

Summer 2026 Issue

Johnese Turri, State President 2025-2027

“Planting Seeds of Joy”

Well...we did it! Our 76th Convention in Las Cruces is officially in the books—and what a wonderful time it was! If you couldn’t make it this year, you were truly missed (and we definitely save you a seat for next time).

The Convention Committee, led by Judy Laird, did a fabulous job. The centerpieces were beautiful, and every detail reflected the hard work and creativity that went into making the event so special.

One of the highlights was our tour at Taylor Mesilla historic site—such a special treat and enjoyed by all. It’s always fun to step out, explore, and be inspired together.

Now for some well-deserved recognition!

It was such an exciting moment to see Debi Harrington present not one, but two NGC grants to the Lincoln County Garden Club—the 2025–2026 Espoma Organic Plant America Grant and the 2026 AMES Tool Grant!.

Photographic Print of the Year: Alahna Wells; **Member of the Year:** Kersti Rock; **Mentor of the Year:** Suzy Andrego ; **Special Achievement Award:** Linda Frank .

We’ll be sharing more awards and plenty of photos on our website soon, so stay tuned—you might just spot a familiar face or two!

We were also so honored to have Donna Donnelly and her husband join us. What a delightful couple! Her message about National Garden Clubs was inspiring and full of exciting updates. If you haven’t already, take a moment to visit <https://gardenclub.org/> and log in—there’s so much happening, and you won’t want to miss out.



President Turri and First Dude, Michael

Thank you all for being such a special part of this organization. It's the friendships, laughter, and shared love of gardening that make these gatherings so meaningful.

Here's to a season full of sunshine, growth, and maybe just a few less weeds (we can dream, right?). May we all continue planting seeds of joy wherever we go.



Path of Success

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CELEBRATE NATIONAL GARDEN WEEK

Ginny Longbotham, Chair

Garden Clubs around the country will be celebrating National Garden Week June 7 — 13th!

The Albuquerque area garden clubs will be doing their annual celebration of Share the Beauty Day, where we decorate soup cans and fill them with flowers and deliver them to folks living in assisted living and veteran homes.

What will your Club be doing? Send it to me and we will let everyone know how you honored National Garden Week. ginnylin@comcast.net

[Details](#) [Poster](#) [Proclamation](#)

Kersti Rock, 2nd Vice President 2025-2027, Membership

Summer will be here soon and most clubs will have a change of pace for three months. This is a time for slowing down a bit from the monthly meeting schedule and perhaps planning some exciting field trips or other get togethers for club members, family and friends. Clubs may also spend time planning their programs for the coming year. Part of this planning could be oriented towards ideas that can bring in new club members.



Visibility is a very important factor to consider for clubs seeking new membership. Clubs can engage the public and gain visibility through community beautification, education or social events. Some specific ideas are pollinator gardens paired with public education, a free seed exchange, creating small gardens or even just planters in public areas (with permission of course), designing sensory garden plots, or mini gardens for kids. Your club could host public workshops on topics such as pruning, composting, or companion planting. Hosting a flower show and inviting the public is another option. Anything your club undertakes should be well promoted along with invitations to attend your meetings as a visitor to learn more about your club and its projects.

It is also time for clubs to send in their NMGC state dues and membership rosters. Dues of \$8 per member are due by May 1 and considered late after July 1. Your rosters should reflect only paid memberships with the exception of NMGC designated honorary members of which the state currently only has one. The NMGC membership list created from these rosters are used to email our clubs with notices and other information as well as the quarterly New Mexico Gardener. So far this year, I have received dues and rosters from four clubs. Please continue to send in dues and updated rosters as club members are added throughout the year so that they can be added to the state mailing list. Each club should send their dues, payable to “New Mexico Garden Clubs, Inc.” to me (see “[Officers and Chairpersons](#)” doc for contact info) along with a copy of their membership list.

Let me know if I can assist you with forming a new club or youth group. And, of course, please let me know if you have formed a new club or youth group. Remember to share your ideas and successes in the New Mexico Gardener. New ideas generate enthusiasm and make our garden clubs even more fun!

Welcome New Members!

Morning Garden Club

Vicki Burress
Susan Hickman
LaNelle Witt

Los Alamos Garden Club

Susan Dryja
Melissa Eborn

Albuquerque Garden Clubs' Flower Show

June 5—6, 2026



The Council of Albuquerque Garden Clubs' 2026 Flower Show celebrating the nation's 250th birthday is coming up quickly! If you're in or around Albuquerque on June 5-6, please consider entering and/or attending our "From Sea to Shining Sea" Show. We have a horticulture class for everything that might be at its peak in early June, some great Design and Botanical Arts classes, including Photography, and a Youth Division to inspire the creativity of young gardeners! We'd love to see what everyone around the state is growing and designing!

The QR code in the ad to the left will take you to the full schedule or you can find it at

albuquerquegardencenter.org. Please contact any of the show co-chairs or committee chairs listed in the schedule with any questions.

Also, please watch for more information coming soon on our "LiberTea" to be held the Saturday afternoon of the show, June 6, in the back gardens. We'll have details on the menu and how to purchase tickets posted to our website soon. Hope to see you there!

Sustainable Floral Design

by Per Benjamin and Max van de Sluis

Submitted by Anne May, Floral Designers Club

Sustainable Floral Design looks to the past for wisdom. It is filled with delightful information regarding the history of flowers and floral work, sustainable materials, and the evolving methods of floral design over the centuries. The photographs are lush and inspiring. Each design is highlighted with a circular box summarizing the techniques, materials and tools required.



Joyce Zaugg, District II Director, 2025-2027

"Let's Root for Each Other and Watch Each Other Grow"

District II has 4 thriving clubs with a membership of 109. Angel Fire has 43 members, Summit has 26 members, Floral Designers has 10 members, and Los Alamos has 30 members. District II held a successful Spring General and Executive Board Meeting on March 20th. The board invited State President, Johnesse Turri and First Vice President, Laurie Hixson as guests of honor.

