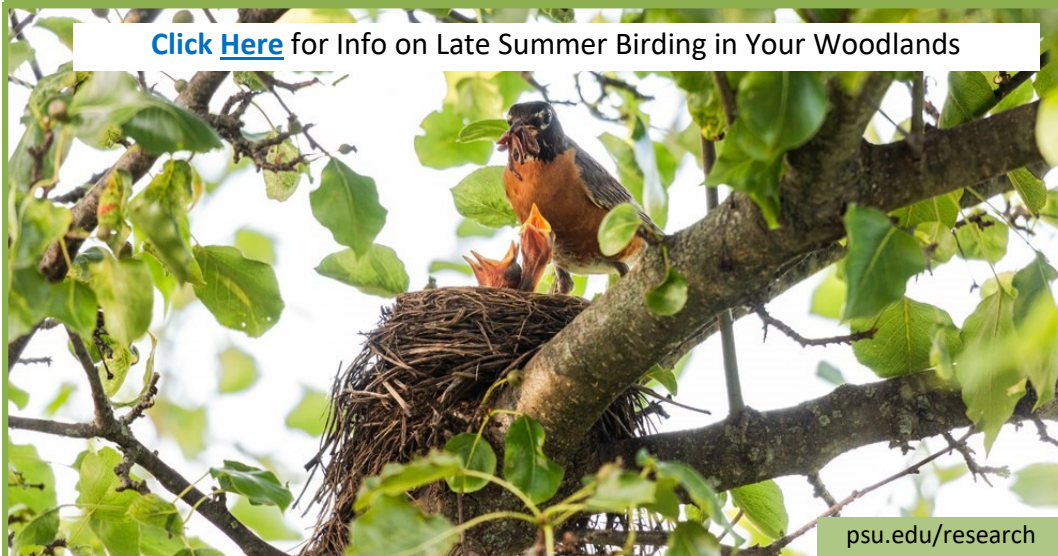
Editor: [Marilyn Small](#)

### Deadlines for Submission:

Fall Issue - October 1; Winter Issue - February 1

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

[Click Here](#) for Info on Late Summer Birding in Your Woodlands



psu.edu/research



### DISTRICT I OFFICERS

DIRECTOR

Pam Walsh

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Ellen Barron

TREASURER

Mary Ann Hanagan

RECORDING SECRETARY

Louise Sheehan

### CLUBS and PRESIDENTS

GC OF BALA CYNWYD

Helen Hortsmann

THE COUNTRY GARDENERS

Janet Fassbender

COVERED BRIDGE GC

Bridget Lininger

ELVERSON GC

Debbie Wright

FOUR SEASONS GC OF

KENNETT SQUARE

Tina Burke

RADLEY RUN GARDEN &

SOCIAL CLUB

Karen Baldwin

SPADE & TROWEL CLUB

Heather Nicholas

THE GC OF SPRINGFIELD

Marla Vanore

UWCHLAN GC

Karen Yoder

VILLANOVA GC

Meg Cave

WAYNE WOODS GC

Anne McCrary



## Pam's Points

Pam Walsh  
District I Director



As I reflect on my time in office, I look back fondly at the time I spent at your club meetings, flower shows, luncheons, garden tours, installations and our district meetings. I have met so many people who share my love of gardening, floral design, horticulture, and simply enjoying time together. These experiences have taught me a great deal about our clubs and their members, and I am grateful for every opportunity to have been part of them.

I am looking forward to our upcoming Garden Party. At the recent state board meeting, I was proud to recognize the five clubs from our district that are hosting garden tours. Our district has the highest number of participating clubs, and I thank all of you for representing us so well. I hope you will have the chance to visit many of the gardens. I am excited to be touring on June 20 and hosting on June 27!

Our district members and clubs received many awards at the state convention, and our newsletter earned a commendation award at the National Garden Club convention. Thank you to Marilyn Small for her work as our District Awards Chair. I encourage all of our clubs to apply for these awards. Many of you are doing outstanding

community outreach and club projects that deserve recognition. Please continue your great work and consider submitting your projects for awards.

My term as District Director will come to an end when we gather for our annual meeting on September 10. At that time, our new officers will be installed. Thank you all for your support during my term.

As many of you know, my husband, Joe, was diagnosed with cancer shortly before my term began and passed away in January 2026. I am deeply grateful to my officers and committee chairs for all the support and assistance you provided during that difficult time. One day, my son-in-law asked how I was doing, and I told him I had received so much support from my garden club friends. He jokingly replied, "I know—I met 40 of them at the funeral!" That support has truly been a blessing, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

I end each of my reports presented at the board meetings with – District I has fun!! So have a fun-filled summer, and see you in September!

~ Pam

*"A woman who is a master in the art of living makes little distinction between her work and her play, her labor and her leisure, her education and her recreation, her mind and her body. She simply pursues her vision of excellence and grace at whatever she does, leaving others to decide whether she is working or playing. To her she is always doing both"*

*~ adapted from James A. Michener*

# THE PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW—Rooted

Congratulations to members of Garden Club of Bala Cynwyd, Elverson Garden Club, Spade and Trowel Club, and Uwchlan Garden Club for their success at the show.



**Alex Dulchinos and Maria Jacobs  
Uwchlan GC**  
1st Place and Best of Large Backed  
Platforms for "Twist and Turns"



**Wendy Fox, Elverson and Uwchlan Garden Clubs**  
1st Place, and GCFP Special Achievement, Quadrant  
2nd Place, Large Backed Pedestal Pot et Fleur



**Carol Simonetti  
Elverson Garden Club**  
HM Photography Class 103



**Carolyn Schreffler, Uwchlan Garden Club**  
1st Place and GCFP Special Achievement  
Award Large Backed Pedestal, Pot et Fleur



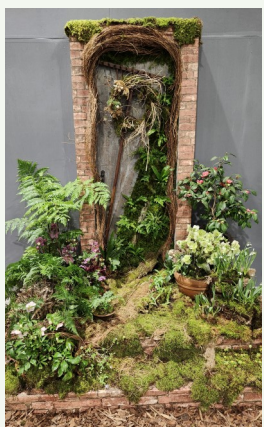
1st Place, Large Backed  
Pedestal Class 131



2nd Place, Large Backed  
Pedestal Class 129



**Mike Walls, Elverson GC, and the  
Chester County Intermediate Unit  
Students, 1st Place Window Box  
and Lamp Post**



**Spade and Trowel  
Club**  
2nd Place, Class  
Commendation, and  
Maintenance Award  
Lost Gardens of  
Heligan  
Committee:  
Diane Matteson,  
Katharine Brigilia,  
Kris Qualls, Sandy  
Yeatman, Sue Clayton



