

Nebraska Garden News

Cultivating the Good Life

Voulume 66-3 Autumn 2025 Issue

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



Hello Garden Enthusiasts:

As Indian Summer hangs around for most of us, I wish you a Fall harvest to remember. Apples and pears are bountiful in my yard, and recipe cards have been shuffled since August.

Neighbors boast of gigantic tomato production and my Concord grapes outdid themselves, again.

The 'Autumn Gold' raspberries fed my ever-present birds, leaving me with three all season! Squir-rels helped pick the mulberry trees bare early this summer.

Finally, I finally discovered two Monarchs on the milkweed and one busy swallowtail visiting our asters. I encourage you to use this Fall to add just one tree where you can. Just one in October!

We're eleven clubs strong across Nebraska. At last count, we were 189 members strong; new members have joined us from Sidney to Omaha. Let's continue to build membership and plant trees to honor those who have gone to the Garden Eternal.

I'll be greeting you here each issue, encouraging tree-planting every month. Happy planting yields a happy harvest. Keep growing, Nebraska!

> Rod Ruzanic FGCN President



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

NEBRASKA GARDEN NEWS

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Dates to Remember

DEADLINE FOR THE WINTER ISSUE November 15, 2025

Any Chair, member or Club President may send a report, article or announcement that seems timely!

Up Coming Events:

NGC Virtual Fall Board September 18.

FGCN Virtual Fall Board October 11, 2025

December 30

NGC, Inc. Award Applications to Christine Martin

April 1, 2024 State Dues to:

Robbie Kupper

315 East 6th St. Ogallala, NE 69153

May 1, Submit state award applications to individual FGCN State Chairs

NGC Convention TBA

June 7-8 90th FGCN Annual Meeting Kearney, NE



Find us on

www.federatedgardenclubsinc.com

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 NeNebraska

Do I Need to Say Anything More!

Epiphyllums are such incredibly beautiful, magnificent plants. Everyone should own at least one, or maybe two or three! Don't you agree?







Epiphyllums remind me of the old fashioned Christmas Cactus my Grandmother Mary had; only these plants are on steroids! The flowers can be as large as a dinner plate, thirteen inches. Incredible combinations of colors with some being iridescent like a kaleidoscope. You're thinking there has to be a catch to the story. They probably require expensive lighting equipment, special soil, humidifiers and after all your work they will wither and die for no reason whatsoever. Right? Well hold onto your trowels. Epiphyllums, commonly known as Orchid Cactus, are relatively easy-to-grow succulents.

Obtain an epiphyllum cutting or plant from on online store or nursery. If you obtained a fresh cutting, store in a cool dark place for 10- 14 days until a calluses forms over the end of the stem. Plant the "little darling" in one part perlite (1/8 - 1/2 size diameter), three parts soil and 1-2 tablespoons orchid bark. Keep the soil damp but never wet. Use a plastic pot with a drainage hole in the bottom. Plastic retains moisture where clay allows moisture to evaporate because the porous nature of clay. Mine are set outside hanging in the shade of the porch. They receive water in the morning which is allowed to drain from the pot. You need to water more often if temperatures are high enough to dry the soil. Your watering schedule may be different from mine. It all depends on how drying the winds are and the temperature. Feed 1/3 - 1/2 strength of a balanced fertilizer (10-10-10) during the winter months but from May to late August use a 2-10-10 formula. These numbers indicate the amount of nitrogen-phosphorous-potassium in the fertilizer. Guard against temperatures below forty degrees Fahrenheit. Like Orchids, they will <u>not</u> withstand the cold. They like a cozy warm house so bring them inside for the winter.

Steve Reedy, an epiphyllum grower and photographer, informed me that I shouldn't be discouraged if my plants are not blooming. It may take several years after planting and when the plant has grown into the size of the pot. They like to be "crowded."





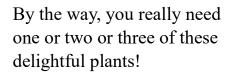












Thank you Steve Reedy for the wonderful pictures!



Submitted by Donna Rouch



Why be Federated? Submitted by Jim and Donna Rouch



Being "federated" means being part of a united group of entities, such as states, regions, and national organizations that maintain a degree of independence while working under commonly shared missions and interests. In our "garden club world: States and Regions are components of a federation called National Garden Clubs, Inc. All are 501(c)3 not-for-profit organizations with their own officers and bylaws. Under Internal Revenue Servce (IRS) guidelines, 501(c)3 organizations enjoy certain tax benefits: they do not pay federal or state income taxes and donations to 501(c)3 organizations are tax deductible to the individual donors.

However, in order to maintain the 501(c)3 status, such organizations must comply with a number of IRS regulations as to its operations, including the filing of annual information returns with the IRS and ensuring that its operations continue to be for the charitable purposes outlined in its bylaws initially filed with the IRS in its application for this special status. Community Foundations and related entities, the The Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraka, Inc. (FGCN), Rocky Mountain Region, Inc. (RMR), and National Garden Clubs a (NGC) are all examples of public charities which emjoy the benefits and obligations of being tax-exempt entities under IRS 501(c)3 regulations.

As noted above, one of the requirements of a 501(c)3 organization is to ensure its's operations are for the charitable purposes outlined in its bylaws. When foundations and related organizations have grant programs to support it mission and purposes, it must ensure that such grants strictly adhere to charitable purposes. Otherwise the organization's tax-exempt status could be revoked. Accordingly, almost all Foundations and other 501(c)3 organization have adopted policies which provide that their grant programs will only be made to organizations which are 501(c)3 organizations. This policy ensures the grantor organization that the grant will not jeopardize its tax-exempt status. Accordinly, if a local garden club is not a member of FGCN and does not hold its own 501(c)3 not-for-profit status, it is not eligible to obtain a grant from an organization such as Community Foundations that has a 501(c)3) status.

Community Foundation Grants: There are over 2,180 foundations in Nebraska, with the Nebraska Community Foundation serving as a network of over 2000 fund leaders throughout the state. Community grant foundations are grant-making public charities that support local nonprofits and improve the lives of people in a defined geographic area. When applying for a grant from community grant foundations, the club must be a 501(c)3 or a member of a 501(c)3 like FGCN. If the club is not a member, it cannot legally receive such a grant without jeapordizing the grantor's 501(c)3 tax-exempt status. Most grantor's will not run that risk.

An Eastern District example of this scenario took place several years ago. Plattsmouth Garden Club (PGC) applied to the Plattsmouth Community Foundation for a grant to help replace the damaged Blue Star memorial on Webster Blvd. Under its governing documents, Plattsmouth Community Foundation would only make such a grant to a 501(c)3 organization. Accordingly, it was initially believed that PGC was not eligible since it was not a 501(c)3 organization. However, a grant request to the Plattsmouth Community Foundation was made by FGCN (PGC member Donna Rouch was FGCN president at the time) for the PGC Blue Star Memorial project. The fact that FGCN was a 501(c)3 organization satisfied Plattsmouth Community Foundation officials and the grant was made. There have been similar grants provided to PGC by PCF since that time, all relying on the 501 (c)3 status of FGCN to be eligible for the grants.

Other Grant Opportunities: Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, Inc. and the National Garden Club, Inc. are 501(c)(3) organizations which have programs for grants and support to local clubs and club projects. Examples:

FGCN Grants:

Annual Scholarships, \$1000.

Annual Community Civic Development Awards, \$350.

NGC Grants:

National Disaster Grants, up to \$5,000.

Plant America Community Grant, up to \$2,000.

Ames Tools Grants, \$250 in tools

Espoma Grants, \$250.

Operation Wildflower Grants, up to \$500.

Scholarships, \$4,500.

Youth Pollinator Garden Grant, up to \$200.

Youth Work Awards, \$100.

Youth Smokey Bear & Woodsey Owl Poster Contest

Nebraska clubs have had success in applying for grants under these programs. For example, Ogallala Garden Club has applied and received FGCN Scholarships of \$1,000 for each of two Keith County students and a student from Lincoln also received a \$1000 FGCN scholarship. In addition, one of Keith County FGCN scholarship winners also received a \$3,800 Scholarship from National Garden Clubs (NGC). Garden Club of Garden County received an NGC Plant America Grant of several hundred dollars to beautify an intersection in downtown Oshkosh, NE.

Personal Growth: FGCN and NGC schools offer continuing educatio opportunities through webinars, YouTube videos, home study units, programs, and projects. After completing each school, NGC Schools provide consultant certificates in environmental, landscape design, gardening, and flower shows. NGC schools are offered in "in-person," Zoom, or hybrid formats.

Recognition: Many member clubs receive recognition for jobs well done through FGCN and National Awards, such as Member Award of Honor, Award of Excellence for Regions and States, Presidential Citations, and Local, State, and Regional awards. Some awards include certificates of merit, including monetary awards.

Community Service: Garden club members are active, concerned citizens involved in their communities as caretakers, gardeners, and responsible stewards who conserve, preserve, and protect our air, water, forest, land, and wildlife. They are a force for good!

Botanical Center Admissions: Many wonderful botanical gardens and arboretums throughout the USA will provide free or discounted admission to visitors from states affiliated with them. Be sure to ask if FGCN or NGC qualifies.

