



Keeping In Touch

FEBRUARY 2015



Linda G. Nelson

2013-2015 President

National Garden Clubs, Inc.

A new year has begun, and I wish each and every one of you a bountiful year. We see great potential for protecting and preserving our natural resources and urging others to join our efforts. Our concerned members drive our commitment to make choices that will make a world of difference. I applaud you in all your projects toward this end.

Recently, I watched a television program that explained weather patterns. The air currents travel from the west, swoop north over the mountains, and head south or east. As the currents collide over the mountain ranges, they produce rain, snow, wind, hurricanes or maybe a tornado. These currents travel thousands of miles and influence areas many miles from where they originated. It underscored in my mind that our gardening choices have the same impact. We may think "what difference does what I do in my yard have to do with things miles away?" But, it does! We also realize that weed-free shoulders along our highways are eliminating pollinator habitat. Could we change our thinking; could we realize those weeds are wildflowers? Could we keep them for the butterflies and other pollinators? What if the winds changed its patterns and didn't bring the rain or snow to the farmlands or the forests? How would that affect our food or housing? When we consider the big picture, we realize all things work together for our good. Let us educate ourselves so we will understand our part in the big picture.

Soon it will be time to change officers in our clubs and states. We have heard it can be difficult to get someone to agree to take leadership roles. I heard a story about a junior high football team. A young boy, a seventh grader, came out for the team. He had never played football before, but he wanted to learn and be part of the team. The coach made them run laps after practice. The older boys were more fit and used to the work outs, but the younger boy wasn't. He was falling way behind, losing hope. An older team mate finished his laps, picked up his water bottle and headed to the locker room. Then, he noticed the tired young boy struggling. He dropped his water bottle, ran out on the field next to the boy and ran beside him, encouraging him to keep on going, saying he would be right beside him till he finished. Do we, as experienced leaders, just leave the field with our water bottle or make comments about the one struggling to get the job done? Let us choose to be an encourager, helper, and tutor. Let us be the back patter, not the back biter. I believe that if the inexperienced leaders knew we were there to help, not find fault, we might find more willing leaders.

Last fall in Des Moines, Iowa our NGC Board of Directors met and voted to increase per capita dues from 50 cents to one dollar, effective June 2016. Most members do not realize that 50 cents are included in their club dues that their state forwards to NGC. NGC raised the dues to 50 cents in 1995. We all know that the 50 cents of 1995 doesn't go very far in 2015. Let me assure you that your leaders on the national level have trimmed our expenses in every way we could. We have reduced our headquarter's staff. We no longer send printed materials to our board of directors, but, instead, require them to use email. We have reduced paper use and postage by requiring board members to print their meeting agendas and copies of budgets. However, there comes a time when we cannot make the income match the out go. We recognize that most of you have faced this fact in your clubs and states also. We are blessed that many of our major expenses are covered by our Restricted Funds, such as the maintenance of our Headquarters and grounds and the Scholarship Fund. But these restricted funds are just that – restricted for specific use by the donors. We acknowledge that some funds have large balances, but we are restricted to using only 5% of the fund value. Now we all understand that if we cannot meet the budget using 5% of the value of the fund, but instead use 6%, we reduce the fund further. It then fails to generate the money needed for next year. The less money you have, the less interest you make. We ask that you approve this increase.

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If you have any questions, please know you can contact me, and I will try to answer them. Our organization is a wonderful educational and service organization. When we join forces across our nation, add our dollars together, we accomplish great things. We replant forests, aid in damage from mud slides, hurricanes, tornadoes, forest fires, and help bring clean water to small villages in South America. We teach the young, we educate ourselves through our four schools, we improve our communities, and we honor our armed forces. We are indeed a force for good and we are **MAKING A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE**.

Love, Linda

NGC SCHOOLS NEWS

Greg Pokorski, ES, GS and LD Schools Coordinator

NGC's Schools Committees thank all those who conducted, attended or promoted school courses or refreshers in 2014. Congratulations to those who became Consultants in 2014.

Consultants are reminded to be aware of your Consultant status. It is important that you and your State Schools Chairmen keep track of your school and refresher records so that personal, state and national records can be kept in sync. To maintain good standing in any school, you must refresh your certificate by the end of the fifth calendar year following receiving your last refresher credit. Consultants may refresh for credit as often as once each calendar year.

