



THE FLORIDA GARDENER

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF FLORIDA FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS, INC.

VOLUME 64 No. 3

SERVING FLORIDA SINCE 1924

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FOR THE LOVE OF
FLOWERS

SPRING 2026

Florida Federation of Garden Clubs

UPCOMING TRAVEL



Canadian Rails on Rocky Mountaineer July 19-27, 2026

A luxurious 8-night, with a 2-day Rocky Mountaineer rail adventure, from Vancouver to Calgary, featuring overnight stays in Jasper and Banff to immerse in mountain hospitality.

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FFGC Organized April 24, 1924
Federated April 25, 1925

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Member

Deep South Garden Clubs,
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MISSION STATEMENT

Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. promotes the love of gardening, floral and landscape design, civic and environmental responsibility by providing education, resources and networking opportunities for our members, youth and the community.

The Florida Gardener is a quarterly magazine designed to address the interests and promote the activities of FFGC, and communicates programming and opportunities for members—connecting members all over the state. TFG covers FFGC news, opportunities, events, district achievements, educational articles, and photographs, plus NGC news.

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Deadlines for Articles & Ads

Fall Sep 1 | Winter Dec 1
Spring Mar 1 | Summer Jun 1

SUBMISSION

TFG welcomes submissions by all FFGC members on articles related to its activities and mission. All submissions will be edited for clarity of expression, space, style compliance, grammar, syntax, structure and messaging. Photographs are encouraged, but maintain a high resolution of at least 300 dpi.

ADVERTISING

Advertising inquiries are welcome. Discounts are available to clubs and club members. Visit the *TFG* website for a media kit or contact Inger Jones for advertising information.

FFGC is a Florida 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located at 1400 S. Denning Drive, Winter Park, FL 32789

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IN THIS ISSUE

Cover Photo: Phipps
Conservatory Orchid Show by
Lisa Packard

COVER STORY

41 Flower Power!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

5 President's Message
6-14 Convention Information
15 Bylaw Changes
22 **Thanks to our 2026
Convention Sponsors**

FFGC COMMITTEES

27 Support our Beautiful
Florida (new!)
29 District Reports begin

NGC NEWS

25 Continuing Education

ARTICLES

28 How will Gen Z Change
Garden Club?

Check the FFGC calendar for meetings, workshops, schools, and some district events.

FFGC.ORG/calendar

Other Useful FFGC Links:

[FFGC.org/forms](https://ffgc.org/forms)
[FFGC.org/education](https://ffgc.org/education)
[FFGC.org/programs](https://ffgc.org/programs)
[FFGC.org/youth-gardener](https://ffgc.org/youth-gardener)
[FFGC.org/Wekiva-Youth-Camp](https://ffgc.org/Wekiva-Youth-Camp)

Useful NGC Links:

gardenclub.org/our-schools
[gardenclub.org/
plantamerica.org](https://gardenclub.org/plantamerica.org)

gardenclub.org/blue-and-gold-star-memorials

gardenclub.org/awards-and-grants

gardenclub.org/national-gardener-archives

The NGC 2026 Convention will be held in St. Louis, Missouri, on May 4-6, 2026.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Christy Linke, President

Dear Garden Club Members,

This year is going by fast, and FFGC is expanding as club membership increases. Clubs have organized flower shows, plant sales, floral design workshops, garden tours, and other activities. More than 40 people attended the Wekiva Volunteer Training—thanks to 3rd Vice President Maria Wolfe. We were delighted to host a bear expert as a speaker this year. Under Camp Chairman and 2nd Vice President Leticia Gunn, registration for Wekiva Youth Camp is already filling up quickly. Thank you to New Smyrna Beach Garden Club for hosting NGC Gardening School, Course 4 and District IV for hosting the NGC Environmental School, Course 1. I encourage all members to take advantage of these educational opportunities.

I am inviting you to join in on the fun, education, and the State Flower Show of the 99th FFGC Annual Convention. The State Flower Show, "**Once Upon a Time**" will definitely bring back childhood memories with the titles that were chosen throughout the show. We are so excited and honored to have NGC President, Donna Donnelly, as well as the Deep



South Garden Club Director, Denise Thorne, attending the convention. They will both be honored on different days so you don't want to miss that. Did I mention PJ's and pancakes! Don't forget to wear your favorite PJ's and have pancakes for breakfast with the Officers and your friends. Backdrop will be available for those memorable pictures.

The flower show is going to be one you don't want to miss. Many of us lost plants during Florida's cold snap. Don't miss out on bringing in your plants, but please don't forget to register your horticulture entries. There are still a few areas in design to be filled. The flower show schedule is online, ffgc.org. Be sure to check it out.

The early arrival dinner on Tuesday, April 14 will not disappoint. Nineteen children of all ages from the Drawdy School of Dance in Plant City

will entertain us with music and dancing. Talk about a great way to start the 99th FFGC Annual Convention!

Workshops, Vendors, 50/50, opportunity drawings, raffle baskets, fantastic speakers, floral designer Jacob McCall, and so much more. Don't forget your District Parties on Wednesday, April 15. All information is on the FFGC website.

If this is your first time attending a FFGC Convention this one is sure to have you coming back for more. The Convention team has been working hard to bring you a Convention you will not forget.

Saying that we look forward to entertaining you, educating you, laughing, eating, drinking, meet others and WOWING you at the 99th FFGC Annual Convention.

Christy

2026 CONVENTION APR 14-17



[CONVENTION REGISTRATION LINK](#)

EMBASSY SUITES BY HILTON ORLANDO LAKE BUENA VISTA SOUTH
4955 KYNGS HEATH ROAD | KISSIMMEE, FLORIDA 34746

[HOTEL RESERVATION LINK](#)

[HTTPS://BOOK.PASSKEY.COM/EVENT/51032179/OWNER/10810031/HOME](https://book.passkey.com/event/51032179/owner/10810031/home)



AN NGC MAJOR STANDARD FLOWER SHOW

The 40th Biennial State Flower Show

PRESENTED BY FFGC

Tuesday April 14 – Thursday April 16, 2026

Open and Free to the Public—Handicap Accessible

CONVENTION SCHEDULE

SCHEDULE (Subject to Change)

FFGC 99TH ANNUAL CONVENTION
And 40th Biennial State Flower Show
April 12 – April 17, 2026

Flower Show – red FFGC meetings – green

Meals – purple NOTE: Hotel Complimentary Breakfast Buffet 6:30 – 9:00 AM Daily

Sunday, Apr 12

1:00 – 5:00 PM	Flower Show Set Up by Hotel Staff Tables/Pipe & Drape by Hotel Staff	Magnolia Ballroom Magnolia
5:00 PM – Until	Flower Show Set Up by Committee Staging/Focal Area/Signage	Magnolia

Mon, Apr 13

8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	ENTRIES	Design/Botanical Arts/Education/Youth	Magnolia
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	ENTRIES	Horticulture	Cypress 5
5:00 PM – Until		Finish Set-Up - Committee	Magnolia
6:30 PM		FFGC Executive Board Dinner	TBD

Tues, Apr 14

7:00 AM – 8:00 PM	Invitational Designs Set Up	Pre Function A,B
7:00 AM – 11:59 PM	Flower/Centerpiece Workroom Open	Cypress 5
7:30 – 11:30 AM/2:00 – 4:30 PM	CONVENTION REGISTRATION OPEN	West Registration Office
8:30 AM	Judges/Clerks Meeting	Palms E
8:45 AM – Noon	Flower Show Judging	Magnolia
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM	Vendor Set up	Palms AB
9:45 – 11:00 AM	Hostess & Page Meeting combined	Cypress 1

- Doors open for lunch at 12:15
12:30 – 2:00 PM

OPTIONAL LUNCHEON
PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED
Palms C and/or D

2:00 – 4:30 PM	CONVENTION REGISTRATION OPEN	West Registration Office
2:15 PM	Flower Show Ribbon Cutting	Magnolia
2:30 – 5:00 PM	Flower Show Open	Magnolia
3:00 – 5:00 PM	FFGC Board of Directors Meeting	Palms E,F,G
3:00 – 7:00 PM	Vendors Open	Palms AB
5:30 – 6:30 PM	Complimentary Reception	Hotel Lobby/Bar

- Doors open for dinner at 6:45
7:00 – 9:30 PM

Early Arrivals Dinner/Drawdy's Dance School
Youth Dance Entertainment
Flower Show Awards
PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED
FREE ADMISSION FOR AFTER DINNER PROGRAM
Palms C, D

CONVENTION SCHEDULE

Wed, April 15

ALL DAY

7:00 AM – 11:59 PM

7:30 – 8:00 AM

7:30 – 11:30 AM/2:00 – 4:30 PM

7:30 AM – 5:00 PM

Invitational Designs on Display

Flower/Centerpiece Workroom Open

PJ's and Pancakes with FFGC Officers

CONVENTION REGISTRATION OPEN

Vendors Open

Pre-function A,B

Cypress 5

Hotel Breakfast Buffet

West Registration Office

Palms AB

8:30 AM – 12:15 PM

2:00 – 5:00 PM

Flower Show Open

Magnolia

9:00 – 10:00 AM

FFGC OFFICIAL CONVENTION OPENING
FFGC BUSINESS MEETING

Palms E,F,G

10:30 – 11:30 AM

Breakout Sessions

Wriggle Brew - Sam Baker

Cypress 1

Therapeutic Gardens – Cecilia Gayle

Cypress 2

Fun with Flowers – Emilie Palmieri

Cypress 3

10:15 AM – 12:15 PM

Hands-On Workshop

Pine Straw Baskets – Zada Mae

Cypress 4

OPTIONAL – PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

- Doors open for lunch at 12:15

12:30 – 1:45 PM

Luncheon and Program

Palms C,D

Remarks - Donna Donnelly, National Garden Clubs President

Speaker - Sammy Tedder – Native American Cultures & Native Plants

Awards Presentations - Districts 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

2:00 – 3:00 PM

FFGC BUSINESS MEETING CONTINUES

Palms E,F,G

2:00 – 4:30 PM

CONVENTION REGISTRATION OPEN

West Registration Office

3:30 – 4:30 PM

Breakout Sessions

Wriggle Brew - Sam Baker

Cypress 1

Landscape Design – Cecilia Gayle

Cypress 2

Avon Park Correctional Garden – Pat Shira

Cypress 3

3:00 – 5:00 PM

Hands-On Workshop

Pine Straw Baskets – Zada Mae

Cypress 4

OPTIONAL – PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

5:30 – 6:30 PM

District Parties

Rooms to be announced

President Christy Linke and Donna Donnelly, NGC President will drop by.