The President of Angel Fire Garden Club is Shirla Harris. Angel Fire Garden Club has six meetings a year, May through October. These meetings are much like most clubs with an in-gathering, business meeting, and program. The Resort and the Village of Angel Fire provide several community activities throughout the year to bring volunteer organizations, local artists, crafters, etc. together. Angel Fire Garden Club has a presence at these events to promote their club. They also use these gatherings as opportunities to communicate the need to protect and reforest our state by providing opportunity to donate to "Plant a Tree" by purchasing raffle tickets for a handmade quilt at the end of the season. Angel Fire Garden Club also serves the community by maintaining 3 local gardens in their area.

The President of Floral Designers Garden Club is Christine Longthorp. The purpose of their club is to have a venue to practice Intermediate and Advanced NGC approved designs in order to create entries for Flower Shows state and nationwide. These are the designs and programs they have enjoyed since September 2025: September 25, Cascade design presented by Shelby Green. October 23, Non NGC design, "Layered" presented by Anne May. January 22, Soup lunch and challenge design at the home of Laurie Hixson. February 26, A transparency entitled "Hide and Go Seek" was presented by Anne May. March 26, Reflective design presented by Juanita Ortega. Members Debi Harrington and Suzy Andrego have designs published in the NGC Vision of Beauty calendar in 2026. Debi has been asked to participate in the design program of the Organization of Floral Art Designers (OFAD) conference in San Francisco this year. Both events are great honors for their members.

The President of Los Alamos Garden Club is Alahna Weller. Program highlights: September 15, Garden Quiz presented Helen Carpenter and Linda Hoffman. October 20, Anne May demonstrated how to make a unique, low floral table design. November 17, Joyce Zaugg and Sue Hansen led the members in how to make standing holiday wreaths and paper towel (instead of corn husk) dolls. January 19, local amateur naturalist, Bob Dryja, presented a slide show talk about Acid Canyon. February 23, member Trish Spillman presented a demonstration on how to make pine cone flower wreaths. As an added treat they made pine cone feeders for the birds. March 16, Laurel Hardin, a local nursery owner and professional arborist, presented a program of soil. The much anticipated Memorial Rose Garden deer fence enclosure is almost complete. The club wants to give fellow member Kersti Rock thanks for spearheading the project these past three years. LAGC is looking forward to participating in PEEC's April 18th Earth Day Celebration and holding a plant/yard sale on May 9th.

See District II, Page 6

The President of Summit Garden Club is Alison Grieggs. Summit Garden Club celebrated their 65th anniversary this year. Program highlights are: Their October program is especially noted. New Mexico herbalist and natural medicine specialist Jessie Emerson gave a program emphasizing the importance of native pollinators and perennials and offered traditional recipes for teas & tinctures. Members are trying garden experiments with Saffron; growers shared updates at a round table during the February meeting Summit awards a high school graduating senior a scholarship. Summit maintains two gardens at Bandelier and the White Rock Community Garden.

Doug Tallamy to Speak at NM Native Plant Society State Convention

The Native Plant Society of New Mexico (NPSNM) is celebrating their golden jubilee statewide this year. The state conference will be held from September 10-13 in Silver City. [Registration for the conference will begin on July 1.](#)

The conference entitled, “Roots of Resilience: Native Plants in the Next Fifty Years,” features nationally known speakers Doug Tallamy and Philip Connors. Tallamy is the author of several books, including *Nature’s Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Yard*, which became a New York Times bestseller and was featured in the Spring 2026 New Mexico Gardener.



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Event Calendar

June 5—6, ABQ Council of Garden Clubs Standard Flower Show, [“From Sea to Shining Sea”](#) and [“LiberTea”](#)

June 7— 13, [National Garden Week](#)

August 1, Submission Deadline for New Mexico Gardener Fall Issue

September 10—13, NM Native Plant Society 50th Anniversary State Convention, [“Roots of Resilience,”](#) Silver City, NM

September 13, [2026 Placitas Garden Tour](#), Placitas, NM

October 13, District I Blue Star Marker Dedication, Veterans’ Integration Center, Albuquerque

November 1, Submission Deadline for New Mexico Gardener Winter Issue

February 1, Submission Deadline for New Mexico Gardener Spring Issue

April 1—2, New Mexico Garden Clubs State Convention, “I Went to a Garden Party,” Roswell, NM

2026 NMGC Convention Judges' Council Banquet

How to Judge

Iris



The irises arrive!
Photos: Mary Gillard



Irises waiting to be judged

Iris: the Greek Goddess of Rainbows



Wendy Jackson, Mary Gillard, Mary West, and Gary West enjoy dinner



Judges' Council President, Debra Sorrell, Introduces Presenter, Pegi Naranjo-Smith, Morning Garden Club



Pegi guides us through the botany of irises and the ins and outs of judging them



Several NMGC members try their hand had judging the irises; Julie Foster, Artesia Garden Club; Sandi Davis, Home Garden Club

Photos: Barbara Antos unless Otherwise Noted

Christine Longthorp (aka Longhorn), SouthCentral Region, Director

Greetings New Mexico Garden Club Members:

The month of April was a whirlwind of conventions across South Central Region which began by celebrating 100 years of Route 66 in Oklahoma City with OGC at the end of March. I was asked to give a design program which was using unusual containers such as hanging brightly colored colanders, rolling pages of an old book for a book club meeting or using child's rain boots for a baby shower! Oklahoma treated me like a queen and they have begun to prepare for next April when they are hosting the SCR convention to follow their annual state convention.

I returned to New Mexico to attend "Old Mexico meets New Mexico" in Las Cruces where we were joined by Donna Donnely our National President who helped inspire newcomers understand the levels of leadership and the longevity of NGC. Our 100th anniversary will be held in Albuquerque in 2029, so put it on your calendar and support SCR member, Suzy Andrego who will be installed as our NGC President.

Within days we were on the road in a rented van, destination San Antonio for the SCR convention hosted by Texas. All four states were well represented and even with it not immediately following the state convention in Houston it was well attended. Again Donna Donnely graced us with her presence and enjoyed a morning river boat cruise before we began the business side of the conference. Great programs, a lavender farm, orchid expert, floral designer who encouraged local growers and a Blue Star/Gold Star memorial program in support of my project. I will be back to Texas for your early April State convention in 2027. As a sideline my name was changed to Christine



SCR State Presidents: Linda Jean Brown (TX), Melanie Mason Spence (OK), Christine Longthorp, Nancy Rana (AR), Johnese Turri (NM)

Longhorn by many people so it stands now as my nickname!!

