



# Keeping In Touch

November 2015 - January 2016



*Sandra H. Robinson*

*2015-2017 President  
National Garden Clubs, Inc.*

## In This Issue

- The President's Greeting and Travel Schedule
- NGC Schools News
- National Wildlife Federation Certification
- Million Pollinator Garden Challenge
- Legislative Action
- Member Services
- *The Frightened Frog*
- Bee a Wildlife Action Hero
- Membership
- NGC Website and Facebook
- SAGE and ROSES
- Blue Star / Gold Star
- Natural Disaster USA Fund
- NGC Life Members
- Take a Byte
- In Memoriam
- News from the Regions

We are members of several communities during our lifetime. We are born into a community, often move to another for school or job, and choose a different one for retirement. One definition of community is a group sharing common characteristics or interests and perceived or perceiving itself distinct in some respect from the larger society within which it exists. Garden club is a community joined by choice with shared common interests, goals, and the desire to make a difference. A strong sense of community benefits members and neighborhoods.

How do you view your garden club? Does garden club play a significant role in your life? One lady shared her story of isolation in a new state following the unexpected death of her husband. She often went days without speaking to anyone with a growing state of depression often asking "Why go on?", until she was invited to a garden club meeting while standing in the grocery checkout line. This random invitation may have saved the life of an active, hardworking, connected member. She found friends, family, and a community through her garden club membership.

Why are we so reluctant or slow to invite others to join our clubs? We know and enjoy the benefits of membership and the work accomplished by our garden club "communities." The reasons people join organizations are well known, including to meet new people, to share a common interest with other like-minded individuals, to learn, to travel, to make a difference, and to network. What people find after joining garden club depends on how they are included in our "community." Reach out to others who are recently retired or new to your area, are recently married, divorced, or single, or "empty-nest" or searching for a way to engage with others who share the same passion for a cause or issue. One truth always remains the same, people often wait to be asked instead of stepping forward and saying, "I would love to join".

Garden clubs are invested in the livelihood of their communities and members' lives. Are you searching for new ideas or ways to fill the coffers for projects? Are you networking with other organizations who may share your interest in a program? One small club reached out to the local Harley Davidson dealership for help in fundraising for a Blue Star Memorial Marker. The dealership offered advice on organizing a benefit ride, advertised to patrons, and allowed riders to meet at the shop for registration before leaving on a 150 mile ride through the mountains to view the fall leaves before returning for lunch and silent auction. Riders paid per bike with an extra fee for a second rider. The club provided lunch, entry gift of flag pin, and had items for sale. Each additional rider received 12 flower bombs to toss along the route. Next spring pollinators will enjoy the wildflowers along the trail and the club will install a new marker.

Gardening crosses all political, economic, and geographical boundaries. Prison officials around the world are recognizing the cost saving, health and physical benefits of vegetable and flower gardens grown by inmates. Prison gardens are places for those who are separated from society to heal.

Garden Time, initiated in 2010 as a President's Special Project of Vera Bowen and The Federated Garden Clubs of Rhode Island with Landscape Architect Kate Lacouture, began in a maximum security prison with 11 men serving life sentences. The program has

extended to the men's medium security prison with an herb garden for the 1200 inmates. The women's minimum security prison garden provides hands on training for possible future employment upon release.

I was privileged to visit the garden at Men's Max with Vera and Kate. The men proudly shared their role in planning and tending the garden, their plans for next year, and how their eating habits have changed. The mesclun greens, arugula, herbs, and tomatoes are added to the iceberg lettuce salads for the 400+ inmates. The herbs are used throughout the year but add a special touch and flavor to the annual Thanksgiving meal.

One young inmate laughed while rolling herbs, raspberries, green pepper slices, and nasturtium into a mesclun leaf saying he would never have eaten any of this when on the street. As we shared one of the watermelons, some raspberries, and herbs grown for the prison's kitchen, they expressed their appreciation for the program and their gratitude to Vera and Kate for their dedication. Garden Time provides an in-depth curriculum covering garden design, soil care, organic gardening and plant biology. The men are expected to study the topics before class time and often challenge Vera and Kate if they misstate a fact. During the winter months the inmates work on the garden design, plant selection, and lesson plans for the next growing season.

Vera and Kate visit each garden two days a week for two hours. For the men serving life sentences the garden is a place of healing and peace. All expressed the desire to spend more than the allotted 4 hours per week working in their favorite place, the garden. I have been invited back for strawberries next season. I would love to share in their harvest as they joyfully work their garden.

Garden clubs truly make a difference in numerous lives and communities. We gain through giving of our time and resources. Recently someone asked why we lament the lost number of members instead of celebrating those we have. Kentucky's state motto is "United we stand, divided we fall." This also holds true for our organizations. Don't be afraid to embrace new ideas or projects. Change happens daily in nature, in our lives, and hopefully, in our clubs. Grow by challenging yourself and fellow members as we **Leap into Action**.

*Sandra H. Robinson*

Click here to visit the [NGC website](#) for information about the 2015-2017 President's Projects

PLEASE SHARE THIS ISSUE WITH A MEMBER IN YOUR CLUB

## PRESIDENT'S TRAVEL SCHEDULE

New England Region Portsmouth, NH	Oct. 20-21, 2015
Million Pollinator Garden Kickoff Washington, DC	Oct. 23
Galapagos Island Peru	Oct. 29 - Nov. 6 Nov. 7-11
LXV Standard Flower Show, Art, Flowers & Plants Lima, Peru	Nov. 12-15
Winter Executive Committee Charleston, SC	Jan. 26-27, 2016

**Submissions for KIT are due January 1, 2016**

Phyllis White, KIT Editor, [gardens@bresnan.net](mailto:gardens@bresnan.net)  
Jan Sillik, Assistant Editor, [gluegunjan@aol.com](mailto:gluegunjan@aol.com)

## NGC SCHOOLS NEWS

GREG POKORSKI, ES, GS AND LD SCHOOLS  
COORDINATOR

**Leap into Action** to hold NGC schools and refreshers to provide educational opportunities to your members and to the public. NGC Schools Committee members are here to assist you. Let us know if you have questions. Following hand-book instructions and working with and asking questions of our NGC Schools Chairmen help simplify the process.

Utilize the interactive forms on the NGC website. These are on the public website. You do not need a password to access them. Save them to your computers as pdf documents and transmit them electronically to save time and money. If you have problems with the forms, let us know. Chances are that you do not have a current version of Adobe Acrobat Reader. This is available for free download. Microsoft's new browser, Edge, is not fully functional. Use a different browser.

Schools and refreshers are posted on the website and in **The National Gardener** through schools chairmen and our Schools Secretary, Katie Roth. Work with them rather than going directly to the NGC webmaster or the editor of **The National Gardener**. Plan ahead. The sooner you register schools and events the more publicity you get.