- Doors open for dinner at 6:45

7:00 PM – 9:30 PM

Dinner and Program

Palms C,D

Speaker – Neal Sanders “Gardening is Murder”

CONVENTION SCHEDULE

Thurs, April 16

ALL DAY

7:30 – 10:30 AM/2:00 – 4:30 PM

7:30 AM – 3:00 PM

8:30 AM – 12:15 PM

1:00 – 3:00 PM

8:30 – 10:30 AM

10:45 AM – 11:45 PM

10:45 AM – 12:15 PM

- Doors open for lunch at 12:15

12:30 – 2:30 PM

2:00 – 4:30 PM

3:00 – 4:00 PM

3:00 – 5:00 PM

3:00 – 5:30 PM

3:00 – 5:30 PM

5:30 – 6:30 PM

- Doors open for dinner at 6:45

7:00 - 9:30 PM

Fri Morning, April 17

Invitational Designs on Display

CONVENTION REGISTRATION OPEN

Vendors Open

Flower Show Open

FFGC BUSINESS MEETING continues

Breakout Sessions

Bellingrath Gardens – Rare Tropical Plants
Tom Papp

Sadler Honey Bees – Tammy Sadler

Awards – Sylvia Swartz & Valerie Seinfeld

Hands-On Workshop

Create Unique Textural Design Components
Using Yarns & Fibers– Janice Hamlin
OPTIONAL – PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Luncheon and Program

Remarks – Denise Thorne, Deep South Director

Speaker – Mike Echevarria – Coral Reef Renewal

Awards Presentations - Districts 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 12

CONVENTION REGISTRATION OPEN

Breakout Sessions

Parliamentary Procedures
Rosita Aristoff

Junior Gardeners – Brenda Davis

Daylilies – Connie Gladding

Hands-On Workshop

Floral Design Centerpieces
Emilie Palmieri
OPTIONAL – PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Flower Show Breakdown

Vendors, Invitational Designs Breakdown

Complimentary Reception
Greet Deep South Director

Dinner and Floral Design Program

Speaker – Jacob McCall “Emotions”

Hotel Check-Out

Pre-function A,B

West Registration Office

Palms AB

Magnolia

Palms E,F,G

Cypress 1

Cypress 2

Cypress 3

Cypress 4

Palms C,D

West Registration Office

Cypress 1

Cypress 2

Cypress 3

Cypress 4

Magnolia

Hotel Lobby/Bar

Palms C,D

CONVENTION BREAKOUT SESSIONS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15

10:30 – 11:30 AM

“Power Your Garden with Worm Wisdom” Sam Baker, WriggleBrew

Hear from founder Sam Baker about the development of WriggleBrew; a kid, pet, and pollinator safe fertilizer made from worm castings. This certified organic fertilizer helps plants grow better while improving soil health.

“The Therapeutic Garden” Cecilia Gayle – FFGC Member

Interested in accessible, enabling and therapeutic garden design for your home or community project? Landscape Architect Cecilia Gayle will share design guidelines and garden ideas to assist with developing your game plan.

“Fun with Flowers” Emilie Palmieri – FFGC Member

FFGC Fun with Flowers Chair, Emilie Palmieri, will demonstrate how to combine crafts with flowers, fellowship, and fun to create a make-it and take-it program for your club.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15

3:30 – 4:30 PM

“Power Your Garden with Worm Wisdom” Sam Baker, WriggleBrew

Hear from founder Sam Baker about the development of WriggleBrew a kid, pet, and pollinator safe fertilizer made from worm castings. This certified organic fertilizer helps plants grow better while improving soil health.

“Landscape Design” Cecilia Gayle – FFGC Member

With more than 35 years of professional experience in Landscape Architecture, Cecilia Gayle, will step us through the design process of research, gathering ideas, and setting a plan.

“Garden Therapy – Avon Correctional Facility” Pat Shira – FFGC Member

Learn how this unique civic garden club program prepares prisoners for horticulture-related jobs upon their release, offering a second chance to those in need of direction for their future.

THURSDAY, APRIL 16

10:45 – 11:45 AM

“Rare Tropicals” Tom Papp – Bellingrath Gardens

Explore rare tropical plants with Tom Papp, Bellingrath Gardens Greenhouse and Nursery Manager. Hear how he maintains a personal collection of hundreds of plants in vivariums in his home with a focus on iridescent understory plants, carnivorous plants, rare ferns, and epiphytic orchids.

THURSDAY, APRIL 16

3:00 - 4:00 PM

“Commercial Beekeeping in Florida” Tammy Sadler – Bee-Haven Honey Farm, Inc.

Bee-Haven Honey Farm, Inc. is a family-owned and operated farm located in central Florida. Tammy Sadler will share with us how commercial beekeepers produce and package raw honey here in the State of Florida.

“Awards” Sylvia Swartz & Valerie Seinfeld – FFGC Members

Apprehensive about applying for awards? Don't know where to start or how to apply? Let Sylvia Swartz, FFGC Awards Chair, and Valerie Seinfeld, FFGC Membership Recruitment & Retention Chair, help you navigate awards season.

“Parliamentary Procedure” Rosita Aristoff – FFGC Parliamentarian

Brush up on your parliamentary procedure by attending this breakout session jam-packed with tips on how to run your garden club meetings professionally following Robert's Rules of Order.

“Junior Garden Clubs” Brenda Davis – FFGC Member

Thinking about forming a junior garden club in your area? If so, please stop by and learn how to go about forming one. Brenda Davis, FFGC Junior Garden Club Chair, has all the information to get you started.

“Daylilies” Connie Gladding – FFGC Member

Daylilies are a popular perennial, having a long bloom period, lots of color varieties, and are relatively low maintenance. President of the North Florida Daylily Society and certified Exhibition Judge, Connie Gladding, will share how to grow and care for daylilies in the Florida landscape.

FFGC 2026 Annual Convention

Featured Dinner Speakers



Neal Sanders

“Gardening Is Murder”

Wednesday, April 15

As the spouse of an avid and accomplished gardener with no “real” responsibilities other than to dig holes and move rocks, Neal has lots of time to observe gardeners and their foibles. At our FFGC annual convention in April, Neal will share some of those observations in a talk “Gardening Is Murder” - that he guarantees will be unlike any gardening lecture you’ve ever heard.



Jacob McCall

“Emotions” - Floral Design Program

Thursday, April 16

World renowned floral artist and Florida native Jacob McCall will dazzle you with his cutting-edge trends and color expertise as he presents his design program “Emotions”. Jacob’s enthusiasm about the floral industry is infectious and his southern charm adds to his downhome approach to sharing his talent.

AIFD AAF PFCI CFD FSMD

Embassy Suites - Lake Buena Vista South
4955 Kyngs Heath Rd, Kissimmee, FL 34746

Visit: ffgc.org for more information

FFGC 2026 Annual Convention

Featured Lunch Speakers



Sammy Tedder

Native Plant Musician

Wednesday, April 15

As a professional musician, composer, film editor, and cinematographer Sammy will share with us "How Southeastern Native American Cultures Used Native Plants in Their Lives." His most recent film *River Obscura: Secrets of a Blackwater River* received the Tallahassee Film Festival's Audience Choice Award for Best Local/Regional Film.



Mike Echevarria

ReefRenewal

Thursday, April 16

Our 2021 "Award of Horticulture Excellence" winner is back with us to give an update on the health of our Florida Keys coral reefs. Hear how his efforts to help grow and plant corals faster, better and less expensively are helping to save our underwater gardens.

Embassy Suites - Lake Buena Vista South
4955 Kyngs Heath Rd, Kissimmee, FL 34746

Visit: ffgc.org for more information

FFGC 2026 Annual Convention

Featured Workshop Presenters



Zada Mae

*Pine Needle
Basketweaving*

Wednesday, April 15

While learning how to weave a small basket from long-leaf pine needles, you will hear about the history of this craft.



Emilie Palmieri

*Centerpieces for
Floral Design Night*

Thursday, April 16

Help create the centerpieces used at Thursday night's floral design dinner and take your creation home with you.



Janice Hamlin

"Blooms & Threads"

Thursday, April 16

Let's play with yarns and other decorative fibers to create unique textural and colorful components for floral designs.

Register Early - Space is Limited
Cost for each workshop is \$35
All Materials will be Provided

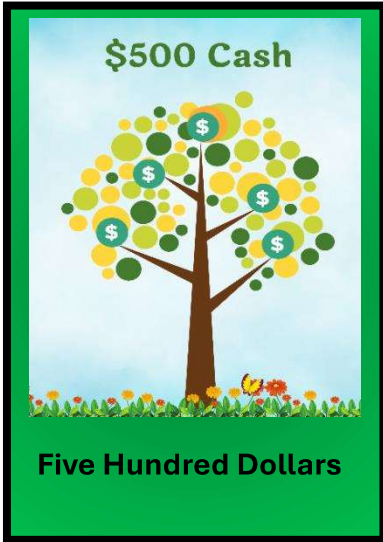
Embassy Suites - Lake Buena Vista South
4955 Kyngs Heath Rd, Kissimmee, FL 34746

Visit: ffgc.org for more information



99th Annual FFGC Convention Opportunity Drawing 2026

SIX FABULOUS PRIZES!



