



The Garden Club of Indiana, Inc.

Indiana Gardens

April Vol. 88 Number 2 - 2025

2025-2027



[National Garden Clubs Inc](#)

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[The Garden Club of Indiana Inc.](#)

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Cover: *Tree photo by David Zahrt*

Next Indiana Gardens Deadline: May 1st

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Letter from the President



As I look back on my two-year term as president, I realize that the time is very much like planting a garden. As with any garden you plant something and then say, "I'll never do that again!" Luckily, that is NOT my feeling about our two years of TGCI,

Inc. gardens. I have seen these years as a metaphor for life as these two years have given me many life lessons. I believe we created a vision of what we wanted in our garden, chose our plants carefully, had a healthy soil and strong foundation for our flowers, fruits, vegetables and trees to thrive.

I see our garden's foundation to be 7 raised bed gardens representing our Districts. They are all of different sizes, but they all have the same mission for their clubs, communities and the state. Flowers have been planted and thrive to add beauty to each community. Some clubs have planted vegetables which go back to help feed their communities. All enrich the communities by adding green space and trees to keep them healthy. It has been a joy to visit each of the Districts, meet the members and learn about their projects and successes. Indiana is a varied state geographically, and the districts display that variety. Keith and I have loved traveling the blue highways to get to the interesting sites of the meetings and conventions.

The gardens are also adorned with shiny Blue and Gold Star Memorial Markers displaying our gratitude to our Armed Forces. I've enjoyed attending 4 Blue Star Dedications during my term. We always have more room in the raised beds for more Blue and Gold Star Memorials to show our support for those who are, have, or will serve in our Armed Forces. They are also a wonderful reminder

of our gratefulness to the families who walk by them!

Unfortunately, along with those beautiful flowers and plants a few weeds and thorns creep in. I applaud the District Directors who have lent a hand with the club presidents and members to take corrective action so toxicity doesn't stifle the beauty and goals the club has set.

At each end of our raised bed garden, we have two state events that bring us all together. Each convention has its own theme and setting so our members can enjoy great company in an interesting setting. My term got off to a great start in Washington, IN hosted by South West District. We then moved into the trees of Turkey Run for a Tremendous time hosted by Central West District, and our 93rd will be mid-state in Indianapolis hosted by Central District where we'll look at myths, facts and realities...again focusing on trees.

Our September Seminars fill in the other end of our raised bed garden. We've explored lakes and water at Lake Wawasee, followed by the setting of Matter Park Gardens in Marion to take in native plants and gardens. This September SE District will be celebrating "Hats Off to Gardening" in Nashville, IN on September 9th.

Around our garden bed is planted 20,000 trees so we can "Leaf a Legacy" through our Land Trust Project. Also, the trees planted by the clubs for "Plant Trees for Hope" as well as those from Penny Pines (now Plant-a-Tree) add to our contribution to the quality of life and environment. Thanks to all who made this happen!

Our Pollinator Scholars...bees, birds, butterflies... that we support in our scholarships are making sure that our TGCI, Inc. goals continue into the future. We are investing in gardens we will never see and trees we will never see shade others.

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to be the TGCI, Inc. President Gardener for 2023-2025! I will always treasure my new friends and memories!

Jayne Kesler,
President



Scholarship Patrons: *A Pin with a Purpose*

April 1958 Scholarship Fund was approved at the Annual State convention. The program was finalized at the December 8, 1958, Board of Directors meeting. The first scholarships were \$300 per year—Charles Robert Vogel of Rushville was the recipient of Indiana's first scholarship.

The fund started with \$539 which represented the amount oversubscribed for the greenhouse at the Indiana Girls' School in Clermont. Scholarship project became popular when Jo Jarboe took over as chairman. 1998 Convention voted to establish Scholarship Patron to continue to fund scholarship program.

Who gets the scholarships?

To qualify, full-time Indiana students must be enrolled in an Indiana "accredited college, technical school, vocational school, or university" listed on the official website of the U.S. Department of Education, a 2-year technical or 2-year vocational school, or university which has a recognized department in the chosen field. Must be a junior, senior or graduate student majoring in Agriculture Education, Agronomy, Botany/Biology, City (rural & urban) Planning, Conservation, Environmental Concerns, Floriculture, Forestry, Horticulture, Land Management, Landscape Design, Plant Pathology/Science, Wildlife Science; and have a Graduation Index of 3.0 or better on a 4.0 scale.

How are the winners determined?

Recipients are selected on academic records, applicant's letter, listing of honors/extracurricular activities/work experience, financial need and recommendations. Recipients are expected to maintain a GPA of 3.0 or better.

What funding do the scholars receive and how is that determined?

Each year, the funds available determine the number of scholarships. The Garden Club of Indiana, Inc. (TGCI) offers in the amount of up to \$1,000 each. This annual number of scholarships to be given is decided at the Spring Board Meeting. Funding for these scholarships is derived from many sources and donations within TGCI. Funding is based on the yearly general donations, memorials, honorariums, and misc. donations.

Funds donated to Scholarship Patron (\$100), Gold Star Patron (\$50), Associate Life Member (\$50) are deposited to the Scholarship Annuity Permanent Fund and only the interest is paid out annually. There is a 50/50 split with Scholarship Patron and Gold Star Patron—\$50 goes to General and \$50 go to Annuity Fund.

At this time, the above-mentioned donations are the only way to support the Scholarship fund. Individuals outside the garden club may donate in one of the ways above.



