



Keeping In Touch

NOVEMBER 2018



Nancy L. Hargroves
2017-2019 NGC President



www.gardenclub.org

NATIONAL GARDEN CLUBS, INC.

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Dear Members of National Garden Clubs,

The news of the world is often full of tragedies that are either natural disasters or caused by man. In the former, gardens are often destroyed; and in the later, gardens can bring comfort.

During the National Children & Youth Garden Symposium in July in Ithaca, New York – of which National Garden Clubs was one of the sponsors, the American Horticultural Society hosted a special community forum on the role of gardens titled, The Garden as Haven: Finding Resilience and Renewal in Turbulent Times. The panel discussion's focus was on gardens as havens; places to find renewal and respite and build community resilience, especially in turbulent times. With increasing frequency, outside stressors— extreme weather events, gun violence, poor water quality, or a myriad of other challenges – are entering youth learning environments across the nation, making mental health a critical priority for educators, students, and families.

This forum was an opportunity for candid and thoughtful conversation about the changing realities of the educational environment and the ways garden spaces can be used not only to teach, but to lower stress, develop a sense of optimism, and build a more resilient community. Special guests included Marsha Guenzler-Stevens, University of Maryland, Director of Student Affairs; Kyle Jeter, Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School teacher; and Greg Eells, Cornell University, Director of Counseling and Psychological Services. This event was recorded and can be viewed from the American Horticulture Society's website at this link: www.ahsgardening.org/gardening-programs/youth-gardening/ncygs/2018-community-forum.

Before the recent tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, students were working to create an outdoor learning space, but the ground was not well-graded, and students weren't able to maintain the area. After the tragic events of February 14, the community and a local commercial landscape designer offered their help to complete the garden.

The initial idea was to create a memorial garden, but the final conclusion was to just have a community gathering space as a way for the students and faculty to come together to finish a project they had already been working on and to create a space that they could use to reflect and move forward. Additionally, the school wanted to keep the structures that were already in place. Photos of this garden can be viewed at this link: <https://bit.ly/2EX5J7p>.

A group discussion was held at the end of the National Children and Youth Garden Symposium. Teachers who attended this Symposium were asked

what they needed to help them achieve gardening education in their schools and classrooms. These were their top two responses:

- Teachers need help in advocating for funding for gardens; school boards don't see this as a priority.
- Teachers need mentors with gardening knowledge, as they usually don't have much knowledge or experience with gardening.

NGC members can help! You can be a gardening mentor to a teacher. Read the personal story of third-grade teacher Désirée Pacuk in this issue. You can be a gardening mentor to a teacher like Désirée. Please contact the local schools in your area and offer your guidance and expertise. Tell middle school teachers about the We Are Bloom website (www.wearebloom.org) that can connect them to free teaching resources from the Scholastic website.

A garden can be a place for learning, but they can also be a place of comfort for the soul.

Nancy

Links to National Garden Clubs

Social Media —



Help NGC!
November 27, 2018 — #GivingTuesday
PLANT AMERICA Fundraiser on Facebook

We invite you to explore the NGC information available on the Internet and promote your club, state, region and NGC on social media.

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Submissions for KIT are due January 1, 2019

National Garden Clubs, Inc. provides education, resources, and national networking opportunities for its members to promote the love of gardening, floral design, and civic and environmental responsibility.

NGC SCHOLARSHIPS

NGC Scholarships are offered to college juniors and seniors majoring in the subjects listed on the NGC website. This year 36 students each received \$4000 NGC Scholarships. Students apply to their respective states and then the winner from each state is sent to this Chairman for judging. The deadline to enter in the state scholarship competition is February 1, 2019. For more details go to the NGC website www.gardenclub.org, then click on Scholarships, click on Instructions and Applications. Both of these are important. State Scholarship Chairmen names and addresses are listed on the website. State presidents and state chairmen, please encourage students in your states to apply for a scholarship.

