

*TRUMPET*



*VINE*

**National Garden Clubs, Inc.**

**Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania – District VII**

A FREE newsletter distributed via Club Presidents to ~338 club members and via

[http://www.gardenclubofmonroeville.org/trumpet\\_vine\\_gcfp\\_district\\_vii\\_newsletter](http://www.gardenclubofmonroeville.org/trumpet_vine_gcfp_district_vii_newsletter)

*Dec2017-Feb2018*



*Jackie Stempfer, Editor*

## ***DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE***

### **THE STATE OF DISTRICT VII'S UNION**

What is the **STATE OF OUR UNION** in **DISTRICT VII** as of **January 2018**? I am proud to say we are definitely an outstanding charitable, volunteer, networking organization that supports the goals of the Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania and our parent organization, the National Garden Clubs, Inc:

**First, 100 percent of our clubs hold educational, noteworthy programs for their members.**

**Second, 80 percent of our clubs donated to their most favored charities,** Natural Disasters USA, Penny Pines and GCFP Scholarships. Other club charities included Sage and Roses, Habitat for Humanity, World Gardening, Book of Recognition, and Natural Disasters, Intl.

**Third, 75 percent of our clubs contributed to the beautification of eastern Allegheny and western Westmoreland Counties:**

- 8 Burrellton gardens in 6 areas of Lower Burrell,
- 5 Forest Hills GC gardens on Boro-owned property,
- 3.5 acres of rose and native flower McKeesport GC gardens in Renziehausen Park,
- 2 of Monroeville GC corner gardens in the University Park area,
- 8 large Flower-filled Highland Park GC planters on Bryant Street in their commercial district,
- 2 Joyful Bloomer gardens in McKeesport's Kane Regional Hospital's Courtyard and Garden of Reflection,
- 2 Murrys ville GC gardens at Sardis Rd Butterfly Garden and Rt. 22 "Jughandle" Garden,
- 5 Pucketos' gardens in New Kensington,
- A Rockledge free program, "Seeds for Teachers," encouraging students to plant gardens, and
- Affiliate Greensburg Garden Center's Butterfly garden is a butterfly habitat and learning platform.

**Fourth, 66 percent of our clubs contributed to youth education through special programs and youth contests:**

- Burrellton GC works with High School and Middle School students and Girl Scouts,
- GC of Forest Hills plants annuals with Cub Scouts,
- GC of McKeesport works with Honor Society Students from the McKeesport Area HS,
- GC of Monroeville sponsors fifth grader Poetry and Sculpture Contests in Monroeville,
- Home Gardeners' Guild works with Special Education HS Students on horticulture therapy projects,
- Joyful Bloomers sponsors a Junior Garden Club,
- Murrys ville GC teaches third graders about gardening,

- Pucketos GC sponsors GCFP contests for poetry, sculpture, Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl, as well as Arbor Day and Ranger Rick, for elementary students. The club also works on horticulture therapy projects with area schools.

**Fifth, fifty percent of our clubs were responsible for \$9,000 given to area students' higher education through scholarships:**

- 2 college level students majoring in Horticulture and sponsored by Burrellton GC and GC of Monroeville won \$1,000 each through the GCFP Scholarship Program.
- 4 students won awards raised from Pucketos GC (\$1,000), Murrys ville GC (\$2,500), Home Gardeners' Guild (\$500), and GC of McKeesport (\$1,000).
- 1 student won \$2,000 from our affiliate, Greensburg Garden Center.

As of February 2017, our clubs did all of these activities with 376 members, which is an overall net 2% or 9 member reduction since January 2016. Over the year, our Clubs experienced a net loss of 4 members or a net gain up to 3 members while 6 clubs remained neutral, plus or minus 1 member.

Club Presidents expressed to me that Membership Matters and Leadership Matters! So, Members, invite and greet those new guests warmly and know that you can also lead a committee to expand your horizons. Continue to help "Naturehoods in Neighborhoods" and to "T.E.A.M. Up and Plant America" Together Everyone Achieves More!