Upon completion of four refreshers you become a Master Consultant. State Schools Chairmen should periodically review records to be sure they are current, and periodically remind Consultants of their status and when they need to refresh and where they can refresh.

We hope you are planning schools and refreshers in 2015. Coordinating such educational opportunities with your Arbor Day and National Garden Week observances and with state and regional meetings is an excellent way to share local, state, regional and national levels of garden club with the public and to make a world of difference by offering education about how our environmental, gardening and landscape design choices matter. Your state and national schools chairmen can assist you.

Tri-Refreshers are scheduled for Mexico, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Kentucky (NGC Convention in Louisville) and Florida. Only eligible Consultants can receive refresher credit from these events, but do consider making them available to a broader audience for their educational value.

GARDENING STUDY SCHOOLS

Greg Pokorski, Chairman

The Gardener's Weed Identification Rule: While weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it's a valuable plant.

Gardening. Study. School. People still frequently get this wrong. If we are to achieve name recognition, we need to achieve constancy and accuracy in the use of our name.

Gardening Study School is a series of four courses, each made up of six classes with a total of at least ten hours of instruction. Five classes in each course are prescribed by the curriculum and one is a supplemental (elective) subject. This is where you can get creative. Learn about something not covered in the prescribed classes or more detail about something than is covered in other classes. Utilize an interesting and dynamic speaker or instructor to cover their area of expertise. Study a flower, fruit, vegetable or tree in detail. Study pollinators (utilize NGC's partnership with Crown Bees). Study garden tools (utilize NGC's partnership with Ames). Study weeds. Study an interesting book on gardening or gardens. You are limited only by your imagination. In addition to the suggested subjects listed in the NGC GSS Handbook, you are free to present other subjects to your Accrediting Chairman for approval. If you have a great subject and/or a great instructor you don't have to be limited by the one-hour time requirement. That is a minimum – you are free to do more.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES SCHOOL

Judy Newman, Chairman

Where can a State and Local School Chairman go to get help? What needs to be done and when? What are the duties of each of the chairmen? There are so many questions and concerns.

The answer is to read and study the Handbook for Environmental Studies School and the NGC website. The Handbook contains general Information about the School, the curriculum for each of the four courses, course requirements, how to become a Consultant, obtaining Refresher Credits, and most important for the State and Local Chairmen, a list of Duties for all of the school personnel. It is most important that the State and Local Chairmen collaborate, checking and rechecking to ensure that each of the duties on the check list have been completed in a timely manner. The duties listed for each chairmanship may or not apply in your state. It is important that someone is designated to complete each of the duties in a timely manner.

Remember the School NGC Accrediting Chairman and NGC School Chairmen are ready to assist in any way.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN SCHOOLS

Jane Bersch, Chairman

My congratulations and sincere appreciation to those state Presidents who chose to hold Landscape Design Schools Course/s during their administration. They have truly fulfilled the NGC Mission Statement which states, ***“National Garden Clubs, Inc. provides education, resources and national networking opportunities for its members to promote the love of gardening, floral design, civic and environmental responsibility.”*** Those who attended can make a world of difference with their choices in landscaping not only their yard, but areas of their communities.

I request the current Presidents to remind their state’s incoming President to notify the Landscape Design Committee of any new chairman of Landscape Design Schools and Landscape Design Consultants Council. Those who will need to know of any change are myself (Janebersch@aol.com) and the current LD Councils Chairman/Newscape Editor, Victoria Bergesen (victoriabergesen@gmail.com). An outgoing LDS state Chairman or LD Consultants Council Chairman might do this notification as well.

States which have scheduled Landscape Design Schools in the spring of 2015 are applauded. They include Course IV in Fulton, MO on March 25-27; Course I in New Haven, CT on March 24-26; Course III in East Brunswick, NJ on April 14-15, 17; Course II in Chappaqua, NY on April 15-17; Course II in Santa Rosa, CA on April 23-24; Course IV in Louisville, MS on April 28-30; Course IV in Ann Arbor, MI on May 7-8; and Course I in Morgantown, WV on May 20-22. Pennsylvania is offering a Tri-Refresher in Erie, PA on April 19-21. Attendees at NGC Convention in Louisville, KY have the opportunity to refresh at the Tri-Refresher taking place from May 12 to May 18. I encourage State Presidents and Landscape Design Schools chairmen to urge garden club members to take

advantage of these opportunities to become more knowledgeable gardeners. In turn, they can educate their community to make wise choices.

