



Nebraska Garden News

Cultivating The Good Life

Volume 66– 4 Winter 2025 Issue

Member: Rocky Mountain Region, Inc.
National Garden Clubs, Inc.



GREETINGS FELLOW GroARDENERS

What's next? Ice and snow blankets our eastern half while "out west" folks string Christmas lights in T-shirts. Only one answer. It's time to flip through seed catalogs, my friends!

Several club members have been enjoying catalog exchange parties for a month already. Here's another option you may not have tried. Tree-planting, Hear me out! Plan to celebrate next year's 250th anniversary of our Independence by planting a memorial tree at each club's location ... from Nebraska City to Sidney. Now's the time to plan. NGC President Donna Donnelly will be speaking at Keep America Beautiful's (KAB) national conference this February - "Plant America" promotions are underway across our country and Nebraska, Home of Arbor Day, is jumping ahead of the rest.

Our "250th Commission" is organizing the statewide planting of red, white and blue flowers. The goal is for each village, town and city to display our nation's colors through the 4th of July. More details after I return from the KAB conference. Detailed plans and resource notes will be presented here in our March newsletter.

Until then, mind the Nebraska weather, and start selecting your club's memorial tree species!

Your tree-hugging president, Rod Ruzanic

If you love to write or have topic ideas, we would love to include the article and explore your topic suggestions in the newsletter. If you have articles from other sources, we need the sources' approval to reprint the article. We welcome your input. The Editors

<p>NEBRASKA GARDEN NEWS</p> <p>Official publication of The Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, Inc.</p> <p>Published at Omaha, Nebraska, on a quarterly basis.</p> <p><u>Deadline for Copy</u> <u>15th Feb, May, Aug and Nov</u></p> <p>NGC Headquarters 401Magnolia Ave, St.Louis MO 63110</p> <p>National Garden Clubs, Inc. 2025-2027 President Donna Donnelly</p> <p>Rocky Mountain Region, Inc. 2025—2027 Director Shirley Pursel</p> <p>Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, Inc. 2025-2027 President Rod Ruzanic 827 West A St. 308-289-3891 Ogallala, NE 69153 ruzanicrod@gmail.com</p> <p>Editors Jim Rouch : jim@rouchpartners.com, 402-651-5569 Donna Rouch: donna@rouchpartners.com, 402-696-0906</p> <p>E-mail Circulation Robbie Kupper 315 East 6th Street Ogallala, NE 69153 fgcninc@gmail.com</p>	<p>Dates to Remember</p> <p>DEADLINE FOR THE Spring ISSUE February 15, 2026</p> <p>Any Chair, member or Club President may send a report, article or announcement that seems timely!</p> <p><u>Up Coming Events:</u></p> <p>December 30 , 2025 NGC, Inc. Award Applications to Christine Martin</p> <p>January 1, 2026 Scholarship Applications are due to Lorraine Patrick</p> <p>April 1, 2026 State Dues to: Robbie Kupper 315 East 6th St. Ogallala, NE 69153</p> <p>May 1, 2026 Submit state award appli makecations to individual FGCN State Chairmen</p> <p>NGC Convention TBA</p> <p>June 5-6, 2026 90th FGCN Annual Meeting Kearney, NE Please make note: the previous date was written in error! June 5-6 , 2026 is correct.</p>
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Mission Statement

The mission of the Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska is: to plant seeds of interest in gardening, landscaping, flower shows, environmental issues, community beautification, charitable activities and to cultivate those seeds through sponsored schools, correspondence and sharing of knowledge for the good life of Nebraska



Remembrance of Our Garden Club Members

Today and always, may loving memories of our gardening friends bring you peace, comfort, and strength.

**Del Hemsath, Kearney, NE age 79 died
August 25, 2025**

Soil Sisters and Misterys

**Marcie Mueller, Sidney, NE age 77 died
November 3, 2025**

Sidney Garden Club, Dix Soillettes Garden Club, and Gurley-Dalton Garden Club.

**Susan Lynne Stuart Ryan
May 8, 1944 - September 19, 2025**

She was a member and past president of Sunset Hills Garden.



Gardening Gloves for Sale

Help Support the Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, Inc.



The Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, Inc. is selling Atlas 370 Gardening Gloves. All proceeds help support Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, Inc. projects.

Glove sizes are medium and large only. The cost is \$8.00 per pair or 2 pairs for \$15.00. The color choices are green, pink, purple and orange.

If you are interested, please send a check with your size and color preference to the following address:

Lorraine Patrick
3716 Schuemann Dr.
Bellevue, NE 68123

If you would like to call and place your order, the phone number is: (402) 502-2548.

Thank you for your support.

