



Garden Club President's Manual

Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania

www.pagardenclubs.org

Re-written 2025

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INTRODUCTION

Garden Clubs are the working body of the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania. It is at the community level that gardening impacts not just club members, but the community as a whole.

The rewarding experience is more than creating beautiful gardens and award-winning floral arrangement, the work is directly impacting the environment in which we live.

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania has a lot to offer Garden Clubs. Members striving to improve their skills can participate in intense educational schools in flower show, landscape design, gardening and environmental studies. Continuing educational opportunities exist at conferences, symposiums and on-line presentations.

Through the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania, all members are connected to gardeners across the United States and internationally through the National Garden Club.

The Garden Club President's Manual is created to help you navigate this structure to make it most beneficial for you. It also presents information in running a garden club to make this a rewarding experience for all.

Part I

STRUCTURE OF THE GARDEN CLUB FEDERATION OF PENNSYLVANIA

The **National Garden Club, Inc (NGC)** gardenclub.org was created in 1929 to provide education, resources and national networking opportunities for its members to promote the love of gardening, floral design and civic and environmental responsibility. Headquartered in St Louis, Missouri, the 6.2 acres has seen modification in landscaping to reflect environmental concerns and issues of our time.



NGC oversees the four schools offered – flower show, landscape design, garden and environmental schools. Plant America community grants offer one time funding to enhance public area and community gardens. Blue and Gold Star Memorial honors men and women of the armed services with plaques. Plant-a-Tree (formerly Penny Pines) works with USDA Forest Services towards reforestation. Global Partners – Running Waters supports access to safe water in Latin America, contributions to NGC; March 22 is World Water Day.

Initiatives arise to reflect current needs such as Feed America (gardening for food pantries) and Landscape for Wildlife (pollinator initiative). NGC Awards are standardized across the USA.

Central Atlantic Region – State Garden Clubs (CAR-SGC)

NGC is divided into 8 Regions. The CAR-SGC is to better service leadership of the states of Delaware, Maryland, National Capital Area, New Jersey, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania.



Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania (GCFP) www.pagardenclubs.org

oversees member garden clubs in Pennsylvania to help coordinate and further the interests and activities of garden clubs. GCFP represents nearly 4,700 gardener club members.

The state implements National Garden Club programs and goals. Various schools are held around the state, flower shows are standardized, Blue Star markers are placed across the state and support is given to local garden clubs. To best manage this, Pennsylvania is divided into 10 Districts, each of which has a District Director who represents the GCFP President at the local level. This position is your first level of contact.



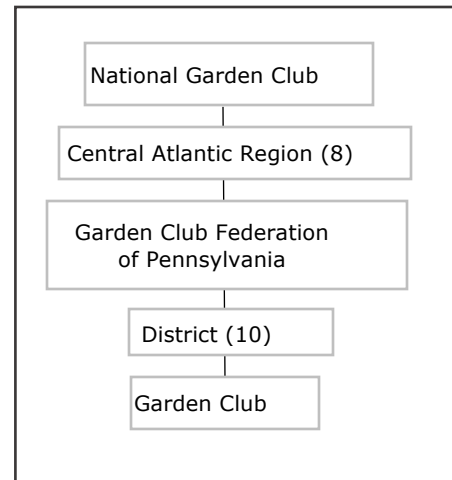
Started in 1930, GCFP brings gardeners together through an annual State Convention and District meetings. Competitive awards follow the NGC guidelines. Leadership workshop is held every two years. Federal non-profit tax status extends to all member garden clubs (this is not a state tax exemption). Liability insurance covers all Pennsylvania clubs with paid dues and updated membership rolls.

Terminology of "the Federation" refers to the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania and a "federated club" is a garden club which is a member of GCFP.

GCFP operates on a fiscal year of May 1 to April 30. Dues are to be paid by May 1.

District Directors A District Director serves as the GCFP's representative to local garden clubs. Elected every two years by local garden clubs, the Director acts as a liaison, helping clubs navigate the GCFP structure, answering concerns, and finding answers to questions that arising locally. Directors are also responsible for encouraging participation in GCFP programs and initiatives, as well as promoting applications for awards.

