

# DFGC Newsletter - March 2024

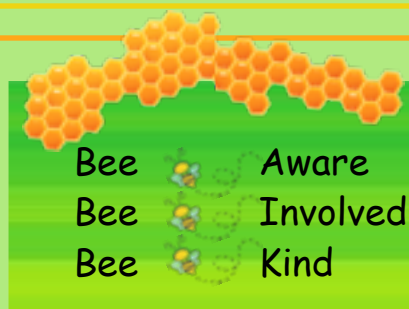


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Ginny Cardona  
Delaware Federation of Garden Clubs  
President

## President's Message



It has been an honor and a pleasure to serve as your President these past two years. I have thoroughly enjoyed attending your Club meetings and events and hearing about your many activities. Thank you for allowing me into your garden club lives.

But wait. There's more. Our last State meeting of the term is April 16 at Kings Creek Country Club in Rehoboth. Our special guest is NGC President, Brenda Moore, who will install our 2025-2027 Officers. Our speaker is Anna O'Kelly, who will give us tips and tricks for floral design. See below in this newsletter for details and dates to RSVP.

Our incoming President, Alva Hutchison, and incoming President-elect, Sandy Fitt, and I have been meeting regularly these past two years to plan for the long term. Leading requires an agenda for the organization, not merely conducting a meeting and planning a lunch. As they execute their vision, say yes. We need different people with different skills to make it happen. This is YOUR organization.

At least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of our clubs will be electing new officers in the next couple of months. I have experienced the scenario where no one steps up to serve as a Club leader, and I have seen it in your clubs also. Say yes to your Nominating Committee. What is the worst that can happen? I have been a Club President, and admittedly, I was not very good at it. However, we held the Club together and the next President came in ready to go. Say yes. Don't wait until elections time to look for Club leaders. The time to start is now. Say yes.

I recently read that the late comedienne, Joan Rivers, loved bees. (Google her bee jewelry!) She said "the bee's story is one of triumph against the odds. In aerodynamic terms, bees shouldn't be able to fly. Their bodies are too heavy and their wings are too small. And yet they fly, achieving the impossible every day!" If each of us does something small, together we can accomplish something large.

Thank you for allowing me to serve as DFGC President. These past two years have been a garden club highlight for me.

Ginny 



**Wednesday, April 16, 2025**

**Registration Opens at 9 Meeting starts at 10**

Location: Kings Creek Country Club, 1 Kings Creek Circle, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971

Host Club: Gardeners by the Sea

Cost: \$ 40

**Special Guest: Brenda Moore, National Garden Clubs President**

Installation of Officers for 2025-2027

Program: *"Flower Show Floral Design: Tips and Tricks,"*

Presenter: Anna O'Kelly



Anna served as the President of the Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland from 2021-2023 and is currently the President of the Maryland Judges Council. She is past president of Ikebana International Baltimore Chapter #118 and a student of the Sogetsu school of Ikebana.

**Clubs send member RSVP to [dfgcregistrar@gmail.com](mailto:dfgcregistrar@gmail.com)**

**Two-week open registration period begins on March 24 and closes on April 7**



# Delaware Federation of Garden Clubs

## Environmental Concerns Report

### Spring 2025



#### Microplastics – How to Protect Yourself



(Image from *National Geographic*)

Where are microplastics? According to University of California San Francisco professor and researcher [Tracey Woodruff](#), microplastics are “an invisible invasion by land, air and sea: Microscopic plastic pieces are in the food we eat, the air we breathe and the water we drink – bottled or not”. Microplastics have been found throughout the body, even in placentas and newborns. This should alarm everyone.

Watch this short [video](#) to learn more about limiting your exposure to microplastics.

Dr. Woodruff has some helpful [suggestions](#) for limiting your exposure to toxic chemicals at home and why/how.

Here are a few:

- Leave your shoes at the door,
- Never microwave in plastic containers,
- Store food in glass, ceramic, or stainless-steel containers,
- Cook with stainless steel or cast-iron cookware,
- Do not use dryer sheets.

If you want to learn more about reducing your exposure to harmful chemicals, check out the **Environmental Working Group's** helpful [Consumer Guides](#).