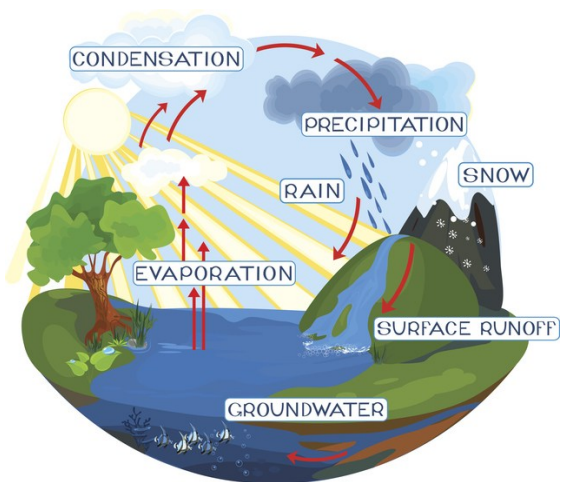
DOWN THE GARDEN PATH
BY Gwen DeWitt Garden Consultant

For several years, Donna and I have attended NGC Environmental Studies School sessions held semiannually in Groesbeck, TX. They are always very interesting and, in addition to the subject matter, we have enjoyed meeting new friends and seeing them on a recurring basis at the sessions. One of these good friends is Gwen DeWitt, past Texas Garden Clubs, Inc. president. Gwen is also a columnist for a local newspaper, with a recurring feature entitled “Down the Garden Path.” One of her recent columns was on the drought much of Texas has experienced and, of course, other great plains states as well. Although the column refers to Texas specific matters, we believe it also has information of interest to Nebraskans as well. Gwen has given us permission to republish the article in this newsletter.

I just returned home from “summer camp” – better known as Environmental School. This time, I was smart and took a foam mattress pad to put on that hard bunk bed mattress in the barracks! The husband and I spent five years in that area when he was manager of Fairfield State Park. It’s a beautiful part of Texas, especially this time of the year.

Students arrived Friday afternoon at Fort Parker State Park, Mexia, Texas in time to make up our beds in the barracks, eat dinner, then take our first class on the Water Cycle. We even did a water workshop. This school covered all aspects of water.

The first session covered practical examples of how the water cycle effects our daily life, our gardens and homes. Experiments were conducted to demonstrate how evaporation, condensation and precipitation occur.



Conditions in Texas over the last few years have made everyone aware of the impact of the water cycle - we are either going into a drought or coming out of one! Much of Texas is in a drought with portions of the state facing severe drought. The lake levels in our area are at historic lows critically impacting surrounding communities drinking water. NBC News has an article on critical conditions facing Mathis, Texas. The area is dealing with stage four water rationing. We are all facing enforced water conservation.

We can do our part to conserve water by only using dishwasher and washing machines with full loads, using shorter cycles. Take shorter showers. Put a bucket in the shower to catch water while showering to use to water plants. Repair leaky faucets, turn off taps tightly, don't run water while brushing teeth, washing hands, or shaving. Don't allow runoff to occur when watering the landscape or water during heat of the day, or when windy. Replace lawns with planting beds filled with water wise plants, native shrubs, and trees. Install water-saving appliances, toilets, and showerheads. If you live in town don't use water to clean sidewalks or driveways – use a broom and sweep, its good exercise! Check with your municipality – they sometimes have tax-breaks for water-saving improvements.

While humans have impacted the water cycle by creating cities filled with pavement and concrete, Urban planners are now adding green spaces and planting more trees. Not only does this make cities beautiful, it reduces heat sinks, reduces run off, and allows water to return to the aquifers.

Water scarcity affects different areas unevenly. Some global areas like the Middle East and North Africa, experience extremely high-water stress. Changes in rainfall patterns, melting glaciers, and rising temperatures are reducing water availability and increasing the risk of extreme events.

While the earth is covered with water, the amount of clean useable water is small. Water is life – 3.6 billion people lack access to adequate sanitation while 3 out of 10 lack access to soap and water. Millions die each year from water borne diseases – cholera and e. coli. In certain areas of the world, women and girls are disproportionately impacted by water shortages since they are the ones that collect the water for their households.

Texas' population based on current trends will be between 44 and 65 million people by 2060. This means we must learn to be more efficient in conserving our water. Cities need to develop local alternative supplies, make sure their piping system is leak free, and wastewater reuse for non-potable purposes. As individuals we can harvest rainwater to supplement our gardens. To do our part to conserve water, we can reduce chemical use, and implement practices that minimize pollution and erosion.

Conservation can lead to lower water bills. Reducing water consumption can also reduce energy needed for water treatment and heating. The five water principals are reduce, reuse, recycle, rejuvenate and respect our water.

We have some major issues facing us on use of water and our electric grid with the coming of AI. Environmental challenges we face include, extreme weather events like the flood we had in the Hill Country, the drought we are experiencing in Texas, water pollution from agricultural runoff, industrial discharge, urban wastewater, and over exploitation and depletion of groundwater and surface water. Deforestation and wetland loss and the impact of wildfires is a major impact on water quality.