Three days later I was on a plane to attend the National Garden Clubs convention at HQ in St. Louis.

It was fun to see first time attendees in awe over the stunningly beautiful setting of our HQ building and to visit the Gateway Arch. Our programs were educational and meeting members from all around the country and our South American affiliates was unifying and fun. One thing that I want to encourage is more participation in applying for awards so expect to hear from me in each publication, reminding you to keep a journal of activities that show the nation how we in the South Central Region make a huge difference in our communities.

I thank all garden club members who contributed and made the effort to attend any of these conventions as your presence was noted by me and I am grateful for the support.

New Mexico, please keep inspiring your members and neighbors to Plant America and Keep America Beautiful as this summer celebrates 250 years of being the greatest country in the world.

Be happy, be healthy and be fruitful always!

Photos: Johnese Turri



NMGC at SCR Convention: Shirley Tetreault, Debra Sorrell, Mary Noskin, Marina Efoyson, Johnese Turri, Laurie Hixson, Christine Longthorp, Suzy Andrego, Vicki Frye, Colleen Herman.

New Mexico Garden Clubs' Programs

Smokey the Bear and Woodsy Owl, Jennifer Moreno, Chair

Thanks to all of you for helping this year's Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl poster contest by getting the word out in your communities! This year, there was quite a mix of both Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl posters that were submitted at the state level, and they were all very colorful and beautiful! Many thanks go out to the Garden Clubs and the volunteers that helped for their outstanding work with these young artists, and for helping to support the poster contest!

This year's NM poster contest winners are:

1st GRADE, 1st Place-- Grayson F., sponsored by Uptown GC and Valley Gardeners GC. Abq, NM -Grayson's poster also placed 3rd at the SCR level!

1st GRADE, 2nd Place—Olivia B., sponsored by Uptown GC and Valley Gardeners GC, Abq, NM

1st GRADE, 3rd Place—London J., sponsored by Uptown GC and Valley Gardeners GC, Abq, NM

Honorable Mention was awarded to the remaining 32 poster entries, which were all sponsored by Uptown Garden Club and Valley Gardeners Garden Club. Many thanks go out to Suzy Andrego and Mary Ann Moreno for working with the 1st grade students at Route 66 Elementary School in Ms. Andrego and Mrs. Huffaker's classrooms. There was a total of 35 amazing poster entries submitted! Congratulations on your dedication and hard work-we couldn't do it without your help!!

The final five poster contest winners will be announced at the upcoming National Garden Club Annual Convention. Please go to the NGC webpage at: www.gardenclub.org to view the winner's posters on the contest webpage when they are announced at that time. In the meantime, congratulations to all of the New Mexico poster contest winners! As we look ahead to next year's contest, please help us spread the words of Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl: Only You Can Prevent Wildfires! And: Lend a Hand Care for the Land.

Archives, Becky Fuller, Chair

Please let me know if you have yearbooks or other papers you would like archived. We can try to figure out a way to meet.

NMGC Members Win National Awards at NGC 2026 Convention



Above: Shirley



Right: Debra

Shirley Tetreault won first and second place awards.

Debra Sorrell's Desert Design garnered a Blue Ribbon and the distinguished Designers Choice award.

Laurie Hixson brought home a 3rd Place Award. ***Congratulations, All!!!***



Laurie

Photos: Johnese Turri

Wildflowers and Native Plants, *Jackye Meineke, Chair*

As summer winds down, it is time to gather and sow seeds for our spring wildflower and pollinator gardens. Summer blooms are developing their seeds, which means we can set the scene for a successful garden next spring and summer.

For inspiration, take the opportunity to visit wildflower and pollinator gardens that are in full bloom throughout the state. [Bosque del Apache](#) added a wildflower garden along one of their viewing roads, that likely will be in bloom. [The New Mexico Wildlife Center](#) in Espanola installed a butterfly garden. Visit [Bee City](#), the pollinator demonstration garden in Los Alamos. In Santa Fe, [Railyard Park](#), Alvarado Park and Dancing Grounds Park feature wildflower pollinator gardens. Santa Fe's [Randall Davey Audubon Center and Sanctuary](#) features a pollinator garden and bee house. Or check out Mariposaville Pollinator Garden at the [Rio Grande Nature Center Park](#) in Albuquerque.

If you planted a wildflower meadow or large pollinator garden, in this quarter it is time to mow the plants, which will scatter seeds and create winter cover for sprouting seedlings.

Are you planning a wildflower garden for spring? If so, now is the perfect time to prepare the space for your creation. Choose an area with at least half a day of sun, since most wildflowers thrive in full sun. Clear the area of weeds and add soil improvements, if any. Loosen up the surface of the soil with a rake to form ridges to catch the seeds and to catch water for germination.

Seeds sown in October or later, receive the benefit of fall and winter rain and snow to improve germination. Many wildflowers sprout at the end of the season, and then winter over as small plants that put on a burst of growth and flowers in the spring. Many wildflower seeds, such as the California poppies, need a winter chill to encourage germination.

There are several sources for wildflower seeds for the garden. Check local nurseries for seed blends that are specific for your area. Go online to reliable sites, such as the [Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center](#), [Plants of the Southwest](#) or [Botanical Interests](#). These sites offer a variety of seed blends for various gardening situations. Or, research the seeds you would like to have in your garden and purchase them individually. Also, check with other gardeners and garden clubs that may collect and share wildflower seeds.

If growing plants from seed is not your thing — I find it can be difficult — then make your list and visit nurseries to find plants. I've found many wildflowers are easily established when there is a parent plant. I've had great luck with penstemons, chocolate flowers, angelita daisies, and others dropping seeds around the original plant that germinate the next year. After all, research shows that plants communicate and support each other. I've certainly experienced good results plants' community approach.