Garden Clubs Each garden club is guided by the interests of its members and the needs of the community, operating under its own bylaws and goals. As members of the GCFP, garden clubs and their members enjoy numerous benefits. Through paid membership in the GCFP, each member is also a member of The National Garden Clubs, Inc., gaining access to a wide range of resources and opportunities offered by both organizations.



Part II Benefits of a Garden Club

For those interested in gardening and environmental concerns, joining a garden club provides opportunities to grow, learn and expand their experiences. It is a gathering of like-minded people who can talk about their passions and be supportive of one another. Garden clubs also offer the opportunity to give back to the community through beautification projects, historical site revitalization, plant sales, garden tours, flower shows, horticulture therapy and many other ways.

Many benefits are accessible through membership in NGC and the GCFP. Through GCFP, garden clubs have a federal non-profit status. State taxes are compiled by a simple IRS 990 series submission to GCFP. Liability insurance covers garden club-sponsored events.

Educational workshops and leadership trainings are routinely offered through GCFP and NGC. These are in addition to concentrated learning schools. Each school offers four sessions of training over a two-year period. Tri-refreshers and flower show symposiums keep students informed of new ideas and changes. Check the NGC website for school and training offerings.

- Flower Show School – flower arranging and flower show presentations
- Landscape Design – structural crafting, outdoor planting
- Garden School – understanding plants
- Environmental Studies – impact of environmental change

[Refer to Attachment "Benefits and Reasons for Belonging to GCFP"]

Part III Bylaws and Standing Rules

A. Bylaws outline the fundamental purpose, officers and operating structure of the garden club. Bylaws are amended by vote of membership after a notice is given. Bylaws are the basic structure of the organization. They are necessary to incorporate an organization.

Basic Articles in a Bylaw would include:

- Name of the Organization
- Purpose
- Membership, Dues
- Officers, Duties and Election
- Parliamentary Operation, Quorum
- Amendments to Bylaws
- Dissolution of Club

B. Standing Rules further specify points of the bylaws. Meeting time and location, garden club dues, committee responsibilities, and clarification of issues that arise. Standing Rules can be amended, deleted or added with a simple vote at a meeting.

C. Procedure and Policy Manual contains specific duties of an office or committee. This information helps with the understanding of day-to-day operations when officers and chairs change positions. Financial procedures may be written out for clarification of responsibilities and practices to reduce liability issues. Procedural manual is routinely reviewed and updated to reflect the garden club's manner of operation.

D. Motion Book kept by the recording secretary and chronicles motions that impact the operations of the club. It includes the motion, the date passed, and the action it supports. This resource makes it easier to track motions over time without the need to sort through the minutes of each meeting. Clubs are encouraged to start a motion book.

Part IV. President's Operation Tools

To ensure the club remains focused on its goals and conducts meetings in an orderly manner, it is essential for all members to understand the order of business, follow proper procedures for making motions, and maintain clear and respectful decorum during meetings.

A. Agenda

A smoothly run meeting starts with an agenda shared with members prior to a meeting. A predictable format allows members to know when to expect reports and motions. Use of the Parliamentary Procedure gives the minority an opportunity to present their side to a question. At the start of a meeting, ensure a quorum is present. A gavel should only be struck once at the beginning and end of a meeting.

SAMPLE AGENDA

- A. Call to order
- B. Devotion or Collection
- C. Pledge to Flag
- D. Introduce Guests
- E. Reading and Approval of Minutes
- F. Treasurer's Report (filed for review)
- G. Reports of Officers
- H. Reports of Committees
- I. Open discussion of Issues –
Unfinished and New Business
- J. Announcements
- K. Adjournment

B. Protocol

The fundamental principles of Parliamentary Procedure are to safeguard members rights, facilitate democratic discussion and accomplish the business of the group peacefully. It is encouraged to show respect to the presiding officer, guests and anyone desiring to speak.

1. Seating Arrangements and Introductions

- a. At a small meeting with no guests, the presiding officer sits in the middle with the parliamentarian and secretary nearby. Other officers are seated according to rank.
- b. With an honored guest, the presiding officer sits in the middle, guests or order of rank to the right and officer to the left in order of their rank.
- c. If introducing the HEAD TABLE, the highest-ranking guest is introduced first if they are just to be acknowledged, but if they are to say a few words, then introduce the lowest ranking guest first and go up the list to the highest ranking guest. Keep introductions brief.
- d. A distinguished guest should never be expected to purchase their own meal or dinner ticket. If the distinguished guest is a member of your club or lives in the same town, the same courtesies should be shown. The club honors the office, not the person.

