



# **The North Carolina Gardener**

**“Growing Together”  
Spring 2026**

**OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE GARDEN CLUB OF  
NORTH CAROLINA, INC.**

**Member: National Garden Clubs, Inc. South Atlantic Region (SAR)**

**Spring 2026-Vol. 93 No.1**

## **On our cover: Celebrating Roses, Gemini Hybrid Tea roses growing in Mary and Billy Barwick's garden. The Spring 2026 North Carolina Gardener feature article introduces our readers to a wonderful garden tour celebrating roses written by rose enthusiast Mary Barwick**



Every year in May a group of rose growing enthusiasts have a wonderful opportunity to share their gardening passion with the public. The Wilmington Cape Fear Rose Society is pleased announce their 23rd annual rose garden tour on May 2nd. This is a free all-day event designed to show off the glory of several members'

gardens with anyone interested. An on online map is available to the gardens which you may walk through, view, smell &, learn tips about growing roses in the south. Do you know the difference between a knockout, hybrid tea, shrub rose, or floribunda? Learn from the garden owners, which roses are repeat bloomers, which are the most fragrant and learn how to care, cultivate and even start your own rose garden. For more information about the tour see our website [WCFRS.org](http://WCFRS.org).

So here I am 15 years into my membership in the WCFRS, and writing an article about the love of rose gardening. Who would have ever though this would be me, and now also vice president of this 25 year gardening group? While I grew up in the country in the 1980's, I was not into gardening. As a kid it was about fun and survival at that time, meaning not stepping on snakes or getting lost playing in the thickets of the woods. Yard work meant hours hand shoveling snow from our long driveway, or hours of raking leaves all for a few bucks- mainly to get some candy or fast food which was a giant treat. My mom and neighbors did have small vegetable gardens which they tended to, and my dad planted a small rose garden with 4 or 5 bushes for my mom. He would run the garden hose to it and put local horse manure on it, that is all I remember. Fast forward to 2006 I got married and we quickly moved into the first house we looked at, mainly because it was in the right location, right time , and had the right vibe. "This is it" we both agreed and 20 years later we are still here so that confirmed that ! I will admit however, while we felt confident in the purchase of the house, I did have some anxiety with all the change and responsibility that lay ahead of me. Along with the house came a giant garden that included azaleas, camellias, and at least 75 rose bushes amongst other flora that I had no idea what it was. My husband said we could dig it up and put in a pool, but as we did not have money for a pool, and I did not want dead plants in the yard my gardening journey began.

## **Celebrating Roses**

### **Wilmington Cape Fear Rose Society Garden Tour May 2nd**

I made so many mistakes along the way. I remember that first year someone told me to get Roundup to kill the weeds. So, I sprayed that on all the grass that was full of weeds. Giant mistake number one. After killing the grass, I am proud to say I never used that product again. Instead, I hand pull the weeds and look to keep them if they are medicinal. I have, however, used salt, vinegar and dawn dish detergent which does keep them at bay. I made another mistake that first spring, knowing that I needed to control blackspot on the roses, I sprayed them all with sulphur. Once again giant mistake, as all the leaves dropped off! (Keep in mind the internet was not as popular as it is now with all the wealth of information and AI at your fingertips.) So, the next step was to hire a professional company to help with the garden. While this was expensive it did work out for a few years, especially as a newlywed, I was also newly pregnant, and the help allowed me to focus on my day job, my pregnancy, and of course in 9 months my focus on my very energetic little baby.

A co-worker of mine was the driving force behind me joining the WCFRS just a few years after it had been formed when my son was a little older. She would ask me intermittently how I was doing with the rose garden and I'm sure she could hear the distress in my voice as I told her. Also, she knew me, and knew my desire to want the best, to persevere and help this beautiful garden flourish. She eventually persuaded me to join her garden group the Wilmington Cape Fear Rose Society and thank God I did, as I started to learn. I learned there are specific formulas to control the black spot and disease as well as fertilization & watering schedules to follow. Once I was able to establish the pattern of getting all this down, my stress & anxiety was also down. And the best surprise yet was that the rose gardening tasks that I did on weekends and after work helped diffuse the stress from the day job. Smelling, cutting, watering, and tending to the roses in the fresh air, and sunshine, I had found a new, healthy, and rewarding hobby.

Learning is so empowering and the group was so friendly, so I stayed on with the WCFRS gaining even more tips over the years. Eventually was I brought on as vice president and currently continue in this role, along with the president Denise Miller, and the rest of the board members to help the organization continue to grow and promote the knowledge & care for roses to the public.

So that summarizes my journey. Life can be hectic and stressful, but gardening is so grounding & rewarding especially when you care for roses. No need to start big and fast like I did, in fact a wonderful way to start is with some authentic inspiration, I encourage you join us and come tour our gardens on the first Saturday in May.

Mary Barwick

**Celebrating Roses  
Wilmington Cape Fear Rose Society  
Garden Tour May 2nd**



Betty Boop (Floribunda Rose)  
Mary & Billy Barwick



Vonnie Fry in her garden



Justine and Jim Pflaum garden



Deborah and Charles  
Cooke Garden

# Table of Contents



Celebrating Roses	Pages 2-4
Table of Contents	Page 5
Elected Officers, GCNC Affiliates, Circulation Manager & Editors	Page 6
Letter from the Publicity Chair, Landes Rigby	Page 7
Letter from the GCNC President, Charles McLendon	Page 8
What is an Honor Roll Club ? 1 <sup>st</sup> VP Marilyn Wright	Pages 9-10
Welcome New Clubs, 1 <sup>st</sup> VP Marilyn Wright	Page 11
New Diaspora Garden	Page 12
2026 NC Wildflower of the Year	Page 13
Are You an Enlightened Gardener?, Joan Eccard	Pages 14-15
Art In Bloom Event Update	Page 17
Save the date! upcoming events from around the state	Pages 18-34
<b>April 10-12 73<sup>rd</sup> Annual Azelea Garden Tour, Wilmington</b>	
<b>April 10 Plant &amp; Attic Sale, Charlotte</b>	
<b>April 16 Gold Star Memorial Dedication Ceremony, Emerald Isle</b>	
<b>April 24-25 Quilted Flowers Flower Show, Shallotte</b>	
<b>April 25 In Full Bloom Garden Tour, Winston-Salem</b>	
<b>April 25-26 Chapel Hill Garden Tour</b>	
<b>April 30-May 1 Blooming Seasons:Art in Petals Flower Show, New Hanover</b>	
<b>May 2 Rose Garden Tour, Wilmington</b>	
<b>May 16 Coastal Garden Club Annual Plant Sale, Shallotte</b>	
<b>May 17-18 A Celebration In Bloom GCNC Meeting, Greensboro</b>	
<b>Oct 26-28 Flower Show School 1, Raleigh</b>	
SAR Meeting	Page 35
District Map/Club Tidings	Page 36
D12 Rocky Mount GC	Page 37
D12 Washington GC	Pages 38-39
D11 Coastal GC	Page 40
D11New Hanover GC	Pages 41-42
D11 Emerald Isle GC	Pages 43-45
D10 Steel Magnolias GC	Pages 46-47
D9 Chapel Hill GC	Pages 48-49
D8 Four Seasons JR GC	Pages 50-51
D3 Club Hopping!	Page 52
D1-2 Lake Norman GC	Pages 53-55
National Garden Club Information	Page 56

Spring 2026-Vol. 93. No. 1

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### Member

National Garden Clubs, Inc.  
South Atlantic Region

### GCNC

Organized 1925  
Federated 1930  
Incorporated 1940

[www.GARDENCLUBIFNC.ORG](http://www.GARDENCLUBIFNC.ORG)

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*Our mission is to provide education, resources, and networking opportunities for our members and to promote the love of gardening, floral design, civic and environmental responsibility.*



# Letter from the Publicity Chair

## Landes Rigby

Happy Spring!

Wow, what a winter! I don't think there was a corner of our state that wasn't touched by extreme cold and snow! But we made it and are in the process of cleaning up, dividing and adding new plants to our gardens. In this issue we highlight several clubs planning to host garden tours, flower shows, and plant sales this Spring. I encourage you to attend events hosted by other clubs as a way to support and be inspired by new ideas that you can bring home to your club.

In the conversations I've had with members in putting this issue together, I continue to be impressed by the vast horticultural knowledge, passion and enthusiasm we have for gardening and floral design. Collectively we interact with our communities to spread our knowledge, share ways to conserve and beautify our environments. This year we have a special opportunity to celebrate our Country's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Our president, Charles McLendon, is encouraging us to get in the spirit and plant red, white and blue flowers. As you support his call to plant, please take pictures and send them to be featured in our Summer issue!

In parting, I want to thank everyone for their submissions. All members are encouraged to submit articles or commentaries on any topic relevant to our readers. The primary purpose of the Gardener Quarterly publication is to share the amazing things we are doing at a local level, celebrate our accomplishments and provide ideas and inspiration for other clubs looking to expand or update their programs. Please be sure to include the names of members along with a photo title when you submit pictures. If you have any suggestions or recommendations on what you would like to include in the Gardener newsletter please let me know:

[landesgcncpublicity@gmail.com](mailto:landesgcncpublicity@gmail.com) . **Note that the deadline for the Summer edition is June 1<sup>st</sup>.**

Happy planting! Landes

### Gardener Quarterly Newsletter Schedule:

Issue	Submission Deadline	Publish Date
<b>Summer (Jul-Sep)</b>	<b>June 1</b>	<b>Jul 1</b>
Fall (Oct-Dec)	September 1	October 1
Winter (Jan-Mar)	December 1	January 1
Spring (Apr-Jun)	March 1	April 1

## Letter from the President Charles McLendon



As spring unfolds across North Carolina, I am filled with gratitude for each of you and the energy, creativity, and dedication you bring to our garden club community. This season always reminds us that growth is possible in every corner, whether in our gardens, our clubs, or our shared mission to beautify and protect our state.

