

Central Region Director's Message

“Promote Potential Progress with a Positive Perspective”

As we enter the busy holiday season and plan for the upcoming year and beyond, I encourage everyone to take time to reflect on our achievements and maintain balance in our commitments. This approach will support our productivity moving forward. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Wisconsin for hosting an outstanding Central Region Convention. The event was well attended, and I would especially like to thank Lynne Ehnert and Kitty Larkin, Convention Chairpersons, along with all the Wisconsin garden club members for their exceptional efforts in making the convention a success.

We were truly,

“Perceptively Connected.”



CR Convention attendees listening and learning on how to take better photographs with our phone, presented by Arabelle Dane.

NGC Central Region ***promotes potential progress*** within each club; we urge our clubs whether large or small to start a new project for the 2025-2027 term.

The project itself can also be large or small. It simply needs to be a new project your club began after June 1, 2025.

Central Region and Central Region Clubs will recognize your efforts and progress. Simply go to the website and seek out information on the Central Region Unified Project under Projects and Awards. Send an article about your club's project to the Central Region newsletter editor and fill out the application form and send it electronically to Carol Yee before September 16, 2027.

All successful applicants will receive a certificate of recognition. In the small club category, up to 20 members, there is a \$75.00 and \$25.00 award. In clubs over 20 members there is also a \$75.00 and \$25.00 award. We were able to increase the amounts CR will be giving due to an additional donation from Jody Meyer in Indiana. Thank you, Jodi! If others would like to donate to this Unified Project, we can increase our potential by simply contacting the CR Director.

Wishing you all a *Happy New Year* and I look forward to visiting your State in 2026.

Happy New Year !

Check out the CR website:
www.ngccentralregion.com

“PLANT AMERICA: Progress is Possible”

Director - Rene` Lynch



NGC Central Region Unified Project

PLANT AMERICA: Your Garden Club Makes Progress Possible!



“Each club is different in its own way, but we all value nature and our environment, education, gardening, floral design and our community. Clubs do amazing projects and deserve to be recognized!”

The goal of Rene Lynch’s NGC Central Region Director’s Unified Project is to recognize Central Region garden clubs for progress on new projects during her term: 2025-2026: It may be any new project or one that focuses on National Garden Club’s new project **“PLANT AMERICA: Red, White and Blue”** for our nation’s 250th Birthday in 2026.

Garden clubs qualify for the NGC Central Region Unified Project award by submitting an article (with photos) about their project to the Central Region Newsletter. After publication, the article and the NGC Central Region Unified Project Award application form must be submitted for review. Four clubs will be selected to receive recognition and a monetary award for outstanding new projects at the 2026 NGC Central Region Convention. We’re looking forward to hearing about your club projects throughout Central Region, so please submit articles to the CR newsletter!

Two \$25.00 recognition awards for clubs with 20 members or less and two \$25.00 recognition awards for clubs with over 20 members will be given. Each club that applies for the award will receive a certificate of recognition. Rene Lynch, NGC Central Region Director, encourages all clubs to make PROGRESS POSSIBLE. “Let’s do it together”.

Carol Yee

NGC Central Region Unified Project Award Chairman

mscyee@hotmail.com



NGC Central Region Unified Project Award Application Form

"Plant America: Your Garden Club Makes Progress Possible!"

Applicant Information (DEADLINE)for application:

Please provide the following details for your application:

- Date Submitted: _____
- Name of Garden Club, town/village/city and state as it should appear on the award certificate:

- Contact Person: _____
- Telephone: _____
- Email: _____

Submission Guidelines

To support environmental sustainability, all members are encouraged to submit their entries electronically rather than using additional natural resources.

If you are unable to send your entry electronically, please contact the Central Region Unified Project Chair before submitting. For manual submissions, please adhere to these guidelines:

- 1-Include a brief summary of the project and include articles and photos submitted to the Central Region Newsletter.
- 2-For manual submissions, attach photos to the pages. For electronic submissions, insert photos within the document.
- 3-Keep a copy of your application for your records, as applications will not be returned.