2. Conducting a Meeting

- a. Start meetings on time to be courteous of other people's time and commitments. Check that a quorum is present to conduct business.
- b. Have basic knowledge of parliamentary procedures, i.e., Robert's Rules of Order, revised addition. Be familiar with the garden club's Bylaws and Standing Rules. Review last meeting's minutes for unfinished business.
- c. Ensure the Secretary has a written agenda.

- d. Call to order the meeting and follow the agenda.
- e. The presiding officer is the CHAIR. Refer to yourself as "the chair" while running the meeting. Give a "President's Report". Refrain from saying "I".
- f. Say the "next BUSINESS IN ORDER" while moving through the agenda. The agenda is the ORDER OF BUSINESS.
- g. Committee members giving a report should only address the presiding officer, such as "Madam, President" and proceed with the report. Addressing others in attendance is no longer used.
- h. Secretary functions:
 - 1) Emailed minutes can be assumed read prior to the meeting.
 - 2) After the minutes, ask, "Are there any corrections to the minutes?" Use of the terms additions or omissions is unnecessary. Minutes can be approved by general consent.
 - 3) The Secretary sign his/her name and title; respectfully submitted is no longer used.
 - 4) Minutes are the legal record of the club activities and should be kept indefinitely. Motions should be written as made and approved.
- i. Financial operations:
 - 1) The financial report, after being presented, is filed for review.
 - 2) Yearly internal reviews are done by president appointed club members not associated with the treasury activities. Audits are done by professional outside firms.
 - 3) A report on the annual financial review is noted at the next meeting.
 - 4) Financial records are kept for seven years.
- j. Expediate business by use of "general consent"; "Hearing no discussion, the minutes are approved as sent/read" or "If there are not objections, we will...".
- k. Be aware of which committees will be giving reports and the presence of the reporting chair. Written reports or summary of the committee's event should be given to the president and secretary.
- l. Motions made:
 - 1) A motion brought out of committee or the Board does not need a second. It is assumed that a committee has already two people supporting the measure.
 - 2) A motion made should start with "I move that...", not so moved.
 - 3) Repeat the motion that has been made verbatim and ask for a second.
 - 4) A motion seconded is ready for discussion or debate.
 - 5) The presiding officer calls for a vote..."Are you ready for the question?" The motion should be restated prior to the vote.
 - 6) Votes are "aye" if for approval, and "no" for dissenting.
 - 7) Motion has been Passed, Failed or sent back to committee. Announce the results.
 - 8) A motion without a second does not proceed to discussion.

- m. If a program follows a business meeting, do not adjourn meeting until after the program.

3. Hints in Presiding

- a. Develop a calendar of events with initiating dates to facilitate planning.
- b. Refrain from turning over the meeting to another person. The chair should preside at the meeting until adjournment unless there is an emergency.
- c. Presiding officer does not vote on motions. Only when there is a tie does the presiding officer break the tie.
- d. Only one issue is debated at a time. A motion with an amendment should have the amendment discussed and approved prior to going back to the full motion.
- e. Debate of a question or motion is directed to the presiding officer. Personal attacks have no place in the discussion. The presiding officer recognizes the debaters and should allow opportunity for all to speak before calling on a person the second time. A committee person may answer a question or present a "point of interest" outside of the debate cycle.
- f. A motion can be approved, defeated or sent back to committee.

C. Courtesies to Guest Speaker

All club members, not just the President or Program Chair, should show courtesy and appreciation to a guest speaker. This starts with the invitation to present a program to the time they exit the door.

- 1. The initial contact with a guest speaker should be specific as to the time, date and location of the meeting. State the duration of the presentation and discuss details such as table, microphone, screen. Agree upon a payment. Follow up this initial discussion with a letter or email confirming the arrangements. Make sure your contact information is given.
- 2. Collect a short resume to help introduce the speaker.
- 3. A speaker scheduled months in advance should be contacted six weeks prior to the presentation and again a week prior.
- 4. If possible, reserve a parking space close to the entrance.
- 5. A chair or assigned member should watch for the speaker's arrival. Assist with unloading supplies and equipment. Make necessary arrangement to accommodate the speaker by assuring audio-visual equipment is working.
- 6. Offer hospitality of a beverage or food. Introduce to other club members as time allows.
- 7. Speaker introduction should be brief, factual and of interest to the audience. If the speaker is known to the audience, they are presented. If they are not known, they are introduced.