Is your Consultant status due to lapse December 31, 2015? If you don't know, check with your State Schools Chairman.

If your good standing expires December 31 and you have no further opportunity to refresh this year, request an **extension of time to refresh** from your State Schools Chairman. State Chairmen should be sure to handle according to the appropriate Schools Handbook, forwarding the form to the appropriate NGC Chairman on a timely basis. We don't want to see retroactive extension requests after the first of the year. And **we don't want to lose you as a Consultant!** You may be eligible for a one year extension so that you can refresh next year.

Promote NGC schools and your school accomplishments when you write articles for your club, district or state newsletter and when you present programs or workshops by listing your title as NGC Environmental Consultant, NGC Provisional Gardening Consultant, NGC Master Landscape Design Consultant, NGC Four-Star Member, whatever the case may be.

Keep learning, keep growing, keep sharing information by attending NGC schools and refreshers.

## GARDENING STUDY SCHOOLS

BARBARA HADSELL, CHAIRMAN

As you know, Gardening Study Schools are implementing NGC President Sandy Robinson's call to **Leap Into Action** with education being the key. Curriculum revisions were published for new GS Schools that are just starting. GS School Chairmen are being encouraged to include related topics that provide more information about NGC's vision and direction for 2015-17. These would include subjects such as Reconciliation Ecology (the science of inventing, establishing, and maintaining new habitats in places where people live, work, and play), and creating backyard habitats to help endangered species, such as pollinators and amphibians which you read about in the fall issue of **TNG**. In the spirit of conformance and co-operation, other changes include simplifying the school registration process. Upon state approval, a GS School can be registered directly with Katie Roth at headquarters by sending in \$5 with Registration form O5-1 without listing the instructors. This allows that information to be immediately posted on the NGC web site. And, Region Directors and State Presidents are being asked to list on their websites, neighboring states' School information.

Bring Gardening Study School to your state!

## LANDSCAPE DESIGN SCHOOLS

JANE BERSCH, CHAIRMAN

The LDS Committee is excited to learn that both Alaska and Arizona are working on holding a series of the LDS Courses. Congratulations to these two states as they **Leap into Action**. We urge other state presidents to consider providing their members with the educational benefits of the LDS program.

**Newscape** is the newsletter of the NGC Landscape Design Schools. State presidents are requested to forward **Newscape** to their garden club presidents. An even better choice would be to put **Newscape** on the state website. Spreading the word and sharing landscaping projects will inspire members to attend Courses, and Councils and clubs to create landscaping projects. Please send articles and photographs of projects, schools and events to editor Caroline Carbaugh ([CSCarbaugh@verizon.net](mailto:CSCarbaugh@verizon.net)).

A reminder to the State LDS Chairmen: It is your responsibility to forward to Consultants and Master Consultants the NGC LDS cards which your NGC LDS Accrediting Chairman sends to you after a LDS Course or Refresher. Reminding the Consultants and Master Consultants that they are also responsible for keeping track of their records is important. Distribution of the form LDS 16 to all attending any LDS program will help to accomplish this.

The LDS Committee is here to assist any state planning a LDS series. Contact information is found on the NGC website ([www.gardenclub.org](http://www.gardenclub.org)) under Schools, Landscape Design, forms. Do **Leap into Action**.

## ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY SCHOOLS

PAT RUPIPER, CHAIRMAN

What relevance does ESS offer you for your home and lifestyle? In other words, why attend this school? I can share what I believe is true. Classes incorporate garden techniques and landscaping techniques into my local planning and expand my view to the neighboring areas and their practice. I have learned about biomes and how various choices I make can create a positive impact. It has led me to evaluate lawn care practices and choosing/planting of shrubs that help create and sustain wildlife habitat. I'm also evaluating how and what to use to clean my home, catch rainwater, create a rain garden, and raise vegetables. The list grows and grows. I have also been exposed to wonderful programs from people who share their passion of ecological/wildlife issues. My horizons have definitely been expanded. Try a school near you; a great experience is just waiting for you.



On another note, during discussions at our schools Fall Board Meeting in St. Louis, some changes in the process of registering and promoting each of the schools occurred. In the spirit of co-operation and standardization, fill out the top half of form (#1-14). Send the \$5 registration fee and form directly to Katie Roth, the NGC Schools Secretary. **Then, as soon as possible (and meeting the other written requirements), send completed form (#1-14) to your National Accrediting Chairman. The Accrediting Chairman must have the instructors list.** This will allow for quicker national notification of a prospective school.

Please note that in 2013 a new handbook with updates was created. Make sure you have the correct handbook, as some course titles and requirements have changed.

I anticipate the above changes will make for a smoother registration process, and hope that we do not end up with advertised courses being canceled.

## OUR NEW PARTNER, NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION, EXTENDS SPECIAL HABITAT CERTIFICATION FOR NGC MEMBERS!

**BECKY HASSEBROEK, NWF LIAISON**

Previously set to expire the 30th of September, National Wildlife Federation has extended the certification special of \$35 to NGC members through the end of 2015. In addition to the certification and the quality metal sign, you will receive membership in NWF, monthly tips on Gardening for Wildlife, the NWF magazine, and more!

Because this special is for **NGC members only**, you need to access this link through the members-only section of our website. If you don't have access to the Internet, one of your fellow gardeners will be glad to help!

Because you'll be receiving benefits from NWF, you'll be asked to set up an account – just a few questions that you'll be asked. And, you'll need to confirm that you have a minimum number of requirements for a healthy habitat on your property. The site will walk you through this!

Let's show our new partner that we support their mission to "Inspire Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future!" By certifying your gardens – not only at home but in our schools and other public places – you will be helping to educate and encourage those around us!

Questions? Please contact me at [beckyhasse@aol.com](mailto:beckyhasse@aol.com) or 907-456-3066.



**\* STATE AWARD CHAIRMEN \***  
**Submissions for NGC Awards are due 1/15/2016**  
**Check the [NGC Website](#) for Details**  
**and Application Forms**

**PLEASE SHARE THIS ISSUE WITH A CLUB MEMBER**

### NGC 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.



## THE MILLION POLLINATOR GARDEN CHALLENGE

BECKY HASSEBROEK, HABITAT CHAIRMAN

You've been a "Busy Bee" this year and planted for pollinators in your own garden and in your community gardens. Now it's time to stand up and be counted!

Go to [millionpollinatorgardens.org](http://millionpollinatorgardens.org), scroll down and select "Bee Counted," and follow the directions to register your pollinator habitat now! You can also access this link on [gardenclub.org](http://gardenclub.org). Be sure, when asked where you heard about "The Challenge," to select National Garden Clubs, Inc. from the drop-down menu. There's no charge, and you can choose to include as much or little information as you want – you will even have the chance to include pictures, but only if you want to!