If any club, district, or individual donates \$1,000 or more to TGCI that club, district, or individual has the honor of naming the scholarship for that year.

Another way TGCI clubs can support scholarships is by organizing special events where the funds raised go directly to the fund. For example, North Central Garden Club of Michiana sponsors a plant sale each year and a portion of the funds raised are donated to the General Scholarship Fund

North Central Four Winds Garden Club holds an annual Scholarship Auction on the first Tuesday of November each year and the Net Amount from the auction goes to the General Scholarship Fund and a Four Winds GC Scholarship is awarded.

Additionally, an anonymous individual donates \$1000 per year to a club in the CE District and her club is named for a Scholarship.

An individual can become a scholarship patron by writing a check to TGCI for \$100. The Scholarship Patron is often given to outgoing club presidents, honoring someone, as a Thank you.

The scholarship patron becomes a voting member of the BOD, participates in the annual Scholarship luncheons and receives a Scholarship Patron Pin to announce to all they are a Scholarship Patron. Listed in Scholarship Patron Album that is on display each year at the convention.

By David Zahrt
Scholarship Chair



April is

Plant America Month

Plant America began in 2017 under the leadership of former NGC President Nancy Hargroves. NGC's focus on community centered projects and efforts brings life to PLANT AMERICA.

Plant America encourages NGC's mission to promote the love of gardening, floral design, civic and environmental responsibility.

Plant America projects enhance public areas, honor our veterans with Blue Star landscaping projects, educate children and adults about the joys of gardening and create pride through local, city, and county projects.

Consider applying for an NGC Community Grant in support of your organization's project to Plant America .



Plant America Month was initiated by former National Garden Club President Mary Warshauer in April 2021. We will continue to celebrate Plant America Month in April during the 2023-2025 administration.

Plant America Month incorporates the celebration of Arbor Day, which falls on the last Friday of April and Earth Day which falls on April 22 yearly.

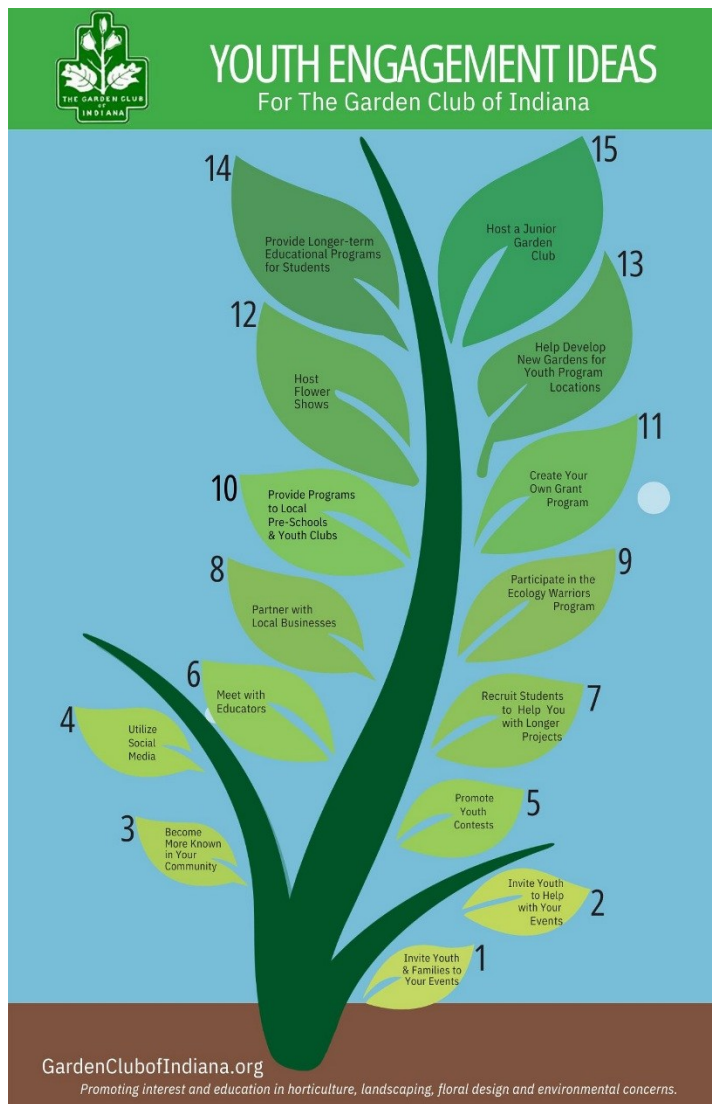
Learn more on the National Garden Club

[PLANT AMERICA](#)

←Link



Youth Activities



Cultivating tomorrow's gardeners today

By engaging with young people, clubs are helping to develop the next generation of gardeners and people who appreciate plants and will be interested in continuing to protect our planet.

The Garden Club of Indiana, Inc. has great resources to get young people involved in garden activities - from simple one-off activities to full-blown Youth Garden Clubs. The TGCI Youth Activities Committee has some great ideas. Clubs can download ideas from the website here: [Youth Engagement](#).