Did you know: **More than 80,000 registered chemicals are used commercially in the US. Less than a dozen are regulated.** Sadly, it may get worse.

Respectfully submitted,

Suzanne Smith

Conservation Chair



## It's That Time of Year Again!

A Certificate of Life Membership in Delaware Federation of Garden Clubs is the ideal gift for any outgoing officer or committee chair in your local garden club. In fact, you might want to consider giving a Life Membership to someone that is celebrating a milestone anniversary of garden club membership.

Simply complete a [DFGC Life Membership Application](#) and submit it with a \$50 donation to the *DFGC Scholarship Fund*. Completed applications received by April 9 will be awarded at the April 16 DFGC meeting. Completed applications received by June 11 will be awarded at the June DFGC meeting. Continue below this sample certificate for additional information.



For additional information about DFGC Life Membership, including (1) a list of Life Members 2010-2024 and (2) application forms for Life Membership in CAR-SGC and NGC if your honoree already has a DFGC Life Membership: <https://www.delawaregardenclubs.org/life-members>.



## Important Horticulture Events – Spring 2025

Courtesy of Kathe Worrell

EVENT	DATES & TIMES	LOCATION
<b><u>Mt Cuba Wildflower Weekend</u></b> Native Plants Sale While supplies last	Thur, Apr 24 to Sun, Apr 27 10am-6pm	Mt Cuba Center 3120 Barley Mill Rd Hockessin, DE 19707
<b><u>UDBG 2025 Plant Sales</u></b>		
Member Shopping In-Person	Apr. 24, 3 – 6:00pm	UDBG Greenhouse
Public Shopping In-Person <b>UD's Ag Day!</b> <b>UD's Ag Day</b> Rain Date	Apr. 25, 3-6:00pm Apr. 26, 10:00-3:00 Apr. 27, 10:00-3:00	UDBG Greenhouse 211 Roger Martin Lane Newark 19716
<b><u>Winterthur Plant Sale</u></b>	Sat, Apr. 26	Winterthur Museum
<b><u>McKean HS Plant Sale</u></b>	Sat, April 26 to Sat, May 3 9am-4pm all week	McKean HS Greenhouse 301 McKennans Church Rd Wilm, DE 19808
<b><u>DNS Native Plant Sale</u></b> Members Only Open to the Public	Fri, May 2 (2pm-7pm) Sat, May 3 9am-3pm	Coverdale Farm 543 Way Rd Greenville, DE
<b><u>May Market in Historic New Castle</u></b> Free, pet friendly, plant tents	Fri, May 2 10am-5pm Sat, May 3 9am-3pm	In and Around 30 Market St Historic New Castle, DE 19720
<b><u>Good News Church Plant Exchange</u></b>	Sat, May 3 10am-Noon	Good News Church 957 Old Lancaster Pike Hockessin, DE 19707
<b><u>Boy Scout Mother's Day Plant Sale in lower parking lot</u></b>	Sat, May 3 (9am-6p) Sun, May 4 (9am-3pm)	Red Clay Creek Presbyterian Church 500 McKennan's Church Rd
<b><u>Wilmington Flower Market</u></b>	Thur, May 8 to Sat. May 10	Rockford Park, Wilmington, DE
<b><u>Brandywine Conservancy Wildflower, Native Plant &amp; Seed Sale</u></b>	Sat, May 10 Sun, May 11 9:30am-4:30pm	Brandywine River Museum of Art Courtyard Chadd's Ford, PA 19317
<b><u>Hockessin Library Plant Swap (?)</u></b> based on last year Not confirmed yet	Sun, May 18 1:30-2 drop off 2-3:30 take home	1023 Valley Rd Hockessin, DE 19707





## *Moonflower Garden Club*

### Club Requests Response to Media Survey

Instead of relating details about some of our consistently interesting programs, I'd like to take a very unscientific survey about using social media for your club. We now have a very knowledgeable member serving as our social media and digital chair who has created a website with a public and a private section. The private section, which can only be accessed by a current member with a password, has member names, phone numbers, emails and addresses. Some of our members are uncomfortable with that information being online and are concerned about privacy issues. The information is available in our yearbook and I suppose that is true for all clubs.