Thank you for the countless hours you've invested in projects, programs, and partnerships. Your enthusiasm has strengthened our clubs, inspired new members, and expanded our impact in ways that truly matter. From community plantings to youth education, conservation efforts to floral design, your work is helping North Carolina bloom brighter than ever.

This year also brings a special opportunity to honor the 250th anniversary of our country. I encourage every club to begin thinking now about where we can plant red, white, and blue flowers in celebration of this historic milestone. Consider the places that hold meaning in your communities—Blue Star and Gold Star Memorials, public gardens, town squares, libraries, and other spaces where our plantings can honor service, inspire pride, and bring people together. These patriotic displays will be a beautiful tribute to our nation and a powerful reminder of the role gardeners play in shaping the spirit of a place.

Let's work together to make North Carolina shine during this anniversary year. With creativity, collaboration, and the passion that defines our members, we can fill our state with color, gratitude, and pride.

Please take a moment this season to enjoy the beauty you help create. Celebrate your accomplishments, support one another, and continue sharing your love of gardening with your communities.

Thank you for all you do, and for the joy and commitment you bring to the Garden Club of North Carolina. I am honored to serve alongside you. Let's make North Carolina proud.

Warmest spring wishes,

Charles McLendon, President

Garden Club of North Carolina, Inc

## **What is an Honor Roll Club?**

Info from 1<sup>st</sup> VP

Marilyn Wright



### **WHAT IS AN HONOR ROLL CLUB?**



Any club who scores 29 points or better on their individual annual report to the district director is designated an honor roll club.

We are proud of you for this achievement. You have worked hard during the year 2025. You have been active and you have served your community. That is why you earned those points.

**We are proud of you and appreciate your service to  
the Garden Club of North Carolina**

**MARILYN WRIGHT  
1<sup>ST</sup> VICE PRESIDENT  
GARDEN CLUB OF NORTH CAROLINA**

# HONOR ROLL GARDEN CLUBS 2025 - 2026

## **DISTRICT 1-2**

Asheville GC  
Good Earth GC  
Lake Norman GC  
Land O'Sky GC  
Mimosa GC  
Pine Creek Dirty Fingers  
GC  
Sylva GC  
Transylvania GC  
Waynesville GC

## **DISTRICT 3**

Flower Power GC  
Monroe GC  
Sardiswood GC  
Mooresville GC

## **DISTRICT 4**

Flower Lore GC  
King of Spades GC  
Bermuda Run GC  
Yadkin Valley GC  
Full Sun Part Shade GC  
Modern Gardeners GC  
Garden Study GC  
Little Greens GC  
Club of Twenty Gardens GC  
Village Home and Garden GC  
Forest Evening GC  
Lewisville GC  
West End GC  
Old Salem GC  
Twin City GC

## **DISTRICT 5**

Anniversary GC  
Cedarwood GC  
Green Thumb GC  
Ingleside GC  
Little Gardens GC  
Rose GC  
Westridge GC

## **DISTRICT 8**

Anderson Creek GC  
Cross Creek-  
Briarwood GC  
Cottonland GC  
Four Seasons GC  
Scotch Gardeners GC  
Town and Country GC

## **DISTRICT 9**

Chapel Hill GC  
Croasdaile GC  
Driftwood GC  
Forest Hills GC  
Heritage GC  
Town and Country GC  
Hillsborough GC  
Garden Study GC  
Roxboro GC  
The Little Garden Club

## **DISTRICT 10**

Steel Magnolias GC  
Two Green Thumbs GC  
Fuquay-Varina GC  
Raleigh GC  
Cary GC

## **DISTRICT 11**

Aza-Mellia GC  
Cape Fear GC  
Emerald Isle GC  
Evergreen GC  
Gardenerettes GC  
Harbor Island GC  
New Bern GC  
New Hanover GC  
Landy Banks GC  
Loblolly GC  
Pine Knoll Shores GC  
Southport GC  
Summerlin Falls GC  
Trent Woods GC  
Whiteville GC

Welcome new clubs!



## WE HAVE NEW CLUBS

We began the year 2026 with three new clubs and we are so excited!



**GARDEN CLUB OF THE HIGH COUNTRY  
BOONE, NORTH CAROLINA  
PRESIDENT: DANA HOLDEN  
WE ONCE AGAIN HAVE A FEDERATED CLUB IN  
BOONE.**



**BROOKLYN ARTS DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB  
WILMINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA  
PRESIDENT; LLOYD SINGLETON  
THEY ARE THE B.A.D. GARDEN CLUB OF WILMINGTON**



**BEGONIAS GARDEN CLUB  
GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA  
PRESIDENT : ODESSA PATRICK  
THE BEGONIAS COME TO US FROM THE AFRICAN  
AMERICAN NORTH CAROLINA FEDERATION OF  
GARDEN CLUBS.  
WE ARE DELIGHTED TO HAVE THESE LADIES. SO  
MUCH TO LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER.**

IT IS SO EASY TO FORM A GARDEN CLUB. REACH OUT TO FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS AND INVITE THEM TO CREATE THEIR OWN SPECIAL GROUP.

I AM ONLY A PHONE CALL AWAY: 828-964-6415

MARILYN WRIGHT

FIRST VICE PRESIDENT OF MEMBERSHIP



# New Diaspora Garden coming to University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Botanical Gardens

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Botanical Gardens is developing an African Diaspora Garden in its Herb Garden to highlight the agricultural, medicinal, and technological contributions of African Diaspora members. This initiative, featuring plants significant to African American history, emphasizes agricultural resilience, cultural heritage, and the botanical skills brought to the Americas.

Key aspects of this project and related initiatives include:

**The African Diaspora Garden:** Located at 100 Old Mason Farm Road, Chapel Hill, this new, permanent display highlights how enslaved people utilized agriculture and plant knowledge to navigate their environment.

**Origins & Dedication:** The garden was co-created by Josie Walker, a local community leader known for her “grassroots efforts”; in sharing seeds and plants. A formal ribbon-cutting and dedication ceremony was held in September 2025.

**Educational Focus:** The garden aims to showcase plants used by African Americans for food, medicine, and fiber, highlighting their profound influence on Southern horticulture.

**Annual Symposium:** The North Carolina Botanical Gardens (NCBG) hosts the “African American Legacy in Gardening and Horticulture Symposium”; to explore the history of African American gardeners and plantspeople.

**Community Connection:** The project, inspired by similar initiatives like a garden at the New York Botanical Gardens, was brought to the NCBG by community creators to foster understanding of the Afro-diasporic experience in North Carolina.

## IF YOU WISH TO VISIT NORTH CAROLINA BOTANICAL GARDENS

The main display gardens, Garden Shop, Daily Plant Sale, Exhibit Hall, and DeBerry Gallery are open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesdays through Sundays. There’s no ticket or fee to visit, but donations are welcome. Phone: 919-962-0522





**The 2026 NC Wildflower of the Year**, big-headed aster (*Symphyotrichum grandiflorum*), is a real showstopper! Native only to the Piedmont and Coastal Plain of North Carolina and Virginia, big-headed aster grows in dry woodlands, forest edges, roadsides, and powerline rights-of-way. It prefers full sun to light shade and well-drained, moderately moist soils, though it tolerates the sandy or slightly clay-leaning conditions common in its native range.

One of the last native asters to bloom each year, big-headed aster can blend into the surrounding vegetation until it bursts into a striking display of color in September through November, a time when many perennials are starting to fade. It's also a crucial late-season nectar source for a diverse variety of butterflies, bees, and other pollinator species well into late fall and early winter, making this species a valuable addition to wildlife-friendly landscapes.

### **Bring big-headed aster home!**

**Starting at the end of January, you can pick up a brochure containing big-headed aster seeds in the Pegg Exhibit Hall at the Garden.**

Can't make it to the Garden? We'll send the seeds to you! Send a self-addressed, stamped business-letter envelope to:

2026 NCWFOY North Carolina Botanical Garden Campus Box 3375, UNC-CH Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3375

### **ABOUT THE NORTH CAROLINA WILDFLOWER OF THE YEAR PROJECT**

The North Carolina Wildflower of the Year program is managed by the North Carolina Botanical Garden with some financial support from the Garden Club of North Carolina, Inc. Each year since 1982, a showy native perennial has been chosen and seeds of that wildflower are distributed to interested gardeners.

Become a member of North Carolina Botanical Gardens and learn about all the exciting projects sponsored by this organization. Your support is greatly needed:

<https://ncbg.unc.edu/support/membership>

# Are You An Enlightened Gardener?

By Joan Eccard

GCNC Conservation Chair



Our ecosystems, food webs, pollinators, insects and birds are all under attack from the continual destruction of their habitat and the use of deadly chemicals. Our yards can no longer simply be attractive – they must be functional, adding to change for our society, and we, as garden club members, need to be leading the charge.

What can we do?

1. Reduce the size of the lawn! Large, pristine areas of grass are a carryover from the wealthy Europeans of the 1700's. Lawns take up huge amounts of irrigation and fertilizer which end up in our groundwater. It is time to update our view of land use. Grass is a good pathway from place to place. Think of the lawn as an area rug, not wall to wall carpeting.

