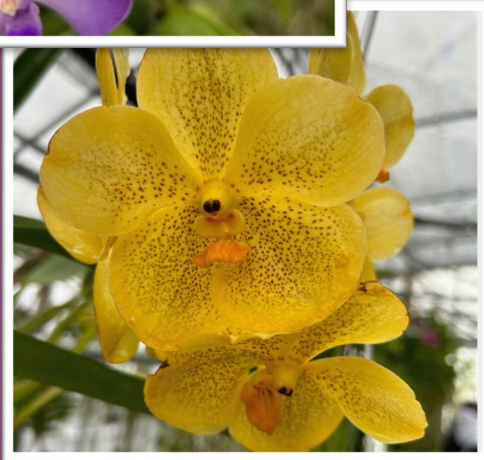
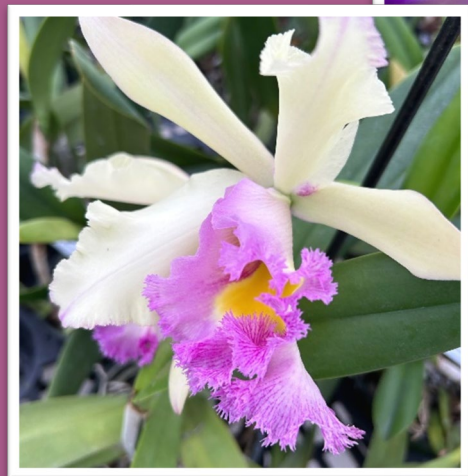


# *Louisiana Garden Club Federation*

# NEWSLETTER

*January*  
2024



# *Thank You Sponsors*

*Deep South Garden Club, Inc. Convention*

*March 8-10, 2023*

## **GOLD SPONSOR**

*Jefferson Parish Council of Garden Clubs*

## **GOLD SPONSOR**

*Federated Council of New Orleans Garden Clubs*

## **SILVER SPONSOR**

*St. Martinville Garden Club*



## **HOST CLUB FOR CONVENTION**

*Louisiana Garden Club Federation, Inc.*

# THE LOUISIANA GARDEN CLUB FEDERATION, INC.

## Newsletter

Member of

National Garden Clubs, Inc.

Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc.

*"Louisiana Goes Emerald—Plant Wildflowers"*



VOLUME LXXIV

JANUARY 2024

NO 3

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**On Our Cover:** The photos on our cover were taken by members of Terrytown Garden Club, District II. For the club's November meeting, the members toured Belle Danse Orchids and Tropicals in Belle Chase, LA. These are just a few of the gorgeous orchids that were blooming in four of their greenhouses. Orchids are plants that belong to the family Orchidaceae. While there are hundreds of orchid species to choose from, the most commonly sold orchid groups are *Phalaenopsis*, *Cattleya*, *Denrobium*, and *Cymbidium*.

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO THE SPRING ISSUE, APRIL 1, 2024, IS MARCH 1, 2024 AND SHOULD BE EMAILED OR MAILED TO THE EDITOR.** We welcome drawings, paintings, or photos for the cover of the Newsletter.

Please email all information for this issue to [lgcfnews@gmail.com](mailto:lgcfnews@gmail.com)

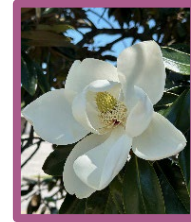
**Editor:** Donna Cline, 826 Evergreen Dr., Gretna, LA 70053. Phone: C (217) 778-2513

# President's Message

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*Louisiana Goes Emerald—  
Plant Wildflowers*



*Happy New Year and a very special  
Happy 90<sup>th</sup> LGCF Anniversary!*

LGCF has so much to celebrate. Our past ninety years has involved the leadership of our Former State Presidents, Former District Directors and Former Club Presidents and Members. Today, the same holds true.

We **WORK** together in order to accomplish our goals as a State, District and Club. We **LEARN** together attending our NGC schools available to all of us as National Garden Club members: Environmental, Landscape Design, Gardening and Flower Show Schools. We **TRAVEL** together on our LGCF tours. We **GIVE** attention to our senior citizens by having special programs for them to enjoy, help needy families during the Holidays, and also donate funds to LGCF scholarships enabling students aid to attend college. We **HONOR** the men and women, who have served, are serving, or will serve in the Armed Forces of the United States by dedicating Blue Star Memorial Markers in our communities. We have **FUN** planting wildflowers along the highways and in our yards. We get together to **CELEBRATE** those clubs receiving awards and our friendships at conventions. Let's continue to work, learn, travel, give, honor, have fun and celebrate on this 90<sup>th</sup> LGCF Anniversary!

As I traveled the highways of Louisiana in October, I was able to visit all six Districts. I thoroughly enjoyed visiting with old friends and meeting with new ones. I enjoyed each luncheon with interesting speakers, mostly the uniqueness of each District. I also am grateful for the gifts received in the Book of Honors/Scholarship Fund on my behalf, Thank You!



I want to quickly remind you of a few topics mentioned in my speech.

Brenda Moore, NGC President's projects:

1. Plant America – Feed America
2. Plant America – Wildlife Habitat Certification Program
3. Plant America – Plant for Pollinators

Each of these project details can be found on the NGC website, [gardenclub.org](http://gardenclub.org)

Stay connected with National Garden Clubs. Sign up to receive the TNG/The National Gardener, NGC Blogs and *Newscape*. Learn about the schools available, programs and webinars. As a LGCF member, you are also a Member of National Garden Clubs, Inc., so take advantage of these perks.

Information on **NGC 2024 Convention in Westminster CO** can be found on the website.

Visit Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc. website: [deepsouthgardenclubs.com](http://deepsouthgardenclubs.com) for **2024 Deep South Convention information in Gatlinburg TN.**

To conclude, I'd like to update you on the *Diggers & Weeders Scholarship Challenge*. Donations have been received from the following Clubs:

Jefferson Parish Council of Garden Clubs, \$200  
LGCF District II, \$100  
Country Club of Louisiana Garden Club, \$100  
Covington Garden Club, \$500  
Hammond Garden Club, \$100  
Diggers & Weeders Garden Club, \$100  
Moreauville Garden Club, \$100

(Clubs donating to this Scholarship Challenge will receive a Special Certificate of Appreciation at the 2024 LGCF Convention in Lake Charles.)

Thank you for your involvement and I do appreciate all you do to keep Louisiana Garden Club Federation, Inc. moving forward and growing with Excitement on this 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration!

With gratitude,

*Patricia Ortalano*

LGCF President 2023-2025

# *Editor's Corner*

---



I hope all of you had a wonderful Holiday and I wish you blessings in the New Year.

This issue introduces you to our District Directors. They are the vital connection between the State President and the districts and help to facilitate the work of the organization.

Also in this issue, we are honoring 17 garden club members who are recipients of the Circle of Roses Award. They come from varying backgrounds, but they share a passion for gardening and a commitment to their garden club and their community. We can all learn from these amazing women.

Keep in mind that the LGCF Convention will be held April 16-17, 2024 at the L'Auberge Casino Resort in Lake Charles, LA. Check the LGCF website for more information as it becomes available.

Please continue to send in your pictures, articles, and any information you would like to share.

Happy New Year,

*Donna Cline*

## SPOTLIGHT ON DISTRICT DIRECTORS

Having just completed a successful tour of the state attending Fall District Meetings, it is fitting that we honor our District Directors. District Directors are an integral part of our organization. They are the link between the state organization and the individual clubs. It is their responsibility to keep club presidents informed of new business and recommendations of LGCF and NGC. It is also their responsibility to hold the District's Club Presidents' Meeting in May or June of each year and preside at the Fall District Meeting. Every club in each District should know exactly who these women are that have given of their time to ensure the success of LGCF.



**Susan Finney, District II Director**

**What inspired you to join a garden club?** I was encouraged to join the River Ridge Garden Club with my mother shortly after my dad died. My friend Stephanie, always on the lookout for new members, thought it would be good for both my mom and me. And it was! I worked as a school librarian when I first joined the club, so I did not participate fully at first. Slowly I learned what a garden club is about. Personal satisfaction.