Value for Your Membership: Compare the value of items offered, such as scholarships and others listed above, from the FGCN and NGC. Local clubs benefit from joining the Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, Inc. Add monies that a club may have the opportunity to receive and compare them to the cost of membership. The members should be impressed. Remember, to receive FGCN grants, you must be a member of FGCN and **Submit Applications for them!**. Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, Inc. is here to help you if you need assistance with the process.



August 8, 2025

New Blue Star Memorial

A Blue Star By-Way Memorial was placed in Omaha Memorial Park in June. This memorial was made possible through fundraising with donations from Memorial Park Neighbors, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2704, and others. Finding a boul-

der large enough for the plaque was a challenge. The boulder was located in the landscaping of Omaha Pyramid Contractors office landscaping. Then came the negotiation for obtaining the boulder. After explaining that the boulder would become part of a Blue Star Memorial to be placed in Omaha Memorial Park, the owner donated the boulder.

In January 2024, two hundred fundraising letters were sent to Memorial Park Neighbors which got about 20 percent response. Also, other organizations and people were presented with the plan which brought in more donations.

The 3000 pound South Dekota granite boulder was moved about 30 miles from Pyramid Contractors office landscaping in Omah to Scott Carson's stone shop in Gretna, Nebraska. Finding a driver with a flatbed truck and forklift that would move the boulder in cold weather was another challenge.

Scott could only work on the boulder during very cold and snowy weather when he could not do his contracted jobs. When the boulder was prepped and the plaque was attached, Omaha Parks Service took over getting it back to Omaha and placed it in the park. Early in the process of getting the memorial placed in the park, I had to get an agreement from the Park Service and meet with them to identify the location and to approve the boulder. The placement was selected along the Military Memorial Walk and close to the Marine Memorial.

The Memorial was placed in the identified spot in early June. There was some difficulty placing it as the boulder was so heavy. Once in place, the Park Services had marigolds and lilies planted the very next day.

Nebraska Garden Club state president and district president were in Omaha for the District One meeting and visited the memorial 'after hours'

The dedication will be scheduled for Veterans Day in November and combined with the Veterans Day celebration in the park by Post One American Legion. A past congressman is being invited to speak about the Blue Star History.

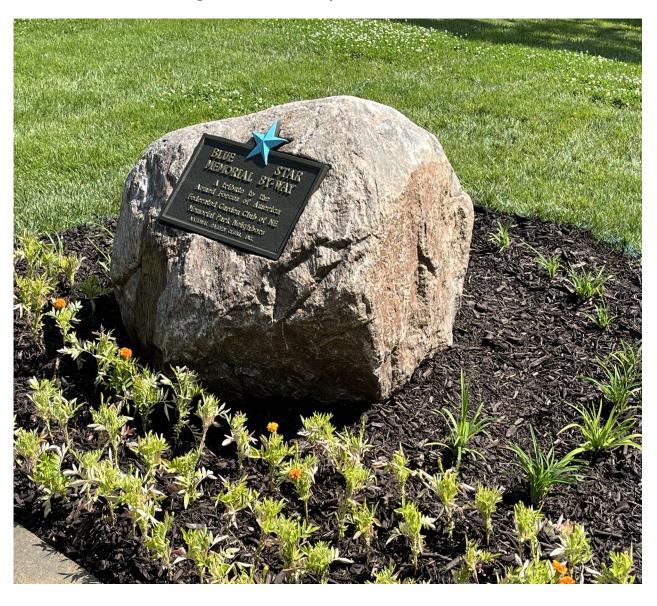
The Dedication will be scheduled at a later date.

Mary L Carlson ANC ret

Blue Star/ Gold Star Memorial rep for state of Nebraska



President Rod Ruzanic with former President Chris Martin reviewing the new Blue Star placed at Memorial Part,





Moving a huge stone for mounting the Blue Star Memorial takes big machinery and very strong men!





Blue Star
Memorial and
Dedication at
Fort
McPherson
National
Cemetery.



FGCN Blue Star and Gold Star Chairperson, Mary Carlson performing the Dedication Ceremoney.



Where do old

Blue Star Memorials Markers
go when bad weather and snow
plows collide with them?

They continue to honor our
servicemen in museums such as
the North Platte Museum.



Bob Carlson cleaning the Blue Star

Memorial at Ogallala 180 Rest Stop.

Bob helps Mary on her travels through

Nebraska monitoring for Blue Star

Memorials.

Below is the map indicating the Blue and Gold Star locations that Mary displays at conventions.





Blue Star Hwys: I-80, Hwy 83, Hwy 34, Blue Star

Fort McPherson National Cemetery Blue Star, March 2025

Lexington Museum, First Blue Star, for Plattsmouth, 2024

Ogallala I-80 East, Blue Star Restored

Kansas Border, Blue Star Restored

Wellfleet, Blue Star Replaced

North Platte, Museum where old Blue Star resides.

Thedford, old?

Valentine, Blue Star Restored

Brady, I-80 West, Blue Star Restored

Grand Island, I-80, Blue Star Restored

Milford, I80 East, Blue StarRestored

Lincoln, Woody Williams, Gold Star

Gretna, I80 West, Milea Hill, Blue Star Rrestored

Papillian, Blue Star

Lavista Blue Star

Plattsmouth, Replaced Blue Star. New Gold Star placed.

Winter Tomatoes



In a few months temperatures will drop as snow drifts toward the frozen ground. As you peer out the window at the once fruitful garden now dressed in white, you think wouldn't it be nice to sink your teeth into a red delicious tomato. Not the bland out of season store bought but a real home grown juicy red tomato.

Today there are tomato cultivars easy to grow indoors during the winter months. Tomatoes such as Sweet Valentine, Pixie, Patio, Toy Boy, Small Fry, Tiny Tim and others. Dwarf tomatoes may not have the large size many of us desire but they will have the delicious taste we crave.

What you will need for an indoor tomato garden are seeds, a six to twelve inch container with drainage holes and a dish to catch excess water, starter or high quality potting soil, a southern window with good sunlight, water, fertilizer and quarter inch plant stakes. Since you are gardening indoors, you don't have to worry about pesticides. Your container should be clean and free of toxic products that would be harmful to the tomato or the people who consume them. If you discover that the plants are not getting enough sunlight, you can may use a grow light.

Plant tomato seeds about one fourth inch deep and water. Keep soil moist but not soggy. If the soil is too wet, the seeds may "dampen off" due to fungal infection and die. The seeds should germinate in approximately five to ten days. Transplant to a larger container when the seed-lings are three inches tall. If you planted seeds in the container you will grow your plant to maturity, remove seedlings except one or two depending on the size of your container. You may fertilize regularly about two weeks after transplanting. Turn the container regularly, so all sides of the plant gets the same amount of sunlight. When the plants bloom, you may become the surrogate bee by gently shaking the branches allowing pollen to fall from one flower to the other. Now you just wait for the fruit to grow and mature.

Three ways to tell when your tomato is ripe. The smell test: a ripe tomato has a fresh garden aroma that is different from an unripe tomato. The squeeze test: give the tomato a gentle squeeze, a ripe tomato will feel soft but not mushy and an unripe tomato will be hard. The weight test: a ripe tomato will be heavier than an unripe tomato. Excuse my drool. I can taste those tomatoes already!

Submitted by the Editors

Going Native at The Veterans Memorial Garden at Garfield Park in Plattsmouth, NE

July 2025

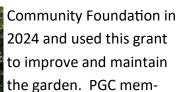
By: Lorraine Patrick, Plattsmouth Garden Club

In the small town of Plattsmouth, Nebraska in the Eastern District, the Plattsmouth Garden Club (PGC) has chosen to "go native" at The Veterans Memorial Garden at Garfield Park. The garden was built in 2007 to

honor current and past Veterans from Plattsmouth area. It is maintained by dedicated Plattsmouth Garden Club volunteers who are passionate about keeping this garden maintained for all to enjoy.

The garden contains many plants native to the Midwest area, as well as plants that have been donated since the garden was established in 2007. The plants and grasses attract pollinators, such as Monarch and Fritillary butterflies, as well as wildlife, such as birds and squirrels. The birds that have been seen or heard at this park include: A Blue Bunting, House Finch, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Barn Swallow, House Sparrow, European Starling, a Northern Cardinal and an Eastern Wood-Pewee.

The PGC was a fortunate recipient of a grant from the Plattsmouth



bers have donated many hours of labor and love to the garden,

including repairing and upgrading the sprinkler system, designing a heart-shaped border with the recycled bricks from the area, and adding more gravel to the existing path.

New signage is available for visitors indicating that native plants planted there have been received from the Nebraska Monarch Organization.









There are also 5 new trees planted in Garfield Park by the Plattsmouth Garden Club in 2023. The trees include Cercis canadensis or Eastern Redbud, American Sycamore or Platanus Occidentalis, which is native to the Midwest, Butternut Hickory or Carya Cordiform, a Linden or Tilla tree and a Chestnut Oak or Quercus Montana. These trees join the massive oak trees already present in Garfield Park and will continue to add structure and beauty to the area.

Should you be passing through the quaint City of Plattsmouth, we encourage you to stop by to enjoy the Veterans Memorial Garden at Garfield Park, located at the intersection of 5th St. and 2nd Ave.