**Elverson Garden Club**  
3rd Place Doorway Class  
"Speakeasy"



**Garden Club of Bala Cynwyd**  
Class Commendation  
1961 visit to Winterthur by  
Jackie Kennedy to meet with  
Henry Francis DuPont



**Maria Jacobs,  
Uwchlan GC,**  
2nd Place and Class  
Commendation for  
"Tip of the Hat"



**Maria Jacobs,  
Uwchlan GC**  
2nd Place with Class  
Commendation for Red  
Carpet Dress in Botanical  
Arts



**Alex Dulchinos,  
Uwchlan GC**  
3rd Place, Large Backed  
Pedestal, Pot et Fleur

# DISTRICT I MEMBERS AT THE GCFP CONVENTION

April 26-28, 2025, Sheraton Bayfront Hotel, Erie, "MystERIE by the Bay"

A wonderful, educational, and entertaining convention.



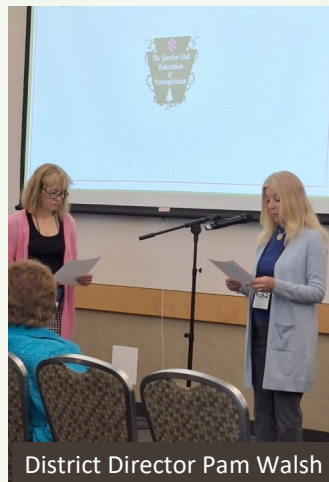
Marilyn Small, UGC and Myrtie Musetti, Wayne Woods GC



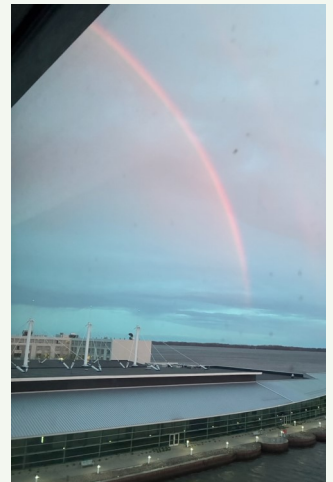
Uwchlan Garden Club Members



New Flower Show Judges were honored. Sharon Richardson and Nancy Cuttic, UGC, with Karen Wychock, Judges Council Chair



District Director Pam Walsh



# All Members Are Invited

## Explore the Brandywine Valley Tri-Refresh Opportunity

Chair Sharon Richardson, Uwchlan GC, I

Sunday, September 13, 2026—Monday, September 14, 2026

Sign up to tri-refresh or to enjoy a fun two days of garden exploration. This year's program will take place across three exceptional venues:

**Longwood Gardens • Mt. Cuba Center • Stroud Water Research Center**

**Sunday:** afternoon walk-and-talk at Longwood Gardens; optional stay for dinner and enjoy the evening illuminated fountain display

**Monday:** a.m. environmental study at the Stroud Water Research Center  
p.m. gardening/horticultural focus at Mt. Cuba Center



Adding to the weekend's appeal is the Greater Philadelphia Dahlia Society's annual show in Longwood's conservatory ballroom. Visit before the programming begins or afterward. Extend your stay and enjoy some of the other destinations with the [Brandywine Passport](#). Registration and [Tri-Refresher details here](#).

## DISTRICT I GCFP AWARDS ANNOUNCED AT THE APRIL CONVENTION

Congratulations to the following individuals and clubs for their awards presented at the GCFP Convention in April in Erie.

### District I

Newsletter 13 - 24 Pages - District

1<sup>st</sup> Place - "The First Bloom"

### Spade & Trowel Club

2<sup>nd</sup> Place - Website, Medium Club

### Uwchlan Garden Club

CAR-SGC Jean Ladson Outstanding Achievement Award - Annual Christmas Fair benefiting the Meetinghouse

1<sup>st</sup> - Beautification of Community Areas  
Planters at Downingtown Library

1<sup>st</sup> - Newsletter 3-12 Pages, Large Club

1<sup>st</sup> - Holiday Project or Event, Large Club

1<sup>st</sup> - Plant Sale, Large Club

1<sup>st</sup> - Youth Activities a. Series, Large Club  
Bulb, Salad, and Pumpkin Workshops

2<sup>nd</sup> Other Project/Event Promoting GCFP Objectives  
Large Club - Horticulture Therapy

GCFP Perennial Bloom - **Nancy Cuttic**, UGC

Presidential Citations

**Nancy Cuttic**, UGC

**Marilyn Small**, UGC

Club Floral Design Achievement Award - Series of outstanding floral design educational presentations

**Valerie Burgess**, UGC

**Carrie Schreffler**, UGC

1<sup>st</sup> - Workshop - "Succulent Dish Creations"

2<sup>nd</sup> - Workshop - "Mod Podge Vases"

### 75th Federated Anniversary

The Country Gardeners

### 2025 SEED MONEY

The Country Gardeners

Covered Bridge Garden Club

Uwchlan Garden Club

## DISTRICT I AWARDS ANNOUNCED AT THE MAY NGC CONVENTION

Congratulations to the following for their awards presented at the NGC Convention in May in St. Louis, Missouri.

### CERTIFICATE OF COMMENDATION

Newsletter 13-24 Pages, District  
District I, "The First Bloom"

### CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

Newsletter 3-12 Pages, Large Club  
Uwchlan Garden Club, I



# DISTRICT I PRESIDENTS' LUNCHEON

## June 5, 2026

With a festive Americana theme, the District I Presidents' Luncheon was held at the Chester County Solid Waste Authority in Narvon, bringing together club presidents, members, and district officers for a day of recognition and fellowship. Attendees were thanked for their hard work, dedication, and service to both their clubs and the district throughout the year.

Special guest GCFP President Pat Wolanski encouraged participation in the Pennsylvania Garden Party, scheduled for June 20 and June 27. Recognition was given to club presidents for their dedication to their clubs. Recognition was also given to Nancy Cuttic, Uwchlan Garden Club, as the recipient of the 2026 State Perennial Bloom Award, and to Wendy Fox, Elverson and Uwchlan GCs for achieving Flower Show Judge status.

Following a delicious luncheon, guests enjoyed an informative presentation highlighting the landfill's programs, achievements, and environmental initiatives. The day concluded with a guided bus tour of the facility, offering attendees a firsthand look at its operations and ongoing successes.