Clubs can find out more about all of the youth contests on the youth contest page on the TGCI website. TGCI is pleased to participate in the youth contests sponsored by The National Garden Clubs, Inc. :

- ☆ Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Poster Contest
- ☆ Youth Essay Contest
- ☆ Youth Poetry Contest
- ☆ Youth Sculpture Contest

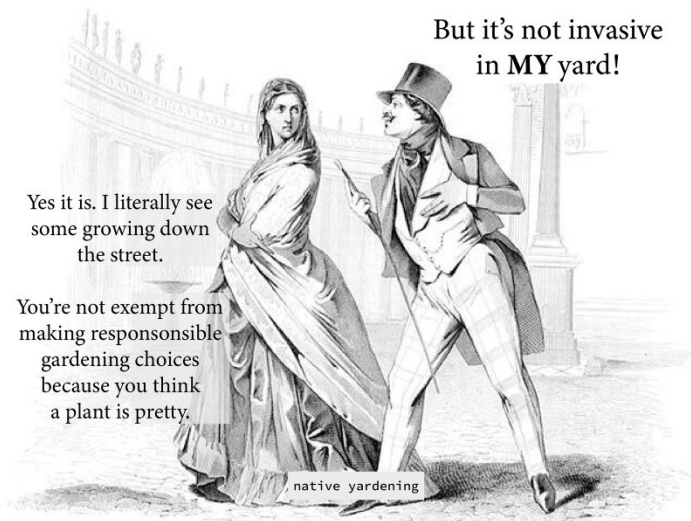
The Youth Activities Committee is always ready to help clubs sponsor or promote the youth contests by customizing the materials just for their club.

More Info about
[Youth Activities](#) ← Link



From the Chairs

UPDATE: The Proposed Amendment to the Terrestrial Plant Rule



This cartoon illustrates one of the misunderstandings about invasive species. While an invasive plant may look beautiful in your yard, it will escape to our natural areas. Great examples are the *Callery Pear* and the *Burning Bush*. Although very pretty while blooming (*Callery Pear*) and with bright-colored foliage in the fall (*Burning Bush*), they have now overtaken our roadsides and woodlands, crowding out native plants which provide nutrition and habitat for our native wildlife, beneficial insects and pollinators.

The Indiana Terrestrial Invasive Plant Rule makes it illegal to sell, gift, barter, exchange, distribute, transport or introduce plants on the list. It went into effect in 2019 and became fully enforceable on April 18, 2020. This Amendment was proposed in 2021 and adds twelve highly invasive plant species to

Invasive Species

the rule. These include the **Callery Pear, Burning Bush, Norway Maple, Sweet Autumn Clematis, Moneywort, Chinese Maiden Grass, Wild Parsnip, Fine Line Buckthorn, Spreading Hedge Parsley, Japanese Hedge Parsley, Lesser Celandine, and European Highbush Cranberry.**

In 2023, the DNR decided that, to ensure rules are current and enforceable, all DNR rules must be re-codified. The Terrestrial Plant Rule is STILL waiting to be recodified. No one can say how long this will STILL take.

In the meantime, nurseries are growing and stocking for sale any of these plants. It breaks my heart in the spring to drive down the highway and see rows upon rows of *Callery Pear* trees blooming on nursery grounds and then also growing in thickets along the same highway in open fields and woodlands.

Dawn Slack, our Indiana Invasives Initiative Project Manager and Coordinator, recently said, “*Do not give up, do not create excuses to keep invasives in our landscapes. We know that 83% of the woody invasives in our parks and preserves come from our landscaped areas. What an opportunity is in front of us to stop new introductions and instead foster a celebration of our natural areas—the Indiana that is special and uniquely Indiana that we love and enjoy. We are just starting on a journey to discover what invasives-free areas will be.*”

By Sharon Baldwin
Native & Invasive Species Chairman

Annual Civic Fund

For 2024, contributions to the Annual Civic Fund were received from Five Districts and Seventeen Clubs for a total of \$1379.00. Letters of appreciation have been mailed to all contributors. A recommendation was sent to the State President for the amount to be given to the 2025 State Convention Host (Central District) to be approved at the April 2025 State Board Meeting. After speaking with Linda Cornelius (South West District Director) I am allowing them until the State Convention on April 9-10, 2025 to give me receipts on a new project. Otherwise they will be returning the money to the Annual Civic Fund (\$1205.00) from the money given to them at the 2023 State Convention. Sue Rosiak stated that Sullivan County Garden Club planted two trees at the courthouse square in Sullivan. Hendricks County Garden Club will be doing a Restoration project soon. These clubs are using money from Hosting the 2024 State Convention.

By Diane Hurless
Annual Civic Fund Chair

Civic Development

I would like to begin by congratulating the seven clubs that participated by turning in applications for 2024. That is a 75% increase from the previous year. We have 46 additional clubs across the state that I think are doing great things for their communities. I would like to encourage all club officers to document their club's projects and apply next year. You can find the application and additional

information in the awards manual under Civic Development. Projects may consist of landscape improvement through the planning and planting of parks, civic centers, libraries, schools, hospitals, etc. Projects should inspire and benefit the community. Write out a description, including landscape diagrams, photos, funding, involvement by members & maintenance. Be proud of your endeavors and instill this pride in your members. Applications are due by December 1st. I hope that 2025 will bring an even bigger increase in the number participating.

By Kathy Vermilion
Civic Development Chair

Bird & Butterfly



Final numbers for the 2025 Great Backyard Bird Count have been calculated. Mark your calendars, next year's GBBC is February 13–16, 2026.