FLOWER SHOW SCHOOLS and SYMPOSIUMS

Dorothy Yard, FSS Chairman

Chairmen should be diligent in providing Evaluation Forms to all attendees of Flower Show Schools and Symposiums. There should be a separate form for each instructor. Students need to be reminded of the importance of using these forms to provide feedback, not only about the effectiveness of the speakers, but also about the facility and committee’s efficiency. After completion, the Chairman must send these forms to the NGC FSS Chairman as soon as possible.

To have sufficient time to prepare for class, students at Flower Show Schools must have the outlines of the topics in their hands 4-6 weeks prior to the class. For this to happen, the Instructors must send the materials to the Chairmen 6-8 weeks ahead of time. The Chairmen should send the information to the students as soon after that as possible. Frequently, students are reporting that they did not receive study guides ahead of time. This is not acceptable and puts the students at a disadvantage when trying to become familiar with the new terms and concepts.

Judges are reminded to keep up to date on refreshers. Part of your responsibility is to obtain judging and exhibiting credits as needed to have your credentials in order well in advance of attending the refresher event. Credentials Chairmen should not have to remind you to send in your credentials or wait for last minute credits to be confirmed.

To be a well-informed, competent judge, one must be constantly reviewing information found in Handbook and *The National Gardener*, as well as learning on one’s own. Attend Judge’s Council meetings, flower shows, schools and symposiums. Visit garden centers and art museums; read books and magazine articles that pertain to horticulture and artistic design. A conscientious judge attends every school and symposium possible, not just the mandatory one every three years. Judges owe it to the exhibitors to be the best they can be.

PRESIDENT'S PROJECT --

Debbie Skow, NGC Native Bees/
BeeGAP/Crown Bees Partnership Chairman
NGC Environmental Concerns Committee

Adopt - A - Bee Program...a BeeGAP Option for Your Club!

Looking for a way to introduce your club and community to the NGC President's Project BeeGAP (Gardeners Adding Pollinators)? NGC partner Crown Bees makes it easy for you with its Adopt-A-Bee Program.

How does Adopt-A-Bee work? NGC partner Crown Bees states: By placing a house and wood trays in a public area, Crown Bees believes more people will learn about gentle mason bees. Having you as the local expert ensures the house is placed wisely, there is adequate mud for the bees to use, the bees are released at the correct time, and the bees are protected once they've finished their work.

To participate in Adopt-A-Bee:

1. Consider where you want to place the bees. Suggestions include public parks and gardens, schools and plant nurseries. Spring and summer pollen within a 300 feet and mud within 50 feet are important.
2. Approach management and explain the BeeGAP program. Invite management to visit Crown Bees' website www.crownbees.com to learn about gentle mason bees. Encourage viewing Joe Lamp'l's Growing a Greener World episode link on the home page.
3. Either pay for or share the costs of materials. Including your garden club and the entity you're partnering with on the plaque provided is an excellent way to promote your club's participation and education role.
4. Complete the Adopt-A-Bee form online.
5. Cost is \$70 plus shipping. Call Crown Bees with your credit card (425) 949-7954.
6. When you receive the complete set, store the bees in your refrigerator within the HumidiBee. Consider placement of the house and a hole in the ground for the bees to mine mud from.
7. If partnering with another entity, keep your co-sponsor involved with what your club is doing. After each bee season is complete, store trays in the BeeGuardian bag in a warm place.
8. Harvest bees in the fall which can in turn pay for the initial set up costs by participating in Crown Bees' annual Bee Buyback Program.

9. Continue the awareness program as long as you wish.

What you'll receive:

- BeeWorks Chalet or Cottage Kit.
- Bees for the correct season.
- Plaque and laminated signs that will hopefully bring visiting gardeners closer to the house to learn about your bees.
- Instructions for setting up your Adopt-A-Bee house available online at www.crownbees.com.