We need to be diligent conserving our water to ensure that enough water is available for human consumption, agriculture, and ecosystems. We can have a major impact by practicing good water habits. Jacques Cousteau said “We forget the Water cycle and Life cycle are one.”

Happy Gardening!





Dedication to the Blue Star Memorial Memorial Park, Omaha, Nebraska

On September 19, 2025 a Blue Star Memorial By-Way, the first to be placed in Nebraska, was dedicated. The dedication occurred in conjunction with the annual POW/MIA ceremony in Omaha's Memorial Park.

Mary Carlson, the Nebraska and Rocky Mountain Region Garden Clubs Blue Star/Gold Star Memorial representative for the National Garden Clubs, Inc., presented the Memorial to Mayor John Ewing for the city of Omaha. Addressing the national, state, and local significance of the Memorial and the Blue Star program, in addition to Carlson and Ewing, was the Honorable Hal Daub, who served four terms in the United States House of Representatives and was the 48th Mayor of Omaha.

Besides the Memorial By-Way, Nebraska has 14 existing Blue Star Memorials, the latest being installed in Fort McPherson National Cemetery, Maxwell Nebraska, in April 2025.

Installation of the Blue Star Memorial By-Way is Carlson's latest effort to expand, document and preserve the history of the Nebraska Blue Star memorials. In the past three years, restoration was completed on seven Nebraska Blue Star Memorials which were over 50 years old (five at Interstate 80 rest stops and two on Nebraska Highway 83 – Blue Star Highways).

In addition, after being damaged in a windstorm, the original first Nebraska Blue Star Memorial (1950) in Plattsmouth, which had been replaced, was relocated and found its way 217 miles west to the Military Vehicle Museum, in Lexington. That Memorial joins the second Nebraska Blue Star Memorial (1952) in Wellfleet, is also in a museum, namely the Lincoln County Historical Museum in North Platte.

The next objective is to install a Blue Star Memorial in the panhandle area of western Nebraska. Stay tuned.

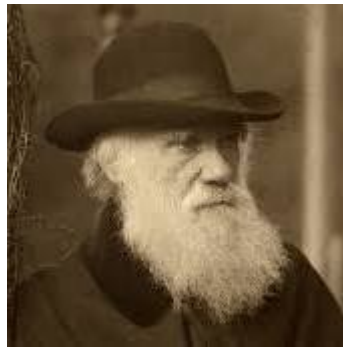
Submitted Mary Carlson



Happy 100th Birthday Gladys Jones

Gladys Jones celebrating her birthday with her many friends including her Plattsmouth Garden Club family!

Quote of the Day



As Charles Darwin stated, "It is not the strongest that survives, nor the most intelligent. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change."

Who Am I?

1. I can reach speeds of 30 miles per hour and I have unmatched flight capabilities.
2. I can hover, fly backwards, upside down and sideways due to my two wing pairs that can move independently. Instead of chasing prey from behind, I perform complex calculations to predict the prey's flight path and fly to where the prey will be! I practice motion camouflage, where I appear stationary.
3. I possess 25,000 facets, tiny lenses, that give me near 360 degree vision.
4. As a testament to my flight control, I can mate in mid-air forming a heart shape.
5. I spend the majority of my life (2) years) as a nymph in the water before becoming an adult.
6. I am the most efficient and deadly predators in the animal kingdom with a hunting success rate of up to 97% thus surpassing other top predators like lions and sharks.
7. Who am I?
(answer on page 28)

Thievery Amongst Us by Donna Rouch



Lithops Poached

“According to scientists and amateur botanists, the greatest threat the cacti and succulent species faces is from poaching for international illegal trade.”

Jared D. Margulies, author The Cactus Hunters

Two thousand cacti species are found primarily in the Americas, ranging from Canada to the southern tip of South America. An exception is “Rhipsalis baccifer” native to parts of Africa, Madagascar, and Sri Lanka. In other regions around the world, cacti are found due to introduction by humans.

Approximately twenty thousand succulent species are found around the world in arid and semi-arid regions. In South Africa’s “Succulent Karoo” biome approximately one third of succulent species reside. Other areas where succulents are found are southwest United States, Mexico, Madagascar, and the Mediterranean.

Cacti are a type of succulent but not all succulents are cacti. Cacti have areoles and succulents do not. Areoles are small, round, fleshy bumps on the surface of the plant. This is where spines, hair, leaves, and flowers grow. Succulents have fleshy leaves, thorns or spines but no areoles.



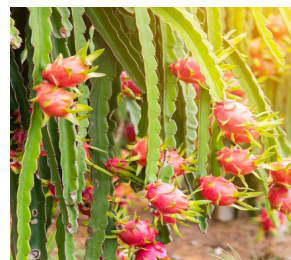
Areoles

Both cacti and succulents have flowers but cacti flowers are larger in size, have brighter blooms and more complex flowers. They are pollinated by bees, butterflies and bats whereas other succulents are pollinated by bees, only.

