

## December 2025 EDITION OF THE VFGC, INC. NEWSLETTER



### ROOTED



December 1, Awards Deadline  
December 15, Hanukkah Begins  
December 25, Christmas Day  
December 26, Kwanzaa  
January 1, 2026 New Years Day

Dear VFGC members,

I don't know about you, but I find it hard to believe that Christmas is next week! Where has the fall gone? Are you as far behind as I am?! This December has illustrated the age-old observation... If you don't like the weather in Virginia, wait five minutes, it will change. Where else can it be in the teens, if not single digits, over the weekend and in the 60's on Thursday!

Around the state, District Awards Chairmen and their committees have been evaluating Awards applications. I hope every club submitted at least one Awards application. I know every club qualifies to apply for at least one Award. You should be very proud of all that you have accomplished! To enjoy just being with each other, there have been wonderful Holiday parties too.

May I take this opportunity to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year.

Thank you for all that you are doing to support your garden club, your District and VFGC!

Thank you for coming to learn and grow with VFGC!

*Sally*

Sally Harrison, VFGC President, 2025-2027

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## NGC GRANT PROGRAMS

Celebrating our Nation's 250th Anniversary

National Garden Clubs and the Plant America Grants Program are promoting a wonderful project, partnering with Keep America Beautiful. As we look ahead to our nation's 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary we have a unique opportunity to bring beauty to the Blue and Gold Star markers across each state that has a memorial to our veterans and families.

Plant America is encouraging each club/district to support the planting of red, white, and blue flowers around every Blue Star and/or Gold Star Memorial Marker within your area. This is an opportunity to show pride and express appreciation.



These plants and floral tributes will serve as a visual celebration of our nation's history. The vision is simple yet very powerful enough to demonstrate and respect the dedication, and sacrifices made by our armed forces throughout the past 250 years.

The application process started November 17, 2025 and will continue through February 17, 2026. Grant funding will be up to \$1000.00. The application will be reviewed with 75% of the funds awarded initially, and the remaining 25 % funds given after the project is completed and the final report is received.

Listed are a sample of plants that may be purchases (of course depending on the area of the marker) ...this also may include soil and mulch.

- **Red:** Salvia, Petunias, Geraniums, Zinnias, Fire frost Lantana, Crimson Feathers, Dark Fire Montbretia (Crocasmia)
- **White:** Alyssum, Begonias, Dusty Miller, Shasta Daisies, Li'l Annie Oakleaf Hydrangea, Viennetta Clematis
- **Blue:** Lobelia, Black and Blue Salvia, Ageratum, Blue Petunias, Blue Marvel Salvia, Surf Swell Hebe

Do support this worthwhile program which may include club members, youth, KAB volunteers and the community in joining together to care for the Blue and Gold Star memorials.

Feel free to ask questions and be sure to follow the NGC website for continued information and application.

Val Story  
Plant America Community Grant Program

## **CLUB NEWS:**

### **The Buckingham- Dillwyn Garden Club:**

Buckingham-Dillwyn Garden Club members fast at work making and delivering festive arrangements designed to bring holiday cheer to each resident of the Heritage Hall Nursing Home.

From left to right.  
Co-president Pam Murray, Suzanne VanDeGrift, Pat Howe, Jackie Fairbarns, Barbara Wheeler, Geraldine O'Neal, Kathy Brooks, Elsie Towler, Glenda Harris



### **Natural Bridge Garden Club:**

Shenandoah District president Valerie Vaughan demonstrated how to make floral arrangements using creative materials for the November program. At right, is her mother, Jane Vaughan, who assisted.





## **The Rose and Garden Club:**

### **A Blooming Partnership: Rose and Garden Club Launches New Collaborative Project with Halifax Master Gardeners & HCHS Students**

The Rose Garden Club has officially embarked on an exciting new community project at the Southside Botanical Gardens in South Boston, VA; one that not only enhances the landscape but also cultivates learning, mentorship, and civic engagement. In partnership with the Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners of Halifax County and the Horticulture and Landscaping classes at Halifax County High School, the club has begun

planting a vibrant new rose garden featuring an array of hearty non-Knock Out rose varieties.

