

CENTRAL REGION GARDEN CLUBS, INC.

Theme: Tree Planting Extravaganza March 2024 Newsletter

CENTRAL REGION DIRECTOR - Lynne Ehnert

Central Region Tree Planting Extravaganza - Central Region Project 2023-2025

With the Winter weather that has recently hit the Midwest, I was thinking about how nice it would be in spring to be in my garden. Instead, we are left wondering what kind of changes will need to be made in spring to our garden. Many of you were hit hard by very heavy snow. Some areas had many trees where branches were broken. We hope our trees will make it. If not, we may have many trees that need replacement. The bright side is that we have an opportunity to plant replacement trees in spring. Please remember to count each tree planted toward the Central Region Tree Extravaganza. While we do not want to have to replace the trees, we do need trees for a healthy environment. It also gives us a chance to try growing a different kind of tree. Please track the trees you replace.



We also had a loss to our Central Region Board. Judy Newman was our Life Membership Chairmen. With her passing, all will miss her. Thankfully, Nan McCabe from Lake St. Louis MO has volunteered to step in as Life Membership Chairman. If you are interested in purchasing a Life Membership, please contact Nan McCabe, 5 Ridge Oak Court, Lake St. Louis, MO 63387. Her email address is njkm55@gmail.com.

In reviewing the records received we have on file for Life Memberships, there were eight new Central Region Lifetime Memberships in 2023 bringing the total memberships to 338. A Central Region Life Membership shall be accorded to any individual by submitting a one-time contribution of \$50.00 to the Central Region Life Members Chairman. There are Life Membership Pins available for \$10.00, and Gold Star Memberships can be added for an additional \$25.00. Any contributions are allocated to the Scholarship Operating Fund. Central Region Life Members are delegates (giving them voting privileges) at the Central Region Convention.

The financials came out for the Central Region Convention. I am happy to report that financially it was successful, and we were able to make a profit of \$2,725.16. A big thank you once again to

Marlene Marolf and Walt Reemtsma for all their hard work to make the 2023 convention a success.

As we close the books from one convention, I look forward to the beginning of the next. Sarah Lambaria and Diane Dawson have been working hard to get the details ready for the 2024 convention. I just recently signed the contract for the next convention which will be held in O'Fallon, IL from 10/17/24-10/19/24. So, mark your calendars - we look forward to getting together at the 2024 Convention!

Have you been on the National Garden Clubs, Inc. site recently? There is a new link on the top drop-down menu – “NGC Path of Success.” I am not sure if you are aware, but NGC headquarters in St. Louis’ property abuts the beautiful Missouri Botanical Garden. There is no fence dividing the two properties, and visitors to the garden tend to wander onto NGC’s property. NGC decided to capitalize on having such a beautiful neighbor and has recently begun renting their property out for functions – their first event having been a wedding last fall and with additional events scheduled in 2024. The “Path of Success” undertaking serves several purposes - to utilize NGC’s physical assets more fully, to create a new revenue stream, and to educate the public about NGC garden clubs and our mission. The project includes creating a ¼-mile walking path on NGC’s grounds allowing the Missouri Botanical Gardens visitors and other members of the public to view NGC’s beautiful gardens and trees, and adding signage to educate visitors about the rich history and purpose of National Garden Clubs, Inc. You can purchase a paver for the new pathway as an individual or as a club, inscribed with your or your club’s name, etc. For more information visit <https://gardenclub.org/ngc-path-success>.

Lynne Ehnert
Central Region Director

Thank you all for all you do in your club, your state, and our region.
Working together, we achieve more. Let us know if we can assist in any way.

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Theme: Tree Planting Extravaganza!

Dates to Remember

**Central Region Convention is at O'Fallon, IL
October 17-19, 2024**

**National Garden Clubs, Inc. Annual Convention
is in Denver, CO, June 2-5, 2024**



National Garden Club Schools in Central Region or Online in other regions.