- Nancy C. Voyles, Scholarship Chairman

NGC Life Membership

You still have time to purchase an NGC Life Membership for yourself or for someone special before the NGC Convention to be held in Biloxi, MS. Applications should be postmarked no later than April 1, 2019, and sent to NGC Headquarters along with a check for \$200. Please find the application form on the NGC website along with instructions. One-half of the above amount will benefit the NGC Scholarship Fund. Thirty-six students received scholarships from this fund this year. The other one-half goes to our Permanent Home and Endowment Fund. This fund keeps our headquarters looking its best at all times.

All new Life Members attending the convention in Biloxi will be honored at one of the luncheons and will receive their NGC Life Member pins. If you plan to attend the meeting, this is an excellent opportunity to be introduced and pinned by President Nancy Hargroves. She honored 24 new NGC Life Members at the last convention in Philadelphia. All Life Members receive The National Gardener free of charge.

Be a part of an NGC group of individuals who provide educational opportunities to individuals for the future of our land.

- Bobbie Verser, Life Members Chairman

Wildlife Gardening



We know that many of our members, clubs, and states have held outstanding wildlife gardening projects in the last few years. Our Partner, National Wildlife Federation, has expressed interest in showcasing National Garden Clubs' special projects in their National Wildlife Magazine. What a great opportunity that would be! Please send

pictures and a short write-up about those special wildlife gardening projects to this chairman before March 1st and, with your participation, we will do our best to make this happen!

- Becky Hassebroek, Wildlife Gardening Chairman,
beckyhasse@aol.com

Innovations in Land Conservation Recycling

Recycling saves our landfills, keeps the air clean, and helps control water pollution. Are you recycling in your community or home? It's less expensive to use recycled products than it is to make items from new material. Recycling saves money, energy, trees, and our landfills.

When we recycle paper products, the recycled material is used for writing paper, computer paper, or egg cartons. There are approximately 4700 products made with recycled paper.

Recycled cans and aluminum products are transformed into house siding, gutters, doors, bike parts, car parts, boat parts, and even some appliances.

Recycled plastic is used to make buckets, lawn furniture, playground equipment, and plastic fencing, to name a few items it creates.

Recycled glass makes new bottles, glass jars, and fiberglass.

Do you take your cloth bags to the store to reuse? Many of my cloth bags came from National Garden Clubs' conventions. Not only are the bags recycled when we reuse them, but they also advertise National Garden Clubs, serving a dual purpose.

If there isn't a recycling program in your community, meet with those in charge and work with them to make changes. Get youth involved with recycling; let them know the importance of recycling. Recycle, reuse, and reduce waste to protect our natural resources.

- Marian M. McNabb, Land Conservation Chairman

NGC Awards Address Update –

Publication award applications (Section 10) that are to be submitted to Carol Keefe should be mailed to her at a new address after December 1, 2018.

New Address:

569 Tree Side Ln.

Ponte Vedra, FL 32081



NGC ENVIRONMENTAL, GARDENING AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN SCHOOLS

The NGC Board approved the Landscape Design School's new curriculum at the Fall Board meeting. The curriculum will include a segment in each course explicitly aimed at redesigning a home landscape, including a three-hour class devoted to creating a personal plan. We will also focus on sustainability. Fundamentally, we need to be aware of the environmental burdens the typical suburban lawn and a few shrubs places on the national landscape. Even moderate changes in planting choices and cultural practices can make significant impacts on the ecosystems around us. This will be an exciting and dynamic approach to landscape design. Instructors will provide course outlines, and use of Stewards of the Land will be discontinued. Details about the transition dates (still to be determined) are forthcoming.

The final draft of the new combined Schools Handbook is nearing completion. However, it is important now and in the future to continue using only the interactive forms available on the NGC Schools website. The free Adobe Acrobat Reader software must be downloaded by the individual before downloading the interactive forms to your hard drive. Forms must be completed only on your hard drive and saved there before attaching and emailing to the appropriate person for signature. NO completed forms are to be sent (emailed) to Headquarters without the proper signatures at the bottom or without sending to all parties designated on each form. To assure timely and accurate processing, follow the instructions on all forms.