Officers Pam Walsh, District I Director; Louise Sheehan, Secretary; Ellen Barron, Assistant District Director; Mary Ann Hanagan, Treasurer



District Director Pam Walsh with GCFP President Pat Wolanski, Norristown GC; Anne McCrary, Wayne Woods GC; Marla Vanore, GC of Springfield; Karen Baldwin, Radley Run GC; Tina Burke, Four Seasons GC; Debbie Wright, Elverson GC; Back Row: Meg Cave, Villanova GC, Karen Yoder, Uwchlan GC, Helen Hortsman, GC of Bala Cynwyd



# NGC SCHOOLS INFO

## Environmental



## Gardening



## Flower Show

Become a Flower Show Judge!



## Landscape Design



For more detailed info and registration

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

## Subscribe to *The National Gardener*

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

# NGC's GRANT and PROGRAM INFORMATION

### **Plant America - Landscape for Wildlife**

Have your garden registered as a NGC Certified Wildlife Habitat  
More Information [HERE](#)

### **Plant America Community Project Grant**

Helps enhance and beautify our public areas and community gardens. April 1 - October 15  
More Information [HERE](#)

### **Plant America, Feed America**

Focused on donating produce that NGC's members have harvested from their own gardens.  
More Information [HERE](#)

### **Plant-A-Tree - formerly known as Penny Pines**

New donation process guidelines. [HERE](#)

### **Plant America - Plant for Pollinators**

Support birds, bees, and other insects. Certify your pollinator garden.  
More Information [HERE](#)

### **Natural Disaster Grant**

Apply for garden-related restoration efforts to replant parks, and municipal gardens due to natural disasters.  
More Information [HERE](#)

### **Youth Pollinator Gardens Grant**

Up to \$200 is available for projects that include educational materials on the vital role pollinators play in nature and youth involvement  
More Info [HERE](#)  
Youth Pollinator Power Book [HERE](#)

### **Native Plant and Wildflowers Educational Program**

Up to \$500 is available to be used toward an educational program on the subject of native plants and wildflowers. More Information [HERE](#)



## 2026 CAR-SGC CONFERENCE

### Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs

October 19-20, 2026

Holiday Inn Cleveland, Independence, OH  
More details [here.](#)



# CLUB NEWS



## GARDEN CLUB OF BALA CYNWYD - Lorraine Troiano

Garden Club of Bala Cynwyd has been busy with the various programs and activities of the club. **The Design Study classes** led by **Judges Council Chair Louise Heilig**, have expanded to two groups— beginners and seasoned floral designers. Participants are learning the principles of design, scale, the use of color, and more recently creating and working with armatures. It's been a great education with a wonderful teacher.

Our **April** speaker was Casey Orange, a graduate student at **Widener University**. She is working on her Capstone Project for her Occupational Therapy Doctorate. Her topic was "Gardening for Life." She brought a comprehensive variety of gardening tools for members to experience. We learned the proper ways to move in the garden to prevent injury. We felt empowered to "garden for life!"



Members **Karen Nemeth** and **Deb Sokil** entered in the design class for the PHS **Flower Show "Rooted."** They created a porch front design. The theme was a 1961 visit to Winterthur by Jackie Kennedy to meet with Henry Francis DuPont. The design was well received and won a Class Commendation. Other members participated in the show administration working as judges, passers, tour guides, and assisting horticulture entries and nomenclature.

Members of the **Design Study groups** had an **excursion to Youngers & Son, Inc.**, a wholesale florist in North Wales. Everyone enjoyed the experience and returned home with some floral treasures.

Charles Cresson, an avid gardener and author, gave a wonderful lecture at our **May meeting**. His topic was "Spring Bulbs, Almost Like Magic and So Easy." It was an informative program about the placement and use of bulbs. We intend to use his recommendations for an upcoming bulb workshop.

We will install our **new officers at the June luncheon at Overbrook Golf Club**. We are honored to have **Helen Horstmann** as the 51st President of the Garden Club of Bala Cynwyd.

The club is looking forward to the **State Garden Party**. We will hostess a Cassatt Garden in Radnor, The Barnes Arboretum at Saint Joseph's University, and The Henry Foundation for Botanical Research on June 20, 2026.

The club is planning our next **flower show** at Ludington Library **April 22-25, 2027**. "**Shower of Flowers**" will be our first spring show in many years.

We look forward to seeing everyone soon!

# CLUB NEWS



## THE COUNTRY GARDENERS - Bonnie Kushnerick

Our **late winter programs** were a great way to bring more greenery into our homes and communities, and to explore ways to boost our health and improve the environment.

In **February**, we had a **Houseplant SOS** discussion where we shared challenges and celebrated our successes with various houseplants.

In **March**, we had an interesting presentation on how plants are used to **create natural dyes**, and we got to see some beautiful examples of finished scarves.

We all learned a few new tips on **how to take better photos of our plants and flowers**, which are so easy to snap with our phones these days. Amazing what tools we hold in our hands.

In **May**, we were able to take a tour of **Tyler Arboretum** with one of their docents. There is such history there from the 1700s, and a wonderful garden with vegetables for the local food banks.

The club also participated in the Middletown Township **Community Day & Green Zone Fair**.

Our exhibit was focused on monarchs and how to support them in our gardens & community.

Our **last meeting** of the year, our summer



social and plant exchange, was held in the late **Eleanor Tickner's Peony Garden**. It was beautiful and bitter-sweet as her daughters are selling the farm this summer. We also inducted our officers for their new terms.

As part of the 250<sup>th</sup> celebration of our nation, the Country Gardeners applied for a **grant from NGC & Keep America Beautiful program**. We are updating the plantings at the Blue Star Marker on State Street in Media, and planting a new shrub and perennial bed around the District I sponsored Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker located in Rose Tree Park, along Rt. 252.



**Save the Date** to join the Country Gardeners for a delightful fall Tea – Nov 12. Delicious food and fun!



## WISHBONE FLOWER

'Wishbone' flower sounds silly, but it's a real thing. Torenia, a shade-loving annual, has unique, crazy-looking wishbone-shaped stamens protruding from its pretty petals.



**COVERED BRIDGE GARDEN CLUB** - Kathleen Tauber

The Programming Committee faced a challenging spring schedule. The **January meeting** was canceled due to weather, and the scheduled speaker was moved to the April meeting. The design theme for exhibits, "Green and White," remained unchanged and inspired a great deal of creativity, with each arrangement proving both interesting and unique.

