

The Garden Club of Indiana, Inc.

# Indiana Gardens

December Vol. 88 Number 6 - 2025

OPEN SEVEN  
DAYS A WEEK  
FALL HOURS  
8 OR DARK  
WHICHEVER  
COMES FIRST



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

# 2025-2027



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Cover Photo: [Come into the Garden Club](#) members en-  
joying the autumn's bounty at [Anderson's Orchard](#).

# Letter from the President



reetings from  
 “Madam President.”

I am an avid reader of English murder mysteries and the start of any conversation in the mystery is a very proper discuss of the weather. So here goes!

Glorious fall weather! One cannot stay inside when the balmy air and fall colors beckon. I hope each of you has taken advantage of these glorious days and stored memories to get through the winter.

I have now completed my first year of District meetings and I am so impressed with TGCI Clubs and all their activities. We should give ourselves a “pat on the back” for jobs well done. I started the meetings in October with the Northwest District in Schererville, IN and finished with the Southeast District in St. Paul, IN. I was warmly welcomed at all of the meetings and found continued support of my Plant America with Natives Theme, as well as *Plant America Red, White and Blue* for 2026 and the 250th Anniversary of our country.

From the Northwest to the Southeast, the programs were excellent and informative. I learned about:

- ❄ Wildlife rehab,
- ❄ A wolf sanctuary,
- ❄ The need to remove invasive plant species to allow the natives to grow,
- ❄ The to inspire our youth to create another generation of gardeners,
- ❄ A claim if you plant natives, you will not be a “sissy gardener,”
- ❄ Learned about giant pumpkins and how

they are used,

- ❄ Heard the inspiring story of the Historic Lyle School and Museum,
- ❄ Converting a lawn to native plants to draw in the birds,
- ❄ How to develop a “love” for the [Hoya](#) plant.

Rita Hummel, 2nd VP, Laura Kearby, 3rd VP, and David Zahrt, Treasurer and Scholarship Chair also traveled to all the meetings. It was great to have part of the TGCI Executive Committee share information on their area and help me share TGCI news with members.

A few days home and I was off to Elkhart Lake, WI to the Osthoff Resort for the Central Region Convention. Indiana was well represented with nine TGCI Members attending the convention. The speakers again concentrated on the use of native plants and using organic products to help pollinators and birds.

There will be a [new award for 2025-2027 from Central Region](#), more on than in this edition of Indiana Gardens.

So, to quote Dr. Seuss, especially as President of TGCI....”Oh the places you’ll go.!” Happy Holiday to one and all! Looking for to another prosperous year with TGCI!

TGCI President



# Central Region Award Winners

GC, 1<sup>st</sup> place in Garden Therapy by Crown Point Garden Club, and 1<sup>st</sup> for Blue/Gold Star by Hobart Garden Club. The TGCI was the winner of 2024 CR Tree Extravaganza sponsored by past CR Director Lynn Ehnert and was accepted by President Zahrt and Past President Jayne Kesler.

Congratulations to our TGCI Central Region photo contest winners!

Lois Whitehead, Sages Garden Club

Kristen Grayson, Petal & Stem Garden Club

Debbie Hahn, Peru Garden Club

Barbara Koteles, Hobart Garden Club

Susan Wellin, Fort Benjamin Blossoms Garden Club

[See the photos](#) (this links to video)

**C**entral Region of the National Garden Club held their annual meeting at the Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake, WI on Oct 28-30. Indiana was well represented with 9 TGCI members in attendance. The theme was *Prospectively Connected* and began with a Flower Show Symposium.

TGCI clubs received Central Region awards of 2<sup>nd</sup> place Planting Community Gardens by Shamrock

PRESIDENT'S

PROJECT



"Plant America with Natives"  
2025-2027

2025-2027

[←Link](#)



## 20th Annual PCMGA Gardening Show

[20th Annual PCMGA Gardening Show](#)

Saturday, January 31, 2026

8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. CST (Chicago Time)

Admission Still \$10!