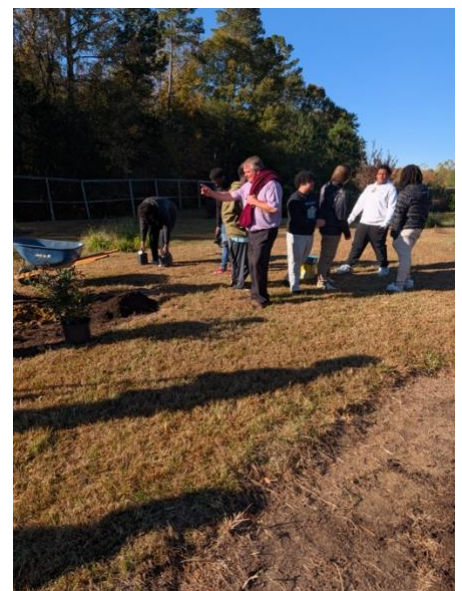
After a unanimous vote by club members to adopt the project, the Rose and Garden Club eagerly moved into action. Members researched and procured a selection of colorful rose bushes known for their beauty, fragrance, and resilience. They also met onsite and mapped out the layout of the new rose garden.

Throughout several days, students from the HCHS horticulture and landscaping classes visited the planting site in rotating groups, each contributing to a different stage of the installation.

Under the guidance of their instructors and with support from Master Gardeners and club members, students:

- Prepared and amended the soil
- Measured and dug planting holes
- Positioned and planted rose bushes
- Watered and completed the finishing touches

This hands-on learning experience allowed students to apply classroom knowledge in a real-world setting. They demonstrated teamwork and skill as they worked side-by-side with experienced gardeners—an exchange of knowledge that benefited everyone involved.



### **Club President Shares Scholarship Opportunity:**

Beyond planting, this project provided an opportunity to invest in the future of Halifax County students beyond gardening. Club President Juanita Johnson engaged with instructors to share information about the Rose Garden Club's annual scholarship, awarded to students pursuing education in agriculture, environmental sciences, landscaping, horticulture, or related fields. This meaningful connection ensures that the club's contribution extends into academic and career growth for local youth.

### **Cultivating Beauty, Learning, and Community**

The new rose garden will burst into full color in the Spring—symbolizing more than just a beautification effort. It represents:

- Community partnership
- Shared expertise
- Youth development
- Civic pride

As the roses take root, so too does a strengthened bond between local organizations committed to education, community service, and environmental stewardship.

The Rose and Garden Club is proud of this collaboration and looks forward to future opportunities to support both Halifax County High School and the blooming interests of its students. Scholarship information may be found at

<https://svhef.org/site2023/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Rose-and-Garden-Club-Scholarship-Application.docx.pdf>

**Members of the Rose and Garden Club are as follows:** Juanita Johnson, President; Amy Edmunds, Vice President; Catty Burns, Secretary; Dorothy Wright, Community Relations chair; Tonja Roberts, parliamentarian and scholarship committee chair; J. Settlers-Petty, Edith Edmunds, Emma Wilkerson, Willie Daniel, Sallie Roberts, Barbara Daniel, Joan Thomas, Willie D. Blakey, Catherine Burns, Vanessa Powell, Janice Powell.



### **Rapid Ann Garden Club:**

On October 8, 2025, Rapid Ann Garden Club had the honor of hosting Carol Inskeep Proulx, AIFD, for an event called “Bites and Blooms.”

Carol is a member of the American Institute of Floral Designers and has over 30 years' experience in the floral industry. She has created designs for the Rose Bowl Parade and for the White House. She specializes in high end arrangements for 5-star hotels and events and galas.

Her passion for teaching was evident during nearly two hours of floral design demonstration. She discussed flower and conditioning foods

and told us about the design products and tools she used. So much great information! Carol created ten glorious arrangements, which were raffled off to 10 delighted winners!

This was a major fundraiser for our club, with 21 of 24 members participating. In all, 48 attendees feasted on dainty appetizers and scrumptious desserts. A grand time was had by everyone!



**SAVE THE DATE: VFGC CONVENTION**



For details, refer to the article in the November 2025 Old Dominion Gardener beginning on page 10 for information. Use the link to reserve your room in the VFGC block at the Williamsburg Lodge at the discounted rate. It can be found on the VFGC website <https://viriniagardenclubs.org> under the heading Publications.