Now is the time of year for each Consultant to review the Good Standing Date for each School completed and if that date is 12/31/2018, the Consultant must refresh in 2018 or apply before 12/31/2018 for an extension. Remember that there is no requirement to test when refreshing. Also, for students taking tests in all three Schools, the new policy is Open Notes, Open Book.

Especially Environmental Consultants—use your knowledge to advocate in the legislative process. One of the mission statements of NGC is "to review environmental problems and their possible

solutions, to promote environmental literacy and to advocate sound environmental stewardship." -- KIT Nov. 2015. Know the positions of your legislators. One of the main reasons to join a garden club, given by new members, is to become educated about local gardening practices. Also, our seasoned gardeners are challenged to **PLANT AMERICA!** NGC Gardening School provides current valuable information to meet those objectives. Please see the article in this issue on the hand in hand approach between Master Gardener classes and our offerings at the NGC Gardening Schools.

CONGRATULATIONS to New Mexico for holding its first NGC Gardening School and to the International Affiliates (IA) for receiving NGC Board approval for its Online Gardening School offered to IA members and International university students seeking a digital horticulture credit.

- Barbara Hadsell, Gardening Schools Chairman

NGC GARDENING SCHOOL—VALUE TO MASTER GARDENERS

At a Florida Federation of Garden Club Board of Directors meeting, District Directors were asked to appoint a Master Gardener liaison. So one might ask, how does our NGC Gardening School fit in with the University of Florida Extension Service Master Gardening program? According to the MG website, "The learning process never ends for Master Gardeners!" Consider inviting your area's MG's to an NGC Gardening School. Here is what two FFGC garden club members (who are new MG's) had to say.

I have really enjoyed and benefitted from the Master Gardener program. It might seem redundant, but I also have gleaned a lot from the NGC Gardening Course. To have the opportunity to experience continuing education in an area of interest that you can choose is a gift. For me, it is also quite incredible to have a relatively short learning session from instructors who have spent a large portion of their lives becoming experts in their fields." Rebecca Stallard

Continued -

"I finished the Master Gardening class last spring but felt that the NGC Gardening School would be a good review. Course I had up-to-date information, especially for South Florida, and I have learned beneficial information for my zone and others. Thank you for this great class. I have a passion for gardening and am looking forward to the next course." Nancy Cavnar

Did you know that many MG's do not know about your club's wonderful activities—garden tours, youth clubs and contests, our environmental youth camps, monthly club programs, field trips and social events?

Please make sure that your club's MG's mention the garden club's local activities at their MG meetings, and invite the MG's to join your club and attend your programs and fundraisers. And don't forget to remind them that many times CEU's are available for those MG's who attend educational programs.

Sponsor a NGC Gardening School and **PLANT AMERICA!**

- Barbara Hadsell, Gardening Schools Chairman

National Children & Youth Garden Symposium

National Garden Clubs reached out to the Athens Garden Club in Athens, New York offering to sponsor a teacher at the National Children & Youth Garden Symposium at Cornell University this past summer. The local Edward J. Arthur Elementary School contacted Désirée Pacuk, a third-grade teacher who had just started a school vegetable garden with her students. Désirée was honored for the opportunity to attend and gratefully accepted the NGC invitation. She shares some of her impressions below.

I arrived in Ithaca and checked into the college dorms. One thing I noticed right away was that everyone was so welcoming. Fellow teachers and presenters were friendly and excited to be at the symposium.

For the first day of the gathering, we went to Gourlandia to learn how to make bowls out of gourds. It was a great experience and had me itching to grow many gourds for a classroom project. Unfortunately, my

garden at school is just not that big.

The next day the courses started with many to choose from. I took classes on diversifying the garden and maximizing space, "horticulture in a can", incorporating STEM into a garden, and garden gadgets, to name a few. I enjoyed every class and loved networking with fellow teachers.



Désirée with a bowl she made from a gourd.

There were field trips and adventures offered every day. One day we walked to the Cascadilla Gorge, which was lovely. Another day we went on a campus tour, and on still another, we visited gardens.