Children under 12 Free

Free Door Prizes

Free Parking

Porter County Expo Center

215 East Division Road

Valparaiso, IN 46383



# What's Up



## Blue/Gold Star MEMORIAL Beautification Grant

Help beautify Blue & Gold Star Memorials in your community! Learn about this new grant opportunity from National Garden Clubs, Inc. in partnership with Keep America Beautiful, and submit your application today.

Join clubs nationwide in this meaningful tribute as we lead up to America's 250th Anniversary!

[Apply Today!](#)



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

New from the Central Region:

## NGC Central Region Unified Project

*Plant American: Your Garden Club makes Progress Possible!*

The goal of the NGC Central Region Unified Project is to recognize clubs of the Central Region for progress on new projects during 2025-2027. The project must have begun after June 1, 2025, and can be any new club project or one that focuses on NGC's new project **PLANT AMERICA; RED, WHITE, and BLUE**. for our nation's 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday in 2026. Collaboration with another group or organization is encouraged.

Garden clubs qualify for the NGC Central Region Unified Project award by submitting an article (with photos) about their project to the CR Newsletter. After publication, the article and the NGC Central Region Unified Project Award application form must be submitted for review **before September 16, 2027**. Four clubs will be selected to receive recognition and a monetary award for outstanding new projects at the 2027 NGC Central Region Convention.

Award forms are on the CR website: [ngccentralregion.com](http://ngccentralregion.com)

2- \$25 award for clubs with 20 or less members.

2- \$25 award for clubs with 21 and more members

Each club that applies for the award will receive a certificate of recognition.

Wanda Zahrt, President  
TGCI, Inc.

[www.ngccentralregion.com](http://www.ngccentralregion.com)

# TGCI District Meetings

## NORTH WEST DISTRICT



**T**he Northwest District of the Garden Club of Indiana held their Fall annual meeting Oct 7 at Teibel's Restaurant in Schererville, IN. Several members of the state board attended, including state president Wanda Zahrt, and learned about state programs and opportunities for clubs. Nicole Harmon, director of Humane Indiana Wildlife presented on the wildlife rehab center she manages and the educational component of the center. Attendees also learned about all the amazing activities of all 5 clubs in the district. The district looks forward to hosting the [state convention at the Blue-Chip Casino in Michigan City on April 14 & 15.](#)

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

## NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT



**N**orth Central District meeting hosted by the Monticello Garden Club was held Oct 8. They met at the Monticello First Presbyterian Church. It is a beautiful facility and a delicious soup and sandwich lunch was prepared by the church ladies' group. The excellent speaker was Monty Sloan from Wolf Park, Battle Ground, IN. This organization, founded in 1972 by Dr Erich Klinghammer as the North American Wildlife Park Foundation, is dedicated to advancing the understanding, respect and conservation of wolves and other Canidae species.

## CENTRAL DISTRICT



**TGCI** President, Wanda Zahrt found herself at the Allisonville Christian Church on Oct. 8 for the Central District's Fall Meeting. The guest speaker was Dawn Slack, a project coordinator for State of Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management. Their organization's mission is to protect, restore, and enhance Indiana's landscapes by coordinating efforts to identify, prevent, and control Invasive species. The attendees really enjoyed hearing about their work!

While there, Wanda caught up with Ruth Hartley. This amazing centenarian has been a long-term member of TGCI and the Central District. Wanda shared ... "she is a joy and to quote Ruth ... *"I'm still kicking!"*"



### Youth Activities

*Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl Poster Contest*

## CENTRAL WEST DISTRICT




Central West District of The Garden Club of Indiana Fall meeting was held Oct 15 in Danville, IN. The district meeting had two terrific speakers. Amy Mullen: Garden Ecology and Style spoke about planting gardens with natives and nativars. She gave the group such great ideas!