Now is a beneficial time to explore, collect and prepare for you spring wildflower garden, so will have a garden buzzing and fluttering with bees and butterflies.



Angelita Daisy

Perfect Timing

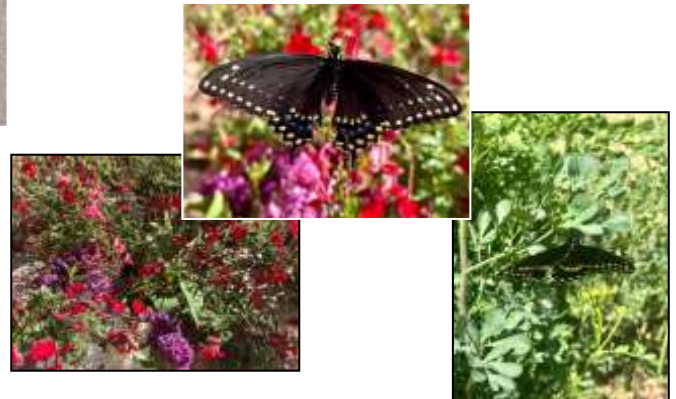
You know they say timing is everything, and that's the title of an article by Kristen West that I recently read in the spring edition of Su Casa Magazine. In the article, the author describes the dilemma we gardeners here in New Mexico face. Timing in the garden depends on where you live! So be in tune with the specific climate swings in your area, realizing that microclimates even on the same property will affect how and what you plant! And speaking of timing, some of you may remember the story about the black swallowtail caterpillars I found on my *Ruta graveolens* plant last November. Six vibrant green chrysalises formed from the group and I overwintered them in my spare fridge. When the weather turned warm this spring and flowers bloomed to provide them nectar, I moved the chrysalises out of the cold storage to the grow light shelves in my garage. I could tell when each was going to emerge because the chrysalis' color darkened. At that point I moved each one into the mesh enclosure with ample cut flowers from the garden ready to give them their first drink. All six of the chrysalises hatched into black swallowtails! One had slightly curled left wings, but they all flew off when released.



Time to fly!

Photos: Maureen Carson

By the time you read this we will likely be in the Warm/Hot Season with the Cool Season plantings past bloom and/or harvested and eaten. I don't know about you, but I am turning to homegrown food as much as possible for several reasons. It is fresh, that thing about timing! It is a learning experience for my grandchildren. It allows me to grow what I want to eat and I know what, if any, chemical exposure happened. And also importantly, it cuts down my cost of purchasing food! Staggering planting dates, called succession planting, helps lengthen the harvest. Eating fresh food in season just can't be beat. It's all about timing!



Here are a few timely chores for the summer season:

- Prune spring shrubs if needed when bloom is complete. Perfect time to shape/prune Lady Banks Rose.
- Harvest garlic bulbs when leaves start to yellow. Hopefully you enjoyed the scapes earlier.

- Move any seedlings that pop up in the wrong place such as sunflower, zinnia, portulaca or better yet, share some extras with friends and neighbors.
- Postpone planting or moving trees or shrubs once summer temps hit. Better timing to plant is FALL.
- Deeply water trees at least once a month. The timing of sprinkler systems doesn't promote deep roots.

Things I added or resupplied to my organic arsenal this spring to help with fertilizing and pest control:

- Espoma products like Rose-tone, Plant -tone, Garden-tone, etc.
- Coast of Maine Compost Blend and Soilutions Compost.
- Spruce TM a new weed killing product claiming to be pet and kid friendly.
- Neem Oil, Insecticidal Soap

Remember, **timing is everything**...so make sure you take some time to enjoy nature in your own, or another person's or public garden. Happy growing!

Bees & Butterflies, Sabine Kelly, Chair

Summer in Bloom: Hollyhocks, Poppies, and the Quiet Work of Bees

As spring slowly unfolds in our high-altitude mountain community, there's a particular kind of magic that happens in the garden. It doesn't rush. It lingers in the cool mornings, the late frosts, and the patient gardener's watchful eye. And just when it feels like everything is taking its time—suddenly, life is everywhere.

Two of my favorite flowers to welcome this season are hollyhocks and poppies. They each carry their own personality, yet both seem perfectly suited to our mountain rhythms.

Hollyhocks (*Alcea rosea*) feel like storytellers in the garden. Their tall, old-fashioned spires thrive in our mountain conditions when given full sun and good drainage. I like to plant them along fences or near barns where they can stretch toward the sky, protected from wind. Varieties like heirloom single mixes, deep burgundy 'Nigra,' or dwarf hollyhocks are especially well-suited to smaller spaces.

Poppies bring a softer kind of joy. Their petals are delicate, almost like tissue paper, catching the sunlight in a way that makes them glow. California poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) are particularly well adapted to our dry climate—they thrive in full sun, tolerate poor soil, and often reseed themselves, returning year after year in cheerful drifts.

At our elevation—often above 8,000 feet—gardening asks for patience and observation. Short growing seasons, strong sun, and dry soils mean that plant selection matters. But when you

choose wisely, the results can be both resilient and beautiful.

Alongside hollyhocks and poppies, I've found these plants to be especially reliable in Angel Fire gardens:

- Blanket flower (*Gaillardia*) – long-blooming, drought-tolerant, and loved by pollinators
- Rocky Mountain penstemon (*Penstemon strictus*) – a native favorite with vibrant color
- Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) – hardy and excellent for bees
- Columbine (*Aquilegia*) – delicate-looking but mountain-tough
- Coneflower (*Echinacea*) – sturdy, long-lasting blooms
- Lupine and alpine asters – well-adapted to cooler temperatures and lean soils

These plants don't just survive here—they belong here.

And then there are the bees.

In early spring, before the garden is fully awake, bees are already at work. On warm afternoons, you might spot them visiting the earliest blooms—often the small, easily overlooked flowers that provide critical nectar after a long winter. These first foraging trips are essential for rebuilding the colony.

One spring morning, I was out near the pasture, scattering poppy seeds along the fence line while one of my horses stood nearby, quietly watching. The ground was still cool, the kind of day where winter hadn't fully let go. A few weeks later, those same bare edges were dotted with orange blooms—and I noticed the bees had arrived before I really had time to appreciate the flowers myself.