You'll join over 185,000 gardeners all over the country who have registered so far and will help us attain that million garden mark sooner than anticipated!

And, when you register your garden and agree to S.H.A.R.E. your space with pollinators, your habitat will show up on the S.H.A.R.E. map. Be sure to check it out – it's amazing!

Please contact Becky Hassebroek with any questions.

## LEGISLATIVE ACTION!

CAROLINE FREY, ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS /  
LEGISLATION CHAIRMAN

How can individual members of National Garden Clubs, Inc. (NGC) make sure they are part of the legislative process? As a non-profit organization, NGC may not lobby, but that does not mean members cannot let their voice be heard through the legislative process.

Members are encouraged in our mission statement to advocate for sound environmental stewardship, and the organization has provided you with tools to assist in this process.

The NGC website is a great place to start when a member wishes to advocate on an environmental issue. When you enter the NGC website you will see on the menu the heading "Clubs." One of the categories under clubs, states Legislative Primer (written by Marion Hilliard) and forms 1293 to 1298 are a virtual, step-by-step outline on how to go about advocating for your position on an environmental issue.

Florida Garden Clubs have written and adopted in January 2015 a position paper on "Fracking" that is an excellent example of what one state voiced as a position on one particular environmental issue.

One of the mission statements of NGC is: to review environmental problems and their possible solutions, to promote environmental literacy and to advocate sound environmental stewardship.

Working together, we can be a force for good and reason, and better stewards of our world.

## MEMBER SERVICES

BARBARA CAMPBELL, CHAIRMAN

With the holiday season approaching, try shopping NGC Member Services. Our new website is very friendly and you can shop online. Log on to [gardenclub.org](http://gardenclub.org) to visit the Shopping Cart and order. Or, call Member Services at 800-550-6007 to place your orders. There are new scarves, the new Monarch butterfly cloisonne pin shown here, bracelets, charms and the fabulous children's book, *The Frightened Frog*, which is leaping out the door. Don't forget your 2016 Vision of Beauty Calendars!





**buy now!**

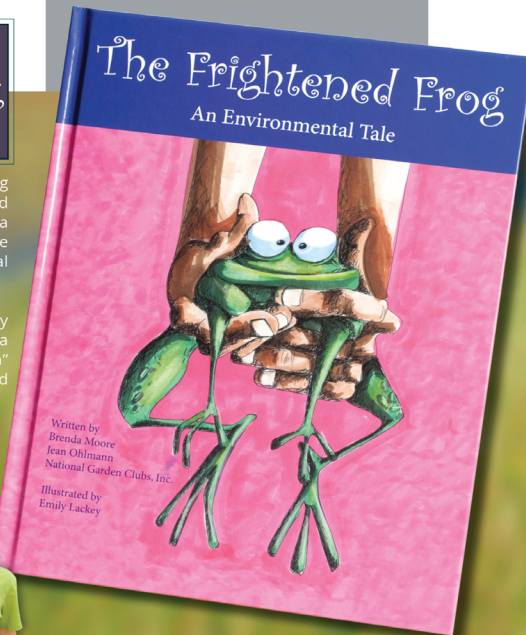
Book and Lesson Plan Available At:  
**[www.shopgardenclub.org](http://www.shopgardenclub.org)**  
(lesson plan is free PDF download)

NEW CHILDREN'S BOOK!

## *The Frightened Frog* NGC 2015-2017 President's Project

**Come** with us on a journey of learning about frogs, amphibians and their habitat! "The Frightened Frog" is a hardcover early-reader book written to educate elementary children about the environmental issues affecting amphibians.

**The** text includes fun frog facts, a story describing the challenges of being a frog, and ways children can "Leap Into Action" to help protect, preserve, and support frog and amphibian habitats in their own backyards!



Written by  
Brenda Moore  
Jean Ohlmann  
National Garden Clubs, Inc.  
Illustrated by  
Emily Lackey

"There's more to frogs than  
you might suppose.  
I'm frightened because we  
have many woes.  
Pesticides, diseases, habitat  
loss, and pollution.  
Where, oh where do we  
find the solution?"

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You might ask, are our frogs really that frightened?  
Or is this alarm something that NGC has heightened?  
Well, I will give some facts so that you'll be enlightened.  
Frog populations are decreasing at an unprecedented rate,  
One-third of the world's amphibians have met a cruel fate,  
That's how many are extinct since the 80's up to this date.  
So promote our teacher's guide and the Frightened Frog book,  
To learn what factors we can change to keep frogs from the hook,  
We need to educate the young to change the amphibians' outlook.  
Encourage them to learn and to change this trend to go forward,  
To apply for The Frightened Frogs president's project award,  
And the outcome of having more amphibians will be the reward!

-Brenda Moore, *The Frightened Frog* Chairman

visit <http://www.gardenclub.org/projects/presidents-projects/the-frightened-frog.aspx>  
to learn about this project and to order the book and teacher's guide  
visit <http://www.gardenclub.org/projects/presidents-projects/service-in-action.aspx>  
to learn about the award related to *The Frightened Frog*



## **BEE A WILDLIFE ACTION HERO! COMMIT TO GARDEN FOR WILDLIFE**

**BECKY HASSEBROEK, HABITAT CHAIRMAN**



It all started with my passion for Backyard Wildlife Habitats! Through our partnership with NWF, I was made aware that "Backyard Wildlife Habitat" was a trademarked phrase and couldn't

be used. I wanted to at least incorporate the initials, so that's where "**Bee a Wildlife Action Hero! Commit to Garden for Wildlife**" was born. (I was told the other day that someone thought these were my initials and couldn't figure out what the "w" was for! But, not so!) Hopefully, our little habitat mascot will help inspire us to garden for wildlife and practice sustainable gardening! We definitely need more heroes in our lives! The commitment form is now available on the website so you can get your club working on your goals and, at the same time, get those award applications to me. Please sign in to our website, select the Projects tab, select President's Projects, then Service in Action on the left hand menu. You can then find out the awards available for ALL of the President's Projects, not just our "Bee," and you can download the required forms. I have been asked our little Bee's name, but at this point he/she is unnamed. Would you help? Please send your suggestions to me at [beckyhasse@aol.com](mailto:beckyhasse@aol.com) and, hopefully, by the next issue, our little mascot will be able to be called by name!

## **MEMBERSHIP -- "MARY, MARY QUITE CONTRARY" DONNA ROUCH, MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

Indeed, Mary Q. Contrary was an avid gardener who was well known for her horticultural creations. However, she moved to a new geographic location and was concerned gardening could be quite different at this new area. She decided to join a garden club near her new home to obtain the necessary education to develop a fabulous garden and to gain new friends. Mary was a quiet person and not very socially engaging. Nervously, she attended her first meeting of the Spade and Hope Garden Club. She was introduced to everyone as a new member. All the smiling faces and loud clapping made her feel welcome. This was exactly what she needed.

