Presidents Message-2025-2027

Carla S. Gauthier-LGCF President-2025-2027

“Our Roots Run Deep at LGCF-PLANT AMERICA for Another 250 Years”

Good morning, this is my first stop in my journey across the state. It took careful planning to get myself here. My ankle replacement surgery was successful, and I am so happy to be out of the house. My husband has been my wheelchair chauffeur.

In July, we kicked off the second year of my term with our Summer Board meeting in Baton Rouge. We introduced a new way for presenting Chairmen and Officer reports, with the understanding that all reports would be posted on the website after Summer Board. It shortened the usual lengthy business meeting and gave all members an opportunity to read about the workings of LGCF on our website.

The four school meetings, Flower Show, Gardening Study, Landscape Design and Environmental were asked to provide speakers to promote the Deep South Unified Project. We had interesting talks on bees, ants, native plants in landscapes and our new Keep Louisiana Beautiful “Litter Free Schools” youth program. Thank you to all the Councils for taking part.

Humzinger is flitting around the room today for LGCF Scholarships. Susan Finney and her committee members have done a wonderful job of getting those scholarships to needy students.

LGCF $2000 Scholarships went to a junior at Southeastern Louisiana University and another post-graduate student at the School of Landscape Architecture at LSU. Each student received smaller scholarships from LGCF District II and the Gardening Consultants Council. The names of the recipients are listed under Scholarships on the website.

The Live Oak Society Chairman, Coleen Perilloux Landry, announced that the Live Oak Society is 92 years old and we are on track to break a record with live oak trees registered in my two-year term. So please keep that challenge in mind.

Two projects, I promoted have come to fruition, the $250 Membership Challenge garden club recipient, as well as the Independence Oak Series live oak winner. These announcements will take place at two of the District meetings where the winners live.

We also have a new photo contest featuring floral designs, refer to the October Newsletter for details. A $50 prize will be offered to the winner, and the photo will appear on the Newsletter cover.

NGC President, Donna Donnelly, is promoting her President's Projects, PLANT AMERICA, KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL and PLANT AMERICA in Red, White and Blue to Celebrate America's 250th Birthday.

Nancy Love, Blue Star Marker Chairman, reported that we have three new marker applications in process and a re-dedication completed. They have all included red, white, and blue plantings in their projects to pay tribute to the men and women of our Armed Forces and in support of Donna's project.

Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc. are promoting "Flower Power Bulb Sales" until October 15th of this year for scholarships.

Heather Carroll presented LGCF, Deep South, and NGC awards at Summer Board. One of the highlights was that Dr. Joe Willis, LSU Ag Agent, who was LGCF Award of Commendation recipient, received the highest award NGC offers at the NGC Convention. The NGC Award of Excellence for a non-member.

Shady Oaks Garden Club sponsored Dr. Willis. He received a beautiful plaque and $500. He was the first to receive this prestigious award in Louisiana. Congratulations to all the award winners.

We have added three new LGCF awards, Digital Media Presentation Award, Hummingbird Garden Award, and Patriotic Container Gardening.

The LGCF Award General Rules for this year have been updated in April 2026; information is on the website.

Another new tool added to the Awards section on the website is the Crosswalk of Awards. It's a condensed version of the submission process for chairmen and clubs so that they correctly submit LGCF, DS and NGC awards to the appropriate chairmen and officers. Thank you to Ammy Taylor, Heather Carroll and Patsy Hebert for coming up with this helpful tool.

Changes have also been made to the Natural Disasters Fund 2026 application form, (Tricia will report on this later in today's meeting) created for LGCF garden clubs to apply for restorative projects; $500 per disaster project and the deadline for applying

is March 15th, 2027. All information can be found on the AWARDS page of the website.

We also learned that the Peggy Martin Rose became Louisiana's Official State Rose. The Louisiana Legislature unanimously passed Senate Resolution #55, to recognize the flower that has become a powerful symbol of resilience, perseverance, and renewal for Louisiana and the Gulf Coast. I bought a lovely children's book "The Rose Without a Name", an inspiring true story of this remarkable rose that defied the odds of surviving. I have the book and poster on display.

Our Ways and Means committee designed and purchased LGCF Breast Cancer Awareness flags that are not polyester but vinyl. They were offered at Summer Board, and they went like hot cakes. At least half of the cost of the flags came form the pink ribbon pin donations collected at the 2025 fall District

meetings. I have more pins offered today. Thank you to all that supported this ongoing project.

We have a new District VIII Director to replace Elaine Hicks. Paula Trudeau, current President of the LeCompte Garden Club, has graciously accepted the position and will be conducting the District VIII fall meeting in Alexandria.

Also, I wanted to announce that Donna Bucci is now our LGCF Nominations Chairman. Margo selected Donna as her successor and had every confidence she was up to the challenge. I agree, congratulations Donna.

Yvette Hebert and her committee are working on the new 2027 LGCF Handbooks; any questions or suggestions are helpful.

Our annual LGCF 2027 Convention planners are finalizing details for our visit to Metairie, April 12th through the 14th of 2027. The “Courtyards to Coastline”

preconvention tour and programs are now listed on the website. Denise Thorne, Deep South Regional Director, will be our special guest.

Just a reminder that many events are listed on the EVENTS-Calendar on the website. I encourage all clubs to send the information in to promote your club's projects. Our website, lgcfinc.org is your friend.

A PRAYER PAGE has also been added to the LGCF website on the Memorials page. Send Vicky, your request with the name of the person the prayers are meant for, also a picture of the individual if available. This thoughtful gesture will mean so much to our many friends in need.

PLEASE BOW YOUR HEADS AS I READ THIS TRIBUTE FOR.....

Amanda "Margo" Margaret Holden Racca -1940-2026

Our LGCF organization is in mourning after the passing of our beloved former President, Margo Racca. As a cherished member of our LGCF family, she was loved and respected by all that had the privilege of knowing her. Her dedication to LGCF never wavered, and her contributions left a lasting impact on our organization and the people we serve. Margo was an icon, a mentor to many and revered by club members, throughout her full life. She will never be forgotten, rest in peace.

Carla S. Gauthier

LGCF President 2025-2027

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