Only cacti produce edible fruits known as dragon fruit and prickly pear.



Prickly Pear
Fruit



Dragon Fruit

Cacti and succulents are phenomenally popular worldwide. Unfortunately, they are among the world's most threatened species. Social media has fueled a desire for plant enthusiasts to own cacti and succulents that no one else has. This has created criminal networks to supply their needs. Colorful succulents by the million are being smuggled overseas! It is a conundrum that passionate lovers of succulents are engaged in illicit trade which may cause the extinction of objects of their desires.

Extinction is the complete disappearance of a species from the Earth. Functional Extinction, on the other hand, means the wild population is too small to survive, even if a few individuals still exist. Poaching is the widespread threat of decline for many species, with hundreds more headed toward extinction. Authorities confiscated over a million illegally harvested plants representing 650 different species in South Africa in 2019. An early 2025 report from the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime identified a significant increase (265%) in online advertisements for threatened plant species between reporting periods in 2024, indicating a major surge in illicit online activity.

Why is poaching so destructive? Some cacti and succulents grow slowly with long lifespans causing them to mature slowly, making it difficult for wild populations to recover. Some species grow in extremely restricted natural habitats like a cliff wall and recovery is difficult if the same environment is not available. Taking plants from the wild removes genetic diversity which is crucial for survival and the ability to adapt to environmental changes.

A multi-faceted approach to halt or slow down poaching is necessary. It is important to work with governments in other countries to stop illegal trade routes. Authorities must strengthen and enforce laws that explicitly make poaching illegal. Penalties must be made stronger by increasing fines and jail time. It is also important that law enforcement, conservation agencies and other groups, and community members work together and share information

We should also promote cacti and succulent propagation by legitimate commercial growers and botanical institutions. And we should support ethical trade by encouraging consumers to buy from transparent and ethical supply chains. Economic alternatives should be created by developing regulated harvesting programs. Markets should be monitored to discover plants being targeted.

The driving forces behind poaching are illegal trade, collector demand, and social media platforms that help increase demand for plants and provide tools like GPS to guide poachers to harvest plants directly from the wild.

The psychological motivation of poachers is high profit margins and steep prices paid for rare and endangered species. Besides financial motivation, there are often desires for status, thrill-seeking, a sense of control and social acceptance within specific illegal poaching communities.

Collectors' psychological motivation may be status and prestige, along with, rationalization and neutralization to justify their actions and avoid guilt. For Example: they may frame their actions as scientific research or preservation of a species or collecting a species before it becomes extinct. Sadly, this is one reason a plant is becoming extinct!

"A mystery: why would succulent collectors, people who are so passionate about these plants-rare, endangered, or otherwise-seemingly love them into extinction through illicit acts?"

Jared D. Margulies

The three cacti below are Functional Extinct.



Echinopsis pampana



Pilosocereus millspaughii



Parodia muricata

2025 Soil Sisters and Mistery Garden Club

by Alice Hemsath, President

Our club has 34 members, most of whom are active in club activities. Our club meets the third Tuesday of each month at different locations depending upon the program for the meeting. At our October meeting we elected Alice Hemsath, President, and Brenda Shinn, Vice President. Debbi Suess and Deanna Schwartz are Treasurer and Secretary.

We have club tours of different horticulture businesses, private gardens, or meetings over lunch with guest speakers. We are saddened at the death from cancer of our President Del Hemsath at the end of August. He led us with enthusiasm and commitment to gardening.

Activities for 2025 year include:

Volunteering at Kearney Yanney Park

Steinbrinks Program on top ten perennials

Touring Grazyk's Landscaping

Roses Program

Plant and seed share in the spring and fall at Harmon Park where folks can come and share plants, no cost to them, plants are free. Donations are accepted.

Lavendar farm tour near Dannebrog, Creek's Bend Garden at Overton

Meeting and touring one of our member's landscapes

Local garden tour in June for the public at personal gardens which is a fund raiser for the club.



Rowe Sanctuary tour

Holiday of Lights at Yanney Park in December

Christmas Holiday celebration in January to bring members and guests together for the past year and looking forward to a new season.

Helping at the local county fair with the plant and flower division and awarding prizes to the winners.

Our 2026 program is in the planning stages but we are going to Lincoln in June to tour native plant landscapes.



OGALLALA GARDEN CLUB

Ogallala Garden Club has had a very busy spring and summer. We kicked off our spring as usual with a plant sale. This is always an exciting time for both the garden club and the community.

A committee of three gathered and planned 19 programs for the Ogallala Garden Club through May of 2027.

In July of 2027, Darla Stubenrough invited members of the garden club to her home in Ogallala. Everyone got to see all the different plants in her well-manicured and beautiful flower and vegetable garden.