**As District Director, has there been something in particular that has enlightened or deepened your appreciation for the organization or its membership?** I love the education that is available to us. Recycling and ecology, gardening, flower shows all enrich my life. I love that we can express our citizenship in beautifying our community, litter control and Blue Star Markers. I love the camaraderie shared at meetings across age groups. We have fun.

**What type of impact do you believe your District has had on your local community?** The clubs in District II are vibrant and I think the impact is that each club has a group of people who care about the community. In that way, they affect the community.



**Babette Werner, District III Director**

I joined the Lafayette Garden Club in 2009 and have served as President, Executive Board Member, Awards Chair, Audit Chair, Civic Pride and Garden of the Month Chair, Parliamentarian, and Protecting Aquatic Ecosystems Chair. I have received the LGC Honorary Member of the Year and Women of the Year Awards.

My Louisiana Garden Club Federation, Inc involvement includes serving as 2019 Convention Chair, Representative-at-Large, Awards Advisor/Consultant, President of the Gardening School Council. I am an Environmental Master Consultant and Landscape and Gardening Consultant. I received the LGCF, DS and NGC Regional Member of Honor Award.

I am a Master Gardener Graduate and an Advanced Master Gardener Program graduate. I have served as the MG President, Vice President, Corresponding Secretary, Class Coordinator several years, Chair of the Plantfest fundraiser, Strategic Plan Co-Chair, School Garden Committee, and Festival des Fleurs Board Member. I was on the Committee which founded the Healers Garden at Vermilionville, a cultural center and historic village. I was appointed to the Louisiana State Advisory Committee. I received the Outstanding Master Gardener Award.

I am a Charter member of the Bayou Vermilion Preservation Association serving as Vice President, Corresponding Secretary, Technical Advisor, Symposium and State of the River committee member, Solicitation Chair. I was awarded the Jan and Charlie Wyatt Visionary of the Year Award.

I was the President of Avec Souci (Women's service organization), Garden Tour Fundraiser Chair, Charitable Works Chair, and Publicity Chair.

I am a graduate of the Acadiana Master Naturalist Class and served as a Board member and assisted with the class. I was also on the Acadiana Symphony Orchestra Board of Directors and was on the Fundraising Committee. I served on the Board of Directors of the Academy of the Sacred Heart and the Development Committee of Our Lady of Fatima Church.

**What inspired you to join a garden club?** I was newly retired after a career as a Development Director and looking for organizations to join where I would continue to learn in my interest areas. I was inspired to join the Lafayette Garden Club after attending a fundraiser for the club featuring a variety of speakers. One of the members invited me to the next meeting which I did not know was a field trip. Two of the older members said that they were going to ride with me. (I didn't know that I was driving). They were so entertaining that I was sold. The club has been a community of friends that I cherish.



**As District Director, has there been something in particular that has enlightened or deepened your appreciation for the organization or its membership?** As District Director, I appreciate the internal and external networks that exist in LGCF. Internally, the state officers and individuals all over the state are able to answer questions and provide advice. There are many mentors, all willing to help. Externally, we are part of tiered larger organizations, Deep South Garden Clubs and National Garden Clubs. NGC has valuable resources for Districts, clubs and members.

**What type of impact do you believe your District has had on your local community?** Our District Clubs have a tremendous impact on our local communities. Many clubs assist their community by helping to beautify areas of town by planting beds and maintaining them. Clubs recognize citizens and businesses through Garden of the Month and Civic Pride programs. Clubs assist with Community Gardens and the food is donated to local food banks. Clubs participate in youth horticulture education working with scouts, schools, 4-H programs and Junior Master Gardener Camp. Projects include establishing pollinator gardens, planting vegetables, native plants, contributing seed, soil and mulch and education about all. One club volunteers with the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program, the Wetland Discovery Center and established the Bonne Terre Native Plant Society. Currently and historically, our clubs have been respected by government officials and have many partnerships to obtain the goals of both organizations. Litter control is a major theme for clubs and government. There are many other worthy programs that our clubs have which improve our community, ie Arbor Day, Conservation Activities, Historic Preservation. Our communities would be at a loss if we did not have our District clubs.



**Nancy Love, District V Director**

Nancy Love, has held previous Garden Club positions as President, Vice-President, and Treasurer of the Farmerville Garden Club and Parliamentarian of District V. She and Clive live on Lake D'Arbonne in Farmerville, LA. They have two children, a daughter, son, and 4 grandchildren.

She is a member of the Farmerville Methodist Church, D'Arbonne Master Gardeners, and on the Chamber of Commerce Committee for "Christmas in the State Park". She enjoys gardening for pollinators, herb gardening, traveling the world, and, most importantly, keeping up with her grandchildren. She has recently been inspired creatively with painting artworks and designing floral arrangements.

**What inspired you to join a garden club?** Nancy's love for the garden club was inspired by her mother, Claudine Love Risdal, who was a member and officer of the Columbia Garden Club. Her mother, who recently passed away, left Nancy all her club yearbooks, floral arrangement award

ribbons, and all of her memories/stories about the wonderful garden club friendships she had across the state and all of the great things they did in the community that are still visible today. That inspiration has helped to motivate Nancy to join and be actively involved in the garden club, founder of Keep Union Beautiful, and involved with mayors, chamber, and police jury in the Farmerville Community with projects and grants to renovate and bring businesses back to downtown Farmerville over the last 10 years. The Farmerville Garden Club erected the Blue Star Memorial Garden over the last few years that won State and Deep South Garden Club Awards. The last couple of years a big chamber community project she has been actively involved in is the new "Christmas in the State Park", which is a drive through Christmas Light Extravaganza that has campers from around the US that light up their campsites for Christmas, business exhibits, church displays, and two weekends of evening Christmas Carols by various Praise Groups and Churches.

**As District Director, has there been something in particular that has enlightened or deepened your appreciation for the organization or its membership?** Traveling across District V, Nancy has seen the deep bond of friendship in all garden clubs and common love of giving countless hours of time, financial support, and energy to help our communities and state be a better place to live. This garden club community energy is contagious to inspire mayors and other civic groups. As District V Director Nancy hopes to inspire others across District V and the State of Louisiana to grow our garden clubs by inviting more friends to be involved, as we evolve with changing times to attract new members.

**What type of impact do you believe your District has had on your local community?** District Fall Meetings and at many Cleanest City Events, so many mayors across the state have credited the local garden clubs with helping our communities be cleaner, more beautiful, and a better place to live. Nancy believes this is the LGCF legacy to uphold.



**Donna Moran, District VI Director**

**What inspired you to join a garden club?** Growing up, I considered gardening as part of living. My grandmothers were both exceptional gardeners. One had her roots in the Lakeview Garden Club; flowers and design were part of her standard operations. In her senior years she surrounded herself with bromeliads and orchids in her hothouse and garden. She knew them all by their Latin name! My other grandmother was raised in the country and had a special interest in roses. The most beautiful flowers in the neighborhood were in her yard. When I retired after 34 years as a state employee, I couldn't wait to join Lakeview Botany Guild and learn the art of arranging flowers for the home. Someone told me that I had to go to Flower

Show School to learn that. Having never been to a flower show, I naively took on the classes. That direction has exploded with the opportunity to meet many wonderful ladies, go to interesting places and to have a life purpose, especially after being widowed.

**As District Director, has there been something in particular that has enlightened or deepened your appreciation for the organization or its membership?** Being a federated organization, LGCF has provided so many avenues to let your light shine or to supply a need. Take a chance on something new, express a desire to work on a special project, or bring plant life into the minds of our youth. There are endless possibilities. I have found that each club has its own unique style. Some work closely with parish agencies such as parks and agriculture, some have a signature event for the community and some hold educational classes for their members. Garden Clubs are so useful in feeding your soul and expressing your grace.



**Ammy Taylor, District VII Director**

Ammy is an RN, MBA who is now retired from nursing after 40 years in progressive healthcare management. She is married to Harold Taylor and together they have 7 children, 16 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. She enjoys spending time with her family, pets, travel, cooking, gardening (flowers and vegetables) and floral design.