Dr. Ronda Hamm of Conner Prairie's Food, Farm and Energy Experience spoke about how we each can inspire the next generation of gardeners, horticulturists and agriculturists. Dr. Hamm is one of the AAAS - The American Association for the Advancement of Science - IF/THEN Ambassadors. She's one of 125 women STEM innovators, chosen in 2019 as leaders in their field with a commitment to serve as high-profile role models. Statues of these inspiring women were created and exhibited in a number of places, including the Smithsonian. She kindly brought her statue to the meeting, and charged us all to be gardening and stewardship role models for all youth. **#plantpower** **#ThisIsWhatAScientistLooksLike**




## CENTRAL EAST DISTRICT



 Alexandria Community Center was where the Central East District held their annual meeting on October 15. President Wanda Zahrt and the other participants enjoyed the presentation from Mikkal Hodge owner/manager of Hodge Family Farm. He shared details about giant pumpkins. The largest that his farm has ever grown was 1,700 lbs.! The largest pumpkin that he has seen was 2,300 lbs.! These pumpkins are grown mainly for competition, but a few are sold to businesses that wish to use them in some type of promotion or fall open house.

## SOUTH WEST DISTRICT



 On October 15, TGCI President Wanda Zahrt was surprised and honored that the South West District purchased a brick in her name to be placed at the Lyles Station Historic School and


Museum in Princeton, IN!

The meeting was opened by Eric Heidenreich, Executive Director of the Gibson County Visitors & Tourism Bureau, and the program was a tour of the museum and grounds by Stanley Madison, President and Founder of the museum.

Did you know this amazing Historic School and Museum displays the story of what the Black community had to endure in Lyles Station and recreates a sense of life and learning in the town during the 1920s when the school was new and the community was thriving. Our TGCI 2026 September Seminar will be held here on 9-9-26 - so save the date to see this incredible place!

## SOUTH EAST DISTRICT



 On October 21 TGCI President, Wanda Zahrt was at the SE District Meeting hosted by the Night Bloomers Garden Club in St. Paul, IN. The lovely **Bruner Event Centre** was the venue. The morning speaker was Jeff Ludlow on **Converting a Suburban Yard to Native Plant Oasis**. Jeff's power point took us from his home purchase with almost no lawn to the bird sanctuary it is today. His wife is the gardener and his interest was more into birding than planting, but by planting natives he has been able to count over 130 bird species in his garden. He counts

*(Continued on page 16)*

**Save the Date**

**2026 TGCI State Convention**  
April 14-15, 2026  
Michigan City

**2026 National Garden Club Convention**  
May 4 - 6, 2026  
St. Louis, Missouri

**NGC Flower Show Symposium**  
Aug 12 - 13 2026  
Birmingham, AL

**2026 TGCI Fall Seminar**  
September 9, 2026

**South East District Fall Meeting**  
September 23, 2026

**South West District Fall Meeting**  
September 24, 2026

**North West District Fall Meeting**  
September 30, 2026

**North Central District Fall Meeting**  
October 1, 2026

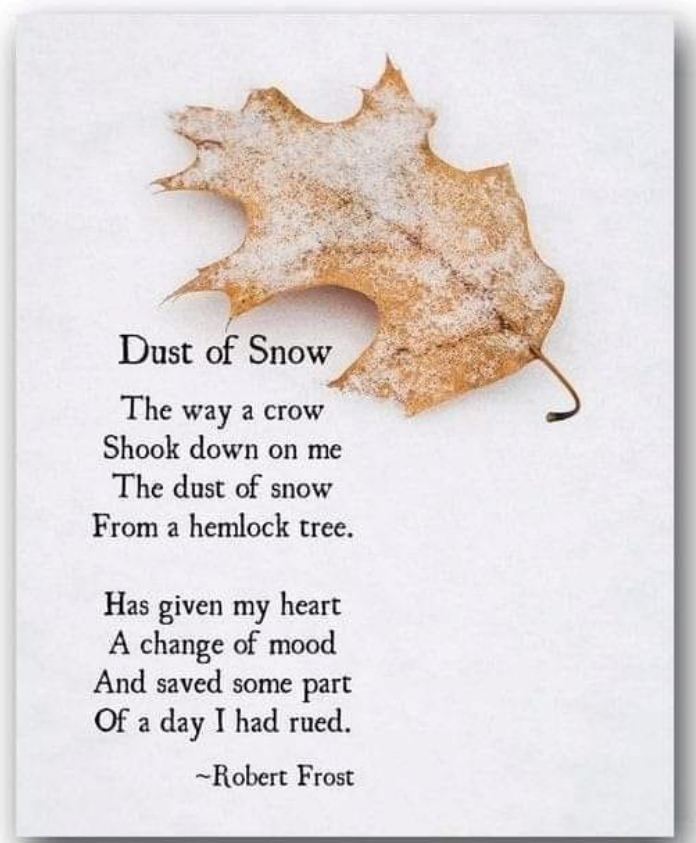
**Central District Fall Meeting**  
October 13, 2026