The **April speaker**, Rob Cardillo, a **photographer** for the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and contributor to many beautiful gardening books, presented a program highlighting his accomplishments prior to his photography career. Several books featuring his renowned work were available for purchase at the meeting. Members will have another opportunity to learn more about his work at the District Meeting and Luncheon on September 10.



The **February meeting** gave members the opportunity to create "**topless**" terrariums. Participants selected from a variety of containers, plants, and decorative items to design their own creations. **Jerry McCue** led the project and guided members throughout the activity.



In **March**, representatives from **Groff's Plant Farm**, a family-owned retail greenhouse business in Kirkwood, Pennsylvania, presented a narrated program featuring



some of their favorite perennials. Following the presentation, attendees had the opportunity to purchase plants brought to the meeting by the owners. The exhibit theme for the month was "**Pansies on Parade.**"

**May** was originally planned as a field trip to Styer's Peony Farm. However, the farm closed to visitors and tours in December following the death of the owner. The committee once again adapted its plans and instead organized a **self-guided tour of the Barnes Arboretum** at Saint Joseph's University for the final meeting of the season.





## FOUR SEASONS GARDEN CLUB - Mary Ann Hanagan

In **January**, our presenter was **Chris Weaver of Wild Birds Unlimited** who discussed bird color changes during the winter months.

In **February**, **Joanne Voelkner of Mt. Airy Lavender** gave a Zoom presentation about the various types of lavender she grows and the seasonal workshops she offers to the public.



Our **March meeting was presented by club member Diane Siebold**. Diane shared insights from her former career with Acme Markets, including how floral displays are marketed in stores and her experiences as a flower buyer traveling across the country. She also demonstrated several inexpensive ways to arrange and display floral bouquets.

In **April**, we held our **Installation Dinner** for club officers, with **Pam Walsh** serving as officiator.

During our **Salad Bowl Workshop**, members planted a variety of lettuce and spinach plants along with flowers.



Our **"After the Bell"** after-school program at Kennett Middle School is fully underway. Members **Mary Drinker and Sue Engberg** have been working with students on floral design projects, including paves and arranging flower bouquets in vases. **Tina Burke** and **Bob Smyth** have also been assisting students in the **Giving Garden**, where they plant vegetables that help provide fresh food to the local food cupboard.



In May, **Mary Ann Hanagan** provided materials for members to create **"Moss Pictures."**

## Trading Winter for the Wonders of Costa Rica

January 30—February 11, 2027

*Sharon Richardson, Uwchlan Garden Club*

While planning a winter getaway to scratch a gardener's itch, I was searching for a destination rich in warmth, sunshine, and natural beauty. I discovered Costa Rica — a small Central American country known for breathtaking biodiversity, welcoming people, and a deep commitment to conservation.

If you love nature and enjoy traveling with warm and friendly gardeners, come join me next February as we escape the short, freezing days and long, dark nights!

**Interested in Joining the Tour January 30-February 11?** The trip itinerary is available [HERE](#).

An informational video about the tour company and itinerary can be viewed [HERE](#).

Passcode: ^An4uhx+ (\*\*case sensitive passcode)

**To enroll or ask questions, contact Mark Rake at [mrake@aca.aaa.com](mailto:mrake@aca.aaa.com) or 215-315-4065.**





- Debbie Wright

Elverson Garden Club once again began the year with a Philadelphia Flower Show club entry. This year’s Doorway Class garnered a **3rd place at the show**. The creative juices flowed with a speakeasy theme, highlighting plants often used to make spirits. Other member entries included **Wendy Fox** (1<sup>st</sup> Place and GCFP special award in the Quadrant Class, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place in Pot Et Fleur), **Carol Simonetti** (Honorable Mention in Photography), and **Mike Walls** with his Chester County Intermediate Unit students (1<sup>st</sup> Place in Window Box and Lamppost).



In **March**, EGC, along with 3 other clubs, was invited to participate in a **Flower Arranging Competition at SEPOS International Orchid Show** held in Oaks. Four members volunteered to compete: **Laura Alden, Wendy Fox, Carol Simonetti, and Janice Wampler**. Our own **Wendy Fox** took home the blue ribbon.

Elverson Garden Club has a tradition of having a **welcome-back potluck meal in March**, after all the flower show activities conclude. We enjoyed delicious food, camaraderie, and showed off some early blooms from our gardens.

Club members were busy during the early days of spring dividing plants to prepare for our **fundraiser** at Springton Farms Sheep and Wool Day. Thanks to **Vanessa Peterson** for spearheading our efforts, nurturing donations, and sharing her Hellebores, and to **Steve Somers** for transport, set up, tear down, and a lot of ferns! This year we had record sales with several repeat customers. Our members shared their knowledge and love of plants to help guide customer choices.



We have had two **educational programs**—“Creating a Pocket Meadow” with new native plant nursery, Rockland Roots, and “Regenerative Farming Practices for the Home Gardener,” with Jennifer Smith from The Rodale Institute. We hope to have ongoing relationships with both of these local organizations.

Club volunteers had a **spring clean-up** of the Detterline Hall gardens after a tough winter. Our club is instrumental in the care and maintenance of these gardens, enjoyed by the public and the many organizations visiting the hall.



District I would like to congratulate  
**Wendy Fox, Elverson Garden Club and Uwchlan Garden Club**  
 for her successful completion of the Flower Show School requirements  
 and achieving Accredited Judge status!





## SPADE AND TROWEL CLUB - Meredith Dragish

At the Philadelphia Flower Show, Co-Chairs, **Heather Nicolas, Diane Mateson**, and their committee of **Katharine Briglia, Kris Qualls, Sandy Yeatman & Sue Clayton** recreated the Lost Gardens of Heligan. They were awarded 2nd Place with a Class Commendation as well as the Maintenance Award. Their door was absolutely stunning and we are extremely proud of their efforts!



**Dede Frederick, Suzanne Pusey**, and their committee provided materials and hands-on floral arranging instruction to young students at Montessori School, Head Start and Tick Tock students in Kennett Square. They helped 130 pre-school children create beautiful Mother's Day arrangements.

We are striving to keep the Kennett Square community beautiful through our work with the Kennett Collaborative. Through this collaboration, we have planted barrels in the Kennett Square Borough and helped to raise beautification funds with Platt's Greenhouse and the Four Seasons Club with an annual plant sale. We are also continuing our work with the Chadsford Historical Society by planting and maintaining the herb gardens at the Barns-Brinton house as well as maintaining the garden at Waywood Beverage.