In September 2025, members drove out to tour the Cedar Point Biolog-



ical Station, located on the south side of Lake Ogallala, below Lake McConaughy and the dam. The station director provided a history of the area, including who uses the area and what activities are conducted there. It is a UNL campus, a field research facility, and part of the UNL School of Biological Sciences. It is also part of UNL's College of Arts and Sciences. Cedar Point is available for research and educational activities from May through August. It has housing for over 100 students, a library, dining facilities, and classroom spaces. The center is situated on 950 acres of prairie and

canyons, featuring junipers.

In October 2025, Dana Revell from Sidney was our guest speaker, presenting a program on Seed Saving. She encouraged us to wear long-sleeved shirts and brimmed hats when working in the garden to help prevent skin cancer. She also showed us stretch sleeves that can be pulled over our arms to protect from the harmful sun rays.

She gave some really relevant tips on seed saving. One should always carry a pen and pad or other label material for seed gathering.

When it is seed-saving time, she hangs some of her plants upside down from a rod to dry. Different-sized kitchen strainers and sieves are used to separate seeds from other materials and debris. Small plastic bags and envelopes are used for storing seeds. A CD case was used for filing and storing seeds. Dana brought and graciously shared seeds from several of her plants, which we took home to plant in our gardens.

The Ogallala Garden Club works to maintain the 500-square-foot flower bed at the Ogallala Cemetery by cleaning, weeding, deadheading, trimming, planting, and mulching.



Written by Janette Fenwick

FRIENDLY FEDERATED GARDEN CLUB

2025 was a very interesting year for the Friendly Federated Garden Club members. Our club was organized 62 years ago by a group of men and women interested in learning about flowers and gardening, and united in a common interest.

The Garden Club worked on many different projects this year and accomplished many of its goals. From January through March, we planned the projects we would undertake, composed our yearbook, and started working on the scrapbook detailing our accomplishments. We continued to meet either via Zoom or by phone. Our projects continued: making birthday cards, saving pop tabs, saving plastic bags for plan, and donating to food pantries in Lincoln and Saline County.



A Tree City USA award was presented to the City of Friend in April. During the Annual Community Forestry Recognition Program, the City of Friend was honored for its 42 years of commitment to managing and enhancing community tree resources. Members of the Garden Club were instrumental in preparing our town to apply for this honor. In April, we also celebrated Arbor Day by planting a Red Oak tree at Friend Park, honoring Issac Speese, who was killed in a tragic car accident. One Garden Club member is a Tree City U.S.A. Board Member.

In May, Chris Martin traveled to Ireland and Scotland and had the opportunity to see some of the most beautiful gardens.

In June, Chris attended the FGCN State meeting in Sydney, NE, and the Eastern District meeting in Elkhorn, NE.

In June, we went to the Sunken Gardens and the Rose Garden in Lincoln, as it is a tradition for our club.

We have begun making decorations for the 41st annual Christmas Tree Festival, which will be held at the Gilbert Library.

Submitted Chris Martin, President

Plattsmouth Garden Club Annual Report October 2025

by Patty Coleman, President

The Plattsmouth Garden Club (PGC) currently has a total of 37 members (8 family and 21 individuals). We continue to be an active club and are always thinking of new projects and events to keep members involved with PGC activities. The Plattsmouth Garden Club (PGC) had many special speakers in 2025 on the subjects of honey bees, dahlia propagation, native bees, seed starting, flower arranging, and more. We were fortunate to welcome 9 new members this year.

A grant was obtained in early 2025 from the Plattsmouth Community Foundation to revive the plantings at the Veteran's Memorial Garden at Garfield Park. The club is devoted to ongoing care and maintenance of this community project. We had regular "Dig and Dream Weed Pulls" during the summer month to keep the garden looking beautiful. This is a project we are very proud of since takes several dedicated gardeners to maintain it. At this time, we are actively fundraising for a permanent addition of a tribute to all Armed Forces which we are calling the "Badges of Honor" Project. Sharon Muller is organizing the project and with her son Max Muller, \$1,350.00 has already been raised towards this project.

A Garden Tour was held on Saturday June 28, 2025 and enjoyed by members and guests alike.

Our social media presence continues to grow with a robust Facebook following of 500 friends.

On Saturday September 13, 2025, thirteen members enjoyed a meeting at Lauritzen Gardens, followed by lunch. Some members ended the day at the Milkweed and Cookies event at Bellevue University.

The ****Fall Plant Sale and Flower Show**** September 5-6, 2025 was a big success! We offered 4 different forms of payment for the plant sale this year and all of them were used. In addition to offering cash and check, we offered a credit card payment option as well as Venmo. The plant sale proceeds totaled over \$700.00!

On October 13, 2025, we had guest speaker Rachel Anderson from the Extension Office discuss "Planting Spring Bulbs." On November 10, 2025 I will be presenting with Yolanda Jasso on "Teacup Fairy Gardens."