**Central West District Fall Meeting**  
October 15, 2026

**Central East District Fall Meeting**  
October 16, 2026



*←link* Click here to catch up with what our district directors and chairs are doing.



**Dust of Snow**  
The way a crow  
Shook down on me  
The dust of snow  
From a hemlock tree.

Has given my heart  
A change of mood  
And saved some part  
Of a day I had rued.

~Robert Frost

# Trees

Pecan fruit by Geo Lightspeed7



**P**ecan trees, native to North America/Indiana, do not need a male and a female tree, as they are monoecious, meaning both separate male and

female flowers are on the same tree which are physically located on different parts of the tree, but they are not self-pollinating. Female nutlets emerge from current season growth and male catkins develop on the last year's growth.

They do need another compatible pecan tree nearby for successful pollination because their male and female flowers mature at different times (which is called dichogamous flowering) and self-pollination is largely unsuccessful. They rely on wind-pollination and the timing of pollen release to set a strong nut crop.

This means that for the best yields and quality nuts, plant nearby (within 150 feet of each other) at least two different compatible varieties, and ideally, a mix of Type I (Protandrous) and Type II (Protogynous) trees to ensure cross-pollination occurs.

## Why one tree isn't enough

**Dichogamy:** Pecan trees have "dichogamy", a type of flowering that separates the male and female flower maturity times.

**Type I vs. Type II:** This means some trees (Type I) shed pollen before their female flowers are receptive, while others (Type II) have receptive female flowers before they shed pollen.

**Cross-pollination:** Planting both types allows the pollen from one tree to pollinate the other when its female flowers are open, leading to a successful nut crop.

## How to ensure pollination

Plant at least two compatible trees: This is the

# Pecan Trees – it takes at least 2 – Understanding Dichogamy

most important step to ensure successful pollination.

**Choose different types:** To maximize success, select at least one of each type (Type I and Type II).

**Consider proximity:** The trees should be close enough for wind to carry pollen between them.

Other native dichogamous nut and fruit trees in Indiana include various hickory species Shagbark and Pignut Hickory, Black Walnut, American Chestnut, Pawpaw and Persimmon. Native dichogamous flowering trees in Indiana include Eastern Redbud, Flowering Dogwood and Tuliptree.

Laura Kearby  
*Trees Chairman*

(Reference: AI Overview, Noble Research Institute, Nature Hills)



Pecan pie by Jonathunder

*In 1919, the 36th Texas Legislature made the pecan tree the state tree of Texas. In 2001, the pecan was declared the state's official "health nut", and in 2013, pecan pie was made the state's official pie. The town of San Saba, Texas claims to be "The Pecan Capital of the World" and is the site of the "Mother Tree" (c. 1850) considered to be the source of the state's production through its progeny.*



# Club News



## Shamrock Garden Club

Shamrock Garden Club had a hands-on canning workshop.

Members learned :

- The basics of safe and successful canning practices
- Essential equipment and supplies
- Sterilization and preparation techniques
- Steam and water bath canning
- Pickling
- Filling, sealing and processing methods
- Storage

Each member filled a pint size jar with sliced cucumbers, which had been prepared for canning. A brine was poured over the cucumbers, jars sealed, and taken home to place in the refrigerator for two weeks to complete the pickling process.

