



NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS, INC.

KEEPING IN TOUCH

QUARTERLY PUBLICATION

Feb-Mar-April 2012

GREETINGS from Shirley Nicolai, NGC President 2011-2013 Theme - NGC: Proudly Serving Our Members and Communities

Choosing resolutions for 2012 causes us to think about our goals and what we must do to reach them. The goals often come easily, perhaps even too easily. The challenge is coming up with a plan of actions to achieve our most important goals and then committing ourselves to putting these actions into practice.



We must begin with a self-evaluation. Where are we headed if we continue to do what we've been doing? Is this course leading us to the future we

desire? Are we drifting in currents that are moving us away from the destinations we want to reach? These questions are pertinent to both our personal and garden club lives, but the focus here is on the latter.

What are our club's strengths and weaknesses? Are meeting times and places still appropriate? A well-worded questionnaire, which asks for suggestions to overcome cited weaknesses, can be a first step. It is the club's strengths that will be marketing tools.

Are there areas not now served by a garden club where one would be welcomed? Members from clubs that are thriving can be helpful doing a search and may even have a personal contact from other affiliations. New housing developments, existing neighborhoods with turnover to younger families, condominiums, high-rise apartments

and businesses where meetings could take place at lunch are some of the possibilities. Mostly on-line clubs are a largely untapped option. Perhaps there are people who would just like to work on planting and maintenance of gardens; they could be a weekend extension of an existing club or be a new club. Clubs for those interested in house plants, propagation, gardening with children or gardens with edibles are further possibilities. When an organizing meeting is held, it is crucial to find out what these potential members want to learn and make it happen.

Are there existing non NGC groups that would partner with us on a worthy project? Might they then be persuaded to join us?

When the self-evaluation is complete and new club possibilities have been determined, it is time to set a goal for member or club increases and establish a target date. For new club recruiting, a team effort is likely needed. This team should give scheduled progress reports so that others can understand how they can help. When the goal is reached, celebrate!

A less formal, but definitive procedure is needed at the smaller existing club level. Personal "asks" during Standard Flower Shows, garden tours, plant sales and National Garden Week are most effective. The NGC Membership Video available from Member Services can

assist the personal "ask". As garden club members, we sometimes get so involved with specific projects that we fail to think of these projects as assets that can be used to encourage membership growth.

NGC has a Strategic Planning Committee. Please look for helpful hints from this group on our website.

A garden club of which I'm a proud member distributes a "Dream Sheet" each spring on which members indicate when they are willing to hostess, which 3 committees they wish to serve on or chair, program topics of interest, willingness to provide a program, ideas for the annual day tour, suggestions, etc. Having members provide input makes them feel valued; they are then more likely to retain their memberships and more likely to bring in new members.

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The Federated Garden Clubs of New York State will host "Explore the Wonders" from May 17-19. Attending this exciting National Convention would be a stellar goal; the plan of actions needed to make this goal a reality can be found in the current issue of *The National Gardener* or at www.gardenclub.org.

With best garden club wishes,
Shirley
shirleynicolai@verizon.net

**WORLD GARDENING
GLOBAL PARTNERS -
Barbara Wesley, Chairman**

**National Garden Clubs Receive
Recognition for Donations to Haiti**

The Voice of Haiti's success owes a lot to members of NGC, Inc. according to Pam Schoessling, a volunteer with the organization. An article appearing in their publication gave credit to members for their contributions. "Thank you for the support that was critical to the new engineering water project. It could not have happened without your substantial donation."

On December 8, 2011, taps on the first central chlorination system were opened. Five thousand Haitians have been provided clean drinking water. A goal has been set to install seven more systems eventually reaching over thirty thousand grateful Haitians. Individuals and communities are being empowered. They are receiving help to stem the spread of cholera and provide healthier lives for thousands. Permanent solutions are being sought to provide orphanages, schools and clinics with clean water and sanitation.

Send your checks made out to NGC, Inc. to Headquarters to participate in this project.

Remember also to donate to Global Partners/Running Waters Fund. When our goal of fifty cents per member is met, it will provide money for a project completely funded by NGC members.

**NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS, INC.
2012 CONVENTION
Babbidean Urban Huber, Chairman**

Have you registered for the 2012 83rd National Garden Club Convention being held in Buffalo, New York, May 16 to 19, 2012? Do not miss out on the National Flower Show, exciting tours, six educational seminars, top vendors, a comprehensive tri-refresher. An open-to-all Life Members Banquet with a design program will be held in conjunction with the National Flower Arrangers. An International Opening Luncheon speaker and a renowned design instructor from Brazil as the Design Banquet are features for your enjoyment.

Check out the Convention Schedule at www.gardenclub.org. It is also in the winter issue of THE NATIONAL GARDENER. The registration forms and the tours, seminars, tri-refresher, and main speakers information are also at the Federated Garden Clubs of New York State website, www.fgcny.com.

**NATIONAL GARDEN WEEK
JUNE 3-9, 2012**

National Garden Week Proclamation and Posters are available on the NGC website www.gardenclub.org under Special Projects-National Garden Week. Members may print as many copies as they wish. Hard copies are also available from Member Service and will be sent upon request as in the past.

Elaine DiPietro,
National Garden Week Chairman

**National Garden Clubs, Inc.
Website: www.gardenclub.org**

**MEMBER SERVICES:
For a current catalog and orders
1-800-550-6007
headquarters@gardenclub.org**

**National Garden Clubs, Inc.
4401 Magnolia Ave
St. Louis, MO 63110-3492
(314) 776-7574**

**PRESIDENT'S
TRAVEL SCHEDULE**



January 26-29 Winter Executive Committee
Albuquerque, NM
February 23-25 CFAA Orlando, FL
March 2-4 Philadelphia Flower Show, PA
March 18-20 Deep South Convention,
Murfreesboro, TN
March 21-23 Tennessee, Murfreesboro
March 25-27 South Atlantic Region Convention
White Sulphur Springs, WV
March 29-31 Alabama, Huntsville
April 10-11 Oklahoma, Alva
April 13-14 Kansas, Junction City
April 17-18 Louisiana, Houma
April 20-21 Nebraska, Omaha
April 23-24 Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
April 25-26 Missouri, Cape Girardeau
April 29-May 1 North Carolina, Asheville

**NGC PRESIDENT'S PROJECT -
PHOTO ARCHIVING
Robin Pokorski, Chairman**

We Want EVERY State on Flickr

Our NGC Flickr site is growing. Is your club or district or state represented? Send pictures with a short description identifying the group, project and location. Your Flickrettes are particularly seeking Blue Star Memorial Marker plantings, hydrangeas (our NGC President's favorite flower) and Aquatic Eco-system Project pictures. Do it today!

Send pictures to Robin Pokorski at RobinP@juno.com. Then visit our Flickr site (Flickr.com/NationalGardenClubs) - your on-line idea book!

Deadline for the next issue of KIT -

April 1, 2012

Please send information, articles, etc.
to
SRGOSSMAN@aol.com
Sandra Gossman, Editor 'KIT'
2506 Northwestern Ave, Ames, IA
50010

Shirley Basista, Assistant Editor 'KIT'
8623 Hollis Ln, Brecksville, OH 44141
sjbasista@yahoo.com

NGC President's Project - PLANTING FOR PUBLIC AND SPECIAL PLACES - Betsy Steele, Coordinator

President's Project 2011-2013
Plantings for Public and Special Places

*Hey, Hey We Need To Know
How Your Plantings They Did Grow
If A New Project Is Underway
(You Lucky Warm Climes)
Fill Out The Form & Send it Without Delay
For All The Others Who Must Wait
We Know Your Plantings Will Be First Rate
So Remember No Matter How Large Or Small
We'll Happily Take the PPSP Forms From All*

Pat, Sue and Lissa
Poem by Lissa Williamson

Don't be left out! You don't have to wait until the April 1st deadline. Send form as projects are completed. ALL Garden Clubs are encouraged to visit the NGC website www.gardenclub.org and complete the form under Special Projects. Clubs apply directly to NGC. Email form to applicable chairmen to receive recognition.