You can sign up to adopt a bee at www.crownbees.com to increase awareness about the importance of native bees. Also, please consider signing up for Crown Bees monthly e-newsletter Bee-Mail to learn what to do for your bees throughout the year and to remain informed about the plight of bees.

HORTICULTURE

Shirley Basista, Committee Member

Extending the Growing Season and An Edible Planting Design

Many NGC members may still be harvesting vegetables from their cold frames. People living in many northern regions can have a fall and winter garden without the added expense of a heated structure. Late fall and winter gardens are also low maintenance; there is no need to water, weed or fertilize from December to March. Harvesting is the only "chore," and there are more than 30 types of cold-hardy vegetables and herbs available.

The key to success is to use the right season extenders to protect the plants. Regardless of the season extender used, there are two important things to remember when planting fall and winter edibles. First, you must know the approximate date of the first hard frost in your area and second, you need to know the number of days to maturity for each crop planted.

Some season extenders are:

- * Cloches--known as hot caps, they are miniature greenhouses. Usually used to shield crops for 1-2 days from the elements or as an incubator to shelter tender crops up to 6 weeks.
- * Row covers--are gauzy materials that are effective at insulating newly seeded or transplanted veggies from light frost, cold weather and pests.
- * Cold frames--bottomless box with a translucent top that captures solar energy. They create a microclimate around

plants, sheltering them from bad weather. The sloped top should face south for maximum light exposure.

* Mini hoop tunnels--they are workhorses in the garden sheltering tender small plants in spring and tall kales, etc. in late autumn and winter. The mini hoops are made from 1/2" PVC pipe and the material of the covering is determined by the season and crop it is protecting.

NGC members may already be thinking about spring and how they can have edible gardens that look as good as they taste. *fine Gardening Magazine* recently featured raised bed gardening with various types of plants. Of the four examples, the five foot, sided, triangle caught my eye. The triangle bed had three 'Red Russian' kale in the center of the bed which was surrounded by 'Triple Curled' parsley (about nine plants) and in each of the points of the triangle 'Red Marietta' marigold was planted. Choose only one variety of each plant for a greater impact. The fine texture of the parsley and marigolds helped the puckered-skinned kale shine as the focal point. It was truly a beautiful combination of edibles and flowers.

Happy winter harvesting and dreaming of a beautiful Edible Garden in 2015.

Info from "fine Gardening" Magazine

NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS

CONSERVATION PLEDGE

I PLEDGE TO PROTECT AND CONSERVE THE NATURAL
RESOURCES OF THE PLANET EARTH AND PROMISE
TO PROMOTE EDUCATION SO WE MAY
BECOME CARETAKERS OF OUR
AIR, WATER, FOREST, LAND AND WILDLIFE.

MEMBERSHIP

Sandra H. Robinson, President-Elect
Membership Chairman

The Be's of Membership

"The key to life is accepting challenges. Once someone stops doing this he's dead." Bette Davis

Be willing to accept new challenges. The fear of failure, of embarrassment, of "looking bad" inhibits our ability to succeed. Mistakes are part of the learning process.

Be willing to work with new people and projects. Working with different people improves our social skills and opens our mind to different approaches.

Be willing to accept a leadership position. The path not taken often is regretted for a lifetime. Accept new roles as opportunities, not duties.

Be open to new ideas while developing your leadership skills. All true leaders know how to compromise and be diplomatic.

Be kind. Garden club members are caring, compassionate, curious, and creative people who love their communities and gardens.

Be ready to grow, as a gardener, as a member, as a leader.

Be an engaged, informed, and enthusiastic member. The power of one multiplied accomplishes great things.

Be willing to accept change. Be open to suggestions and implement those that will improve your organization.

Be active in recruiting new members. Healthy clubs have active members.

President's Travel Schedule

March 23-25	South Atlantic Region, Hilton Head, SC
Mar. 29- April 1	Ohio Convention
April 13-16	Missouri Convention
April 17-18	Nebraska Convention
April 19-20	Illinois Convention
April 23-25	South Carolina Convention
April 26-28	Virginia Convention
May 1-2	Kansas Convention
May 12-18	NGC Convention, Louisville, Kentucky

NEWS FROM REGIONAL DIRECTORS

PACIFIC REGION Elaine Gunderson, Director

As we enter 2015, State and Local Clubs are planning the 2015 - 2016 year.