Next month's meeting arrived, and Mary was met with a smile from members passing by. As projects were being discussed, Mary was not asked if she had any ideas or opinions. Mary had a wealth of knowledge, but was hesitant to interject. No one asked her to participate on the projects. Mary went home a little underwhelmed but knew it would take time to assimilate. She was bursting with knowledge

and enthusiasm, and she assumed members would contact her to help as soon as they worked out all the details. Next meeting would be different.

The next meeting was not different. Neither was the meeting after that and the meeting after that! Mary Q. Contrary resigned from the club to the surprise of all the Spade and Hope Garden Club members. And sadly, no one called Mary to find out "Why?"

Working to obtaining new members is vitally important for a club's longevity. New members bring new ideas and enthusiasm. People join garden clubs for a variety of reasons, but many resign because they are ignored or their needs are not met. Why are new members ignored? Garden club members are not mean! We have the same difficulty remembering names as the new member. Permanent name tags worn at every meeting and every function will help solve this problem. Name tags remove the barrier to communication.

Every new member should receive a yearbook. A yearbook that contains members' photos next to their vital information aids our ability to associate names to faces. Yearbooks may also have other vital information about the club. This allows the new member to contact club members to learn more about the club, such as meetings, schedule of events, committees, and so forth. Some clubs give a little present to the new member, for example, tulip bulbs or a little plant. This is a heartwarming gesture from the club saying "you are so special to us, we want you to have this gift."

Club stewardship is time, talent and money. We all have these in various amounts. We should be appreciative of each member and new member's contribution. Praising a member more for the amount of money donated, but praising the member less for ability to construct a raised bed, is unconscionable. Time, talent and money are all equal in importance, and without these, we could not exist as a club. We need to remember to thank people for the jobs they do no matter how large or small or how many times they have performed the task. New members may be unsure of their contributions to the organization. A simple "pat on the back" goes a long way in reassuring them.

A new member needs to have ownership in the club. He or she needs a job--something to do--to feel involved, but do not give them an insurmountable job! You don't want to overwhelm them. Initially, keep it simple.

Sending birthday cards to members or calling them to see if everything is going well puts a smile on their face. Small acts of kindness are infectious and can transform a garden club into a "family of gardeners."

## NGC WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK

### POSS TARPLEY, WEBMASTER

There has been some discussion that members are having difficulty navigating the NGC website. Here are some tips:

1. Sign in to the Members Section and you will find links to issues of ***The National Gardener***, the Bylaws and Standing Rules, the Convention minutes, the Fall Board Meeting Manual and the Convention Manuals. Also, click on the sentence "Click for Wildlife Habitat Certification order form" to get the special rate for certification by NWF of your wildlife habitat backyard. The deadline for that special offer has been extended to December 31. *See the story on p. 4.*

Board members have a special password that allows them to access finances, board minutes, administrative forms, the NGC Brand Guide and pages for the Region Directors and the State Presidents. There is also a searchable Directory of all board members for this administration.

2. Consider sending information for the NGC Facebook page to Phyllis White ([gardens@bresnan.net](mailto:gardens@bresnan.net)) or Yvonne McCormick ([yvonne@mail.iastate.edu](mailto:yvonne@mail.iastate.edu)). Pictures of garden club events (with a caption or explanation), pictures of flower show exhibits and/or designs, etc. will be welcomed as postings and news from your area about conservation, environmental projects, and things that interest your garden club will interest others across the world! (Pictures then become the property of NGC.)

#### Technical Tips:

- Use your mouse to select names to get an email address. The email address will appear in the left-hand lower corner of the monitor screen. If you wish to send an email to that person, click on the name, and a form for email will appear for you to fill out and send.
- Occasionally forms cannot be filled out in a browser window, so it is always better to download it and save it to your computer. You should not have trouble filling it out there, saving it and then sending it as an attachment.
- If you use Internet Explorer, make sure it is the latest version. Older versions are not always compatible with our forms and/or documents.
- If you have trouble opening a form in one browser, try a different browser. There are many browsers out there and they react differently when presented with a pdf form.

And, as always...make sure your Adobe Reader is the latest version! Updates are free.

## SAGE AND ROSES

Send **A** Greeting Electronically and  
Remember **Our** Servicemen's **Every** Sacrifice  
(A Blue Star Marker program)

BE WISE – Save money on postage and cards

BE GREEN – Saving paper, saves trees

BE SPEEDY – A click of the computer is faster than a written note.

Make a donation to the SAGE AND ROSES BLUE STAR MARKER FUND and **send it to NGC Headquarters.**

1. a) \$10 to \$25 – one chance for your state to win.  
b) \$26 to \$50 – two chances for your state.  
c) Each additional \$25 - another chance to win.
2. Your name will be on your chance tickets.
3. The winning ticket will be drawn by the president at the NGC Convention.
4. The winning ticket holder decides where the Blue Star Marker will be placed in the state.
5. All monies collected will be spent in the same year for the erection and landscaping of the markers.

## BLUE STAR MEMORIAL MARKERS AND GOLD STAR FAMILIES MEMORIAL MARKERS

ANDREA T. LITTLE, CHAIRMAN

Thank You **Blue Star Team Chairmen** and members for your loyalty and dedication to this wonderful NGC Program and for continuing to honor and support all of our Armed Forces.

The following changes, per Sewah Studios request, to the *2015 Guidelines for Blue Star Memorial Markers Booklet* are effective immediately:

1. Orders will now take from 10-14 weeks to manufacture and deliver due to the increase in the number of Markers being ordered.
2. Sewah's five-year warranty covers the Marker finish against peeling, chipping, cracking, and significant fading. The Warranty is void if the Marker is not restored by Sewah Studios. Structurally, the Markers should last for decades. A switch was made to a powder coating process in 2013 and Sewah Strongly believes from salt testing results, that the paint durability will double if not triple its intended life.
3. When a Dedication Date is known in advance of 12 weeks, Sewah will commit to delivering the Marker by making a "ship by" commitment date. Orders with no Dedication date will be prioritized based on production



workload estimation of 4-6, 6-8, or 8-12 weeks. When there is no Dedication Date (“uncommitted”) orders go beyond Sewah’s estimate, Sewah will notify each customer with a status of their order and either commit to a future date or provide a new estimate. December through March are slow months and a good time to order your Markers.

4. Expect an increase in the prices of the Markers in May, 2016. You are encouraged to order your Markers before the increase.

5. Many states are still using the old order forms. Please utilize the updated Blue Star forms that have a date on the bottom right hand corner of each of the forms of Rev. 5/2015. These forms can be located on the [NGC Website](#). They are also contained in the *2015 Guidelines For Blue Star Memorial Markers and 2015 Gold Star Families Memorial Markers* that can also be downloaded from the NGC Website.