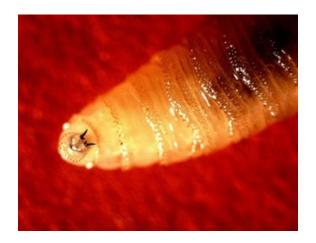
Who Am I?

- 1. I can reach speeds of 30 miles per hour and dive at speeds up to 90 mph.
- 2. I have unmatched flight capabilities. I can hover, fly backwards, and upside down due to rapid wing beats up to 80 times per second, not to mention my figure—eight motion due to unique shoulder joints.
- 3. I possess remarkable spatial memories, allowing me to remember the locations of feeders and flowers.
- 4. I have a high metabolism and must consume large amounts of nectar to meet my energy needs.
- 5. Praying Mantis, frogs, domestic cats, and large spiders are some of my enemies.
- 6. To sleep at night, I enter a sleep-like state called a torpor to concerve energy as my heart rate and metabolism slows dramatically.

Who am I? (answer on page 29)

New World Screwworm Fly and Larva





Cochliomyia hominivorax, the New World Screwworm Fly, or simply screwworm is a species of parasitic blowfly whose larvae eat the living tissue of warm-blooded animals including humans. Cochliomyia hominivorax has entered the lower United States' including Georgia and Texas. More than 111,000 animal cases and 680 human infections have been reported so far, according to the CDC. Parasites's are not a threat in Nebraskda yet unless residents travel to outbreak areas. Travelers are urged to cover open wounds, use insect repellent, and sleep indoors.

A key eradication technique is the sterile insect technique (SIT), where massive numbers of gamma-irradiated sterile male flies are released to mate with wild females, producing infertile eggs and driving the population to extinction.

Humans contract Screwworms when a female lays eggs on an open wound. The eggs hatch into larvae which burrow deep under the skin causing severe pain as they feed on human flesh. Other symptoms include a foul-smelling odor, visible larve, and a feeling of movement within the wound. Risk factors include having open wounds or a weakened immune system. Screwworms can be fatal if not treated.

Outbreaks of Screwworms begain in 1933 and was eradicated in the United States in 1966. However, periodic outbreaks continue to occurre in North, Central, and South America.

Submitted by Editors



Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, Inc

91st Annual Meeting

Business Meeting

June 7, 2025

FGCN 91st Annual Meeting

Call to Order: 10:00 am

Presiding: President Chris Martin

Attendees:

Chris Martin, President, Friendly Federated Garden Club

Rod Ruzanic, Vice-President, Ogallala

Robbie Kupper, Treasurer, Ogallala

Donna Rouch, Secretary, Plattsmouth

Sharon Crews, Dalton

Rebecca, (Sharon Crews daughter), Dalton

Rilla Draper, Dalton

Janet Waite, Dalton

Susie Young, Dalton

Carol Brown, Dalton

Char Henke, Dalton

Carolyn Schmidt, Dalton

Donna Johnson, Dix (Guest)

Dorthy Griffith, Dalton

Nancy Sanders, Sidney

Dorea Renelle, Sidney

Heather Rehm, Sidney

Kelly Nelson, Sidney

Charlotte Swanson, Dalton

Marcia Crofutt, Ogallala

Julia Lester, Sunset Hills, Omaha

Mary Carlson, Sunset Hills, Omaha

Jim Rouch, Plattsmouth Garden Club



Janice Borgmann

Marlene Mahoney. At Large, Omaha

Alice Hemsath, Soil Sisters & Misters, Kearney

Del Hemsath, Soil Sisters & Misters, Kearney

Invocations: Del Hemsath:

Pledge of Allegiance: Del Hemsath

Welcome: Rilla Draper

Introduction of Guests, Chris Martin

Ryeigh Grove, Scholarship winner and her Fiancé, Jamison,

Credential Report: Chris Martin

There were 32 registered with 4 guests.

State Officers 6

State Chairmen 2

State Life Members 14

District Directors 2

National Officers 0

Regional Officiers, 2

Club Presidents, 1

Flower Show Judge, 1

Past State Presidents, 5

Past and Current Garden Club Presidents, 27

Regional Chairman, 1

Parliamentarian, 0

Guests, 4

Rules of the Meeting: Julie Lester, Eastern District Director

Adoption of the Program: Chris Martin

The program was adopted.

90th Annual Meeting Minutes: Donna Rouch, Secretary

Treasurer's Report: Robbie Kupper (deferred to the Fall Board)

Financial Review: Jim Rouch (deferred to the Fall Board)

Time Keeper: Donna Johnson

Reports:

FGCN President's Report: Chris Martin

FGCN Vice-President's Report: Rod Ruzanic

RMR Director: Robbie Kupper

The new Director is Shirley Pursel, and the RMR meeting is Cheyenne, WY, August 23-24, 2025

Eastern District Report: Julie Lester

West District Report: Rilla Drapper

Ogallala Garden Club: Marcia Crofutt

Soil Sisters and Mister's Garden Club: Del Hemsath

Plattsmouth Garden Club: Jim Rouch

Photography: Julie Lester

Three Categories, Four places and \$800 awarded to the winners.

Other Awards: Chris Martin

New Business:

Election of Officers:

President: Rod Ruzanic
Vice-President: vacant
Secretary: Donna Rouch
Treasurer: Robbie Kupper

Rilla Drapper moved to elect the slate, and Mary Carlson seconded. Motion passed.

Why Be Federated? Jim and Donna Rouch

This is a revised document that speaks to the benefits of belonging to a larger organization with similar missions and interests. The state, region, and national are all 502(c)3 not-for-profit organizations. Garden Clubs are members of the organization and receive benefits from the 501©3 regional and national. If a club is not a member of FGCN and are not a 501(c)3 non-profit, it will not be able to receive grants from other non-profits such as Nebraska Community Foundations. Plattsmouth Community received a grant from the Plattsmouth Community Foundation because they are a member of FGCN. There are many grants available through our organization. The document will present other benefits for clubs.

Website: Donna Rouch

Website Address: federatedgardenclubsofnebraskainc.com

FGCN Directory: It is now on the website and password-protected. Contact Donna Rouch for password.

Garden Club Events: You may advertise your club's events on the website by sending information or a mockup to donna@rouchpartners.com.

Pictures: We have a gallery where you can place photos of your club events.

Articles: We welcome articles you have written. If you have articles from an outside source, we will need to get their permission to print them. Articles are found in the Learning Center on the website.

Proposal: That a committee will be formed to help clubs and districts plan the annual and district meetings, if needed—motion by Janice Borgmann and seconded by Heather Rohm. Motion approved.

Proposal: That FGCN offer grants to clubs for special projects. This is in the infant stages as we are reviewing applications, qualifications, etc. We hope to launch during the 2025-2026 calendar year. The Finance Committee is to explore the use of PayPal to facilitate donations and to sell items – a motion by Jim Rouch, seconded by Heather Rohm. Motion Approved.

Silver March: Marlene Mahoney

Garden club members who passed away this past fiscal year were:

Mary K. James, Dix Soilettes Garden Club, Sept. 18, 1925-Sept. 17, 2024

J. David West, Elkhorn Garden Club, Jan. 22, 1945-June 30, 2024

Veda Bennet, Nebraska City Garden Club, age 99, died Sept 1, 2024

Elaine E. Swanson, age 93, Dec. 27, 1927-Jan. 6, 2024

Mayme Elaine Swanson, Sunset Hills Garden Club, March 20, 1926-Dec. 20, 2024

Patty Lou Hancock, Dundee Garden Club, Feb. 15, 1931-Dec. 4, 2024

Silver March proceeds were \$247.00

Ways and Means: Chairman Rilla Draper

The money collected was \$247.00

Courtesy Resolution: Chris Martin

Invitation to the FGCN 92nd Annual Meeting in 2026

Submitted, Donna Rouch

Kudos! Kudos! Kudos!

Congratulations to Rilla Draper, Susan Young, Chris Martin ad the members of Sidney and Gurley-Dalton Garden Clubs for hosting a very successful and fun FGCN Annual Meeting June 7-8, 2025. The event kicked off Friday night with the Life Member Banquet at the Sidney Applebee's restaurant. On Saturday, the meeting venue was Granny's Farmhouse in rural Gurley, NE. This was a very interesting and fun site to hold the FGCN 91st Annual Meeting. Chris Martin, outgoing FGCN President, presided over the proceedings. There was a short business meeting to kick off the day, followed by a Silver March Memorial Service conducted by Marlene Mahoney. This was followed by a very delicious luncheon and four interesting programs in the afternoon. The programs-speakers were Mary Carlson "Blue Star-Gold Star Memorial" updates; Shawn Kruse; "Keeping Bees and Honey"; Dana Revell, "Seed Saving"; and Graham Santero, "Worm Castings." All of the programs were interesting and relevant. And each program was offered at different buildings/venues on the farm. This was a very nice touch because attendees could stretch their legs and visit/view various gardens and interesting exhibits on the farm property. The Sidney and Gurley-Dalton Clubs conducted the Ways and Means activity thoughout the day.