A garden club should be asking itself, where are we headed? What are our successes and what did not work out as planned? Are our programs meeting the desires and needs of the majority of the members? Is there some aspect of horticulture, design or the environment for everyone? Are we reaching out to existing non-NGC groups to partner on a worthy project?

After State and Local Club programs and projects are decided, set a goal and a target date. Ask members and friends to join you in attending your programs, flower shows, garden tours or plant sales. The key to a successful club is an active membership. Participation makes it happen. When your goal is reached, remember to celebrate. Reward your success.

PACIFIC REGION TEAM

Congratulations to each of the Pacific Region States. Pacific Region did it. For the first time in 10 years, each State submitted a report of how it "made a difference" and how it "expanded horizons by planting seeds of knowledge and stewardship." Pacific Region Director's Project Chairman Sandy Ford is compiling the results. Isn't this exciting? Three PR States will win monetary PR Director Awards and now Pacific Region will be able to apply for NGC Regional Award of Excellence #24. Pacific Region is a TEAM – Together Each Accomplished More.

PACIFIC REGION CONVENTION

April is coming and Pacific Region's 72nd Convention in Eugene, Oregon, April 20-22, 2015. Spring is a beautiful time of year.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION Beverly Heidelberger, Director

As a new year begins we look forward to new beginnings, or do we? We may want to change our lives but they always seem to turn out to be the same. But one thing we can count on in the New Year is that the weather will always change. Each year gives us a variety of unpredictable weather and that is why gardeners use winter to try to think ahead into the New Year for plants that can survive the good weather and the bad weather. Thinking ahead can help your plans turn into a successful adventure.

"If you always do what you always did, you will always get what you always got." Therefore, now is the time to think about a "new way" to enhance your garden clubs. Think of new ideas for members to become more involved in the conservation of the earth, promote horticulture education, to get new members and to understand and accept the reasoning behind the NGC

dues going up to \$1.00. The Rocky Mountain Region leaders will make new choices to enhance each garden club and their members by using new and innovative ideas. Maybe something as simple as choosing a different time or a different day to have the club meetings could increase your membership.

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION Nancy Voyles, Director

The fall has been a busy time in the SCR states. Texas and New Mexico had Blue Star Memorial Dedications. The Home Garden Club of Roswell, New Mexico dedicated a Blue Star Marker at the General Douglas L McBride Veteran's Cemetery in November. NGC Blue Star Memorial Chairman Andrea Little attended the ceremony. The Fannie Marchman Garden Club of Mineola, Texas dedicated the Blue Star Memorial Marker at the Mineola Nature Preserve in November. This director was privileged to be a part of that dedication.

Clubs in Texas have celebrated anniversaries. The Uvalde Garden Club observed a 70th anniversary and Dig & Dream of El Lago celebrated their 50th.

"Blossom the Bee" has been busy in our region with new members and new clubs. She was in attendance at the NMGC Fall Meeting in Santa Fe, NM. "Blossom" aka Diane Peterson shared many ideas about attracting new members. I wish everyone could have seen our "Blossom." She was a busy bee. We will give a full report at the NGC Convention in Louisville, KY.

Even though the states have been busy with fall meetings, they will not be taking a break this winter. They will have flower show, environmental and landscape schools this winter. Arkansas will have their annual flower show in February. This is the 24th year to have a show in cooperation with the Flower and Garden Show in Little Rock. What dedication!

The Cross Plains GC of TX participated in an after school program at the local library. Approximately 30-40 students were involved in activities that allowed students to "dig in the dirt." One of the projects was learning about growing gladiolus. This was a fun time for both students and garden club members. This is how we are Learning, Living and Leading in SCR.

CENTRAL REGION Gerry Ford, Director

All states in Central Region are sharing "Gardener's Talents."

Illinois began a project creating Butterfly and Bee Safe Havens using ramp infields at highway exits and interchanges. These are smaller areas that can be planted and maintained naturally without mowing. These high visibility infields create a great opportunity to educate and create beautiful mini panoramas. This project will revive GCI's relationship with IDOT, provide a project for clubs throughout the state, revitalize GCI's commitment to roadsides improvement and help the pollinators.