2. Put in native plants. Why? Our insects and pollinators have evolved over centuries with our native plants and need them as a food and nectar source. A few keystone species are especially vital as they provide the backbone of local ecosystems. In North Carolina these keystone perennials include Solidago (goldenrod), Symphyotrichum (aster), and Helianthus (sunflower). Other reliable natives include Eupatorium (Joe Pye Weed), Hypericum (St. John's Wort), Asclepias (butterfly weed), Monarda (bee balm), Salvia (sage), Penstemon (beardtongue), Helenium (sneezeweed), Lobelia (cardinal flower), Pycnanthemum (mountain mint), Guara (whirling butterflies) and Rudbeckia (black-eyed Susan). For a complete list for your zip code, along with the number of butterfly species each supports, go to [nativeplantfinder.nwf.org](http://nativeplantfinder.nwf.org).

3. Value the insects! Many birds and animals depend on insect protein for food. A land without insects is absent most forms of higher life. Insects are an important part of the food chain. It is okay for insects to eat your plant leaves – it means that the sun's energy that went into the leaf is now

## Enlightened Gardener continued

continuing to the insect and beyond. Also, remember that most birds feed their babies only caterpillars.

4. Protect the soil! Your soil is a living organism that will determine the health of your plants. It needs to be fed with natural ingredients, like compost or bone meal, not with chemical fertilizers. Use only organic fertilizer, as it is made up of natural ingredients which will enrich the soil, enabling the soil to feed the plants. Organic fertilizer is water insoluble, so it lasts longer, nourishing both the soil and the plants. The gardener is also helping both the insects and the soil by allowing organic matter to remain in the garden and decompose over the winter, clearing only when temperatures are above 50 degrees for 10-14 days.

If every gardener took steps to make his or her yard a more functional part of the food web it would make a huge difference in the health of our world and in the preservation of our environment for the next generations. As the ancient Indian proverb says, "Treat the Earth well. It was not given to you by your parents, it was loaned to you by your children."

Joan Eccard

GCNC Conservation Chair

joan.eccard@gmail.com

## Gold Star/Blue Star Memorials-Did you know?

*(Historical Information provided by Paula Hartman-Chairperson for GCNC Blue Star/Gold Star Program as presented in the Garden Club of North Carolina 100<sup>th</sup> Year History 2000-2025 publication)*



At its Annual Convention at Sedgefield Inn in Greensboro in the spring of 1948, the Executive Committee of the Garden Club of North Carolina, made by Mrs. R.N. Simms, adopted a motion that the Blue Star Memorial Highways become one of the GCNC projects. Mrs. Simms had been in Detroit in 1946 when the National Council of State Garden Clubs project was adopted as a national project and the National Council hoped that all States would soon have a system of Memorial Highways, honoring those who served in World War II.

The plan was to link the country east to west and north to south through this living memorial. Virginia and South Carolina Legislatures had already approved the project. So, this motion would make North Carolina an important link in this highway system.

The Highway Commission named Highway No. 301 and No. 64 East-West as Memorial Highways. The Garden Club of North Carolina, Inc. was awarded (1949-1950) the Certificate of Achievement for its efforts to establish the Blue Star Memorial Highways as a tribute to the Nation's Armed Forces of World War II.

The first marker to be erected was on Highway No. 64 at the eastern entrance to Raleigh, our State Capital. This was given by the Raleigh Garden Club honoring Mrs. R.N. Simms, member of their club and the state chairman of Roadside Development and the first chairman of the Blue Star Memorial Highways in North Carolina. The second and third markers were erected at Rocky Mount where the two highways cross. The one on Highway 301 was given by the Rocky Mount Garden Club honoring their member Mrs. J.R. Bennett, who had been active in the state clubs Roadside Development Council. The one on Highway 64 was given by the Garden Club of North Carolina, as this was the only place in the State where the two highways cross.

At present we have 224 Blue Star Memorials and 8 Gold Star.

For more information regarding the Blue and Gold Star memorial program check out the National Garden Clubs' website: [Blue and Gold Star Memorials](#)

## Art in Bloom event update

Art in Bloom was held at the North Carolina Museum of Art in West Raleigh, presented by PNC, March 18-22, 2026. Featuring the stunning creativity of floral designers from across the state and beyond who interpreted works of art on display in the People's Collection. Art in Bloom is an annual five-day floral design fundraiser in support of the North Carolina Museum of Art. Bess Treadwell and Vicki Thompson were the only Garden Club of North Carolina members who participated in this event.



Bess Treadwell, member  
Coastal GC and Raleigh GC

Bess' design features  
anthurium, aspidistra, scabiosa  
pods, hypernium berries and  
amaranthus

Vicki Thompson, member of the  
Raleigh GC

Vicki's design features larkspur,  
clematis, carnations, narcissus,  
citrus, and ranunculus

**Save the Date:**  
Upcoming Club Events from Around the State  
Mark Your Calendar!



**April 10-12, 73<sup>rd</sup> AZELEA GARDEN TOUR** hosted by the Cape Fear Garden Club

**April 10, PLANT & ATTIC SALE** presented by the Charlotte Council of Garden Clubs

**April 16, GOLD STAR MEMORIAL DEDICATION CEREMONY** presented by the Emerald Isle Garden Club

**April 24-25, QUILTED FLOWERS FLOWER SHOW** presented by the Coastal Garden Club

**April 25, IN FULL BLOOM GARDEN TOUR** hosted by the Garden Club Council of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County

**April 25-26, CHAPEL HILL GARDEN TOUR** hosted by the Chapel Hill Garden Club

**April 30-May 1, BLOOMING SEASONS: ART IN PETALS FLOWER SHOW** presented by the New Hanover Garden Club

**May 2, ROSE GARDEN TOUR** hosted by the Wilmington Cape Fear Rose Society

**May 16, ANNUAL PLANT SALE** presented by the Coastal Garden Club

**May 17-18, GARDEN CLUB NORTH CAROLINA ANNUAL SPRING MEETING-A Celebration In Bloom,** Greensboro

**October 26-28 FLOWER SHOW SCHOOL 1,** JC Roulston Arboretum, Raleigh

Save the date: April 10-12  
73<sup>rd</sup> Annual Azelea Garden Tour  
Cape Fear Garden Club (D11)

*The 73rd Annual*  
**Cape Fear Garden Club**  
**AZALEA GARDEN TOUR**



*“The Joys of April  
Gardens to Inspire”*

*Sharing Wilmington’s Gardens Since 1953*

**APRIL 10, 11 & 12, 2026**

*Visit our website for more information*

**azaleagardentour.com**

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# Save the date: April 10-12

## 73<sup>rd</sup> Annual Azalea Garden Tour

### Cape Fear Garden Club (D11)



*‘The Joys of April Gardens to Inspire’*

#### **Azalea Garden Tour in Wilmington, North Carolina**

Each spring, as azaleas burst into color along the Carolina coast, Wilmington welcomes visitors to one of the South’s most beloved garden traditions—the **Cape Fear Garden Club’s Azalea Garden Tour**. An official event of the North Carolina Azalea Festival and a longtime favorite featured in *Southern Living*, this self-guided tour offers a gracious invitation to experience Southern hospitality at its finest.

Now in its many decades of tradition, the tour opens the gates to **twelve exceptional private and public gardens**, each reflecting the unique character of coastal North Carolina. Visitors will discover a rich variety of styles—from charming, whimsical cottage gardens to stately landscapes surrounding historic homes. Designs range from formal symmetry to contemporary plantings, all thoughtfully curated and presented with the warm welcome of Cape Fear Garden Club members.

The tour begins with a celebratory flourish at the **Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and Azalea Queen’s Garden Party**®, held Friday, April 10, 2026, at 9:30 a.m. at the Cameron Art Museum. This festive opening features Coastal Strings, the North Carolina Azalea Festival and offers an early glimpse of the Azalea Queen and her court, and special guests, in an elegant setting that celebrates the season in true Southern style.