Gardens with Edibles: Pat Rupiper arupiper@bright.net
Container Gardens: Sue Robinson rerob@mac.com
Trees and Shrubs: Lissa Williamson erw510@aol.com

Betsy Steele, PPSP Coordinator: betsysteel@truvista.net

PLANNING A PUBLIC EDIBLE GARDEN - Pat Rupiper – Vegetable and Herb Chairman

The garden catalogs are flooding into the house and it is time for planning. I would love for all of the garden clubs in every state to set aside a time to discuss what they can grow for the underserved in their community. Yes, it involves work. However, it is more rewarding than you could possibly imagine and there are people out there who are anxious to help. Contact the public area title-holder for rules, placement, etc. Contact agencies that could utilize the food for their clients. All gardens need the same thing: *water source, good drainage, sunlight, and adequate soil*. Start small, have the committee set up a club meeting to start some seeds &/or teach others to do the same, order some transplants, or select the design to beautify the area. Read a few Kitchen Garden and Herb books for inspiration.

Do you need to create a raised bed in the area for healthy soil and easy access? Would it be better to create in containers? Our courthouse steps have seasonal pots that a club creates and waters. It would be so easy to turn those into edibles combined with flowers. Libraries and schools are great places for display gardens. How about a historic site or the public park? Be creative and bold and give it a shot.

Pick your plants carefully for drought resistance and ease of care. Have the utilizing agency ask its clients what they would like to see growing. Many patrons would take pride in helping and it is a wonderful learning opportunity. I bet you could involve the extension office or health department to help teach about using or cooking the food. There are people who can teach a basic garden class out there, expose your club and the community to that resource and ask for helpers. The biggest effort will be maintenance. Remember to utilize whatever water saving techniques you can and to try to grow without chemicals for the public's safety.

I would encourage all of you to submit the club's effort as a President's Project. It is easy. Go to the website (www.gardenclub.org), fill in the form in the Project Plantings area, add the digital pictures, and send the edible project to me (arupiper@bright.net), or the other two leaders - containers (rerob@mac.com) or trees and shrubs (erw510@aol.com)! Our teams would really enjoy reviewing them and your club would receive a certificate from NGC. *Happy growing.*

ASK ... Increasing Club Membership

Linda Nelson, 1st VP, NGC Membership Chairman

In a report from a California garden club in response to my request for sharing success stories of how their club increased membership were the following ideas. These ideas are worth strong consideration.

This club **emphasizes educating its members**. They budget a large amount for high quality educational speakers or programs. They vary the speakers and subjects to attract new members and maintain existing members interest. They keep a spreadsheet of previous programs to avoid duplication. They do not rely on "free programs", although they do invite nursery owners and allow them to sell their plants or authors to autograph and sell their books and give them a lesser honorarium.

This club's **membership chairman has been inviting both new members** who have recently joined and any guests who attend a meeting **to attend an orientation meeting** at a local bakery where she treats them to coffee and pastry to discuss the club and its projects and goals. At this meeting they discuss the different study groups the club encourages, the projects the club supports (youth, memorial gardens, state reforestation, butterfly garden, plant sale). Also discussed are the workshops planned (pressed flowers, floral design, propagation, etc). Often they have guests decide to join the club at the conclusion of this meeting. All new members then receive a notebook with all club information, a club structure chart helping the member realize how they fit into the bigger picture of district, state, region, national. Also included is a pie chart of how the dues are spent, the budget shows a deficit to demonstrate the need for fund raising. The members bring this notebook to meetings for note taking and to store any handouts they receive.

The final personal touch is the colored name tag given new members so existing members (who have white name tags) can **readily welcome them**.

This club is proof that effort pays off. Effort in securing quality programs, effort in keeping them busy in rewarding projects, effort in making all members feel welcomed and needed. The biggest payoff from this effort, however, is the friendships you gain.

Ask them to join **S**hare information **K**eep them busy
(We are ASKING you to SHARE your success stories so we can KEEP busy writing this column)

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS - CONSERVATION INVASIVE PLANTS - Jane Buck, Chairman

INVASIVE PLANTS: WHAT'S LURKING IN YOUR GARDEN?

Invasive plants have been around for many years and are a serious environmental threat and growing problem worldwide. Invasives infest millions of acres of forest, rangeland, wetland, and urban landscape across the country. By becoming familiar with the invasive species threats in your climate, you can avoid accidentally contributing to the problem when you select plants to grow in your yards and gardens.

Definition of an Invasive Plant:

An Invasive Plant is a non-native species whose introduction does or is likely to cause harm to the economy, environment, or human health.