Submission Instructions

Send the completed application electronically to:

NGC Central Region Unified Project Award Chairman: Carol Yee

Email: mscyee@hotmail.com

Questions? Contact Carol Yee by email or phone: (708) 927-9937

If you must submit your application by mail, send it to:

NGC Central Region Unified Project Award Chairman

5224 Grand Ave.

Western Springs, IL 60558



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Rene Lynch

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Theme: PLANT AMERICA:
Progress is Possible.

Dates to Remember

TGCI 94th Annual Convention
April 14-15, 2026 - Blue Chip Casino
Michigan City, IN

NGC Convention
May 4-6, 2026, in St. Louis, Missouri

www.ngccentralregion.com

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

Environmental School

Course 1 Jan.13-15, 2026, St. Augustine, FL, (Virtual Course)

Course 2 Nov. 3-4, 2025, Hickory Corners, MI (In-Person Classroom)

Course 3 Mar. 16-19, 2026, St. Louis, Mo, (Virtual Course)

Apr. 6-7, 2026, Augusta, MI, In-Person Classroom)

Course 4 Nov. 20-21, 2025, Ft. Myers, FL, (Virtual course)

Nov. 2-3, 2026, Augusta, MI (In-Person Classroom)

Gardening School

Course 1 Nov. 17-18, 2025, Fairfax, VA (Hybrid Course)

Course 2 None available

Course 3 April 17-18, 2026 Saywer, MI, (In-Person Course)

Course 4 Feb. 9-11, 2026, New Smyrna Beach, FL. (Virtual Course)

Sept.18-19, 2026, Sawyer, MI (In-Person Course)

Landscape Design School

Course 1 In person, out of CR area

Course 2 Out of area

Course 3 Out of area

Course 4 Feb. 23-25, 2026, Louisville, OH (Virtual Course)

Flower Show School

All classes in person, out of Central Region area

Go online type - NationalGardenClubs.org. Click on the website home page at the top of the screen. Go to the NGC website Schools section to register for any of the above classes.

Zoom offers lots of opportunities to become a consultant or refresh credentials as a consultant. I am always happy to receive comments on virtual or in person schools.

Lucy Valitchka

lmvalitchka@gmail.com

NGC Schools Chairman

Indiana Presidential Theme for 2025-2027: Plant America with Natives.



The vibrant colors of autumn have turned beige, and we have experienced our first snow of the season. As we gather our thoughts from this year and move forward with the holiday season, it is a time to reflect on the happenings of The Garden Club of Indiana, Inc.

The CR Convention in Wisconsin was a grand finale for me, as I had finished visiting the seven districts in Indiana the week before the convention. The Osthoff Resort was a welcome oasis for a bit of quiet time. It was good to see old friends and make new friends at the convention. The speakers were exceptional and enjoyed by all.

However, I found the business meetings to be disorganized. Being a business major, I expect things to be in order and move forward in an orderly fashion. Back in Indiana, I am preparing for our December board meeting where we will be reviewing standing rules to bring them up to date with the times and social media.

In November, we attended a Scholarship Auction sponsored by the Four Winds Garden Club of the North Central District of TGCI. The club has held this auction for thirty years. It was a pleasure to attend and to know that more than two thousand dollars was raised for the 2025-2026 Scholarship year. As president of TGCI, I will have a bit of a breather in January from TGCI related business, but I will be meeting with my local garden club to plan programs, budgets, and fund raisers for 2026.

In February, the Scholarship Committee will begin interviews for the 2026-2027 school year. We are looking forward to talking with the applicants and finding out about their future plans. In March, we will start "gearing-up" for the 94th Annual State Convention to be held at the Blue-Chip Casino in Michigan City, IN. The Northwest District of TGCI has been hard at work planning and fund raising for this convention.

I will be looking forward to spring and continuing to promote the NGC President's theme for 2026- Plant America: Red, White, and Blue! I will also be promoting my theme for Plant America: With Natives! I have had a good response to my theme, and I find that more of the programs that I attend are addressing the need to PLANT NATIVE!

