



September, 2025

www.towncountrygardenclub.com

Vol. 4, Issue 6

The Hidden Gem



Town & Country Garden Club of Libertyville
celebrates 73 years of serving the greater
Libertyville area with civic plantings, scholarship
awards, local charitable donations and our
Hidden Gems Garden Walk.

I have the end of summer garden blues – my annuals are leggy, my perennials are bashed down by rain, Creeping Charlie keeps popping up in my yellow looking lawn....and I'm tired of sweating.

It's easy to fall out of love with your garden this time of year, but I keep reminding myself to be patient. I know that September will bring the bloom of my autumn garden: the dusty pink of sedums, the golden yellow of "Fireworks" goldenrod and grasses swaying in the fall breezes. Whoever quoted "Fall is proof that endings can be beautiful" wisely knew there is still plenty of enjoyment to be had from our fall gardens.

As I walk my dog through downtown Libertyville, I always check out our Town & Country civic projects. Our containers, the Butterfly, Blue Star and Library gardens are still vibrant and beautiful thanks to all our maintenance and watering volunteers. I always feel proud of how much we enhance the beauty of Libertyville. Take time to walk by and view all our projects, especially as our containers transition to Fall after Labor Day.

Looking forward to our Fall programs,
Sue Hazelwood, President, TCGC

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District IX Flower Show: My Dream Vacation

On August 2nd to 3rd, a National Garden Clubs Standard Flower Show was presented by District IX, Garden Clubs of Illinois. There are two divisions in the show: horticulture and design. TCGC entered the Club competition which required seven related specimens from at least two members showcased per the theme of the Flower Show “My Dream Vacation”. Nine members contributed or helped design and arrange the nine specimens in a display called “Leafing on a Jet Plane” – Ann Baker, Risé Barkhoff, Annie Cochran, Sue Hazelwood, Liz Leonard, Laura LeVert, Janet Lichtenberger, Sandy Marquardt, and Sally Steele. The club entry won a third place award.

Seven members contributed 33 individual specimens in the horticulture division. Congratulations to Ann Baker, Risé Barkhoff, Annie Cochran, Laura Edwards, Donna Fischer, Sue Hazelwood, Sandy Marquardt, and Sally Steele. See some of entries on page three. Congratulations to all for participating – Town & Country Garden Club of Libertyville had a strong showing among the garden clubs.

On Friday morning, a spirit of camaraderie filled the room as members prepped the exhibits. Much effort went into correctly identifying the botanical names. Sue H. helped Ann B. select green beans for display, and Risé Barkhoff suggested that Ann snip her caladium leaf—an entry that later won a special award.



In the horticulture division, Ann Baker’s Marquee Moon Daylily won a first place in the class and a Merit Award, winning the section. Her Caladium leaf, ‘Allure’, won the class, section, and the Horticultural Award, best in the Horticulture division. A full list of the winners and their awards is located [HERE](#) on our website.

See photos on page 3

Flower Show Member Entries

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Sue Hazelwood/Butterfly Garden



Sandy Marquardt



Laura Edwards



Annie Cochran



Ann Baker



Ann Baker



Risé Barkhoff (2nd); Peek of Sally Steele's (1st)



Risé Barkhoff



Risé Barkhoff

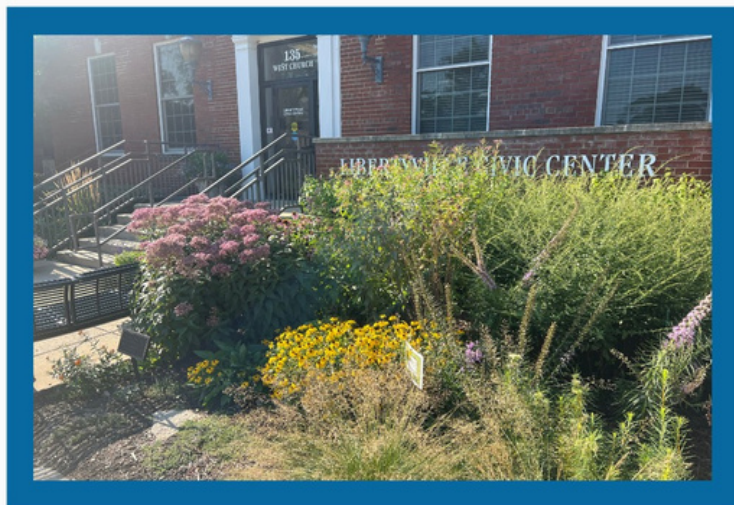
Special Recognition

A big thank you to the Libertyville Civic Center for recognizing the ribbons won by blooms from the Civic Center Butterfly Garden, installed and maintained by the Town & Country Garden Club of Libertyville. Center staff created and posted this flyer on their bulletin board and facebook page. The Joe Pye Weed is blushing at this very moment.