Invasive plants can be introduced in these ways:

- By dispersal from one area to another by birds, wildlife, livestock, vehicles, watercraft, man, railways and wind.
- By intentional introduction as an ornamental or food plant.
- As an unintentional by-product of disposal, such as garden waste dumping.

Without native diseases and growing conditions to keep them in check, many invasives will multiply unchecked. Some invasives are rapid growers choking out slower growing native plants. This invasion is affecting our economy, environment, quality of life and health, and is changing the natural uniqueness and beauty of our environment. The United States National Arboretum reports that

over \$100 million a year is spent in the U.S. combating invasive plants in wetlands alone. Invasives can have a devastating impact on native ecosystems by out-competing native plants for space, light, water and nutrients. Subsequent consequences can include the loss of wildlife habitat, decreased agricultural productivity, and increased fire danger.

It is up to us as gardeners to become aware of this problem and do our part to stop the spread of invasive plants. Choosing plants wisely and controlling potentially invasive plants in your garden and on your property are the best ways to preserve native plant habitats.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP STOP INVASIVE PLANTS?

Contact your local native plant society or state Department of Natural Resources to find out which plants are invasive in your area.

- Learn to identify locally important invasive plants.
- Remove invasive plants in your yard and garden to prevent their spread.
- Plant non-invasive plants in your garden.
- Use systemic herbicides carefully as a last resort to remove invasives.
- Share your knowledge of invasive plants with other gardeners and neighbors.

RESOURCES TO FIND OUT WHICH PLANTS ARE INVASIVE:

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COMMUNICATIONS PUBLICITY Sharon Yantis, Chairman

CHANGING IN THE WAY WE DO BUSINESS

Don't look now, but this was written on New Year's Day 2012. It's a day to reflect briefly on the past year and to focus our thoughts on the New Year. It's a day of resolutions – challenging us to change the way things used to be and morph them into what is and will be in the year ahead.

Today, the computer, I-phone and other technology have become our vehicle for shopping online --from airline tickets, to reserving movie tickets, it has become so much easier to do business today. It's our ticket for reading "tomorrow's news today" via online editions of the local and national newspapers. We can get the weather any time we want, and we can "Google" virtually any topic we can imagine.

2012 is different than when many of us joined our first garden club. Back then most everything, including newsletters, were mailed to our homes. Today, we need to encourage our members to utilize this fast-moving technology and become part of the social media movement. We need to keep the information on our Websites up to date and have worthwhile information for our members. It is also a vital way of attracting new members.

As leaders of our garden clubs, let us use this time of resolution to resolve to encourage each other to use this new technology to our benefit. It not only can help expedite information delivery, but it will help our economic balance sheet. We must be proactive in our message and encourage our members to subscribe to and read our newsletter, *Keeping In Touch*, from a computer screen....of course, one can always print out any copy that is needed for that scrapbook project of memories past.

Share your secrets of how to implement your resolution for this year. Tell us how you will encourage your members to learn how to effectively utilize our new age technology? It is how we will be "Keeping in Touch" in the years to come.

Sharon Yantis, sharon.yantis@sbcglobal.net

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES SCHOOLS Judy Newman, Chairman

One of the goals of the NGC Environmental Studies School Committee is to have the ESS offered in every state. Each year, one and sometimes two states have started new Environmental Studies Schools. Consultants are responsible to keep track of the courses completed in each of the four schools. ESS Consultants wishing to verify courses/ refreshers completed may contact me for a printout of his/ her records.

Judy Newman, NGC ESS Chairman,
newman9641@aol.com, 414-861-7134.

GARDENING STUDY SCHOOLS Greg Pokorski, Chairman

We are fortunate to have many ES, GS and LD schools in progress across the country. While the NGC educational schools may be given or taken in any order, in some ways Gardening Study Schools provide a foundation for the study of landscape design, the environment, and flower show judging. Clubs, districts or state federations who have never sponsored a NGC school might consider beginning with a Gardening Study School (GSS).

A series of four ten-hour courses covers basic botany, soils, plant propagation, houseplants, container gardening, plant diseases and pests, growing flowers, vegetables, fruits and woody ornamentals, development and evaluation of new plants, classifying plants, pruning techniques, lawns and lawn alternatives, home irrigation techniques and more. This program provides clubs, districts or state federations with a structure to offer garden-related education to their members and to the public, thus providing an opportunity to offer value to existing members and an opportunity to recruit new members. The GSS Committee is here to help you.