I will end with this quote to promote my theme:

Growing a natural habitat garden is also one of the most important things each of us can do to help restore a little order to a disordered world.....Ken Druse

Wanda Zahrt
Indiana State President

Plant America - Grow, Share and Connect to a Brighter Future



Happy Fall! I am so excited for another beautiful Fall in Michigan. What an active summer MGC has seen! Clubs and Members have hosted Flower Shows, Garden Walks, Plant Sales, garden dedications and Blue & Gold Star Memorial dedications. I've been fortunate to visit many of these events and have enjoyed seeing many beautiful sites in Michigan and meeting many of our MGC members and community members from across the state.

All 8 of the Michigan Garden Club Districts held engaging, inspiring and festive fall meetings in September and October. Each of these wonderful events will spawn creative ideas as we plan to host the Central Region Convention in the Fall of 2026. Our 134 clubs are truly engaged in the 2025-2027 focus on youth. Some highlights of the summer to illustrate youth activities have been the inspiring youth floral exhibit in the Tri-Cities Garden Club Flower Show, "A Gardener's Library," in Spring Lake, the creative and inclusive youth exhibit at the Marshall Area Garden Club Flower Show, "Palette of Blooms," in Marshall, and the Dedication of the Children's Sensory Garden at the Botanic Garden at Historic Barns Park, in Traverse City. These are prime examples of incorporating the 2025-2027 MGC theme and focus.

As this term progresses, I will be watching for the many creative and fun ways that our MGC clubs promote, educate, include and inspire youth. The MGC project, Gardening with Purpose, is our way to address the food insecurity in Michigan. Our county-by-county directory of food pantries and a newly revised report form are on the MGC website, and we encourage every member to donate to food pantries in their area, and then report the donation through this form. Food drives were held at each of the fall district meetings, and I look forward to tallying up the statewide donations. This year, our clubs reported updates to their rosters through our newly created database process, with a simple online option to pay dues. This process was well received, and we are currently updating our Constant Contact register to include all member updates. Sincere thanks go to our MGC Treasurer, MGC Financial Assistant and MGC Member Services Administrator for their dedicated efforts throughout the summer to accept, document, assist clubs, and follow up on these updates and payments.

Check the MGC website and mark your calendars for the fabulous NGC schools that Michigan will host in 2026: * Gardening School Course #3 - April 17-18, 2026, Sawyer, MI. Watch for Registration in February 2026.

Thank you, River Valley Garden Club, and District 3B for your continued support of Gardening School.

- Landscape Design School - A new Series is being planned in Traverse City, Course #1 is scheduled for April 23-24, 2026.
- Environmental School Course in Hickory Corners, MI mark your calendars for course #3 April 6-7, 2026.
- Thank you, Chula Vista Garden Club, and District 3A for your continued support of Environmental School.

Michigan State President

Until next time...Happy Gardening!

Lisa

Minnesota President's Message by Catherine Williams
"Alive and Growing in the Environment We Live In- PLANT AMERICA"



Fall is a time of reflection for me. I treasure the friendships built around garland making, floral design, and planning for the future of gardening in our area of Minnesota through Federated Garden Clubs of Minnesota, Inc..

Nature is such a centerpiece of my life that it has been a pleasure to bring programs like the Healing Power of Nature, Monarch Butterfly Farming, and Biodiversity in the Garden to our attention. During our annual meeting we emphasized soil enrichment, discovered new ways to protect garden plants and wildlife, and viewed orchids as special plants we love. It is through rubbing shoulders with experts in their field that we continue to grow and stretch ourselves adapting to changes in our environment.

The FGCM Executive Board supported the development of a National Garden Club (NGC) sponsored Environmental School. Rene Lynch is certified to facilitate this on the Minnesota and national stage. Rene will also be the Director of Central Region for the coming two years. You go, Rene!

Minnesota gardeners had community garden success in Richfield and Edina. Richfield has given up to 1,000 pounds of food to their local food shelf. They have had a community garden for over three years. Another club has taken gardening to their local school. It is so important to include children in the future of gardening.

Each garden club has their own take on garden tours. For several years Diggers hired a bus and took 50 gardeners to a number of gardens in the surrounding metro area. Bittersweet in Lake City, MN has toured the "she sheds" in six of their local gardens.

A special shout out to our Renaissance committee and all garland makers for taking part in the Renaissance Fair held each October. So many give time and sweat equity to support our fundraiser for FGCM. Through their efforts we are able to give the monetary scholarships, grants, and awards to students and member clubs each year.