The evening schedule included an awards banquet which honored former FGCN presidents. The actual awards portion of the program was conducted by Chris Martin and Julie Lester. The installation of new FGCN officers capped the evenings events. The new officers are

Rod Ruzsnic, President (Ogallala Garden Club; Donna Rouch, Secretary (Plattsmouth Garden Club); and Robbie Kupper, Treasurer (Ogallala Garden Club). The Vice-President position was vacant and will be filled at a later date. Several Photos from the annual meeting

are included in this newsletter. Submitted by the editors



President Rod Ruznic informing us on the future of FGCN.

Left to right: Outgoing President, Chris Martin, Secretary/Historian, Donna Rouch, President Rod Ruzanic, Treasurer, Robbie Kupper.





Lunch in the Farm House



Store at the Farm



Attendees examining the Bee Box



Shawn Kruse providing information on Bee Keeping.



Charlotte Swanson, Donna Rouch, and Rilla Draper



Members gathering to hear from Graham Santero Worm Casti



Members attending the meeting and watching the entriles to the photo contest.

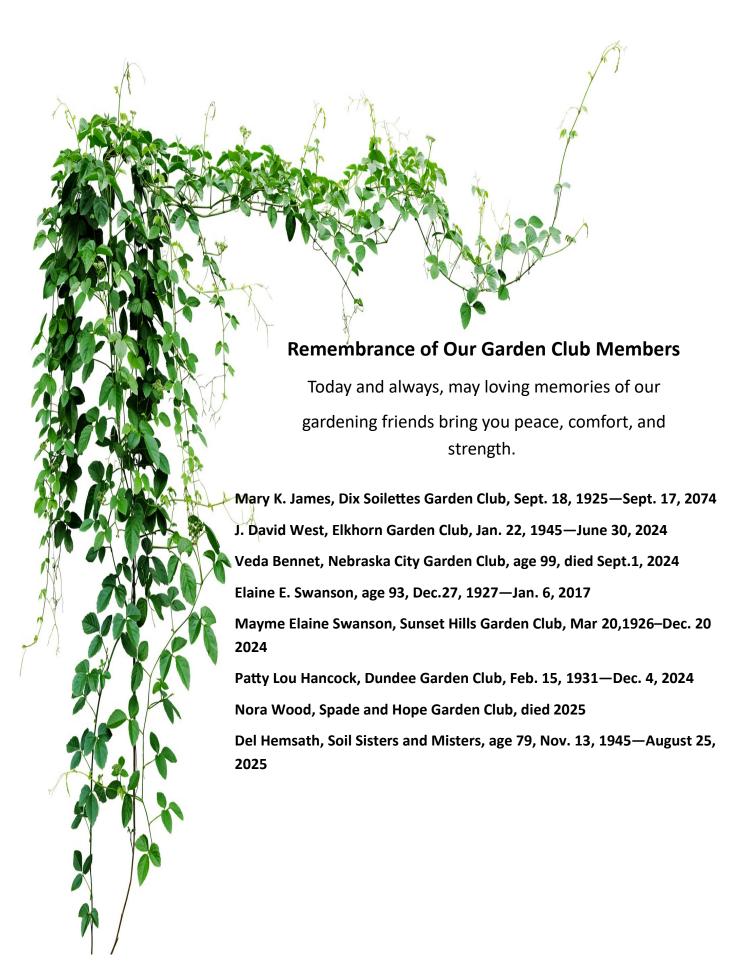
Eastern District Officers for 2025 –2027



From left to right:

Cheryl Wirth, Treasuer Julie Lester, Secretary Kathie Hopkins, Assistant Director,
Chris Martin, Director and Rod Ruzanic, FGCN President.

A very successful Eastern District meeting was held on June 21, 2025. Elkhorn Valey Garden Club hosted the meeting at Bethany Lutheran Church in Elkhorn. The host club provided morning rolls and coffee, refreshments at midmorning and arranged for a delicious luncheon catered by HyVee. Plattsmouth Garden Club chose a theme of "Summer in the Sun" and provided related tale decorations and the head table centerpiece. District Director Julie Lester presided over the business meeting, which included reports from individual club presidents and district and FGCN officers. Sunset Hills Garden Club was responsible for the speaker, Scott Evans, Douglas County Extension Associate, Who presented an interesting program on "Peonies." Sunset Hills Garden Club also conducted an entertaining game of "Garden Bingo", which included prizes for the winners. Tree City Garden Club and Friendly Federated Garden Club conducted the Ways and Means portion of the meeting and a centerpiece raffle drawing. Marlene Mahoney, Member at Large, led a memorial service and silver march ceremony in honor of District members who had passed away during the prior year. As noted Rod Ruzanic, FGCN state president, installed the above District officers for the 2025-2027 term of office.





Minutes and Pictures from the Rocky Mountain Region Convention 2025

89th RMR (Rocky Mountain Region) Meeting Minutes
Laramie County Senior Services Center Cheyenne, WY 82001
Saturday August 23, 2025

Minutes submitted by: Lorraine Patrick, Plattsmouth Garden Club, Plattsmouth, NE Please direct any questions or comments regarding these minutes to: Lorraine patrick0809@yahoo.com

Theme for 2025 meeting in Cheyenne, Wyoming: "Wagons of Wildflowers"

Theme for Regional Director: "Many Hands Make All Work Light"

Theme for National Club President: "Plant America for the Next 100 Years."

RMR Director Shirley Pursel opened the 89th RMR Meeting at The Laramie County Senior Services Center located at 4100 East Pershing Boulevard in Cheyenne, WY at 9:00am (Mountain Time). Shirley welcomed all in attendance and thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. Chaplain Theresa Odhiambo led the invocation at the RMR meeting. The invocation was followed by the presentation of colors and Pledge of Allegiance by Girl Scout Troop 1054. Following the presentation of colors, all RMR attendees said the conservation pledge which read as follows:

"I pledge to protect and conserve the nature resources of the planet earth and promise to promote education so we may become caretakers of our air, water forests, land, and wildlife."

RMR Convention Chairman Jutta Arkan welcomed all in attendance and thanked everyone for coming.

RMR Convention Chairman Jutta Arkan then read a poem written by Sharyn Guthridge

The Honrable Josh Hopkins, Mayor of Chugwater, Wyoming welcomed everyone to Wyoming. Joshua is the mayor of Chugwater, Wyoming which is the 13th smallest town with an elevation of 5,288 feet. Joshua grew up in Delaware County, PA and is Chugwater, Wyoming's newest Mayor as of January 2025. Joshua is 34 years old and has lived in Wyoming since 2019. Joshua encouraged everyone to come to Chugwater to try their famous "Chugwater Chili."

A credentials report was given. There were 65 people in attendance at this meeting.

NGC Officers: 2

NGC Chairman: 0

NGC Committee Members: 2

NGC Life Members: 17

RMR Directors: 1

RMR Officers: 1 (Secretary)

RMR Chairmans: 3

RMR Life Members: 19

RMR Previous Directors: 5

State Presidents: 6

Club Presidents: 7

State Life Members: 17

Environmental Studies: 6

Garden Studies Consultant: 4

Flower Show Judge: 4

Landscape Design: 5

Garden Club Members: 58

Guests:7

Mary Lersson, Parliamentarian read the rules of the meeting, adopted the program and agenda, and assigned two (2) timekeepers. All in attendance introduced themselves stating their name, their local garden club and their state.

A report of the Secretary's minutes from the RMR meeting in August 2024 in Sioux Falls, South Dakota were read by Lorraine Patrick, Plattsmouth Garden Club, Plattsmouth, Nebraska.

Copies of the Treasurer's report was distributed. The Treasurer's report was approved. The proposed updated budget was accepted and approved. The estimated general funds in checking totaled \$11,382.61 (May 31, 2026). As a region, expenses were low last year so income exceeded expenses.

Investments at Edward Jones are growing at a rate of return of 5.22% in the last 5 years. This is a solid growth level for an institution/non-profit. Mick Pryor is the advisor for Edward Jones. He meets with Lynette Jeffries twice a year to look at the investments and discuss strategies. From May 31, 2024 to May 31, 2025, there was a gain of \$836.69 in the Edward Jones account.

Presentation of Bills (None)

Reports were verbally given by State Presidents and RMR Chairmen. Written copies of reports were submitted by some of the State Presidents.

Meeting recessed at 11:55am. Blessing was given by Ann Fournier.

At 12:00pm, the Laramie County Senior Center catered a soup salad buffet luncheon.

RMR photography awards were presented by Donna Rouch, Plattsmouth Garden Club, Plattsmouth, NE.

Local Cheyenne Wyoming author Barb Gorges discussed her work in the Habitat Hero Program at the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens.

Retired biologist from the Bureau of Land Management Vickie Herren presented on helping pollinators in Cheyenne. Vickie is now active with the Cheyenne Audubon group, works in her own pollinator garden and travels in her free time.

Old Business: State Treasurers should give national dues. It is \$1.00 per member. The largest clubs will earn \$100.00, small garden clubs will earn \$50.00.

State Presidents are on the Board Of Directors for NGC.

New Business:

Chris Martin would like to know the Awards Chairman for each state. National Garden Clubs (NGC) would like e-mail addresses for all club members in the Rocky Mountain Region (RMR).