D. Communication with Others

The President is the face of the organization to the community and shares the purpose and activities of the garden club with others. The President instills support and confidence in garden club members to help bring up new officers and committee chairs. Members will respond when motivated

with information and enthusiasm.

1. Use the channel of email and websites for reminders and notice of other events.
2. Develop a newsletter to share events, pictures and upcoming information.
3. Print a garden club yearbook with member contact information, meetings and programs, Bylaws and Standing Rules, Committee and other pertinent information to the Garden Club. Give a copy to the District Director and other Garden Clubs in the District.
4. As *ex-officio* member of committees, if stated in Bylaws or Standing Rules, show support to committees and especially chairs. Do not take over their jobs.
5. Delegate responsibility to other officers and committee chairs and have confidence in their ability.
6. Convey goals, project and directives of the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania to members.
7. Reward accomplishments. Use awards such as "Laurel Award" through the District and establish an awards chair to nominate for GCFP awards.
8. A club president is assumed the contact for GCFP/District unless another person is designated. Forward GCFP/District newsletters, informational about events and notices on to garden club members.

E. GCFP Sharing

Spread the news.

1. Send your notices of special events such as plant sales and garden tours, flower shows and club fundraisers to the District Director to share with other area clubs and have it posted on the GCFP website through the Webmaster (email in Keystone Gardener Directory Issue).
2. Consider joint sponsored events with other garden clubs. Host a training with area clubs or expand a flower show. This accesses more hands to work and reduces cost per one club.
3. President Pins – Current and past garden club president pins are available through the store of the NGC website.

Part V President's Responsibilities to GCFP

The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania connects each garden club to others of like interests. This is done by dividing the state into Districts with a Director who represents the GCFP locally and is your contact person.

The GCFP wants to know what you are doing, learn of accomplishments of the club, share leadership information and any issues that may arise. This is done through several means – Club President's Annual Report, District meetings, webinars and direct contact with the Director.

- A. Keep GCFP update on membership and officers. Send promptly as this information impacts the effectiveness of liability insurance.
1. Submit officer names and address to the Database Manager and District Director upon a change in officers (GCFP website, Forms, Club Officer

Change Form).

2. Send a change in membership roster to the database manager in a timely basis. Use ADD MEMBER or REMOVE MEMBER forms on GCFP website under Forms.
 3. Send a MEMBER CHANGE OF ADDRESS form for members who move.
- B. Club President's Report is received by February 15 to the GCFP President and the District Director. Fillable form found at GCFP website, Forms.
- C. District Directors are available to conduct officer installation.
- D. Flower Show ribbons are available through GCFP Flower Show Awards and Ribbons Chair. Larger rosette ribbons can be sought through NGC website store.
- E. Liability insurance covers sponsored events of the garden club. For liability insurance, garden club membership needs to be kept current. Submit Add and Removal Member forms on GCFP website timely to a change.
- F. The mailing address of GCFP, i.e., post office box, changes every two years to reflect proximity of the reigning GCFP President. Check Keystone Gardener or District Director for the current mailing address.
- G. Zip code nine-digit can be obtained at <https://tools.usps.com/zip-code-lookup.htm?byaddress>. Search by address for 5-digit zip code and click 'find' for 9-digit. The nine-digit is needed to send the Keystone Gardener. Incorrect zip codes have a return cost to GCFP.
- H. GCFP End-of-Year Needs
1. With GCFP calendar year of May 1 to April 30, dues based on club membership are due no later than May 1. The Club treasurer should receive a form for completion. At this time the club roster for members and addresses should be checked against the one sent from GCFP.
 2. PA Tax form for 501 C-3 990 short form for clubs with income under \$50,000 per year should be returned to the indicated GCFP designee no later than May 31. The 501 C-3 990 Information Form long form for gross income of \$50,000 plus should be used. (GCFP website, Forms). Tax forms should be reviewed at the beginning of the year for proper notation of expenses or receipts.
 3. Gambling Revenue from 50/50, raffles, bingo and gaming activities are reported separately. Sale of alcohol does not fall under Small Games of Chance.
 4. Speakers receiving payment of \$600 or more should be issued a Federal 1099 at the time of their service.
- I. Leadership Training is offered biannually and is open to all garden club members. This is a good way to get questions answered, to develop leadership skills in others and to become knowledgeable about the GCFP.