Every morning started with a guest speaker. One of the speakers was Kyle Jeter, a science teacher from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School who started a garden to help provide hands-on STEAM learning (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics to guide student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking). Kyle's garden ended up being much, much more. Kyle spoke about how the garden brought together the school in the wake of the tragedy they had experienced. It was an emotional moment, sitting there listening to him speak. I started to think about how gardens could be therapeutic for students. Added to that was a visit to the Ithaca Children's Garden. As I walked around the garden, I was struck by all the wonderful exhibits, especially the Bulb Labyrinth Memorial Garden. It was a place that invited you to walk around and have a quiet moment, seek solace, or to listen to the laughter of the children running around you. It planted a "seed" in my mind. I decided that I wanted to build a therapeutic garden at my school — a place where children could go with the social worker and dig in the dirt, plant some seeds, weed, and tend while they talked.

As I walked around both the Ithaca Children's Garden and The Cornell Botanic Garden, I took pictures and jotted down notes on how the gardens were arranged and how they maximized their space, hoping to use these ideas in my garden at the school.

I will be forever grateful for this wonderful experience.



Tour with National Garden Clubs

The Best of the Canadian Rockies

August 18-25, 2019

Join us for the trip of a lifetime as we journey through some of the most untouched, most breathtaking natural beauty on the planet, as well as visit some of Canada's most charming cities and small towns.

By geological standards, the Canadian Rockies are a relatively young mountain range, and because they are remote, they are essentially unspoiled.

Our week-long tour begins in Calgary and continues to Banff, Lake Louise, and Jasper, where we start our two-day train ride aboard the Rocky Mountaineer, ending in Vancouver.

Here's a taste of Day 5 of the tour:

As you soak in the views of Mount Robson, the tallest peak in the Canadian Rockies, teal-green lakes, Yellowhead Pass, and Pyramid Falls (a 300-foot cascade of whitewater), you will be offered complimentary drinks and gourmet snacks, and your storytelling host will recount historic tales as the train ascends to the breathtaking heights of the Canadian Rocky Mountains.

Our Itinerary includes:

- 7 nights hotel accommodations
- 7 Breakfasts, 2 Lunches, and 4 Dinners
- Sightseeing per the Itinerary
- 2 Days Aboard the Rocky Mountaineer in Gold Leaf Service
- Admissions to the national parks
- Admissions to the Calgary Tower and Vancouver Lookout
- Vancouver Gardens Tour

Complete details of this exceptional tour are available on the NGC website, or contact the NGC Tours Chairman Mary Ann Bryant, at 770-893-1570 or maryannbryant1@gmail.com.

The registration deadline for this tour is December 1, 2018. Due to the popularity of the Canadian Rockies, hotels will not hold space for the group after that date.

**Join this majestic
tour and share the splendor with
other garden club friends!**

Internet Security Refresher

Yes, we are all under cyber attack. "Phishing," hacking, spam, malware, viruses — are all bad actors. Everyone using a computer or smartphone is vulnerable, but there are some simple steps to avoid falling prey to surveillance, stolen data and frozen computers. **The golden rule is to set strong passwords, update apps from reliable sources, have good anti-virus protection, and know which emails and files are suspicious (and get rid of them).**

- **Account Passwords** Create a new password for every account. It should contain at least 12 to 16 characters and contain a combination of numbers, symbols, uppercase letters, lowercase letters, and spaces. According to cnet.com, "the password should be free of repetition, dictionary words, usernames, pronouns, IDs, and any other predefined number or letter sequences."
- **Public Wi-Fi** They may be fine when you're in a hurry and checking the weather forecast, but don't use public Wi-Fi to make a credit card purchase or look at your bank account balance. Your passwords and pin information may be exposed on public hotspots. If you're staying in a hotel, check to see if the room Wi-Fi is private. It usually is public in the lobby.
- **Ransomware and Phishing Scams** These are phony emails with links or attachments that look like they're from a business you know (bank, cable provider, or credit card company). Delete the email and report it to the company where you have your account. Do NOT click on links or attachments. Phishing scams are emails that request personal information to qualify for long-forgotten ancestor's estate, or when the name of a garden club friend shows up needing bail in Mexico, or emails asking to fund a "Go Fund Me" account. Do NOT click on anything that looks fishy or is out of the ordinary. Do NOT send money or buy cash cards to send to the email sender. Do NOT respond with your password and pin information. If you happen to click on a bad email or attachment and your computer freezes, disconnect your computer from the network immediately and contact a cybersecurity expert or online security firm and let them help you. Update your malware software!