**What inspired you to join a garden club?** I always knew that when I retired and had time, I wanted to become more involved in my garden club. I enjoy spending time with the members of my club and finding new friendships around the state. The educational events that are available through the federated garden clubs in our state and nationally help me in becoming a better gardener and floral designer.

**As District Director, has there been something in particular that has enlightened or deepened your appreciation for the organization or its membership?** Traveling to the different clubs in my District has provided me with an opportunity to meet so many new people and see in person the diversity of projects that they all have in their home communities.

**What type of impact do you believe your District has had on your local communities?** The clubs in our District not only contribute to beautification efforts in their individual communities, but they also work with other community organizations on projects that impact other needs in each town such as visits to nursing homes, school projects, and assisting with providing needed other services to people in need. They also all work together when needed to organize or contribute to District or State fundraisers.



**DD Lamartiniere, District VIII Director**

I grew up in Eutaw, AL, graduated from Greene County High School and attended Livingston University (now known as University of West Alabama) in Livingston, AL before beginning an insurance career in Atlanta, GA as an Underwriter before relocating to New Orleans, Jackson, MS and finishing in Birmingham, AL after a 37-year career.

DD lives in Fifth Ward, a community just north of Marksville, with her husband Coral, a former researcher in cancer chemoprevention at the University of Alabama-Birmingham, their four cats and one Keeshond dog.

DD and Coral are active members of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, serving as Extraordinary Ministers. In addition, she is a Lector and Altar Society President. DD is also active in the Marksville Garden Club, spearheading their annual poinsettia fundraiser sale, CENLA Master Gardeners and Friends of the Avoyelles Libraries.

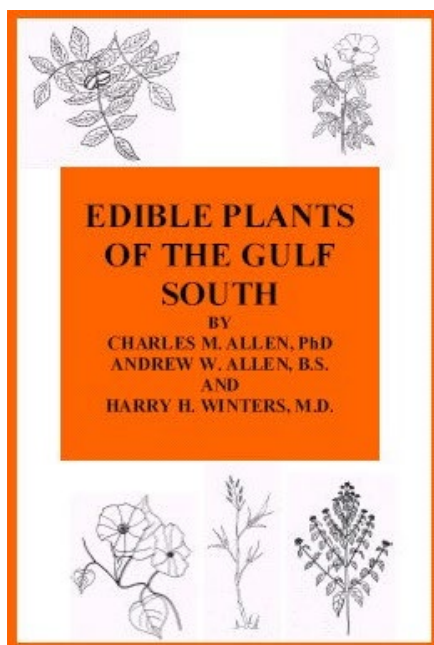
**What inspired you to join a garden club?** I grew up working alongside my paternal grandmother in her flower gardens. I would help my aunt and uncle occasionally in their flower shop. My mother always preferred being out in her yard “piddling” and so do I.

**As District Director, has there been something that has enlightened or deepened your appreciation for the organization or its membership?** I have enjoyed visiting each club in District VIII, meeting the members, exchanging ideas, and seeing how each club is alike, yet different.

**What type of impact do you believe your District has had on your local communities?** I believe we have changed the stereotypical image of what a garden club member is and looks like. We don't mind getting our hands dirty, hauling bags of mulch, sprucing up planters around town or going toe to toe with city officials on issues that impact our communities, towns, and cities. We are a mighty voice!

## *Book Review*

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### **Edible Plants of the Gulf South**

**By Dr. Charles Allen and Dr. Harry Winters**

**Illustrated By Andrew Allen**

**Allen's Native Ventures Publishing, 2005**

**291 Pages**

**ISBN-13: 978-0971862524**

Though this is an older book, it is a new one to me! The author's name rang a bell, as I suddenly recalled having conversations with gardening friends about him. An accomplished authority on the native plants of Louisiana, and in collaboration with Dr. Winters, MD, Allen has compiled this field guide in response to a growing interest in the importance of native plants in our environments, and not just for their beauty and sustainability.

With its many descriptions and artistic illustrations, this book is the perfect resource for those interested in organic local food, for naturalists as well as survivalists. Apparently, because of our unique ecosystem in the Gulf South, our forests and many of our backyards are lush with plants that have long been forgotten as a source of sustenance.

Take a look at this book, then go see what you've got in YOUR yard!

*Submitted by Sissy Gall, LGCF Book Review Chair*



# ***Save the Date***

**4/16-17, 2024**



*Join us for  
Lake Effect Fun!*

## **2024 LGCF Convention**

**L'Auberge Casino Resort**

**Lake Charles, LA**

**Hosted by District VII**

## *"The Paul Soniat Oak"*

---

Mr. Paul Soniat, director of the New Orleans Botanical Garden in City Park for the past 41 years, retired on November 30, 2023. The Live Oak Society Chairman Coleen Perilloux Landry honored him by sponsoring an oak in his name. A ceremony was held near the tree in the Botanical Garden with 40 invited guests who had helped with the Garden through the years, whether helping to build the Pavilion of the Two Sisters, sponsoring the "Thursday at Twilight" concert series, helping with Celebration in the Oaks and many other facets that helped the Garden and gave pleasure to millions through the years. A luncheon was held at the Tavern in the Park restaurant following the ceremony.

**"The Paul Soniat Oak" is # 10,012 on the Live Oak Society registry.**



Coleen Perilloux Landry, chairman of the LGCF's Live Oak Society presents the official certificate of registration to Mr. Paul Soniat.



Paul Soniat is congratulated at the Oak by LGCF President Patricia Ortalano, Coleen Perilloux Landry and Mary Ellen Miller.

# NGC ENVIRONMENTAL SCHOOL COURSE 2

## March 11-12 VIA ZOOM

GC Environmental School Course 2

[REGISTRATION](#)

# THE GEOSPHERE

The geosphere is the part of the Earth composed of its interior and exterior surfaces, mostly made up of rocks and minerals.

**CRUST** It is where land and oceans are found, composed of plates that float above the mantle.

**MANTLE** It is the largest layer and made of extremely hot, dense rock with thick asphalt texture.

**OUTER CORE** It is made of extremely hot iron and nickel that remains in a liquid state.

**INNER CORE** It has similar materials as the outer core but remains a solid ball due to pressure.

**NGC Environmental School Course 2**

**March 11-12, 2024**

**Via Zoom**

<https://www.gardenclub.org>

Landforms such as mountains and canyons are part of the geosphere.

"The Earth's Layers Lesson #1." Volcano World, 10 Dec. 2018. <https://volcano.oregonstate.edu/earths-layers-lesson-1>.

## AMES Tools—A Corporate Sponsor of National Garden Clubs, Inc.

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*National Garden Club, Inc.'s grant program with The Ames Companies, Inc. began in 2014. The Ames Companies has generously agreed to extend its in-kind grant program for 2023.*

Take advantage of this benefit of being an NGC member garden club. You may select tools up to a retail value of \$250 for your community garden or garden therapy club project. Details may be found below. Select “Resources and Forms” to find the application and the tool Item Selection List. Many tools are appropriate for children or gardeners who prefer a cushion grip handle.

Garden tools with a total retail value of \$4,500 are available for NGC gardening projects. Gardening programs performed or supported by NGC local member clubs and scheduled to be carried out **March 1 through September 30, 2024 are eligible.** Projects may be a joint venture with another organization, however the garden club applying must be a member of NGC. Awarded tools will be shipped to the successful applicants in May of this year.

Submitted by Donna Bucci  
NGC Activities Chairman



## SPRING TOUR TO PHILADELPHIA, PA

March 3-8, 2024

The group will all fly to Atlanta, and then all of us will fly together to Philadelphia. We will stay at the Home 2 by Marriott, which is just across the street from the Flower Show location. The Flower Show is the nation's largest and longest-running horticultural event and features stunning displays by the world's premier floral and landscape designers.

NOTE: We have 9 spots left for this tour!

### SUNDAY – Private Airport Transfer Service

Deluxe private chauffeured transfer from Philadelphia International Airport to Home2 Suites by Hilton Hotel in downtown Philadelphia.



