

Report of Awards Chairman
for VFGC Board April 20, 2026

Since the February Board Meeting, I have completed the certificates and organized them for presentation on the 21st. Rosettes arrived and additional dollars have been received for the blue ribbon winners. We are still short \$195. The zoom meetings are efficient, but do not allow attendees to easily hand me their checks. I am happy to accept a few more now. Our treasurer has cut checks totaling \$1,270 payable to clubs and districts. As always, when you receive an envelope with your certificates, if you have a check, please cash it at once, as our state fiscal year concludes the end of May. The youth have certificates with envelopes with cash in them – their names are on these envelopes and the money is for them.

You will see a different awards presentation tomorrow. Instead of a power point, I have created five display boards showcasing different types of awards. The items I used are actual award applications, or entries. One shows Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl posters– the state winners – second grade student Everly Treacy sponsored by Merrifields, and 5th grade student Maggie Cassandra, sponsored by Cedar Run. These clubs are to take the posters home with them after the meeting.

A second board features youth Poetry winners, a third is publications – with winners included so you can see what judges valued. The fourth and fifth are different categories of awards with top examples of creating text or stories for the application, formatting, and particularly of use of photos. There are tips and recommendations of what to include and what not to.

I hope you will take time to read what is offered and that it will help and inspire you to apply for awards this next year. Members do so much to benefit our communities; we need to showcase these efforts and share our methods with each other.

Thank you, Heidi Sage, VFGC Awards Chairman

April 21, 2026 Comments by Awards Chairman

Without a power point, I have a very brief introduction before President Sally Harrison presents the packets of awards to the district Presidents, who will distribute them to the clubs. Each envelope contains certificates with ribbons, point score sheets and a copy of the program plus a check where appropriate.

I wish to thank the six district awards chairmen, who fielded your questions and helped with the application process. They conducted the district level judging and are responsible for the district award certificates.

Blue Ridge District – Sharon Jones O’Connell, Piedmont District- Susie Rothenberg, Shenandoah District – Becky Yates, South Central District – Suzanne VandeGrift, Southwest District – Jane Sorensen and Tidewater District – Jessica O’Conner; and my vice-chairmen, Jeanne Bruton who assisted with organizing and the judging at the state level.

In lieu of the power point, I was asked to create display boards to showcase aspects of the awards program: One shows two of the best Smokey Bear, Woodsy Owl poster contest winners and the criteria used in judging as determined by the US Forest Service in conjunction with National Garden Clubs. I brought additional entries from past years to give you an idea of how creative our young artists can be. Merrifields and Cedar Run please take their posters home after the meeting is over.

The second display features winning youth poems with the NGC theme and guidelines. A third has actual examples of winning publications, like newsletters and brochures. Lake of the Woods, please take your publicity press book.

Two more displays highlight different categories of awards with appropriate point score rubrics. These are all top applications with examples and tips on how these clubs created their winning stories, and how to use photos to advantage.

On the tables you will find the programs with lists of the winners of the state awards and the South Atlantic Regional Awards. You will note for the first time, SAR recognized second and third place winners. At the end of the program, the clubs and districts that donated to the awards program are listed.

Please remember the fiscal year is the end of May, so deposit your check immediately upon receipt. Checks held too long may not be honored. Lost checks will not be replaced. Would the district presidents please come forward and receive their packets of awards.

Thank you, Heidi Sage, VFGC Awards Chairman