So my questions to each club:

1. Does your club use social media? If so, which platforms?  
Do members use it regularly?
2. If your club has a website, do you have a private section for members only?
3. Has anyone ever been hacked from this source?
4. Do members have the option of having their information on the site?
5. If some members don't include their personal information, is your site useful in the way it is intended?
6. Does your club have its own email? Something like [moonflowergc@xxx.com](mailto:moonflowergc@xxx.com)?
7. In general, how useful are your website and social media?



Passwords for Membership Access  
to DFGC, CAR Websites:

DFGC-3210

DFGC Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 103



Four Seasons Garden Club of Heritage Shores celebrated the holidays with a luncheon at Abbott's on Broadcreek. Following the luncheon and a short meeting led by President, Kathy Polley, the group enjoyed a "Garden Cake."

February's meeting showcased floral arrangements for Valentine's Day. Local florist, Christie Culp of Downtown Alley demonstrated techniques for a holiday basket arrangement which surrounded a bottle of champagne!







A timeless proverb, "Many hands make work light" by John Heywood (1497-1580) has rung true each fall over the past three years when Milford Garden Club members come together to support its annual Holiday Centerpiece Sale. Starting in October to early December, members carve out several workdays from their busy schedules to create 100 beautiful centerpieces which is a major fundraiser for many of the Club's community projects.



Assembling a large volume of colorful arrangements made of fresh greens gathered from our members' gardens is not an easy task. It requires hours of organization, purchasing supplies, and a dedicated team of volunteers.

The funds raised from this sale, along with our spring and fall plant sales, enable the Club to provide a scholarship to a student to continue his/her education in horticultural studies, assist a family in need during the Christmas season, and purchase plants for Milford's Delaware Veterans Home and Senior Center. The three sales have also generated greater awareness of the Club in the area, which attracts new visitors and potential members.



On a personal level, our activities provide training in the elements of floral design and a sense of "family" pride as we work and learn together whether hands-on participation or support from the sidelines.



100  
CENTERPIECES!  
MISSION  
ACCOMPLISHED







## CoastalGardeners.org



**Coastal Gardeners** members toured *Delaware Botanical Gardens* in Dagsboro on a beautiful October day. They were guided by Joyce Romans.



Club members Patricia Rainer and Mary Kunst enjoy the plant exchange organized by Michele Crane.



**Coastal Gardeners** volunteer to participate in *Adopt a Highway*, near Delaware Botanical Gardens in Dagsboro, keeping roads clean from debris.



**Coastal Gardeners** continues to decorate and maintain the flower planters at *Beebe Healthcare's Emergency Department & Cancer Center*.

Club Members gathered to prepare for **Operation Christmas Cheer**.



On December 17th, 15 of Santa's **Coastal Gardener** elves gathered at Millville By The Sea's clubhouse to wrap, pack, and decorate 120 gift bags to be given to senior citizens in the Foxana area.





### Lord Baltimore Clean Up October 22, 2024

In the Spring and then again in the Fall of each year, committee members hunker down to clean up the gardens at Lord Baltimore Elementary School. This year was no exception. Fortunately, it was a beautiful, clear day; we accomplished a lot and had fun doing it. Committee members that helped: Thea Chandross (chair), Maryanne Green, Kathy Lesperance, Anne McKinney, Betsy O'Neil, Lonie Sculley, and Audrey Young.



### Delaware Hospice 37th Festival of Trees November 19, 2024

Our tree's theme this year was "Cookie Cutter Christmas". In addition to raising funds for Delaware Hospice, these decorated trees are donated to local foster homes, safe houses, Men & Women's Home of the Brave with some of the trees remaining at the Hospice Center in Milford. The trees are a comfort and joy for many during the Holiday season.

There were 14 Committee members who gathered for six 2-hour sessions making and decorating 150 "cookie cutter" ornaments, making bows, a tree skirt and the Gingerbread tree topper. The members who attended to decorate the tree were: Ria Carraro, Diane Baxter, Dianne DeForest, Barbara Denney, Alva Hutchison, Judy Ireland and Karen Plis. Other members who attended the workshops were: Audrey Young, Thea Chandross, Joan O'Day, Mary O'Neill, Judy Dayhoff, Babs Lutton and Cathy Bowen.