Environmental School

Course 1

Mar. 18-21, 2024, St. Louis, MO, (Zoom, afternoon)

Course 2

Mar. 11-12, 2024, (virtual via Zoom, registration deadline Feb. 26th)

Sept. 27-28, 2024, Sheboygan, WI, (in person)

Course 3

Sept. 19-20, 2024, Derby, CT, (virtual, via Zoom)

Course 4

Apr. 12-13, 2024, Manistee, MI, (in person)

Gardening School

Course 1

Mar. 28-29, 2024, Streamwood, IL, (in person)

Course 2

Apr. 25-27, 2024, Chelmsford, MA, Hybrid

Course 3

Mar.4-5, 2024, Athens, GA, (virtual, via Zoom)

Course 4

In person, out of CR area

Landscape Design School

Course 1

Mar. 13-14, 2024, Athens, GA, (virtual, via Zoom)

Mar. 26-27, 2024, Clinton, CT, (virtual via Zoom)

Course 2

In person, out of CR area

Course 3

Apr. 2-3, 2024, Athens, GA, (virtual via Zoom)

Course 4

May 29-30, 2024, Athens, GA, (virtual via Zoom)

As of this date current Flower Show schools are all in person, but out of the Central Region.

Go to our NGC website, Schools section, to register for any of the above classes.

Zoom opens up lots of opportunities to become a consultant or refresh credentials as a consultant.

Lucy Valitchka

Central Region NGC Schools Chairman

Diane Dawson - President of the Garden Clubs of Illinois 2023-2025

Theme: "Let's Grow Together Illinois: Plant America"



Please come and join us at our state convention in Springfield, IL April 21st and 22nd. Registration is located on our website: <https://www.gardenclubsofillinois.org>. There are many tourist attractions in Springfield, so come early and stay late!

One of our state projects, Children's Woodlands Garden at the Lincoln Memorial Garden is a tour option. This is a garden designed to be a natural play area for children, where families can explore, learn, and have fun with nature.

The garden will feature elements, all natural materials, such as a simulated stream, a waterlog tunnel, a sensory table, a water pump, a natural musical instrument, a foot bridge, and observation area, and an outdoor sink and log climbing structures. For those of you who attended the Central Region convention in Iowa, this garden is NOT a playground.

It is located on the grounds of the Lincoln Memorial Garden, which is a 100 acre woodland and prairie garden in Springfield, IL. It was designed by renowned landscape architect, Jens Jensen, as a living memorial to Abraham Lincoln. The native plants would be what Lincoln would have seen in the three states he lived in: Illinois, Indiana, and Kentucky.

Illinois garden clubs have supported this youth project by making it a part of our mission bylaws. The \$25,000 seed money was a spark that ignited the community to support the garden financially. Several local Springfield families and businesses provide most of the funding.

Let's grow together Illinois: Plant America is our theme. This theme not only focuses on the need to keep growing membership, but the need to unify as a state. We are a long state and are comprised of North, Central, and Southern clubs and can accomplish our goals by pulling together, and celebrating our diversity.

Illinois is proud to be hosting the Central Region Convention in 2024 in O'Fallon, Illinois, October 17 - 19. Contracts have been signed, and we are actively planning educational and fun events to support the Central Region theme. We hope to see all of you there.

Diane Dawson

Illinois State President

Catherine Williams - President of Federated Garden Clubs of Minnesota 2023-2025 Renaissance Festival in Minnesota is 50 Years Strong 2023



Sunset is my favorite time of day. The calming finish to each day was seeing the vibrant evening colors during sunset spill across the wetlands from my home as a child. Sunset is my favorite sky to paint as well.

“Sunrises and sunsets trigger significant increases in awe. Research indicates that feeling a sense of awe can improve mood, enhance positive social behavior, and increase positive emotions, all of which have a positive impact on health and wellbeing. It also decreases inflammation.” (AJ Smalley & MP White; Beyond blue-sky Thinking; Journal of Environmental Psychology, Vol. 86, 2023 – <https://www.sciencedirect.com>)

Being in nature and among trees has been good for our well-being. Is it any wonder that researchers found *“a significant positive association between seeing or hearing birds and improved mental well-being? The benefits continued through the day even if not hearing any other birds. Ryan Hammoud, PhD candidate at the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience at King’s College London and author of the study called it a “time-lasting link.”*

Another study “found that listening to short – just six-minute – audio clips of birdsong could reduce feelings of anxiety, depression and paranoia in healthy participants.” Hammoud, who was not involved in the second study said: “That’s a very, very nice finding.” “Participants who listened to more diverse birdsong (featuring the acoustic acrobatics of eight species) reported a decrease in depressive symptoms in addition to significant decreases in feelings of anxiety and paranoia.”