Barb Yates made a motion that a change be made to the RMR Handbook. She requested that Item #5 read as follows: "Registration fee shall be at least \$25.00." The rationale is that this allows the Convention Committee to determine a larger amount if they feel it is needed. The motion was seconded by Mary Lerssen and was approved.

RMR Director Shirley Pursel is in the process of updating the RMR Handbook. She would like photos of the current RMR Officers.

Shirley's Project is titled "Planting Trees." She would like each state to tally up how many trees were planted and where/when they are located. Please provide this information to both Shirley Pursel and Robbie Kupper. No date was specified as to when this information was needed.

FGCN (Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska) President Rod Ruzanic volunteered to be the tree chairman. Thank you Rod!

The business meeting adjourned at approximately 2:23pm

There were two (2) garden tours in the afternoon. Garden enthusiasts toured Vickie Herren's Pollinator Garden and Amy Connaghan's garden. Thank you to Vickie and Amy for allowing us to see your beautiful private gardens!

There was a silent auction- all winners paid for their items.

A blessing was given by Ann Fournier. The Laramie County Senior Center provided a Fajita Buffet dinner.

At approximately 7:00pm guest speaker Rhonda Davis shared her knowledge on the Language of Fans during the 1800's and demonstrated a Victorian High Tea. Rhonda is a history enthusiast, as well as a registered nurse. Thank you, Rhonda, for sharing your knowledge with us!

In the evening, we were fortunate to have Donna Donnelley, NGC President at the RMR meeting. She spoke on her interest in resurrecting "Plant America." This is a program that past NGC President Nancy Hargrove started before COVID-19.

Jutta Arkan invited RMR guests to her house for a breakfast and garden tour on Sunday August 24, 2025. Thank you Jutta!

There was a courtesy resolution was given and the meeting concluded at approximately 8:21pm Mountain time on Saturday August 23, 2025 in Cheyenne, Wyoming.

Next year's RMR annual meeting will be in Fargo, North Dakota. A date was not provided but it will likely be in August 2026.

Next Meeting: A RMR virtual meeting will be on September 18, 2025. No time was specified.



A food truck which was located next to the pavilion provide lunch. After lunch members could visit the botanical gardens.

The pavilion housed RMR Registration Table and seating for all who attended. Desert and drinks were provided here, also.





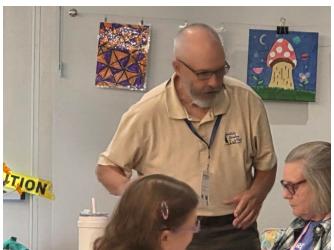


Highlight of the day was the opportunity to be reacquainted with old friends and making new friends.

Saturday was a day of learning about various teas. There are many types of tea, but people are surprised that all teas, white, green, oolong, black teas all come from the same plant. Tea is the second most popular beverage. The speaker was very informative.

Sunday was a day of visting members gardens. Fun was had by all.











The RMR meeting was held at the Laramie County Senior Center. Tables were changed to represent various topics of the day. Flowers honoring each state president was on display.

Lorraine Patrick, Plattsmouth Garden Club, became the RMR Secretary and as you can see from her Secretary Minutes she will be an asset to the RMR organization. Rod Ruzanic became the Plant a Tree chairman. His love and work with trees and involvement in various tree-oriented organizations will also be an asset to RMR. Mary Carlson involvement as FGCN Chairman with Blue Star and Gold Star memorials in FGCN will now expand to RMR.

Answer to Who Am I! is Hummingbird.





Jutta Arkan

Auroras Over Wyoming Wyoming Federation of Garden Clubs 1st Place







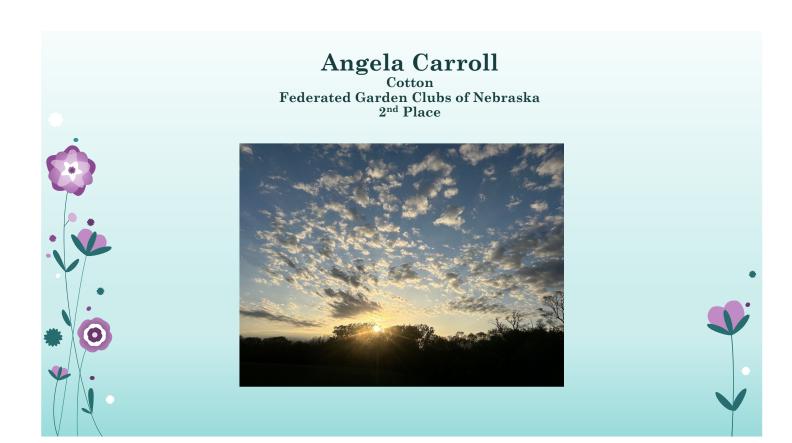
Lorraine Patrick

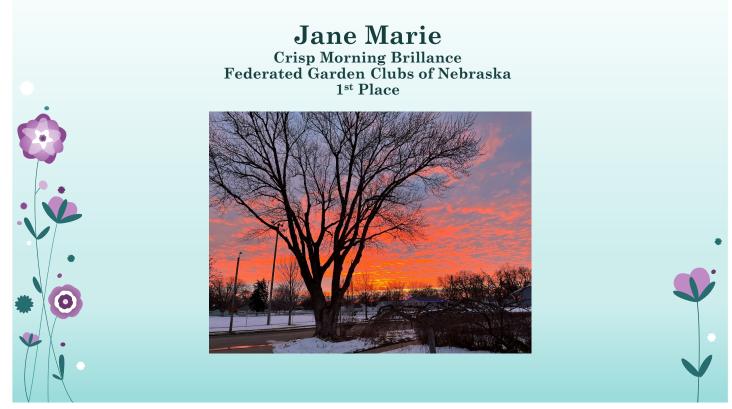
 $\begin{array}{c} {\rm Midwest~Storm} \\ {\rm Federated~Garden~Clubs~of~Nebraska} \\ {\rm 1^{st}~Place} \end{array}$











Patsy Bruner
Lightning in the Setting Sun
Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska
2nd Place









Mary Carlson
The Storm is Ending
Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska
2nd Place







Chris Martin

Lightning Strike Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska Honorable Mention









Winter Storm On It's Way Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska 3rd Place







Mary Carlson
Weathered House
Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska 3rd Place







Lorraine Patrick

Jagger in Snow Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska Honorable Mention