Greg Pokorski, GS Chairman, GregPokorski@earthlink.net

NGC LANDSCAPE DESIGN SCHOOLS Jane Bersch, Chairman

Landscape Design Schools have and will be taking place throughout this fall in many of the states. Several are being planned for 2012 and this chairman has been contacted by state presidents who want to start a series of Courses. Refreshers, some multiple, are on the calendar as well. All provide rich opportunities for developing a strong appreciation and knowledge of the many aspects of landscape design. I encourage the state presidents to include Landscape Design Schools in their goals. The LDS Committee is here to help you. You can find the list of Committee members on the NGC web, www.gardenclub.org, under Schools>Landscape Design>Forms>LD Committee 2011-2013.

The Landscape Design School Operations Guide is in the process of being updated, clarified and improved. Currently the forms required for planning a Landscape Design School Course are on the web www.gardenclub.org. A series of articles on the planning of courses will be appearing in *The National Gardener* in the next few issues. Encourage the former LDS Chairman to mentor a new LDS Chairman.

Jane Bersch, NGC LDS Chairman, janebersch@aol.com

*The only limit to your garden
is at the boundaries of
your imagination.*

Thomas D. Church

MEMBER SERVICES - Candace Morgenstern, Chairman

Think Spring! Think Member Services! Spring is a time of transition – new growth, new officers, flower shows and the freshness of new beginnings.

Brent & Becky's Bulbs has a wonderful selection of bulbs for spring and summer planting. Think about a "Living" flower arrangement workshop using lilies, gladiolas, dahlias, oxalis and callas. Plant a container garden to compliment President Shirley's project, "Plantings for Public and Special Places". Go to www.bloominbucks.com, click on the pull down menu – click on National Garden Clubs, Inc. NGC will receive credit for each sale – including bulbs, books and tools.

Thank your outgoing president with a **Past President's pin** and how about presenting your new President with a **Club President pin**! A new flower show judge in your club? Don't forget we have **Flower Show Judge's pins** and **Master Judge pins**! Fabulous **certificates** are available for that

special garden club member who works so hard for your club. New customized **magnetic name badges** are available for your garden club members – think "green" no more paper!

New this year is the long awaited **4 and 5 Star Member pin**. A round pin encircled with stars, with a large center cut out star, when 5 star status is achieved a "diamond" is inserted in the center star.

The new **Vision of Beauty Calendar** (2013) will be available soon. Consider placing large orders either through your district or with another club/s to receive further discounts and assist in your fund raising project.

Not only do we carry standard **Flower Show ribbons** but we can customize with your club name, year and event. Think new when planning and ordering for your flower show.

Attending one of our schools in the

spring? The **required reading books** are all available with Member Services.

Looking for new members? Order our **NGC DVD** for a wonderful aid to membership.

We are in the process of designing a NGC scarf, similar to the carpet at NGC Headquarters. Please send a digital copy of your state seal/logo with your state's garden name printed out. This is an exciting project and we're looking forward to hearing from every state! Send to ms.candace@cox.net

Member Services is your garden club store! If you don't find what you would like, contact me at ms.candace@cox.net and we'll make it happen! Products sold through Member Services will soon be available to purchase on-line, making it convenient and easy for us all.

Orders only 800-550-6007

Email: headquarters@gardenclub.org
FAX 314-776-5108

CONSERVATION BUTTERFLIES - Marian McNabb, Butterfly Chairman

Now is the time to be thinking of plantings for Butterflies next spring. If there is a certain species of Butterfly you'd like to attract to your garden check to see what their host plant is and make sure you have plenty of it in your garden. You can join Monarch Watch through the University of Kansas, and tag Monarchs for their fall migration. Consider installing a Monarch Waystation. We have two Monarch Waystations in our town, one at our home, the other at the Nature Center. A Waystation is an area set aside just for Butterflies, with plants that attract them, such as Milkweed for the Monarch, their host plant. Monarchs lay their eggs on Milkweed, the larvae or Caterpillars eat the Milkweed, and sometimes make their Chrysalis on Milkweed, then emerge a Butterfly. Thus completing their life cycle. Please remember when planting a Butterfly Garden never use chemicals/insecticides on the plants in this garden.