*When you go outside – **Be aware** of the birds and their singing. **Be curious** about what bird it is. **Be involved** in watching them, feeding them, and get involved with a group of birdwatchers. **Be present**, feel the joy. (source: Minneapolis Star and Tribune Sunday, May 28, 2023)*

You will never regret your time spent in nature observing, listening, and moving among the great world outside. Need ideas? Richard Louv has gathered a guide of 500 ways to enrich our health and happiness by immersing ourselves in nature, taking in vitamin N. (**The Essential Guide to a Nature Rich Life: Vitamin N** by Richard Louv)

Minnesota’s April 2024 Annual Meeting will emphasize “The Healing Power of Nature.” Gardeners have long steeped themselves in nature every day. Be mindful of your need to be amongst plants, birds, and trees. Can’t get outside? Create a container garden of plants on your patio; or even gather an indoor garden of house plants. Take in your need for vitamin N. Better yet, share it with your family, friends, and community.

Catherine Williams
Minnesota State President

Jayne Kesler - President of The Garden Club of Indiana, Inc. 2023-2025
Theme: "Plant Trees for Hope"



Anticipation is the word which best describes
The Garden Club of Indiana's clubs at this time of year.
We can never know about the days to come
But we think about them anyway

Now that I've got you humming along, let me share what TGCI is anticipating. We are thumbing through seed catalogs and the rich colors bring to life the flowers we want in our community club wagons, beds, and hanging baskets. Which flowers do we plant to cut for our bouquets, for our Meals on Wheels, and our National Garden Club Week community gifts? Which seeds to start to add to our perennials in our annual plant sales?

We are anticipating the wonderful programs we have set for our clubs, the field trips to gardens, nature centers, and the dedications of at least two new Blue Star Memorials. In all of those activities, we are anticipating visits with our treasured friends and in hopes of making new friendships with new members.

The Garden Club of Indiana's 93rd Annual State Convention is a top anticipation for our members. Our Central West District has planned a convention celebrating "Our Tree Mendous Earth" on April 16-17, 2024. Turkey Run State Park is a perfect destination to celebrate and learn more about our beautiful state. Turkey Run State Park is the second state park. The park offers the chance to explore deep, sandstone ravines, walk along stands of aged forest, and enjoy the scenic views along Sugar Creek.

A horticulture specialty show will begin the festivities of the convention. A gallery talk will follow the judging of the show. Interesting speakers will introduce our members to some new and exciting topics and challenge each of us to try new things in our gardens and to plant new trees in our communities.

We anticipate learning the names and schools of our 2024 scholarship winners, and we look forward to meeting and learning about the adventures of our past scholarship winners at our Scholarship Luncheon on the last day of convention. Our hearts are filled with gratitude as we hear them speak, and we know that we have helped a young person make our world a better place.

So you can see that we are filled with **Anticipation** as we head into spring.

As Carly Simon said, "cause these are the good old days
These are the good old days.
These are the good old days."

Jayne Kesler
Indiana State President

Beverly Wattenbarger, President of the Garden Clubs of Missouri, Inc. 2023-2025
Theme: “Plant America: Leading the Way for a Greener Missouri”



After a challenging winter here in Missouri, our clubs are ready for a busy spring and summer. The members of our Central District in Columbia, Missouri have been busy preparing for our 91st Annual State Convention, May 6-9, 2023. They will have informative Speakers, educational Seminars, fun Tours and a Design Program, along with the business of the Federation. FGCM will be honored to have our Central Region Director, Lynn Ehnert, attending our convention this year.

The chairman of the FGCM Blue Star/Gold Star Memorial Markers, Margie Wild, reported that Missouri has dedicated 110 Blue Star Memorial Markers and one has been purchased to be dedicated this year to bring our total to 111. We have dedicated 9 Gold Star Memorial Markers and one has been purchased to be dedicated this year as well, which brings that total to 10.

The greater St. Louis Judges Council will host a two-day hands-on NGC Design Type Workshop, June 24-25, 2024, with Madelyn Hucker, NGC Design Instructor Emeritus. It will be educational and a fun way to learn about the different types of designs.

Our “Teaching Missouri’s Children to Plant America” grant awarded grants to five clubs for a total of \$1,290.46 in 2023 and are looking forward to many more this year. Working with our youth is so important.

Wishing everyone a happy Spring and productive Summer.