### Garden of Cheer Raffle

Our major fund-raiser was a huge success this year. We sold 495 tickets out of 500 with a profit of over \$4,000. We had many donors plus two bird baths donated by club member Ria Carraro. The monies are used for outreach projects throughout the surrounding communities.



### GBTS Annual Holiday Luncheon December 13, 2024

This year's annual luncheon was held at Cripple Creek Country Club. This is a way for the Club to give back to our members who work all year to make the Club a success. The highlight of the afternoon are the many beautiful poinsettias that are given out as door prizes.







After decorating our tree at the Ronald McDonald House, kicking off 2025 has been a busy time for the Brandywine Garden Club.



Keeping to our club president's theme "Bee Keepers: Stewards of Our Community", our programs have focused on sustainability and beautification. In January, Michael Halloran from Davey Tree Company gave a great lecture on tree and shrub pruning. Many of us learned better techniques that would enhance our efforts and support optimal tree growth/life.



In February, club member, Maura Sheridan-Walther gave a fantastic workshop, "Sustainable Alternatives to Oasis in Floral Design". Because Oasis is single use plastic foam, alternatives such as "egg cages" and Oshun packs help us reuse/recycle materials to keep plastics out of our landfills. While a little tricky, beautiful designs were created by members using the egg cages Maura provided.



Showing our club a little love the day before Valentine's Day, the Garden Gate Garden Club invited our members to join their meeting where some members presented design demonstrations on each of the design classes in their upcoming June flower show. The theme of their show is "Mother Goose in the Garden" and the designs they prepared were creative and beautiful. Each was discussed focusing on the strengths and weakness from a judge's perspective. This certainly enhanced our knowledge in preparation for our own ["Along Nature's Way"](#) flower show happening on June 4, 2025.







Spade & Trowel Garden Club in Seaford is off to a busy spring, after cancelling the January meeting because of 12 inches of snow and ending the February meeting just as snow started falling. We welcome spring!

We had a successful greens sale in December, decorated the Gov. Ross Mansion, and enjoyed a delightful “high tea” with Shirley O’Neal in Laurel as our

Christmas party, where we brought “mugs of cheer” for judging and then distribution to patients at a local rehab facility.

At our March meeting, club members learned about the worsening invasion of Spotted Lanternfly from Katie Bielicki of the Delaware Department of Agriculture. In April we’ll have a program on “Gleaning: Ending Food Waste and Food Insecurity.” In conjunction with that, we plan a visit to the Food Bank of Delaware in Milford on May 6.

A Kokodama workshop is planned for April 29; participation in the Western Sussex Boys & Girls Club Spring Festival in Seaford on May 10; and a carpool on May 17 to “A Day in Old New Castle.”

Our major service to the community, beautification of downtown Seaford, will take place around Mother’s Day, as we plant flower baskets on two bridges and containers for a number of businesses.

We learned that the Ark Educational Center in Laurel, a nonprofit group that offers an after-school program of one-on-one tutoring by volunteers as well as a small summer school, is in need of school and office supplies. As a new club project, members are bringing donations of supplies to monthly meetings.

Our membership is growing in this, our 70th year as a garden club. We plan an anniversary celebration in October.

Photo: some of the busy workers at Spade & Trowel Garden Club’s greens sale.





## Middletown-Odessa Garden Club

Our Club is ready for Spring! As of March 1<sup>st</sup>, we have our Seed Library up and running at the Corbit Calloway Memorial Library in Odessa. Joan Simon coordinates it every year and she organized packaging events to prepare the library. Do you know it was the first one in the State?



The Club was very busy over the holidays. Heddy Cumba had crafting sessions using pine cones and old jewelry to create decorative Christmas trees for the Middletown Pocket Park.



Peggy Leonardi took over the Club's Story Book Tree for Christmas in Odessa this year. It's always based on a children's book and this year it was "The Polar Express". Again, we had a fun crafting session to make ornaments.

And as we have been doing for years, we made wreaths, bows and swags for Christmas in Odessa.