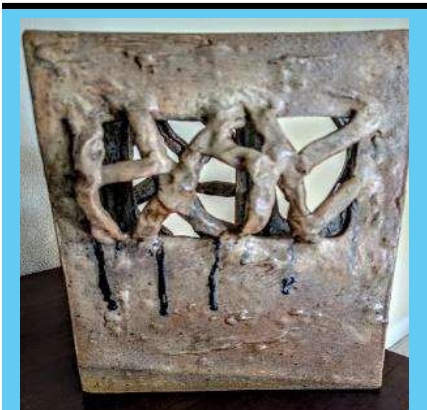
Five Hundred Dollars



Beautiful Handmade
Queen-Size Quilt



Two-night stay at
Embassy Suites by Hilton
Lake Buena Vista South



Ceramic Design Container



\$200 of Scratch Off Tickets



Ceramic Design Container

Suggested donation is \$2 per ticket. Club Members and Non-Members Eligible.

Make checks payable to FFGC 2026 Convention. Write "Opportunity Drawing" on check memo line.

BY MARCH 15, 2026 - Mail ticket stubs and payment to:

Dianne Beaver, 6560 Wild Orchid Lane, Sarasota, FL 34241

Order more tickets OR Questions: diannebeaver@gmail.com Phone 941-780-2949.

The drawing will be held at Convention on April 16, 2026. You need not be present to win.

Your generous donation supports FFGC aims, goals, and special projects. The Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization. IRS rules and regulations apply. Winners of prizes valued at \$600 or more will be issued IRS form W-2G. Your donation may be tax deductible as allowed by the IRS.

BYLAW CHANGES FOR THE CONVENTION

PROPOSED BYLAWS FOR 2026

Bylaws, previously approved by the Board of Directors, to be brought to this convention annual meeting include:

Motion: ARTICLE III MEMBERS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

Eliminates the concept of Voting and Nonvoting Membership and focuses on the concept of authorizing who can vote. Bylaws, as a general rule, focus on granting authority and do not discuss the concept of what cannot be done. As a result, this Article is being renamed Organization Structures which seems more appropriate. Defines Garden Club to include clubs on a circle plan and e-clubs; eliminates significant redundancy; clarifies that the right to vote is tied to being designated as a delegate; changes mailing addresses to contact information since mailing addresses is not all that is required of members; adds Resignation and Reinstatements to Section 1 relating specifically to Garden Clubs and deletes former Sections 3 and 4; deletes subsection regarding Life Members which is already covered in Standing Rule 4 which does not allow non-members to receive this honor; deletes subsection regarding Honorary Members which has been added to Standing Rule 4 which covers other Honors; clarifies that new Garden Clubs and new Councils are approved by the Executive Committee, not elected; changes requiring "officers of Affiliate Members" to just a contact person; and added Home School Co-Op Gardeners as another authorized FFGC organizational structure.

ARTICLE III - ~~MEMBERS~~ **Organization Structures**

~~The membership of FFGC shall consist of two (2) classes: Voting Membership and Non-Voting Membership.~~

SECTION 1 - Voting Membership GARDEN CLUBS

~~Voting membership shall consist of members of Garden Clubs, Garden Clubs organized on the Circle Plan, Councils, and FFGC Life Members and Honorary Members of FFGC who are members of a Garden Club:~~

~~a. Eligibility, Admission~~

~~(1) Garden Clubs~~

a. A Garden Club, **not on the Circle Plan, including Online (E) Garden Clubs**, shall have a membership of not less than ten (10). **A Garden Club organized on the Circle Plan shall be composed of constituent Circles of not less than ten (10) members each under the direction of the governing body of the Club.** Application for membership shall be submitted to the FFGC Board of Directors through the Director of the District in which the Club is located. The application shall be accompanied by per capita dues, and an alphabetical list of names and ~~mailing addresses~~ **contact information** of all officers and members. A majority vote of the Executive Committee shall ~~elect~~ **approve** the club which shall immediately be entitled to all rights and subject to all responsibilities of membership. Ratification shall follow at the next Board of Directors meeting.

b. Only members of FFGC Garden Clubs shall have the right to vote as designated delegates and only members of FFGC Garden Clubs shall hold office.

BYLAW CHANGES FOR THE CONVENTION

- c. **A Garden Club may be accorded membership in an adjoining District with the approval of the District Directors involved.**
- d. **A Garden Club wishing to resign from FFGC shall submit a written notice to its District Director. The resignation shall be presented to the Board of Directors by the District Director at the next Board of Directors Meeting. In the event a Club does not submit written notice to the District Director and notification is received from Headquarters of nonpayment of dues, the District Director shall make contact with the Club to verify membership standing. If contact is unable to be made or confirmation of resignation received, the District Director will present this information at the next Board of Directors meeting as Notice of Resignation.**
- e. **A Garden Club which resigns in good standing may be reinstated upon payment of the current dues and a reinstatement fee of five dollars (\$5.00). The District Director will present this information at the next Board of Directors meeting as Notice of Reinstatement.**

~~(2) Garden Clubs Organized on the Circle Plan~~

~~A Garden Club organized on the Circle Plan shall be composed of constituent Circles of not less than ten (10) members each under the direction of the governing body of the Club. Application for membership shall be submitted to the FFGC Board of Directors through the Director of the District in which the Club is located. The application shall be accompanied by per capita dues, and an alphabetical list of names and mailing addresses of all officers and members. A majority vote of the Executive Committee shall elect the club which shall immediately be entitled to all rights and subject to all responsibilities of membership. Ratification shall follow at the next Board of Directors meeting.~~

~~(3) SECTION 2 - Councils~~

~~A Council shall be composed of three (3) or more FFGC Garden Clubs that have united to give strength to community projects. Application for membership shall be submitted to the Board of Directors through the Director of the District in which the Council is located. The application shall be accompanied by the names and mailing addresses contact information of all officers and members. A majority vote of the Executive Committee shall elect approve the Council which shall immediately be entitled to all rights and subject to all responsibilities of membership. Ratification shall follow at the next Board of Directors meeting.~~

~~(4) Online (E) Club~~

~~An Online (E) Club shall have a membership of not less than ten (10). Application for membership shall be submitted to the FFGC Board of Directors through the FFGC 3rd Vice President. The application shall be accompanied by per capita dues and an alphabetical list of names, District number, mailing address and email address of all members. A majority vote of the Executive Committee shall elect the club which shall immediately be entitled to all rights and subject to all responsibilities of membership. Ratification shall follow at the next Board of Directors meeting.~~

~~(5) Life Members~~

~~FFGC life membership may be accorded to an individual, either a member or a non-member,~~

BYLAW CHANGES FOR THE CONVENTION

~~interested in the work of FFGC upon payment of the required fee. Life Members shall be members of an FFGC Garden Club in order to vote and hold office.~~

~~(6) - Honorary Members~~

~~Honorary membership may be conferred upon an individual who has notably promoted the purposes of FFGC. Such individual shall be recommended by the Board of Directors and voted on by the convention body. An Honorary Member shall be exempt from FFGC dues, but only those who are members of a Garden Club may vote and hold office.~~

~~b. Membership may be accorded in an adjoining District with the approval of the District Directors involved.~~

~~SECTION 2 - Non-Voting Membership~~

~~Non-voting membership shall consist of Life Members and Honorary Members of FFGC who are not members of a Garden Club, Affiliate Member Organizations, and individuals and groups of Junior Gardeners, Intermediate Gardeners, High School Gardeners, College Clubs and Vocational-Technical School Garden Clubs.~~

~~a. Eligibility, Admission~~

~~(1) Life Members and Honorary Members of FFGC who are not Members of Garden Clubs. See ARTICLE III, Section 1, a., (4) and (5).~~

~~(2)~~ **SECTION 3** - Affiliate Member Organizations

Affiliate membership may be granted to a related organization, other than a **gGarden cClub** in Florida, whose nature and general purpose parallel FFGC. Application for such membership shall be submitted to the Affiliates Chairman. Application shall be accompanied by annual dues and the names and mailing addresses of **its officers** a contact person. A majority vote of the Executive Committee shall **elect approve**. Affiliate membership shall be ratified by the Board of Directors at the next scheduled Board meeting.

~~(3)~~ **SECTION 4** - Junior Gardeners, Intermediate Gardeners, High School Gardeners, **Home School Co-Op Gardeners**, College Clubs and Vocational-Technical School **Garden Clubs**

(a) Junior Gardeners, Intermediate Gardeners, **and** High School Gardeners **and Home School Co-Op Gardeners** shall be sponsored by FFGC Garden Clubs, Councils or Districts.

(b) College Clubs and Vocational-Technical School **Garden Clubs** shall be composed of at least ten (10) students, faculty, or campus-related members and shall be sponsored by FFGC Garden Clubs, Councils or Districts.

~~b:~~

SECTION 5 - Additional **categories of non-voting membership organization structures** may be added as authorized by the Board of Directors.

~~SECTION 3 - Resignation~~

~~A Club wishing to resign shall submit a written notice to its District Director for presentation and Headquarters. Following further contact by the District Director, the resignation shall be presented~~

BYLAW CHANGES FOR THE CONVENTION

~~to the Board of Directors by the District Director at the next Board of Directors Meeting. In the event a Club does not submit written notice to the District Director and notification is received from Headquarters of nonpayment of dues, the District Director shall make contact with the Club to verify membership standing. If contact is unable to be made or confirmation of resignation received, the District Director will present this information at the next Board of Directors meeting as Notice of Resignation.~~

~~SECTION 4 - Reinstatement~~

~~A Club which resigns in good standing may be reinstated upon payment of the current dues and a reinstatement fee of five dollars (\$5.00).~~

Motion: ARTICLE IV DUES AND FEES

The term Garden Club has been clarified in proposed amended Article III to include clubs on the circle plan and e-clubs so the redundancy is eliminated; changes the "as of date" for members to May 1, since dues are due May 1; clarifies the dates new members must pay dues; and, incorporates language that Life Members are exempt from paying annual dues.