Two of our clubs, Bloomington Garden Club and Garden Circle of Friends, applied and received grants of \$1,000 each for community gardens including pollinator gardens. As in any community, we have families of hungry bunnies. Sometimes they win, sometimes we do. They teach us patience and develop a willingness to learn.

Minnesota has put blue star markers in our four new national cemeteries. Our Federated leadership has been asked to take part in each of the dedications of the markers during the opening of each cemetery. We have one more in the planning.

The National Garden Clubs' conventions opened new ways for FGCM members to connect to National Garden Clubs through people, awards and grants, and special schools and symposiums. There is a wealth of knowledge through NGC, and yes, even money, out there to assist us in our endeavors here in our Minnesota garden clubs.

Catherine Williams

Minnesota State President

“Flourishing to our 100th Anniversary 2027 - PLANT AMERICA”



On the road again" was my life this past fall as I traveled throughout Illinois. Visiting at club/district meetings, attending several Blue Star or Gold Star dedications, and lastly a trip to Central Region Convention in Wisconsin concluded a very busy schedule. Total mileage was over 2500 miles; the weather was mild and scenery was beautiful in the fall colors.

The best part of these journeys was learning how active our GCI clubs have been this year. Our Blue Star/Gold Star marker program has increased now to 157 and the State's 6th Gold Star was dedicated on Veteran's Day along with the 157th Blue Star in Pinckneyville, IL. More Blue Star markers will be added in 2026.

One exciting new 2025 project I would like to share is the 'mini-tree' project using the Miyawaki method. The Algonquin Garden Club members in northern Illinois planted more than 200 native trees, shrubs, and plants in a densely packed, 600-square foot area.

The project started two years ago after members heard about a book named *"Mini-forest Revolution Using the Miyawaki Method to Rapidly Rewild the World."* The donated land for the plantings is in a nature preserve and grants of over \$6000 helped bring this project to fruition.

Since vegetation is planted closely together, growth is expected to skyrocket. In about three years, the 2-foot high trees may be 10 feet tall, which will help restore the tree canopy coverage. Everything planted will provide either a berry or a flower for native birds and pollinators. These are some of the worthy goals that club members hope will happen.

I would like to add a "Thank-You" to the Wisconsin Garden Club Federation organizers of this Central Region Convention. Rene Lynch, our Central Region Director, Lynne Ehnert, convention chairman, and many other WGCF members planned for wonderful learning and fun opportunities at this convention. WGCF president, Joe Powelka, was a gracious host as well.

Diane Greenwalt

Illinois State President

Theme: PLANT AMERICA: Nature's Beauty in Our Backyards



Missouri has 59 clubs and 1389 members. The Missouri eight Fall District Meetings just concluded. The new district officers were installed for the next term. Reporting of Club Presidents expressed just how active our clubs are with the goals and visions of Missouri, Central Region, and National Garden Clubs.

Missouri clubs have hosted two symposiums this year. Clubs have dedicated two Gold Star Family Memorials. Two of our clubs were awarded the Plant America Grant from National this year. Missouri awarded scholarships to college students as well as one receiving an award from National and one from Central Region.

Missouri clubs are now planning for the 2026 year's activities, youth and public education, civic beautification, community projects, flower shows and more for their year-books. Clubs are also planning for related activities for the "PLANT AMERICA-CELEBRATE AMERICA'S 250TH BIRTHDAY BY PLANTING RED, WHITE AND BLUE".

My Theme, "PLANT AMERICA: Nature's Beauty in Our Backyards" is also being implemented within the Missouri club agendas. Backyards may be your personal backyard or a local community backyard garden. By cultivating native plants, removing invasive plants and not using pesticides can transform backyards into a nature sanctuary enhancing local ecosystems and supports biodiversity.

I'm anxious to see what wonderful happenings will evolve in 2026 around the State of Missouri.

**Tanya Stanley
Missouri State President**

Theme: “Our Pollinators Still Need Help”



I was at the Central Region meeting in October along with Terri Ewers and Peg Egertsen from Iowa. I had a wonderful time and the Osthoff Resort was great. We will vote on the new Central Region Director from Iowa at our state meeting in June 2026.

