



The Garden Path

Contents

President's Letter	2
March 2026 Meeting Minutes	3 – 4
Calendar Don't Forget! Happy Birthday!	5
April Program: Fragrance in the Garden	6
Don't Miss Out!	7
WTGC Field Trips.....	8
WTGC Annual Scholarship Breakfast.....	9
Members Judge Horticultural Exposition	10
Gallery March Meeting	11
Gallery 2026 Subaru Sakura Festival	12

Anne Skalka
President

Linda Reasoner
Vice President

Rick Lazarick
Treasurer

Karen Lewandowski
Recording Secretary

Victoria Rivera Cruz
Corresponding Secretary

Lorraine Persiani
Immediate Past President

Maggie Kramer
Club Parliamentarian

Jeff Tryon
Newsletter Editor

Lynn Grillo
Newsletter Design



President's Letter

Anne Skalka | April 2026



April arrives with the promise of renewal and the true beginning of the gardening season. After the quiet months of winter, it is exciting to see gardens awakening with new growth, early blooms, and the return of birds and pollinators. Spring reminds us why we garden — to nurture beauty, support nature, and share our love of the outdoors with others.

Our club has much to celebrate this season. We are proud of the continued dedication of our members and the work being done in our community gardens and projects. The spirit of cooperation and creativity that each of you brings truly helps our club flourish.

Thank you to everyone who helped make our recent *Scholarship Breakfast* a meaningful event. Your support helps us invest in the next generation and reflects our commitment to education and community growth.

As we move further into spring, we also continue our planning for our *250th Anniversary project*, an exciting opportunity for our club to contribute something lasting to the community. Your ideas and participation will help make this project something we can all be proud of. Don't forget to check out our *Spring Plant Sale*, and get your orders in. Our *Birmingham Park Garden* is a living testament to the spirit of community gardening.

April is also a wonderful time to welcome new members and encourage friends and neighbors to learn more about gardening and community gardening activities. Whether planting seeds, tending a garden bed, or supporting our new club initiatives, like our new children's programs, every effort helps cultivate a stronger community.

Thank you for your enthusiasm, your volunteer spirit, and the friendships that make the West Trenton Garden Club so special.

Wishing you a beautiful and blooming April.

Warmly,

Anne Skalka

WTGC President

March 2026 Meeting Minutes

Karen Lewandowski, Recording Secretary

President's Report

The West Trenton Garden Club meeting of March 2, 2026 was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by President Anne Skalka.

Secretary's Report

The minutes of the February 2, 2026 General Meeting were printed in the March Newsletter. Hearing no additions or corrections, the minutes were filed as reported.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Rick Lazarick reported a current balance of \$7,368.30. Activity included an income of \$22 from February's 50/50 and \$30 from dues, minus a \$200 expense from the February program stipend.

Corresponding Secretary

No report.

Birthdays

Anne Skalka acknowledged all members who have March birthdays.

Committee Reports

250th Anniversary

Linda Reasoner and Rick Lazarick met with the Mayor of Ewing, and Rick Lazarick reported that the July 3 festivities planned for Birmingham Park are coming together well and will focus on the historic significance of our park's location. We can use the yard at the "pink house" to put up tents that will house fun activities for kids, refreshments, information, etc. A 250-word essay contest will be held in the Ewing Schools, and participants will get a chance to read what they have written. We will reach out to local businesses for donations, and the West Trenton Firehouse is offering free parking in their lot. The club is also planning to be represented at the Festival in Trenton on July 4th

Pass the Can

Linda Reasoner reported that \$27.60 was taken in at the last meeting.

March 2026 Meeting Minutes

Karen Lewandowski, Recording Secretary

Scholarship Breakfast

Linda Reasoner reported that everything is ready for the breakfast to be held on Saturday, March 7, from 9-11 am at Hollowbrook. So far, 18 baskets have been donated for the raffle, and 44 members have purchased their tickets. The food committee has worked hard to prepare a great menu for the event.

Field Trips

Lynn Grillo reported that she has partnered with Jeff Tryon to put together four trips for the membership to enjoy this year. The first one takes place on Thursday, May 7 and is a self-guided tour of Sayen Gardens. It happens to coincide right before the Azalea Festival, so the park should be in pristine condition and in full bloom. The second trip will be to PHS Meadowbrook Farm, which will take place on Saturday, June 20, in Jenkintown, PA. It is a guided tour and free. The late summer trip will be to Federal Twist, a private garden in Stockton, and the early fall trip will be to Andalusia, a historic estate and gardens, in Bensalem, PA. The dates for those trips will be announced at a later date.

Spring Plant Sale

Elle Belcheff reported that she is getting the sale list and order form ready and will email to the membership soon. Prices will not be raised from last year. Volunteers will be needed for delivery and distribution, and she will also email the schedule of times to sign up. May 1 is the delivery date.