## **FLOWER SHOWS, TOURS and EVENTS ARE PLANNED:**

For future editions of **ROOTED**, please email your club's announcements to [rootedvfgc@gmail.com](mailto:rootedvfgc@gmail.com). There are no announcements in this edition.

## **LEARNING IS FUN!**

Flower Show School and Landscape Design School are open to any garden club member! Whether or not you are considering becoming a Flower Show Judge or certified Landscape Design Consultant, consider signing up for one or both schools. The details follow:

*Flower Show School*  
*Course II*

*A National Garden Clubs, Inc. School*

*March 23-26, 2026*

*Freemason St. Baptist Church*

400 E. Freemason Street

Norfolk, VA 23510

757-625-7579

Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs



VFGC President – Sally Harrison

**For more information contact:**

**Flower Show School Chairman – Frances Thrash**  
**2109 Cocoa Circle, Virginia Beach, VA 23454-2213**

**[francesthresh@cox.net](mailto:francesthresh@cox.net)**

**757-481-3484 or 757-478-5791**

**Flower Show School – Course II**

**Date: March 23-26, 2026**

**Location: Freemason Street Baptist Church, 400 E. Freemason St., Norfolk, VA 23510**

**Design & Flower Show Procedure: Cathy Waitinas**

Cathy will teach tables, petites, & flower show procedure.

## **Horticulture: Jan Griffin**

Jan will teach dracaenas with emphasis on sanseverias and daffodils.

### ***Attendance at all Sessions is Required for Credit***

<b>Schedule:</b>		
Monday, Mar 23	3:45 – 6 pm	Flower Show Procedure
Tuesday, Mar 24	8:00 – 9:00 am	FSP Exam
	9:15 am – 3:30 pm	Horticulture/Lunch
	3:45 – 5:45 pm	Point Scoring Test
Wed., Mar 25	8:00 – 9:00 am	Horticulture Exam
	9:15 am – 3:30 pm	Design
	3:45 – 5:45 pm	Point Scoring Test
Thursday, Mar 26	9:00 – 10:00 am	Design Examination

**Hotel Information: Hotel is on your own, suggest Sleep Inn at Lake Wright, 1521 premium Outlets Blvd, Norfolk, VA 23502, 757-462-6251. (This is near the outlets and Ikea, just off the interstate – 10 minutes at most to the church.)**

#### **Required Books to have:**

***Handbook for Flower Shows, 2017 Edition, NGC Exhibiting & Judging, both available on the NGC Website for purchase or download.***

**Flower Show Procedure** will cover review of Standard & Specialty Flower Show requirements, standard system of awarding, duties of flower show chairman & committee, writing a flower show schedule, and an explanation of Botanical Arts Photography Section & Botanical Arts Photography Award.

**Horticulture** will cover staging horticulture innovatively, petite horticulture, general requirements for horticulture Top Exhibitor Awards, judging qualities on the point scoring form, and commenting vocabulary,

**Design** will include table designs with the role of balance, color and texture emphasized, creative staging of tables, petite design and Top Exhibitor Awards for tables and petites, judging qualities on the Point Scoring form, and commenting vocabulary and procedures.

## **Cathy Waitinas**

### **Flower Show Procedure & Design**

Cathy Waitinas is an NGC Master Accredited Flower Show Judge and FSS Design and Flower Show Procedure Instructor. She is a member of Arissa and Garden Guild Garden Clubs, CFAA and the Society of American Florists. Cathy is an NGC Board Member Chairman of the TN Federation of Garden Clubs' State Headquarters. She has taught school and served 30+ years in the nuclear industry in safety and technical writing. Cathy and Jerry have 3 daughters and live out in the county near Oliver Springs where she has a woodworking shop in her basement. Cathy's carpentry projects show up in many of her design structures

## **Jan Griffin**

### **Horticulture**

After moving from the Seattle area to Florida all the plants I knew about would not thrive in Florida's climate. I joined a Garden Club and started my quest for learning about other varied and interesting plants. I became Flower Show Judge. Now