- 8,078 species of birds identified
- 217 countries or eBird subregions
- 387,652 eBird checklists
- 611,066 Merlin Bird IDs
- 838,113 estimated global participants
- 409 reported community events

By Cathy Weber
Birds & Butterflies Chair

Annual Civic Fund

Q&A: with Annual Civic Fund Chair, Diane Hurless

Q: What is the Annual Civic Fund for?

Contributions made each year to the Annual Civic Fund are available to the District hosting that year's State Convention.

Q: How are the funds distributed?

Each affiliated garden club within the district may submit a request for funds to support a new civic project.

Q: Why should clubs contribute to the Annual Civic Fund?

Money for these projects is collected from donations given by the clubs throughout the year. So please donate to the Annual Civic Fund as we all look forward to doing these special projects after each of our State Conventions.

Q: How long have you served as Annual Civic Fund Chair? *I have been Annual Civic Fund Chair since 2021. Sharon Baldwin was the previous Chair and recommended me as her replacement. I will continue as chair under Wanda Zahrt for 2025-2027 term.*

More Info about
[Annual Civic Fund](#) *<—Link*



Before



After

One example of a club using the Annual Civic Fund to support a civic project is the Blue Star project undertaken by the All Thumbs Garden Club of Seymour which involved moving the South East District Blue Star from a ditch next to Highway 50 to a park in Seymour.



Iris Elm Garden Club of Winamac planted Dogwood trees at their Blue Star Byway Memorial Marker along the Winamac Town Pathway Park. They received funds for their project after the 2019 State Convention.

Save the Date

TGCI Annual State Convention

April 9-10 2025
Indianapolis, Indiana

National Garden Clubs Convention

May 18-22, 2025
North Charleston, South Carolina

TGCI September Seminar

September 9, 2025
“Hats Off To Gardening”
Seasons Lodge Convention Center
Nashville, Indiana

North West District Meeting

October 7, 2025
Tebel's Family Restaurant
1775 US 41, Schererville IN 46375

North Central District Meeting

October 8, 2025
First Presbyterian Church
104 N Illinois St, Monticello IN 47960

Central District Meeting

October 14, 2025
Allisonville Christian Church
7701 Allisonville Rd, Indianapolis IN

Central West Meeting

October 15, 2025
Northview Christian Church
623 N SR 39, Danville IN 46122

Central East District Meeting

October 16, 2025
To Be Announced

South West District Meeting

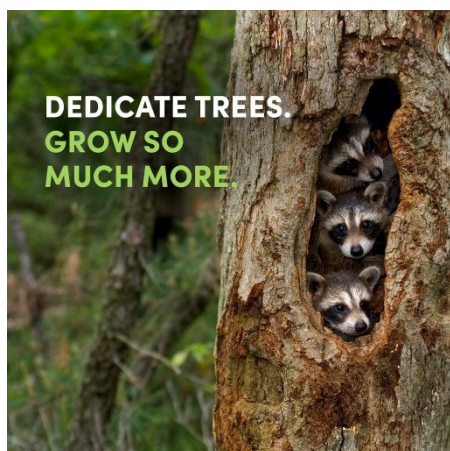
October 20, 2025
Lyles Station Historic School & Museum
953 CR 5000 W, Princeton IN 47670

South East District Meeting

October 21, 2025
Bruner Event Centre
100 N Webster St, St Paul, IN 47272

Central Region Convention

October 26-28, 2025
Osthoff Resort
Elkhart Lake, WI



Arbor Day

Friday, April 25, 2025

The first Arbor Day in Indiana was observed on April 11, 1884. Indiana's
Arbor Day is celebrated annually on the last Friday in April.

Club News



Terra Verde Garden Club

The [Shirley Heinze Land Trust Organization](#) provided the Terra Verde Garden Club of LaPorte Indiana with a very informative and interesting program presented by Mari Patis, Programs Coordinator. Mari introduced the members to the land trust utilizing visuals of the various locations plus the history of the organization. Since 1981 the Shirley Heinze Land Trust has restored and preserved approximately 3,400 acres throughout Northwest Indiana including lands in LaPorte County. Mari specifically mentioned [Amber Flatwoods Nature Preserve](#) and [Barker Woods Nature Preserve](#) in Michigan City. She also mentioned Meadowbrook located near Valparaiso plus two locations in St, Joseph County. Mari's pictures and knowledge of the various preserves with their trails, wildlife and plants was enjoyed by everyone present.

Submitted by Fran Raderstorf
President, Terra Verde Garden Club LaPorte IN



Ft Benjamin Blossoms Garden Club

Ft Benjamin Blossoms GC volunteered to help with Signage for The Garden Club of Indiana 93rd Annual State Convention. Here, club member Cassie Richardson, displays the terra cotta flower pot she decorated during a work-meeting in March.

Fall Creek Garden Club

Fall Creek Garden Club members are ready for the new gardening season!

In January, we met for lunch and shared our goals and plans for the new gardening season. From planting mini meadows to growing delicious vegetables, we're all looking forward to what a new season can bring to our gardens.

In February, our speaker was Melanie Harper, who spoke about Healthy Posture for Gardeners. Melanie's long list of credentials includes being a licensed medical massage and Myofascial Trigger Point therapist for 20 years, a certified Health and Wellness coach, a certified Pilates and Yoga instructor, and a member of the Fascia Research Society. She showed us what effects posture and body alignment can have on our health and, with her

helper Emily's assistance, demonstrated some simple techniques to alleviate those aches and pains that we often experience after weeding, trimming, or digging. We left encouraged about how we can maintain our balance, strength, and flexibility so we can keep on gardening.