Announcements

- Anne Skalka thanked the Hospitality Committee for providing the evening's refreshments.
- The 50/50 winner of \$26 was announced.
- Anne Skalka brought in her garden book collection and offered them to members.
- It was announced that Helga Fontus won a ribbon at the Philadelphia Flower Show.
- Iliana Okum reminded the membership that they need to sign up for our own Flower Show being held in September.
- A plant exchange was held. Those who brought in a plant could take one home.
- Iliana announced the Rose Society's Rose Sale, and provided order forms.
- With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm. After refreshments were served, a program entitled "Our Favorite Garden Plants, Flowers and Trees" was held that featured several members presenting their favorite garden plants through pictures and personal stories.

Calendar | Don't Forget! | Happy Birthday!

April 2026

Mark Your Calendar

April 6 | 6:30 PM, WTGC Monthly Meeting

Program: "Fragrance in the Garden."
See Page 6 for details.

April 14–16 | Holly House

GCNJ Flower Show School IV

April 22 | Earth Day!

April 22 | 10:00 AM, Holly House

GCNJ Horticulture Study

April 25 | Arbor Day, 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

See page 18 in the Yearbook for details

April 27 - 10:00, Holly House

GCNJ State Board Meeting

April 27 | 7:00 PM, WTGC Board Meeting

Linda Reasoner's Home, 75 Lochatong Rd, Ewing

Don't Forget!

Flowers for Ewing Library

Diane Sanchez

Hospitality Committee

Linda Gerasimowicz (Chair), Susan Fair, Zofia Jablonski Feulner, Victoria Rivera-Cruz, Jeff Tryon, Jill Voorhees, and George Wallace

Newsletter Deadline

Submit all info to Jeff Tryon by the 15th of the month via email at:

wtgcnewsletter@gmail.com

Happy Birthday!

- Victoria Rivera-Cruz - April 4
- Ida Cahill - April 12
- Barbara Lear - April 13
- Mary Corrigan - April 21



Peace Lily for the Library, by Janis Stia
Photo by Diane Sanchez

April Program: Fragrance in the Garden

Steven Kristoph

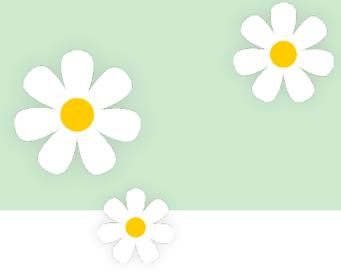
Back by popular demand, horticulturist and past favorite Steven Kristoph returns to present “Fragrance in the Garden,” a delightful exploration of scented plants and their powerful role in garden design. Steven will share the science behind plant fragrances, how they attract pollinators and influence human emotions, and guide us in choosing flowers and foliage to create a personal fragrant oasis. Attendees will learn how to thoughtfully incorporate these plants into their gardens to maximize impact through placement and seasonal timing. Prepare to be inspired to turn your own outdoor space into a sensory retreat.



Steve Kristoph is widely known for his encyclopedic knowledge of plant material. He received his Bachelors and Masters degrees in horticulture from Rutgers University, and he has been an adjunct instructor at Rutgers for more than 25 years. 🌿

Don't Miss Out!

Flower Sale Orders, Event Sign ups, Latest News



Spring is Here—Let's Get Growing Together!

There's a lot happening in the months ahead, and now is the time to jump in. Whether you enjoy planting, helping behind the scenes, or simply spending time with fellow members, there are plenty of ways to take part.

	April	May	June	July	August	Sept
Flower Sale	Order by April 10	Pick up May 1-2				
250 Event	Sign-up to help at 250 Event			250 Event July 3		
Field Trips		Sayen Gardens May 7	Meadowbrook June 20	Federal Twist July 11	Andalusia Aug 24	Field Trip details next page
Flower Show	Sign-up to exhibit or to help					Flower Show Sept 18-19

Flower Sale – Order Now!

Our annual Flower Sale is in full swing, and orders must be placed by April 10. This is a firm deadline, so be sure to get your order in on time. You can conveniently pay when you pick up your plants in early May.

Many thanks to *Elle Belcheff*, our Flower Sale Chair, for organizing this year's sale. | [Download Order Form](#)

250 Celebration – Join a Team

We are gearing up for our Birmingham Park 250 Celebration, and volunteers are welcome on several event sub-committees. This is a great way to contribute in a way that fits your interests:

- **Planning & Coordination** – *Linda Reasoner*
- **Entertainment** – *Lynn Grillo*
- **Hospitality** – *Monique Bonnier*
- **Publicity & Promotion** – *Ida Cahill*
- **Logistics & Procurement** – *George McElrath*
- **Financial Tracking & Grant** – *Rick Lazarick*

Reach out to any of the leads above to get involved. Every helping hand makes the event more special.

Field Trips – Save Your Spot

Our summer field trips are always a highlight—relaxed, enjoyable, and full of inspiration. Details are on the next page. Contact *Lynn Grillo* with questions or to sign up.

Flower Show – Looking Ahead

Our September Flower Show will be here before we know it. There are many ways to participate, from exhibiting to helping with setup and welcoming visitors.

Contact *Helga Fontus* to learn more or to get involved early.

Take a moment to look over the timeline above, mark your calendar, and choose where you'd like to join in. Your participation keeps our club active, welcoming, and fun for everyone.