6. The ONLY Time to call Sewah Studios direct is for the Restoration of a Marker. Please call your NGC Blue Star and Gold Star Families Chairman with any and all questions regarding the application process and delivery of all the Markers. Most questions can be answered by reading the *2015 Guidelines*.

7. State presidents, please provide this information to your state Blue Star Chairmen and ask them to provide this information to all garden club Blue Star Chairmen within their respective areas.

8. The above information also applies to the Gold Star Families Memorial Markers Program.

### **GOLD STAR FAMILIES MEMORIAL MARKERS**

In May, 2015 at the NGC Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, the Gold Star Families Memorial Markers Program was approved as an adjunct program to the NGC Blue Star Memorial Markers Program. Mrs. Patti Smith is the Founder and President of Gold Star Families, a not-for-profit organization created to provide support to those who have lost a loved one in service to our country through the United States Armed Forces. All family members representing all conflicts, all branches and all circumstances of death are supported. Family members are referred to as Gold Star, families of the fallen and/or survivors. Their mission is to offer honor, hope and healing through remembering fallen heroes by coming together for various events. While their hero paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom, survivors live daily lives with the pain of this sacrifice. Gold Star families endeavor to provide an atmosphere of emotional and psychological conduit for healing. One way we accomplish this is by providing embroidered memorials for every fallen hero to their surviving family members.

Many people do not know the significance of the Gold Star banner and its meaning. The name Gold Star came from

the custom of families of servicemen hanging a banner called a service flag in the window of their homes. The service flag had a star for each family member in the United States Armed Forces. Living servicemen were represented by a Blue Star, and those who had lost their lives were represented by a Gold Star. For additional information about Gold Star Families, their website is: [Cigoldstar.org](http://Cigoldstar.org) or email [info@cigoldstar.org](mailto:info@cigoldstar.org).

Gold Star Families Memorial Markers Adjunct Program follows virtually the same guidelines as NGC Blue Star Memorial Markers Program with the following exceptions:

1. National Garden Clubs, Inc. will still remain Sponsor for both program (Blue Star and Gold Star).
2. All orders will be approved by the Gold Star Founder/President. Final approval and processing will be done by the NGC Blue Star Memorial Markers Chairman.
3. *2015 Guidelines For Blue Star Memorial Markers* publication will apply, where applicable.
4. Only the Gold Star Families Memorial Marker and the Gold Star Families By-Way Marker are approved for purchase. Highway Memorial Markers are not approved.
5. When a Gold Star Family orders a Gold Star Families Marker, the Gold Star Family will be responsible for all costs related to the purchase, placement and dedication of the Marker(s) to include publications for their advertising campaign. A garden club at any level will always be the sponsor.
6. When a garden club at any level specifically orders a Gold Star Families Memorial or By-Way Marker, the garden club (or whoever or whatever entity/organization such as the American Legion, VFW, etc. donates funds for the Marker) is responsible for paying for the Marker.
7. The NGC Logo at the top of the Memorial Markers will remain the same.
8. The coloring, size of the Markers, and print type will remain the same.
9. Prices for the Gold Star Families Markers will be the same as that of the NGC Blue Star Markers. Sewah Studios will be the sole manufacturer of these Markers. All checks will be made payable to Sewah Studios.
10. The Gold Star Families Markers will bear a GOLD Star; the word ‘Blue’ would be changed to ‘Gold’ where applicable; and the ‘tribute’ wording would read: “A TRIBUTE TO GOLD STAR FAMILIES WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE DEFENDING THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.”
11. Gold Star Families Founder and President is Patti Smith, 6403 N. Talisman Terrace, Peoria IL 61615; email [pattidc@yahoo.com](mailto:pattidc@yahoo.com).

If I can assist in any way, please email me at [littlebruce@msn.com](mailto:littlebruce@msn.com) or call at 508-329-1630; I’m here to serve.

## NATURAL DISASTER USA FUND

Adrienne Langan, Chairman

The NGC Natural Disaster USA Fund was instituted to assist state and local clubs in their efforts to restore garden related sites that have been devastated by natural disasters caused by hurricanes, tornados, earthquakes, ice storms, floods, and wildfires, etc. This Fund, supported by the generous contributions of our membership who are eager to keep this fund alive, extends a helping hand to the efforts of fellow garden clubs across the country.

Grants of up to \$5000 per project may be awarded in a fiscal year to a local or state club, pending a review of data submitted to the ND Committee, which must include the location of the site, nature and severity of the disaster, proposed restoration plan by the garden club, estimated itemized cost of the project, as well as funds received from outside sources. If your club is contemplating a restoration project for a garden-related site devastated by a current or previous year's natural disaster, send your application form and supporting data via email to this Chairman at [LanganA@aol.com](mailto:LanganA@aol.com) for Committee review to determine if your club qualifies for an ND Grant. The application form, which is available on the NGC website, also includes a scale of points as a guideline for determining the grant awarded.

This Fund reflects the garden club spirit and deep commitment, not only to preserve our natural resources, but also to come to the aid of fellow clubs across the country. Please continue to send your donations to NGC Headquarters, earmarked for Natural Disaster USA Fund. *Thank you!*

## NGC LIFE MEMBERS

### EDUCATION MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

Alice DeSomma, Chairman

There are times when we wish to honor someone who shares our love of gardening. That will be the moment we decide to give a gift of National Life Membership for that "special someone" in our lives and garden clubs. The gift of a National Life Membership will demonstrate your appreciation and commitment to the youth of our nation, the future leaders of our world. Your gift of \$200 to become a Life Member is shared equally by the Scholarship Fund and the Permanent Home Endowment Fund.

The recipient will receive a lifetime subscription to *The National Gardener* and may attend the National Life Member Banquet at all conventions. The new application form issued by this administration may be obtained from your region or state life member chairman or by going to the [NGC website](http://www.ngc.org). Please honor special garden club members by giving National Life Membership for birthdays, anniversaries, graduation, or service to clubs and projects, etc.



Take A Byte JAN SILLIK, KIT ASSISTANT EDITOR

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

[www.gardenweb.com](http://www.gardenweb.com) This is an amazing site, with posts on every conceivable topic relating to gardening and for home décor and maintenance in general. The site states that there are 24,827 Garden Web discussions available to the visitor! For example, "Vegetable Gardening" will take you to posts on topics, such as "Raised Bed Keeps Getting Invaded With Roots," "Getting Ready for Winter," "Starting A New Vegetable Garden," "Fall/Winter Tips," "First Frost Questions," "The Best Okra Variety You've Ever Grown," and so on. You are sure to find a topic that is of interest and for which you have questions, or even better, answers and tips to share.