Amongst our many plans for spring, which include a program in March about attracting butterflies to our gardens, we are also managing the registrations for The Garden Club of Indiana 93rd Annual State Convention. **Come and meet members of the Fall Creek Garden Club at the registration table.**

Submitted by Carol Michel
Club Secretary

Petal and Stem Garden Club

The 2024 Christmas Auction was a fabulous success for the Petal and Stem Garden Club in Richmond, Indiana. Where else can club members enjoyed fabulous food, joyful companionship, and fierce competition – all during the same event?

The fund-raising auction included handmade items, beautiful gift baskets, elegant wreaths, and so many other great items. Please do not let the polished demeanor of our club members fool you – the bidding wars that ensued during the auction were fierce! However, it was all in good fun and all for a great cause – supporting our Richmond, Indiana community!

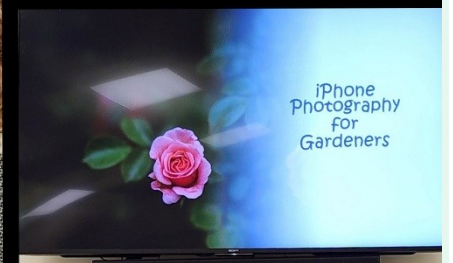
The Petal and Stem Garden Club members also enjoyed a presentation by David and Wanda Zahrt (TCGI president-elect for 2025-2026) at their March 5th meeting. David showed how to better photograph flowers using the cell phone camera. Club members then practiced their skills while adjusting lighting and applying the rule of thirds. It was exciting to shoot close-ups with a Macro-Lens – exactly when was this brilliant gadget for cell phones even invented?

For those who have not heard David speak about *iPhone Photography for Gardeners* you are missing out! Some of the tips we took to heart include:

- 📱 Shoot in soft light
- 📱 Simplify the background
- 📱 Shoot from a low angle
- 📱 Fill the frame
- 📱 Go minimal
- 📱 Practice, practice, practice!



Christmas Auction 2024



We were challenged to enter some of our flower photography into a local contest, and we are excited to try our hand at the Richmond Rose Garden Photo Contest this year.

Submitted by Ann Herrman
Petal and Stem Garden Club



Vale of Paradise Garden Club



The garden club season has commenced. In January, Vale of Paradise Garden Club had a table at the Porter County Master Gardeners Association garden show. It served as our annual membership drive with a raffle basket to raise money for scholarships. The event was successful and generated interest in the club.

In February, there was a social gathering where many attended despite the weather to meet potential new members.

In March, one of our newer members will present a program titled *The Medicinal Properties of Common Plants*.

April will be a busy month, including a garden club meeting, The Garden Club of Indiana 93rd Annual State Convention, and Earth Day activities.

Submitted by Linda Dingee
President

Crown Point Garden Club

Crown Point Garden Club was off to a rousing start as we enjoyed our first meeting of the new year on February 6, 2025. As our members approached the door they were welcomed by one of our new mascots "Petunia the Garden Lady." She created a lot of excitement and chatter for the coming year. What a joy it was to begin the new year seeing old friends and welcoming four new friends that all became members at the meeting!

We celebrated three of our members completing the Master Gardener program and are now officially Master Gardener Interns, Vicki Bush, Debbie Herndon and Pam Metzger.

Our Vice President, Tish Vater and Program Chairman instructed us on how to force Paper White bulbs to get us all in the mood for the coming of Spring. Each member brought a 6-8oz jar; pebbles, bulbs, and small branches were furnished to complete our project. As we all worked the joy of seeing old friends, catching up on our Winter gardens, and making new friends created a buzz to brighten a dreary day!!!! Each member was also given a small packet of Verbena seeds for sowing in outside pots as a Winter garden project.

As I look out my window at the "white splendor" I am reminded of the beauty of Winter! Spring is just around the corner!!!!!!

Submitted by Virginia Clark
Crown Point Garden Club





The Cultivating Garden Club's

2025 – 24th Annual

Plant Sale

Saturday, May 17
8:00 am to 1:00 pm

7125 S Meridian St
Indianapolis 46217

(one block south of Southport Rd on Meridian St)

Sun and Shade Perennials, Herbs/Veggies,
Groundcovers, Shrubs, and more

Rain or Shine!

Central East District

Central East District clubs are ready for planting as the planning and program books are being published. I have been privileged to be their director for 22 years and am now retiring.

When I first began, I sent newsletters to all clubs while pretending to be an editor and a paper boy delivering the news from the state and national boards. I had to learn how to use a desktop computer, use clip art etc. I would call from my landline all 11 presidents in order to share their progress, new accomplishments, and who had new grandbabies. Then I would translate that information into a 3-minute quarterly report given at the Board Meeting and saved in their archives.

My garden club life was updated when we got a bag -phone, then a flip phone, and now most communication is via text on my apple phone; or if it is lengthy information in an email. The reports are still fun and interesting to write on a laptop and share.

Summitville Garden Club federated in 2010 is a night time club with eight members and that number has increased to ten. I don't have time to share all they accomplish in the community. One of the projects they are most proud of is the Veteran's Memorial Park that they landscaped five years ago before it's dedication and still maintain. Their speaker in February was Jake Wyatt. Jake and his 12-year-old son shared so much knowledge that both he and the members lost track of time.