What struck me most was the stillness of it. The horse grazing peacefully, the soft movement of bees from bloom to bloom, the sense that everything was unfolding exactly as it should—without hurry, without interference. It reminded me that the garden isn't just something we tend. It's something we're part of.

One of my favorite things to watch is bees working poppies. While poppies don't offer much nectar, they provide abundant pollen. If you pause and look closely, you'll see bees dusted in golden grains, moving methodically from bloom to bloom. Later in the season, hollyhocks become a vertical feast, with bees climbing from one blossom to the next.

If there's one gentle suggestion I can offer, it's this: plant with the bees in mind. Choose a variety of flowers that bloom from early spring through late fall. Let a few plants reseed and naturalize. And whenever possible, skip pesticides—our pollinators depend on it.

Gardening here teaches us to work with nature, not against it. The bees seem to understand that instinctively. They don't rush the season—they follow it, trusting each bloom as it comes.

And perhaps that's the real lesson of a mountain garden: beauty unfolds in its own time, and when it does, it's worth every moment of waiting.

2026 NMGC Convention General Meeting, Luncheon, and Taylor-Mesilla Historic Site Tour



Shirley Tetreault leads the Pledge of Allegiance



NGC President, Donna Donnelly addresses the attendees



Mary Ann Moreno, Ways & Means Chair, promotes the Prize Raffle Fund Raiser



Debra Sorrell receives a certificate from Debi Harrington for successful completion of Gardening Schools 1-4



Timekeeper, Alison Grieggs, prepares to pull the plug on a windy presenter



Suzy Andrego fills us in on proposed by-law changes



Top: First Time Convention Attendees

Left: Smoky Bear & Woodsy Owl Chair, Jennifer Moreno



Judy Laird, Convention Chair, welcomes us



Luncheon Centerpieces



Luncheon Host, Kersti Rock, 2nd VP



Russell Hernandez, Mesilla Mayor, invites us to Visit Mesilla and Tour the Taylor-Mesilla Historic Site



Special Guest, Rosemary Maddox, MVGC Honorary Member



Left: Plant-a-Tree and Silent Auction Fund-raisers



Right: Visiting the Taylor-Mesilla Historic Site



Photos: Barbara Antos

Dandy Dandelions As Early Pollinators, Selvi Viswanathan

My mentor, Dorothy Hoard, Los Alamos Naturalist who is no more, taught me to respect the weed Dandelion. When we were working in the old Nature Center on the Butterfly Garden with children, I was ready to pull the Dandelion plant. Dorothy stopped me and said, "this is the early Pollinator in Spring so to leave it." Now, when I see a few yellow Dandelion blooms, and I leave them. Here two pictures of butterflies in our yard.

Right: Skipper-see the hooks on the antennas!



Left: Beautiful Male Southwestern Orange Tip feeding on Dandelion

Here are some interesting Dandy Dandelion facts I learned from Internet:

- We sometimes do not want them in our yards. They be controlled when the flowers go to seed; we can simply dig the plant out!
- Dandelions are highly resilient, nutrient-dense perennials and every part--root, leaves, and flowers--are edible and useful.
- Their yellow flowers turn into wind dispersed 'puffball' seeds.
- Dandelions are the only flowers that represent the three celestial bodies the Sun, Moon. and Stars.

SUN:The bright yellow open flower is associated with warmth.

MOON: The white delicate spherical seed head reflects the appearance of a Full Moon.

STARS: The individual seed with parachutes dispersing in air appears as scatters concellations.



Photos:Selvi Viswanathan



Evening Primrose, Submitted by Mary Wilson, El Jardin Encanto

This is one of my favorites. This one is in my front yard. It is well established, goes dormant in the Winter and comes to life in the Spring.

Photo: Mary Wilson

2026 NMGC Convention Banquet



NMGC President, Johnese Turri Kicks off the Procession of Honor



Presiding Officer and NMGC 1st VP, Lauri Hixson



Guest Presentation by Heart of the Desert's Maria Massey



Blessing Offered by Shirla Harris, Angel Fire Garden Club



Centerpieces Inspired by New Mexican Art and Flora



A Good Time Was Had by All



Sandi Davis, Home Garden Club, Conducts the Memorial Service



Humorous Photos Submitted for Awards



Mesilla Valley GC's, Linnea Egbert Reports the Final Registration and Credentials



Above: Mary Ann Moreno Presides Over the Ways & Means Raffle



Right: District V Invites us to the 2027 "I Went to a Garden Party" Convention



Above: Debra Knox and Becky Fuller Deliver Courtesy Resolutions



Right: Carolyn Bergsagel Gives the Benediction

Photos: Barbara Antos

New Mexico Garden Club News

Mesilla Valley Garden Club, Becky Fuller, President

The past three months have been planning and implementing ideas for the NMGC Spring Convention. For all those who attended, we hope you had a wonderful time! For our Last meeting until September, we are planting red, white and blue flowers in pots for patriotic centerpieces for our country's 250th Anniversary. We will also be planting with a patriotic theme in the Town of Mesilla's Veteran's Park planter. We wish everyone a wonderful summer and a special 4th of July celebration!

Right: Becky Fuller prepares to deliver resolutions at the 2026 NMGC Convention.

Photo: Linnea Egbert



Socorro Garden Club, Mary Gillard, President

Members of the Socorro Garden Club at the Socorro General Hospital sprucing up the flower bed.

Photo: Mary Gillard

Artesia Garden Club, Mary West, Member

Artesia Garden Club went to Hobbs for Blue Star and Gold Star memorial. The markers were sponsored by New Mexico Gold Star Mothers Iris Garden Club, the City of Hobbs, and New Mexico Garden Clubs.



Mary also writes, *“My flowers are changing colors. I’ve had this bush for about 7 years always covered in pink flowers. This year I have 3 solid white, 6 with specks of white and 2 cool ones that are 1/2 white 1/2 pink.”*

Photos: Mary West



El Jardin Garden Club, Mary Lou Wilson, Member

Our club took a guided tour at the Valle de Oro Wild Life Refuge by ranger Dakota to see the development of the 500 acre refuge with natural vegetation, including the planting of more Cottonwood trees, and making more water features and beautiful landscape views.