We will end our very busy year with a fun and relaxing Christmas Party on Monday December 8, 2025 at 6:00pm. Some of the Plattsmouth Garden Club's traditions include a potluck, gift exchange, cash donations to the Plattsmouth Food Bank and unwrapped gifts for Prestige Care residents.

Beginning in January 2026, we will kick off with an election of officers in January at Milano's Italian Restaurant in Plattsmouth.



Armed service emblems added to the existing Veterans Memorial Garden structure at Garfield Park in Plattsmouth, NE. Project led by PGC members Sharon and Max Muller.



Plattsmouth Garden Club

Tea Cup Fairy Garden Workshop

A creative life is an amplified life. It's a bigger life, a happier life, an expanded life, and a hell of a lot more interesting life." - [Elizabeth Gilbert](#)



Feel the joy on Mern Breitzkreutz's face!



The Plattsmouth Garden Clubs believes in being creative and the joy of being creative together!



PGC members and guests picking out items to design their fairy gardens.



Change: Never Stop Evolving!

By Donna Rouch



Gertrude Jekyll stated, "A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all, it teaches entire trust."

Organizations are like gardens; they must be well-maintained to prevent stagnation and decay. Nurturing our organization requires recognizing signs of change and being vigilant about instituting innovative improvement methods.

One of the constants in this world is "Change." Change is inevitable, and therefore, we cannot ignore it. Ignoring the need to change can have devastating effects, as experienced by organizations such as Xerox, Blockbuster, Nokia, Polaroid, Toys R Us, and many more.

For example, Kodak dominated the photographic film market during the 20th century. They developed the world's first digital camera but remained so focused on photographic film that they missed the digital revolution. They failed to keep innovating. They failed to change and filed for bankruptcy in 2012.

According to the Center for Charitable Statistics, approximately 30% of non-profits do not survive. Remember, Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, Inc. is a 501(C)3 non-profit. Mismanagement and a failure to adapt to changing markets and practices led to the downfall of many organizations.

We cannot continue to live in the past or be satisfied with the present forever. We must be vigilant and plant the seeds of innovation to keep our clubs vibrant and blooming. Even though we may not have achieved all the goals we initially hoped for, we can always start anew at any moment.

The first step in solving any problem is recognizing there is one. When we realize that we need to change, we must move out of our comfort zones to resolve the issues and move our organization toward the future. That said, we cannot let the past be a roadblock to the future. Sometimes we think what makes us strong is holding on the past, but in reality it is the letting go that moves us forward.



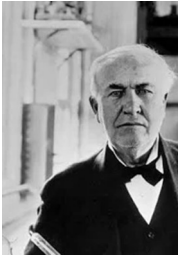
Mandy Hale indicated, "Once you make the decision to move on, don't look back. Your destiny will never be found in the rearview mirror."

We must not fear failure.

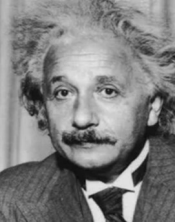
The following are examples of people who did not allow failure to interfere in their quest for success! For example:

Warren Buffett made several unsuccessful investments and lost significant amounts of money early in his career. Today, Warren Buffet's worth is \$160 billion. He is the fifth richest man in the world.

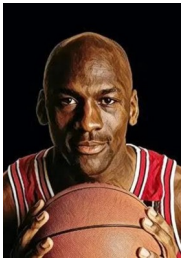




Thomas Edison Failed in 1,000 experiments before perfection the light bulb.



Albert Einstein was rejected by many universities and even expelled from his first school. He later became a renowned theoretical physicist.



It is difficult to believe that Michael Jordan was cut from his high school basketball team.

Michael Jordan stated, “I can accept failure, Everyone fails at something. But I can’t accept not trying.”



Winston Churchill stated, “Success is not final. Failure is not fatal. It’s the courage to continue that counts.”

We must also understand that teamwork, innovation, collaboration, and transparency are pathways to success.

An effective leader guides the team by sharing ideas, accepting feedback, and enhancing communication. If a leader makes all the decisions without input from others on the team, the results may be unproductive and cause discord. The lack of collaboration results in a loss of brainpower and may lead to less-than-optimal decisions.

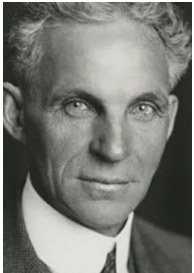


Bob Chapman stated, “Management is about telling people what to do, and leadership is about allowing people to do what they’re capable of doing.”

An organization is like a garden. It may have some “weeds,” resulting in less-than-optimal growth. Whether we grow organically or use herbicides, we must take control of the “weeds.” The following are Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, Inc. “weeds,” which need to be addressed and tended to:

Strategic Planning is crucial. To prepare for the future, we must start planning now. We must stop operating in two-year presidential terms and begin to consider where we want our organization to be in one, five, ten, or twenty years from now. We must work together regardless of the term. We must have an overall plan.