Garden Gate Garden Club

In November we went on a field trip to Wilmington and Brandywine Cemetery. While there, we learned a lot about Delaware history, dating back to the Revolutionary war, and all the famous Delawareans buried there. We also saw two state champion trees: Eastern Hemlock and Eastern White Pine.

On November 6, 2024, many members of Garden Gate Garden Club joined staff and veterans at the VA hospital to present a memorial wreath and commemorate our Blue Star Marker at the hospital. It was especially meaningful this year as we were able to meet in person and socialize with the veterans and staff. We are proud to honor our local veterans in this way on Veterans Day and Memorial Day each year.



GGGC decorates a Christmas tree at the Ronald McDonald House every Christmas. This year several members joined in to decorate the tree with a Noah's Ark theme. All ornaments have been handmade by members.



Upcoming for Garden Gate will be our biannual garden show on Wednesday, June 11. It will be a small standard show entitled Mother Goose in the Garden and will chaired by Bob Howatt.







## Our Fenwick Island Pollinator Park Clean Up

Some of the Barefoot Gardeners worked cleaning up the winter shrub in the Fenwick Island Pollinator Park. Thank you Donna Nowell, Liz Lear, Pam Pridgeon, Colleen Wilson. We are ready for

## Beach Clean Up

Several Barefoot Gardeners participated in



## Planting Beach Grass

Barefoot Garden club members participated in DNREC's annual Beach Grass Planting, as the Fenwick Island beaches have been identified as needing additional grasses to maintain the dunes.



## Friends of Fenwick Help Coastal Highway

Barefoot Gardeners helped to beautify the "Friends of Fenwick" portion of Coastal Highway under the DelDot Adopt-a-Highway program.



# Plantation Lakes Garden Club

This past November we made flower arrangements for the tables at the Cheer Center in Georgetown to celebrate Veteran's Day



On November 11@11:00am we hosted our 4th Veteran's Day at our Blue Star Garden. Many of our members were involved and agreed that this was a very special day.



In December, we celebrated our Holiday Luncheon, with friends, in Bethany Beach, at The Cottage Cafe.



In December, we also had the honor of decorating a 100 year old, one room school house for their Open House.



This January, one of our members, taught us the art of Rock Painting. The finished rocks will be placed along the walking trails for kids to find.

While in February we had a presentation by Sharon Fanning, on "Honeybee's and Your Garden, Small Wonders". It was incredibly informative and very interesting.



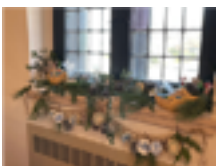
Our March meeting was we a Field Trip to East Coast for a class about How and What to plant living in DE. We all learned a lot and took notes.



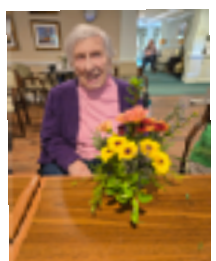


## Sussex Gardeners Work Holiday Magic

As the Sussex Gardeners (SG) enter their 87<sup>th</sup> year, the Club continues to honor its cherished Holiday Traditions. Civic Beautification Co-Chairs, Crystal Selway and Sandra Skidmore, designed and installed holiday greenery and décor at the Zwaanendael Museum in Lewes and on the gates of the Rehoboth Library.

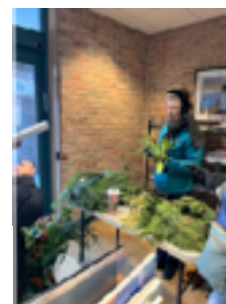


Holiday Garden Therapy



Wreaths and Nosegays for Meals-on-Wheels

Decorating the Rehoboth Public Library



This year's theme for the Museum decorations is, "Spruced up for the Holidays," and features evergreens, fresh wreaths and potted trees, along with hand painted wooden ornaments and pinecones. The window ledges are decorated with wooden shoes, filled with holiday treats for good little Dutch Children. An education table presented by Club member Kathy Ackerman continues the 'evergreen' theme with a display highlighting the horticultural differences in our Christmas trees - firs, spruces and pines!

