

## **Oregon's Fall Garden Fair**

By Gaye Stewart, Event Coordinator

The Oregon State Federation of Garden Clubs is pleased to report the success of the Second Annual "Fall Garden Fair" held at the renowned Oregon Garden in Silverton, September 14 and 15, 2019. This mega event was originally designed to capture the attention of both our Oregon Club members and the general public. The plan that evolved was to do several things:

1. To focus the skills, interests and unique characteristics of its members on a major project designed to bring us together in a public forum for a common purpose we could accomplish together, and
2. To publicly demonstrate what the Oregon State Federation of Garden Clubs is all about... who we are, what we do, and how we make a difference in our Oregon communities through conservation, preservation, beautification, education, communication, and much more!

The events for both years have included:

- An NGC Standard Flower Show, themed this year, "Hail to Thee, My Oregon" – a Gardener's Legacy, was focused on the natural beauty of Oregon. The entries of floral designs were amazing to behold! The horticulture entries were gorgeous! Many photos were taken of these creative designs and they will undoubtedly be the spark for enthusiastic conversations still to come "back home."
- 8 workshops, including 4 "hands-on" workshops, included wreath-making, beaded sun-catchers, Fairy Gardens, and a "make & take" floral design. We had good crowds for each of these workshops. All but one of the workshops were taught by Garden Club members from all over the State who came to share their special skills and interests with the public. It was definitely a win, win situation.
- A Blue Star Memorial Marker was formally dedicated on the Oregon Garden grounds Saturday morning to commemorate our respect and gratitude to those who have served, are serving, or will serve in the Armed Forces of America. In addition, a plaque will be placed adjacent to the marker to commemorate the important role played by former OSFGC President Jan Iseli, an Oregon Blue Star Chair and one of the founding supporters of the Oregon Garden.
- Numerous booths and display boards were prepared and staffed both days to engage visitors and answer questions. Examples include: Recycling, Legislation, Smokey Bear, Blue Star Markers, OSFGC Membership, Schools/Education, Pollinators and Children's Crafts.
- To promote pollinator education and awareness, two live demonstrations were displayed – a working beehive and pre-Monarch Butterfly caterpillars feasting on milkweed. These two displays received lots of inquiring attention from visitors.
- A "give and take" book table supplied visitors a source for gardening books, gardening magazines and catalogs.
- The "Oregon's Bounty" exhibit showcased the many specimens of plants growing from all regions of Oregon. The 170 entries for this display covered over 50 feet of table space and was an eye-catcher.
- Children's Crafts and Storytime was provided to those who wanted to make something special to take home, have their face painted and/or enjoy a story time with "Miss Molly."
- 17 plant vendors and garden supply vendors provided an interesting assortment of plants, yard art, bee houses, birdbaths, and more.
- To keep the attendees involved and coming back, we even had free drawings every 30 minutes for some great prizes donated by members or event sponsors.

Upon reflection, it should be noted that a major event such as this does generate excitement among Club members as they work together to make it all happen. There were 71 Club members who worked a shift at the event and many more who worked lots of hours at home getting ready. Almost all regions of Oregon were represented by floriculture and horticulture exhibits, new skills were shared, education was provided and we are proud of our membership in the Garden Club. Together, we do make a difference!

And, we're already thinking about how to make the 2020 Fall Garden Fair even better. Stay tuned...