Dakota Dominquez, Fish & Wildlife Ranger



*Tile Rabbit Sculptures
Created by Local Artists*



*Old and New
Cottonwoods*



View of the Sandias from Valle de Oro

Photos: Mary Lou Wilson

Angel Fire Garden Club, Sabine Kelly-Allen, Member

Quick Tips for Angel Fire Gardeners

- Start seeds early indoors or direct sow cold-hardy flowers as soon as soil can be worked
- Use raised beds or amended soil to improve drainage and warmth
- Mulch generously to retain moisture and buffer temperature swings
- Plant in wind-sheltered areas when possible
- Choose native and drought-tolerant plants for best success

Placitas Garden Tour, Sunday, September 13

The 2026 Placitas Garden Tour will be held from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. on Sunday, September 13. This annual fundraiser supported by the Sandoval County Master Gardeners will feature local gardens, including the native plant garden at the Placitas Community Library. The tour is an annual fundraiser to support the library and the master gardeners. The library also features a special art exhibit during the month of the tour, and artists are featured in the gardens. Full information on the gardens on the tour and 2026 ticket price are not yet available (placitasgardentour.com).

Deer Fence Project, 2021-2026

The Los Alamos Garden Club was very honored to receive 1st Place for the 2025 Civic Development Award at the New Mexico Garden Club's convention in Las Cruces this April. The award was for the club's project to have an attractive deer fence built around the historic Memorial Rose Garden near Fuller Lodge in downtown Los Alamos.

The Memorial Rose Garden is the oldest public rose garden in New Mexico. It was established by the Los Alamos Garden Club in 1957 with an allocation of land from the Zia Parks Department. Since the town at that time had no cemetery, Los Alamos residents soon began to donate rose bushes in memory of loved ones. Space quickly became a problem in the original location and, in 1958, the club obtained the current, larger plot of land from the Atomic Energy Commission. Professional landscape architect and member of the Los Alamos Garden Club, Lila Gardner, designed the present Memorial Rose Garden in its current location next to the History Museum and near Fuller Lodge in the Los Alamos Historic District. The Garden is the second stop on the Los Alamos History Walking Tour. It has long been a favorite spot for locals and visitors. It is also used for many formal events, such as weddings.

Members of Los Alamos Garden Club have continued to care for the Memorial Rose Garden each year from April to November, maintaining the garden and planting new donations of memorial roses. Beginning with pruning and cleanup in April, followed by tasks such as periodic fertilizing, weeding and deadheading throughout the season, and ending with late fall mulching, Garden Club members lovingly put in hundreds of hours working in the Garden. The County Parks department has assisted by maintaining the irrigation system, providing mulch, mowing the lawn and performing needed structural work.



Judy Handy Shoos Away Deer

Deer have always been present but, in recent decades, fires, drought and nearby residents feeding the deer have resulted in a huge increase in the number of deer feeding on the rose bushes, often nearly destroying them. In addition, deer droppings became a frequent and unpleasant sight in the garden beds and lawn. Generations of deer have now been born within the human populated areas and Los Alamos has become home to the deer as well as to the people. Many gardens in town have become fodder for the deer.

The club tried a number of methods to deter the local deer from destroying the Rose Garden. Members planted deer deterrent plants such as marigolds and rosemary. Strongly scented soap was hung from the bushes. Spraying deer repellent chemicals was considered but is maintenance intensive and the smell can annoy human visitors. For the past three years, the club has relied on wire cages to cover the plants.



See Deer Fence, Page 20



Special Event and Cages

The cages are ugly and, while not completely effective, are more effective than the scent deterrents. The only real and permanent solution was determined to be an attractive deer fence with gates to allow visitors and keep out the deer.

The club began discussing the idea of a deer fence in April 2021. The project involved much time and effort as there were many steps and hurdles to meet along the way. This is a very condensed summary of the club's efforts, led by

member Kersti Rock, to determine the fence design and gain the needed approvals before Los Alamos County would take on the project as a part of their budget for scheduled work. The fence design and material had to not only be effective at keeping out deer but had to be visually compatible with the historic district where the garden is located.

Many possible fence designs and materials were considered before settling on a simple but attractive welded wire and powder coated steel fence from Design-Master. This fence style, Milan, had the strength and height we needed. It had an attractive design and was available in a soft taupe color that blended well with the area. Detailed presentations were prepared to explain the importance of the garden, the need to protect it and, ultimately, to obtain approvals from the Los Alamos Historic Preservation Advisory Board (HPAB), the New Mexico State Preservation Office and the Los Alamos County Parks and Recreation Board. Kersti Rock's 2022 presentation to the Los Alamos HPAB on the history of the rose garden and the need for a deer fence was also posted on the County website and garden club members spoke with members of the public and County Council members about the need for a deer fence. Online newspaper articles also informed the public of the project. While support from the HPAB and the County was not always clear, it began to gel in 2024. Club members attended the public comment section of a February 2024 meeting of the Los Alamos County Council where Kersti informed the council of the issue and the need for a deer fence to protect the rose garden. And between June and September of 2024, the club obtained approvals from the Los Alamos HPAB, the State Historic Preservation Office and the Los Alamos County Parks and Recreation Board. The deer fence project was placed on the County's budget and scheduled to begin in late 2025.



After Presentation to County Parks



Construction Begins December 2025

See Deer Fence, Page 21

The project was essentially complete in April 2026 with the exception of a few remaining touch ups and adjustments. Los Alamos Garden Club members were delighted to be able to remove the ugly chicken wire cages from the rose bushes on Monday, April 27! Los Alamos County's Community Development Department is planning a ribbon cutting ceremony to take place in May, Historic Preservation Month. The County, Los Alamos Garden Club and the public will be able to celebrate the completion of the deer fence around the garden. Many people have already commented on the beauty and definition that the fence has added to the Memorial Rose Garden. As we were working on the garden this past Monday, a young couple entered the garden to discuss plans for using it as the venue for their upcoming wedding.