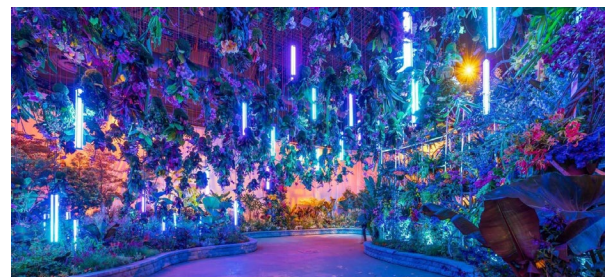
### MONDAY EXPERIENCE – The Philadelphia Flower Show



Be immersed in dazzling floral color, creativity, and garden beauty presented at the USA's largest horticultural event.

The world's most talented community of floral and garden artists are brought together by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

Now in its 195th year, the award-winning PHS Philadelphia Flower Show is a one-of-a-kind marquee event known the globe over for its exquisite and immersive floral exhibits, world-class plant competitions, family-friendly activities, educational offerings, and shopping. Your ticket (plus handstamp at the exit) is valid for an all-day experience from 9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on-your-own schedule.





## TUESDAY EXPERIENCE – City Tour

### Philadelphia Then & Now: *from Colonial Capital to Modern Metropolis*



The most comprehensive full-city tour, ***Philadelphia Then & Now***, is a fully guided tour by bus through four centuries of art, architecture and Philadelphia's growth to the 2nd largest city on the east coast.

Beginning before 1776, we will hear stories of the people, places and things that made Colonial Philadelphia the seat of government for the young nation and one of the largest English speaking cities in the world.

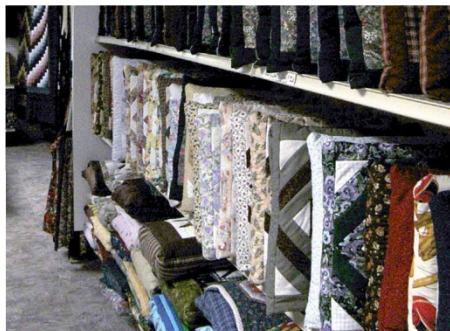
See such sites\* as the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall (ticketed interior tour), Congress Hall, First and Second Bank of the US, Betsy Ross House, Franklin's grave, Christ Church, Elfreth's Alley and the neighborhood of Society Hill. Embracing the modern day, we will visit neighborhoods where the Founding Fathers' lived and see how contemporary Philadelphians have made them their own.

Going beyond the colonial period, we will visit\* the bustling business district, Museum Mile of the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, the famous Rocky steps, Philadelphia's vibrant theater district, and much more.



\*

## WEDNESDAY EXPERIENCE – Amish Country



Who doesn't like to shop? Begin the tour with a gift bag and a mini jar of jelly plus receive a "free gift" at each of the four Amish stops. Receive a wooden toy at an Amish toymaker. Get a whoopie pie at the bake shop. Take home an Amish handmade leather craft and finish with a quilted notion from a quilt shop. Four stops, five gifts, great shopping!

Plus plenty of stories of Amish life and culture along the way.



### Amish Country Homestead & One-Room School

Lancaster County's only officially designated *Heritage Site* Amish House. The scenic country setting, completely surrounded by Amish farms, is but one reason why the Homestead is the only Heritage Site Amish house tour. This prestigious distinction has been earned for its ... **Authenticity** – the “lived-in” look of the house as you walk through nine rooms, including a one-room school ... and its **Interpretation** – Your guide answers the ‘how and why’ questions that baffle visitors (and

locals). Why do the Amish dress so plainly? How do they power their appliances? Why don't they have churches? Oh, and yes, you'll just love all the marble rollers.

## THURSDAY EXPERIENCE – Longwood Gardens & Barnes Foundation

Less than an hour's drive from Philadelphia lies the beautiful **Brandywine Valley**, immortalized on canvas by many artists, including the Wyeth family. Our deluxe transportation takes us to the world-renowned **Longwood Gardens**. America's premier horticultural center captivates with 1,050 acres of majestic gardens, natural woodlands and colorful meadows. Twenty spectacular outdoor gardens await you while indoors 4 acres of heated greenhouses contain 20 unique garden settings.

We first begin with a 45-minute guided *highlights tour* followed by the opportunity for **free time** at Longwood Gardens to enjoy lunch and to visit the conservatories, outdoor gardens and gift shop.



Next, we'll visit the world-renowned **Barnes Foundation**. Established by Dr. Albert C. Barnes in 1922 to "promote the advancement of education and the appreciation of the fine arts," the Foundation is home to one of the world's largest collections of Impressionist, Post-Impressionist and early Modern paintings .

## FRIDAY “DEPARTURE DAY” – Private Airport Transfer Service

Following breakfast at the hotel, it's time to depart the hotel for the Philadelphia International Airport.



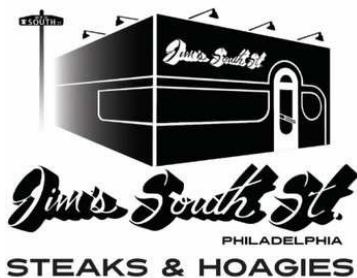
## ENJOY THESE GREAT RESTAURANTS FOR LUNCH AND DINNER



Sunday Dinner  
Walking Distance – 2 blocks  
Plated Meal



Monday Dinner  
Walking Distance – 3½ blocks  
Buffet Service



Tuesday Lunch  
Bused to/from during tour



**MAGGIANO'S**  
LITTLE ITALY

Tuesday Dinner  
Walking Distance—Less than ½ block  
Plated Meal Served Family Style



**PLAIN & FANCY FARM'S AMISH FEAST – served family-style**



**Wednesday Lunch**  
**Bused to/from after tour**  
**Plated Meal served Family style**



**Wednesday Dinner**  
**Walking Distance – 1 bloc**  
**Plated Meal**



**LONGWOOD  
GARDENS**

**Thursday Lunch**  
**\$25 pp Gift Card**



Each guest will receive a \$25 Gift Card valid in either **The Café** or **1906 Restaurant** on site at Longwood Gardens. If guest's choices go over the \$25, guest will be responsible for paying any additional amount.



**Thursday "Farewell" Dinner**  
**Bused to/from – approx. 15 minutes each way**  
**Plated Meal**





# *CIRCLE OF ROSES*

Ann Kos Edwards  
Lake Terrace Garden Club  
District II



Ann Kos Edwards was born in July of 1942 in Croatia when it was part of the former Yugoslavia. She completed her college degree in English Literature at the University of Zagreb. She later married Robert Edwards, her American love who was working in Yugoslavia at that time. After living in New York City for some years, Ann, Robert, and their son John settled down in Lake Terrace, New Orleans, Louisiana in 1998.

Ann is an active member of the Lake Terrace Garden Club as well as other neighborhood and local organizations, including the Lake Terrace Property Owners Association, the Lake Terrace Women's Club, the Homeowners Auxiliary of Lake Terrace, the Croatian American Society, and the People Program NOLA.

Ann recently retired from the University of New Orleans where she taught Social Anthropology.

A continuing active member of the Lake Terrace Garden Club, Ann has served as Vice President and has chaired several committees. She has also provided interesting and educational programs to our group over the years.

Members of Lake Terrace Garden Club cannot think of anyone more deserving of the Circle of Roses senior member award than Ann K. Edwards.





# *CIRCLE OF ROSES*

Sharon Rojas  
Metairie Ridge Garden Club  
District II



Sharon Rojas has been married for 23 years to Ralph Rojas and lives in River Ridge. She has lived in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana since age three. Sharon has one son, one granddaughter, two stepdaughters and two step grandsons. She is a retired Medical Office Administrator.

Sharon has been a member of Metairie Ridge Garden Club since 2007. During her membership, she has held the office of President for five years, Vice President for seven years, yearbook committee for twelve years and Yearbook Chair for the last seven. She also has been Horticulture Chair for numerous club flower shows and on the Horticulture Committee for the joint flower shows of Jefferson Parish Council of Garden Clubs (JPCGC) and Louisiana Garden Club Federation. Other committees include: Scarecrow Decorating, Monthly Garden Judging, Christmas Door Award, Plant Therapy, Chair of the Birds and Butterfly Committee and JPCGC Awards. She has been awarded multiple awards for her horticulture entries in flower shows and has won Garden of the Month several times.