We have 6 Districts. Six of the nine Iowa student judges who have completed the four Flower Show School courses are now new accredited judges. Our state meeting in 2026 will be June 16th, with a Flower Show on June 15th. This will be centrally located in Jefferson, Iowa and this should make it easier for more members to attend.

Our flower show will be America the Beautiful, a Petite Show. It will be fun to work with the red, white, and blue. I intended to follow my theme with a show about pollinators, but when I realized this was the 250th anniversary of the United States, I changed the titles. So I will have a pollinator flower show for 2027.

I chose the theme “Our Pollinators Still Need Help” because it is something I am familiar with, and we don’t want to forget them. I live in the country and have really noticed the small number of Monarch butterflies and some birds. Check out our website:

<https://federatedgardenclubsofiowa.com>

Shirley Wolf
Iowa State President

Blue Star and Gold Star Families Memorial Markers

Following our appointment by Central Region Director René Lynch at the May 2025, NGC Convention in Charleston, South Carolina, these Co-Chairs were busy with Blue Star/Gold Star Families Memorial Markers Dedications.

Three Dedications were held in Wisconsin:

- May 15 – Lake Wissota Garden Club, Gold Star Families Memorial By-Way Marker to accompany the Blue Star Memorial By-Way Marker that was Dedicated in 2024 at Ray's Beach in Chippewa Falls;
- May 15 – Botany Belles and Beaus Garden Club, Windmill Park, Baldwin;
- May 22 – Wisconsin Garden Club Federation-Milwaukee District, Blue Star Memorial By-Marker on the Hank Aaron State Trail in West Allis.

Four Dedications were held in Illinois:

- June 14 – McHenry Garden Club, Blue Star Memorial By-Way Marker, Veteran's Park;
- September 6 – Bloomington-Normal Garden Club, Blue Star Memorial Marker intersection of Route 66 and N 1900 East Road near I-55, Exit 171, Towanda;
- September 28, National Gold Star Mothers and Family Day - Marion Garden Club, Gold Star Families Memorial By-Way Marker at VFW Post 1301, Marion; and
- November 11, Veterans Day – Pinckneyville Garden Club, Blue Star/Gold Star Families By-Way Markers at 410 Fairgrounds Road, Pinckneyville.

While it is likely that other dedications were held this year in Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Indiana, and Iowa, we did not receive notification of those events. As mentioned last term, we certainly want to attend your dedications if we are available, so please tell us about them.

We are in the process of contacting CR State Presidents to request contact information for their Blue/Gold Star Chairs so we can personally inform them of our appointment as Co-Chairs of this committee. State Chairs, if you would like to avoid the rush, feel free to contact us now before our 2026 calendar begins filling up; our contact information follows.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve on this Committee.

Linda and Chuck McCafferty, Co-Chairs
Central Region Blue Star and Gold Star
Families Memorial Markers Committee
Lkmcmm@gmail.com
608.837.2675



Invasive Oriental Bittersweet Vines (*Celastrus orbiculatus*)

The beautiful orange or/yellow capsules containing red berries of the bittersweet vines are coveted for wreaths and fall decorations. But, before you use some, here are some things you need to know.

Those beautiful Oriental bittersweet berries can cause significant problems to other plants should they find their way into the environment. Oriental bittersweet was introduced from Eastern Asia in the 1860's and brought to the US for ornamental purposes. What should you do if you have this invasive vine and berries in your wreaths or arrangements?

Tivon Feeley, Iowa Forest Health Program Leader says, "burn them". Seeds on wreaths can stay viable for many weeks after being cut. Birds may eat the berries, dispersing the seeds. Once thrown away, seeds on wreaths may enter the soil and germinate. Oriental Bittersweet has a rapidly growing underground root system. It is extremely difficult to eliminate once established.

How do you tell the difference between the invasive Oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*) and the American native bittersweet (*Celastrus scandens*)?

American bittersweet has orange capsules around red fruits; Oriental bittersweet has yellow capsules around red fruits.

American bittersweet flowers and fruits are only found at the terminal ends of stems, Oriental bittersweet flowers and fruits are found all along the stem at leaf axils.