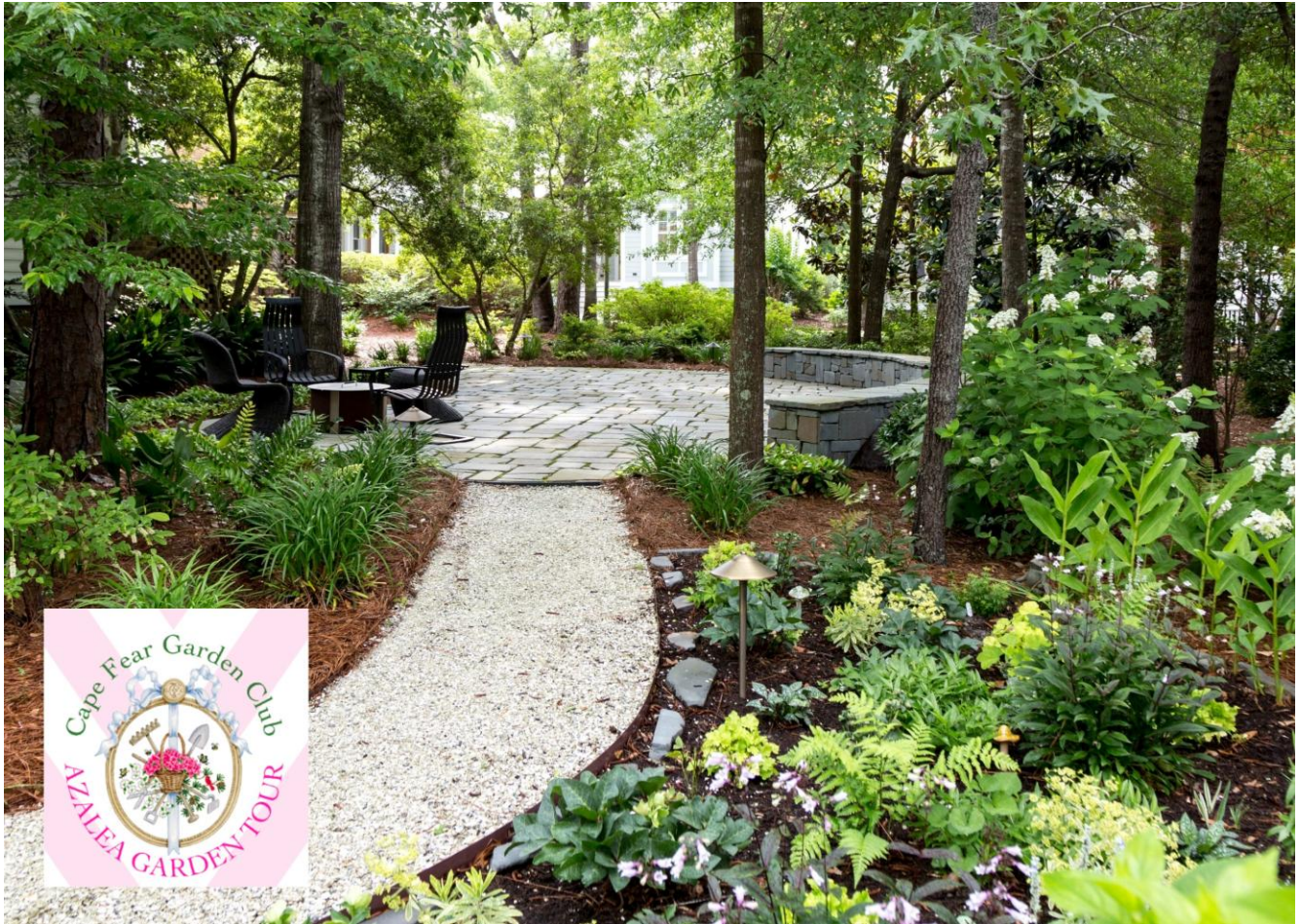
Gardens are open daily from **10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** (unless otherwise noted) from Friday – Sunday **April 10–12, 2026**. Several “Secret” gardens (Nos. 6–9) are accessible exclusively by shuttle, with continuous service from Autumn Hall, allowing visitors to relax and enjoy the experience without navigating traffic. Throughout the tour, Cape Fear Garden Club Ambassadors are stationed at each location, ready to greet guests and share insights into the gardens’ design and plantings.

A highlight of the weekend is the **Benefit Art Sale**, held Sunday, April 12, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Garden #7A. This special event features original works created *en plein air* in the gardens during the tour. Admission is included with a garden tour ticket or is available separately for \$5.

Tickets are **\$50 and available online**, with more information at this link <https://www.capefeargardenclub.org/2026-cape-fear-garden-club-azalea-garden-tour/>

They may also be purchased on the day of the event, payment by check or cash only; availability may be limited. No Pets allowed. To streamline the process, all online purchases are held at will-call and may be picked up at the shuttle stop kiosk at Autumn Hall, 630 Carolina Bay Dr., Wilmington, before the tour begins.

**Save the date: April 10-12**  
**73<sup>rd</sup> Annual Azelea Garden Tour**  
**Cape Fear Garden Club (D11)**



**Secret Garden #7-A**

**Save the date: April 10  
Plant and Attic Sale!  
Charlotte Council of Garden Clubs (D3)**



**Plant and Attic Sale!**

**The Charlotte Council of Garden Clubs**

**1820 East Seventh Street**

**Friday, April 10**

**10 AM to 3 PM**

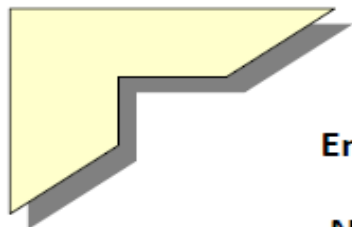
**Saturday, April 11**

**9 to Noon**

**Please pay by cash, Zelle, or Venmo.**

**Come find a new treasure! Our prices are great! We have favorite perennials and planters, home and garden tools, home décor, art and craft supplies, collectible and vintage items, quilts, books and games, children's toys, jewelry and more.**

**Save the date: April 16  
Gold Star Memorial Dedication Ceremony  
Emerald Isle Garden Club (D11)**



**Emerald Isle Garden Club of  
National Garden Clubs, Inc.**

**And**

**The Town of Emerald Isle**

**Request the honor of your presence at the**

**Gold Star Memorial Dedication Ceremony  
Thursday, April 16, 2026 @ 2:00pm  
6800 Emerald Drive  
Emerald Isle NC**

**The Gold Star Memorial Marker  
is being sponsored by the  
Emerald Isle Garden Club**

**To honor men and women who have given their lives  
For our Nation while serving in the  
Armed Forces of the United States**

**Lemonade & cookies served following the ceremony**

**Please RSVP to:  
Tula Satterfield  
252-349-3205  
tulamsatter@gmail.com**

**Save the date: April 24-25  
Quilted Flowers Show  
Coastal Garden Club (D11)**

## ***QUILTED FLOWERS***



National Garden Club Small-Standard Flower Show

Presented by Coastal Garden Club  
Member of:  
National Garden Clubs  
South Atlantic Region Garden Clubs  
Garden Club of North Carolina – District 11

Friday, April 24, 2026 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM  
Saturday, April 25, 2026 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Shallotte Presbyterian Church – Fellowship Hall  
5070 Main Street  
Shallotte, North Carolina 28470

Open and Free to the Public

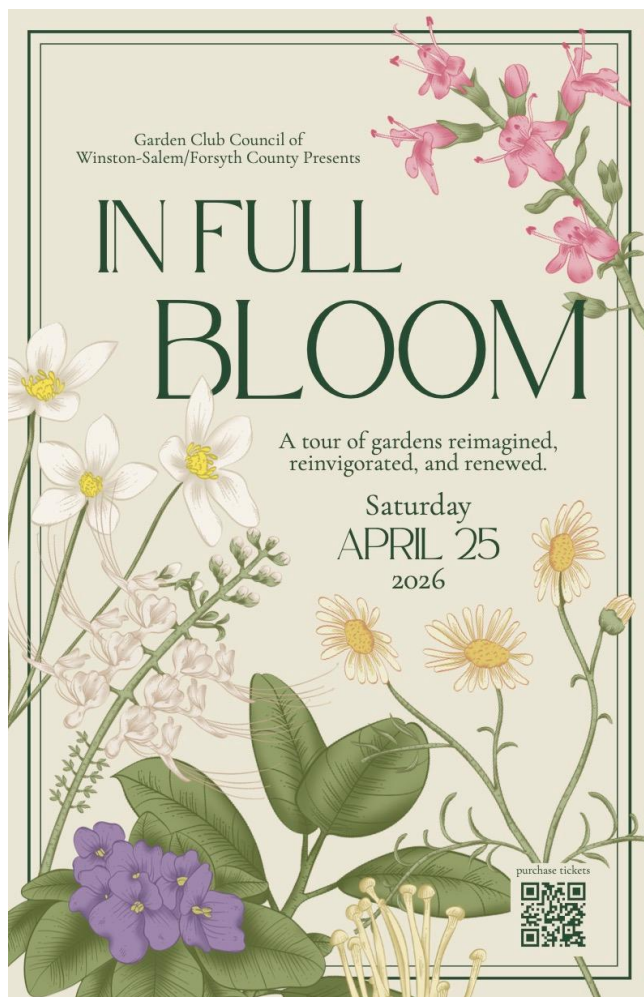
# Save the date: April 25

## In Full Bloom garden tour

### Garden Club Council of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County (D4)

The Garden Club Council of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County proudly announces our upcoming garden tour, **In Full Bloom**, taking place on Saturday, April 25, 2026, from 10am-4pm, rain or shine. This highly anticipated one-day, biennial tour invites the public to experience some of our area's most inspiring private gardens while celebrating our shared appreciation for nature, design, and transformation. Each garden on this year's tour has been carefully cultivated over time - reimagined, reinvigorated, and renewed - and now stands in full bloom, as a showpiece of beauty and creativity.

As our primary fundraiser for the Council, the net proceeds allow the Council to provide grants for community beautification, restoration and conservation activities and projects within Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. Through these grants the Council can make a visible impact across our parks, schools, and public and nonprofit spaces. For more information and tickets, visit [wsgardentour.org](http://wsgardentour.org).



**Save the date: April 25-26  
Chapel Hill Garden Tour  
Chapel Hill Garden Club (D9)**



**CHAPEL HILL  
GARDEN  
tour**

**April 25 & April 26**

---

The Chapel Hill Garden Club's popular tour returns,  
featuring five stunning private gardens  
and three UNC affiliated public gardens.

Admire majestic trees, massive natural rock formations  
and unique plant collections  
nestled within creative, charming garden designs.

Plantsman Tony Avent and other local experts  
will entertain your questions.

Join us in celebrating the wonders of spring!