Sharon has been an avid gardener since 1985, loving Spring shopping and planting. Favorites include Amaryllis and Day Lilies. She also nurtures her Begonia collection which are in containers, and some are over five years old and six feet tall. Just this past year she was given a Lifetime Membership to JPCGC by the members of Metairie Ridge Garden Club.



# CIRCLE OF ROSES

## Sherry Darcey Azalea Garden Club District III



Sherry G. Darcey is a native and resident of New Iberia. She was married to Melvin Darcey until he passed away in September 2015. She has a daughter Christy Lannie, married to husband David, and grandchildren Joshua and Taylor. She also has a son Chad and grandchildren Carmyn and Christopher.

Sherry is a charter member of the Azalea Garden Club. The club was founded in 1992. She was elected president in 1993 and served until 1999. She served as Vice President 1999-2001 and has served as Recording Secretary numerous times.

Sherry served as Cleanest City Co-Chairman in 1994 during which New Iberia won State. In 1995, Sherry was Chairman of Cleanest City Contest when New Iberia again won State. She served on the Louisiana Sugar Cane Festival Board of Directors from 1984 to 2011. She was elected Recording Secretary in 1985 until she resigned in 2011. While serving on the Sugar Cane Festival Board she helped co-ordinate the Azalea Garden Club and New Iberia Garden Club Flower Shows. She served as State Yearbook Chairman for 6 years. She was chairman of judging of the Christmas Lighting Committee for five years. She was co-chairman of the Backyard Kids Junior Garden Club for three years. Sherry had the pleasure of serving as District III Cleanest City Contest Chairman for 2020-2022. She also served as District III Recording Secretary for 2020-2022.

Sherry enjoys working with her flowers, but her main love is raising Plumerias and Desert Roses. In the 2018 show, her Desert Rose won the Tri color Award, Growers Choice Award and earned The Silver Trowel Award. Her other hobbies include genealogy and pastel painting. Her pastel paintings are primarily wildlife as her late husband, son and grandson are avid deer and duck hunters.

As a Charter member Sherry has enjoyed seeing the growth of the Azalea Garden Club from the beginning to what the garden club has accomplished through the years. Although the size of the garden club is small, they excel in attendance in District meetings.



# CIRCLE OF ROSES

Margaret Melancon  
Azalea Garden Club  
District III



Margaret Melancon is a native and resident of New Iberia. She has a Master's degree in Home Economics Education from the University of Southwestern Louisiana in Lafayette. She has one son, two grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

In September of 2000, she joined Azalea Garden Club. In May, 2001, she was elected President, which she held for four years. Since then, she has held every office in the club.

She was Chairman of Azalea Garden Club's Flower Show, which is held during the Sugar Cane Festival, for sixteen years. After participating in the Horticulture and Design Divisions, she became interested in one day becoming a judge. After retiring from the State Department of Education at 64, she began going to Flower Show Judges School. She is now a member of the Southwest Judges Council as an Accredited Life Judge, and is working towards becoming a Master Judge. She has also held the title of Vice-President and President in the Judge's Council. She was instrumental in revising the check sheet for the Publicity Press Book Award, and for six years held the title as State Chairman. She also was a member of the District III Cleanest City Committee.

Margaret states, "my love for flowers was developed at a young age on my Grandfather's farm, and my love for photography was influenced by my father. It began to take on new meaning when my son was born." She has acquired many cameras through the years, so that she could take better pictures of her flowers and other flowers in her travels. In 2019, she was honored to have a flower picture exhibited in Biloxi as part of the NGC Photography Competition. During Covid, her photography skills and flower planting skills helped her to win a first-place award in a virtual, NGC National and International Flower Show competition, for an African Violet, and a 95+ award for a *Gomphrena globosa*. In 2022, she also received an Honorable Mention in the Philadelphia Flower Show Photography competition.

She continues to help the Azalea Garden Club in their quest to achieve the goals of the National Garden Clubs.



# *CIRCLE OF ROSES*

Jeanie Richard  
Lafayette Garden Club  
District III



Jeanie Richard was born on March 25, 1943 in Eunice, Louisiana. She was raised in the hamlet, Pitreville and attended school in Church Point, ten miles away. Jeanie then attended the University of Southwestern Louisiana majoring in Education and finished at McNeese in Lake Charles. She taught in Lafayette for 23 years at the elementary level.

In 2001, Jeanie met a Lafayette Garden Club member at a garage sale who invited her to attend a meeting. The meeting was fun, informative and the members lively, so she joined the club. She was quickly nominated by the member she first met to be the Recording Secretary. Jeanie was encouraged to do a design for the LGC flower show and that began a history of blue-ribbon designs. She has worked on many committees through the years. Currently, she is the chairman of the silent auctions held at monthly meetings.

Jeanie's hobbies are weeding and assisting with the beds at her church, exercise classes and playing cards with friends. Having never married, she has her cats to care for.





# *CIRCLE OF ROSES*

Janet Myers  
Terrebonne Garden Club  
District III



Janet Newman Myers was born in Rapides Parish and graduated high school in Bunkie, LA in 1961. She attended LSU and graduated in 1964 with a degree in education, specializing in English and French. She later obtained a Master's Degree in school counseling. She retired after 38 years in education in 2002. She has two daughters and a granddaughter and grandson.

She joined her neighborhood garden club soon after retiring and joined Terrebonne Garden Club about a year later. During her time with the club, she served as vice president for four years. She helped plan monthly activities and field trips for the membership. She was chairman for the Backyard Garden Tour for two years, organizing the first event from scratch. She chaired Garden of the Month and Civic Pride Award for eight years. She also added an award, Le Petit Jardin, to allow another area for gardeners to have a small garden.

Janet is a Master Gardener, bridge player, golfer, and more importantly a garden enthusiast.





# CIRCLE OF ROSES

Therese Oubre  
Terrebonne Garden Club  
District III



Therese Smith Oubre has been an active member of Terrebonne Garden Club since 2009. She has participated in various club activities through the years and highly values the friendships and knowledge of gardening acquired through participation. Therese commented that she feels blessed to be a member of the club where caring women strive to bring out the best in each other as well as the community, state and nation and strive to maintain family values and preserve history and our environment.

Therese is a native of Terrebonne Parish. She was married for 56 years to Howard "Buck" Oubre who passed away on 8/19/2020. She has two children and four grandchildren. She retired from the insurance industry after 22 years.

Therese is an active member of St. Francis deSales Catholic Church and associate member of Maria Immaculata Catholic Church and takes part in various ministries including prison ministry, Altar Society, Catholic Daughters of America, Home-bound Eucharistic Minister and Food for the Spirit Ministry. She is a member of Terrebonne Historical & Cultural Society and Regional Military Museum Foundation.

She is currently head hostess for Terrebonne Garden Club and was co-hostess for many years. She has participated in flower show competitions receiving 2nd place in reflective design and various horticulture ribbons through the years.



## *CIRCLE OF ROSES*

Mary Jane Peters-Albert  
Terrebonne Garden Club  
District III



Mary Jane Peters-Albert grew up in Indiana. She married Dr. Michael Peters and moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana in 1971. She graduated from LSU receiving a B.S. degree and worked at LSU for several years in the Graduate School Admissions and the Chemistry Department. Mary Jane has one son, Mark, and four grandchildren, Ben, Michael, Thomas and Caroline. She also has one precious great-grandson, Grayson. She recently married Wayne Albert.

She moved to Murfreesboro, Tennessee in 1991. Because of her interest in gardening, she became a Tennessee Master Gardener and completed the course in 2000. She was invited to join the Optimistic Garden Club, and her garden was on the Secret Garden Tour. She was also president of the Optimistic Garden Club. Mary Jane completed National Garden Clubs (NGC) Landscaping School and NGC Flower Show School in Nashville, Tennessee.