Marilyn C. Backus- District VII Director (2016-2018)

**PS. I HOPE to see MANY club members** at our District VII networking event presented and prepared by our Board of Directors...the **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP TEA/LUNCH BUFFET/PROGRAM** on **THURSDAY, MARCH 15** AT SAMPSON'S MILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH HALL, 1665 Lincoln Way, White Oak, PA 15131. Our **Angie Raitano**, 2009-2011 GCFP President, will create **Four Fun Floral Designs**. Other features: Doors open at 9 AM for coffee and rolls, 50/50 and Basket/Item Raffles, Used Jewelry and Used Book Sales, new Educational Exhibits and Trash to Treasure Club Contest. To attend, send a \$10 check made out as "GCFP-District VII" and send to Marilyn Backus, 925 Wood Street, Pitcairn, PA 15140-1614 no later than Thursday, March 8.

**REGISTER TODAY** and share a room **FOR THE 2018 GCFP CONVENTION (April 15-17)** at the WASHINGTON MEADOWLANDS Doubletree Hotel (724-222-6200)! SEE the Keystone Gardener Winter edition's Registration FORM and more information at <http://www.pagardenclubs.org/>.

**REGISTER FOR THE 2018 NGC CONVENTION (May 20-24)** in Philadelphia at the Loews Hotel. See <http://www.gardenclub.org/> for more information.

### **Meet the 2016-2018 Board's District Chairs of Standing Committees...**

The Chair shall be "a competent, enthusiastic leader, well informed and interested in the specific appointment... and ...should be available for talks and/or short articles within the District." *District VII Standing Rules*

**Please contact Marilyn Backus to volunteer for an open or future seat on the Board of Directors!**

Standing Committee	Current Position Holder
Awards	Margie Wolff * *** Murrys ville GC
Birds	Haddie Weber* Home Gardeners Guild
Chaplain	Betty Monyok GC of McKeesport
Conservation & Recycling	Open

**Flower Show Schedules Advisor**

**Angie Raitano** \* \*\* *Landscape Design Society of W PA*

**Gardening and Health\*\*\***

**Marilyn Backus**\* *Murrysville GC*

**Garden Therapy**

**Judy Schaffer** *Pucketos GC*

**GCFP BEE GAP National Bee Project**

**Iris Cisarik** \* *GC Forest Hills*

**GCFP Club Yearbook Awards**

**Joyce Peterson** \* \*\* \*\*\* *GC Forest Hills*

**GCFP Convention Coordinator**

**Judy Schaffer** *Pucketos GC*

**GCFP 2018 Convention Chair (District X) AND GCFP Awards Vice Chair**

**Haddie Weber**\* *Home Gardeners Guild*

**GCFP Dist VII Nominating Alt. & GCFP Recording Secretary**

**Leeanna Ryba** \* \*\* \*\*\* *Burrellton GC*

**GCFP District VII Nominating Chair**

**Iris Cisarik** \* \*\*\* *GC Forest Hills*

**GCFP Parliamentarian/Past GCFP President 2009-2011**

**Angie Raitano** \* \*\* *Landscape Design Society of W PA*

**Historian**

**Ann Stromberg** *Joyful Bloomers GC*

**Horticulture**

**Mary Jane Hickman** *GC McKeesport*

**Judges' Council (Flower Show)**

**Joyce Peterson** \* \*\* \*\*\* *GC Forest Hills*

**Membership**

**Lana Kling** *Joyful Bloomers*

**Natural Disasters**

**Sharon Bryner** *Joyful Bloomers*

**Programs**

**Iris Cisarik**\* \*\*\* *GC Forest Hills*

**Publicity for District VII Membership Tea and Annual Meeting**

**Open**

**Scholarships (GCFP)**

**Shirley Brody** *GC Monroeville*

**Trumpet Vine Editor**

**Jackie Stempfer** *Murrysville GC*

\* Flower Show Judge

\*\*Landscape Design Consultant

\*\*\*Gardening Study Consultant

### **Also meet 2018's District VII Club Presidents and Officers...**

**Burrellton Garden Club**  
**Garden Club of Forest Hills**  
**Garden Club of McKeesport**  
**Garden Club of Monroeville**  
**Gardens LTD.**  
**Greensburg Garden Center (affiliate)**