- **Encryption** Your privacy relies on your data being secure. The average citizen should usually only worry about tech companies tracking them to serve up ads pertinent to your browsing sites. Installing an ad blocker will stop pop-up ads. Check the security in the browser bar for the locked icon when making an online purchase. iPhones are seen as the most secure mainstream device today. Modern and newer Android devices usually come with strong security features, but there isn't a universal implementation of encryption yet. Your iPhone encrypts as soon as you lock your screen, but Android devices have to be shut down entirely.

Focus on prevention as much as on real time software protection against threats. Think before you click!

- Phyllis White, Non-Print Communication Committee and Social Media Coordinator

By the Numbers

- 418 **Plant America** Grant Applications received in 2017
- 28 **Plant America** Grants awarded in spring 2018
- 161 **Plant America** Grant Applications received in October, 2018
- 544 members, spouses and guests attended the 2018 NGC convention in Philadelphia
- 5,415 copies of The Saved Seed and 10,000+ copies of The Frightened Frog sold
- 8,000 copies of the 2018 Vision of Beauty Calendars sold
- 6,989 copies of the 2019 Vision of Beauty Calendars sold
- 22 Gold Star Families Memorial Markers dedicated from June, 2017 to October, 2018
- 111 Blue Star Memorial Markers dedicated in the same time period
- 9,000 followers on the NGC Facebook page
- 800+/- applications for NGC awards plus review of about 300 yearbooks submitted in 2017

Around Town

Featuring seasonal holiday projects



Alabama District IV clubs—Ceres, Tuscaloosa, Coker and Greensboro—decorate six entrances to town (above), and hold a "Porches and Parlors" tour of historic homes to raise funds (below).



"FUN with Flowers"
This fun-filled program, with step-by step instructions, teaches members new ideas and skills. The focus is on creating floral designs for the home for seasonal accents, for entertaining, and special occasion decorating. "FUN With Flowers" is an interesting way to attract new members, raise funds, explore creativity, provide community service, and most of all, to just have FUN! Available from Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, www.ffgc.org





Bellport Garden Club on Long Island, NY decorate the window boxes at the Bellport Village shops for the holidays and host a bi-annual event, a Christmas House Tour.
www.bellportgardenclub.com



The Garden Club of Harrisburg, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, decorates historic Fort Hunter Mansion for the Christmas holidays. Members make 33 wreaths and decorate 5 mantels.



Fort Hunter commands a magnificent view of the Susquehanna River and Blue Mountains beyond. Ideally situated at a bend in the river, it served as an alarm station and supply depot during the French and Indian War.





Garden Club of New Jersey volunteers decorate the Drumthwacket mansion annually in holiday finery. Members from the Belvidere, Essex Fells, Keyport, Mountain Lakes, Stony Brook, and West Trenton Garden Clubs participate. Drumthwacket is a Scots-Gaelic name meaning "wooded hill." It is now the official home of the Governor of New Jersey.



The Milford Garden Club decorates Grey Towers, located in Milford, Pennsylvania. It was originally the summer estate of the James Pinchot family and later the primary home of Gifford Pinchot, America's first forester and founder of the USDA Forest Service and two-time Governor of Pennsylvania.





The Waterford Garden Club (Garden Club of Pennsylvania) has been decorating the historic Judson House (shown) each Christmas as part of the community wide Colonial Christmas Days. The Judson House was built in 1810 with a large addition added in 1820. The house was built on the site of Fort LeBoeuf, which was an important part of the French and Indian War. It is now owned by the Historical Society of Waterford and is open as a museum. The tree above is located in the Lincoln Bedroom. It is decorated with dried flowers and other antique items. In the formal dining room on the right, the Christmas tree was decorated with cups and saucers to enhance the mood of the room.