Indiana has distributed \$8400 for its "TREES for LIFE" State Project. Tree grants were awarded and trees have been planted in public spaces all around the state. The response has been far-reaching; some community Park Departments have been spurred to go ahead with planting trees and renewing spaces long overlooked. They awarded 20 \$1,000 scholarships to students at Purdue, Ball State, and Indiana U.

Michigan has been successful with their Leadership Seminars to member clubs. "We are Connected" is an overview of our organization showing how each is connected to NGC, Region, State and Districts. Modules on Awards, Preparing Yearbook/Directory, Membership, Effective Meetings are a few of the topics covered. "When enthusiastic, creative people have an opportunity to work together identifying specific needs, innovative ideas and solutions are found," stated Michigan President Picciotti.

Gateway Greening continues to be strong with neighborhood gardens in vacant lots and around the business areas in Missouri. The large (average attendance of 80) Children's Garden Club in St. Louis area has good leadership and the involvement of community businesses. When fairy gardens are created by the children, there is a sense that children are our fairies of the future.

An idea from Wisconsin -- the use of Go To Meeting (internet program) for committee meetings, reducing long drives across the state for a short meeting.

Iowa is stressing projects which utilize plants native to Iowa's Zone 5 climate. Earthkind Roses grow especially well in Zone 5.

DEEP SOUTH REGION Gloria Blake, Director

Here we are in 2015, and I wish you all a very "Happy and Healthy New Year." With the holidays, garden club activities slow down as we celebrate with family and friends. It is now "full steam ahead" as we plan for the DS & state conventions, spring flower shows, etc.

Alabama – GCA is very excited to host the DS 2015 Convention in Birmingham, AL on March 24-26. The theme is "Sweet Home Alabama." Excellent programs and speakers, with a tour of beautiful Birmingham Botanical Gardens are planned. "Y'all come!"

Florida – FFGC members celebrated a historic victory with the passing of Amendment 1, the Water & Land Conservation Amendment, by 75 percent of the vote. Members worked diligently to have petitions signed to get the amendment on the ballot and passed.

Georgia – After a year of planning with the GA Building Authority, the Garden Club of Georgia obtained permission to place a Blue Star Marker at the Pete Wheeler Veteran's Plaza of Floyd Veteran's Memorial building across the street from the GA State Capitol in Atlanta.

Louisiana– The cleanest City Contest is once again underway. District judging takes place Mar. 16-20, and state judging will take place April 7-17. As LGCF has said, when you enter you have already won, because it shows the desire of the community to want to be liter free and beautiful.

Mississippi– GCM held two Blue Star Memorial dedications in November -- in Clarksdale and Diamondhead. Diamondhead's was in a subdivision park which must house every veteran who lives on the coast, and they all arrived in "Gulf carts."

Tennessee – A remarkable event held on Dec. 5, 2014 was the TFGC's celebration of the 90th anniversary of Lenoir City Garden Club. The club received proclamations from the governor and the mayor. Lenoir Garden Club continues to be a vital part of the community in many ways.

CENTRAL ATLANTIC REGION Mary Warshauer, Director

The Destination was Delaware! Dover Downs definitely was the place to be October 26-28th! Mary Noel and Lisa Arni led their team of hardworking garden club members with enthusiasm and efficiency to ensure a successful 2014 CAR conference. Congratulations to the members of the Delaware Federation of Garden Clubs.

Highlights of the conference:

- The educational workshops were well attended, standing room only.
- "Let's Talk," moderated by Wanda Davis, addressed concerns and issues for the local garden club. Participation level was highly energetic, very well received.
- Ohio's Nancy Fenton from the Western Hills Garden Club was named the CAR 2014 Perennial Bloom winner.
- Mary Lou Sewell, NCA, received the NGC Member Award of Honor for the Central Atlantic Region.
- GCNJ's Brenda Bingham is the 2015 Vision of Beauty "Designer of the Year."
- CAR awarded two \$2500 scholarships to very deserving students. The recipients were from the NCA and the FGC-MD.
- GCFP extended an invitation to the 2015 CAR conference "A Floral Explosion" October 25-27, in Gettysburg, PA.
- State presidents returned home with many awards to share with their garden clubs.