Submitted by Gerry St. Peters  
*Publicity Chairman*



[We Can Now Track Individual Monarch Butterflies. It's a Revelation.](#)



[Hurricane Helene, Compost, and God's Vine](#)



[Fern Station renamed to honor Efroymsen family](#)



[5 invasive plants that could be putting down roots in your garden or lawn](#)

## Booneville Garden Club



Boonville Garden Club conducted Yard of the Month (YOM) from May through October to recognize Warrick County residents for their contribution of beauty. We honored 7 yards this summer, 6 in Booneville, and 1 in Chandler. During National Garden Week, we had a YOM recognition and we invited the mayor.

November is a luncheon of prospective members and current. Yard of the Month recipients are invited and recognized again. We'll celebrate Christmas by decoration a tree at the Warrick Museum and party there also.

Submitted by Mary Pate



## Come Into The Garden Club



*Come into the Garden Club members met this past summer and autumn for business meetings, plant shares, wildflower seed shares and tours to the Indiana State Fair, Hunter's Honey Farm and Anderson's Orchard (pictured). All of which, of course, included time for a little shopping and stops for great food and fellowship.*

## Vale of Paradise Garden Club

Garden club continues as our gardening season has come to an end.

Throughout the year, we have enjoyed a variety of interesting presentations ([Humane Indiana Wildlife Rescue](#)) and embarked on memorable garden adventures, (a member's dahlia garden) enriching our knowledge and fostering community spirit.

Earlier in the season, we were fortunate to receive a grant from the Master Gardeners. This support enabled us to replant our monarch way station, enhance our pollinator garden, and further expand our planting efforts in the [Valparaiso Public Library's Rotary Garden](#). These additions have contributed to the beauty and ecological value of our shared

spaces.

Our gardens serve as valuable teaching experiences for the Naturalist and camp counselors during summer camp. By utilizing these gardens, they can provide hands-on learning opportunities for campers, fostering an appreciation for nature and gardening in young minds.



The ongoing work of maintaining our gardens brings great pleasure not only to our club members but also to the many visitors who enjoy these spaces. Our collective efforts ensure that the gardens continue to thrive and provide enjoyment for all.

Submitted by Linda Dingee  
*President*

## Sullivan County Garden Club



*"Plant Natives" display at the Sullivan Public Library. Sullivan County Garden Club members pictured below left to right include April Cox, Barb Gill, and Emily Gill.*

# The Garden Club of Marion

## The Garden Club of Marion: A Year of Growth, Learning, and Friendship

This summer brought more than just sunshine and blooms—it was a season of growth for The Garden Club of Marion, both in our gardens and in our membership. We are thrilled to share that our club has grown to 49 members, reflecting a thriving interest in gardening, community, and environmental stewardship.

Despite the sweltering summer temperatures, our dedicated members spent countless hours tending to our beloved Blue Star Memorial Garden, ensuring it remained a vibrant tribute and a beautiful spot for all to enjoy.



In August, the club ventured out on an engaging field trip to Kuhlpacka Farm, where members learned all about alpacas and their care. The experience was not only educational but also heartwarming, as we discovered the charm and uniqueness of these gentle animals.

September brought back a club favorite, Dugan Julian of the [Southern Indiana Cooperative Invasives Management](#). His informative presentation on invasive species highlighted the ecological damage they can cause and the importance of planting native species to protect our local ecosystems.

In October, another cherished guest, Taylere McCoy, Land Steward with [ACRES Land Trust](#), joined us for an enlightening discussion. Her presentation deepened our understanding of conservation efforts and emphasized the crucial role we all play in preserving natural habitats. We are also excited to announce a delicious new project—our upcoming cookbook fundraiser! Members are ready to put on their chef hats and share their favorite recipes, combining culinary creativity with community spirit. It's another way we're growing together—this time, in the kitchen!