Construction Complete April 2026, Fuller Lodge in Distance

Photos: Kersti Rock

Summit Garden Club, Alison Grieggs, President

This week, our Laurie Hixson won a third place award at the National Garden Club Convention in St Louis. Woo hoo! She is so talented.

And last night, Los Alamos Master Gardeners announced that this year's designations of Lifetime master gardeners are our Betsy Comly, Doris Thielemann, and Laurie Hixson. Hoorah! A plaque for each will be installed on the arbor in the LA demo garden to honor their long service to the community.



We're just beaming with pride! And so thankful for our members of Summit Garden Club!!!

Bosque del Apache Pollinator Garden, Mary Gillard, Socorro Garden Club President



Socorro Garden Club
Members

Members of the Socorro Garden Club and community at large participated in several volunteer days with the [Pollinator Garden Enhancement Project](#) planting trees and shrubs, replacing metal fence posts, preparing the watering system, installing benches, digging up johnsongrass, and cleaning up pack rat nests.



Penstemmon

Photos: Mary Gillard

Sunshine Valley Garden Club, Cindy Johnson, President

We had our February Valentine's themed meeting/luncheon at Johnny B's restaurant in Truth or Consequences, with a delicious taco bar buffet. Three guests came down from Albuquerque to join us: longtime garden club members, Suzanne Andregio, Christine Longthorp, Debra Sorrell. It was so great to see them again. They made our meeting extra special.



The Club hosted the District IV Spring Meeting on Thursday, March 12th at Johnny B's restaurant. We had a yummy barbecue buffet. The theme was St. Patty's Day with plenty of decorations, centerpieces, door prizes and favors. Our member, Ellie Nordgren, gave a program on honeybees. She had raised them for years, once having at least 33 hives, and told us lots of interesting things about them. Many speeches were given by special officers.



Our annual Plant Exchange (aka "Pot Party") was held at President Cindy Johnson's home in April. There were many interesting plants, seeds and cuttings to choose from. We enjoyed having 3 new



guests. This is a great way to get new and different plants for our gardens and always a lot of fun.

"There are no gardening mistakes, only experiments"

"You can't plant flowers if you haven't botany"

Home Garden Club, Sandi Davis, President

The Home Garden Club in Roswell had a wonderful day at the Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge learning all about the birds that migrate in our region throughout the year. We thoroughly enjoyed every bit of the program. The Home Garden Club also has a designated area at the Bitter Lakes that we take care of. This year we added a large Agave plant and moved another plant to a better space along with cleaning the area and trimming the trees.



Photos: David Blount

See Home, Page 23



We also learned a lot about Pistachio trees. How to plant, water and harvest the nuts. Such a great experience to be at the Pistachio Farm here in Roswell.

Photo: Pat Greenwade



Photo: Lina Offenbacher

Peggy Naranjo Smith gave us a wonderful program on Spring Floral Designs. What a treat that was!



April was our Installation of Officers and a yummy potluck lunch.



Going forward! Our Club has been invited to a Garden Tea Party this month at a Historic, 150 year old rock house, here in Roswell. That is going to be a very special day!



Happy Plants While You're Away, Submitted by Johnese Turri, NMGC President

I wanted to share a little tip to help keep your plants happy and hydrated while you're away for a few weeks.



All you need is a large container of water and some natural rope or yarn (non-synthetic works best). Cut a length long enough to reach from the water to your plant, with a bit extra to sit in the container. Give the yarn a good



soak, gently wring it out, then place one end in the water and tuck the other into the soil. It will slowly wick the water into the plant—like a quiet little lifeline while you're gone.

I usually have a neighbor peek in after about a week, just to be sure the water hasn't gotten too low.



Here's to coming home to happy, thriving plants!

Photos: Johnese Turri

Lincoln County Garden Club, Stephanie Kinnamon, President

The Lincoln County Garden Club has been very BUSY this Spring getting ready for Summer planting and enjoying FUN activities!



February 17 LCGC Meeting program presented by our own Carla McDougal on “How to Grow Microgreens”. Healthy veggies you can grow indoors.

March 4th “Learn to Prune” fruit tree pruning hands on demo, hosted by the Ruidoso High School Garden Club at their campus orchard



that consists of fruit trees purchased from an LCGC grant.

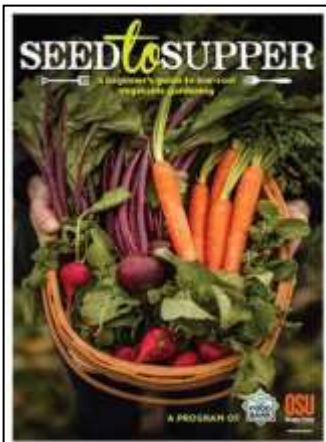


March 23rd District V Spring meeting “LADYBUG TRAILS” hosted by Artesia Garden Club. We enjoyed delicious food and an interesting program by NMSU Entomologist Jane Pierce.

April 7th and 8th NMGC 76th Annual Convention. The LCGC enjoyed the festivities and it was announced LCGC won two National Garden Club Grants: The Espoma Organic Fertilizer and AMES Tool grants.



April 14 - May 19 LCGC members attended the NMSU ICAN “Seed to Supper” course held weekly on Tuesday evenings at the ENMU annex in Ruidoso. The course includes in class instruction on all aspects of home gardening: planning, preparation, growing, and harvesting fruits and vegetables at home.



Our April 21st meeting was held at Conley’s Nursery where the owner, Victoria Bomer, showed us how to create mixed potted plants and hanging baskets.

April 24th LCGC donated an ornamental plum tree to the Village of Ruidoso’s “Keep Ruidoso Beautiful” program for Arbor Day to be enjoyed by the entire community. This tree was the 12th tree that the LCGC helped plant in the Village of Ruidoso including 8 fruit trees at Ruidoso High School’s Garden Club orchard, and apple trees donated and maintained at the High Mountain Youth Program.