J. Websites

NGC website – gardenclub.org

- president pin, awards book, flower show handbook and ribbons, Webinars, list of learning school offerings.

GCFP website – pagardenclubs.org

- forms for GCFP operations (donations, membership update, scholarship, tax/dues) and information (GCFP Bylaws, Liability Certificate, manuals), state directory (password protected, contact the District Director).

Part VI GCFP PROJECTS

A. Contributions

Through the years, the GCFP has developed opportunities for recognition of members and donating to environmental causes.

BOOK OF RECOGNITION donations used for general GCFP operation funds. GCFP SCHOLARSHIPS support 11 GCFP Scholarships for Garden Club sponsored students studying in allied gardening fields. Winners are eligible for NGC scholarships.

NATIONAL DISASTER is forwarded to NGC to rebuild after natural disasters.

PLANT-A-TREE (formally Penny Pines) is a coordinated project with Department of Conservation and Natural Resources to be used in Pennsylvania for special projects or restoration of national forests. A \$50 minimum is requested.

SAGE AND ROSES is a program to allow funds used to purchase a greeting Card, which is then sent as an email greeting, to be used to help fund Blue Star program.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP in GCFP, CAR-SGC and NGC is a way to honor presidents or members giving significantly to gardening. GCFP is \$100, CAR-SGC is \$50, NGC is \$200. Application on GCFP website, Forms.

BLUE STAR MEMORIAL HIGHWAY MARKERS is a project of NGC to honor men and women in the United States Armed Services. A designed plaque is placed in a public area to be landscaped and maintained by garden clubs. GOLD STAR markers honor mothers of veterans.

KEYSTONE GARDENER is a magazine of GCFP and KG ONLINE is an email version issued three times a year. Contributions can come from garden clubs, Districts or committee chairs.

B. Service projects

These focus on the community of the garden club. Identify how each club can Offer a unique service for all to enjoy.

1. Community Projects A good way to establish public relations with the community is to offer visual awareness to the garden club. This can be done in many ways:

- maintain community garden, beautification projects
- revise historical garden
- hold annual plant sale
- sponsor garden tours

- host a flower show
 - invite public on field trips.
2. Conservation Awareness Engage in education and projects to help sustain the environment – tree planting, pollinator gardens, clean water, water conservation, plastic use restriction, air pollution, native plant benefits.
 3. Horticulture Therapy Bring the healing power of plants to less accessible groups – terminal illness, mentally and physically disabled, aging, shelters, daycare programs, hospitals or prisons. Provide a positive experience to others through use of plants and outdoor environment.
 4. Youth involvement Share knowledge and experience with the future – the youth of today. Develop a junior garden club, have a relationship with scouts, 4-H, daycares, schools or other youth groups. Approaches might include: invite youth to share in gardening work, help to establish a garden at a school or park, support environmental activities such as recycling, litter, pollution, conservation posters.
 5. Partnerships Not all projects need to be done alone. Partner with like organization to extend the reach - local government, conservation groups, food cooperatives, historical societies, Master Gardener events, and other garden clubs.

Part VII AWARDS AND GRANTS

A. AWARDS

There is satisfaction in accomplishing a planned project. Recognize this accomplishment with one of the many awards offered through GCFP, CAR-SGC and NGC. Most end-of-the-year awards are due by December 1 for evaluation and given out at the annual April GCFP state convention. Awards offered are listed under the GCFP website, Awards, which references the NGC awards manual.

One of the easiest is awards to apply for is to submit the Club Yearbook by December 1. Other areas that can be recognized through GCFP awards include websites, digital media, newsletters, flower shows, environmental projects, youth engagement and programs. Top winners are forward to CAR-SGC and NGC for further consideration.

Many local clubs offer scholarships to youth pursuing educational studies in gardening and allied fields. Consider using the GCFP application and request the student application be forward to GCFP Scholarship by February 1.

The GCFP President term operates under a theme. That theme culminates into a GCFP Seeds of Service President's Project for which awards are given. Specifications for this award are published with the application due June 15 in even-numbered years.