We look forward to seeing you this season!



WTGC Field Trips

Experience beautiful gardens close to home!

We have an exciting line-up of field trips planned for 2026 — all less than 45 minutes from Ewing. Two are free, and two have a fee. We've included both weekday and weekend options so everyone has a chance to join us at least once.

It's a lovely mix. Each garden has its own personality — one is peaceful and park-like, one is full of practical ideas we can bring home, one feels artistic and creative, and one gives us that beautiful historic estate experience along the river. I think we're going to come away inspired — and simply enjoy spending time together in some very special places

*Sign up for our
Spring Field Trip to
Sayen Gardens on
Thursday, May 7!*

Email: lgrillo@mac.com
Call/Text: 609-954-2191

Spring | Sayen Gardens Thursday, May 7, 10:00 am

Sayen Gardens is a beautifully maintained 30-acre municipal garden featuring winding paths, ponds, gazebos, a wide collection of azaleas and rhododendrons in a peaceful park setting.

- Hamilton, NJ - 20 minutes from Ewing
- Free
- **Self-guided** | Easy to moderate

Early Summer | PHS Meadowbrook Farm Saturday, June 20

Meadowbrook Farm is a 25-acre public garden operated by PHS that showcases sustainable gardening practices, seasonal displays, native plantings, and creative design ideas for gardeners.

- Jenkintown - 45 minutes from Ewing
- Free
- **Guided Tour** | Moderate

Mid Summer | Federal Twist Saturday, July 11

Federal Twist is a private garden in Stockton that blends contemporary garden design with naturalistic planting, creating artistic, and layered landscapes that change through the seasons.

- Lamberville area - 30 minutes from Ewing
- \$15 pp fee
- **Guided Tour** | Moderate

Late Summer/Early Fall | Andalusia Gardens Thursday, Aug 24, 10:00 am

Andalusia Gardens is a historic riverside estate along the Delaware featuring formal gardens, an arboretum, and sweeping views, with ongoing horticultural restoration and preservation.

- Bensalem, PA area - 25 minutes from Ewing
- \$30 pp fee
- **Guided Tour** | Easy

WTGC Annual Scholarship Breakfast

A Resounding Success!

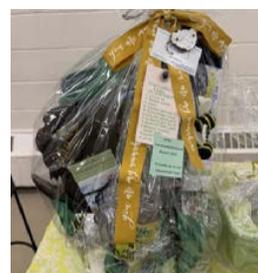
I am happy to announce we had another successful Scholarship breakfast this year.

105 people attended the breakfast, and we raised enough money to present up to \$2,000 in scholarships to qualified students.

I would like to thank the hospitality committee for providing a wonderful breakfast, it had something for everyone to enjoy. A special thanks goes out to all the members who donated gift baskets and items to make up the baskets. We had over 32 items (baskets and individual gifts) for the attendees to take a chance on.

This is a well-attended worthwhile project that goes to an excellent cause thank you to everyone who bought the tickets they were given and either attended, gave them to someone else to enjoy or donated the money to our cause.

Linda Reasoner, Project Chairwoman



WTGC Members Judge at NJ FFA Horticultural Exposition

By Barbara Lear

WTGC President, Anne Skalka, and member, Barbara Lear, recently acted as judges at the 49th New Jersey Future Farmers of America (FFA) Horticultural Exposition, held at Mercer County Community College on March 13.

Anne and Barbara worked alongside two additional judges to evaluate entries across several categories, including Magical Miniature Gardens, Flowering-Holiday arrangements, Cactus and Succulent Dish Gardens, and Potted Herb Gardens. They shared how much they enjoyed seeing the creativity and care that went into each entry. Even viewing just part of the exhibition gave a real sense of the students' talent—and as Barbara noted, the room “smelled heavenly” from all the fresh plant material.

They were especially impressed with the FFA student assistants, describing them as capable, enthusiastic, and a pleasure to work with throughout the day.

For a bit of perspective, the New Jersey FFA Association includes more than 3,300 student members across 38 chapters. This year's exposition brought together students from 22 chapters, with over 600 entries on display. In addition, 65 students competed in the Floriculture Career Development Event, and 48 participated in the Nursery and Landscape competition. The level of skill and creativity on display made a strong impression.

Anne and Barbara described the experience as both interesting and rewarding—one of those opportunities that reminds us how promising the future of horticulture really is.

Full results from the event are available here: https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/ag_ed/ffa/career/cderesults26.html



Barbara Lear (center right) and Anne Skalka (right)



Gallery | March Meeting

Our Favorite Garden Plants

Presented by WTGC Members Angela Proctor, Linda Gerasimowicz, Virginia (Ginny) Sari, Carol Bozarth, Zofia Jablonski Feulner, and George McElrath



View the presentation at: <https://wtgc-march-2026.lovable.app/>

WEST TRENTON GARDEN CLUB

Our Favorite *Garden Plants*

A showcase of beloved plants from our members



Gallery | 2026 Subaru Sakura Festival Philadelphia

March 28, 2026 | Photos by Jeff Tryon, Iliana Okum, Terry Palise, and Rita Obed