Members of the Middletown-Odessa Garden Club in Delaware decorate Old St. Paul's in Odessa for Christmas (above). On the left, the members make beautiful wreaths to decorate the historical houses in preparation for the "Christmas in Odessa" festivities. This is an annual event in which thousands of visitors tour the homes.



The Bethlehem Garden Club's community service project is decorating historic Bethlehem, Pennsylvania museums and sites for Christmas. Last year, 54 members of the Club helped to decorate six museums. Pictured here is the entrance, bay window, and a tree adorned with silver spoons at the Kemerer Museum of Decorative Arts.



Buckeye Garden Club, Mansfield, Ohio decorates a room at Kingwood Center Gardens in Mansfield every year. It opens to the public in November until January 1 on specific days. Pictured is a dining room display that was decorated whimsically around the theme of Thing 1 and Thing 2 by Doctor Seuss.





Sussex Gardeners in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware was organized in June of 1937. The members decorate historic Zwaanendael Museum in Lewes every Christmas season. "Preserving Our Floral Heritage" was the 2016 theme shown in the first two pictures. Outside decorations were fresh fruit and inside decorations were preserved florals. In 2017, the theme was the "Victorian Era with a Nautical Twist," depicted on the right.



Each year Maplewood Garden Club members create wreaths, swags and decorations for the historic Maplewood, New Jersey Transit Station exterior, interior and holiday tree (left). The holiday tree was decorated with repurposed and decorated plastic water and soda bottles! Above, the club donated the conservatory to the Township's Dickens Village, which recreates the locations in the story of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol on a miniature scale. Each year Club members fill the Victorian Conservatory with live and dried plant material and maintain it throughout the holiday season.

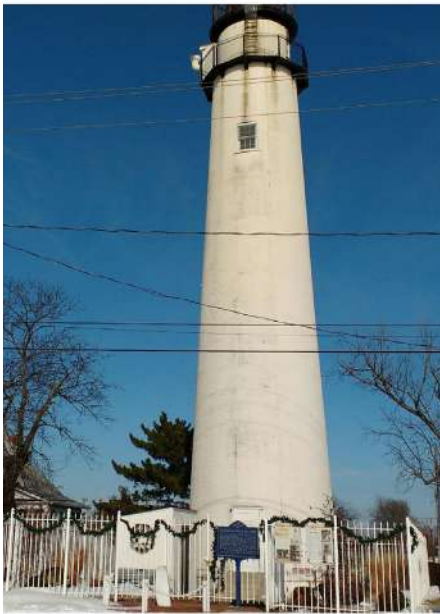


The Wyckoff Area Garden Club decorated the Octagonal Room for the Skylands Holiday Fundraiser in Ringwood for the New Jersey Botanical Gardens Holiday Open House. Members chose the theme "Snoopy's Christmas" which would appeal to the children in all of us. The Red Baron even made an appearance as he flew around the chandelier!



The Haddonfield Garden Club frequently decorates the Indian King Tavern for the Holiday Season. In this building the Provincial Congress of the Colony of New Jersey declared itself the Legislature of the State of New Jersey on July 2, 1776.

Shown here are the welcoming door at 233 Kings Highway East, Haddonfield, New Jersey, the kitchen window with dried herbs for use in cooking, a small table waiting for card players in the Tavern Room, and a table set for dinner in the formal dining room.



The Fenwick Island Lighthouse, completed in 1858, is decorated for the season by the Barefoot Gardeners Club of Fenwick Island, Delaware. The Fenwick Lighthouse rises 87 feet and has provided a crucial warning light for sailors for more than 160 years after it was first lit in 1859. The structure and surrounding grounds are now owned by the State of Delaware and maintained by the New Friends of the Lighthouse and by the Barefoot Gardeners.



The Muirfield Village Garden Club, Dublin, Ohio was asked to decorate the Coffman Homestead, which was built between 1862 and 1867 and is on the National Register of Historical Buildings. In keeping with the time period, the family parlor was decorated using Osage orange fruit both live and dried, dried hydrangea, pine cones and greens. The welcoming centerpiece on the right features greens, apples and a pineapple.