High Desert Design Club, Shirley Tetreault, President



High Desert Design Club took on an unbelievable project – The High Desert Memorial Garden. Unfortunately, the garden had been neglected and unwanted materials which consisted mostly of “rock” had been put there for possible later use. Three members headed up the tremendous task of rock removal (6 inches), soil prep, plant selection, water renovation and planting of red, white and blue plants. Dorothy Duff, Catie Glover and Beth Schneider are the three-person team that made it all happen. The Garden includes a Blue Star and Gold Star and was seen by all for our Parade of Gardens tour on May the 3rd.



We applied for the National Award – Keep America Beautiful that was designed for our Blue Star/Gold Star markers and to celebrate America 250. We were awarded \$850.00 for this red, white and blue garden project. Several pictures will be taken this summer as everything develops and we will apply for a national award that is complete.

Plant material is as follows: Roses – Santa Claus (red) and Iceberg (White), Patriotic named Iris, Red Tip Photentia, Summer Jewel White Salvia, Blue Columbine, Coronado Red Agastache, Electric Blue Penstemon, and Easy Wave Red Petunia, Dragon’s Breath Celosia, Cherry Crush Calibrachoa, Black Forest Ruby Dahlia, White Pelargonium, Nepeta Catmint, and Blue Dwarf Plumbago.

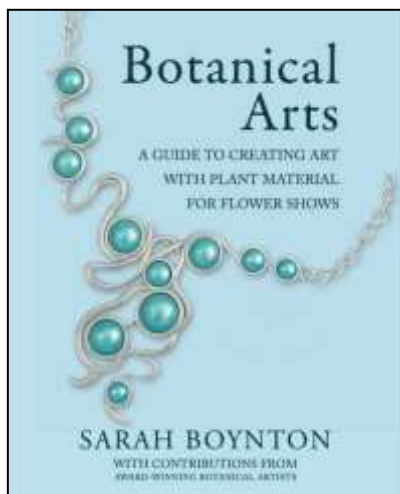


This President could not be prouder of the garden, the creators and how special it is to Veterans who pass by and stop to observe.

Required for Your Floral Design Library:

Botanical Arts by Sarah Boynton

Submitted by Anne May, Floral Designers Club



This long awaited book was published to the thunderous applause of Botanical Artists everywhere! Botanical Arts outlines each step of the creative process, from gathering and preserving botanical materials to mastering tools, adhesives, painting, finishing, packing, and exhibiting. Botanical Arts features a comprehensive guide to transforming dried plant material into beautiful works of art. Each technique, step, tool and process are illustrated with exquisite photographs. Even better are the jaw dropping photos of hundreds of finished pieces of jewelry, couture, whimsical forms and delightful embellishments.

Sunflower Power Challenge Rules

This is a photo of Judy Laird and the sunflower she grew last summer. You are challenged to grow one as tall or taller in 2026. Five seeds are attached for you to plant.



- 1: You must use the attached seeds to grow your sunflower entry and only one sunflower per member may be submitted.
- 2: A jpg photo of you standing next to the sunflower with your feet on the ground must accompany the entry form.
- 3: You may submit your entry form with your photo at anytime but it must be received by November 1, 2026, the New Mexico Gardener's winter issue deadline.
- 4: Send your completed entry form and photo (jpg, please) to newmexicogardenclubs@gmail.com.
- 5: Convention attendees received seeds in their convention tote bags. If you did not attend the convention but would like to enter the Challenge, send a self addressed stamped envelope to Judy Laird, 3914 Quail Brush Court, Las Cruces NM 88011.



Sunflower Power Challenge Entry Form

Name _____

Garden Club _____

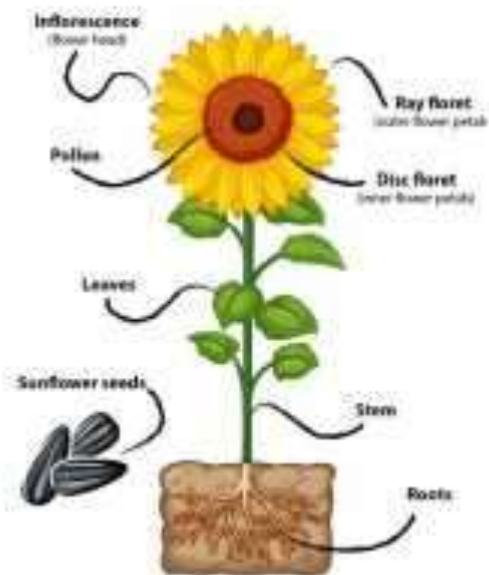
City _____

Date planted _____

The sunflower stem measures _____ inches from the ground to the back of the bloom.

If you need other options to send the photo and/or form email: newmexicogardenclubs@gmail.com.

PARTS OF A SUNFLOWER



2026 NMGC Convention Awards Ceremony



*Mentor of the Year,
Suzy Andrego*



*Member of the Year!
Kersti Rock*



*Special Achievement,
Linda Frank*



*Membership Increase 75%
Socorro Garden Club*



*Photo Print of the Year
Alahna Weller*



*Longevity
Uptown Garden Club*



*Club History Class III
Valley Gardeners*



*Club History Class II
Los Alamos Garden Club*



*Bird Award
1st Place, Alahna Weller*



*Std. of Excellence, Class II
Los Alamos Garden Club*



*Tree Award
1st Place, Christine Longthorp*



*Std. of Excellence, Class III
Valley Garden Club*



*Civic Development
Los Alamos Garden Club*

Photos: Barbara Antos

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19 Clubs

2 Youth Clubs

Incorporated August 5, 1952

404 Paid Memberships

22 Youth Members

New Mexico Gardener

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The Editor reserves the right to edit any copy for clarity, accuracy, or space requirements. It is the responsibility of the article writer to ensure that names are spelled correctly. All articles need to be submitted as a Microsoft Word document (unformatted) attached to an e-mail or submitted as email text. Photos must be sent as .jpg files, maximum three per file, as an email attachment. Do not frame or otherwise enhance. Poor quality photos will not be accepted (i.e. out of focus or grainy.) Photos that are submitted with the photographer's name will receive photo credit.

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Theme: "Plant America for the Next 100 Years"

South Central Region

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Theme: "Let the Good Times Grow!"