I teach Floral Design classes as well as horticulture for Flower Show Schools and have developed several horticulture and design programs for clubs, judges, and civic groups.  
 Being actively involved in The Florida Federation of Garden Clubs and Florida Flower Show Judges keeps me busy. It has been my honor to serve as horticulture chairman for six state flower shows and several District shows.  
 My interests other than Garden Club are my family, golf, and working in my friend's florist shop. My comment to all my wonderful design friends is that you need great horticulture to create great designs

**REGISTRATION FORM: Flower Show School-Course II**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Club \_\_\_\_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_

Credit \_\_\_\_\_ Non-Credit \_\_\_\_\_

Full Course with/without exam (Includes tuition, two lunches, and reserved seating on Front rows.)	\$150 _____
Flower Show Procedure (Mon.)	\$40 _____
Horticulture & Lunch (Tues.)	\$75 _____
Design & Lunch (Wed.)	\$75 _____
Manual will be e-mailed (free of charge)	
Printed Manual available at Registration if preordered.	\$10 _____
TOTAL	_____

Dietary Restrictions \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*No refunds after Feb 23, 2026**

Make check payable to **Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.** with **Flower Show Schools** in the memo line and mail to:

Registrar Val Story, 2122 Whithorn Hill, Jeffersonton, VA 22724-1873, 540-272-0975, valstory@aol.com

*This course is available to all those having an interest in the beauty and care of our environment through landscaping*



*LANDSCAPE DESIGN SCHOOL*

*Course 2, Series 30*

**Monday and Tuesday  
April 13, 14, 2026**

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden  
Education Classroom  
1800 Lakeside Drive  
Richmond, VA 23228-4700  
Phone (804) 693-9393

Sponsored by

**VIRGINIA FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS, INC.**

*SCHEDULE*

Monday, April 13, 2026		
Time	Activity	Instructor

Currently, area hotels cannot offer us a block of rooms.

Suggestion is to call to make your own reservation at the hotel of your choice - they offer discounts if you are a AAA member, as well as other promotional discounts.

8:00 – 8:20am – 8:20am	Registration Welcome		
8:30am – 9:30am	Overused, Often Invasive and Native Alternatives in Your Area		Laurie Fox
9:40am – 10:40am	Designing for Pollinators and Wildlife		David Pippin
10:50am – 11:50am	Accessible, Enabling and Therapeutic Gardens		Laurie Fox
11:50am – 1:10pm	<b>LUNCH</b> (The Café is convenient)		
1:20pm - 2:20pm	Plants in the Landscape		Laurie Fox
2:30pm – 3:30pm	Supplemental Subject -Art and Nature Appreciation		David Pippin
6:00pm <b>Group Dinner – place to be announced – pay on your own</b>			
<b>Tuesday, April 14, 2026</b>			
8:30am - 9:30am	Landscape Design Process		Neal Beasley
9:40am - 10:40am	Development of North American Landscape Design		Peggy Singlemann
10:50am - 11:50am	Redesign of Areas		Neal Beasley
11:50am - 1:00pm	<b>LUNCH</b> (The Café is convenient)		
1:00pm - 2:00pm	Preservation of Historic Sites and Structures		Peggy Singlemann
2:10pm - 3:10pm	Structures in the Landscape		Neal Beasley
3:15pm	<b>Review – consultants not taking the exam may leave.</b>		
3:30pm	<b>Exam</b>		

## INSTRUCTORS

### Neal Beasley, ASLA, ISA Certified Arborist

Neal is a Landscape Architect and Certified Arborist with over 25 years of experience in the fields of Horticulture, Arboriculture, Irrigation, Landscape Construction and Public Gardening. Neal studied horticulture at N. C. State University and was formerly the Manager of Horticulture at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. As an Arborist, he assesses trees during the site analysis to best determine protection strategies or removal. Neal is also on the team of the Timmons Group in Richmond. Neal is the co-author of “Recycling Urban Stormwater: 1050K Street, NW Washington, DC” 2007.

### Laurie Fox, Ph.D.

Laurie Fox is a faculty member in the Horticulture department at Virginia Tech and is based at the Hampton Roads Agricultural Research & Extension Center in Virginia Beach, VA where she has extension and research responsibilities. She received her BS & MS degrees in Horticulture from North Carolina State University, with an emphasis on landscape design, ornamental plant production, and weed science, and her Ph.D. from Wageningen University, The Netherlands. Laurie is an author and the publisher of *Best Plants for Hampton Roads - A Landscape and Garden Companion*.