It is evident that the garden clubs of the Central Atlantic Region are devoted to their communities. They continue to RALLY so that our Region continues to prosper.

NEW ENGLAND REGION **Maria Nahom, Director**

2014 was a busy, fulfilling year for our Region and 2015 promises to be the same. 2014 also brought us a great loss. Elaine Dates passed away on November 18, shortly after one of our most successful Symposiums, which she chaired. In addition to all the positions Elaine held in her State and Region, she served three terms as the NGC Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Chairman. At the time of her death she was Vice Chairman of the NGC Nominating Committee. There is a large void in our Region.

Vermont in the fall was a lovely location for our 80th Annual Meeting. To celebrate the occasion some of our members did a skit, complete with furs, hats and gloves to “re-enact” the first Annual Meeting in 1934.

New Hampshire continues their important work with Mason Bees and planting pollinators, along with other on-going projects. They are also in the planning stage of hosting the 2015 NER Annual Meeting at Portsmouth’s beautiful harbor.

Part of Maine’s Fall Conference was a guided tour of Coastal Maine Botanical Garden by Bill Cullina, the executive director and past NGC Award of Honor winner. President Linda Nelson was in attendance.

Rhode Island has instituted a Community Projects Award Program, setting aside \$2,000 annually to fund clubs’ projects. Some of the many projects have been Blue Star Markers, work at a nature preserve and bird sanctuary, and planting a wild-flower meadow.

“Flora in Winter” was the beautiful flower show put on by affiliate Tower Hill Botanical Garden, with the help of our Federation in Massachusetts. They were also involved with The Massachusetts Horticultural Society’s “Festival of Trees.”

The Native Tree Contest has given Connecticut hundreds of new trees so far, all native pollinators. Many backyard habitats have been registered with the National Wildlife Federation in that contest.

We all look forward to another year of [Making a World of Difference](#).

SOUTH ATLANTIC REGION **Martha Morgan, Director**

The theme of the past two years in the South Atlantic Region has been “A World of Opportunities-Be Involved,” and the five states in the South Atlantic Region, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia, certainly have responded. There have been Schools, Symposiums, Workshops, Camps and many other activities spotlighting the educational opportunities we have through National Garden Clubs, Inc. In addition, flower shows have been held throughout the states, including a Regional Flower Show in Roanoke. Our individu-

al clubs work with all age levels – preschool through senior adults, as we share the love of gardening and the message of the responsibility we have to be stewards of our beautiful country so future generations may also enjoy it. We have emphasized the importance of protecting our pollinators, especially the bees and butterflies, for we know that without these useful insects, our flowers, trees, and most importantly, our food supplies would be endangered. While much has been accomplished, we know the need is ongoing for educating our members and the public on many important matters.

We in the South Atlantic Region look forward to welcoming the members of National Garden Clubs, Inc. to Kentucky, as the National Convention convenes in Louisville in May, 2015. Ann Fiel will serve as Chair, with Joan Wipperman as her Co-Chair. Their committees are hard at work planning events that will be both educational and FUN!! Y’all come!

IN MEMORIAM

● It is with a heavy heart that we must pass along the information of the passing of **Elaine Dates** following a battle with cancer. Elaine passed away November 18, 2014. She was a NGC Flower Show Judge, Vermont’s Flower Show Chairman and Vermont FSS Symposium Chairman and a former President of the Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont, Inc. She was currently serving on the NGC Board of Directors as the Nominating Committee Vice Chairman and Youth Committee Coordinator. Elaine will surely be missed in the garden club world.

Notes of condolence can be sent to her husband and family, Steven Dates, 145 South Pointe Drive, South Burlington, VT 05403-4452.

● It is with sadness we share the news that Regina Brown’s husband **Ken Brown** passed away. Both Ken and Regina were former Presidents of the Delaware Federation of Garden Clubs and dedicated garden club members. Regina Brown is currently on the NGC Finance Committee.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests contributions to the Smyrna-Clayton Ministerium, 118 W. Commerce St., Smyrna, DE 19977. Condolences may be sent to Regina Brown, 116 N. Main Street, Smyrna, DE 19977-1428.