Mary Jane moved to Houma, Louisiana in 2003, and her husband of 43 years passed away. She transferred membership to the Terrebonne Garden Club. She was President for four years and served as District III Director. Also, she served on the Deep South Garden Clubs and NGC Board of Directors. Also, Mary Jane has been an active member of the Downtown Houma Development Corporation Board for 18 years.

Mary Jane wrote an article for The National Gardener in 2016 about the Sensory Garden that Terrebonne Garden Club completed for the Stella Learning Autism School in Houma, LA. She has been president of the Louisiana Council of Nationally Accredited Flower Show Judges, Gardening Consultants Council, Louisiana Landscape Design Council, Southwest Louisiana Council of Nationally Accredited Flowers Show Judges Council. Mary Jane has achieved Master Status in all Four National Garden Club Schools and is an NGC Five Star member.



## *CIRCLE OF ROSES*

Betty Blanchard  
Plaquemine Garden Club  
District VI



Betty joined the Plaquemine Garden Club in 1995. She has served the club as Secretary, Parliamentarian, Christmas Tea Chairman and Chairman of the Plant Sale. She has been an active member and continues to participate as much as her health will allow presently. She loves to participate and has her sitter bring her to meetings as much as possible.

She and her husband Gerard have two children and four grandchildren. You will often see her in church with her son Gerard.

Betty is a retired educator. She and her husband, now deceased, were active in the community. They were members of the Lions and Lady Lions Club, Alhambra, Ladies Alter Society, and Merry Makers Dance Club.

The club has been fortunate to have "Miss Betty" and cherish her continued participation and presence.



## *CIRCLE OF ROSES*

Jeannine Dunn  
Plaquemine Garden Club  
District VI



Jeannine has been a member of the Plaquemine Garden Club since 2008. She is the epitome of your "worker bee" volunteering at so many of our activities. She loves to plant and is always working and planting our Courthouse Square or the museum flower beds the club maintains. She is our banker at the Garden Club Plant Sale every year which is no small task. Her participation and attendance at our meetings are exemplary. She always decorates and attend our annual Christmas tea. If you cannot find her at the tea, she is in the kitchen working. She enjoys life and it is so pleasant to be in her company.

Jeannine's husband, Roger, is deceased. They have three children and nine grandchildren. For many years she worked for the Iberville Parish Council.

Jeannine simply loves and enjoys life which really means she loves being with her family. While gardening she always admires the birds and nature surrounding her. It is evident by the beauty of the gardens in her yard.

We are truly excited to honor her in the Circle of Roses.





# CIRCLE OF ROSES

Julie Hebert  
Plaquemine Garden Club  
District VI



Julie joined the Plaquemine Garden Club in 1983. She became its recording secretary in 1986-88 and Vice President in 1990-92. She also chaired the library garden display in 1990-91, Arbor Day committee in 1992-93, Christmas Lighting Contest in 1993, Garden of the Month in 1996, Founders Day in 2003-04, Vice President in 2022-23 and is presently serving as recording secretary.

In 2012 she hosted the annual Christmas Tea and has graciously been the Christmas Tea decorating chairman several times. Julie has contributed consistently throughout her long membership as noted above and in other activities like the "Show and Tell" meetings, "Visual poetry of Flowers" meeting and has hosted meetings.

She currently serves as the Membership and Retention Chair and has been in this role since 2010, giving the Board valuable insight into membership participation.

Julie is also an active member of Le Krewe Du Roi, one of the Mardi Gras Krewes in Plaquemine helping to decorate and chairing many of its activities.

Julie's husband, Freddie, is deceased. They were active members of the Chamber of Commerce and the local Lions Club. Julie was a member of the Lady Lions. She retired many years ago from the School Board office for Iberville Parish to become a full-time wife and mother to their only child and daughter. She is also very active in the life of her one granddaughter, the apple of her eye!



# *CIRCLE OF ROSES*

Linda Finley

Lake Charles Garden Club

District VII



Linda grew up on a rice and cattle farm near Welsh and graduated from Welsh High School. She then attended McNeese State University earning a B.S., a B.A. and an M.Ed. After teaching high school for three years, she became an administrator at McNeese State University. She retired as Dean of University Services and Registrar after 35 years of service and was honored with Emeritus status.

Linda was active in several professional and civic organizations during her career. She was president of McNeese Women's Club; Louisiana Association Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers; and Southern ACRAO. She was a vice-president of American ACRAO at the time of her retirement. The Board of Directors of the McNeese Federal Credit Union was another area of long-time service. A few of the special honors received were: Quotarian of the Year; National Women's History Month Outstanding Female Boss; International Management Council of Lake Charles Certified Manager; and Kentucky Colonel. She is a founding member and past president of McNeese Outriders. She taught Sunday School for a number of years and currently is a greeter at her church.

The Louisiana Master Gardener program was her first endeavor after retirement. Her garden club life began in 2002 when she joined the Lake Charles Garden Club quickly becoming president, then District VII Director and she was off on the journey. She has served LGCF in several chairmanships and offices, including President 2019-2021. She attended Gardening, Landscape Design and Environmental Schools becoming a Master Consultant in each one. She and Margo Racca established the Louisiana Environmental School. Linda is a Life Member of LGCF, DSGC and NGC. She was a member of the Mayor's Team Green and served as Cleanest City Chairman several times.

Currently Linda is on the Boards of Directors of NGC; Calcasieu-Cameron Retired Teachers Association; Calcasieu Teachers and Employees Credit Union; SWLA Master Gardeners; and L'Argent Investments. Some of her other activities are exercise class, yardwork, cooking and traveling.





# CIRCLE OF ROSES

Pauline Darbonne Humphries

Leompte Garden Club

District VIII

*Pauline's goal is to have something blooming in her yard every month of the year; she makes every effort to reach her goal. The ever-changing kaleidoscope of colors she creates is a testament to her Faith in God, her love of gardening, and her ability to put 110% effort in everything she does. She is strong-willed, determined, kind and soft-hearted.*



Born in Lafayette on September 5, 1942, but raised in Elton in a mud and straw house that was built in the 1700s and used as a hospital during the Civil War, Pauline was the oldest of four children and she was "the boss." Her interest in sewing and home economics developed at an early age and the skills were honed to an elevated level with daily practical use at home. She would continue in her adult life to sew clothes for herself and her family. After graduating from Elton High School in 1960, she attended college in Davie, Florida.

After returning to the Central Louisiana area, Pauline was employed at Southfield Care Center in Leompte. Her compassion and empathy toward the residents and their families set her apart from others. People who worked with her at Southfield still speak very highly of her work ethic. Families would ask Pauline to work for them at home when their loved one was ready to leave Southfield. Southfield closed years ago, yet people still seek Pauline's help and advice.

Pauline also attended classes at LSUA. Pauline's thirst for knowledge and willingness to share what she learns has benefited the Leompte Garden Club for many years. In May she was attending a workshop on herbs given by Michael Polozola, PhD. She recently joined the Louisiana Native Plant Society and is eager to visit their facility so she can share more information with our club. Since joining the Leompte Garden Club in 2006, at each and every meeting, Pauline encourages members to bring in horticulture, she also orchestrates plant exchanges and has chaired the horticulture portion of the Flower Show for years. She has won the Horticulture Excellence Award on numerous occasions. The Leompte Garden Club considers her our resident expert. At the 2023 Leompte Flower Show, Pauline received 18 Blue Ribbons (the most awarded) for her horticulture entries. Pauline served as President

of the Lecompte Garden Club from 2015-2017. Pauline is the Chairman of the Beauty of Life Garden located at the Old Lecompte High School and diligently maintains the area year-round. It is planted with day lilies, irises, and at least ten different roses—some with markers in remembrance or in honor of loved ones, two are for Pauline's own daughters. Pauline also is the chair of the Native Plant Garden at Smith's Landing and co-chairs the project at Veterans Monument.