**Jill Nigro and Nancy Roberts** are continuing with their creative spin on our workshops by utilizing the expertise and knowledge of our members. Each month we will visit a member's home to learn about a variety

of topics ranging from terrarium building, tips to overwinter plants, vegetable garden prep, meadow gardening, and much more! This month, members visited **Meredith Dragish's** vegetable garden and are looking forward to our next workshop in July.

Our **May meeting** featured our own NGC Small Non-Standard Flower Show, "A Brandywine Experience." The show was chaired by **Denise Klein and Julie Fellingner**, with many members chairing a myriad of committees. **GCFP President Pat Wolanski**, District I Director **Pam Walsh**, and Assistant District I Director **Ellen Barron** were in attendance and enjoyed many original designs and horticultural specimens. Congratulations to **Beth Vinyard and Fran Wilson** for being awarded the "Alice Bucher Best in Blue for Design" for their beautiful illuminated design, and thank you to all of our members for contributing to a successful flower show!



Finally, **Beth Vinyard** has been leading the preparation for the club's involvement in the **Pennsylvania Garden Party**. She has secured six wonderful gardens for all to visit on June 27. We hope to see everyone there!



District I would like to congratulate  
**Denise Schalleur Klein, Spade and Trowel Club**  
 for her successful completion of the Flower Show School requirements  
 and achieving Accredited Judge status!



## THE GARDEN CLUB OF SPRINGFIELD

- Louise Sheehan

**Our January meeting** opened with a presentation on Kokedama, the centuries-old Japanese form of garden art. The presenter from Wedgewood Gardens showed us a number of examples of this type of art and demonstrated how to create it.

**In February**, we learned about the origins and history of grape growing and the many uses of grapes and wines in our cooking. Following the presentation, two of our members demonstrated how to design floral arrangements in wine glasses.

**At our March meeting**, a Master Gardener taught us how to recognize various moths and butterflies and reminded us of the value of having these fascinating insects in our gardens.

“Presentation is everything” said our **April presenter, Terry Miller from Uwchlan Garden Club**, who provided information on the art of adding flowers to our foods, thus elevating our dining experience. We learned about the various flowers that are edible, and we tasted homemade jellies the presenter created using various flowers. Discovering flowers

that were edible was quite a learning experience for many of our members.

**On Arbor Day** our club partnered with the township and students from a local nursery school to plant a tree in one of our community parks. The day was extra special because we witnessed Springfield being presented with the Tree City USA award for its 30<sup>th</sup> year.

**The May Plant Sale** was very successful, partly due to the fact that many of our members donated a variety of flowers and vegetables from their home gardens. A huge turnout from the community, the volume of volunteers who assisted, and the quality of the plants also added to its success.

Members had a guided tour of **Chanticleer Garden** led by one of our members who works at the garden. Following the tour, members picnicked at the garden.

Our club will also be presenting a **scholarship** to a graduating Springfield High School student who has demonstrated a commitment to environmental studies or horticulture.





## UWCHLAN GARDEN CLUB - Terry Miller

The Uwchlan Garden Club is in perpetual motion! Twelve of our members ventured to **Erie for the GCFP Convention**, where we applauded member Nancy Cuttic as she received the Perennial Bloom Award. Congratulations, Nancy!

Our annual **May plant sale** was a huge success again this year. Shoppers arrived an hour early, and not much remained at the end of the sale. There was a Children's Corner, a "Plant Doctor" to answer questions, and experts were available to offer insights about native and pollinator plants. The income over expenses was over \$9,000, and over half is contributed to support the 1756 Meeting House, where we manage the upkeep of the gardens and gather for meetings.



Plans are in progress for a ceremony on July 5, 2026, for a **rededication of our Blue Star Memorial** with a Marine Color Guard and an Open House reception for the community to enjoy.

UGC is excited to be a part of the **GCFP Garden Party**. Our tour is on June 27, and it is guaranteed to be a seven-course floral feast for the eyes!

We participated in a **Barnes and Noble fundraiser**, which gave us the opportunity to showcase our Plant Sale, the Garden Party, and promote membership. Children of all ages were invited to make pressed

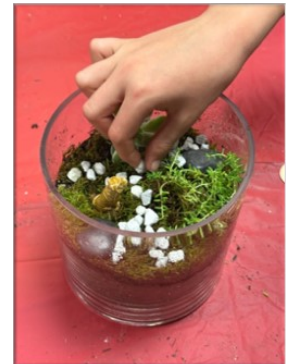
flower bookmarks at our table while members spoke to parents about the events.

UGC is committed to the upkeep of the **planters at the Downingtown Library**, and we have donated and maintain two planters at the entrance of the Downingtown Area Senior Center's new building.

In **April**, members partnered with Hopewell United Methodist Church to help decorate for a special **"Under the Stars" dance**, a joyful evening designed for young people with **special needs**. UGC members contributed a beautiful, elongated centerpiece designed by **Becky Zeeger**.



Kate Morrison-Teeter, along with her entourage of helpers, oversaw **Sprouts and Seedlings** group creating **bird feeders**. These were incorporated into the library planters inviting feathered friends for a dining experience. At another library activity, the children made **terrariums**. **Horticulture Therapy** participants at Simpson Meadows delighted in **arranging flowers in mugs**.



Carrie Schreffler has been conducting workshops where members gathered to make **bird houses, terrariums, and bee skeps**. These functions are great opportunities for our group to get to know each other better.

Our installation of new officers will be on May 27. Karen Yoder will be assuming the position of President for UGC, and she will do a fine job!



## VILLANOVA GARDEN CLUB - Meg Cave

**What's your best guess:** How many **species of beetles are in the U.S.?** Would you have imagined 400,000 or 40% of the insect species here?

Telling us that beetles are **her favorite insect**, (Yes, that's true!) **Samantha Nestory, Stoneleigh Naturalist and Engagement Manager**, presented with great enthusiasm all the reasons why she finds these creatures so fascinating. For instance, the Click Beetle has an internal mechanism that flips it off its back—with a notable clicking sound. The Snail-Eating Beetle has a narrow head so it can reach inside a shell to eat what's inside. The Bess Beetle lives in family groups and even has a nursery. The Tiger Beetle is so fast, in fact like a flash, that it can move 120 times its body length in one second. The Lady Beetle is not accurately called a Ladybug, and its Japanese species is overtaking the native ones and shouldn't be mail ordered—even though it loves aphids.