This is the first year for Sussex Gardeners to work in collaboration with library staff to decorate the gates of the Rehoboth Library. The Gardeners used fresh evergreen swags, magnolia leaves, and winter foliage to create the outdoor décor in the Colonial Williamsburg style. Magnolia seed pods coated with peanut butter and birdseed are also featured in the swags to encourage winter birds to visit!

As part of a long-standing tradition, the Club held its annual December workshop where members made over 200 nosegays and several wreaths – using evergreens, winter foliage and holiday ribbons. The nosegays were donated to our local "Meals on Wheels," where they will adorn holiday meal trays in our community. The wreaths are donated for display at local public buildings. The Garden Therapy Committee, chaired by Joan Boraski and Abbe Barbado, visited the Brandywine Senior Living Facility in Rehoboth this past week, and helped residents create floral arrangements for display in their rooms over the holidays.

This past month, Sussex Gardeners launched its first-ever website, [www.Sussex-Gardeners.org](http://www.Sussex-Gardeners.org). The website has information available to the public, and a password-protected section for members only where club news can be shared. The Club continues to maintain and update its Facebook page and encourages contact with the Club via email at [SussexGardeners@gmail.com](mailto:SussexGardeners@gmail.com).





Duck Creek Gardeners kicked off the 2024–2025 season by digging in and getting our hands delightfully dirty as part of our annual community planting! With trowels in hand and a shared love for blooms, 14 of our dedicated members were joined by the residents of Delaware Hospital for the Chronically Ill to plant 250 daffodils and tulip bulbs.

Our October meeting was a blooming success, filled with creativity and hands-on learning! Jennifer Boland captivated us with her presentation, *Documenting Your Garden with Art*, where she showcased her stunning photography and shared techniques for capturing the beauty of a garden through every stage of growth. With her expert guidance, members had the chance to snap their own floral masterpieces using their cell phones. It was an inspiring and interactive experience!



In October, our members took a delightful field trip to the Delaware Botanic Gardens and had an absolute blast! The gardens were beautiful, and we were lucky to have an excellent tour guide who brought the landscapes to life with fascinating insights.

Our club members got into the holiday spirit by decking the halls of two historic buildings with festive charm! At

Belmont Hall, we honored tradition with a colonial theme, adorning the space with fresh greenery gathered from the grounds and adding dried oranges for a timeless, old-world touch. Over at the Smyrna Museum, members chose a vibrant red and white theme to showcase Smyrna's school colors. This wonderful collaboration filled these historic sites with welcoming displays for the community to enjoy during the Holiday Open House!



Our January meeting sprouted fresh ideas as Debbie Nicol, Master Gardener, shared her expertise on hydroponics! She walked us through the benefits, essential elements, and various types of hydroponic systems—from small-scale setups to more robust designs. It was an enlightening presentation that left us all inspired to explore soil-free gardening!



# Announcements

**April 2, 2025**

**Moonflower Garden Club** is hosting Kelly Billings of Gateway Gardens who will present **Water Gardens and Ponds**. She will discuss designing, maintaining and planting water gardens, including plants for sun and shade. There will be an emphasis on water quality research and the use of natural processes to avoid invasive species and maintain a healthy environment for wildlife.

As the church has limited seating, guests should check with Kathe Worrell to see if there is still space available: [katgardens@aol.com](mailto:katgardens@aol.com) or text 302-333-7307

Fellowship Hall at Red Clay Creek Presbyterian Church  
500 McKennans Church Road  
Wilmington



**Delawareans Can Buy Composters Online  
at a Discount Through April 3 Via  
DNREC Promotion**

<https://news.delaware.gov/2025/03/10/delawareans-can-buy-composters-online-at-a-discount-through-april-3-via-dnrec-promotion/>





## **Flower Show!**

**Wednesday, June 4, 2025**  
***1 pm – 4 pm***

### **The Brandywine Garden Club**

Presents

### ***Along Nature's Way***

First Unitarian Church of Wilmington  
730 Halstead Rd., Wilmington, DE 19803

**Free and open to the public!**

BGC is a member of the Delaware Federation of Garden Clubs  
Central Atlantic Region  
National Garden Clubs, Inc.

A National Garden Club Small Standard Flower Show



Following our tradition --Clivia plants will be available for purchase