She is the Sunday School teacher for the Senior Ladies Class at the First Baptist Church of Lecompte. She is the Vice-President of the Spirit Riders Christian Motorcycle Association (she no longer rides a Harley—but she used to!) Pauline stays busy. She bakes some of the best sugar cookies you have ever tasted. Several organizations have enjoyed her tasty treats. The youth groups and town volunteers who participate in semi-annual workdays for the Town of Lecompte Cleanest City contest have sampled more than a few over the past years.

She is also an active member in the United Christian Women's Group. The Friendship House was an Adult Day Care Facility that the Christian Women's group would bring some 'goodies' to every month or so as a treat. An all-time favorite was Pauline's home baked sugar cookies. Her kitchen was set up to do batches to supply over 100 cookies for a variety of functions. She would do it her way; it always came out exactly right. As part of Christian Women's, Pauline is one of the women who sews prayer blankets. A prayer blanket is a smaller sized lap blanket with strings attached given to a person who needs prayer. As the blanket is passed around, people tie a knot and say a prayer before presenting the person with the prayer blanket.

Pauline sews more than 200 cloth school bags to be given to local schools each year as part of her mission work plus another 100 for the Samaritan's Purse organization. She also spends time working with the Main Street Mission in Pineville, Louisiana.

Asked about her favorite things, Pauline sites "digging in the dirt and having coffee with friends." Her favorite flowers are carnations and gladiolus. Another favorite was a goose by the name of Sally, whose photo is on Pauline's phone that she will happily show you. Pauline raises chickens and supplies a few friends with yard eggs.

Continuing to Count her Blessings, Pauline is the mother of four children: Danny, Diane (Deceased), Nina, and Randy; the grandmother of four: Troy (Danny), Danielle & Delana (Diane) and Laura (Nina) and the great-grandmother of five: Sonny & Nora (Danielle), Dawson & Dallas (Delana) and Olivia (Laura).

What's next? Still reaching for the stars, there is something that Pauline still has on her "TO DO LIST" to achieve. She wants to add a Blue Ribbon for a Flower Show Design. That one accomplishment has eluded her. The Lecompte Garden Club is looking forward to celebrating with her when she has the Blue Ribbon in her hand; knowing Pauline, she'll be bringing home the Designer's Choice Award!

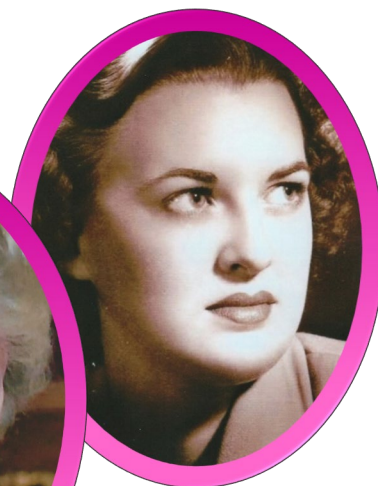


# CIRCLE OF ROSES

Sara Elizabeth McKenzie  
Marshall

Lecompte Garden Club

District VIII



Sara became a member of the Lecompte Garden Club in 1958. She served two terms as President of the Lecompte Garden Club. The first term was from 1965-1967 and then again from 1975-1977. She served as District Director for District VIII in the latter part of the 1970s. On the state level, she served as Finance Chairman for 16 years, Headquarters Chairman for 4 years, Corresponding Secretary for 2 years, and as a Member at Large for a number of years. She also served as Corresponding Secretary on the Deep South Board as well as Credentials Chairman. She was Protocol and Trees Chairman and a few others.

Sara celebrated her 97th birthday on June 20, 2023. She has been an active member of the Lecompte Garden Club for the past 65 years and has served as an advisor, mentor, and friend to many. Sara's soft southern lilt in her voice and her laughing eyes define what it means to be considered "ladylike". A favorite story overheard at last year's Summer Board in Baton Rouge is how Sara Marshall taught a younger member how to pour her beer into a glass so it would look like she was sipping champagne. Sara is always "ladylike" in everything that she does: she is the epitome of southern style, charm and grace!

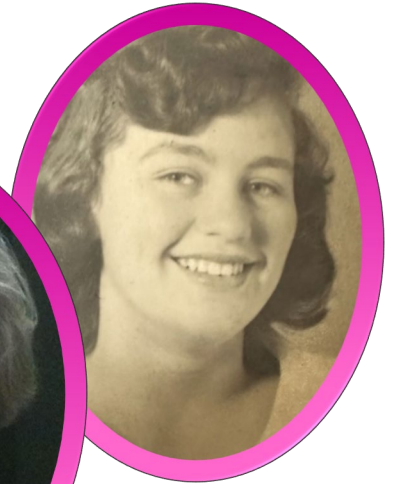
The Marshall's moved into the Chamber's Community in Lecompte in 1986. Sara's husband, James Gregg Marshall, Sr. passed away years ago. Sara has four children, five grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren with one more due soon. Sara has several nieces and nephews who are special to her and they love her very much, too.

Sara enjoys working puzzles, crossword puzzles and computer games. A couple of years ago, Sara was gifted a 1,000-piece jigsaw puzzle that took a year to finish...only to discover it was missing the final piece! She reordered the same puzzle, found the missing piece and it did NOT fit properly! She now requests puzzles to not exceed 500 pieces. The puzzle was made from a favorite picture Sara took of her garden. It had once been submitted to The Vision of Beauty calendar. Sara enjoys gardening, her flowers, bird watching, writing, reading, playing the piano, and bingo. When Sara was younger, she was a gifted and talented seamstress as well as an exceptionally good cook. She always made beautifully decorated cakes for birthdays, especially when her children were little.



# *CIRCLE OF ROSES*

Diane Bordelon  
Moreauville Garden Club  
District VIII



Diane Bordelon was born to Wilmer and Joicie Juneau on August 14, 1943 and is one of three siblings. On October 15, 1961 she married her husband Michael Bordelon and together they have four sons, David, Todd, Kerry and Chad, eleven grandchildren and twelve great grandchildren who are the loves of her life. She enjoys her new role of carpool pickup to one of her great grands and loves nothing more than helping her family when needed.

Diane loves to work in her garden, always willing to share her knowledge and plants with friends and family. She works continuously in her beautiful garden and patio. Her love for gardening led her to join the Moreauville Garden Club in the early 1990s. She has fully devoted her time and expertise to the organization. Serving in multiple positions and offices, Diane has assisted in making the Moreauville Garden Club a special organization. She has served as President, Vice President, Secretary, District VIII President, Judges Council District VIII Vice President, District VIII Director, State Judges Council Parliamentarian, Master Judge and Co-Chairman 2011 LGCF State Convention.

Diane is a resident of Bordelonville where she worked as a Teacher's Aide with the Avoyelles Parish School System for 30 years.

Diane is a member of St. Peter's Church Choir, Ladies Alter Society, and a newly formed women's organization, Women at the Well. She is an active caregiver with Hospice Care of Avoyelles and has been involved in initiating a library in her beloved hometown.





# CIRCLE OF ROSES

Elizabeth “Liz” Cherry Coco  
Moreauville Garden Club  
District VIII



As a "transplant" to Louisiana from Jefferson City, Missouri, Elizabeth grew up in Alexandria, Louisiana, attending Providence (Menard now) Catholic School for girls. Upon entry to the University of Southwestern Louisiana (U.L. now), she met Wayne Lawrence Coco, an architect who would go on to become her husband for the past 55 years.

Although she began her studies in Interior Design, Liz's life's calling has been education. She earned her BA in Education from USL and went on to attain a plethora of continuing certifications to enhance her qualifications. Liz taught lower elementary grades for 35 years in both the public and private sectors. She loved teaching but gleefully enjoys retirement more. She always brought creativity to her memorable school lessons. To this day, many former students reach out to her to express what a positive impact she had on their formative lives. She was a 4-H leader for decades, and her students consistently won horticulture achievement awards due to Liz's mentorship.

Honorably, Liz was selected as the first Avoyelles Parish School System's "Teacher of the Year" in 1980-81. She wrote a significant education grant and was awarded the Title IV Mini-Grant in 1981 to assist Avoyelles Parish students with creative projects. Always mindful of the importance of the Arts, Liz was an artist/teacher for both the Avoyelles Parish Library Summer Parish Program and the local Simmesport Library Summer Arts Program.