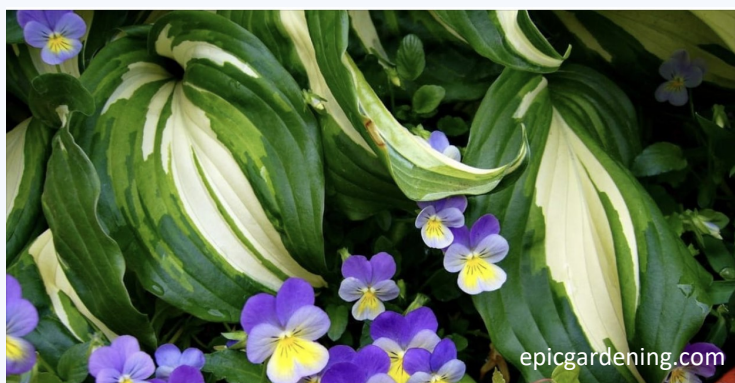
Following up on that March event at Jenkins Arboretum, we went back to Jenkins in April to hear from **Sally McCabe, director of PHS's Community Education Program**. Equally entertaining, Sally first wowed us with a large container of blooming amaryllis, all in a row. Then she engaged us in a spirited discussion of **what to do in our gardens in April—and what not to do**, at least not quite yet.



Continuing with our last of 10 programs a year, in May we visited the **Henry Botanic Garden in Gladwyne**. It's on the **Garden Party tour and shouldn't be missed!** The garden is a **research center** with an appealing wildness **in flora that Mary Gibson Henry brought home from areas around the world**.

In June we'll hear about **native plants** from Michelle Detwiler, a local designer.

## 11 GREAT CONTAINER COMPANION PLANTS FOR HOSTAS



If you're considering growing Hostas in pots or containers but aren't sure what to pair them with, there are plenty of great companion plants to choose from.

Find the list [HERE](#).



Radley Run  
Garden & Social Club

## RADLEY RUN GARDEN and SOCIAL CLUB

- Muriel McDaniel

On May 5, we marked the end of our season and celebrated our many accomplishments. We also announced the date of our next **Luncheon and Fashion Show**, which will be held on **November 19, 2026**, to benefit local horticulture students.

This quarter included several enjoyable outings, including a visit to Fricks Lock Historical Village in Pottstown, a performance of *9 to 5* at the Media Theatre, and a walk through Longwood Gardens. We also hosted several informative lectures, including **Sharon Richardson's** presentation on pollinators and Edward Weber's talk on basic orchid care.

For our closing luncheon, we celebrated Cinco de Mayo with festive paper-flower centerpieces created by **Sue Barrett, Nancy Adams, and Pat Kelly**, and a delicious themed lunch prepared by the Country Club chef.

The highlight of the gathering was the installation of next year's officers: President, **Karen Baldwin**; First Vice-President of Programs, **Nancy Adams**; Second Vice-President of Luncheons, **Ann James**; Third Vice-President of Membership, **M.A. Kowalski**; Treasurer, **Denise McDermott**; and Advisor, **Gail Smith**. The officers will meet throughout the summer to plan activities for the coming season, which begins in September.



Denise McDermott, M. A. Kowalski, Nancy Adams, Karen Baldwin

## COMMITTEE REPORT



### Awards – Marilyn Small, Uwchlan GC

Congratulations to the clubs that submitted applications for awards that were announced at the Convention in April (Page 6).

Three clubs were also awarded "Seed Money."

The Country Gardeners  
Covered Bridge Garden Club  
Uwchlan Garden Club

The next opportunity for Seed Money will be in February, 2027.

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

The following District I award submissions are due **August 1**, and recipients will be announced at the Annual Meeting and Luncheon on September 10.

#### Exceptional Horticulturist

Send write-up and picture to JoAnn Celaschi  
celaschi@hotmail.com  
Award Description [HERE](#)

#### Forget-Me-Not

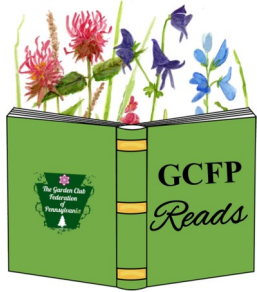
Send write-up and picture to  
District Director Pam Walsh pamyoga@aol.com  
Award Description [HERE](#)

#### Laurels

Send write-up to Marilyn Small  
mmsmall@comcast.net  
Award Description [HERE](#)

As always, if you have any questions about awards, please contact me—[mmsmall@comcast.net](mailto:mmsmall@comcast.net)

## GCFP READS WINS NATIONAL RECOGNITION



With the help of a few clubs in District I, the GCFP Reads program, chaired by Sharon Richardson, Uwchlan Garden Club, was awarded a prestigious honor at the National Garden Clubs convention in May. President Wolanski accepted the Award of Excellence for States for her reading initiative. This award also included a \$500 check to GCFP! Special thanks to Uwchlan and Springfield Garden Clubs for their supportive GCFP Reads activities that helped us win this award. Look for more reading recommendations from Sharon in the July issue of the *Keystone Gardener*.

## *Save the Date*

### 71<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL DISTRICT I MEETING AND LUNCHEON

Hosted by the Covered Bridge Garden Club

Speaker: Rob Cardillo, Photographer

*“Through the Garden Lens”*

Thursday, September 10, 2026, 9:30 a.m.

Fox Barn, 16 Great Valley Parkway, Malvern

Pam Walsh, District I Director

Bridget Lininger, Club President

bridgetlininger@gmail.com

Registration information will be emailed to you soon.



## DISTRICT I FLOWER SHOW AT

### LONGWOOD GARDENS

**September 18-20, 2026**

NGC Patriotic Flower Show

**“Celebrating a Nation of Artists”**

Chair Maria Jacobs, UGC

Design Chair Nancy Cuttic, UGC

Horticulture Chair Sharon Richardson, UGC

Entries Received Sept. 18, 1 - 4 p.m.

Sept. 19, 7 - 9 a.m.

Open to Public Sept. 19, 1 - 9 p.m.

Sept. 20, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Find the Schedule [HERE](#).

## Celebrating a

### Nation of

### Artists

A National  
Garden Clubs, Inc.  
Patriotic Flower Show



**Sept 18-20, 2026  
Longwood Gardens**



## DISTRICT I SHINES IN THE PENNSYLVANIA GARDEN PARTY

Nancy Cuttic, Uwchlan Garden Club

The first-ever GCFP statewide garden tour is set to take place, rain or shine, on Saturdays, June 20 and 27, from 9:30 – 4:00. Beautiful and unique gardens will be open from Pittsburgh all the way across the state to Bucks, Delaware, Chester and Montgomery counties in the east.

