



*Grow Your World AND *Green* Your Community BY Joining A *Garden Club**



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AS NEARLY 200,000 men and women of all ages and backgrounds across the nation can attest, the rewards of belonging to a garden club go far beyond the pure pleasure of growing things.

While joining a local garden club is indeed a great way to “green” your thumb, membership also provides an opportunity to expand your interests and build lifelong friendships while bettering your community and the environment.

Individual garden clubs focus on particular local interests while also enjoying the opportunity to network regionally (through state organizations) and nationally (through National Garden Clubs, Inc.). In general, each local garden club determines its specific programs, which are tailored to members’ interests as well as area needs. Clubs offer an enjoyable variety of educational, environmental, social and civic projects that attract a diverse membership.

Through providing stimulating, informative and relevant programming for today’s world, local garden clubs continue to thrive from generation to generation.



You'll Find Much More Than A Garden Variety of Activities

Most local garden clubs meet monthly and offer *a wide range of top-notch educational programs*. Topics cover the latest gardening techniques for flowers, shrubs, trees, vegetables and house plants; organic gardening; landscape and floral design; creating ponds and water features; conservation and environmental education; and the study of birds, butterflies and beneficial insects and how to attract them.

In addition, garden clubs develop and participate in *a myriad of outstanding and rewarding local, regional and national community service projects*.

A small coast-to-coast sampling includes:

- *Healing with Gardens and Horticultural Therapy.* Therapeutic projects are diverse and include such things as teaching gardening skills to developmentally challenged high-school students; planning, planting and maintaining healing gardens in nursing homes and veterans hospitals; and providing gardening education and encouragement to prison inmates.
- *Digging in to Raise Funds for Replanting Disaster-Struck Areas.* Garden clubs across the nation raise money annually in support of the U.S. Forest Service "Penny Pines" program, which replants damaged state and national forests. Garden clubs in the Gulf States are working to re-landscape hurricane-damaged public areas through the NGC-sponsored "Green the Gulf Coast Grants" program.



- *Helping Habitat for Humanity Homeowners.*

Garden clubs provide gardening education and assistance to Habitat homeowners throughout the U.S. During Habitat's national "Home Builders Blitz," garden club members work side by side with new homeowners to help them establish low-maintenance, environmentally friendly gardens.

- *Working with Children and Schools.* Garden clubs assist local schools in establishing gardens to teach children about nature, horticulture, the environment and how to "plant native."
- *Holding Flower Shows.* These enjoyable events continue to draw crowds while giving club members a chance to exhibit their plants and floral arrangements and compete for prizes. The shows also help spread the word about the joys of gardening and serve as a forum for learning and discussing the latest horticultural techniques.

- *Beautifying and "Greening" the Community.*

Garden club members frequently take on park and vacant lot rehabilitation; community gardening; recycling and pollution-control efforts; and historic-site preservation. Many clubs actively support the "Blue Star Memorial" program, which honors those who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces by placing distinctive and permanent memorial markers along highways and in national cemeteries, parks and veterans facilities.

You'll Connect with an International Gardening Network

Local garden clubs join together at both the state and national levels to form strong, synergistic networks for sharing ideas, advancing common interests and pulling together to achieve mutual goals. In fact, with 200,000 international members, 6,300 local clubs, 50 state clubs and a National Capital Area club, *National Garden Clubs, Inc., is the largest volunteer organization of its type in the world.*

This means that garden club members have a powerful voice that can be heard coast-to-coast to achieve NGC's rewarding and relevant mission: to promote the love of gardening, floral design, and civic and environmental responsibility.

Today's garden clubs creatively and effectively address current issues, such as climate change, highway beautification and other environmental concerns. Local and state projects and national partnerships with such organizations as the U.S. Forest Service and Habitat for Humanity International give garden club members everywhere an opportunity to make a difference while engaging in activities they love.

National Garden Clubs, Inc., (www.gardenclub.org) is a not-for-profit organization that marks its 80th anniversary in 2009. NGC offers extensive educational programs and a variety of informative print and electronic publications and resources to promote gardening and environmental responsibility. NGC is headquartered in St. Louis, adjacent to the world-famous Missouri Botanical Garden.



How to Join a Garden Club Near You

It's simple to get in touch with garden clubs in your area.

1. *Contact the national organization.*

To find garden clubs near you, contact National Garden Clubs via phone, mail or e-mail, or visit the NGC Web site at www.gardenclub.org.

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2. *OR, contact your state or local organization via their Web sites.*

The NGC Web site resources page (www.gardenclub.org/resources/stategc.aspx) maintains an alphabetical list of links to all the state Web sites. Many of the local clubs and their respective links are also included on the list.

Join today!