Upon marriage, Liz and Wayne moved into their present-day place over fifty years ago into Wayne's grandmother's historic home and garden in Simmesport, LA, Avoyelles Parish. They eagerly worked in the repurposing and redesigning of Grandma's yard for decades. A fellow Circle of Roses mentor, Marilyn Beridon Coco of District VIII in Hamburg, encouraged Liz to join the Moreauville Garden Club. "Just come to one

meeting, "Mrs. "Punky," said. Well, twenty-seven years later, Liz is still with her initiation club.

When her retirement commenced from the school system, Liz and her two best garden club friends (Diane Bordelon and Carla Gauthier) decided to pursue becoming flower show judges. They spent years attaining credentials and requirements, traveling across the southern region of the United States. All would later serve faithfully in local, district, and state top leadership positions within the Louisiana Garden Club Federation.

Some specific areas of garden club interests for Liz have been the production of multiple garden shows and awarding deserving garden of the month awards. She has opened her home and yard to the club, the community, and all who have asked to tour it. Liz spearheaded beautification projects and enriching club field trips to exotic garden locations. With a competitive spirit, Liz has won numerous flower show awards in both design and horticulture categories, including best in shows.

A memorable highlight of Elizabeth's life was a surprise retirement trip to the United Kingdom, where she and Wayne toured many of England's extraordinary gardens. Her favorite was the 240-acre 1889 Royal Horticultural Society Garden in Wisley, Surrey, just south of London.

As a Christ the King Catholic Church member in Simmesport, Liz is also a member of the Ladies Altar Society. She has served on the Arts and Humanities Council of Avoyelles, the Les Theatre de Bon Temps Board, and La Commission des Avoyelles. Liz was a Charter Member of the Associated Professional Educators of Louisiana, the Simmesport Historical Society, and the Louisiana Educator's Social Studies Association. She was the Arbor Day Chairperson, D.A.R.E. Program mentor, and Teacher for Excellence Organization for Modeling School Teaching.

Liz and Wayne have one accomplished daughter, Patra M. Coco, an Interior Designer in Simmesport. They delight in three talented grandchildren: Sawyer S. Coco, who is in graduate school in Boston, MA; Gabriella M. Coco, who is earning her L.S.U., Baton Rouge, LA graduate degree in December; and Avery Elizabeth Coco, a sophomore at St. Joseph Catholic School.

An avid reader, Liz is involved with her local library. Moreover, Liz loves her fur babies, Rudy, Kit Kit, and Rosie, and supports the Atchafalaya Animal River Rescue Organization. Liz enjoys travel, fine dining, and spending quality time with her family. The garden club is paramount to enriching Liz's life.



# CIRCLE OF ROSES

Carla Gauthier  
Moreauville Garden Club  
District VIII



Carla Smith Gauthier is a lifelong resident of Cottonport, Louisiana, where her home is located on the banks of beautiful Bayou Rouge in Avoyelles Parish. Born in Port Barre, Louisiana, she is the oldest daughter of Georgie and Paul Smith, who moved to Cottonport when Carla was a young child. A farmer's daughter, Carla and her three siblings learned the value of hard work and a deeply rooted appreciation for family and community. Her love for all things that "grow" was attributed to her mother, affectionately known as "Porgie", who was a master gardener before the title was ever officially recognized. Her flower beds and gardens were the things of envy in their tight knit community.

After finishing high school at Cottonport High, Carla went on to earn her degree from LSU. While pursuing her degree, on June 1, 1968, she married her high school sweetheart and the love of her life, Newell Gauthier, Jr. After her husband Newell finished LSU Medical School, the couple moved back to the only place they have ever called home, Cottonport. A better ambassador and proponent of the town of Cottonport you will not find. Thirty seconds into any conversation will have her raving about her beloved hometown.

For the next fifty plus years, they raised five children, and Carla became a fixture in her small community, serving multiple terms as Cottonport's first female town councilman and mayor pro tem. She also served on the Avoyelles Parish School Board and was the driving force behind two Cleanest City contest wins. She has been a staple of volunteerism in her town, giving freely to great endeavors like Little League Baseball, the Cottonport Christmas Parade, the Cottonport Women's Commission, the Christmas on the Bayou Pageant and so many others.

The proud grandmother of nineteen grandchildren, no that's not a typo!!!, and three great-grandchildren, she continues to serve and is always offering a helping hand to those in need. In Carla's spare time, she enjoys traveling, fulfilling her duties with the Garden Club statewide, visiting with friends and loved ones, LSU sports, and naturally, spending time in her own yard with all of her beautiful flowers.

Her track record with the Garden Club is impressive. Beginning in 1984, Carla has served twice as Club President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Historian. She proudly served as State President of the Louisiana Council of Accredited Flower Show Judges, LGCF District VIII Director, President of the District VIII Judges Council, LGCF Vice President, LGCF Recording Secretary and LGCF First Vice President. Currently, Carla is the 2023-2025 LGCF President-Elect.





# CIRCLE OF ROSES

The purpose of Circle of Roses is to recognize garden club members in their senior years who have given their time and talents to garden club work. We would like to honor them in the newsletter as well. In order to do this, we are asking each club that wishes to honor a senior member or members to please submit a short history of her garden club activities and achievements. This can include personal information such as husband, number of children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, church and community activities, hobbies, etc. Enclose two pictures, a "then" and "now." (One when she joined the garden club and one that is recent.)

If you have a deserving member of your club that you would like to nominate for the Circle of Roses, please send the information to:

**LGCF Circle of Roses Chairman**

**Kathy Bedenbaugh**

**42366 South Range Rd**

**Hammond, LA 70403-1416**

**[katiecb44@gmail.com](mailto:katiecb44@gmail.com)**

**985-507-3066 (Cell)**

**985-345-1566 (Home)**



**New Email**

## **Note from the newsletter editor:**

The Circle of Roses is a very special honor and we strive to make the presentation in the newsletter one that each recipient can print out as a keepsake. Since the newsletter is done in a digital format, it would be very helpful if the biographies could be sent in digitally. We do the newsletter in Word so that is the preferred format. We prefer that it not be sent in PDF format.

The "then" and "now" pictures are especially important and please clearly label which picture is "then" and which is "now." If possible, please send in digital images or pictures that have been scanned. When scanning, use as large a picture as possible and scan each picture individually. The quality of the picture is greatly diminished when there is more than one picture in a scan and each one must be cropped and enlarged. If you are unable to scan the pictures, please send in the original photographs. Those will be scanned and returned to whomever you designate.



# *Calendar of Events*

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## **2024**

January 8–9	LGCF Winter Council Meeting, LeCompte, LA
March 3–8	Philadelphia Flower Show Tour
March 11–12	<b>NGC Environmental School Course 2</b> <a href="#">REGISTRATION</a>
March 11–15	Cleanest City District Judging
March 19–20	DSGC Convention, Park Vista Hotel, Gatlinburg, TN
April 1	Dues Due — State, District
April 16–17	LGCF Convention, District VII, L'Auberge Casino Resort, Lake Charles, LA -Celebrating LGCF's 90 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary <a href="#">INVITATION</a>
April 23–May 3	Cleanest City State Judging
June 2–5	NGC Convention, The Westin Winchester, Denver, CO
June 2–8	National Garden Week
July	LGCF Summer Board, Baton Rouge, LA
September 19	NGC Fall Board Meeting, NGC Headquarters, St. Louis, MO
September 26–October 2	Seattle Area and Victoria Island Tour
October 15	District V - Farmerville
October 16	District VIII - Marksville
October 17	District VII – Rayne
October 22	District VI – Gonzales
October 23	District III – St. Martinville
October 24	District II – Jefferson/Orleans

## **2025**

January	LGCF Winter Council, Lecompte, LA
March 31–April 5	Texas Bluebonnets Tour
April 7–9	LGCF Convention, District VIII
May 19–23	NGC Convention, Omaha, Nebraska
October 9–13	Boston and New Hampshire Tour

## **2026**

TBD (Jan/Feb)	Nashville's Antique & Garden Show Tour
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