Beverly Wattenbarger
Missouri State President

Youth Recycling

It is important that we introduce the importance of recycling to children at a young age. One way to do this is to provide books that teach this concept. Consider donating a selection of such books to your local library or elementary school. A few of these books are listed in this article.

For the preschooler to age six a book titled I Can Save the Earth by Allison Inches educates children on what they can do to be more eco-friendly. The book itself is made from recycled materials.

A book for children aged four to eight is titled Can I Recycle This by Jennie Romer. This book is an adaptation of a book for adults and answers questions about recycling.

For students from age’s four to eleven, the book titled What a Waste by Jess French teaches students the ways our habits impact the earth. This book is part of a three book series titled Protect the Planet.

This Class Can Save the Planet by Stacy Tornio is a book that provides students ideas to help them have an impact on the environment with ideas they can implement in their own homes and classrooms. It is appropriate for students from kindergarten through middle school.

These are just a few of the many resources available to impress upon our youth the importance of recycling.

Sue Fuhrman
Youth Recycling Chairman

Invasive Plants

The Colorful, Destructive Spotted Lanternfly Bug

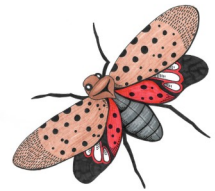
“Spotted Lanternfly has been inching closer to the Midwest and Illinois for close to a decade” said Jerry Costello II, Illinois Department of Agriculture Director.

The spotted Lanternfly is a plant hopper that has decimated many kinds of fruit, ornamental and woody trees since it was first detected in Pennsylvania in 2014. Since then, the bug has been confirmed in 11 states.

First found in the U.S. in southeastern Pennsylvania in 2014, SLF has continued to spread throughout the eastern U.S. and recently into the Midwest. Confirmed identifications of SLF have been recorded in Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa and Ohio, in addition to some eastern and southeastern states.

The primary hosts of spotted Lanternfly are tree of heaven and grapes. However, in Korea, it has been recorded attacking 65 different species; many of these same genera occur in the Midwest including apple, grape, willow, oak, walnut, silver maple, common lilac, poplar, eastern white pine, and rose. To learn more about this invasive insect go to the following link showing photos of the insect in various stages.

<https://www.iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Forestry/Forest-Health/Spotted-Lanternfly>
Keep a watchful eye out for it in your area and report any sightings to your DNR.



Jane Buck
Invasive Species Chairman

Nancy Ryan - President of the Garden Clubs of Michigan - 2023-2025 **Theme: “Grow, Share, Connect Michigan”**



We kicked off our Monday Member Meetings via Zoom in November. Our line up for 2024 includes Robin Pokorski, Author of “Membership Matters” in February and NGC President Brenda Moore in March. We will conclude this series in April with “Gardening with Purpose” which kicks off our statewide initiative in support of the Feed America Project.

Our state scholarship process is wrapping up with at least one scholarship being provided at each of the state’s public universities. Our named scholarship program launched in 2022 and has continued to grow and our Sustaining Scholarships Investment Policy started in 2017 continues to generate returns to support the program.

Our districts are busy planning their 2024 Spring District Meetings which will be held in April and May. The 2024 Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc. annual conference “Smitten with the Mitten Shore to Shore” will be held on June 10-11, 2024, on the riverfront in Bay City. We have invited our Regional Director Lynne Ehnert to attend.



Nancy Ryan
Michigan State President

Garden Therapy/Healing



The Power of the Garden



Horticultural Therapy: the engagement of a person in the garden and plant-based activities. It encourages creativity and provides an outlet for stress and emotions.

It may not look like spring, but spring is on the way. Everyone is itching to start planning and prepping. What kind of activities do you do in early spring to engage in horticultural therapy?

Activities: seed planting, propagation, and transplanting.

All three have an educational element, but also serve as meaningful therapeutic activities.

Seed planting: focuses on the life cycle of a seed. Therapeutic significance - seed germination activities allow horticulture therapy to connect the importance of seed germination and plant care to the care of oneself or others.

Plant Propagation: plant propagation is another activity for a group of any size or ability. Therapeutic significance - it's used to teach a valuable lesson in a healthcare setting. Taking something old or overgrown to start something fresh and new.

Transplanting: activity transplanting can greatly enhance the garden's immediate beauty while increasing ownership among participants. Therapeutic significance – feeling of ownership or pride over a space greatly enhances success of a garden.

Shared from Clare Johnson & Lynda Perry

Linda Dingee
Garden Therapy/Healing