**Leeanna Ryba**  
**Karen Lukas**  
**Marsha Pratt**  
**Shirley Brody & Marilyn Backus**  
**Roz Markovitz**  
**Carla Rusnica, Barbara Cseh & Margie Wolff**

**Highland Park Garden Club**  
**Home Gardeners' Guild**  
**Joyful Bloomers Garden Club**  
**Landscape Design Soc. W. PA**  
**Murrysville Garden Club**  
**Pucketos Garden Club**  
**Rockledge Garden Club**

**Susan Ryan**  
**Kathy Ingel**  
**Sharon Bryner**  
**Angie Raitano**  
**Pat Morrison**  
**Pat Lance**  
**Jim Lindsay**

**District Director**  
**Assistant District Director**  
**Treasurer**  
**Recording Secretary**  
**Corresponding Secretary**

**Marilyn Backus (GC Monroeville)**  
**Margie Wolff (Murrysville GC)**  
**Leeanna Ryba (Burrellton GC)**  
**OPEN**  
**Valerie Wilson (Murrysville GC)**



It's... not springtime. Not by a long shot. But believe it or not, winter is ending soon, which means the time is ripe to get our plans in order for this year's garden, whether you're dreaming of a bounty of vegetables, a balcony of colorful flowers, or some other sort of outdoor oasis.

Any gardener will tell you that as soon as the holidays end, our thoughts turn to one thing only: the garden.. After an interminably long, cold winter, gardeners are anxious to be outside and get their hands in the dirt. As memories of harsh winter storms fade in the warmer days of spring, it's time to think about waking up the garden for the new growing season. The busier you stay, the sooner spring will get here.

## **SPRING GARDENING TIPS AND CHORES**

With so much to get done, it's easy to feel overwhelmed on where to begin. By planning ahead and getting yourself organized, spring chores can be a snap.



### **Seed starting**

Start seeds of vegetables and annuals indoors 6-8 weeks before you plan to set them out. Make a planting schedule so that seedlings are mature at the optimal time for your region. Once soil temperature reaches 40 degrees F, crops such as greens, radishes and peas can be directly sown. Wait until soil temperature warms to 50 degrees F to plant cabbage, onions and Swiss chard. Summer vegetables can be sown in late spring.

### **Prune shrubs and vines**

Now is the time to prune roses, shrubs and perennial vines. Remove dead branches and shape plants once new growth appears. Research proper pruning techniques for each variety, and hold off on pruning spring bloomers until after they flower.







## Prepare ornamental beds

Start with areas where spring blooming bulbs are peeking out of the ground to spiff up early color displays. Rake out surface debris and cut back perennials and ornamental grasses before new growth appears. Top dress with several inches of homemade compost or well-seasoned manure, which will add slow-release nutrients, suppress weeds and conserve water during warm summer months.

## Divide perennials

Once new growth appears, it's a good time to divide perennials. Transfer extra clumps into bare spots or give them away to friends. If you belong to a neighborhood gardening group or club, organize a plant swap. It's a great way to try out new plants for free.



## Edible planting

Remove surface debris such as leaves or mulch from vegetable beds to help warm the soil. To avoid compaction, wait until soil has dried out sufficiently before tilling. If soil crumbles when you try to make a ball, then it's time to work the beds. Add amendments such as aged compost, manure and trace minerals before planting early crops of lettuce, radishes, kale, peas and onions. Protect young plants from late frosts with a cloche or

cold frame.

## Add color

Place early season annuals such as pansies and ranunculus around bulbs or in containers for an extra splash of color. Now is the time to plant summer bulbs including lilies and dahlias. Once all danger of frost is past, it's safe to plant warm-season annuals such as petunias and marigolds. Set out starts of cosmos and sunflowers.



**Plan ahead** Make a "to do" list of projects to tackle, such as building a pathway or wall, staining the deck, or installing a new water feature. Prioritize projects by setting up a time schedule and make realistic goals to get things checked off your list.



## Clean and prep

If you didn't do so last fall, scrape excess dirt off tools, wash in soapy water and allow to dry thoroughly. Coat metal parts with oil to prevent rust, and sharpen pruners and loppers. Power wash decks and patios, then wipe down stored patio furniture and set it outside for the season. Scrub out empty containers and fill with fresh potting soil in preparation for planting.