Last year, the Anaconda Garden Club in Montana created a Christmas show based on a book by Anaconda author Marian Geil and her book "The Christmas Mouse," a story of how the smelter mice had to move into town after the smelter was demolished. Along the way the mice camp in various places, finally finding a church in which to live. All the mice were beautifully handmade.





Old York Road Garden Club decorates the historic Richard Wall House in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania annually. Shown on the left is the large living room where Quaker Meetings were held. The "Roaring Twenties" room features a beautiful mantle design.



The Portland District Garden Clubs help the East County Historical Organization decorate the Zimmerman House each Christmas. This house is an old Farm House built in 1874 and lived in by the same family until the youngest daughter died in 1991. All the furnishings are original to the family.

At right, a tall tree decorated in Victorian style is set near the original furnishings and a dress worn by Isabel, the last resident of the home, who was a long-time teacher in the Portland Public Schools.





The Rose Garden Club members of Oneonta, Alabama decorate the Amelia Porter Cabin at Palisades Park for the Christmas Season.



The Home Garden Club of Morristown, New Jersey display their handmade wreaths before donating them to adorn the doors of historical landmarks in town. The greens are donated by the Freylinghuysen Arboretum.



The Southern Butler County Garden Club had the wonderful opportunity to decorate two historical homes, the Buhl House and Passavant House, located on Main Street in downtown Zelienople, Pennsylvania. The Passavant House (pictured immediately left) was decorated in period décor with fresh fruit & greens. The Buhl House interior was themed after an old time Department Store, with each room a specific department. The “toy department” room with old fashioned décor and antique toys is pictured on the upper left, and the living room is above. More pictures of the Christmas house tour and other events are on their website, www.southernbutlercountygardenclub.org.



For almost 40 years, the Morning Garden Club members from Roswell, New Mexico have partnered with the Historical Center for Southeast New Mexico Museum to decorate the historic house/museum. This past year's decorating theme was a "Victorian Christmas." Decorations were chosen that would be in keeping with the time period, using natural resources that are available from around the area, including tree trimmings, berries, pine cones, vines, and feathers. In 2017, more than 400 visitors toured the house to view the decorations during the Museum Christmas Open House.



Above left, a Heritage Garden Club member hangs ornaments on one of seven trees displayed at the State Farm building in downtown Troy, Pennsylvania.

Directly above (right) is a photo of Brandon Garden Club members and school children with a tree in the lobby of the Brandon Mississippi Municipal Complex using the theme of the high school's bulldog mascot. The club continues a ten-year tradition of decorating the municipal building visited by thousands of people during December. A Christmas tree with blue and silver ornaments in the lobby of the Brandon Police Department is in appreciation of the City's first responders. www.thebrandongardenclub.com





The Ridgewood Garden Club of Parma, Ohio provides holiday decoration for the Stearns Homestead (above left). The homestead is a working educational farm and has a Yankee-style barn, animal shelters, a country store and a cabin used for a meeting room. The Stearns House was built in 1855 and contains furnishings, antiques and historical items appropriate to the era. A festive-looking entrance on the Briggs Homestead (right) is also decorated by the club members at Christmastime, fall and other seasons. When able, club members volunteer to help with the gardens at the homesteads. (Photos by Carol Kovach, special to cleveland.com)



2018 is the fourth year the Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland has participated in decorating Christmas trees for the state house in Annapolis. All of Maryland's 24 counties are represented. The trees are decorated and delivered by club members and are displayed in the state rotunda from late November to the first week of January. The trees are delivered over a two-day period, and members are treated with music and cookies, and visited by Governor Hogan and the first lady (the annual display was the governor's idea). Each club is presented with a certificate of appreciation, a special Christmas ornament, and group pictures. Each tree is decorated to depict either the history of the county, county attractions, or special county features. The display attracts wide newspaper coverage and has generated interest in joining a garden club. www.fgcofmd.org