Congratulations & Thank You

Town & Country Garden Club

National Garden Club Flower Show



1st Place Butterfly Weed
1st Place Dwarf Joe Pye Weed
2nd Place Blazing Star



Horticulture

Forest Bathing: Bringing the Trend Home for Gardeners

by Ann Baker

Forest bathing, or shinrin-yoku, began in Japan as a way to reduce stress, improve health, and reconnect with nature by immersing oneself in the sights, sounds, and scents of a forest. Today, it's a growing wellness trend worldwide. Gardeners are the lucky ones – we don't have to leave home to enjoy this relaxing experience.

Forest bathing isn't exercise or plant study; it's mindful presence. You walk slowly through a forested area – like our own Independence Grove or Old School Forest Preserves – and let your senses take in the sounds, scents, textures, and sights unique to the treed landscape. Science shows this sensory engagement can lower blood pressure, boost mood, and strengthen immunity.

Gardeners can adopt forest bathing without needing to go down the Des Plaines River Trail. To do this, we need to take a deep breath, put down our tools, put away the to-do list, and step into the garden with no agenda at all. Sit beneath a tree or beside a favorite shrub. Focus on color variations in leaves, the movement of pollinators, the songs of the birds calling. Even small gardens can offer this meditative experience through layers of plantings, canopy trees, and quiet nooks.

Sadly, many gardeners find visitors get much more enjoyment out of their gardens than they do. Take time as summer winds down to approach your garden with forest-bathing mindfulness. Transform it from a space of tasks into a sanctuary – a place where tending plants also tends to your own well-being.



Conservation: Fast Fashion

by Anne Stranberg

This month's article is about what I learned from "Teen Vogue" which is exciting in and of itself – never, ever underestimate young people!

Fast fashion is a business model built on quickly and cheaply producing trendy clothing to meet consumer demand for the latest styles. These clothes are sold in popular, lower-cost stores and platforms like H&M, Forever 21, Temu, and Amazon. The fabric and construction are usually inexpensive but just good enough to capture the current "look" seen on social media.

The marketing strategy is simple: click on or view a promoted ad or influencer video, more ads appear. Soon you feel like you absolutely must have the item. One quick click later, it's purchased. But because it's a trendy piece, it often ends up in the give-away pile just as quickly. And there lies the problem.

Donating fast fashion doesn't always mean extending its life. Because of their short lifespan in both quality and style, many pieces never make it onto resale racks. Instead, they are discarded or shipped to secondhand markets in countries across Africa, South America, and Asia. These markets are overwhelmed—the sheer volume of clothing far exceeds local demand, leaving unsellable piles that end up in landfills or open dumps.

Some of the worst dump sites for fast fashion are in places like the Atacama Desert in Chile and landfills in Ghana, particularly around Accra's Kantamanto market. These sites receive mountains of discarded clothing, creating toxic waste, polluting soil and water, and overwhelming communities with unmanageable textile garbage.

Fast fashion may dominate the racks, but we don't have to follow its pace. By choosing timeless pieces, caring for what we own, buying secondhand, and supporting more sustainable options, we can turn fashion into a force for good—and wear our values with pride.

References: [What Really Happens to Your Used Clothing](#), [Teen Vogue](#)

Online Used clothing sellers:

- [ThredUp](#)
- [Poshmark](#)
- [Depop](#)



Meet a Member: Evelyn Olson

I grew up in central Minnesota as the daughter of a dairy farmer, on a farm that was homesteaded by my ancestors. I was raised with nature all around me and exposed to gardening at an early age via helping tend and harvest crops for the cattle and raising vegetables to feed my family. My first project to earn money was to raise sweet corn to sell to the local market. My first job was to detassel corn for a company growing corn for seed. I became interested in ornamental gardening after I became a homeowner and had a yard that I could enhance with flowering plants and shrubs. I gravitated to ornamental gardening because I associated vegetable gardening with the practicalities of farmwork. I nurtured this interest by taking classes in community education. A favorite class that I took was at the Chicago Botanical Garden to learn to identify 60 flowering shrubs.



I also grew up in a musical family and was encouraged to study music. Once my children were grown, I decided to pursue my interest in music by joining the adult program at the School of Rock. So just as with gardening, I surrounded myself with people with a shared passion, which lead to continued growth and opportunity. During the pandemic, I put my two passions together with summer concerts off of my deck, so people could enjoy live music in my garden, a labor of love for the past 27 years. I love the peace and solitude of the garden and the joy of seeing the garden come alive in the spring (my favorite season), and the way it soothes my soul.