I'd like to see every Region select a Regional Butterfly. I know of two Regions with a Regional Butterfly. Central Region has the Painted Lady and New England Region chose the Monarch because of their migration in the fall and the abundance of Milkweed, their host plant, in the area.

Marian M. McNabb, NGC Butterfly Chairman
Nature@lowatelecom.net or gwmnm@lowatelecom.net
Phone 712-296-4920

Plant for Public and Special Places TREES AND SHRUBS -Lissa Williamson, Chairman

PRUNING YOUR TREES AND SHRUBS - SOME QUICK DO'S

THIN

- to increase air and light to interior leaves for better photosynthesis
- to decrease surface area for snow and ice accumulations
- to decrease the "sail" effect of high winds
- to decrease the weight of the branches
- to improve branching habit
- to maintain shape and health of the plant

MAKING THE CUT

- just above an outward facing bud
- angle the cut slanting away from the bud
- avoid leaving a stub
- dead heading or pinching to redirect growth may be enough for some shrubs
- you can remove up to 1/3 of shrub branches - to the ground - in one growing year to help rejuvenate

THE TIMING

- know when they bloom for best results the following year
- shrubs that bloom on old and new wood usually require little pruning
- avoid heavy pruning in fall/early winter to protect stored food energy
- check A-Z guides for specific information if you're in doubt
- two excellent sources are: ORTHO "All About Pruning" and Dr. Hessayon's "The Tree & Shrub Expert"

NEW ENGLAND REGION

JOYCE A. KIMBALL

The New England Region recently expanded their formerly semi-annual newsletter into a quarterly publication! Of course, now being published electronically influenced this decision, however, it was our very able and most agreeable Newsletter Editor and our contributing writers that made it a reality. And—our newsletter now has a name! Formerly known as simply “NEWSLETTER of the New England Region”, it will now be published under its new name: *Northern Exposure*. How fitting! The previous administration sought suggestions of names from the general membership and through a selection process chose the name *Northern Exposure* for future publications. We came up with a new logo as well. Please feel free to log on to the NER website to view our current and past newsletters: www.ngcner.org. Speaking of the website, we have recently begun offering sponsor listings to garden-related businesses as a fund-raising endeavor. For a small annual fee, we will list a sponsoring business' company logo on the opening pages of our website for all to see. Anyone logging on will have the opportunity to “click” on a sponsor's logo to be sent directly to their website. This new undertaking has had a very positive response and we anticipate more sponsor sign ups in the immediate future. “HAPPY NEW YEAR”!

CENTRAL ATLANTIC REGION

JEANNE T. NELSON

Members of our Central Atlantic Region have had a busy fall and holiday season with many projects, programs and decorating of Historic Sights.

I have been made aware of extensive contributions individual clubs have made to improve their communities. The Blue Star Memorial Project, started as “The Trail of Blue Stars”, has grown beyond our region's wildest dreams. The Community Gardens Program has taken a giant leap forward with workshops, newly planned gardens and photographing of successful endeavors. See photos in CAR newsletter. We are so very proud of all our clubs for their continuing efforts to give scholarships to our young people and encouraging other community groups to become involved with local school programs.

The newsletter “CAR Regional Review” has just published its third issue. There are wonderful articles about our environment, invasive plants, water quality, and a

contribution from Rutgers University on Native Hollies (Ilex) by Bruce Crawford, Director, Rutgers Gardens.

The Central Atlantic Regional pin is ready to go into production for all to see at the National Convention, hosted by FGCNY one of the CAR states...“Shuffling off to Buffalo”.

SOUTH ATLANTIC REGION

MARY DIXON

This Director is excited to hear about all of the projects being done by the member states for this region. Articles have been published in state publications supporting NGC and SAR special projects. As this Director receives other publications from other regions it is encouraging to see the work being done by the National Garden Clubs, Inc. clubs. South Atlantic Region Chairmen are encouraged to challenge each state and club to participate in the special projects.

Schools have been held with great success and more are offered for our members. Flower Shows are planned for the spring and many opportunities for tours are available also.

Time has come to complete the plans for the SAR convention which will be held at the Greenbrier Resort, White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, March 25 – 27, 2012. This Director looks forward to hearing from all SAR states about their activities and accomplishments during the past year as well as spending time with our National President Shirley Nicolai.