## Rejuvenate water features

Remove dirt and debris from water features and clean or replace filters. Turn on pumps and make sure water is circulating properly. For natural water gardens such as ponds or bogs, add beneficial plants or apply other algae control methods to maintain a healthy ecosystem.



## Wildlife friendly

Birds and other wildlife help control pests, balance the ecosystem and add ambience. Install nesting boxes with the proper dimensions and in the right spot to attract particular birds. Provide a consistent, clean water source. Plant natives that offer food sources of nectar, seeds and berries, and make sure there are trees and hedging for nesting habitat and shelter.

## Remember to Celebrate State Bird Day for Pennsylvania's Ruffed Grouse on Wednesday, March 21!

The name "Ruffed" was derived from the long, shiny, black or chocolate colored neck feathers that are most prominent on the male.

Record-low brood observations of the bird in 2017 (the second lowest in 37 years of monitoring) suggest immediate and aggressive action is needed to support recovery. See details and PA's 2018 management plan at <http://www.pgc.pa.gov/Wildlife/WildlifeSpecies/Pages/RuffedGrouse.aspx>



Photo from <http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org/> website



## **Garden Therapy "Key Ideas"**

Submitted by Judith Schaffer

Keys—Do you have unused keys sitting in a drawer?

I recently found some old keys that I have no idea what they unlocked. What should I do with them?

I discovered in a magazine article found on the Internet, an idea for recycling or reusing old keys. The author offered this advice –if they haven't been used in 5 years, get rid of them.

There are lots of craft ideas designed around using old keys. Start your club collecting old keys now. Make a key drop box and have it displayed at several upcoming meetings. Everyone will have some old keys around their homes to donate.

Keys make wonderful wind chimes, unique package decorations, jewelry or shadow boxes. Need something for a Christmas craft – make key snowman ornaments. This could be the theme for a holiday Christmas tree competition. The instructions for making the ornaments are found at this email address-  
[http:// craftsbyamanda.com/easy recipe-print](http://craftsbyamanda.com/easy_recipe-print)

Another idea is to recycle old keys. Keys for Kindness is an organization that accepts old keys and then recycles them as a fundraiser for multiple sclerosis. Donations of keys can be mailed to:

Keys for Kindness

P.O. Box 201

Pearl River, NY 10965

Don't just throw away old keys, recycle or reuse them!

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## **GREENSBURG GARDEN CENTER**

### **Philadelphia Flower Show 2018 Bus Trip Wednesday, March 7**

The annual bus trip to the Philadelphia Flower Show will be on Wednesday, March 7. The bus will leave at 7:00 AM from the Greensburg Garden Center and arrive back at the center at approximately 11:30 PM. Tickets are \$120 for members or \$130 for non-members. Call the office to reserve your seat early. We have a smaller bus this year and seating is limited.

The 2018 Flower Show, "Wonders of Water", will celebrate the beauty and life-sustaining interplay of horticulture and water.

America's leading floral and garden designers will create tropical jungles, temperate forests, native woodlands and landscapes showcasing the astounding plants that thrive in each

environment, from exquisite orchids and flowering vines to luminescent desert blooms.

The Annual Flower Show is a top destination and a "must experience" horticultural event,. Attracting 250,000 visitors annually to the Pennsylvania Convention Center, a showcase of excellence that dates back to 1829.

While the hustle and bustle of the Flower Show is exciting and colorful, you may want a little respite in mid-afternoon. The Garden Tea may be just what you need. Perfectly timed at 2:45 PM, relax and enjoy light sandwiches with petite treats and an assortment of fine tea. Reservations are suggested at \$30.00 each (in advance). Tickets can be ordered thru our office or online.

Feeling crafty? Check out the Make and Take section and create a succulent planter. Only a \$10 fee; available the day of the tour.

## GREENSBURG GARDEN CENTER, *continued*

### 2018 MAY MART – GARDENER'S FARE

FRIDAY, MAY 4 – 12:00 PM TO 7:00 PM  
SATURDAY, MAY 5 – 9:00 AM TO 1:00 PM

Mark your calendar to be sure not to miss this year's May Mart! Plans are already perking

along: the perennial order has been filled out, the vendors' forms have been sent and a raffle prize is ready.