Small Town Garden Club was federated in 2003 because of a grocery store parking lot plant exchange. Their much-needed fund raiser was the

raffling of tickets to do six hours of yard work for one winner. Meetings are held of an evening with a carry in meal, hold their business meeting followed by great programs.

Twin City Garden Club, originally named Gas City Garden club federated in 2018. They hold programs, collected monies for the tree project and play in the dirt while working in two cities on beautification projects.

During my term **Garden Club of Marion** has dedicated a Blue Star Memorial at the National Cemetery located in Marion, have a National Award winning Butterfly Garden at Matter Park, planted trees in that park during my term of office and other noteworthy projects

Pendleton Garden Club has planted tulips in the park every year and still does. They have held a flower show or horticulture show every year until 2024. Annually hold plant sales with incomes over \$1000, most of which is sent to state projects.

Petal & Stem Garden Club have increased their membership almost continuously, work in the Arboretum, the Environmental Center, the Rose Garden. They have held auctions, plant sales, and selling mums to raise money for the Scholarship fund and other state projects.

Creative Hands Garden Club plays with flowers, watches power points about flower arranging, has guest designers and gives money to state projects. We have had or now have members who are men, a grandmother, mother and daughter family, members born in different countries, young and old, wealthy and not so wealthy. All members

arrive at meetings carrying buckets of greenery, flowers and tired faces. They leave with empty buckets, having used and shared materials, but at least one fresh flower arrangement, refreshed souls and smiles on their faces.

Only two clubs meet in the daytime now, all bring food but **Creative Hands**, they just bring buckets. Some clubs are casual in their dress, others are less casual. All have great, and sometimes not so great, programs. They all put in the work, play nice together most of the time, and keep paying membership dues.

Being director of this district has brought me pleasure beyond words. Installations given, programs presented or attended, gifts received and given with joy and sincerity. The sadness of losing members who were friends and the joy of meeting, knowing and

having great experiences together with members defies description. I am what you see, and what you see is a person who was intimidated and fairly shy, become someone who is no longer shy, has become a full-time cheerleader sharing the excitement and offering encouragement to all “my” clubs. I retire with pride and memories of wonders, accomplishments and a wider understanding of people and nature.

Central East District is a small part of being a Force for Good and I am a tiny part of this district. Thanks for your attention, hugs, giggling at my silliness and being a part of my memory basket. It is your turn now, Kathy Vermilion!

Joyce Bulington
Central East Director



What's Your Club Planning?

Taking a Closer Look at... 

Creative Hands Garden Club

Creative Hands Garden Club became federated in September of 1997 with Ruth Moorhead as president and designer instructor. Ruth and Joyce Bulington are the only remaining charter members, and both have been state presidents. We do have women and men, members born in different countries and the youngest member was 16 when she joined with her mom and grandmother and the oldest in her early 90's. We are a very casual group, with no meals or snacks. It is too much to carry.

The Beginning

Ruth Moorhead was an instructor of a floral arranging class and when the term was coming to completion the students wanted to continue to learn and practice. A new garden club came into existence with more than 10 members.

It has grown, it has shrunk, it has survived. Some years we have 18-20 members, and some years we have 12. Loss of health, loss of spouse, loss of giddy up and go are the reasons.

We hold evening meetings and none in December, January, and February. The reason for that is cold winter weather makes it difficult to go outdoors and cut greenery. It also becomes a physical challenge to cart and carry needed supplies into the building. Therefore, everyone is excited to be returning in March, just like Crocuses bursting through the ground.

We always welcome guests, furnish our own greenery and try to bring our own flowers when they are available. When we do not have enough, we do buy them from a grocery or florist. They must respond to the purchaser noting attendance. This allows us to split the cost which is around \$7 per member per month. Taking home a \$40 arrangement, if bought, having fun while learning makes the cost worthwhile. Normally, there is a specific design style for all to work on, but members do have an option to choose



a different style. I find this happens when there is a personal need for something different.

Members arrive with buckets, weary bodies and desire to see photos of grandbabies, grand dogs and cats. The business meeting starts with a surprise rollcall allowing us to know more about each other. Members ask pertinent horticulture questions and then playtime begins. We design with flowers, sticks, peeps, jellybeans, candy canes, etc. and other unexpected surprises. Everyone brings their container of choice, wet foam and/or a pin holder and tools. Sharing is optional but always seems to occur. Most of the time someone makes an extra design to be left for a senior group at the church which meets the next day. Everyone packs up, cleans up their area and leaves with a smile and relaxed body.

We do have guest designers and power points when requested or available. Everyone shares knowledge as everyone has a different experience level and that is part of the fun. Nothing is judged, politics and religion are prohibited conversations, but dumb jokes are expected. Joyce Bulington is president, so dumb jokes are a given.

The club donates to state projects, welcomes new members and guests, and celebrates almost anything positive. Fresh flowers feed the soul. The motto is: If you are not pleased with your results, give it away and know that you have made the day special for someone else. Playtime with flowers is always a win time!



North West District

The North West District has had several planning meetings for the 2026 Garden Club of Indiana Convention. We have an enthusiastic, creative group of people working on this event and plans are moving along well. Mariellen Smith is Chairman and Christine Graves and James Pavelka are co-chairs. Members from other clubs in the district are part of the planning committee.

Crown Point Garden Club

Crown Point Garden Club held their first meeting of 2025 in February. As members approached the door, they were welcomed by one of our new mascots "Petunia the Garden Lady." She created a lot of chatter and excitement for the upcoming year. What a joy it was to begin the year seeing old friends and welcoming four new friends that all became new members at the end of the meeting!