I enjoy being part of our garden club, with members who share a passion with something I love, and to have the opportunity to continue learning. One of the things that attracted me to this club is the lecture or learning opportunity at every meeting.

My gardening tip is the proper timing to prune spring flowers shrubs such as a forsythia. I often notice forsythias in the spring with few flowers as the plant was pruned after it set its buds for next year. So the tip is to prune forsythias shortly after they finishing blooming in mid-spring, before mid-summer, to avoid cutting off next year's flower blooms.

My favorite flower is Hydrangea paniculata 'Pinky Winky.'



Perennial of the Month: Pinky Winky Hydrangea



Photo courtesy of Evelyn Olson

The Pinky Winky hydrangea is a standout shrub with tall, cone-shaped blooms that begin creamy white and gradually turn deep pink, creating a striking two-tone effect. Blooming from midsummer into fall, it adds long-lasting beauty to any landscape. Thriving in full sun to partial shade, it prefers moist, well-drained soil. Reaching 6–8 feet tall and wide, it's versatile for hedges, mixed borders, or as an eye-catching specimen plant, offering both elegance and seasonal interest. This panicle hydrangea needs pruning in late winter/early spring—cutting at the wrong time won't ruin it (blooms on new wood), but heavy pruning can reduce its size and shape.

Native of the Month: Anise Hyssop

Anise hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*), a North American native, boasts spikes of lavender-purple blooms from midsummer to fall, loved by bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds. Its fragrant leaves smell of licorice and can be used in teas or as garnish. Thriving in full sun and well-drained soil, it grows 2–4 feet tall, spreading moderately by seed. Generally trouble-free, it may suffer root rot in soggy sites. Outstanding cultivars include 'Blue Fortune' for long bloom, 'Golden Jubilee' with striking golden foliage, and 'Meant to Bee Queen Nectarine' with soft peach flowers and mauve calyxes.



Photo: [Prairie Moon Nurseries](#)

NGC/GCI News

Mark Your Calendars
2026 NGC Convention
 May 4, 2026 – May 6, 2026
 in
ST. LOUIS!

Perspectively Connected:
Central Region Convention

October 28 – 30
 Osthoff Resort
 Elkhart Lake, WI

For Registration
[CLICK HERE](#)

Flower Show School

Our last introduction to the four NGC schools covers Flower Show School – a comprehensive program that teaches all you need to know about judging, entering, competing, and chairing an NGC flower show. There are 4 courses each generally scheduled over a 2–3 day period, and each with a specific curriculum that includes horticulture, design, and flower show procedure (FSP). If you are considering becoming a flower show judge, planning to chair a flower show, or simply want to learn more, your first step is to attend Course I.

For more information, click [HERE](#)

Sowing Seeds of Organization: Google Drive & Workspace for Garden Clubs

Tired of digging through emails or juggling outdated versions of documents? Learn how to streamline your club's work using Google Drive and the Google Workspace tools (Docs, Sheets, Forms, and more)!



Ann Baker
 Guest Speaker

TIPS:

To get the most out of this session, it's best if your club or you as an individual have a Gmail address set up. We'll be using Google tools that work best when you're already signed in.

Bring Your Device!
 Bring a laptop or tablet to follow along and try out the tools during the session.



15 October 2025



9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.



Mount Prospect Public Library
 10 S Emerson St, Mt Prospect, IL

REGISTER



847-997-4464



anfbaker@gmail.com

Upcoming Events



June 27th, 2025
Mark your calendars!

Five exceptional gardens

Meet the gardeners and be inspired by unique designs and specimens.

Online tickets Available. Village Hall sales open 6/2.

Members receive tickets 6/3.

Farmer's Market sales June 4, 11, and 25th

Want to be a Master Gardener?

Applications are now open for the 2026 Lake County Master Gardener training. For more information, visit the Lake County Master Gardener [website](#) or contact Program Coordinator Alex Landberg at landberg@illinois.edu.

2025 Garden Learning Series

Session 6 – Grasses and Sedges for the Home Landscape
Presenter: Lake County Extension Master Gardeners

September 10 – Virtual
6:00 to 7:30 p.m.

To register, click

[HERE](#)

October Wild Ones National Webinar
with Doug Tallamy
Hosted by Wild Ones National
Thursday, October 16th, 2025
6:00 pm to 7:00 pm (Central Time)
Online/Virtual