Do you have extra "volunteer" plants in your garden or need to "divide and conquer" plants that have outgrown their space? We welcome your unwanted extras! Bring them to the Center where our planting ladies will re-pot and fertilize them to plump them up for sale at the Gardener's Fare.

**Don't toss out those unwanted, used garden items from your shed or garage. Give them a second chance at our Garden Flea Mart.**

Someone needs those throw-a-ways! Bring them in and we can set them out for someone else to buy and use.

If you or someone you know have a special talent to display and/or sell at May Mart, it's simple to reserve a space. In 2017 we had 20 vendors; we have room for more!

Call Nicky at the office if you would like to have a May Mart flyer to show around or post in your favorite store. Help to get the word out that Greensburg Garden Center's May Mart should not be missed!

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### Judy's Jottings Jar Talk



I grew up having a Grandma who planted a large vegetable garden and did lots of yearly canning. Her cellar was always loaded with jars of fruits, vegetables and jellies. She willingly shared her bounty, but with the condition that her canning jars must be returned.

She had a large amount of jars, yet she was always buying more.

My mother inherited lots of her mason jars, but never canned like Granny did. She would put up tomatoes and hot peppers and sometimes pickles. When my mother passed away, I sold her house and had to clean-out our root cellar. (It was just a cold storage area in the back of the cellar.) Mason jars of all sizes and colors were given away and finally just pitched. I regret not keeping some of the jars, as a new trend is to make them into crafts or gifts.

The Mason Jar was invented and patented in 1858 by a tinsmith named John Landis Mason. He was raised in Philadelphia and then moved to New York. He created the standard thread cap then the jar to go with it at the age of 26. The jars were an immediate success! He also received a patent for the first pepper shaker with a screw-on cap on the same day as his jar.

His jars were affordable and re-useable. His design was for a two part top. The lid is used only one time, but the rubber ring and outer band with screw threads can be used numerous times. Competitor companies produced the mason jars after his patent ran out in 1879. John Mason never became wealthy and died broke in 1902.



With only minor adjustments, his jars were used to preserve foods for years. Brand name companies such as Ball, Kerr, Golden Harvest and Bernarden, massed produced his product. The Ball Brothers began distributing the Mason jar in 1884 and are still the most known mass production company.

Collecting mason jars began in the 1960's with renewed interest in canning throughout the United States. Jars were produced in a variety of colors besides clear glass. Aqua, amber, dark amber, emerald, milk glass, cobalt and black are collectibles from common to rarest colors. I threw away some of these colors and could kick myself now! If you have old mason jars check out this source book to judge their value-----

***RED BOOK 9: THE COLLECTORS GUIDE TO OLD FRUIT JARS***

By Douglas Leybourne

There are endless uses today for mason jars. Remember as a child collecting lightening bugs in them!

Dreams do come true

If you wish on every fallen star

Once you catch those dreams

Keep them like lightening bugs in a mason jar.

A popular holiday trend is to fill a decorated jar with recipe mixes and give it as a gift. How many did you receive this past holiday season?

Beautifully decorated jars are filled with attractive layers of ingredients for making homemade goodies.

Did you know that there is a right and wrong way to layer the ingredients? I recommend this book for first time crafters—

***THE MASON JAR SOUP-to-NUTS COOKBOOK***

By Lonnette Parks

The cost of 12-regular mouth jars including lids and bands cost \$13.92 at your local Walmart. I plan to buy a case to keep in my cellar, not for canning but to create something unique. Any ideas? Containers for flower arrangements!

If old time mason jars could talk, imagine the stories and history they could pass on to us today.

Next November 30 is National Mason Jar Day. Take one and make something with it in your own unique way.