**Scan to BUY TICKETS NOW**



[ChapelHillGardenTour.net](http://ChapelHillGardenTour.net)

**Save the date: April 30-May 1<sup>st</sup>  
Blooming Seasons: Art in Petals Flower Show  
New Hanover Garden Club (D11)**

**“Blooming Seasons: Art in Petals”**



An NGC Small-Standard Flower Show

Presented by the New Hanover Garden Club  
Member Of: National Garden Clubs, Inc.  
South Atlantic Region  
The Garden Club of NC, Inc., District 11

Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026, 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM  
Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

NHC Arboretum  
6206 Oleander Drive  
Wilmington, North Carolina 28403  
(910)798-7660 Open and Free to the Public

**Save the date: May 2**  
**Wilmington Cape Fear Rose Society (D11) presents**  
**Rose Garden Tour**



*Wilmington Cape Fear  
Rose Society*

*Invites you to our 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual*

*Rose Garden Tour*

**9 am to 5 pm**

**Saturday May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026**

**Free & open to the public**

*Come tour our rose gardens & speak  
with garden owners about growing roses in  
the south.*



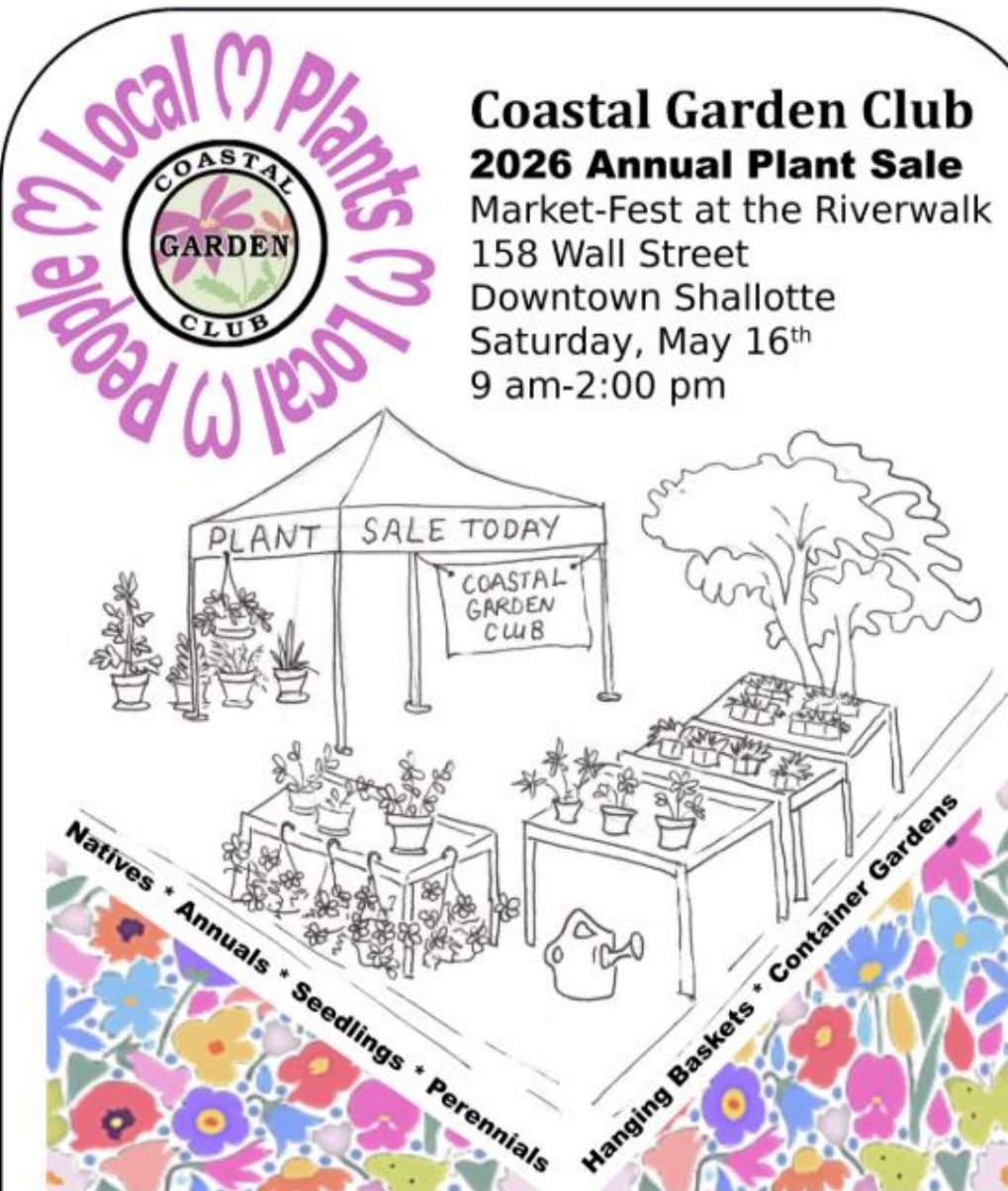
Map



Wcfrs.org



**Save the date: May 16  
Coastal Garden Club (D11)  
Annual Plant Sale**



Coastal Garden Club is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Proceeds from the sale help to support our community gardens and outreach projects. 50% of proceeds awarded to Brunswick Community College scholarship recipient

**Save the date: May 17-18**  
**Garden Club of North Carolina Annual Spring Meeting**



SAVE THE DATE

GARDEN CLUB OF NORTH CAROLINA  
ANNUAL SPRING MEETING

*A CELEBRATION IN BLOOM*

MAY 17-18, 2026  
HILTON GARDEN INN AIRPORT  
238 NC HWY 68 S  
GREENSBORO, NC

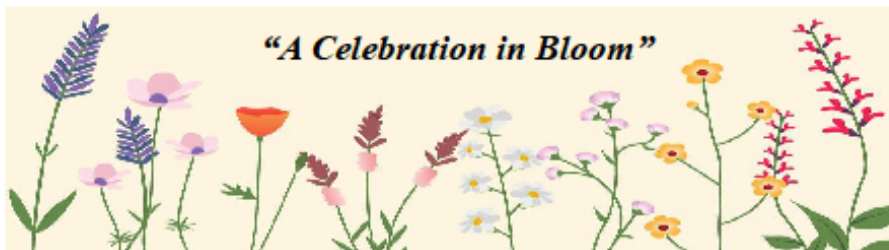


# Save the date: May 17-18 Garden Club of North Carolina Annual Spring Meeting

The Garden Club of North Carolina, Inc.  
Charles McLendon, President  
OFFICIAL CALL LETTER

The Annual Meeting of the Garden Club of North Carolina, Inc. will be held  
**May 17-18, 2026**  
**Hilton Garden Inn Airport**  
**Greensboro, North Carolina**

The Garden Clubs of District 5 invite you to



Join other GCNC garden club members and us for fellowship, ideas, and fun. Share your gardening experience and ideas and gather fresh inspiration from others to take back to your members and community.

### Speaker – Workshops – Awards – Silent Auction

All members of the Board of Directors should attend, if possible. Please remember that all garden club presidents are members of the Board of Directors. All members of our garden clubs are invited to attend, and we encourage you to join us for this awesome 2026 GCNC annual meeting event.

**TO COMMITTEE AND CATEGORY CHAIRMEN:** PLEASE LET ME KNOW BY EMAIL, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, IF YOU PLAN TO MAKE A REPORT. THIS WILL HELP OUR BUSINESS MEETIN RUN MORE EFFICIENTLY! [mclendonc@nc.rr.com](mailto:mclendonc@nc.rr.com)

Please email your Committee Reports \*\*\* by Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026, to both:

President: Charles McLendon, [mclendonc@nc.rr.com](mailto:mclendonc@nc.rr.com)

Recording Secretary: Vicki Corporon, [vcorporon@nc.rr.com](mailto:vcorporon@nc.rr.com)

Also, bring one printed copy to the meeting.

Registration Form and a brief outline of the meeting are attached and will be published on our website. The Host group would appreciate your assistance with an “on time” response to their Registration Form. Also, think about honoring or remembering someone special by buying an AD to be placed in the program booklet!

Thank you for everything you do for The Garden Club of North Carolina, Inc.

Charles McLendon, President  
The Garden Club of North Carolina, Inc.

To celebrate our country’s 250th anniversary, there will be a special flower arrangement set up for your photo opportunities.

Contact Person: Jo Ann Lasker, AM Co-chair at 336-342-7448 or [jolasker@bellsouth.net](mailto:jolasker@bellsouth.net).

# Save the Date: October 26-28 Flower Show School 1



## WHAT ARE FLOWER SHOW SCHOOLS

Flower Show Schools are designed to educate a person on how to become a NGC Flower Show Judge or just come and learn how to put on a NGC Flower Show on for your club. In school you will study Horticulture, design, and Flower Show Procedure. There are four schools which must be attended to become a Flower Show Judge. A suggestion is for your club to consider a scholarship for 1 or more of your members. They in turn will bring knowledge to you club.

The brochure below will give you all the details you need to sign up for FSS I, October 26-28, 2026. Projections for FSS II will be held in April 2027.