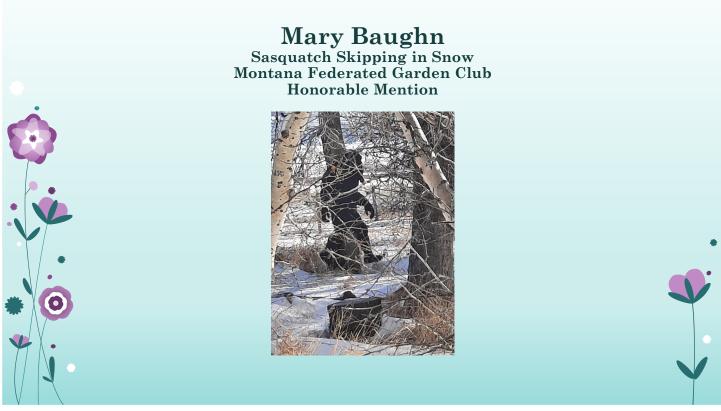




Jutta Arkan Snowcat Wyoming Federation of Garden Clubs Honorable Mention







Bob Martin

Winter Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska Honorable Mention



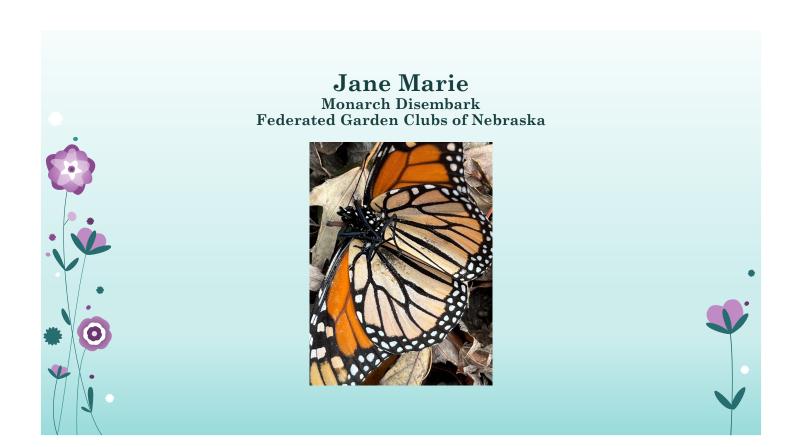




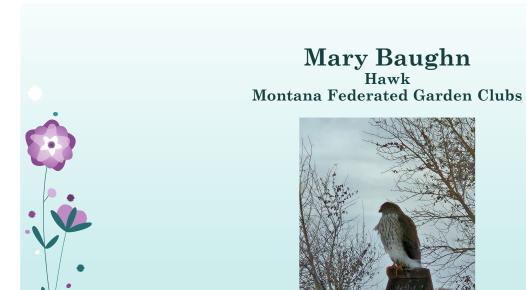


JUROR'S CHOICE

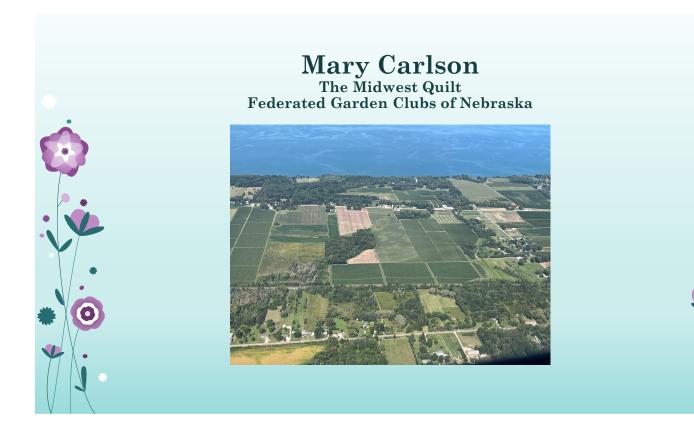








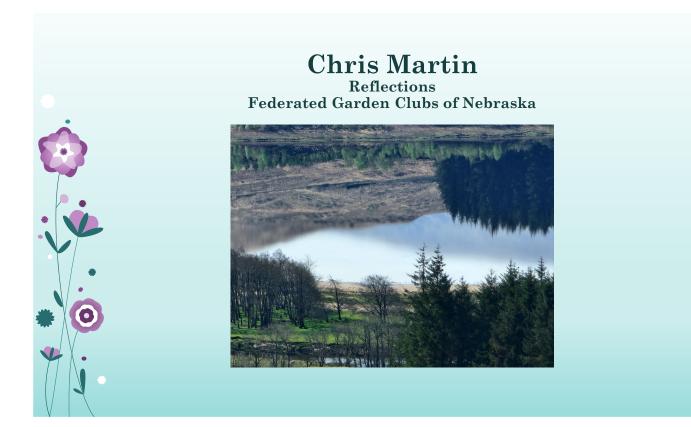




Patsy Bruner Lavendar Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska







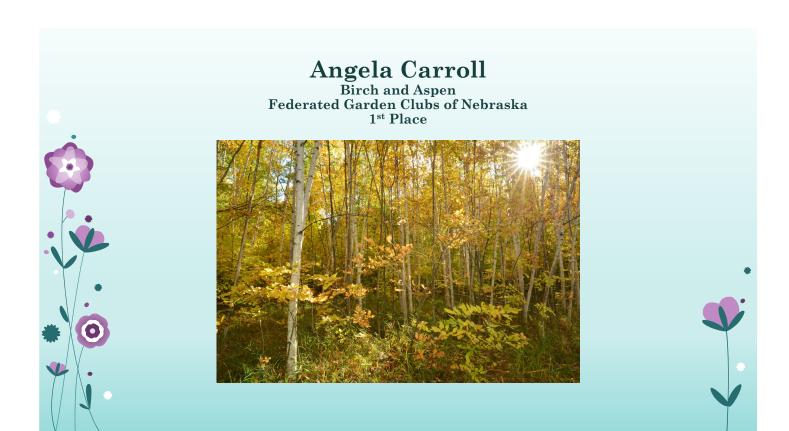
Lorraine Patrick

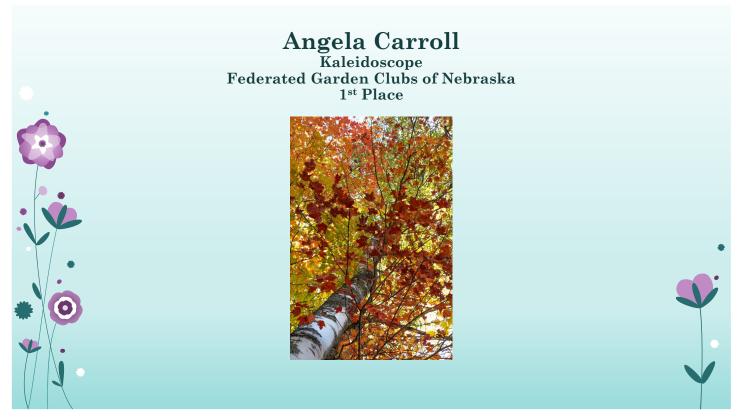
Waterfall in Sioux Falls Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska

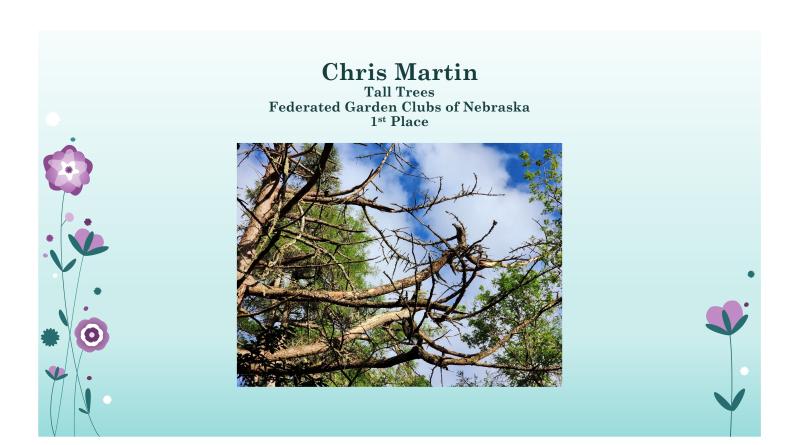


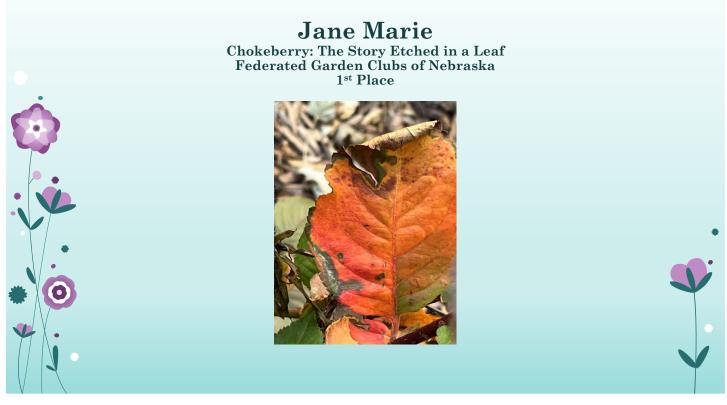


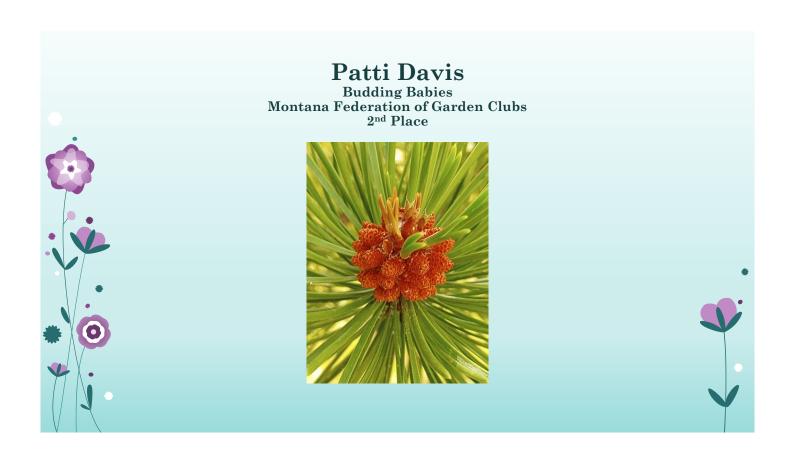


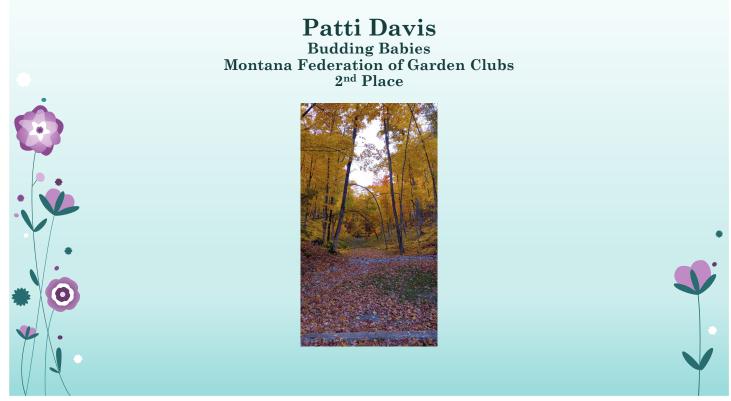


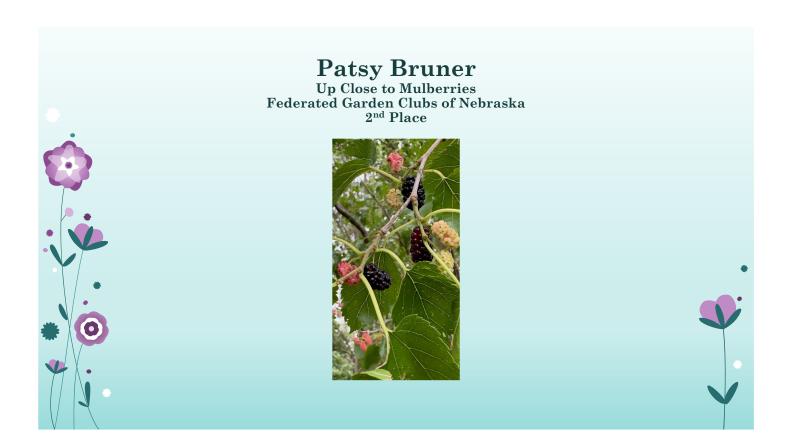


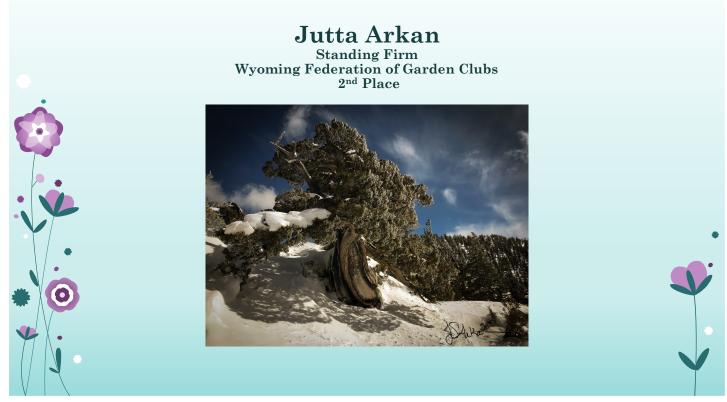


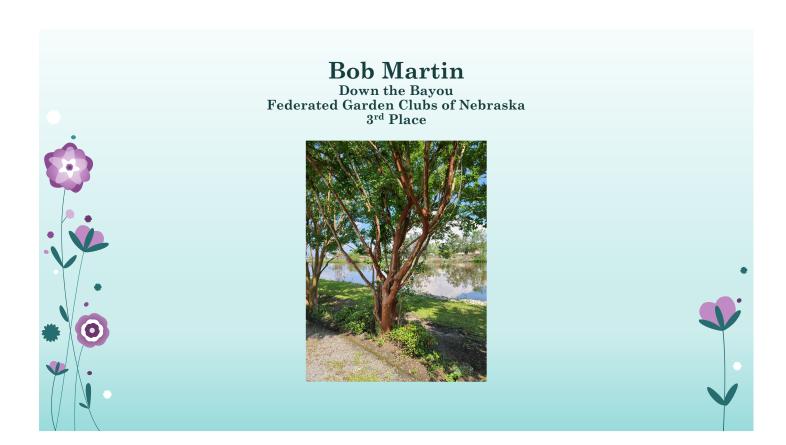


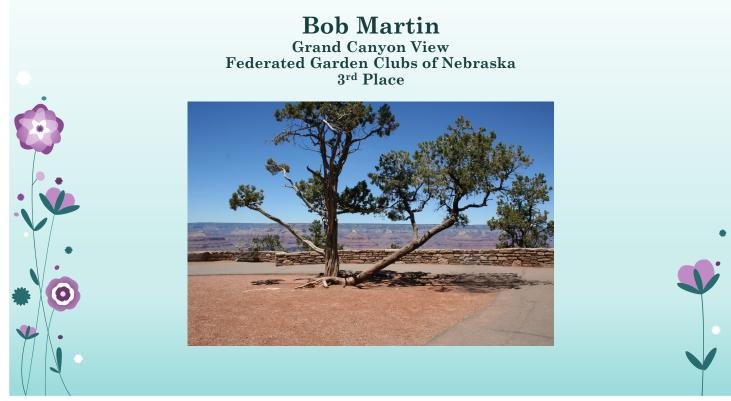




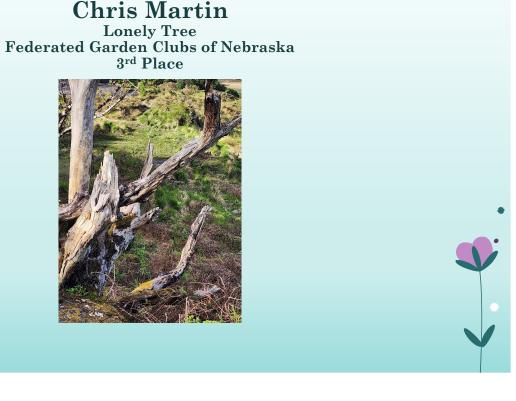


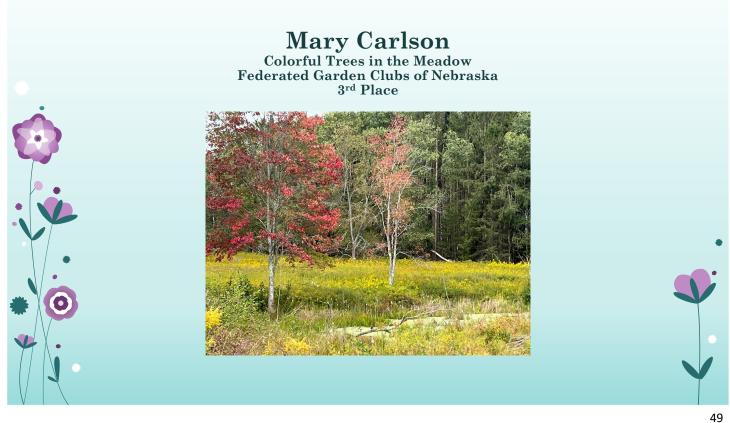






Chris Martin

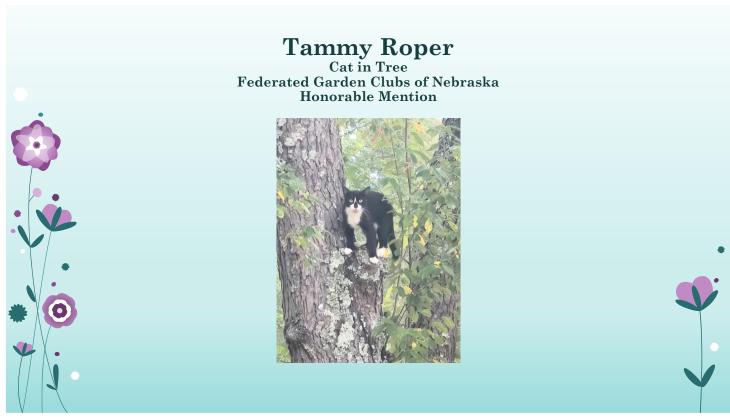


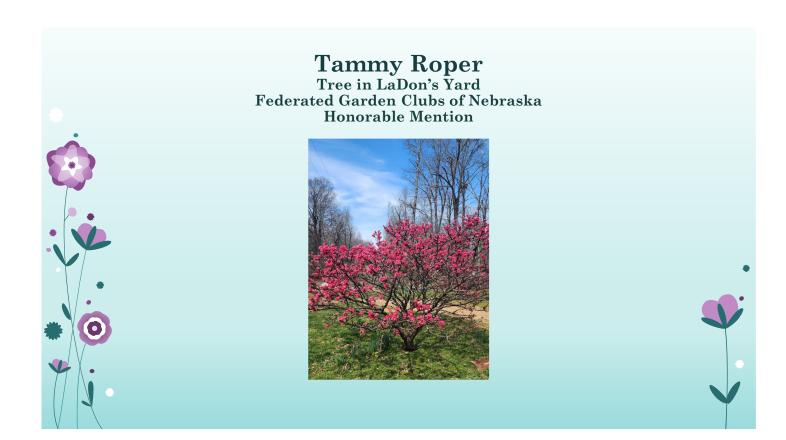


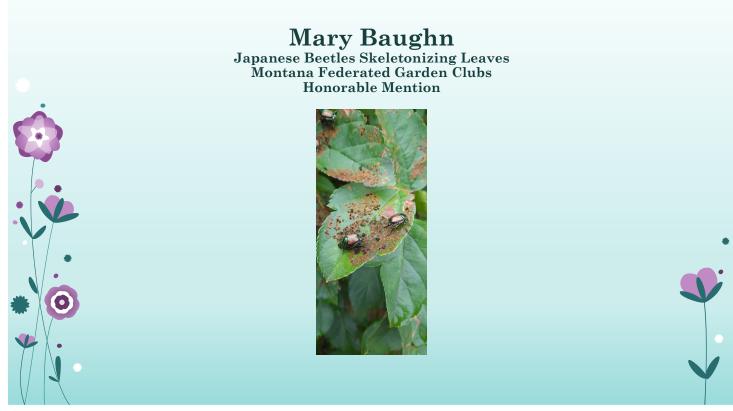
Jane Marie Coppertina Ninebark Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska Honorable Mention