### Peggy Singlemann

Peggy Singlemann is nationally known as one of the foremost gardening experts. Her experience in the field is exceeded only by her infectious enthusiasm in sharing knowledge of best practices. She is a familiar figure as the longtime host and co-producer of Virginia’s only TV show, *Virginia Home Grown*, on Virginia Public Media/PBS. Peggy is also prominent in this field for her transformative role renewing and overseeing the garden and grounds of the historic estate Maymont in Richmond.

She holds professional certifications as an arborist, horticulturist, and landscape designer and has greatly expanded knowledge in the gardening/landscape design fields through her national and regional speaking engagements, contributions to publications, and consulting work via her business, RVA Gardener LLC. In 2022, the Virginia General Assembly presented a commendation to Peggy for her outstanding guidance, restoration, and preservation of Maymont’s gardens, grounds, and arboretum over 38 years of service.

**David Pippin**

David graduated from Virginia Tech in 1983 with a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Education. Prior to founding David Pippin, Inc. in 2000, he became known for his knowledge and creative talents in a variety of horticultural and education venues in the Richmond area. In addition to running David Pippin, Inc. he is an adjunct professor in the Hort. Dept, at Reynolds Community College as well as a facilitator and consultant for Virginia Agriculture in the classroom. He is a sought-after designer of inspired floral arrangements, a provider of garden-themed hands-on programs as well as an educator with a wide range of horticultural knowledge and experience.

**COURSE REGISTRATION**

**LANDSCAPE DESIGN SCHOOL**

**Course 2    Series 30    April 13, 14, 2026**

*Registration Deadline: March 15, 2026*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ VA \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ + 4 \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Garden Club: \_\_\_\_\_ District: \_\_\_\_\_

Check if Refreshing \_\_\_\_\_ Are you a Master Gardener? yes / no

Is your garden club a member of VFGC? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_No

PLEASE CHECK CORRECT BOX

- [ ] EXAM STUDENT \$100.00
- [ ] NON-EXAM STUDENT 100.00
- [ ] SINGLE DAY STUDENT – Monday \_\_\_ or Tuesday \_\_\_ 50.00

**TOTAL ENCLOSED** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Refunds can be given only for medical emergencies.*

*LDS will refund all but \$20 if cancellation (other than medical) is within five days of the first class.*

Make check payable: **VFGC Landscape Design School**

Mail to: LDS Registrar  
Claudia Cosby Phone: 804 794-7798  
3015 Mount Hill Drive  
Midlothian, VA 23113-3923 E-mail: [cosbych1205@gmail.com](mailto:cosbych1205@gmail.com)

LDS Chairman, Glenda Knowles  
Email: [ggknowles6@gmail.com](mailto:ggknowles6@gmail.com) Phone: 757 651-0401

### **From the VFGC Corresponding Secretary –**

Please let me know if you have an address, phone number and/or email address change.

Also, if you are not the current Garden Club President, please ask your replacement to provide his or her contact and email information and Club name to me with a copy to Claudia Cosby Email: [cosbych1205@gmail.com](mailto:cosbych1205@gmail.com) for the VFGC Yearbook 2025 - 2027

Thank you,

Dianna Busch  
VFGC Corresponding Secretary  
Email: [diannabusch@comcast.net](mailto:diannabusch@comcast.net)

### **THE IDEA EXCHANGE:**

While the Old Dominion Gardener (ODG) is published quarterly, **ROOTED** can be sent **monthly when ODG is not**. So please submit articles or information you want to share in **ROOTED** by the 8<sup>th</sup> of each month to [rootedvfgc@gmail.com](mailto:rootedvfgc@gmail.com). **Every club has some news they can share at least once in 2025!**

ODG deadlines are: August 1, November 1, February 1 and May 1. Refer to the back page of ODG for submission instructions.

For either publication, please submit photos as a pdf or in jpeg format. Please submit text in Word format.

**Happy Holidays to All!**

**Email: [rootedvfgc@gmail](mailto:rootedvfgc@gmail.com)**