If you have questions or would like more information please contact Mary Vacek, Flower Show School Chairman: 936-689-0328, [mary.o.vacek@icloud.com](mailto:mary.o.vacek@icloud.com)



# Save the Date: October 26-28

## Flower Show School 1

### Tri-Fold Flyer

#### Our Instructors

Gina Jogan



Gina Jogan Gina has been an Instructor : Design and Flower Show Procedure for NGC's Flower Show Schools (FSS) since 2002 and NGC Symposia, Design and Allied topics since 2004. She is an NGC National Garden Clubs, Inc. Accredited - Master Flower Show Judge, and Master Emeritus Consultant in NGC Gardening Consultant and Landscape Design. Gina is 2025-2027 Flower Shows and FSS Chair

Jan Griffin



Jan moved from the Seattle area to Florida where all the plants she knew would not thrive in Florida's climate. She joined a Garden Club and started her quest for learning about other varied and interesting plants. She became a NCG Flower Show Judge. She now teaches Floral Design classes as well as horticulture for Flower Show Schools and have developed several horticulture programs, for clubs, judges, and civic groups. Being actively involved in the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs and Florida Show judges keeps her busy. She has served as Horticulture Chairman for six flower shows and several District shows. Her interests other than Garden Club are my family, golf and working in her friend's florist shop. Her comment to all her wonderful design friends is that you need great horticulture to create great designs

#### Required Reading

- *Handbook for Flower Shows 2017 Edition* revised July 2025, digital version is available free online at [www.gardenclub.org/flower-show-schoolresources](http://www.gardenclub.org/flower-show-schoolresources) Headquarters phone # 800-550-6007
- *Outlines of Period Flower Arrangement*

#### All taking courses for credit must:

- Attend all sessions. Be on time.
- Have attendance verified.
- Bring *Handbook for Flower Shows 2017*, Revised July 2025.
- Outlines provided to study
- Pencils
- Review Page 124 of Handbook For FS, Course 1

**Study Outline will be emailed in advance to registrants.**

Please review material to understand what will be taught by the instructors.

#### LODGING

##### Hotel Information

Ramada Inn

1520 Blue Ridge Parkway

Raleigh, NC 27607

919-832-4100

Room Rates \$89 plus tax

Buffet Breakfast included

Deadline to book a room is

October 15, 2026

#### FLOWER SHOW SCHOOL



## Course I

**Growing, Staging, Exhibiting,  
Judging**

**October 26-28, 2026**

**JC Raulston Arboretum**

**4415 Beryl Road**

**Raleigh, NC 27636**

**Sponsored by**

**North Carolina**

**State Judges Council**

**State Flower Show Chairman**

**Mary Vacek**

**936-689-0328**

**mary.o.vacek@icloud.com**

**Registrar**

**Connie Goodson**

**1320 N. River Drive**

**Surf City, NC 28445**

**910-526-1898**

# Save the Date: October 26-28

## Flower Show School 1

### Tri-Fold Flyer



**FLOWER SHOW SCHOOL** is a comprehensive program with all you need to know about judging, entering, competing and chairing a National Garden Clubs (NGC) flower show.

Four (4) courses are scheduled over a two-three (2-3) day period each with its own curriculum in horticulture, design, and Flower Show Procedure (FSP) and may be taken in any order. **Course 1** is the perfect place to start!

All are welcome to attend. NGC members who take the full course with examinations are eligible for **CREDIT**.

- Become a flower show judge!
- Plan a beautiful, educational flower show!
- Learn more about horticulture and design!

**Join this unique experience.** Become an active part of Flower shows. Learn more about growing, preparing, planning, staging, and judging for smooth, seamless, successful shows!

**Course 1** is facilitated through a variety of methods by NGC accredited, qualified instructors with outlines provided. See the NGC Handbook for Flower Shows and all related forms on [GardenClub.org](http://GardenClub.org). Interested in learning more about flower shows? Visit NGC Flower Shows on [GardenClub.org](http://GardenClub.org).

**Learn:**

- To display and critique horticulture and floral design
- Point-scoring to evaluate how entries are judged and see what it takes to get the blue ribbon.
- About awards, types of shows, and what committees are needed to produce a show.

**Register early to guarantee space and supplies.**  
Clipboards provided.

**Garden clubs are encouraged to sponsor and provide registration for at least one member**

**FLOWER SHOW SCHOOL Course 1 AGENDA**

Flower Show Procedure (FSP) & Design  
Gina Jogan  
Horticulture ~ Jan Griffin  
Possession of Handbook required for CREDIT.  
Must be on time and seated when sessions begin and attend all sessions. Please bring pencils, clipboard will be provided.  
Personal devices must be silenced throughout all sessions and Exams.

**Monday, October 26, 2026**

1:15 Registration  
2:00 Announcements  
2:30-4:30 Flower Show Procedure (FSP)

**Tuesday & Wednesday, October 27-28**

**8:00 (Tuesday) FSP Exam**  
**8:00 (Wednesday) Design Exam**  
**8:00 (Thursday) Horticulture Exam**

8:30 - 9:00 Registration  
9:00 - 9:15 Announcements  
9:15 - 10:15 Design or Horticulture  
10:15 - 10:30 Break  
10:30 - 12:30 Design or Horticulture  
12:30 - 1:00 Lunch  
1:00 - 2:00 Design or Horticulture  
2:00 - 2:15 Break  
2:15 - 3:15 Practice Point Scoring  
3:15 - 3:30 Break  
3:30 - 4:30 Point Scoring

**Flower Show School**  
**Course I**  
**October 26-28**

**Deadline to Register October 10th 2026**  
**Complete form and mail check payable to NCFS Judges Council to Registrar Connie Goodson**  
**1320 N. New River Dr**  
**Surf City, NC 28445**  
**conniejog@gmail.com**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Your Garden Club \_\_\_\_\_

Full Course, plus exam and lunch \_\_\_ \$170

Full Course, no exam and lunch \_\_\_ \$160

One Day - \$80 + \$20 Lunch

Total Enclosed \_\_\_

Checks payable to:  
North Carolina State Judges Council  
**No refunds after October 15, 2026**

More information is available on the GCNC website



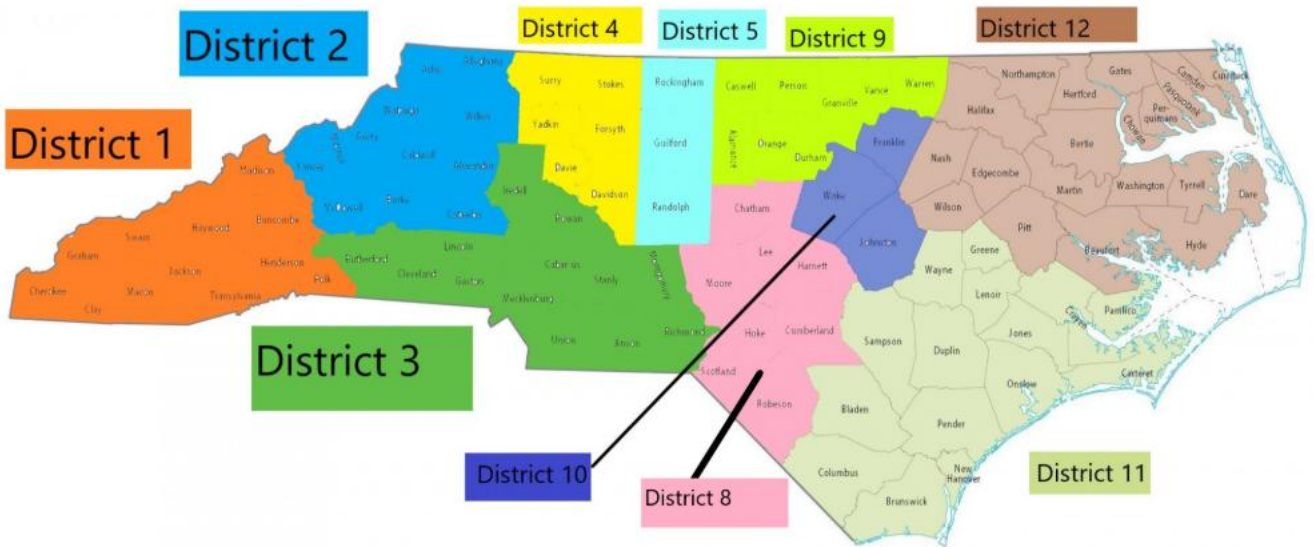
## South Atlantic Region (SAR) Meeting

16 members from North Carolina recently attend the South Atlantic Region meeting in Blennerhassett West Virginia. Our state president, Charles McLendon was honored with a lovely floral arrangement (most stunning arrangement there) designed by Cathleen Hedgecough Smith. Cathleen shared her unique plant list and agreed to a photo opt with our president.



The arrangement features a mix of exotic flowers and lush greenery, featuring Heliconia Rostrata, Heliconia Iris Red, Heliconia Golden, Fish Tail Palm, Monstera Green, Pandanus variegated/green and Calathea Zebrina

# Garden Club North Carolina District Map Club Tidings



## District 1-2

Asheville  
Brevard  
Hendersonville  
Morganton  
Newton  
Piney Creek  
Sherrills Ford  
Sylva  
Tryon  
Waynesville

## District 3

Charlotte  
Cherryville  
Davidson  
Huntersville  
Monroe  
Statesville  
Troutman

## District 4

Bermuda Run  
Elkin  
King  
Lexington  
Mount Airy  
Pilot Mountain  
Winston-Salem

## District 5

Greensboro  
Jamestown  
Julian  
Liberty  
Reidsville

## District 8

Dunn  
Fayetteville  
Laurinburg  
Lillington  
Pinehurst/  
Southern Pines  
Pittsboro  
Spring Lake

## District 9

Chapel Hill  
Durham  
Hillsborough  
Roxboro  
Warrenton

## District 10

Cary  
Knightdale  
Raleigh  
Wendell  
Zebulon

## District 12

Ahoskie  
Farmville  
Maneto  
Moyock  
Rich Square  
Rocky Mount  
Tarboro  
Washington  
Wilson

## District 11

Cape Carteret  
Clinton  
Dudley  
Emerald Isle  
Goldsboro  
Jacksonville  
La Grange  
New Bern  
Newport  
Pine Knoll Shores  
Shalotte  
Sneads Ferry  
Southport  
Surf City  
Tabor City  
Whiteville  
Wilmington  
Wrightsville Beach

# D12 Rocky Mount Garden Club

## Creating a Pollinator Garden

In late 2023 and early 2024, the Rocky Mount Garden Club was given the opportunity to adopt and develop a rather large garden area adjacent to the entrance to the Pearsall Library on the campus of North Carolina Wesleyan University. This library is not only open to the students of NCWU but is also used by the public.