We must all work together—officers, districts, chairmen, local clubs, to help fortify our respective organizations. We must market and promote our clubs’ accomplishments in our communities and beyond. We must work with other organizations such as PlantNebraska, Keep America Beautiful, our colleges and universities and others in our communities, and state.



Henry Ford declared, “Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is a success.”

Club, District, and State meetings should strive to provide educational information creatively presented. Knowledge and entertainment are the keys to an excellent well received event. Club meetings and events should be enjoyed not just endured!

We must explore all types of fundraising to avoid depleting financial reserves, increase revenue, prevent liquidity problems, and support more substantial grants, scholarships, and project funding. Raising membership dues is merely a temporary solution. We have previously contacted our members for donations. We must now pivot and contact other individuals and organizations to invest in and support our organization.

If we wish to make a garden or an organization grow, we must understand it and its weeds. We must appreciate that we must be vigilant, recognize the urgent need for innovation, and move judiciously to adapt to change, meeting our members' needs and being a force for good in our communities.



“Dreams are the seeds of change. Nothing ever grows without a seed, and nothing ever changes without a dream.” (Debbie Boone)



Federated Garden Club of Nebraska, Inc.

Fall Board Meeting

November 15, 2025



Call to Order: 9:06 am MST

Presiding : President Rod Ruzanic

Attendees:

Rod Ruzanic, FGCN President

Robbie Kupper, FGCN Treasure

Donna Rouch, Secretary

Jim Rouch, Financial Review

Mary Carlson, Blue and Gold Star Chairman

Bob Carlson

Susie Storm

Marcia Croffut, Co-President Ogallal Garden Club

Debbie Suess, Treasurer, Kearney Garden Club

Welcome: Rod Ruzanic called the meeting to order and welcomed all who were attending the Zoom virtual meeting.

Secretary Minutes Report: Fall Board Meeting Minutes November 2, 2024: Stand as read.

Treasurer's Report: Robbie Kupper reviewed the report. One typo, Ft. McPherson donation from VFW was \$350 instead of \$450. Report accepted and filed.

FGCN Budget: Robbie Kupper reviewed the FGCN Combined General Fund Budget, June-May 2024-2025. Motion to approve by Donna Rouch, seconded by Jim Rouch. Motion.Passed.

Recommendation: Publish Minutes and Financials in the Nebraska Garden News and on the FGCN Website. Motion Donna Rouch and Second Jim Rouch. Motion Passed.

Finance Committee:

Finance Committee is to review FGCN finances. The committee was appointed by President Rod Ruzanic and they are Rod Ruzanic, Chris Martin, Robbie Kupper, Debbie Suess, Susanne Von Essen, and one other member.

Unfinished Business: None.

Chairmen Reports:

Marcia Crofutt Chairman: Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl.

Information and presentation at Ogallala's St. Paul School and Ogallala's St. John School. Teachers were encouraged to submit posters to Marcia prior to the Christmas but deadline is January 20, 2026.

Mary Carlson Chairman: Blue Star and Gold Star Memorials.

By invitation, Mary attended the Marine League "Birthday Cake Cutting Ceremony" and was given an award. At the Blue Star By-Way Dedication, the Omaha Parks and Recreation Department provided beverages and donuts. She informed Governor Pillen that FGCN is looking to place a Blue Star near Sidney, Nebraska. Mary has delved into the history of the Blue Star helping to locate all the Blue Stars in Nebraska. It is quite a reaserch project. Mary Carlson has been appointed as Chairman of the Rocky Mountain Region Blue Star Committee.

NEW Planning Committee for all FGCM Conventions:

Committee Members are Rod Ruzanic, Chris Martin, Robbie Kupper, Donna and Jim Rouch.

President Rod Ruzanic's Project: Celebrating the 250 years of the Declaration of Independence:

Ogallala planning committee includes Keith County, Keep America Beautiful, Boy Scouts of America, Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, Inc., and others are involved in the celebration. Rod Ruzanic wants FGCM to plant red, white and blue flowers across Nebraska as our contribution to the nation wide celebration.

President Rod Ruzanic's Theme: Plant Memorial Trees:

Clubs are encouraged to plant at least one tree for individuals they wish to honor or memorialize. Goal is to plant 250 trees.

Discussion on Monetary FGCM Awards:

FGCM awards descriptions indicate that a certificate and monetary award will be received by the award winner but there is no indication as to the amount of the award.

Recommendation: Ensure the amounts of each award are indicated in the award description and form new committee to consider to increasing the amount of the award. Motion Donna Rouch. Second Robbie Kupper. Motion Passed.

Discussion: Consider developing a New Award, Blue and Purple Ribbon Award.

Recommendation: Develop a check list of various activities a club could do. No text required but just check a box that the task was accomplished. A Certificate and/or monetary award could be provided. A committee will be formed to create the checklist criteria. Motion Jim Rouch. Second Robbie Kupper. Motion Passed

Discussion: FGCN has no grants available for our members.