Posts are very current as gardeners are posting every minute, keeping the site updated. The enthusiasm of the avid gardeners who interact is readily apparent. A visitor to the site can have productive interactions and exchanges of ideas and knowledge. Sharing is the order of the day!

There is a Nature Net Forum for nature enthusiasts. Topics for this section of the Garden Web include Bird Watching, Raptors, Bluebirds, Insects, Nature Photography and Sustaining Our Environment. You can also click on Product Ads for gardening merchandise of all kinds at this site.

[www.theflowershow.com/show-info](http://www.theflowershow.com/show-info) This site contains everything you could possibly want to know about the Philadelphia Flower Show. The 2016 Flower Show will open on Saturday, March 5th and will close on Sunday, March 13th. Show hours and schedules are available on the site on a day-by-day basis. There are opportunities to support the Show through donations, volunteer opportunities and sponsorships. As many of our members know, qualified judges - by invitation only - will be needed, also!

It is not too early to plan your trip to see the show, and here you will find every detail needed to plan your visit: Directions, Parking, Box Office/Will Call, Entrances, Handicap Accessibility, etc. One interesting thing this reviewer learned from a visit to the site is that there are two special tours offered: 1) an Early Morning VIP Tour and 2) an Early Morning Photography Tour. The photography tour will be led by a nationally renowned photographer, with private access to the best areas for taking photographs.

Each year experienced horticulturists, landscape architects, flower arrangers and designers are needed as around 60 major awards are given out in total; judging occurs daily.

Many of our outstanding NGC judges participate each day. It's a much sought-after invitation!

The theme for next year will be "Explore America" and the show, held annually at the Pennsylvania Convention Center, is advertised as the world's oldest and largest indoor flower show. With upwards of 260,000 people attending each year, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society is justifiably proud of this marvelous event. Visit the site to learn more and to make plans for 2016.

### IN MEMORIAM

Sadly, we must pass along sad news. **Barbara Shepard's husband Darrell** passed away on July 26, 2015 suddenly after a battle with cancer.

Barbara Shepard is the Indoor Gardening Chairman for the 2015-2017 Board of Directors. Notes of condolence may be sent to Barbara Shepard, 6380 Birkewood Street, Columbus, OH 43229-2401.

We must once again pass along the sad news of the passing of **Gerry Ford's husband Roland**. Roland Ford passed away on Saturday, August 8, 2015.

Gerry Ford is currently on the NGC Board of Directors as a member of the Calendar Committee, and she was the 2013-2015 Central Region Director and 1997-1999 President of the Garden Clubs of Illinois, Inc.

Notes of condolence can be sent to Gerry Ford, 971 Ashley Rd., Lake Forest, IL 60045-3379 and their daughter, Mindy Bourne, 135 W. Honeysuckle Rd., Lake Forest, IL 60045-2816.

It is also with profound sadness that we must inform everyone of the passing of **Isabel de Ibarguen**. Isabel passed away peacefully at home on Saturday, August 8, 2015.

Isabel served on the current NGC Board of Directors as I.A. Membership Chairman for South America and a member of the NGC Membership Committee I.A. (Spanish Speaking).

Isabel was an accomplished floral designer, a Master Flower Show Judge and International Flower Show School Instructor. She was very active in the International Affiliates Garden Clubs and will be missed by all.

It is with a heavy heart that we must pass along the sad news of the death of **Pat Grulke's son, Mark** who passed away on October 6, 2015. Pat Grulke is a member of the NGC Protocol Committee.

Cards and notes of condolence can be sent to Pat Grulke and family at 9811 Wildginger Dr. SW, Fort Myers, FL 33919-4928 or patgrulke@hotmail.com.

## NEWS FROM THE REGION DIRECTORS

### NEW ENGLAND

[www.ngcner.org](http://www.ngcner.org)

Vera Bowen, Director



The New England Region's 81st NER Annual Meeting was a wonderful success!

Pope Francis and his Encyclical raised the bar on what is needed to bring about a worldwide change in how we view our environment. This problem needs our attention, and we can all, no matter how small, make a difference to enhance our communities, states, and nation. All NER states are moving ahead to effect change. As autumn comes and our garden season is slowing down, our state presidents are actively working to lead their states toward a better tomorrow.

In Connecticut, State President Jane Waugh (Theme: Growing Together: Tiny Acorns to Mighty Oaks) has a wonderful project to fund and plant Native Live Oaks throughout the state. The White Oak is not only our Connecticut State but, also, our National tree. Growing Together defines a commitment on the part of the Federation to work more closely with clubs, to develop ideas and to share them, for the benefit of all. This commitment includes a plan for several idea exchange symposiums among region clubs with the Federation's assistance and participation.

Maine President Suzanne Bushnell's (Theme: Growing Together – Inspiring Change) project will encourage clubs to reach outside their current "comfort zone" by partnering with other individuals or organizations on joint projects. This project could be a partnership with their local library, land trust or governmental entities. The object is to inspire change in the way we've done things in the past and encourage growth by partnering with others. Portland, Maine will be the location for our 2016 NGC Fall Board Meeting. Becky Linney is chairing the event. Together Suzanne and Becky have a wonderful program in store for us, and I hear that a refresher will follow the meeting.

Massachusetts President Betty Sanders' (Theme Growing Together) goal is that everyone sees that as we grow our clubs through education and friendship, we are growing (or greening) our world. Having the second largest club membership in the country, Betty is busy crossing the state spreading her word.

Jane Goodwin, a two-time New Hampshire State President, (Theme: "What if . . .?") feels very strongly that we all need



new ideas to help us keep growing in a good, positive way, whether we're thinking individually or as groups. Jane's state held a wonderful Symposium Sept 2-4th in Manchester, NH and hosted the 81st NER meeting Oct 20-21st.

Catherine Moore, Rhode Island State President (Theme: "Rejuvenating the RIFGC"). Rhode Island had its 85th Anniversary recently, and we were fortunate to have NGC President Sandy Robinson attend the "Art in Bloom" party at the Rhode Island Botanic Center. Cathy's president's project is to plant Breast Cancer Awareness Healing Gardens in the state.

Vermont's State President Susan Hinkel is no stranger to the job of State President. (Theme: Jump In! Saving all our Pollinators!) Being President from 2007- 2009, Sue knows the requirements of the job; however, as Sue states, the need to protect our pollinators is even more immediate than it was during her previous administration.

**CENTRAL ATLANTIC**  
<http://www.ngccar.org>

**Anne M. Bucher, Director**

The months of August and September were very busy for this Region Director. I had asked my seven state presidents to organize and hold Leadership Workshops for the garden club members to attend during our administration. Four of the seven presidents organized and held workshops between June to September. National Capital Area Garden Clubs were the first to hold theirs at the National Arboretum and hosted 55 members.