There are several awards given across Pennsylvania at the District level. These are:

- * Perennial Bloom Award.....due January 15
- * Forget-Me-Not Award.....due August 1
- * Exceptional Horticulturist Awarddue August 1 to GCFP
- * Laurel Awards (not judged).....due August 1

B. GRANTS

Funds can be requested to support gardening projects and educational events. GCFP Seed Money applications are due February 15. National Garden Club offers

a one-time Plant America grant and Native Plant and Wildflowers. NGC also partners with business to offer tools, soil amendments and seeds.

- C. PRESIDENT PINS Current and past Garden Club President Pins are available on NGC website store.

Part VIII INCREASE and SUSTAIN MEMBERSHIP, FUNDRAISING

Increase of membership starts the moment a person steps into a garden club meeting or event. To look into the future, look at the present club operations.

Enthusiasm starts the moment a person steps into the door of a meeting. For potential new members or long-term members, greet people warmly as they walk into the door. This should not be an assignment of one person, but for all members of a club. Make others feel important.

Consider your community activities. Are newer members welcomed and encouraged to participate and take on leadership roles? The excitement and openness felt within the club will enthruse to others and spark an interest.

VALUE YOUR CURRENT MEMBERS

- invite ideas from members
- "bring a friend" meeting
- encourage a rich newsletter by soliciting member contributions
- host a family event for spouses, siblings, parents, children and grandchildren
- practice an "elevator speech" – 2 minutes of what you like about the garden club
- "seat swap" at meetings where people sit at different locations
- FOLLOW UP ON CONTACTS made

- develop a vibrant newsletter
- ask members for recruitment ideas
- engage sunshine committee or corresponding secretary in remembering special dates
- indicate garden club membership in resumes
- provide a personal testimony about the benefits of garden club membership
- contact members absent for one or more meetings

USE OF MULTIPLE MEDIA

- develop business cards with space for personal contact numbers
- create an invitation template for email use to send to others
- devise a club logo consistence in publication and correspondence
- develop a brochure or member application
- develop a video presentation
- have a website presence; check and change it regularly
- advertise meeting times and programs
- take photos for publication in local media and website
- have members post on personal Facebook, twitter gardening events and result

PROGRAM OFFERINGS

- have alternative meeting times
- review membership application process; are there restrictions?
- have a mentor program for each new member
- host a recruitment meeting or dinner
- develop a membership or recruitment committee with a targeted focus
- open programs to the public
- secure programs of a diverse range of interests
- host public service events such as plant sales, gardening preparation, container planting
- reach out to underserved – horticulture therapy to summer camp, assisted living

TOKENS

- develop a T-shirt, apron or garden club button to wear
- conduct exit interviews of departing members to obtain positive and negative responses
- offer perks or freebies to members who bring in the most members or guests
- thank members regularly for their commitment
- review the accomplishments of the club on a yearly basis

OUTREACH

- create a "welcome packet" or "informational gathering" for new members
- sponsor a local event using club name and logo such as fall bird walk
- give talks at other organizations
- join in public events such as a park planting or community service projects
- host a "summer social" at a garden open to the public
- offer gardening activities to public schools

FUND-RAISING

- hold a plant sale with plants from local gardens or sale on consignment from a nursery
- bring in a plant from a nursery or landscaper, share information and sell the plant
- plan a garden hike, have a forest ranger or ecologist lead, open to the public
- donate gardening items to a sale
- sell beginner gardener kits for children
- sponsor a bingo game with baskets for prizes
- host a garden party
- raffle something large
- host a garden tour, make an attractive membership offer to those who buy tickets
- be creative with a flower show
 - ...show in different houses, one with floral design, another with horticulture
 - ...close down a street to show gardens, porches or patios
- hold a dinner party for 8 people (a raffle prize)
 - ... limousine service to someone's home
 - ...use owner's table-ware and garden, hire catering service
- host a burger and bingo for the public, or potluck for club members
- sponsor a murder mystery dinner
- tour the White House for Christmas
- hold a Booze and Botany (houseplants) ticket event
- raffle an experience
- hold meetings at a unique location
- sponsor a 50/50 raffle

ADDENDUM

Benefits and Reasons for Belonging to the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania

1. Your club is part of the largest volunteer gardening organization in the world, National Garden Clubs, Inc (NGC). (www.gardenclub.org). The NGC is divided into 8 regions and Pennsylvania is part of the Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs, Inc. (CAR-SGC). CAR-SGC includes Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Delaware, Maryland, and the National Capital Area. There are many programs and opportunities available through NGC and CAR-SGC.
2. The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania (GCFP) offers clubs the opportunity to come under the 501 (c) (3) Federal Tax Umbrella for charitable organizations which gives qualified clubs tax exempt status. Clubs must have an EIN number (tax ID) and complete a tax information form provided by the GCFP on an annual basis. The GCFP, as a benefit to its members, has a CPA complete the required 990 series Federal tax form for each club. **This is a Federal Exemption only, and has nothing to do with State Taxes, including State Sales tax.** This benefit is important because all clubs must now file, or have someone file for them, a 990 Federal form each year. **Failure to file for three consecutive years results in revocation of tax-exempt status.**
3. The GCFP Liability Insurance policy provides liability coverage for all GCFP Clubs if dues are paid on ALL members by the required date. Clubs are responsible for updating any changes in membership including pro-rated dues for new members. This insurance covers the club's liability for bodily injury and property damage to "others". Others means a party other than you, "the insured". The policy extends medical payment coverage to members, guests, and non-member attendees. A certificate of Insurance may be obtained from the GCFP if a meeting place requires such proof. There is a \$500 deductible on all claims payable at the club level. Special events coverage is recommended for large fundraising events.
4. To be eligible for the GCFP Liability Insurance and shelter under the 501(c)(3) tax umbrella, clubs must achieve "good standing" by paying all their dues, including new member prorated dues, to the GCFP in a timely manner, and prior to established deadlines.
5. Club members can take advantage of the excellent educational opportunities offered by National Garden Clubs, Inc., and sponsored by the GCFP. The schools are:
 - Flower Show School
 - Landscape Design School
 - Gardening School

Environmental School

These courses are taught by instructors from National Garden Clubs, Inc. or instructors who have been approved by NGC. Flower Show School Course I must be taken first, then students can take any of the other Courses as they choose. All other schools' courses can be taken in any order. They can be either picked up courses when a new GCFP school begins or taken in another state.

6. Clubs benefit from their GCFP Membership by participating in regular District meetings, District events, and the Annual GCFP Convention. This is true with any organization; the more you participate, the more you get out of your membership.
7. Clubs can apply for "Seed Money Grants" to undertake a new civic beautification project. A specific GCFP committee reviews the written applications and selects the winning clubs. These "Grants" are awarded annually to the selected clubs at the GCFP Convention in April. The Seed Money application can be found on the Federation website at **www.pagardenclubs.org**.
8. The GCFP website, **www.pagardenclubs.org**, provides up-to-date information for its members on planned GCFP activities, such as District and State Meetings, Schools, Awards and Scholarships available, program ideas and links to NGC, Inc. and CAR-SGC resources. Upon approval by the GCFP President, clubs can provide the webmaster with details of club meetings or activities open to the public, including flower shows, and they will be publicized. Application forms for GCFP, NGC and CAR-SGC awards, scholarships, and the registration for junior gardeners can be found on the website and downloaded. The website also contains all pertinent information regarding upcoming conventions.
9. All Club members receive the *KEYSTONE GARDENER* as part of their membership. The *Keystone Gardener* is the official publication of the GCFP. It provides a calendar of upcoming events, important information and a host of other tips and helpful articles.
10. NGC accredited judges are available to judge club flower shows, and to assist clubs in writing their schedule.
11. Club officers and members may take advantage of the Bi-annual Leadership Workshop held in their area. The Workshops will be held in the Western, Northern and Central part of the state. GCFP Board of Director's members will be the instructors for the Workshops.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF CLUBS

1. Clubs must pay their annual dues to remain Federated. Dues must be paid in a timely manner, and prior to the deadline established, if the club wishes to be covered by the GCFP Liability Insurance. They must also pay pro-rated dues for new members. If the club wishes to remain under the 501 (c)(3) Federal Tax umbrella, they must also file, or have someone file for them, the required 990 series form annually.
2. Clubs must provide a complete listing of their membership (name, address, phone number and email where available) to the GCFP Database Manager at gcfpdatabasemgr@gmail.com. They must provide updates on their membership (additions, deletions, and address changes) as changes occur.
3. Clubs must promptly report newly elected officers to the GCFP Database Manager (gcfpdatabasemgr@gmail.com), and to their District Director.
4. Club Presidents are requested to complete a two-page annual report that goes to the GCFP

President and their District Director on the activities of the club. This form can be found on the GCFP Website under Presidents Packet/forms.