Recommendation: A committee will be formed to discuss and recommend to members the establishing of a FGCN grant program. Motion Robbie Kupper. Second Jim Rouch. Motion Passed.

Discussion: Lifetime Membership to National Garden Clubs, Inc.

NGC Lifetime Membership Award costing \$200 has been traditionally given to the FGCN President. A FGCN Lifetime Membership Award \$50 could be given instead.

Recommendation: Instead of giving the NGC LifeTime Membership Award, give the FGCN Lifetime Membership Award to the FGCN President. Motion Robbie Kupper. Second Jim Rouch. Motion Passed.

Recommendation: Have Minutes and Financials in the Nebraska Garden News and on Website. Motion Robbie Kupper. Jim Rouch. Motion Passed.

Announcements:

FGCN Annual Meeting, Kearney, NE, June 12-13, 2026.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:07 am MST

Submitted Donna Rouch

FGCN SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

DONOR RESTRICTED AND BOARD DESIGNATED FUNDS

	<u>5/31/2024</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>5/31/2025</u>
Blue Star Memorial Funds	\$ 7,072.16	\$ (2,128.17)	\$ 4,943.99
NGC Schools/Life Members	\$ 7,132.29	\$ (7,132.29)	\$ -
Scholarship Bank Account	\$ 2,325.03	\$ (659.50)	\$ 1,665.53
Educational Saving Account	\$ 3,247.00	\$ (3,247.00)	\$ -
Scholarship Certificate of Deposit	\$ 10,151.11	\$ 76.43	\$ 10,227.54
Scholarship Ameriprise Account	<u>\$ 20,812.95</u>	<u>\$ 4,305.84</u>	<u>\$ 25,118.79</u>
 Total Donor Restricted Funds	 \$ 50,740.54	 \$ (8,784.69)	 \$ 41,955.85
 UNRESTRICTED GENERAL FUNDS	 <u>\$ 9,276.04</u>	 <u>\$ 10,255.60</u>	 <u>\$ 19,531.64</u>
 Total-All Funds	 <u>\$ 60,016.58</u>	 <u>\$ 1,470.91</u>	 <u>\$ 61,487.49</u>

During fiscal year 2025, the FGCN Board approved the transfer of the Board Designated

NGC Schools/Life Membership Fund & the Educational Savings Account Fund into the Unrestricted General Fund. Other transfers were made from the Blue Star Memorial and Scholarship Fund into the General Fund for disbursement for these activities.

More detailed Financial Statements for the year ended May 31, 2025 is can be obtained from Robbie Kupper, FGCN Treasurer. Those detailed Financial statements, as well as the above summary, have been reviewed by Jim Rouch. The review consisted of procedures to examine USbank Statements, Pinnacle Bank Statements and Ameriprise Financial Statements; agreeing beginning and ending financial statement fund balances to the balances in the independent bank and Ameriprise statements; agreeing all individual transactions in the Treasurer's QuickBooks records to the appropriate financial statement captions and other procedures as considered necessary in the circumstances. There were no exceptions.

Jim Rouch, November 15, 2025

Navigating the Website

Federatedgardenclubsofnebraskainc.com

The Header is at the top of the page and the Footer is at the bottom of the page. The Header may have a number of pages attached. Hover over the title and subpages will appear for you to open (click on the subtitle) or it may have only the single page. The Footer below will have titles that are the same as the Header above. These will be underlined. Click on these and they will take you to matching title in the Header. It is a quick way to go to the top of the page and stay in the same title. The button will take you to the top but not to any particular page.

The Header:

Home About Us Scholarships Learning Center Events Grants Store Membership Contact Us

Home: is the front page of the website and it only has one page that informs people about FGCM..

About Us: Information page

National Garden Clubs information

Rocky Mountain Region information

FGCM Officers, Directors, and Chairman

FGCM State Life Members

FGCM Former State Presidents

Flower Show Judges

Consultants

Scholarships:

Program Details

Eligibility

Selection Criteria

Description of Funds

Application Procedure

Application Form

Financial Aid Form

Learning Center:

Introductory Page
Photo Gallery
Garden Vision
Newsletters
Plant Societies and More

Events:

Page includes events for National Garden Clubs, Inc., Rocky Mountain Region, Inc. and Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, Inc., and FGCN Clubs if they request notification on the website.

Grants:

National Garden Clubs, Inc.

Store:

Listing of store items.

Membership:

Introductory page
Membership Directory (password protected)
Awards
ByLaws
Minutes
Financial Summary
Contact Us:
Page allows you to send a message to the FGCN President

Please contact me if you are having problems, have suggestions, or need to know the membership directory password.

Thank you,

Donna Rouch
donna@rouchpartners.com
402-676-0906

The answer to Who Am I? Is a Dragonfly.