We are “Proudly Serving Our Members and Communities” and our “Members Are The Link To The Future” in the South Atlantic Region. Happy New Year and may this one be the best yet for everyone.

DEEP SOUTH REGION

SARA LANIER

Oh, Where, Oh Where did 2011 go? Are you asking yourself that question? Have you set a New Year's resolution? Why not set one for your club...attract members and retain them!

Kudos to Tennessee! They have 286 new members and a new club with 30 members that will be joining after their Winter Board meeting. Tennessee has also been busy updating their bylaws, standing rules and job descriptions. They are also busy planning the Deep South Convention to be held March 18-20 in Murfreesboro, with NGC President, Shirley Nicolai as our honored guest. All members are invited to attend the Deep South Convention. Mississippi has just finished their 56th Edward Martin

Landscape Design Symposium, the longest running symposium in the US. Alabama's “Helping Hands Jr. Garden Club” won the “Go Green Award” for cleaning up a one acre lot. The Jr. Garden Club planted a vegetable garden on this lot to provide vegetables for the community. When the tornadoes of April 27th struck, the community garden played another important role...a place to plant your own garden and a source of free vegetables for anyone needing them.

The Deep South Region is so proud of the winners and those who entered the WAFA Flower Show in Boston, and especially our youth who won. Congratulations!

CENTRAL REGION

FLORENCE SMITH

Another year is upon us allowing the Central Region members to continue on with all the wonderful goals and objectives they have begun and are planning on doing. Throughout the seven states the goals are similar with individual and unique approaches.

At the CR Convention in Grand Rapids, MI this October, the presidents' and representatives' reports were given. The seven states are continuing to ‘Plant It Pink’, with a great interest in the dedication of Blue Star Memorial Markers. Work continues toward the implementation of NGC President Shirley Nicolai's plans for the future with Community Gardens, Protecting Aquatic Ecosystems and Planting Flowering Trees for the CR unified project. Growing members is also a big part of the states' goals.

Of special note is the CR Award #5 Celebrating Talents in the “Vision of Beauty Calendar” sponsored by The Garden Club of Indiana Inc. This award is for the CR state with the largest number of entries featured in the 2011 Vision of Beauty Calendar. This year I'm proud to say there was a tie with two states having seven designs in the calendar, yes seven. Congratulations to the Garden Clubs of Illinois, Inc., and Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc.

I'm looking forward to a wonderful year and seeing how all the goals are met.

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

JUDY GROTTTS

In our region some Garden Club members have attended meetings for 4-H, Boy and Girl Scouts, and the monthly home schooled children meetings. Through programs and workshops we are hoping to interest the younger generation in environmental studies, landscaping, and garden

studies. Secondary expectations are an increase in adult membership, an increase in youth organizations and perhaps an increased number of contest entries.

Another way to involve us in communities is by networking with those groups to take advantage of programs offered by philanthropic companies. Coca Cola has a project that gives school equipment and supplies just for the time it takes to enter the numbers found on the underside of the caps. By saving their caps and donating them to a small school it was able to acquire computers for the library, and new playground equipment. Other companies have similar projects, and these are being researched. Oklahoma had Series 3 Course II Environmental School in December. In Arkansas Dardanelle Garden Club rededicated a Blue Star Memorial on November 11. On that same day Oklahoma had two Blue Star Memorial dedications; one in Walters by the Dahlia Garden Club and one in Del City by Midwest City Garden Council. On November 16 Pisces Garden Club of Guthrie, OK had a Blue Star Memorial dedication. New Mexico held a symposium, and plans are in the works for more schools. Arkansas had David Robison give a program in Little Rock and they are working on the SCR Spring Convention March 30-31, 2012. Texas continues to have Landscape Design, Environmental and Gardening Study Schools, and the Texas Design Seminar.

All four states have planned flower shows and symposiums in 2012. Each state has other events happening. Please check *The National Gardener* for dates.

We realize that little things can make a difference. If we unite our efforts to care and improve this earth our future generations will have a better place to live.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION TERRY KROKE

New Year's greetings to everyone from the Rocky Mountain Region. Although winter cold and snow have caused a serious slowdown of outdoor gardening activity in much of the region, garden clubs and their members are staying active by taking stock of the year just completed and making plans for the season ahead. Clubs and members have documented their achievements on awards applications. Awards chairs are having applications judged and made ready for the next level. Looking forward, clubs are organizing for the new season by preparing schedules and developing programs.