ARTICLE IV - DUES AND FEES

SECTION 1 - The Annual dues of each Garden Club, ~~Online (E) Club and each Garden Club organized on the Circle Plan~~ shall be Twelve dollars (\$12.00) per capita on all categories of members enrolled as of ~~June 1~~ **May 1**, with the exception of the members specified in b and c below.

a. Dues of members joining between ~~June 1~~ **May 1** and ~~May 31~~ **April 30 of the following year** shall be Twelve dollars (\$12.00).

b. Annual dues of a legally married couple with membership in the same Club shall be fourteen dollars (\$14.00) for a couple membership.

c. ~~Annual FFGC dues of a~~ Life Members, including multiple Club memberships, shall be exempt **from paying FFGC annual dues.**

d. Annual FFGC dues of members belonging to two or more Garden Clubs, ~~Online (E) Clubs and Garden Clubs organized on the Circle Plan~~ shall be a total of Twelve dollars (\$12.00) per capita paid to the FFGC Club designated by the member. Proof of FFGC dues paid to the designated FFGC Club ~~or Club organized on the Circle Plan~~ shall be the responsibility of the member.

e. Dues shall be payable to FFGC and shall be remitted to Headquarters by May 1. Dues of members enrolled after May 1 shall be payable immediately.

(1) Dues shall be delinquent if not received by May 1 and a notice shall be sent. If not received by June 1, a further notice shall be sent. If not received by June 30, membership and all privileges shall be forfeited unless and until reinstated.

(2) Clubs forfeiting membership for non-payment of dues shall be reinstated by payment of current dues, and a reinstatement fee of five dollars (\$5.00).

f. Dues for members of new clubs accepted for membership during the Winter Board of Directors meeting shall be six dollars (\$6.00). Dues of a legally married couple shall be seven dollars (\$7.00).

g. FFGC Membership dues are non-refundable.

BYLAW CHANGES FOR THE CONVENTION

Motion: ARTICLE XVI - BYLAWS AND STANDING RULES COMMITTEE

The current eligibility requirement that members must have served four years is too restrictive and drastically limits the pool of candidates, so years of service is being reduced to two; clarifies the timing of appointments of Committee members by the President; clarifies the timing and structure of the Bylaws Nominating Committee; clarifies the term of Committee members and when they assume their duties; clarifies the limitation of terms of office; eliminates a reference to Standing Rule 24, which was deleted; requires that responses to request for amendments be in writing; authorizes the Standing Rules document on the website be updated post Board meetings so that the website version is up to date; and, changes several “will” to “shall”.

ARTICLE XVI - BYLAWS AND STANDING RULES COMMITTEE

SECTION 1 - Membership

- a. The Bylaws Committee shall consist of seven (7) voting members: President, First Vice President, Chairman appointed by the President, two (2) members appointed by the President in consultation with the Chairman (one member who is a former FFGC President), and two (2) elected by the FFGC Board of Directors. **The President shall appoint members at the post-convention Board of Directors meeting in the odd numbered years.** The Parliamentarian ~~will~~ **shall** serve as a non-voting member.
- b. Vacancies shall be filled by the President subject to approval of the Board of Directors.

SECTION 2 - Eligibility

Members of the Bylaws Committee shall have served for ~~four (4)~~ **two (2)** immediate past consecutive years and ~~currently~~ serve on the FFGC Board of Directors **at the time of their appointment or election.**

SECTION 3 - Election

~~The Nominating Committee for the Bylaws Committee would be selected in the fall of the even numbered years. The Chairman shall be appointed by the President and two (2) members elected by the Board of Directors. Bylaws Committee members elected in winter of odd numbered year to begin serving at the Post Convention meeting of the odd numbered year. Elected members serve for a two-year term with an option for a second two-year term. (Committee members appointed do not have a term limit restriction.)~~

- a. **A Bylaws Nominating Committee of three (3) shall be formed at the Fall Meeting of the Board of Directors. The Chairman shall be appointed by the President and two (2) members shall be elected by the Board of Directors.**
- b. **The Nominating Committee shall submit one (1) nomination for each vacancy to be filled at the Winter Board of Directors meeting, at which time nominations may be made from the floor.**
- c. **Election shall be by ballot and a majority vote shall elect. If there is but one (1) nominee for each vacancy to be filled, election may be by voice.**

BYLAW CHANGES FOR THE CONVENTION

SECTION 4 – **Term of Office**

- a. **The Officers shall serve for the duration of their terms of office.**
- b. **The term of elected and appointed members shall be two (2) years.**
- c. **Elected members shall assume their duties at the close of the annual convention.**
- d. **Appointed members shall assume their duties at the time of their appointment.**
- e. **Elected and Appointed members shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms upon reappointment or reelection.**

SECTION 5 - Procedure

All requests submitted to the Bylaws/Standing Rules Committee must be in writing and include date of request, rationale and be signed by the person/committee chairman making the request. ~~(Standing Rule #24)~~. Requests should be received not less than six (6) weeks prior to the next Board of Directors Meeting. Notification of decision with rationale will be given **in writing** to the person/committee chairman making the request when decision has been made. If approved within the Bylaws Committee, the **amended** Bylaws/Standing Rule ~~will~~ **shall** be presented to the Board of Directors for approval. Standing Rules may be amended or adopted by vote of the Board of Directors only. Bylaws submitted for adoption or amending shall adhere to ARTICLE XXIII.

SECTION 6 - Duties

The Bylaws Committee duties include but are not limited to:

- a. Immediately following the Winter Board of Directors meeting, all Bylaw changes to be addressed at the Annual Convention must be prepared and forwarded to The Florida Gardener Chairman for the Spring Issue. This is in accordance with ARTICLE XXIII, Amendments, Section 1.
- b. Immediately following the Annual Convention, the Master Bylaws ~~and Standing Rules~~ are updated on the website. **The Master Standing Rules shall be updated immediately following any Board of Directors Meeting at which changes are proposed and approved.**

Motion: ARTICLE XV - STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Correcting the number of members to ten since ten members were listed; clarifying when members are appointed and elected; clarifying the timing and the structure of the Strategic Planning Nominating Committee and making it similar to the Bylaw language authorizing other nominating committees; and, changing the term of all elected members to three years because of confusion of terms, and with the appointed members serving two years, the Committee saw no benefit to staggering the terms of elected members.

ARTICLE XV - STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

SECTION 1 - Membership

- a. The Strategic Planning Committee shall consist of ~~nine (9)~~ **ten (10) voting** members. ~~Four (4)~~ ~~Three (3)~~ members shall be the President, First Vice President, Second Vice President and Third Vice President of FFGC. Three (3) members ~~to be serving on the current Board of Directors~~ shall be appointed by the President **at the post-convention Board of Directors meeting in odd numbered years**, with the approval of the Board of Directors. Three (3) members ~~serving on the~~

BYLAW CHANGES FOR THE CONVENTION

~~current Board of Directors shall be elected by the Board of Directors with one (1) serving a two-year term and two (2) serving a three-year term. (The President serves by virtue of office on all committees except the Nominating Committee.) Appointed members and elected members shall serve three-year terms.~~

b. Vacancies shall be filled by the President subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

c. The chairman shall be elected within the Strategic Planning Committee. The FFGC President will not be eligible for chairmanship of the Strategic Planning Committee.

SECTION 2 - Eligibility

Elected and appointed members shall ~~currently~~ serve on the FFGC Board of Directors **at the time of their election or appointment.**

SECTION 3 - Election

~~The Chairman of the Strategic Planning Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the President at the Post Convention Board of Directors meeting in the odd numbered year. Two members to the Nominating Committee shall be elected at the Post Convention Board of Directors meeting in the odd numbered year. The Committee will report at the September Board of Directors meeting in the odd numbered year to elect the three At Large members to the Strategic Planning Committee. The election shall be by ballot and a majority vote shall elect. If there is but one (1) nominee for each vacancy to be filled, election may be by voice.~~

a. A Strategic Planning Nominating Committee of three (3) shall be formed at the Winter Meeting of the Board of Directors. The Chairman shall be appointed by the President and two (2) members shall be elected by the Board of Directors.

b. The Nominating Committee shall submit one (1) nomination for each vacancy to be filled at the pre-convention meeting in the even-numbered year and one (1) nomination for each vacancy to be filled at the post-convention meeting in the odd numbered year, at which time nominations may be made from the floor.

c. Election shall be by ballot and a majority vote shall elect. If there is but one (1) nominee for each vacancy to be filled, election may be by voice.

SECTION 4 - Term of Office

a. The FFGC Officers shall serve for the duration of their terms of office.

b. The term of ~~one (1) elected member shall be two (2) years. The term of two (2) elected members shall be three (3) years.~~

c. ~~An~~ **E**lected **and appointed** members ~~may~~ **shall** serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms.

d. Elected members shall assume their duties at the time of their election.

SECTION 5 - Duties

The Strategic Planning Committee duties would include consideration of issues to protect the future of FFGC and strengthen the Corporation and other items as suggested by the President, Officers or FFGC Board of Directors. The Committee functions in an advisory capacity only. The Committee will report recommendations to the President who will then assign to the appropriate existing FFGC Committee for consideration.

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Every step
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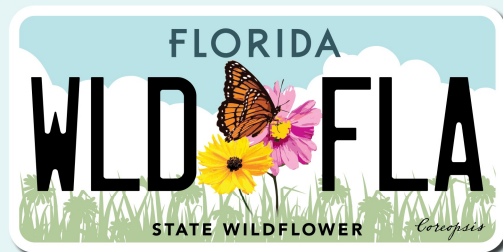
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Join fellow FFGC members and get your plate today!