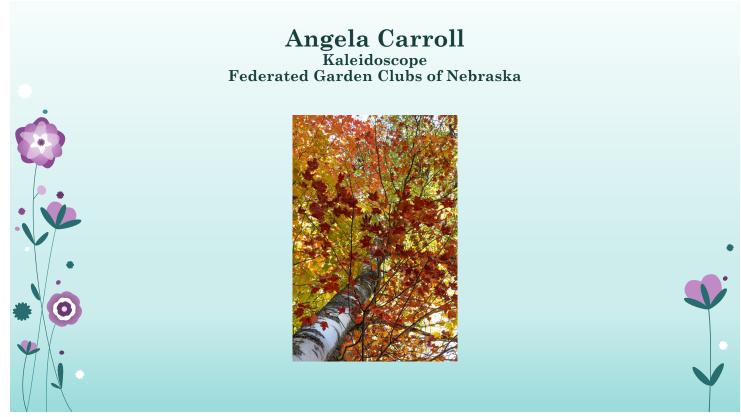










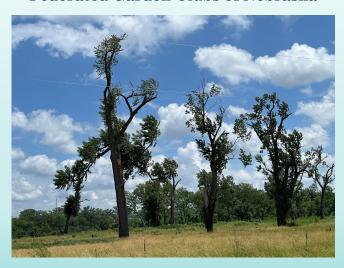






Mary Carlson
Pruned by a Tornado: Electrical Wires Restored
Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska







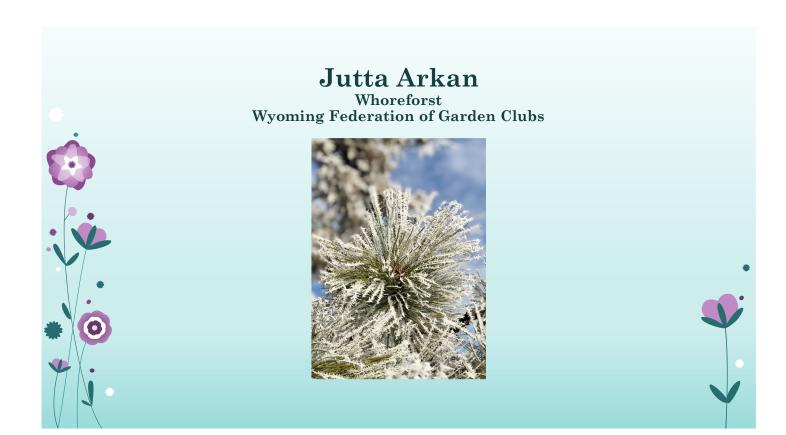
Lorraine Patrick

Tall Trees Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska











Award 1C Colorado Award: Garden Therapy

Bullhook Blossoms, Montana Federation of Garden Clubs Provides a service to a group of People (Care and Share: floral arrangements were made and given to a neighbor or patient in a group home. 14 Halloween arrangements were completed and delivered.

1 st place

Award 2A Kansas Award—Conservation

Greeley Morning Garden Club, Colorado Federation of Garden Clubs Educational Activity or program: The club created two new community gardens in Linn Grove Cemetery where the Blue/Gold Star Memorial is located. The Native Garden has strickly native plants and Mary's Garden is strictly plant select.

1st place

Award 3A Montana Awards—Writing Yearbook

Bullhook Blossoms Garden Club, Montana Federation of Garden Clubs, 1st Place

Dig and Dream Garden Club, Colorado Fedeation of Garden Clubs, 1st Place

Dirt Diggers Garden Club, Wyoming Federation of Garden Clubs, 1st Place

Award 3A Montana Awards—Writing Yearbook

Friendly Federated Garden Club, Federated Garden Clubs of Nebrask, 1st Place

Mitchell Area Garden Club, South Dakota Federation of Garden Clubs, 1st Place

Queen of Spades Garden Club, Colorado Federation of Garden Clubs, 1st Place

3A Montana Awards—Writing Yearbook

Top O'the World Garden Club, Colorado Federation of Garden Clubs, 1st Place

3B Montana Award—Writing—Scrapbook

Friendly Federated Garden Club, Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, 1st Place

Maywood-Wellfleet Country Gardners, Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, 1st Place

Award 3D Montana Award—Writing—State Publication

South Dakota Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. South Dakota Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. Twice a year, The Messenger, a newsletter is published documenting the state and local club events, 1st Place

Award 3E Montana Award—Writing Articles for publication by a magazine or newspaper Karen Vosen, Bullhook Blossoms Garden Club, Montana Federation of Garden Clubs Article published in the Harve Daily News about the Gold Star Dedication, 1st Place

Lynn Cleveland, Queens of Spades Garden Club, Colorado Federation of Garden Clubs Ms. Cleveland authored an article on the history of The Emerson ouse which served as the Colorado Federated Garden Club's headquarters from 1965-2025, 1st Place

Award 4B Horticulture Excellence — Contributions to horticulture through education

Sioux Falls Federated Garden Club, South Dakota Federated Garden Club Club toured a wholesale nursery where they learned how to start plants from seed, including transferring them to larger pots, 1st Place

Award 5E North Dakota Award—Slide Show

Greeley Morning Garden Club, Colorado Federation of Garden Clubs

A slie show was developed to help new members understand the community work that the club
does. It included showing plant buying, planting, weeding, and maintaining, 1st Place

Award 8A Utah Award—Garden Tours—Open to the Public

Greeley Morning Garden Club, Colorado Federation of Garden Clubs

4th year of sponsoring the tour, which has been in existence for 33 years

Money raised goes to the Garden Club's scholarship for high school seniors, 1st Place

Dell Rapids Area Garden Club, South Dakota Federation of Garden Clubs Members traveled to Mary Jo Wegner's Arboretum in Sioux Falls, SD. They learned various approaches of gardening techniques shared by Master Gardeners, 2nd Place

Plattsmouth Garden Club, Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska Members hosted a tour of six gardens, which the public could tour. There was an A-Z tour game, with prizes, a raffle, and a tool swap, 2nd Place

Award 8C Utah Award Garden Tours—Open to Garden Club Members Only

Mitchell Area Garden Club, South Dakota Federation of Garden Clubs Club members traveled 70 miles to a private garden. On the return trip they also visited a Greenhouse, 1st Place

Award 10 Civic Development

Bullhook Blossoms Garden Club, Montana Federation of Garden Clubs
Since 2010, the club has been maintaining the flower beds at the Hill County Courthouse. They
work with the Courthouse lawn crew and provide funds to purchase flowers, etc. The County
Commissioners recognized them for their contributions through a formal proclamation. (10
a,d,e), 1st Place

Plattsmouth Garden Club, Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska The Club has been responsible for maintaining the Veterans Memorial Garden at Garfield Park (10e), 1st Place

Mitchell Area Garden Club, South Dakota Federation of Garden Clubs Club participates in First Friday Summer Events where there are raffles and opportunities to teach children how to plant and maintain plants, 1st Place

Award 11 Conservation and Environmental Concerns

Queens of Spades and Garden Club, Colorado Federation of Garden Clubs
The program addressed the critical need to expand the gardens to provide an environment for sustaining pollinators. 80% of the members certify their gardens through Audubon Rockies
Habitat Hero, National Wildlife Habitat program 90% of members' gardens are certified by one or several accreditation programs. or the National Garden Club Pollinator Garden Certification Programs., 1st Place

Marilyn Granell, Bullock Blossoms Garden Club, Montana Federation of Garden Clubs Members went to a cabin in the Bear Paw Mountain to capture the Wildflowers in bloom. Marilyn shared the common and scientific names of each flower., 1st Place

Garden Open to the Public

Fargo Garden Society, North Dakota State Garden Clubs
The project is to provide habitat for many pollinators in the area. This garden is located at the Red River Zoo. The project has been ongoing since 2019, 1st Place

Award 14 Landscape Design

Bullhook Blossoms Garden Club, Montana Federation of Garden Clubs
For 10 the Club has adopted the Aminat Wilson Iris Memorial Flower in Veteran's Park. They
maintain and add flowers as needed, 1st Place

Dirt Diggers Garden Club, Wyoming Federation of Garden Clubs
The club is restoring the rock garden outside the Grand Encampment Museum. They perennials, 1st Place

Dell Rapids Area Garden Club, South Dakota Federation of Garden Clubs

The Club is updating the landscaping of the Lutheran Church of Dell Rapids, 1st Place

Award 16D Youth Award

Driggs Dragons Junior Garden Club, Utah Federated Garden Club
The Club provides multisensory, hands on experiences and activities center on plants, nature
and animals. The club also participates in all activites sponsored by NGC, 1st Place

Award 18 Blue Star/Gold Star Highway Memorials

BlueStar/Gold Star Committee, Mary Carlson, Chair, Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska A Blue Star Memorial was placed and dedicated at Fort McPherson National Cemetery in March 2025, 1st Place

Award 22: Citation of Distinguished Service

Geoff Ellis Utah Associated Garden Club

Award 23 Club Programs

Dig and Dream Garden Club, Colorado Federation of Garden Clubs This award is presented for a garden club program on growing, studying, and culture of plants or a plant family

"A year of programs About Sow and Grow"

Programs were held on: Growing Seedlings with Grow Lights

Mushroom Loa

Water Gardens

Growing Cutting Gardens

Basic Care of Houseplants

Putting Your Garden to Bed

The Sow and Grow meetings were opportunities to get hands-on experience with making potting soil, creating bird feeders and herb butter, 1st Place

Award 25 National Garden Clubs Projects

Dig and Dream Garden Club, Colorado Federation of Garden Clubs
The club supports Plant America – Feed America: A Vegetable and Herb Garden is located at the Ronald McDonald House. The cooking staff uses the food at the RMH for visiting family members, 1st Place