This is a multi-year project of planning, designing, executing, and maintaining a public garden devoted to attracting bees and butterflies. While the planning and design phase plus the initial preparation of the site took place in 2024, much of this project took place in 2025 and it continues to evolve as an ongoing RMGC project with the entire club membership participating.

In preparation for this project, RMGC invited Lettie Allen, a certified beekeeper and Biology Instructor from Nash Community College (also a NCW grad), to present a program to the RMGC in 2024 called “How Does a Butterfly Garden Differ from a Pollinator Garden?”. Mrs. Allen also gave the Club a preliminary plan for the necessary elements that should be included in the garden space, some suggestions for a design, and some plants to consider. The Club ultimately settled on a hybrid garden that is a pollinator garden but also one that will attract butterflies and birds. As we learned, pollinator gardens do not always look “neat”, and since this was a public space, we needed to include elements that would attract bees but would also look attractive.

Work began in earnest in early 2025 with club members participating in pulling weeds, clearing all grass, tilling and preparing the soil, and establishing a natural looking “stream” of river rock for drainage and a potential water source for bees. There was also a decorative stone area on the corner (to prevent students and library patrons from taking shortcuts across the corner). A bench was added beneath an existing crepe myrtle, and perennials were established around the perimeter and in the Phase I area of the project. Plants were donated by members of the Club from their own gardens and included day lilies, butterfly bushes, calla lilies, Mexican petunias, golden dewdrops, and others. After planting, the entire area was covered in pine straw raked and donated by members and neighbors, and a Rocky Mount Garden Club sign was installed.

Later in 2025, the club planted more perennials and bulbs in the next phase of the project, continued weeding, and refreshing pine straw. This is the type of project that evolves over time and 2026 will see even more development as we fill in the subsequent phases. It is an educational project with relatively low maintenance (requiring periodic “refreshing”, weeding, plant replacement or additions, etc.) and it is an attractive addition to the campus.

This is an ongoing project. Members gather periodically at an appointed date and time in their Garden Club T-shirts and maintain the garden. We also pay particular attention to the University’s calendar so we can make sure the area is “show-worthy” to visitors on campus for special occasions.



# D12 Washington Garden Club Meet the Chocolate Botanist!

## Washington Garden Club, BCCC host Derek Haynes for gardening program

By Angela Mason Foster  
Second VP, Washington Garden Club

On Saturday, March 21, the Washington Garden Club partnered with Beaufort County Community College to host a free community program featuring Derek Haynes, widely known as *The Chocolate Botanist*.

Haynes delivered an engaging and lively presentation examining the gardening “hacks” that have spread rapidly across social media, especially during and after the pandemic. With humor, energy, and a strong foundation in plant science, he explored which popular tips are supported by research and which are better left untried. His presentation encouraged gardeners to look beyond internet trends and rely on sound, evidence-based practices in the garden.

With a background in plant biology as well as vaccine and therapeutics development using plant-based technologies, Haynes brings a distinctive perspective to his work. He blends modern science with traditional plant knowledge, emphasizing that the wisdom of the past and the innovations of the present can work together in meaningful ways.

Haynes also highlighted the broader importance of plants in everyday life, touching on issues such as food insecurity and holistic wellness. His ability to make scientific information both accessible and entertaining made the program especially memorable for attendees.

Inspired by the legacy of pioneering Black scientists such as George Washington Carver and Percy Julian, Haynes has built a strong following through his educational platform. On Instagram, where he is known as *The Chocolate Botanist*, he has attracted more than 40,000 followers who appreciate his depth of knowledge, humor, and passion for plants.

The event offered local gardeners an informative and enjoyable opportunity to learn, connect, and rethink some of the gardening advice circulating online.

## D12 Washington Garden Club: Meet the Chocolate Botanist! continued



From Left to Right: Clay Carter, Director of Personal Enrichment Initiatives, Derek Haynes, the Chocolate Botanist, and Sharon Arnold, President of the Washington Garden Club

## D11 Coastal Garden Club, Shallotte

The Coastal Garden Club's flower show scheduled for April 24 and 25, 2026 takes a lot of participation from our club members. We begin working on our flower show the summer before and different members work until and through the actual show. One of the parts of the flower show that is important to our club is the floral design. We have six flower show judges in our club and we all enjoy having a flower show and participating with the preparation and exhibition. Three of our judges participated in presenting a workshop on different classes in the Design Division of the show to our members in order to help members know the different design types and how to create their own floral design. We are lucky to have such dedicated and enthusiastic judges.



Bess Treadwell  
demonstrates floral design



Bonnie Giehl  
demonstrates leaf  
manipulation



Joan Eccard  
demonstrates leaf  
manipulation

## D11 New Hanover Garden Club

Brookdale Memory Care Wilmington has received a new courtyard renovation through the plantings and participation of the New Hanover Garden Club in Wilmington. Garden Club members also participate in ongoing monthly nature programs with the Brookdale residents. Tulip and daffodil bulbs were planted in the fall, along with raised bed plantings. In December, the residents made seed ornaments and decorated a Christmas tree for the birds based on the book “The Nature Tree.” Resident participation and interest in the monthly projects have shown substantial growth. We now await the arrival of spring and the daffodil and tulip bulbs to bloom!



## D11 New Hanover Garden Club

Our New Hanover Garden Club was contacted last fall by the pastor of Wilmington's Price Cathedral AME Zion Church asking for help with their church landscape. Once the site visits and discussions with their representatives were complete, our garden therapy committee developed a plan to enhance the entranceway of the church grounds. In November, ten members of our garden club, assisted by some students from the football team and Beta Club of New Hanover High School, worked together to carry out the project and make the landscaping improvements at the local church. Three cubic yards of mulch were put down and spread in the two beds alongside the church and the large area with trees along the curb. Two large flowerpots were placed at the doorway and planted with some colorful pansies and Pencil Japanese Holly Shrubs to make a welcoming and lovely entrance for its members.



## **D11 Emerald Isle Garden Club**

### UPCOMING DEDICATIONS OF GOLD STAR FAMILIES MEMORIAL MARKERS

We are extremely proud to announce the following dedications in honor of the families of their children who paid the ultimate price in the defense of the United States of America. These markers give honor, hope and healing to our Gold Star Families.

Emerald Isle Garden Club will dedicate the Gold Star Families Memorial Marker on April 16, 2026, at 2:00 pm, at the Veterans Memorial next to the Boat Launch.

GCNC will dedicate the Gold Star Families Memorial Marker at the Duplin County Historical Courthouse Plaza on May 22, 2026, at noon.

Cedarwood Garden Club will sponsor a Gold Star Families By-Way Marker in Kernersville on May 25, 2026, time to be determined soon

Pending Dedications include:

Anderson Garden Club will sponsor a Gold Star Families Memorial Marker in 2026, dedication date to be determined, on the Highway through Fort Bragg.

Gardenerettes Garden Club will sponsor a Gold Star Families Memorial Marker in late 2026 in Jacksonville, site to be determined.

## D11 Emerald Isle Garden Club The snow didn't stop us!

The January snow didn't deter the Emerald Isle Garden Club from creating bouquets of roses, daisies, baby's breath, and ferns to give to our local nursing home for the residents to enjoy for Valentine's Day, and our twenty-five Green Thumb students created fat seed balls to hang in trees to feed the birds.



## **D11 Emerald Isle Garden Club The snow didn't stop us!**

February brought big plans for our yearly fundraiser, the Card and Game Party. Teams sign up to come together to play board games, cards, and Mahjong while we provide snacks and raffle prizes donated by local businesses and members. The event was February 25<sup>th</sup> with 112 people signed up to participate.

Come March, our Green Thumbs students will be creating birds from toilet paper tubes, and in April will be planting a garden and trees in honor of Arbor Day. They are excitedly waiting to hear news about their entries into the Woodsy Owl and Smokey Bear poster contest. They had so much fun drawing and designing them.

The members of the Emerald Isle Garden Club will have a program about bee keeping in April, and in May we will be working with local businesses for our annual Bikes and Blumes in conjunction with Bike the Banks.



## **D10 Steel Magnolias Garden Club**

### **From Soul to Soil: Celebrating the Legacy of Black-Owned Farms**

To celebrate Black History Month, the Steel Magnolias Garden Club (SMGC) dug deep into the rich history of black-owned farms in Zebulon, NC. Our "Soul to Soil" presentation was a heartfelt tribute to the legacy of our local black farming community and showcased a local black-owned catering business that provided delicious soul food samples. The Garden Club of North Carolina (GCNC) 3rd VP, Frances Cain, provided a Welcome Address to attendees and our club celebrated her for being appointed as the first black woman to hold an executive position in the organization's history.