FlaWildflowers.org/wildflower-tag

SHORT COURSE NORTH
“POSSIBILITIES”

(Advanced Master Gardener Training)



Date: August 13-14, 2026

Daily hours: 8am Registration, 8:45 Welcome, 9- 3pm

Sponsored by:

Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc., District I
 University of Florida, IFAS

Location: Escambia County 4-H Office
 3740 Stefani Road, Cantonment, FL 32533

For more info: Ttuttle1954@gmail.com

Topics of Study will include:

The Urban Forest	Chemical Spraying	Soil problems
New, smaller Plants	Invasives	Foodscaping
Oyster Gardening	Birds	Optional project

Come Learn, Come Buy, Come Win:

Vendors, Door Prizes, Plant Sales, Raffle Baskets, Freebies!

*****Cut Here*****

REGISTRATION:

Entire Course (two days-includes handouts and lunch)	\$60.00	_____
Name of Garden Club _____		
Master Gardener County _____		
Thursday only	\$35.00	_____
Friday only	\$35.00	_____
Total enclosed		\$ _____

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION MUST BE INCLUDED (please print clearly):

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip+4 _____
 Phone (____) _____ E-Mail _____

DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION (OR REFUND) IS AUGUST 1, 2026

Make Checks payable to: FFGC District I
 (Please indicate Short Course North in the Memo line)
 Mail to: Gina V. Jogan, Registrar, 6727 Highway 99, Molino, FL 32577-4048
Send SASE for confirmation of registration. Hotel accommodations are on your own.

NGC SCHOOLS

FLOWER SHOW SCHOOL

Course 2

MAY 19-22, 2026
Boca Raton Garden Club

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Florida Flower Show School

FFGC DATES

SPRING 2026

April 9 Floral Design
April 14 FFGC Convention
April 30 Floral Design

May 31- UF Short Course
Jun 2

Jun 1 Nat'l Garden Week

SUMMER 2026

Aug 13-14 Short Course
North

FALL 2026

Sep 15-17 FFGC Fall Board Mtg

WINTER 2026

TBA

SHOWS & TOURS

April 25-26 (9 am to 3 pm)

'All' Aboard Garden Club of
St. Petersburg Flower Show,
District VIII

NGC CONVENTION 2026

May 4-6, 2026
St. Louis, MO

REGISTER BY MAR 31
no later than APR 14

Florida Federation of Garden Clubs

GARDEN CLUB BUSINESS GUIDANCE

Via ZOOM

Hear from subject matter experts about those nasty but necessary mundane financial and regulatory topics that go along with running a non-profit organization. Information is geared towards Districts, Clubs and Circles.

With Speakers :

**NICK CHASON, CExp &
JANA WALLING, CPA**

April 29, 2026

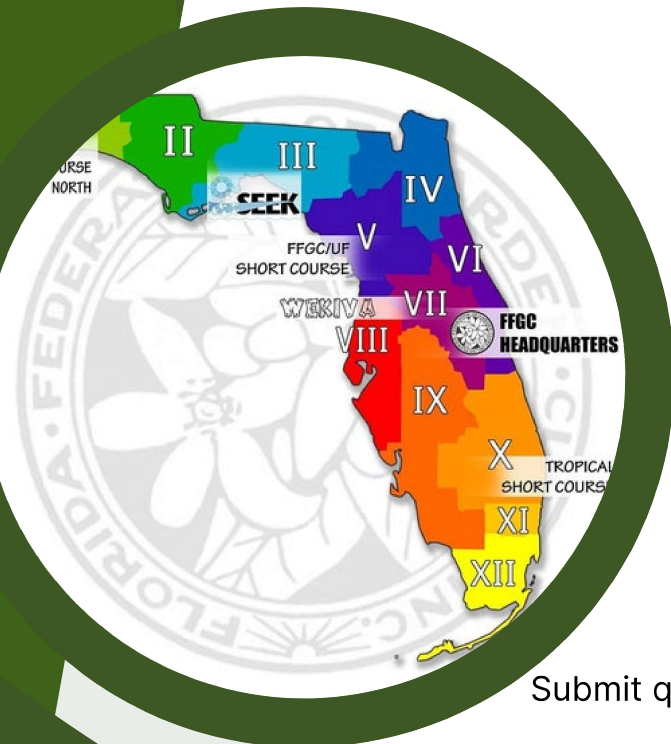
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm



JOIN US

Submit questions ahead of time as you register

[REGISTRATION LINK](#)



SUPPORT OUR BEAUTIFUL FLORIDA

A NEW FFGC PROGRAM

by Mickey Quickley, Chair

This new program absorbs and expands two former committees, *Adopt A Park* and *Greenways and Trails*.

This program focuses on ways garden clubs can beautify, support, preserve and defend Florida. The possibilities are endless in this new program and informational resources and guides will be shared in future articles.

Injured Wildlife

Florida has a highly diverse, subtropical ecosystem featuring over 250 endemic species found nowhere else on Earth. Some species include the American Alligator, Florida panther, West Indian manatee, Scrub Jay, Gopher tortoise and the Florida Black Bear. Of course, we have a myriad of other wildlife so crucial to our natural systems.

Due to our increasing population and visitation, many of these creatures are hit by cars, caught by outdoor cats, get caught in fishing line, hit by boats, suffer from loss of habitat, and struggle to find food sources.

What should you do if you find injured wildlife? If the animal is large and you feel you cannot handle it, call **Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission** or FWC for short. Their phone number is (888) 404-FWCC. You may also report a crime against wildlife at this number!

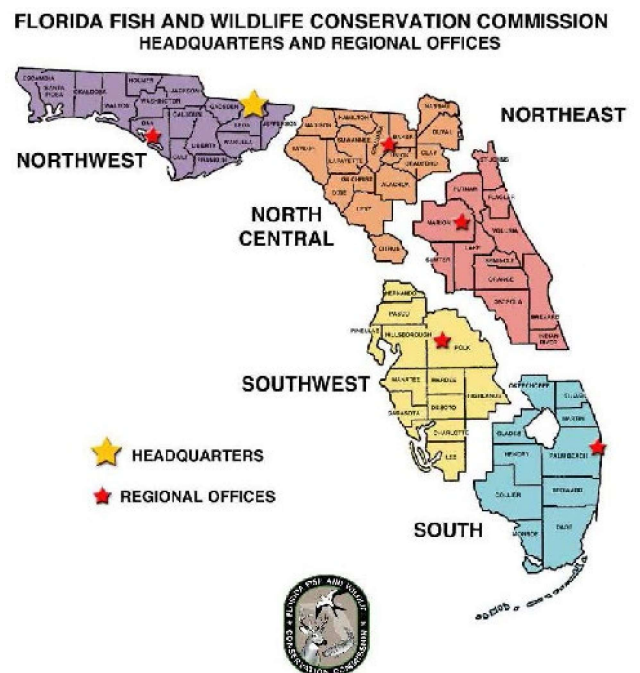
Local Wildlife Sanctuaries

Most Florida jurisdictions have a local wildlife sanctuary. They are always grateful for volunteers to do anything for nearly any amount of hours you can give. From cleaning cages, to washing dishes, donating towels, blankets, cat food, small boxes, fruit, vegetables, they are glad to have help from the public. They are always glad to have monetary donations, no matter how small. Support them by attending their events or open houses to visit some of the residents that cannot be released. You will gain a new respect for wildlife seeing them up close!

In 2025, the Wildlife Sanctuary of Northwest Florida (Pensacola), took in 4,100 patients last year! That is impressive for their reasonably small facility. That was the biggest year since their founding in 1982. Check out their [website](#) for a great report (with photos) of the patient intake for 2025.

[LINK TO ALL FLORIDA SANCTUARIES](https://www.fws.gov/locations?state_name=%5B%22Florida%22%5D)
https://www.fws.gov/locations?state_name=%5B%22Florida%22%5D

Feel free to contact me at Rangermick@bellsouth.net. [REPORT 1-888-404-FWCC](https://www.fws.gov/locations?state_name=%5B%22Florida%22%5D)



HOW WILL GENERATION Z CHANGE GARDEN CLUBS?

by Lisa Packard
President, Gardens of the World
Garden Club (virtual)

In four years, the National Garden Club will celebrate its 100th birthday, but FFGC already celebrated 100, as well as local clubs throughout the country. Longevity depends on so many things; however, it's fair to say garden clubs have always been where members can learn about plants and landscaping, make new and lifelong friends, and participate in doing good in their communities.

Those interests are consistent, even if specific activities have evolved. Adaptation is a well-established theory in evolution; however, what if garden clubs get ahead of evolution? What if we try to understand what changes are coming and plan for them?

Now is the time to understand how to attract the new generation to a 100-year-old concept of the garden club.

It's time to meet Generation Z
the cohort following the Millennials.

Generation Z (born late 90s–early 2010s) is a rapidly growing economic and social force, set to drive \$12.6 trillion in global spending by 2030. Their changing priorities will affect everything, including who joins garden clubs. They yield incredible buying power and have strong interest in sustainable products and doing good in the world.

Gen Z is driving a gardening boom, with over 70% of 18–35-year-olds expressing passion for the hobby, and 83% viewing it as a “cool” lifestyle choice. Driven by a desire for sustainability, mental wellness, and “granny-era” trends (including knitting, crocheting); they are heavily investing in houseplants, herbs, and native plants, often sharing, trading, and upcycling materials.



Digital Natives: They are the first generation raised entirely in a digital world and turn to the internet for information and YouTube for how-to videos.