District I leads the state with 5 out of the 15 host clubs and 25 of the 90 gardens that will be showcased. Sales have been brisk ahead of the June 6 pre-order ticket sale deadline. The following District I gardens will have tickets/tour books available for \$30 on the day of the tour:

### June 20

- Garden Club of Bala Cynwyd: 460 Wyldhaven Road, Bryn Mawr
- Villanova Garden Club: 926 Hereford Drive, Berwyn
- Garden Club of Springfield: 38 Shelburne Road, Springfield

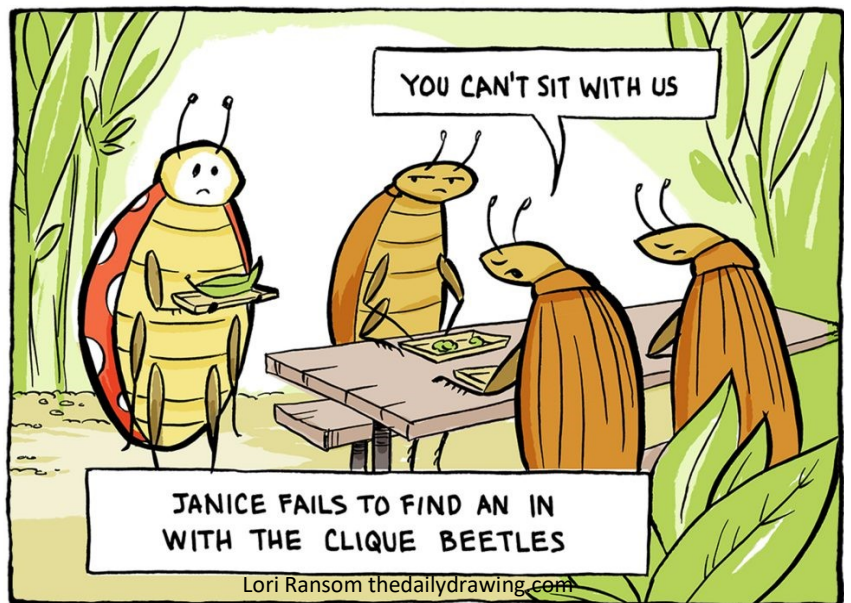
### June 27

- Spade & Trowel Club: 1091 Barnview Lane, West Chester
- Uwchlan Garden Club: 223 Colwyn Terrace, West Chester

The garden owners have been preparing their gardens and the host clubs have worked tirelessly to identify their gardens, solicit ad sponsorships, sell tickets, and schedule hostesses to be present at the gardens.

The 156-page tour book outlining the 90 gardens across the Keystone state serves as the entrance pass for both days of garden experiences. For more information, please see the GCFP website at [pagardens.org](http://pagardens.org).

It's going to be a fabulous garden party, so come join the fun!





# SAVING YOUR HOSTAS FROM SUMMER LEAF DAMAGE

Sharon Richardson, Uwchlan Garden Club

**Frustrated by holes in your Hosta leaves?** Hoping to exhibit pristine foliage in a horticulture show? Hostas are among the most dependable and attractive perennial landscape plants, prized for their wide range of colors, textures, and forms. Unfortunately, warm, humid summer weather also creates ideal conditions for pests that can quickly damage their beautiful leaves.

While discoloration or tearing may result from disease or environmental stress, distinct holes are usually caused by insects or slugs feeding on the foliage.



## Common Culprits

- Slugs and snails - tiny round or irregular holes early in the season that enlarge as leaves expand; often accompanied by slime trails
- Grasshoppers - small elongated holes between leaf veins
- Earwigs - jagged, shredded holes; they feed at night and often target young leaves
- Vine weevils - small "paper-punch" holes or notches along leaf edges
- Blister beetles - irregular chewing damage
- Flea beetles - tiny pinhole damage
- Caterpillars - holes between leaf veins
- Cutworms - ragged notches along leaf margins
- Tomato Hornworms - small elongated holes in Hosta leaves
- Cockroaches - irregularly shaped holes that may have a yellowish hue



## Simple Household Remedies

- Use traps and bait: Most traps and baits are made from materials like beer, sawdust, or other organic ingredients. They can be placed in garden beds or around the perimeter of your Hosta plants to ward off snails and slugs before they have a chance to do damage.
- Diatomaceous earth: a non-toxic powder that dehydrates soft-bodied pests. Note that Diatomaceous Earth does not discriminate between beneficial insects and pests.
- Crushed eggshells or coarse grit: may discourage slugs and snails from crossing into your Hostas.



Healthy Hostas usually recover well from minor damage, but early prevention is the best way to keep foliage lush and attractive all season long. With regular monitoring and a few simple practices, your Hostas can remain one of the highlights of the summer garden.

## Sources

<https://www.bhg.com/gardening/pests/insects-diseases-weeds/whats-eating-holes-in-my-hostas/>

<https://gardenswhisper.com/holes-in-hostas-leaves/>

<https://towerlandscapedesign.com/how-to-prevent-holes-in-hosta-leaves/>

# Gardening *news*

**National Garden Week:** June 7-13, 2026. Sponsored by National Garden Clubs, Inc. [www.gardenclub.org](http://www.gardenclub.org)

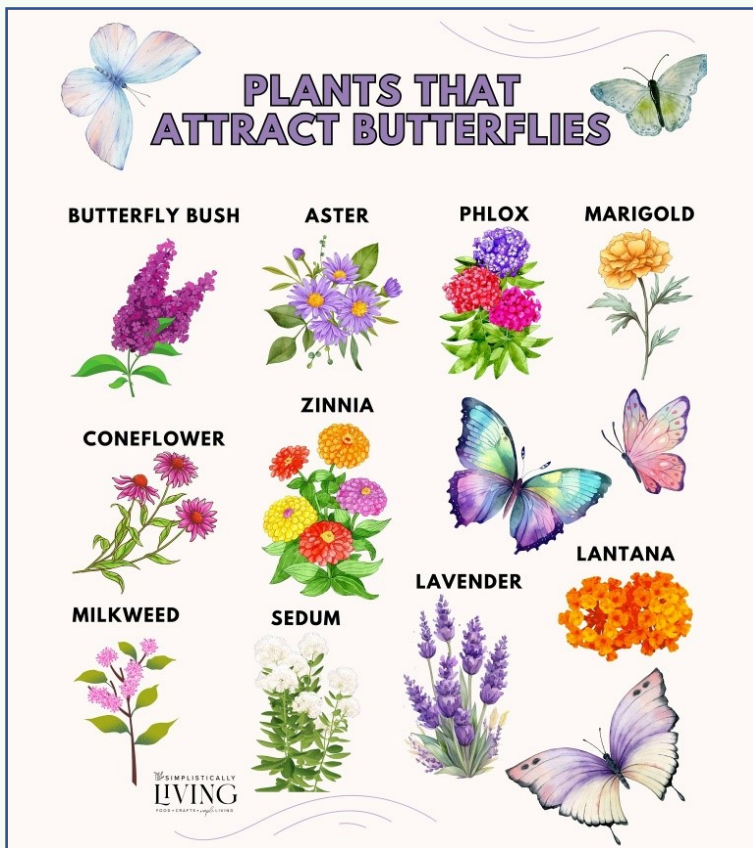
**GCFP Pennsylvania Garden Party:** June 20 and 27, 2026. Visit the 25 gardens showcased by District I clubs. See Page 20 for information and how to obtain tickets.