There were nine speakers addressing subjects about Organizational Structure, Budgets, 990's, Mentoring, Parliamentary Procedure, and more. All of the attendees received a bag of informational handouts to take home and study.

In July, I attended a workshop in Allentown, PA at the First Presbyterian Church. There were 35 members attending and a group of 11 speakers spanning the subjects from Protocol, Public Speaking, Insurance, Liability, to 990 Forms, Finance, Mentoring, Awards and more.

In August, I attended the workshop in Butler, PA up in the hills beyond Pittsburgh. It was a lovely setting in a woodland area. Seventy-five members attended along with eight speakers. A few new topics were discussed. Benefits and Reasons for Belonging to a Garden Club in PA and State-Mandated Clearanc-

es for Volunteers with Routine Contact with Children. All of the speakers were wonderful and well informed.

On September 11, I attended a workshop at Rutgers University in New Jersey. About 135 members attended with 14 speakers poised to deliver wonderful leadership material. The basic Keys to Leadership that were presented included Organize, Plan, Listen, Communicate, Educate/Mentor and Motivate. In three hours, a great deal of information was disseminated and a large packet of material was given to each attendee at the close of the workshop.

September 16, the State of Delaware held a small Leadership Session at the Agricultural Museum Conference in Dover. Basic steps in mentoring and developing future leaders were discussed. Thirty-four members attended and requested that more leadership workshops be held in the future.

I had the privilege of speaking on my theme, Mentoring: The Key to Leadership at most of these workshops. It was an honor to meet so many garden club members and leaders of each state. Although I drove over 1,600 miles to attend these workshops, it was worth every minute to see these members grow in leadership.

October is our Region Conference in Gettysburg, PA. I am looking forward to reporting about it in our next publication.

**SOUTH ATLANTIC**

**Sarah Ann F. Parler, Director**

The first year of an administration is the time for initiating the next two years direction and for coordinating local projects with the themes of the Region and of the National President.

South Atlantic Region members received Award information from National Garden Clubs and South Atlantic Region, as well as, their own States awards. Once

these listings were received, the members could begin the task of deciding on workable projects among the membership. They have to choose the direction, then begin making plans, incorporating suggestions, listening to ideas and views from their members.

The plan is how much the cost will be, do you have enough manpower, do you want to involve other groups, such as boy/girl scouts, schools, communities, civic organizations? If you have to gain permission to make the project possible,



make contact with those who are in charge of the particular school, church or it could be something placed in a City Park. Could you involve the youth, such as the Girl/Boy Scouts participation or the city/town mayor and councils?

Hopefully, as you are reading these suggestions, you've begun a project/projects and formulated plans to make the project a reality. I've received several calls concerning SAR projects, and as they shared their ideas and goals, I envisioned projects that would be welcomed in any of our cities/towns. Let's see if their vision becomes a reality for their club, communities and schools.

I would like very much to see our Region members be among the Award finalists with their projects for 2015-2017. Good Luck.

Please visit our newly reorganized website at [SOUTHATLANTICREGIONGARDENCLUBS.ORG](http://SOUTHATLANTICREGIONGARDENCLUBS.ORG). All of the SAR Awards are listed on the site.

## DEEP SOUTH

<http://dsregion.org>

After a busy summer of planning, garden clubs in the Deep South Region are ready for the start of a new year of meetings, programs, projects and special events. You will see that the DSR theme "Service Through Action" and the NGC theme **Leap Into Action** are prevalent in the following highlights.

### Carol M. Bullard, Director



Georgia - The seven districts of the GCG are getting ready for the District Meetings in October. We are launching our Backyard Habitat for Neighborhoods for certification, in addition to individual backyards. We are encouraging members to read *The Frightened Frog* in their schools. A Flower Show School series is underway in our state.

Louisiana - The LFGC sponsored Flower Show School I, Environmental Studies School Courses I and II and Landscape Design School Course II this summer and fall. The LGCF project for the DSR Project is *The Frightened Frog*. We have ordered over 200 copies and the books will be donated to school and public libraries in the state. We have 90 clubs in LGCF and I asked that each club donate one book.

Mississippi - GCM was honored to co-sponsor the 60th annual Edward C. Martin Landscape Design Symposium at Mississippi State University October 21st. This is the longest

running event of its kind in the nation. This year's event featured MSU alumnus who returned to share their knowledge in landscape design. The symposium offered educational opportunities for Gardening Consultants, Landscape Design Consultants, Master Gardeners and the home gardener.

Tennessee - The 137 garden clubs of TFGC have pollinators on their minds and have planted milkweed seed and plants to promote "Monarchs across Tennessee." We held our annual Conservation Camp in October at one of our beautiful state parks. We studied ways to conserve our natural resources to protect and sustain our world, how to protect butterflies, snakes and bees, our Land Trust Project -- Cumberland Trail State Park Trail, how to create a backyard habitat, and birds of prey.

Alabama - GCA is doing "small things" in great ways, and with fantastic showmanship, especially flower shows. Fort Payne had their fall show as part of the county fair, Montgomery Federation has just completed shows back-to-back with the Montgomery Fair, and Shades Valley Council is planning a small standard Christmas show at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. District directors have reported clubs busy with the planting of fall mums around public buildings, parks and Senior Citizens Centers. Street corners are beginning to look festive.

Florida - The FFGC President and 3 Vice Presidents are leaving on the Annual Tour of the 12 Districts of Florida, bringing news to them from National, Deep South Region and FFGC while inspiring them with the most important projects of each. Currently we have nine NGC Schools, one Symposium, two Floral Design Units 1-6 and 1 Advanced Unit 7 - 9 scheduled between now and the first of the year. We continue our commitments to the water, wetlands and parks of the state; the Coral Restoration Project; to ban fracking, and our Youth through our Youth Gardening units, Wekiva Youth Camp, and SEEK programs.

## CENTRAL

<http://ngccentralregion.org>

### Judy Newman, Director

The members of the Central Region gathered to "Czech Out Iowa" at their 83rd Convention in Cedar Rapids, Iowa with a tour of the National Czech Museum October 3-5. Garden club members from our seven states had the opportunity to greet and chat with our NGC President, members of the NGC Board of Directors and the CR Chairmen. During two of the meal functions, CR Chairmen had



the opportunity to connect with state chairmen and convention attendees. The purpose was to learn about the focus of the committee, gain new ideas/information to take back to the state, district, clubs and members.

Laurel DeBoer, President of Illinois, noted in her report that short business meetings are better, keep it simple. "Make & Take" meetings are popular. Illinois garden clubs donated to Washington, IL, which was heavily damaged in a tornado, assisting in replanting trees and shrubs. The Illinois World Disaster Fund donated funds to Fairdale, IL, which was also heavily damaged by the June 2015 tornado.