Homeownership: Gen Z has moved ahead of Millennials in terms of homeownership, and they plan to spend more time and more money on gardening in 2024. They are used to small dorm rooms and apartments so even furniture has to be convertible and fit into a smaller footprint. Houseplants are very popular, with a specific interest in unique varieties like monstera, philodendron, and succulents. Many are maximizing small spaces, such as balconies, to grow their own food.

Forward thinking clubs will think about what changes they might consider implementing for their own survival. The obvious focus will be strengthening your online presence--not just a website but have your own YouTube channel for posting short videos. Increasing your online visibility will be key.

The next generation is around you already. You can find them online.

DISTRICT 1

by Betty White
District Director

District 1 garden clubs celebrated the holidays, both Thanksgiving and Christmas, with luncheons and various activities. Our new club, the **Baker Area Garden Club** and its President, Carmen Lundy, celebrated its one year anniversary in December and celebrated with an ornament exchange and homemade goodies.

District 1 is implementing a *scholarship program called, "The Phoenix,"* as it symbolizes renewal and growth. Any member attending a program that progresses the mission of District 1 and the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs--whether it be a floral design program, a Tour of Tables, Dessert and Design gala, a horticultural class, or a general knowledge class regarding related gardening--may be eligible for a stipend toward their registration fee. The applicant applies for the stipend of up to \$75 after their attendance of the class or workshop.

The Dessert and Design Gala is being held in March featuring Jackie Lacey with a theme of "A Magic Carpet Ride Through India." This is sponsored by the Florida Judges Council, chaired by Director Anne Collins.

The District 1 Board is working to show our appreciation to our clubs for all their hard work. We initiated a **special project** beginning in October to reward each club with a \$25 check to recognize their work particularly in community outreach. A visit to each club is planned by the Director.

A Wekiva fundraiser is planned for May with Wishing Wells on each table for clubs to donate. We have on our agenda other rewards for our very busy clubs. The District 1 grant of \$250 is up for consideration to award more grants for the clubs' projects.

A "contrived, floral design" workshop was taught by Judy Keliher, Deana Gordon and Esther Davis. Even though our design may not have turned out so well, we had a lot of fun and laughs trying!

The **Navarre Garden Club** is hosting a Spring Fling luncheon and garden sale in April chaired by Ginger Eisele and Jan Chappell, President.

Several of us attended the **Gulf Shores Garden Club** Annual Floral Seminar which was presented by Scot Wedgeworth. Scot is a well-known wedding and event

designer from what he calls the "deep and dirty" South. He has an "over-the-top" design style, outrageous personality, and an edgy flair for design.

Clubs in District 1 continue to be busy bees, and their hard work is very much appreciated!

DISTRICT II

by Sarah Darden
District Director

District II Director, Sarah Darden, recently held a luncheon at the Port St. Joe Garden Club to facilitate collaboration on the upcoming District Spring Meeting in May. Representatives from all seven clubs attended.

Given the relatively small overall membership, the Fall Meeting was structured as an experiment, with each club assuming responsibility for a portion of the event. The approach led to the decision to adopt this model as the standard format for district meetings moving forward for the foreseeable future.

Gulf Beach Garden Club has maintained an active schedule this year. The Club has organized several workdays since January. To commemorate Florida Arbor Day, members planted a Live Oak at The Humble House in

Panama City, Florida, gaining valuable experience on proper planting and staking techniques. Throughout February, taking advantage of favorable weather in Panama City Beach, Gulf Beach member volunteers focused on garden bed maintenance, including flower bed cleanup, weeding, and application of fresh pine straw at multiple locations including The Ark, PCB Senior Center, Hutchinson Elementary, and during the Camellia Festival (Member to Member outing). The Club also coordinates with Roads and Bridges for the upkeep of a designated section of Front Beach Road, ensuring it remains well-maintained. A monthly report detailing these accomplishments is submitted to Bay County, Florida.

Port St Joe Garden Club hosted its first community workshop of the new year on

February 21. *Sandy McInnis*, Master Gardener and club member led the two-hour session and shared her special interest and knowledge of orchids. Nearly 30 participants learned how to care for the various types of orchids, including repotting, lighting and fertilizing. Each had the opportunity to mount their small orchid on a wooden board prepped by our members specifically for orchids. At least half of the attendees were from the community, not the club, which we consider a successful outreach.

Chipleay Garden Club's Butterfly Chair Glenda Wilson was interviewed by *Travel + Leisure Magazine* concerning our Butterfly Garden at Falling Waters State Park. The resulting [article](#) was published.



DISTRICT III

by *Dianne Amburn*
District Director

Spring greetings from the Big Bend garden clubs!

At **Live Oak Garden Club's** annual Christmas party members were divided into three teams, given rolls of toilet paper and accessories such as scarfs, mittens, hats, etc., and instructed to create a "snowman." Along with their snowman they were expected to create a skit, a poem, or a song to accompany their creation. What followed was a lot of good-natured laughter as the teams went to town.

Our January and February meetings concentrated on trees in honor of Florida Arbor Day. Our Suwannee County Extension Agent's talk centered on native trees and the do's and don'ts of tree planting. A Valentine card workshop was held and, with the assistance of the Women's Club Art Group, over 200 unique cards were created and distributed to local nursing homes and assisted living facilities on Valentine's Day.

February's program was "Three strikes and you're out, but you're not!" Perry resident Jeff Byers talked about the art exhibition he curated currently installed at Taylor County Library. It showcases

his, and others' art exploring the three hurricanes that hit Taylor County in 2023 and 2024. The club's main on-going project, led by Audrey Adams and Amanda Beckett, is a complete redesign and restoration of our grounds. Audrey was instrumental in getting a 2025 Natural Disaster USA grant in the amount of \$5,000. Andy Jackson and his crew have installed and laid most of the irrigation lines, while club members meet each Friday to work on removing old bushes and plants, raking and digging natural pathways, and preparing for the arrival of new flowers and plants in the Spring.

Tallahassee Garden Club held their annual Holiday Open House, paired with the Petite Flower Show. The Petite Flower Show, chaired by Helen Purvis with assistance from TGC Flower Show Judges and Designers, was a standout success. From tiny 8" and 12" designs to decorated ornaments, child-size shirt designs, and horticulture entries, these small creations made a big impression.

January was the launch of our annual Caladium Bulb Sale. Cathy Bishop, Nancy Van Wilder, and Susan Barnes gave a wonderful and informative

presentation at the Executive Board meeting, sharing their expertise on these beautiful plants and distributing brochures showcasing varieties that will provide stunning color throughout late spring and summer.

The **Wakulla County Garden Club** hosted members at Mary Cortese's Little Red Barn. From late December through early January, the club devoted significant time and energy to preparing for and supporting the Crawfordville Arbor Day celebration held on January 17. At this well-attended community event, more than 2,000 trees were distributed free to the public.

Following Arbor Day, efforts quickly shifted to purchasing and potting new trees that will be donated by the club in 2027. Special recognition goes to Jeannie Brodhead for coordinating much of this extensive work and for mentoring Fritz Bertoch, who will lead the program moving forward.

In February, the club welcomed guest floral designer Gina Jogan, to lead the program "Fun with Flowers."

DISTRICT IV

*by Steve Davies
District Director*

The District sponsored and the NGC Environmental School Course 1 in January and plans are underway to hold Course 2 (virtually also) this summer. Florida Arbor Day was celebrated across the District involving girl scouts, tree plantings, tree giveaways and public proclamations to bring attention within our communities of the importance of trees to our environment and society.

The District is fortunate to have two flower shows being sponsored by our clubs this spring...RGC March 27-28 and GCSA April 24-25.

Numerous FFGC and NGC grants were received by the District, Clubs and Circles totaling over \$6,000 to help fund planting, education and other horticultural outreach to our communities.

Alligator Creek Garden Club conducted a mock trial on "Crepe Murder" complete with a demonstration on proper pruning techniques.

The **Bartram Garden Club** teamed up with their local Ace Hardware store to donate buckets of basic gardening tools for Habitat for Humanity new homeowners.

Callahan GC celebrated their 85th anniversary with FFGC with a visit from FFGC President Christy Linke.

The **Garden Club of Fleming Island** celebrated their "Flamingo heritage" with a flamingo painting party including ALL pink refreshments.

Garden Cove of Green Cove arranged a program to help special needs high schoolers plant flowers for Valentines Day. They are also organizing a Veterans Day program to be held in the historic town center.

Garden Club of Jacksonville held a Designer of Distinction event featuring former White House floral designer Laura Dowling.

Garden Club of Middleburg erected a donated large green house which will allow them to really stock up for their spring garden sale.



The **Garden Club of Orange Park** knows that spring is in the air as they have been very busy preparing for their annual horticultural event on March 20 loaded with great speakers, raffles, door prizes and, of course, plants.

The **Garden Club of Palatka** is moving ahead with refurbishment of Blue Star Markers in their area. The fresh looking marker will have a new location which is both safer and easier to access. Also in refurbishment mode, members continue to make repairs and improvements to their historic log cabin meeting place inside Ravine Gardens State Park.

Ribault GC Combined a great Italian dinner with trivia game night to have a "BUINASERA" and they plan to do it again soon.

Some members of the **Garden Club of St Augustine** showcased their talents at Club and Circle meeting by demonstrating basic bonsai techniques and honey bee keeping. They also had some Vegas card sharks spotted at a recent Card Party fund raiser.

DISTRICT V

by Jo Lee Houlihan
District Director

Gainesville Garden Club took a different approach to Arbor Day to focus on urban forestry and choosing the appropriate tree for yards. We purchased native trees and shrubs to give away via a drawing at the conclusion of the program. We advertised via Facebook and had a healthy audience of almost 60 people with a number of newcomers who came due to the Facebook postings.