Leaf shape is highly variable and not a good characteristic for distinguishing American from Oriental bittersweet. Vines wrap around the tree as they grow towards the top. Once they reach the canopy they start growing back towards the ground. The weight of the vines can eventually pull down the entire tree.

Oriental bittersweet outcompetes and displaces American bittersweet to the point that Connecticut now lists the formerly common American bittersweet as a species of concern. Additionally, by hybridizing with American bittersweet, Oriental bittersweet causes further loss of American bittersweet populations. The key to managing Oriental bittersweet, like any invasive, is preventing seed production.

Do your part as a conscientious gardener and destroy the Oriental bittersweet vines and berries. Grow only American bittersweet in your garden if you wish to have it.

Jane Buck
Invasive Species Chairman

Birds and Butterflies

As of this writing, October 18, 2025, I still have many Butterflies.

Yesterday I saw two Monarchs on my zinnia's, and I am hoping they make it to their wintering sight in Mexico before it freezes.

I couldn't garden this year due to health issues but one of our daughter's came in the spring to rake out a row, 3 feet wide by 8 feet long, that our son had tilled for me and we threw out some long, that our son had tilled for me, and we threw out some zinnia seeds and Barb covered them for me. Candy came and weeded them out and Barb covered them for me. They really grew and attracted the Butterflies.

I never cut my flowers down until spring so the birds can eat the seeds. This winter I will start planning for my gardens next spring and include another large area for zinnia's.

I do have the common milkweed seeds if anyone is interested.

You can email me and I can send the milkweed seeds to you. They can be thrown out now where you would like them to grow in the spring.

Marian McNabb

Central Region Bird/ Butterfly Chairman

Suet Feed

1 cup chunky Peanut Butter

1 cup Lard,

Melt these together then add the following:

1/4 cup sugar, 1 cup Flour, 2 cups oatmeal

2 cups corn meal – Mix these 4 well, then add:

2 cups sunflower seeds, this will be thick, mix it well.

I put it right in suet feeders so it hardens.

I hang it outside from September/October until the end of April, I never use it in the summer.

***Besides using suet, I also put out Black Sunflower Seeds.
We always have a variety of birds at the feeders.***

CENTRAL REGION AWARDS FOR 2025

Hello fellow Central Region members! The Central Region Convention this year was from October 28th through October 30th at the Osthoff Hotel in Wisconsin. As usual, awards were presented during the convention. We again had some fantastic entries, and our clubs continue to be committed to our communities and the environment. I wish every entry could win an award: the events they are involved in are truly inspiring.

The following awards were given:

Award Number	Name of Award	Winner
#2	Planting Community Gardens	Kent GC-MI
#3	Sharing Gardens	Open Gate GC-MI
#4	Healing Gardens.	Cress Creek GC-IL
#5	Caring Through Garden Therapy	Crown Point GC-IN
#6	Preserving Our Land	Cress Creek GC-IL
#8	Promoting National Garden WK	Cress Creek GC-IL
#11	Honoring Vets-Blue&Gold Star	Hobart GC-IN
#12	Celebrating Life Memberships	Federated GC-MO

Please see complete award information (including runner ups and sponsors) on the website. Congratulations to all!

Our clubs continue to show the world how fun and educational it is to be in a garden club. Our world is in such need of the skills and energy that garden club members have. Let's never forget gardeners make a difference for the better. Please reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

Kerry Krokos
CR Awards Chairman

Scholarship, CR Life Membership, Gold Star Membership, Memorial/Tribute Recognition

One of the best things we do as the CRGC is to award scholarships each year to one or two worthy students who are studying some area of plant sciences. This year I received one application for the 2025 CRGC Scholarship from the state of Missouri. We awarded \$500.00 to a very worthy student, Leah Danielle Landon, a Junior at the University of Central Missouri, enrolled in the Biology Department Majoring in Ecology and Evolution, with a 3.96 GPA.

I forwarded her information onto our CR Treasurer Joe Powelka and our Central Region Director Rene Lynch to complete the process of getting the scholarship monies to Leah. I sent an article to the Central Region Editor, Gloria Notaro, to be placed in the Central Region Newsletter.