We also celebrated with three of our members finishing the Master Gardener program and are officially Master Gardener interns.

Vice-President and Program Chairman Tish Vater introduced us on how to force Paper White bulbs to get us all in the mood for the coming of Spring. Each member brought a jar, pebbles and bulbs and small branches were supplied to complete the project. Each member was also given a small packet of Verbena seeds for sowing in outside pots as a Winter Garden project.

Duneland Garden Club

In September, our club toured the [Gabis](#)

[Arboretum](#) and created a relationship with Gabis to prune non-deciduous trees and shrubs for the Chesterton downtown planters. Additionally, 80 boxwoods shrubs were transplanted from Brinca Cross Gardens and replanted in Thomas Park by a few fabulous members and husbands.

October set the stage for getting ready for the holidays as several members scraped and painted the gazebo in Thomas Centennial Park in Chesterton. In November, we decorated 20 planters downtown Chesterton for the holidays, as well as 20 hanging baskets. We wrapped the library, for the 30th year in a row, with Christmas lights.

For their member holiday party, their president prepared 10 raffle baskets. Throughout the year, members received raffle tickets for participating in club activities. Some members had 100 tickets!!

Hobart Garden Club

Several members attended the popular Porter County Seeds and Bulb exchange in January. They enjoyed the garden shopping and the speakers.

The first meeting of the year was held on the first Friday and Meals on Wheels Valentines and Easter/Spring favors were made. A club member is asking for fresh flowers to make arrangements for seniors in three facilities in Hobart.

In March, the club will tour Johnson's and Remus Garden Center to see new varieties and have a planting workshop for our June 7 plant sale during National Garden Week which will have Ken and

Barbie working on environmental awareness with native plants to follow incoming TGCI President Wanda Zahrt's Presidential Project.

Members were notified that the club is up for three national awards at the April convention. Members will help President James Pavelka in a group consolidation arrangement honoring outgoing president Jayne Kessler.

Seven students sponsored by the Hobart Garden Club will be receiving awards in poetry, one state award for a poster and essay contest and a state and regional award for the sculpture contest.

Munster Garden Club

Munster Garden Club is focusing this year on increasing membership. We have changed our meetings to 6pm at night to hopefully encourage those who work to join the club.

We have had difficulty filling leadership positions and the future of the club is dependent on increasing membership. Our first meeting was held in February on a cold evening, but we were thrilled that 22 members attended. One of our members brought a friend, who then joined the club.

This year we hope to be a presence at more area events, push our door hanger campaign that recognizes beautiful landscaping and gardens and having a stronger presence on social media to encourage new members.

Vale of Paradise Garden Club

Vale of Paradise Garden Club had a table at the hugely popular Porter County Master Gardeners Garden Show. It is our annual membership drive where we sponsored a raffle basket to raise money for scholarships. It was a

successful day with one new member and a potential second one.

We held a social get together and welcomed new members and visited with the current ones. March 13th will be our first formal meeting of the year. One of our new members will be presenting on the medicinal properties of common plants.

In April, several of our members will be attending the TGCI convention in Indianapolis and we will also have a booth at the Expo for Earth Day with the theme "Our Power, Our Planet".

Mariellen Smith
North West District Director



Taking a Closer Look at... Duneland Garden Club



The Garden Diva's is a name coined for the core workers of The Duneland Garden Club that plan and maintain the gardens in Thomas Centennial Park. It is a joy and privilege to be part of this energetic group that makes me feel like elite special forces. This year The Garden Diva's saved 80 boxwoods, digging them up and replanting them in Thomas Park; they also painted the band shell in the park as this 100-year-old beauty was in desperate need of love.

Pictured are a few Garden Divas resting and enjoying a picnic lunch during the long day of planting the 80 boxwoods. Members not physically able to work prepared a delicious and restorative meal. It is this spirit of camaraderie, commitment, and acceptance that makes membership in The Duneland Garden Club a vital part my life.

By Karen Davis
Duneland Garden Club

South East District

Spring is here!! We are enjoying the warmer weather and are outside tending our gardens and landscapes. We are finishing up our Program Books. It's definitely a busy time!

ALL THUMBS GARDEN CLUB took a breather in January. In February they met at the Community Foundation for an interactive floral arranging presentation instructed by Paulette Balmer. In March they learned about maple syrup production by Greg Burton of [Burton's Maplewood Farm](#) with taste samples.

CULTIVATING GARDEN CLUB had a board meeting in January. They installed new officers at their first meeting of 2025. They have created their new Yearbook with a flower on the front cover. They are remembering their senior members with cards.

FLOWER LANE GARDEN CLUB had their annual planning meeting in January. February's meeting was at Norbeck Chapel with more additional planning. March was a meeting at a members home with a guest speaker who discussed her artwork and brought quilts for display.

GIVE-N-TAKE GARDEN CLUB had to cancel their January meeting due to health issues and cold weather. But most were able to attend their annual holiday dinner at Ertel Cellars Winery. Marilyn Hadler was voted in as the new President.

MUDLARKS met at a members home with Master Gardener, Steve Forster, delivering a wonderful program titled *Solar and You*. In February they held their meeting at Mother Bear's Pizza with a brief overview of the planned year. Diane Hurless installed the new officers for 2025. The March meeting was again at a members home with a program on orchids presented by Rachel Walker of the Indiana Orchid Society.