The Garden Club of Indiana President's theme is "Gardeners: Preserving the Past, Beautifying the Present, Preparing for the Future". They are "Cultivating Connections" with their State government with two upcoming projects celebrating Indiana's Bicentennial 2016. A "Blue and Gold Floral Tribute to Indiana's Flag" from The Garden Club of Indiana will include encouraging all 92 counties in Indiana to plant Blue and Gold/yellow flowers. There are plans of placing a Blue Star Memorial Marker on the property of the Indiana Statehouse in Indianapolis to be dedicated during National Garden Week.

"Remember the past, enjoy the present, plan for the future" is the theme of Loretta Daisy, President of the Federated Garden Clubs of Iowa. Her focus is "Cultivating Communications" with e-mails to clubs and members. She is promoting planting native plants to help the pollinators and methods of best use of native plants in public gardens.

Michigan President Marilyn McIntosh created and distributed a "No Excuses Manual" for club presidents. It is on their new website and can be downloaded. There have been six Blue Star Marker dedications with more being planned. They have a new website. They are "Cultivating Connections" with brochures, business cards, through leadership training and placing a list of speakers on their website.

The Federated Garden Clubs of Minnesota are "Cultivated Connections" by providing membership cards to all of their members. President Betty Beck's theme, "Together We Can," will include joining the Monarch Watch Butterfly Program by creating backyard habitats for butterflies and pollinators. They worked with the disadvantaged youth this summer by providing education and materials to plant and grow vegetables in containers.

The Wisconsin Garden Club Federation is "Gardening for Good" through many projects. They are ready to launch a newly revamped website: [wisconsin-gardenclub.org](http://wisconsin-gardenclub.org). Many committee meetings are held on-line via GoToMeeting.com decreasing the expense of time and travel. In addition

to promoting all of the NGC President's projects, plans are being made for a Blue Star and a Gold Star Marker to be placed near the State Capital in Madison.

## ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Darlene Skari, Director

<https://sites.google.com/site/rockymtngardenclubs/>

The annual fall meeting of the Rocky Mountain Region was held on September 11th and 12th. in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Six of the state presidents were present, and the other two were represented by members appointed by the president. Over half of the RMR Chairmen were also there. The state and chairmen reports were a highlight of the meeting as we shared ideas from our garden clubs. A visit from National President Sandy Robinson was much appreciated by all those who attended.



The title of the meeting, "Strutting Your Stuff" illustrated with a picture of a ring-necked pheasant, perfectly showed the interest South Dakota has with a big industry for them, pheasant hunting with hunters coming from far and near. A tour of an apple orchard, and a venue where members added a garden and pond to an outdoor concert area, plus time at the beautiful Falls Park right in the middle of the city introduced us to a very clean, pleasant and interesting place to visit. An arranging program by a club member on practical designs completed the first day after a dinner at the park.

There were several educational displays, and beautiful flower designs to observe during breaks. A director of a nursery where they grow and emphasize hardy and tough plants, that include fruit growing, presented an informative report on appropriate plants for the region. For so many of us with our harsh climates, this was a fascinating and well-done power point presentation.

Because our hotel was right downtown in Sioux Falls, members could use the break between the end of the meeting and dinner to walk around and see the street art fair or the German Fest. The many RMR awards were presented at the dinner after NGC President Sandy Robinson spoke about her agenda.

**PLEASE SHARE THIS ISSUE WITH A CLUB MEMBER**



Many clubs in the four states in the SCR are involved in county and state fairs that are excellent opportunities to display and teach horticulture and design skills and speak directly to the public. An additional bonus is the opportunity to raise funds to “plow” back into club projects, plus gardeners love home grown plants.



A vital and busy club attracts new members and many have adopted butterfly and pollinator gardens. I took my iPad to my club meeting and registered 100% of our members with the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge. Our Region is on the migratory path of the Monarch Butterfly. All of our clubs are on alert for this fall's migration and planting milkweed for next spring's return. Twenty years ago more than one billion Monarch Butterflies made the epic, 3,000 mile voyage from America's backyards and grasslands to their wintering grounds in Mexico. Last year, the wintering population numbered only about 56 million.

As I have been giving clubs the lovely certificates available from NGC Member Services, I have asked the club to present the certificate to another community group in recognition of that group's outstanding project/s and send a photo. The presentation and publicity promotes networking and recognition of both organizations.

The SCR ***The Communicator*** is now sent only by email; the last issue was sent to hundreds more members than the previous issue. Now we need more lessons about how to promote our work through Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, blogs, etc.

The Pacific Region consists of eight states: Washington, Arizona, California, Oregon, Nevada, Idaho, Alaska and Hawaii. All of these states except Hawaii have experienced a summer of wildfires and drought. Gardeners have worked so hard to keep their gardens alive and cool. Even with that, we cannot prevent lightning



strikes from starting wildfires. We are grateful for the onset of autumn and look forward to the chores it presents. Of course, we are all back to garden clubs, and we can share our stories and help one another.

Our theme for this term is “Look to the Garden Through the Eyes of a Child – a Kaleidoscope of Possibilities.” As we visit each state, it is heartwarming to hear how they are embracing this theme, and reaching out to children and youth in their communities. Never before has it been more important for children to realize that we all have a responsibility to take care of this beautiful earth which we have been given. Yes, it is a gift, but with the gift comes responsibility. Many schools are now embracing the thought of community gardens. Children are being taught how to plant seeds and care for them as they grow and then reap the benefits of the harvest. For some children, this will be their only opportunity to learn these important lessons and others, such as recycling and litter prevention. I am hoping that each one of our states will have entries in the Smokey Bear – Woodsy Owl Poster Contest and also submit entries in the “Croaking, Leaping Frogs” poetry and “Don’t Let the Frogs Croak” essay contests sponsored by National Garden Clubs, Inc. There are so many ways to involve youth.

After being in St. Louis, Missouri again and visiting Headquarters, we wanted to bottle the enthusiasm. We could feel it in the air, and we wanted to take it with us to spread around like a comforting mulch for everyone. It is so great to be with those who have a common love for National Garden Clubs. We wish to thank Sandy Robinson and all those who work so tirelessly to see that we know what we need to know to help each other when we get back to our homes, no matter in what region we live.

### **NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS, INC.**

**Website: [www.gardenclub.org](http://www.gardenclub.org)**

**Find Us On Facebook - National Garden Clubs Inc.**

**4401 Magnolia Ave., St. Louis, MO 63110-3492  
(314) 776-7574 [headquarters@gardenclub.org](mailto:headquarters@gardenclub.org)**

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**A current list of the 2015-2017 Board of Director Roster changes and additions appears in the Board Member Section on the NGC website.**

**National Garden Clubs, Inc. provides education, resources, and national networking opportunities for its members to promote the love of gardening, floral design, and civic and environmental responsibility.**