Coming right up for GGC is a fund-raiser at a local brewery with a large outdoor area. This will be the fourth year for the event advertised as **Blossom, Brew and BBQ**. This year we have 17 vendors with plants and garden related items. Our BBQ master does the cooking at cost, and the brewery offers discounts on beer when customers purchase a wrist band from GGC for a \$10 donation. Funds raised support our community projects. We bring GGC info and are delighted because the event reaches many younger people. The brewery is noted as a family friendly place and attracts a nice cross section of folks from our community.

This year we are planning a **Sip 'N Stroll fund-raiser** to support our scholarship programs. It will involve many members as

we cook, obtain auction items, decorate our buildings and gardens to create a memorable evening in mid-March.

Join us for the 2026 FFGC-District V and University of Florida **Short Course**. We are excited to bring you **Tools for Tomorrow**, an innovative program that will cultivate ideas and provide tools for action. Space is limited. Registration opens on February 1 for FFGC Members and March 1 for Master Gardeners.

We look forward to seeing you at Short Course!

Contact Mona Rippe
2026 Registrar
<https://ffgc.org/event-6446850>



FFGC DISTRICT V - UF SHORT COURSE



TOOLS FOR TOMORROW

May 31 - June 2, 2026

University of Florida Straughn Center
Gainesville Garden Club

FFGC Member Registration Opens February 1
Master Gardeners March 1, General Public April 1

www.ffgc.org/education Registrar: monarippe@gmail.com

 Funded in part by 
Visit Gainesville, Alachua County

DISTRICT VI

by Debra Griffith
District Director

It has been a hard winter for District VI. The **hard freezes** reached all the way down to the southernmost portions of our district, causing major plant damage. Instead of complaint or grief, the garden clubs stepped up to help their communities. **Garden Club by the Sea** dedicated a Little Gem Magnolia, a vitally important tree to the barrier island's ecosystem and a silver buttonwood was planted by members of the **Cherry Laurel Garden Club** for Arbor Day. **Melbourne Garden Club** attended two Habitat for Humanity house dedications in Palm Bay. They presented each new homeowner with a garden tote filled with gardening tools, plants and educational information. The **Magnolia Circle of The Garden Club of DeLand** hosted a program for what to do in your garden when the worst freeze damage happens.

Their generosity continues to other areas as well. The **Garden Club of Palm Coast** held their first February Workshop for Kids. They said it was thrilling to watch the children focus on building their plant stands and decorate them.

Magnolia Circle of The Garden Club of DeLand met in February to continue their annual Valentine Vases for Nursing home resident. **Titusville Garden Club** provided a lovely meeting honoring past club presidents. There was a lovely luncheon, recognition and roses for all their past presidents.

There have been numerous club **field trips** this past quarter. Cherry Laurel took a magical trip to Washington Oaks State Park. **DeLeon Springs Garden Club** adventured out to a caviar farm (owned and operated by women) and **Titusville** went to a Native Plant Workshop in Orlando.

Flower shows are blooming this year. It is so exciting to see individual clubs doing flower shows. The **New Smyrna Beach Garden Club** finished a fabulous flower show (*Party Time!*) in January. The **Ormond Beach Garden Club** will hold their Flower show and Tea (*Lights, Camera, Flowers!*) at the end of March and the **Titusville Garden Club** will be adventuring out with a rescheduled flower show (*Fly Me To The Moon!*) in May. This bodes well, because the magnificent *Penny Decker* will be teaching a Floral Design course this year.

A few more noteworthy items on our calendar of **events** will be the **New Smyrna Beach Garden Club's Annual Garden Tour** scheduled for April and their humungous long awaited rummage sale in March.

Indian Harbour Beach Garden Club has created a video introduction to their Garden Club. What an interesting and unique way to **promote your club**.



DISTRICT VII

*by Jennifer Barber
District Director*

In the Garden Club

In the shade of blooming friendships, we gather with hands full of purpose—plant sales humming like busy bees, raising roots and hope together.

Scholarships bloom at Wekiva, each gift a seed of confidence for a child stepping into the woods to learn the language of nature.

Fashion shows swirl with petals and laughter, creativity stitched into every moment, while donations to camp ripple outward like rings across a quiet lake.

Valentine's for Vets carries kindness forward, a simple gesture blossoming into gratitude.

Fascinator workshops spark imagination, and fun with flowers reminds us why we gather—to create, to learn, to share beauty.

We wander through preserves on field trips, listening as the wild speaks softly—orchid growers sharing secrets of air and light, bromeliad keepers tending cups of rain.

Teas steep in porcelain calm, lunches stretch into long conversations, and fellowship—our perennial treasure—grows stronger with every shared bloom.

We celebrate the honor of winning NGC and FFGC grants—recognition of vision, effort, and heart. Pollinator power hums around us, bees and butterflies stitching life from blossom to blossom.

Spring Fever rises, urging us to plant, to plan, to dream again. Educational workshops open doors, Arbor Days and Earth Days remind us of our responsibility to the land. Park renovations restore spaces where communities gather and breathe.

And always, in our mission true, we guide and lift our youth—helping them discover the wonder in ecology. Sharing our knowledge plants tomorrow's seeds, and hope grows in the hands that will follow.

Convention plans unfold with anticipation. Flower shows burst into color and pride. Hostess volunteers welcome each guest with warmth and a sense of belonging. We look forward to speakers whose

words plant ideas that flourish, while raffle baskets brim with generosity and horticulture exhibits glow with the pride of careful hands.

Then come the moments of joy—PJ's and pancakes, laughter echoing through hallways of friendship, and district parties where stories are traded like treasured seeds. In the company of gardeners, every season is a celebration, every project a promise, every gathering a reminder that community grows best when tended with heart.

This District Director is extremely proud, humbled, and continually amazed by the generosity, knowledge, and grit of the members of District VII. Every project they nurture, every seed they plant, and every act of kindness they extend strengthens the heart of our district. It has been my privilege to represent them this past year, and serving alongside them has been one of my greatest honors.

DISTRICT VIII

by Joyce Drew
District Director

Apollo Beach Garden Club piloted their Junior Gardener Academy which included harvesting sweet potatoes. The 8-session series began with 10 children from 5-8 year-old. The classes filled in 72 hours. This series is for Homeschool children only and is in collaboration with Step-Up for Children of Hillsborough Co & UF IFAS 4 H coordinator.

Dade City Garden Club will repeat its Monarch Butterfly Festival in the Spring. This year's event will be presented by the Dade City Garden Club and The City of Dade City on Saturday, April 18, 2026, from 10 am to 4 pm in Touchton Park with activities flowing across the street into the gardens. The Jolley Trolley will be back to carry visitors from the free parking areas downtown to the Festival.

Manatee River Garden Club owns its clubhouse, but it sits on land that we lease from the City of Bradenton. Club members and friends of the club generously work on the landscaping, saving our club much money. These volunteers are called "Garden Angels." In 2025, we had a total of 78 angels, which means 6.5 volunteers a month!

Plant City Garden Club has three junior gardener chairpersons and five junior gardener clubs in three different public schools, and we also work with one homeschool group. Our activities include stick weaving, floral design, insect study, gardening (pollinator and agriculture), fairy garden assembly, and designing and creating terrariums, among other things.

Each of our junior gardeners receives a plant or creates a terrarium or fairy garden to grow for 90 days and show at the Florida Strawberry Festival. Club members staff the horticulture show at the Strawberry Festival annually along with doing all the plant check-in and arranging for the judging and teardown.

Sarasota Garden Club's Education Committee visited the Sarasota Succulent Society, where members enjoyed a tour of the whole garden, saw the historical home and created our own succulent gardens to be entered in the Flower Show in February 2026.

Tampa Garden Club is proud to host two annual community projects, an NGC Standard Flower Show with the theme "*Oh, The Games People Play!*"

and an outdoor plant sale and festival, GreenFest!, which is a plant festival featuring Florida native plants.

Venice Area Garden Club maintains the Legacy Park Demonstration Garden. They held their Home/Garden tour, "*A Centennial Garden Celebration,*" and participated in "Art in Bloom" at the Venice Art Center.

Nearly all of our clubs host plant sales, fundraisers and other special events to raise funds to support sending kids to Wekiva Youth Camp and other scholarships. Everyone is off to a great start this year with a variety of fascinating presentations on club meetings, and most clubs report strong membership.

DISTRICT IX

by Susan Lawson
District Director

Our spring season has been very active. In addition to their regular club meetings, several clubs held their major fund-raisers. We've had Tea Parties in Punta Gorda and Winter Haven, Card and Game Day in Sebring, a Home and Garden Tour in Naples, and Plant Sales in every corner of the District. All of these events raise monies to support the many charitable endeavors our Clubs support.

In March, **Naples Garden Club** held their Flower Show Extravaganza "Under the Big Top" – the largest flower show in Southwest Florida at the Naples Botanical Gardens. Also in March, **Punta Gorda Garden Club** exhibited designs and horticulture at their "From Golf to Gulf" Flower Show.

In April, **Cape Coral Garden Club** will be hosting "Painted Paradise" their Flower Show celebrating the vibrant colors of the well-loved artist Leoma Lovegrove. Also in April, **Calusa Garden Club** will hold an Art in Bloom event at the Marco Island Center for the Arts.

Our DIX **Affiliates** have events coming up that will be fun and educational. In April, the **Bonsai Society of SW FL** is holding their annual Silent

Auction, and the Edison Ford Winter Estates hosts Grow Fort Myers, a plant sale and symposium.

In addition to holding their 73rd Annual Hibiscus Show and Sale in April, the **James E. Hendry Chapter of the American Hibiscus Society**, founded in 1955 and the oldest chapter in the Society, will be hosting the 2026 Annual Convention of the American Hibiscus Society in Fort Myers June 18 - 20.



Attendees will gather from chapters in Texas, Louisiana and Florida to participate in educational workshops and network with fellow tropical hybrid hibiscus enthusiasts.

