

NGC Members of Honor 2022

New England Region – Evelyn Focorilli

Garden club offers you the opportunity to hold several officer positions within your club over the course of a 50-year membership. Evelyn is one of those people who has done just that. In addition to holding these positions, she has chaired numerous committees such as Adopt-A-Spot, Arbor Day, Awards, Birds, Civic Beautification, Therapy for Seniors, field trips, and workshops for design and horticulture. One of her specialty programs was a School Enrichment Program where she initiated teaching young children the wonders of Mother Nature's domain and the value of seeing the usefulness of recycled objects. 46 years later, Evelyn's idea of the need to engage children with the concrete learning experience in elementary botany blossomed into multi-level school projects ranging from growing flowers from seeds to feeding our feather friends and all things concerning nature and the environment. Evelyn was nominated for the Member of Honor for the New England Region based on her generosity to share her creative gifts and time over the past 50 years.

South Central Region – Freda Martin

Freda has held several officer positions in her club and within the district over the past 25 years. She has also held several offices and chairmanships for the State of Texas Garden Clubs, Inc. Freda continues to keep her club up to date with information at the national, state and district level. She provides an annual workshop on awards encouraging her club to apply for the various awards, providing step by step instructions. She is involved in Community Service for various counties and has been a mentor for HOSTS (Helping One Student of Succeed). Freda encourages her club to hosts flower shows and provides horticultural design study information at the monthly meetings. She is the glue for her club.

South Atlantic Region – Sandy Yun

Sandy has served as club president on two different occasions and has been club secretary and served on numerous committees. She has been recipient of the Silver Achievement Award on two occasions. This is the clubs highest award for outstanding contributions to the success of the club. She initiated the Junior Garden Club at Wise Count Christian School and serves as advisor. She leads several activities in the club such as plantings at the fire station, along Main Street, at the entrance signs to town, the public library, the town hall and the Blue Star Marker, Flower Shows, National Garden Week activities, financial support of the food bank, holiday decorating contest and the participation in the towns Fall-Fling. She is truly a go getter.

Central Atlantic Region – Carol Dietzel

Carol is an outstanding member of the Potomac Village Garden Club. She has been integral to most of the Potomac Valley Garden Club's projects offering project suggestions, planning, leading them and working with members to execute them. Her involvement and contributions have led to amazing success in 1) Landscape Design, Civic Development, Community Enhancement 2) Youth Activities/Education and 3) Fundraising far beyond the club's expectations. The Peter Rabbit Herb Garden was the primary project where planning and expertise and labor helped it to become a reality. As we all know, an idea is just an idea unless some is willing to make it happen and that is exactly what Carol did with the idea of constructing an herb garden at the library. Carol took off with the idea. She developed the specific plans, and once the garden was completed, she has continued to lovingly care for it. She weeds, replaces herbs as needed and takes care of its watering.

Pacific Region - Billie Marie Rochelle Fitch

Billie is an active and engaged member of the garden club. For the past 28 years she has worked tirelessly and enthusiastically in the Norland Garden Club, the Olympic Peninsula District, the Washington State Federation of Garden Clubs with the National Garden Clubs, Inc. She served as an NGC Horticulture Instructor for 10 years. She has recently served as Olympic Peninsula District Judges Council president. She is also a contributing author on the Horticulture Exhibiting and Judging Handbook. For 20 years she edited and published the district newsletter which was filled with garden club news, recipes, and great jokes. She has been involved in the Jefferson County Fair floral barn and Horticultural Barn and on the Fair Board. She is also involved in the Olympic Peninsula Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society. Billie is one busy lady.

Central Region – Mary Reed

Mary has demonstrated passion and commitment to the club and greater Portage Lake community in the areas of Conservation, Civic Development, Education, Garden Therapy, Landscape Design and Youth Activities. She was featured in the Traverse magazine focusing on Mary's 'lifetime of bringing people together to convene, listen and help the community.' Over the years, Mary has served her garden club in several leadership roles and served as Environmental Conservation Chair for 12 years educating the club and community on invasive species mitigation, wetlands preservations, and local aquatic ecosystems. Mary has taken a community leadership role on many levels and the result has been to make Portage Lake and Onekama a much stronger environmental community.

Deep South – Mary Whisler

Mary has held several leadership positions throughout her career with the Garden Club of Crystal River and the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs especially when it comes to youth. While it is true that Mary's involvement with youth is not entirely typical junior gardener work, she has a real passion for our 'unique to Florida' youth program. She is part of the Wekevia Youth Camp, an overnight environmental studies camp for children. Mary leads over 600 campers over 6 weeks each summer in the Wekevia woods, trails, and lakes to share her knowledge of nature and the environment. Mary recently volunteered to rewrite the curriculum for the 7th grade girls focused on the Naturalis Program. Mary completed environmental schools in 2017, landscape design in 2018, and gardening schools in 2019. She has also served as Vice President at Tri-Council in Florida. In addition to the above, as soon as Mary completes her final flower show school classes, Mary will be eligible to become the NGC Four Star Member.