Our coordinator, Karyn Farmer - SMGC Community Outreach Chair, kicked things off with a fascinating look at the statistics of black farm life in the early-to-mid 20th century. But the real magic happened when our youth facilitated panel—representing four generations from two families who still farm over 100 acres in eastern Wake County—took the stage.

They shared moving stories of starting work at just three years old, trailing wagons to catch dropped tobacco leaves. It wasn't all work, though! They reminisced about "dirt clod" fights and spirited games of Red Rover. While their lives were defined by hard physical labor, it was clear that their success grew from hearts filled with family love.

Today, those same families include lawyers, doctors, and county commissioners who credit their success to the lessons learned in the field:

- **Hard Work Never Hurt Anybody** - Achieve your goals through dedication.
- **Seize Every Opportunity** - Don't let anything hold you back.
- **Love Makes You Stronger** - They grew up during segregation and prejudice, but they were rooted in families full of love.

## **D10 Steel Magnolias Garden Club From Soul to Soil: Celebrating the Legacy of Black-Owned Farms continued**

This program truly "took the show on the road!" It garnered so much attention that Karyn was asked to present at two Raleigh schools and invited to a Black History reception at the Governor's Mansion where NC Governor Josh Stein and First Lady Stein honored several NC black farmers. We were thrilled to have support from the local Boys and Girls

Club, Zebulon Chamber of Commerce, Zebulon Commissioners, SEED Community Foundation, the Governor Morehead School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and WakeTV.

### **Want to bring "Soul to Soil" to your club?**

You can watch the presentation at [zebulongardenclub.org/blog](http://zebulongardenclub.org/blog). If interested in the slide deck, contact Karyn Farmer at [steelmagnoliasclub@gmail.com](mailto:steelmagnoliasclub@gmail.com). Let's keep these vital stories growing!

# D9 Chapel Hill Garden Club

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Christine Ellestad [gochristine@me.com](mailto:gochristine@me.com)



January 18, 2026

## Thirty Year Springtime Tradition Returns to Chapel Hill The 2026 Chapel Hill Garden Tour

The Chapel Hill Garden Club's 15th biennial Chapel Hill Garden Tour will take place from 10am-4pm on Saturday and Sunday, April 25 and 26, 2026.

This much-anticipated springtime event, a self-guided tour throughout Chapel Hill, features five distinctive private gardens and three public gardens. Our theme, *Sculpted & Soaring Skyward*, reflects the natural forces that shaped ancient volcanic rocks into the area's current landscape, which now supports majestic trees and a tapestry of color and lush greenery.

Tour visitors will experience a diverse group of garden designs honoring Chapel Hill's horticultural history and celebrated natural rock formations, a plant collector's paradise brimming with abundant blooms and textures, an expansive redesign of a tobacco farm with sustainability and wildlife in mind, and an expertly designed Japanese-inspired garden oasis. These private gardens are open to the public only during this special weekend.

Be entertained and enlightened by local experts who will answer your questions about plants, tree care, Ikebana design, birds, and beekeeping. Meet internationally known plantsman Tony Avent, UNC geologist and author of *Exploring the Geology of the Carolinas*, Dr. Kevin Stewart and Orange County Master Gardener Volunteers. A schedule listing the times and gardens for their appearances will be posted on our website.

The three featured public gardens are the North Carolina Botanical Garden, the Carolina Community Garden, and the American Indian Cultural Center Garden. Learn from a garden dedicated to an extensive collection of native plant collections, sustainability, and conservation, tour a working fruit and vegetable garden made possible through the shared efforts of the university's staff, students, faculty, and local residents, and enjoy a peaceful stroll through a garden which celebrates the American Indian presence at UNC-Chapel Hill.

The North Carolina Botanical Garden remains the Tour's primary beneficiary, with ongoing support for Habitat for Humanity, Freedom House, Triangle Land Conservancy, The Wonder Connection, The Garden Club of NC Scholarship Fund and gardens at local schools. Proceeds also provide funding for the Chapel Hill Garden Club, a civic organization serving our community since 1931.

For ticket details and complete tour information, please view [ChapelHillGardenTour.net](http://ChapelHillGardenTour.net).

BuildSense, a local high-performance design + build company, is the presenting sponsor of the tour.

## D9 Chapel Hill Garden Club



## D8 Four Seasons Junior Garden Club Fossils, Phosphates and Future

The January 2026 program of the Four Seasons Junior Garden Club continued the exploration of what lies beneath our feet, with a focused study on fossils and their connection to North Carolina's natural history and modern agriculture. The club consists of 24 students aged second through fifth grade that meet monthly at The Robin Paige Boys and Girls Club in Lillington, NC

The program concluded with a discussion on phosphate mining, why phosphates are extracted, and their importance in fertilizer production. Students linked geology to food production, learning how earth minerals aid plant growth and farming. The leftover matrix was placed in the area in which a new raised bed is being installed this Spring.



Student with a partial  
shark tooth



The students were  
very engaged

## D8 Four Seasons Junior Garden Club Fossils, Phosphates and Future continued

Students learned how fossils form and discussed the types commonly found in North Carolina, particularly the marine fossils prevalent along the state's coastal regions. This lesson connected earth science concepts to local geography and history, helping students understand how ancient environments shape the land we use today. This program tied into the workshop in November on Geology.

To provide a hands-on learning experience, Becky Blair, a club leader and member of the Four Seasons Garden Club of Lillington, traveled to Aurora, North Carolina, and brought back tubs of fossil matrix from the Nutrien Mine. Using identification sheets, students carefully examined the material and enthusiastically searched for fossils, including shark teeth and other marine remains. Club Member June Pitsley assisted the students in this activity.



Four Seasons Club Member June Pitsley assisting in the hunt

## District 3 Club Hopping!

District 3 Director, Sharon Eichler, and Vice Director, Alison Redfoot-DiLiddo, have been hopping from meeting to meeting. They have pledged to visit every club in their district and, so far, have visited six of the twelve active clubs and are working on visiting the remaining clubs by summertime. They have been present for two 75th anniversary celebrations, a silent auction, a live auction, a tea party, and three programs that included Japanese Gardens, Ladybugs, and How to Care for Houseplants. They were warmly welcomed by each club they visited and saw how they share their love of gardening with one another and the public. District 3 clubs have been very busy!



# D1-2 Lake Norman Garden Club Spring Updates

Despite the unusually cold temperatures of January and February, our club was quite active with several projects.

## Unveiling of the Time-Capsule.... Uncle Billy's Garden

It was in 1996 that the idea of Uncle Billy's Garden was born at a spring LKN Garden Club meeting. It would take two years of hard-work and planning and fundraising for the Uncle Billy's Memorial Botanical Garden would come into fruition. A beautiful sanctuary for patrons of the Sherrills Ford Library.

Several years later, the library was moved to their new location, and the building and garden were officially deeded to Catawba County. Over time, the garden fell into disarray, and as new members joined the garden club, the history of this garden was lost. It was only through casual conversation and our current project of a pollinator garden with the library at their new location that renewed interest for this garden developed including the discovery of the time-capsule that was buried at the dedication of the garden in May 1998. In February 2026, a small group of dedicated members braved the temperatures to search for the buried time-capsule. After an hour, the time capsule was found, and after much digging, prying, and some calls to husbands, we were able to open the time-capsule and find the wonderful treasures of our past.

Below are some of the photos from this adventure:



Pictures above of us digging out the time-capsule, the engraved stoned under a large shrub that was covered with debris, the actual time-capsule and our group... victory!

## D1-2 Lake Norman Garden Club Spring Updates continued



Great fun at Ironwood Estate Orchids!



Community evening program: 101 on Monarch Butterflies

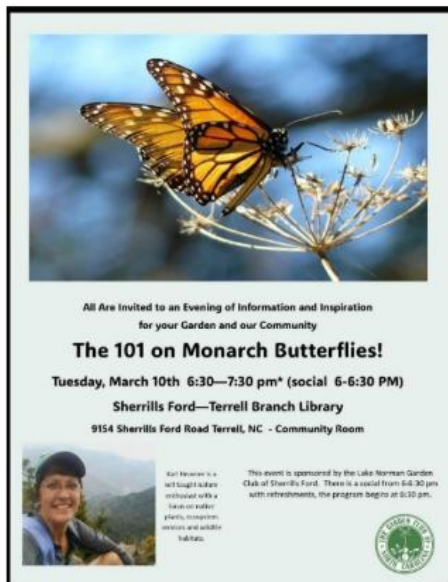
# D1-2 Lake Norman Garden Club Spring Updates continued

Our club also had a wonderful field trip on Feb 11th to Ironwood Estate Orchids in Hickory.

It was a grand trip, with a tour of the orchid greenhouse, owners providing history of the estate, and information on the various orchids. Members were able to purchase orchids.



On Tuesday, March 10th our club hosted an evening program “101 on Monarch Butterflies” presented by Kari Heavner. Excellent presentation. We had several attendees at this event, and 3 potential new members including our first guy!



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**Gardener Quarterly Newsletter Schedule:**

Issue	Submission Deadline	Publish Date
Spring (Apr-Jun)	March 1	April 1
Summer (Jul-Sep)	June 1	Jul 1
Fall (Oct-Dec)	September 1	October 1
Winter (Jan-Mar)	December 1	January 1

**Submission topic ideas:**

Save the date future events, successful fundraisers, new/ongoing community projects. Memorials, editorial/noteworthy member authored articles pertaining to gardening, floral design and community involvement. Any topic that would appeal to our club members.

***Our mission is to provide education, resources, and networking opportunities for our members and to promote the love of gardening, floral design, civic and environmental responsibility.***