● **Della Colver Barry** passed away on December 2, 2014. Della was a former President of the Alaska Garden Clubs, a former NGC Regional Director and currently was serving on the board as Environmental Concerns/Legislation Vice Chairman. Della was also a Golden Circle member of National Garden Clubs. Della had a wonderful sense of humor and will be missed by all.

Cards of condolence may be sent to her family at her house at 2123 Solstice Circle, Anchorage, AK 99503.

● **Jeff Herman**, son of Diane Herman now serving on the NGC Membership Committee, passed away on December 5, 2014 after a 17 month battle with a brain tumor. Jeff was a Forester and Superintendent of a California Park.

A memorial service will be held in California sometime in March 2015. Condolences may be sent to Diane Herman, 1027 Willett Drive, Johnstown, PA 15905-1237.

A column devoted to reviews of websites, with recommendations for those of interest to garden club members.

www.invasiveplantatlas.org - The visitor will find a comprehensive, easy-to-navigate site that covers the following topics: aquatics, grasses, herbs, shrubs, trees, vines, and much more. A clear definition will set forth exactly what the term means. Non-native invasives are becoming a greater problem in all of our states, as we are all too well aware. There are videos that are well done and interesting. The one this website critic was particularly interested in was "The 5 Worst Invasive Species in the Everglades." The video was based on a cover story that ran in TIME magazine, and included wonderful photos with informative audio. (You can click on "Skip Ads" to avoid the accompanying advertisement at the beginning.) The video covered both plants and wildlife, such as Cuban Tree Frogs, Brazilian Pepper Trees, Giant Snails (you have to see these!), Lionfish, Pythons and many more species. There are other videos and good coverage of this topic that is a challenging one throughout the US. This is a site that is worth a visit.

www.blackkow.com - You will hear a cow mooing as you visit this site, and that's kind of fun. The motto for Black Kow is "The Mature Manure" and we all know that it is a wonderful, essential product. The motto always states, "Perfectly Natural. Naturally Perfect." There are gardening tips, ways to use composted Black Kow, suggestions from experts, project ideas and helpful hints and, one of my favorite components of the site, a photo gallery with pictures from experienced Black Kow users. An invaluable section is the LIST OF LINKS for gardening products, services, seeds, publications, and so on. You will learn how Black Kow is made, view Other Products, Butterfly Gardens information, etc. For the uses of Black Kow, the following are included: Planting tomatoes in a Black Kow bag, Roses, Flower Beds, Trees and Shrubs, Fruit Trees and Fighting Nematodes. These are videos and are very informative. You will learn more about these Black Kow products: Mushroom Compost, Composted Chicken Manure, Black Velvet Plant Soil, Black Kow Topsoil and Black Kow Peat. All in all, a site all gardeners should visit.

www.fusionflowers.com - A site that originates in the United Kingdom, with award-winning contemporary floral designs as the focus. You will learn more about books and accessories that floral designers find necessary and/or desirable. You can subscribe for a print version, published six times a year, or subscribe to a digital edition. There are step-

by-step tutorials, and 84 pages (according to the site) of design information. Floral designers are interested in keeping up with the trends and cutting-edge techniques, and this is a magazine to consider, whether you opt for the print or digital publications.

Worth mentioning....

www.growingagreenerworld.com, soil prep for the vegetable gardener.

www.coralrestoration.org, headquartered in Key Largo, Florida, an amazing project to restore the reefs off Key West and around the Florida peninsular.

www.boxwoodsociety.org, everything you want to know about this favorite landscape plant.



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A current list of the 2013-2015
BOARD OF DIRECTORS Roster changes and additions
appears in the Board Member Section on the
NGC website

Submissions for KIT are due April 1, 2015

Phyllis White, KIT Editor, gardens@bresnan.net
Jan Sillik, Assistant Editor, gluegunjan@aol.com

APPLICATIONS FOR NGC PRESIDENT'S SPECIAL PROJECT

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6. NEED HELP? PROJECT COORDINATOR: MARIONH@BELLSOUTH.NET

ALL ENTRIES MUST BE POST MARKED BY **MARCH 31, 2015**

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