Club members are encouraged, but are not required, to do the following:

- To attend District Meetings.
- To attend the Annual GCFP Convention, held in a different district each year.
- To attend the schools offered.
- To do local community projects.
- To apply for awards for their club based on club projects.
- To sponsor students for state scholarships.
- To hold Standard Flower Shows.
- Participate in NGC and CAR-SGC Inc. projects. [GCFP document]

National Garden Clubs, Inc (NGC)

Objective and Purposes

The object and purposes of this non-profit organization, as stated in the Articles of Incorporation of National Garden Clubs, Inc. are:

1. To operate on a non-profit basis and solely for benevolent, charitable, scientific and educational purposes conducive to the well-being of the community and useful to the public.
2. To coordinate and further the interests and activities of the State Federation of Garden Clubs, together with similar organizations in the territories of the United States and foreign countries.
3. To aid in the protection and conservation of natural resources, to protect civic beauty and encourage the improvement of roadside and parks.
4. To encourage and assist in establishing and maintaining botanical and horticultural centers for the advancement of science and for the enjoyment and education of the public.
5. To advance the fine art of gardening, of landscape design and the study of horticulture and the environment.
6. To cooperate with other organizations in the furtherance of the foregoing objectives and in such activities as may be determined by the Board of Directors of NGC.
7. To further horticultural and environmental education, conservation and landscape design through gift scholarships.
8. To establish and maintain permanent headquarters and to construct and furnish buildings and improvements to house the same in the city of St. Louis, Missouri.
9. To promote youth communication through club sponsorship of Junior, Intermediate and High School Garden groups to teach the youth through involvement in poster, speech and essay contests. 2025

Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania (GCFP)

Object and Purposes

The object and purposes of this nonprofit organization are as follows:

1. To operate solely for benevolent, charitable, scientific and educational purposes conducive to the well-being of the community and useful to the public.
2. Coordinate and further the interests and activities of garden clubs in the GCFP together with organizations having similar interests.
3. To create public interest, to aid in the protection and conservation of natural resources, to protect civic beauty and encourage the improvement of roadsides and parks.
4. To advance the fine arts of gardening, landscape design, floral design and the

study of horticulture.

5. To cooperate with other organizations in the promotion of the foregoing objectives and in such activities as may be determined by the Board of Directors.
6. To further education in horticulture, conservation, landscape design and other related curricula through gift scholarships.
7. To accept contributions and any legal earnings to be used in carrying out the organization's purposes.
8. The organization shall not at any time, nor in any manner, intervene in any political campaign.
9. To restrict the activities of the organization so that it shall not be used or operated for private profit or personal gain to any member thereof or any special group.

2025

Recruitment Suggestions

from NGC Membership Monday Oct 2024

Elevator Conversation

- a 2-3 minute explanation

Open the Garden Gate

- members are always welcome
- extend a personal invitation
- state upcoming programs
- follow-up on the call
- give the elevator speech

1. Spring into Action – immediately speak of gardening topic
2. Establish a Passion Match – find out their gardening interests and share about the garden club
3. Offer a low barrier entry – send a newsletter, invite to a meeting, keep on inviting
4. Share the benefits of belonging

Garden Clubs are like a buffet – take what you like

- share the reason you joined
- what can be learned
 - + via the schools of learning
 - + creative flower arranging
 - + native planting
 - + programs at the club
 - + talking with members
 - + online opportunities
- travel opportunities – bus trips, day trips
- presence in the community – plant sales, bulb sales, flower shows, community gardens, youth involvement
- philanthropic involvement – scholarships, Blue Star Markers, historical restoration
- part of a larger community – local, district, state, regional and national involvement
- fun to meet with sharing gardeners

Start with a Conversation - - End with an Invitation

- develop a rapport, i.e., gardening
- learn their area of gardening interest
- share the variety of gardening topic/interests of club members
- extend invitation to next meeting
- meet the person and introduce them to others at the meeting.