**The "Flowering Lawn" Movement:** Penn State Extension experts in the region are urging residents to pivot away from completely weed-free, grass-only lawns. Embracing blooming "weeds" like Dutch white clover is being heavily promoted to create floral environments that better support native bees and butterflies.

**Longwood Gardens Summer Programming:** Located in Kennett Square, Longwood Gardens is running its [Festival of Fountains](#) alongside [specialized youth workshops](#) and [classes and workshops](#).

**Penn State Extension Hotline:** Both county offices run a free [Chester County Library System Garden & Home Guide](#) where you can reach Master Gardeners via phone or email for localized troubleshooting and soil testing.

**Delaware County Master Gardeners:** To see demonstration gardens (like those at Smedley Park) or to enter your own garden into seasonal contests, review the [Penn State Extension Delaware County Master Gardener Program](#).



## KIDS' CORNER



Sprouts & Seedlings

Does your club sponsor a youth group? Consider joining **GCFP's Sprouts and Seedlings** program. Annual dues are just \$2, and new clubs receive \$50 to support youth activities. T-shirts are also available for \$11.

Chair [Cheryl Brumbaugh](#) of the Norristown Garden Club is happy to provide guidance, along with plenty of creative ideas for engaging, educational activities with young participants. There are many grants available also.

### Key Ideas for a Kids' Garden Corner for Your Children or Grandchildren:

- **Mud Kitchen:** A must-have for sensory play, featuring pots, pans, and water.
- **Gardening Station:** Dedicate a small raised bed or containers for children to grow fast-growing plants like radishes or sunflowers.
- **Play Structures:** Incorporate a small wooden playhouse, tepee, or a simple tree swing.
- **Sensory and Nature Elements:** Add a small sandpit, a "digging" spot for finding bugs, and sensory plants like lamb's ear or mint.
- **Storage Solutions:** Use crates or dedicated sheds to keep toys, shovels, and buckets organized.
- **Comfort Area:** Set up a small table with chairs or a few comfortable, waterproof pillows for relaxing in the shade.

### Tips for Success:

- **Involve Them:** Ask for their input on themes or plants.
- **Safety First:** Choose organic, non-toxic plants, and consider safe zones for young children.
- **Use Durable Materials:** Opt for materials that can withstand, such as pine cones, log slices, or sturdy plastic toys.

## Photo Contest

Would you like to see one of your personal photos showcased on the cover of the next "The First Bloom?" Send your best shot of a "first

bloom" from your garden or yard, or a special shot of a seasonal "first bloom" of one of your club's tours or projects.

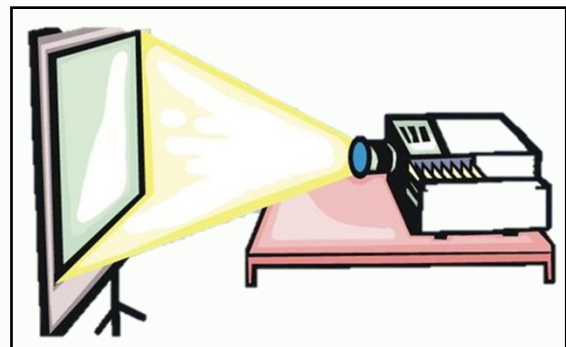
- \* Keep in mind that the next issue is October 2025; fall "first bloom" shots would be best.
- \* Be sure to take some summer pics for next year's June issue.
- \* Pics must be a vertical size, not horizontal.

Send your photos to Marilyn Small  
[mmsmall@comcast.net](mailto:mmsmall@comcast.net).

## DISTRICT PROJECTOR

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

Contact Pam Walsh, District Director  
[pamyoga@aol.com](mailto:pamyoga@aol.com)



## UPCOMING DISTRICT EVENTS

### DISTRICT I MEETING AND LUNCHEON

Thursday, September 10, 9:30 a.m.  
Hosted by Covered Bridge Garden Club  
"Through the Garden Lens"

### DISTRICT I LONGWOOD FLOWER SHOW

"Celebrating a Nation of Artists"  
Entries Received Sept. 18, 1 - 4 p.m.  
September 19, 7 - 9 a.m.  
Open to Public Sept. 19, 1 - 9 p.m.  
Sept. 20, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

### NATIONAL CUCUMBER DAY

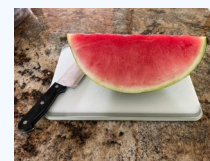
June 14, 2026



Check out some cucumber trivia and fun facts [HERE](#).

### NATIONAL WATERMELON DAY

August 3, 2026



Check out some watermelon day fun facts [HERE](#).



# Keystone Gardener

*Official Publication of The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania*

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

## NGC, GCFP, and DISTRICT I 2025 CALENDAR

June 20 and 27	Pennsylvania Garden Party
August 5	GCFP Floral Design and Horticulture on Zoom, 6:30 p.m.
September 10	District I Meeting and Luncheon hosted by Covered Bridge Garden Club
13-14	Tri-Refresher, Brandywine Valley, Pennsylvania, see Page 6
18-20	District I Flower Show at Longwood Gardens
October 5-6	GCFP Board Meeting, Boalsburg, PA
19-21	CAR-SGC Conference, Cambridge, MD
26-28	NGC Flower Show School Course IV, Gettysburg
November 4	GCFP Floral Design and Horticulture on Zoom, 6:30 p.m.

## *Have Something to Share?*

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