The state and local clubs are looking at old and new projects that fit with the regional project, "We Make Our World a Better Place

to Live". By looking at their service programs with a new eye as suggested by the project, they are planning ways to spread the word about what they are doing to improve their community and/or the world. We have built a great organization. Now, we hope that if we tell them about it, they will come.

PACIFIC REGION DEBBIE HINCHEY

New Year and Reflection: Young people are interested in gardening, especially growing food, and many of our clubs have no young members. How can this be?

A lot can be learned on the web (without commitments to bring refreshments, work the plant sales or attend business meetings). So, is this the problem? Have we been too rigid and not changed "the way garden club operates"? Young people with careers or other obligations have time constraints, but want to learn useful information that they can use in their own lives. Simple purchased refreshments, on-line committee reports and minutes, as well as having the educational program or workshop before an if-needed abbreviated business meeting, could be beneficial changes to our routine.

Although information can be learned from the internet and reading books, I've found from my garden club experience that new members want to exchange information with experienced people. They want to be able to easily ask questions or get hands-on experience. Is this the value of belonging to a garden club? If so, mentoring opportunities abound-along with opportunities for a younger membership base.

Maybe some of our clubs can even morph into single issue clubs - like growing food, beautification or invasive weed issues. Maybe "the way garden club operates" can be flexible and appropriate for 2012 and beyond.

2011-2013 BOARD OF DIRECTORS - ROSTER CHANGES & ADDITIONS
Pg 24 Conventions and Fall Board Committee. 2011 Fall Board Mtg
V. Chairman Linda Bolhofner lbarden@att.net

2013 Fall Board Mtg Chairman Kay Schaefer
kschaeferdesigns@yahoo.com

Pg 33 Environmental Concerns/Legislation
Environmental Concerns/Legislation Committee
Della Colver Barry 2123.Solstice.Circle
Anchorage, AK 99503-1757

Page 62 ROSTER OF STATE PRESIDENTS
Arizona Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.
www.azgardenclubs.com

Page 64 The Garden Clubs of Illinois, Inc.
Susan P. Cooney 1834 Wesley Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201-3521 (847)877-6711(C)
delete other phone number delete fax number

Invasives - continued from page 4

RESOURCES TO FIND OUT WHICH PLANTS ARE INVASIVE:

1. United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources and Conservation Service: <http://plants.usda.gov/java/noxiousDriver>. An easy-to-understand FAQ.
2. The United States National Arboretum: <http://www.usna.usda.gov/Gardens/invasives.html> Good photos identifying invasive weeds.
3. Plant Conservation Alliance: <http://www.nps.gov/plants/alien/factmain.html>.
4. EHow.com: www.ehow.com This site can bring up informative answers to questions about invasive plants.
5. Learn the latest research about invasives: Visit WeedUS online, affiliated with the Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health <http://www.invasive.org/weedus/index.html>.

Jane Buck, NGC Invasive Plant Chair
AZ Master Gardener

Memoriams & Personals

Lisa Stephens passed away on November 15, 2011 in Phoenix, AZ. Lisa served as Arizona State President 1993-1995, Pacific Region Director 1999-2001, National Headquarters Gifts and Grants Chairman 2001-2005. Cards could be sent to her husband Bill Stephens, 1016 E. Gemini Drive, Tempe, AZ 85283

Jimmy Wray passed away December 17, husband of Sylvia Wray. Sylvia serves as the International Affiliate Flower Show School Chairman. Cards can be sent to Sylvia Wray at CC 419 Bariloch, 8400, Rio Negro, Argentina.

Graem Yates passed away on December 25, 2011, husband of Eleanor Yates, NCSGC President 1993-1995. A Memorial Service will be held in April in Charlotte, North Carolina. Cards can be sent to Eleanor Yates at 10142 Glenmore Avenue, Bradenton, FL 34202-4049.

Just before the Holidays, Harlin Turner succumbed to his lingering illness. He certainly enjoyed teaching and being with all of his "Flower Show" friends. Card could be sent to his wife at 13484 Lake Shore Dr., Fairfax, VA 22032

*We can never get enough of nature.
We must be refreshed by the sight
of inexhaustible vigor.
Henry D. Thoreau*