Looking ahead, we're eagerly preparing for our annual Greens Workshop, where members will create eco-friendly wildlife feeders, blending creativity with sustainability. Then, we'll wrap up the year by bringing holiday cheer as we decorate Marion's historic Hostess House for Christmas.

As 2025 winds down, we reflect with gratitude on a year filled with education, growth, and friendship. The Garden Club of Marion continues to bloom, and we look forward to all that the next season has in store.

Submitted by Kimberly Jackson  
*President*





## Flower Lane Garden Club

The Flower Lane Garden Club began July with an enjoyable trip to the [White Diamond Lavender Farm](#) in Hope, Indiana. The outing included a luncheon and a guided tour of the farm, providing members with a relaxing and educational experience.

In August, the club visited [Flowers and Herb Barn Nursery](#), where members again enjoyed lunch together. Following the meal, the group held a meeting to discuss and finalize plans for the upcoming The Garden Club of Indiana (TGCI) September Seminar.

On September 9<sup>th</sup>, Flower Lane hosted the TGCI September Seminar, themed "Hats off to Gardening," at the Seasons Lodge and Conference Center in Nashville, Indiana. The event was well-attended, with 142 participants gathering for a day of learning and fellowship. Southeast District Director Diane Hurless opened the seminar with a warm welcome, followed by opening remarks from TGCI President Wanda Zahart, setting an enthusiastic tone for the day's activities.

The first morning session featured Rocky Lortz, a South-Central Indiana Master Gardener, who introduced the concept of Homegrown National Parks. Rocky discussed practical steps everyone can take to restore biodiversity in

their gardens, such as planting native plants, reducing lawn size, removing invasive species, increasing the diversity of landscape plantings, reducing nighttime light pollution, and networking with neighbors to promote native planting. She also emphasized the importance of building conservation hardscapes to protect small creatures like frogs and toads, mowing grass to a minimum height of three inches, installing water bubblers for birds, and avoiding the use of insecticides or fertilizers. Attendees received handouts to reinforce these ideas.

The second morning session featured Cora Reinbolt, the Bartholomew County Extensions Educator for Agriculture and Natural Resources and Community Development, giving a presentation titled "How to Improve Our Soil to Improve Our Plants." She covered essential topics such as collecting soil samples for testing, understanding soil pH, knowing when to test soil, the correct procedures for drying and mixing samples, and the process of submitting samples. Handouts were distributed to assist attendees with these practices.

The afternoon session featured Ro Whittington, a member of the Mudlarks Garden Club, delivering

*(Continued on page 16)*

(Continued from page 8)

his early success to Sharon Sorenson and her first book Planting Native to Attract Birds to Your Yard. The afternoon speaker was Wendy Blake on the hoyo plant. There are sixty-seven varieties of the hoyo and sell for over \$300. She had a lively discussion on type of soil to use, light, watering and general tips on how to get the hoyo to bloom.

By David Zahrt  
Assistant to Madam President



(Continued from page 15)

an engaging talk on "*The Surprising, Nutritious, and Amazing Tomato*." Her session included a lively Tomato Silly Quiz, which provided the audience with entertaining and educational facts about tomatoes.

The afternoon activities featured a delightful break with the "Blooming Voices" puppet show skit, which brought fun and laughter to all participants.

Attendees displayed creative hats, boosting the seminar's festive mood. The gift basket raffle saw enthusiastic participation, with thanks to all contributing clubs.

Submitted by Lisa Dailey  
Flower Lane Secretary



Chapter 26 - TGCI President and her husband David attended their 4th of 4 National Garden Clubs Inc. Landscape Design School Classes in Charleston, SC! The classes were held Founders Hall at South Carolina State Parks's Charles Towne Landing.

The class director was Paul Gibson, Chairman, The Garden Club of South Carolina, Inc. Landscape Design School. To welcome the class to South Carolina was Betty Jackson, President of the GC of South Carolina and Donna Donnelly, NGC President (pictured with Wanda).

By Sue Yoder  
Social Media Guru

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[The Garden Club of Indiana](http://www.thegardenclubofindiana.org)