2018 DISTRICT VII'S OPEN, PUBLIC EVENTS CALENDAR		
DATE	SPONSOR	EVENT
Mar 3-11		<b>Philadelphia Flower Show – Wonders of Water</b>
Thurs Mar 15	District VII Board	<b>Membership Tea-Lunch-Program at Sampson's Mills Presbyterian Church Hall, 1665 Lincoln Way, White Oak, PA 15131</b>
Wed Mar 21		<b>State Bird Day</b>
Sat Apr 7	GC McKeesport	<b>Rose Pruning Day</b> starts at 1 PM at Clubhouse in Renziehausen Park
Sun-Tues Apr 15-17	District X	<b>GCFP Convention and Board Mtg @ Doubletree by Hilton, the Meadowlands, PA.</b>
Tues April 17	GC Monroeville	<b>"Attracting Monarchs and Other Butterflies Into Your Garden"</b> free presentation at Monroeville Public Library Gallery Space, 7 PM

Tues-Thurs April 24-26	GCFP, Erie Area, Pittsburgh Area, Laurel Highlands Judges' Councils	<b>Flower Show School Course III</b> , Hampton Inn and Suites, Grove City, PA 16137. Registration Deadline is April 1, 2018.
Fri Apr 27		<b>Arbor Day</b>
Sat Apr 28	GC Monroeville	<b>Plant (and Bare Root Tree) Sale in Monroeville's new Tilbrook Park Pavilion #1 from 10 AM-2PM</b>
Mon Apr 30	Designers Guild	<b>"Petites"</b> at Greensburg Garden Center on Old Salem Rd, ~10 AM-1PM
Sat May 5	GC McKeesport	<b>Plant Sale and Crafts</b> at Clubhouse in Renziehausen Park begins at 9 AM
Sat May 19	Burrellton GC	<b>May Mart @Lower Burrell City Hall</b>
Sun-Thurs May 20-24	NGC/GCFP	<b>2018 National Garden Clubs Annual Convention @ Loews Hotel in Philadelphia "Love Blooms in Philadelphia"</b>

### **Closing the Bee/Gap – Gardeners Aiding Pollinators**

**Iris Cisarik**

It is the time of year, believe it or not, when farmers are planning their crops for the coming season. It was in January when my dad began deciding what he was going to plant and the amount of seeds he would need to order. Bees need our help and your garden needs the bees to pollinate your vegetables, fruits and flowers. So this is the time to decide just what you may want in your garden this year.

Spring Mason bees can help increase your spring fruit and plant yields. Summer flowers and gardens benefit from the leafcutter. There are more than 130 species of hole-nesting native mason bees in North America. These native bees are very efficient at gathering both pollen and nectar within the same visit. Research shows that solitary mason bees can double cherry pollination compared to honey bees alone. Both bees forage for pollen within 300 feet of their nests. On average, one foraging female native mason bee can pollinate as much as 100 foraging honeybees.

This information lends itself to planting such vegetables as arugula, beans, beets, brussel sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, collards, cucumbers, eggplant, garlic, leeks, lettuce, melons, peas, peppers and shallots to name a few. Some excellent flowers are poppies, Monarda, Snapdragons, Asters, Butterfly bush, butterfly weed, fennel, Lantana, oregano, sunflowers, sweet alyssum, Alstroemeria, Red Hot Poker, Salvia, Lavender, Gloriosa daisy, Pincushion flowers, Gallardia, coneflower and Yarrow and yes, even think about nut trees. **HAPPY PLANNING.**

**REMEMBER- THE HARDEST WORKING BEE CAN SAVE THE WORLD- ONE BACKYARD AT A TIME!**

*NEXT ISSUES of the Trumpet Vine:*

Articles/Information for the Mar-Apr 2018 issue info is due Apr 15 for publishing May 1.

- The May-Aug 2018 issue info is due Aug 15 for publishing Sept 1.

- The Sept-Nov 2018 issue info is due Nov 15 for publishing Dec 1.

NOTE1: Send email files to TV Editor [jstempfer@comcast.net](mailto:jstempfer@comcast.net) copying the District Director [marilyncbackus@gmail.com](mailto:marilyncbackus@gmail.com). The TV Editor prefers electronic files of each club's officers and club business programs planned for 2018 before April 15.

NOTE2: Also remember to send or give a copy of a Club Yearbook to the District VII Director (Marilyn Backus) at 925 Wood Street, Pitcairn, PA 15140 before April 15.