NIGHT BLOOMERS had their first meeting of 2025 on March 4th with a planning meeting preparing for the South East District Meeting at the Bruner Center in St Paul, IN on October 21. Mark your calendars - this will be a good one!!

Diane Hurless
South East District Director



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Taking a Closer Look at... Irvington Garden Club

Thanks to Paula Rominger-Lewis, the Irvington Garden Club of the near Eastside of Indianapolis was begun in the late 1990s with the help of an organizing group consisting of Marcia Doty, Laura Hildreth, Dawn Briggs, and Paula Hearn. This group met weekly for two months to design the club's structure and on Monday, February 22, 1999, a gathering of thirty-two attendees voted unanimously to create The Irvington Garden Club - "God's Garden Keepers, Inc."

The goals of the Irvington Garden Club (IGC) are to promote interest in native plants and wildlife habitats, to stimulate the greening of Irvington, to share knowledge about gardening, and to enhance the quality of life in our community.



Members not only devote time to their own personal gardens but also dedicate hours every year to beautifying public areas within the Irvington community. One of these sites is the Benton House Historic Garden at 312 South Downey Avenue, Indianapolis.

Built in 1873, The French Mansard style Benton House is the site of historic (prior to 1900)

collections of irises, daylilies, peonies, lilies, species hostas, native ferns and wildflowers, tulips, and daffodils. The site is also registered as a wildlife habitat.



Among other public areas the club supports is the Kile Oak Habitat Garden, 5939 Beechwood Avenue, Indianapolis. This oak is estimated to be between 300 and 400 years old. The grounds are planted and maintained with Indiana native flowers and grasses in a "native habitat."

For the past 25 years the club has offered the Irvington Garden Tour on the last Sunday of June every year from 1 PM to 5 PM, rain or shine, heat or cold. This is not a walking tour since the area of Irvington is vast, but bikes can be used. This year the club is exploring the use of a bus shuttle between the 8 gardens for an additional fee.

A committee meets early in the year to begin the work of developing that year's tour. Countless hours are spent seeking gardens, advertising, and creating and printing materials. Club members prepare plants to be given away to each registrant on



the day of the tour. The tour is so popular that some only join the club to volunteer their time that day in one of the 16 shifts of work. Over the years the tour has added artists, musicians and educational speakers to some of the gardens. The tour is purposely held the same day as the historic Irvington Methodist Church's Strawberry Festival and continues to hold the registration cost at a rock bottom 10 dollars for a great family day in historic Irvington!

Our advice to others wanting to offer a tour is start small and dream big.

One of the draws of the Irvington community is a sense of neighborliness. The Farmer's Market managed by the Irvington Garden Club was born out of that desire for a sense of community, to advertise the Garden Club, and for the marketing of gardener's produce and craft. The market, which meets at the Ellenberger Park every second Sunday of June through October, 12 PM to 4 PM is a massive

undertaking relying again on garden club volunteers.

The market has a small core of dedicated and knowledgeable garden members who carry out all the details throughout the year and a larger group of volunteers who help with the logistics that day to make the market possible rain or shine. This is not a work for the faint-hearted as there is a need for educating oneself as to insurance and permits required. Our manager attends training workshops as available. The market was especially challenging during Covid but was so welcome in that time of isolation. Check your area for regular community events where you might be able to be able to have a table to promote your club and grow from there.

The Irvington Garden Club is a unique club in its community but every garden club has its special niche in promoting the beautification and care of the gardens God has given.

By Ronna Brown
Irvington Garden Club



Deloris Elza, Helen Corbitt, Brenda Leske - owner of Rue de Fleurs, Judy Thurman and Cinda Ferguson with tea pot centerpieces made for the Hendricks County Historical Museums Community Tea.

Taking a Closer Look at... Hendricks County Garden Club

Hendricks County Garden Club has members from all over Hendricks County plus a few from surrounding counties. We are located just west of Indianapolis. We were organized on May 25, 1949 and federated in February 1950 in Clayton, Indiana. We are part of the Central West District.

Our theme for this past year was Loving Nature's Gardens. We meet on the fourth Wednesday of each month. Our meetings consist of a variety of speakers and field trips to area businesses or gardens and parks. Examples include: McCloud Nature Park, Rue de Fleurs (a local flower farm, Avon Outdoor Learning Center, Oliver Winery, Speakers: Mike Corbitt (Purdue Entomologist), Constance Ferry (Hobbit Garden Herbs), John Chapin (local landscape expert) to name a few.

We participate in two fundraising events each year - Master Gardeners Gardening for All Ages in which we sell plants donated by members. It is a great way to talk to prospective members and talk about plants with people,

plus we make money for our club. We also have a member gift auction and pitch in at our planning meeting.

We enjoy going to a local restaurant for our annual Christmas Luncheon. Members participate by weeding and watering at the I-70 rest area where we maintain gardens and the Blue Star Memorial. Each month volunteers donate a flower arrangement to a local business. We also participate in Danville's Scarecrow on the Square Contest in October. Another fun activity is our annual Progressive Lunch in which we visit several member's gardens and enjoy a pitch in.

We host the Central West District's Fall Meeting every other year and helped host the State Convention last April. This year we are also planning on helping to landscape a new building that the Hendricks County Historical Museum has recently purchased.

By Cinda Ferguson
Hendrick County Garden Club