Since the CRGC Convention last year to October 2025 I have sold 5 Gold Star Membership Pins, 5 Life Memberships, and 5 Life Membership Pins. I received no requests for the Memorial and or Tribute Recognitions. Please consider purchasing one or all of these for yourself or for someone else. They truly are such a wonderful way to give a gift that blesses the receiver and blesses a student applying for a scholarship because the money to purchase these goes into the CRGC Scholarship Fund.

Life Memberships can go to anyone. A neighbor, friend, as well as a member of a garden club. Memorial/Tribute Recognitions can also go to anyone as well as garden club members. Gold Star Membership Pins are wonderful if your club has a Gold Star Memorial too.

The applications can be found on the CRGC website. While we are here at convention, please find me to make a purchase. Please use the NGC Scholarship Application for students applying for your state scholarships. You can easily send on your NGC state scholarship applications to both CRGC and NGC to apply for their scholarships as well as awarding a student with your state scholarship funds.

Life Membership \$50.00

Life Membership Pin \$10.00

Gold Star Membership Pin \$25.00

Memorial/Tribute Recognitions are any amount but recommended \$20.00.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nan McCabe

CRGC Scholarship, Life & Gold Star Membership and Memorial/Tribute Recognition Chairman 2021-2025

Garden Therapy



Jayne Kesler
Central Region
Garden Therapy Chairman
November 9, 2025
CR Newsletter

I am happy to be the 2025-2027 chairman of Garden Therapy/Healing Gardens for Central Region. The first in my list of responsibilities is to Promote Garden Therapy with the use of garden-related activities to aid in the recovery and rehabilitation of the physically and mentally challenged. I intent to extend this definition to include all people whose life would be enhanced and heal from finding strength and meaning in the vitality of Nature. This can be as simple as asserting that they believe in tomorrow by planting a seed, or that they have a sense of achievement with exercise, fresh air and contact with the earth.

I feel it is important that we learn and implement green activities for those who are suffering mental health disorders, but I also feel we need to be aware of how our gardening can help prevent us from developing mental health related issues by simultaneously boosting positive moods and reducing stress.

I plan to share stories of those who have found passion for gardening as crucial for their survival and spirit. I will include stories from famous authors, painters and everyday people who have written about their life changing experiences.

I shared my Garden Therapy display at the Central Region Convention in Elkhart Lake. In the center is an idea that I truly believe..."When the world becomes too heavy, the garden is a soft place to land." I asked members to anonymously share their personal experiences, and I was delighted to receive many shared experiences. I encourage the club members and presidents to share with me the wonderful gardening therapy activities that your clubs are doing. I will be delighted to print those in our Central Region Newsletter.

Please check your president's materials for the book *Horticultural Therapy: A Guide For All Seasons*, edited by Martha R. DeHart and Joan R. Brown, published by National Garden Clubs in 2001. It is a compilation of 45 contributors who created a wonderful text. I will share ideas gleaned from this publication as well as others I find pertinent.

Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Poster Contest

The deadline for the poster contest is coming right up, but there is still time. In fact, this is the perfect project for kids over the holidays. Posters need to be in the hands of your state chairman by January 20, 2026.

The contest is for kids in 1st through 5th grade and should be completed by the individual student artists. The posters should include either Smokey Bear or Woodsy Owl (not both) and their message. Smokey's message is "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires!" and Woodsy's message is "Lend a Hand – Care for the Land!". You might remember that Woodsy had a different message when introduced but this is his current message and is the one that should be used.

Posters are to be 11 x 17 inches but cannot be three-dimensional, computer-scanned or electronically- generated.

National Garden Club and the U.S. Forestry Department will select first-place national winners for each grade level who will receive a certificate and \$50. From those first-place national winners, one will be chosen as the national grand prize winner who will receive a certificate, a trophy, a frame copy of the winning poster at a recognition ceremony.

Need more information? My contact info is CRPoster99@hotmail.com or you can contact your state chairman. To easily access the contest information page, NGC has created the following QR code. Please share with anyone who might be interested in applying!

Cynthia Wright
Central Region District
Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl
Poster Contest Chairman