In April, the **Garden Club of Lakeland** will be celebrating their Blue Diamond 95th Anniversary with a luncheon being attended by FFGC President Christy Linke just before she heads to Convention.

On May 2, the **Avon Park Correctional Facility** will hold their Spring Plant sale. This sale has hands-on support from the Garden Club of Lakeland and the **Avon Park Founders Garden Club**. There will be lots of plants available at prices that are hard to beat, so make sure to bring your wagon.

Our Spring DIX Meeting is being hosted by the Port Charlotte Garden Club on May 7. Their theme is **Whimsical Garden Wonders**, and their program will show us how art, color, creativity and plants can come together in our garden.

We continue to grow our DIX Speakers Bureau. Our bureau now has 22 speakers who can speak on a variety of topics willing to come to meetings or events and give talks. This resource has proven to be valuable to our clubs who are always looking for new or different topics for their meetings. [Just ask if you would like for us to share that document.]

DISTRICT X

by Mary Ann Cody
District Director

District X started the year with hosting the 69th Annual Tropical Short Course, "Gardening into the Future," held in January at the Wellington Community Center, Wellington, FL. This year's Tropical Short Course was also an NGC Tri-Refresher for Gardening, Landscape Design and Environmental Consultants. There were over 100 attendees each day. FFGC President Christy Linke led off the first day with her presentation on the Junior Gardener Program, which is a Major focus of her presidency. She held the crowd's attention with her heartfelt remarks, and from there on it was smooth sailing. Many thanks to the Program Chair, **Jacqueline Reed, Registrar, Tony Cvetko**, and all the Volunteers who helped make it such a successful event and educational experience.

Thanks to the success of this Tropical Short Course, District X finds itself with a surplus of profits, which the membership will decide how best to utilize in accordance with our Mission at the Spring Meeting. District X hopes to continue this successful trendline so more funds can be contributed to

Camp Wekiva and other worthy causes.

District X Clubs have been busy this season with a myriad of events. The **Garden Club of Indian River County** presented its annual **Gardenfest** in Vero Beach's beautiful Riverside Park. This two-day event celebrates everything in the garden which the Indian River Garden Club has spent over 25 years developing and perfecting.

Boynton Beach Garden Club hosted "**Hats and High Fashion**," a fashion show and luncheon at the Indian Springs Country Club. A must attend event for all the Fashionistas and Professional Shoppers among us

Oleander Garden Club of the Palm Beaches held its "**Sounds of Spring 2026**," a lovely outdoor concert under the stars, with wine and gourmet hors d'oeuvres prepared by its members.

"**Orchids by the Sea**," a community event to learn about the mounting and care of orchids in a coastal environment, will be hosted by the **Ocean Ridge Garden Club**

on March 18th at Ocean Ridge Town Hall. All are invited to attend.

Wellington Garden Club presented its 2026 Garden Tour "**Garden Inspirations**" on Saturday, March 21st. Nobody does it better than Wellington...

Last, but by no means least, **Boca Raton Garden Club** will host the District X Spring Meeting on Thursday, April 23rd. "**Wonders of Water**" (WOW), will be held at the Boca Raton Garden Club, so seating will be limited to the first 120 registrants. Please submit your registration early.

Looking forward to seeing everyone at FFGC Convention 2026!

DISTRICT XI

*by Taryn Palo
District Director*

District XI has been busy with gardening projects, interesting programs, fundraisers and community outreach.

Fort Lauderdale GC held their Secret Garden Tour and it was a tremendous success. Some beautiful gardens were on display and members of the garden club and master gardeners were available at all locations.

The **Garden Club of Pompano Beach** has a new Junior Garden Club. This club was started by fate. PBGC meets at Emma Lou Civic center where there is an after school program. A new member was experienced with Children's gardening, so we submitted a program and a Junior Garden Club was formed. We signed up volunteers from our club; they were fingerprinted and a schedule was organized. YEA TEAM! Since that time there have been a few meetings including the latest where flying butterflies were created from paper.

Pompano Beach GC held its annual soup luncheon and fashion show. Members make incredible soups. Salad and rolls are provided at every table. There are jewelry and plant

vendors and a great fashion show.

Garden Club of Lighthouse Point is having their annual salad lunch coming up March 28th. Members all pitch in and make wonderful salads. Raffle baskets, 50/50, and vendors will all be there. There is going to be a performance by Jimmy Sawgrass of the Seminole Tribe. His dance and pow-wows are legendary.

Lauderdale-by the Sea is continuing the work on the apiary located at the town hall. The February Rummage sale and plant sale fundraiser was a huge success. They also had a garden tour and a floral design workshop. Their new website is almost up and running. President Ann Marchenski has an interesting idea. Meetings are started with members sitting next to each other talking to their partner for five minutes. They then go around the room and introduce each other. The topics are what is something you are working on, what is something you hope to accomplish, and what is your interest.

Coral Springs GC is working in various community gardens, distributing seeds through

the local library, and having wonderful programs and field trips.

All of our clubs are growing and staying active in the community. We do floral design and distribute to local hospitals, we engage kids in gardening projects and we share our love of caring for our environment.

DISTRICT XII

by Anita Grodssman
District Director

Coral Pines Garden Club

In January, Coral Pines Garden Club visited Lion Farms Organic Mushroom Farm, a zero-waste, 100 percent organic regenerative farm producing nearly a dozen varieties of high quality, healthy culinary and medicinal mushrooms. They are known for their “worm tea” made from worm castings and compost to produce a microbially-rich vermicompost tea used for fertilizer.

GROW Miami Garden Club

GROW (Gardeners Restoring Our World) Miami held a yard and native plant sale.

Marathon Garden Club had a successful January Jamboree with lots of merchandise sold.

South Miami Garden Club

held its annual Make, Bake or Growth fundraiser to raise funds for various non-profits in our community. Members are encouraged to bake homemade baked goods, make crafts or other items and bring in plants they have grown (some just buy them).

The **Miami Beach Garden Club** started 2026 with 82 members. In collaboration with the Miami Beach Orchid Society, their Club had their

Jr. Gardeners Chair, Drenda Mercer, provide an orchid re-potting booth for the Orchid Society Keiki Klub event. This summer, MBGC will be proudly sponsoring three lucky girls from Girls Inc., Miami, for 1 week at Camp Wekiva Youth Summer Camp.

Our January speaker was Anya Contierra, a clinical Herbalist/Herbal Educator who spoke on Botanical Resilience—Medical and Adaptive Strategies of Plants. MBGC started working on their Centennial Celebration to be held January 20, 2027.

Coral Gables Garden Club

Our Centennial Historic display was on view at the Coral Gables Library for the month of December, during which our Planting Pollinators sculpture was dedicated. Each month, members participate in our Heritage Herb Garden planting and maintenance at the historic Merrick House and our Fun with Flowers program which holds a floral arranging workshop with a different theme each month. In January, we had a Diggin It Workshop which featured a microgreens presentation and planting. Our Garden Therapy Committee works with Crystal Academy school for autistic children. We will host our 4th

Annual Fashion & Floral event, “Nightfall in the Garden,” on April 24 at the Coral Gables Golf & Country Club at 7 pm. Funds raised will support the new micro-forest planned in collaboration with the city of Coral Gables and continued habitat restorations of Camp Mahachee.

FLOWER POWER!

Flower shows began in the early 19th century when horticultural societies started organizing exhibitions to showcase new plant varieties, gardening techniques, and botanical discoveries. As plant exploration expanded through global trade and colonial expeditions, gardeners and botanists wanted venues to display rare species.

One of the earliest organized flower show was the **Philadelphia Flower Show, established in 1829** by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. These early shows were relatively small competitions featuring cut flowers, fruit, vegetables, and potted plants judged for quality. It is the oldest major flower show in the United States and one of the largest indoor flower shows in the world. Known for large themed exhibits, floral competitions, and landscape installations. Typically held in early March at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia.

Victorian Era Expansion (Mid-Late 1800s)

Flower shows became extremely popular during the Victorian gardening boom for

several reasons: The discovery of exotic plants from Asia, Africa, and South America; the development of glasshouses and conservatories; the rising middle-class interest in gardening; and formation of horticultural societies and clubs. During this period, the Royal Horticultural Society in Britain began hosting large exhibitions that eventually evolved into the famous Royal Horticultural Society's **Chelsea Flower Show in 1913**, considered the most prestigious flower show in the world.

20th Century: Spectacle and Garden Design

By the early 1900s, flower shows expanded beyond simple plant competitions. They began featuring full landscape garden installations, artistic floral design, plant breeders introducing new cultivars, educational exhibits and lectures.

Why Flower Shows Are So Popular

They inspire gardeners and visitors to see new plant combinations, garden layouts, and see design ideas they can use at home.

They introduce new plants; breeders debut new roses, perennials, bulbs, and shrubs.

The spectacle and artistry of large floral sculptures and show gardens function almost like temporary botanical art installations.

Shows educate the public through demonstrations, lectures, and horticultural advice.

Modern flower shows blend horticulture, landscape design, sustainability, and public entertainment. They remain influential because they shape global garden trends, introduce new plants to the public, and celebrate the cultural importance of gardening.

Keukenhof Spring Flower Exhibition – Lisse, Netherlands is often called the “Garden of Europe.” Open for about 8 weeks each spring (March–May). It displays over seven million bulbs, primarily tulips, along with hyacinths, daffodils, and specialty exhibits. One of the most visited floral displays in the world.

Singapore Garden Festival – Hosted by the National Parks Board (Singapore). Held every other year, it features international landscape designers and floral artists competing in large installations. Especially famous for orchid and tropical plant displays.



Of course, you can see your state's flower show in April at the convention in Kissimmee.

AN NGC MAJOR STANDARD FLOWER SHOW
The 40th Biennial State Flower Show
PRESENTED BY FFGC
Tuesday April 14 – Thursday April 16, 2026
Open and Free to the Public—Handicap Accessible



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