

## TCG District IV Spring Convention - 2024

The annual Texas Garden Club Spring convention was held on March 27, 2024 at the Lone Star Community Center in Montgomery, Tx. Fourteen Lakewood Forest garden club members carpoled to the meeting.



The Woodlands Garden Club prepared the room and table decorations. What a fantastic job they did! The display was so colorful and imaginative we had to go back again and again to fully appreciate every detail.

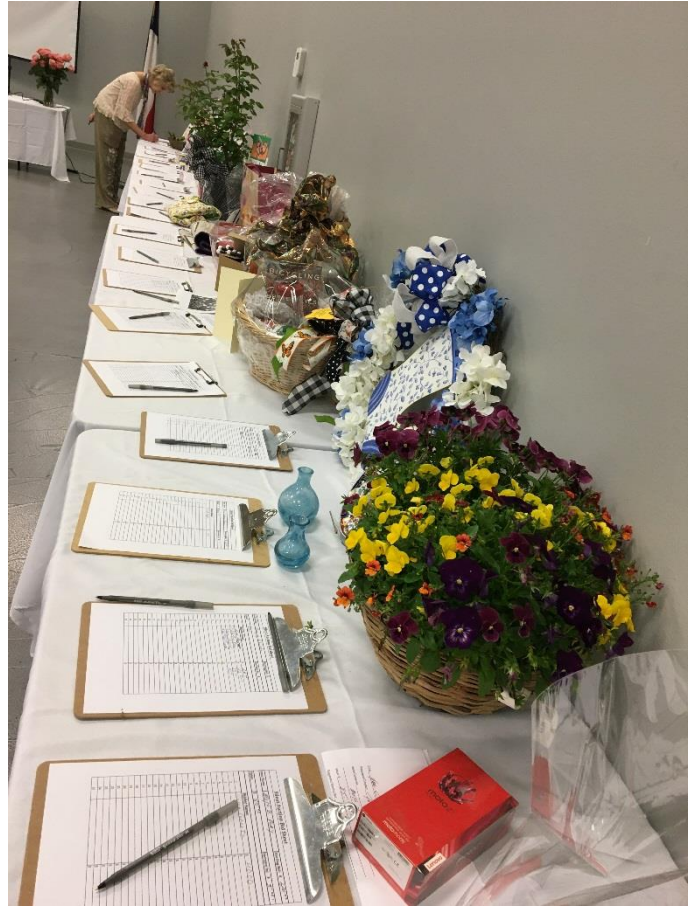


Every table had a stunning centerpiece and the individual place sets were brightly colored plates and napkins.





The Bridgeland Garden club created the program and collected items for the Silent Auction. The auction items were displayed on long tables along the walls of the large meeting room. Varied items were presented and ranged from the whimsical to the artistic, practical and useful.



Our club donated a gorgeous potted rose for the auction. The final winning bid brought in \$65.00.



Raffle items were collected and displayed by the Forest Cove Garden Club. Besides raffle tickets we could try our luck at the 50/50 game.



Another interesting display provided information about the Monarch butterfly. In a tent with milkweed plants several Monarch caterpillars could be observed feeding on the leaves while a few pupae hang from the stems and roof of the tent waiting for their metamorphosis.

Books on everything butterfly, especially Monarchs, for adults and children were available for purchase.





Several garden clubs contributed sweet treats that were served to us with a morning coffee.

Convention chair Jamie Pierce opened the meeting by welcoming us all. Jamie introduced the first speaker, Donna Anderson, from the New Century Garden Club.

Donna's presentation was on 'Milkweed and Monarchs' and she started with an overview of some spiritual and mystic legends surrounding the Monarch butterfly in various cultures.

In Native American beliefs, as in many other cultures, the Monarch is considered a symbol of transformation and rebirth. The appearance of a

Monarch butterfly is believed to be a sign that the spirit of a loved one is watching over and protecting the person who sees it. The annual migration of the Monarch to Mexico coincides with the 'Day of the Dead' holiday celebrated in Mexico. Folklore has it that the Monarch carries the souls of the deceased into the afterlife.

According to Aztec legend, the goddess of love and fertility, Xochiquetzal, was transformed into a butterfly to escape the unwanted advances of another God. Henceforth the butterfly became a symbol of transformation and freedom. Due to its metamorphosis, butterflies are symbolic for resurrection, spiritual evolution, hope and resilience.

Monarchs have evidently been around for more than 150,000 years and have survived various climates. They usually stay close to their birth place and do not venture out at night. A temperature of 85F degrees is needed to activate their flying muscles. They feed on nectar from pollinator plants.

Unfortunately, their numbers are declining more from year to year. Their decrease is due to many factors such as increased use of herbicides and pesticides, weather emergencies, fires and storm with destruction of their habitat, etc.

We gardeners can assist Monarchs by planting Milkweed which is the only plant on which Monarchs lay their eggs and the only plant eaten by the caterpillar.



Creating a chemical free environment for the Monarch in the garden, providing host and nectar plants, sheltered areas, rocks which the butterfly uses to warm their little bodies, are a few ways that can increase their chances of survival.

Donna went on to explain the metamorphosis of the Monarch, the stages from egg to caterpillar, pupae and finally the butterfly. Every butterfly uses different host plants and planting the right plant will attract the butterfly to your garden.

Monarchs favor only milkweed. Tropical milkweed, which grows year around, will confuse Monarchs and should be cut down in the Fall. Tropical milkweed also harbors a certain parasite (OE) which causes disabling birth defects in the developing



monarchs. Native milkweeds such as tuberosa, common, swamp, prairie and spider milkweeds are safer choices. In nature and our gardens, caterpillars are a delicacy for wasps and birds.

Monarchs migrate on the 'monarch highway' that stretches from Canada to Mexico. It is not known how Monarchs navigate the trip, if by solar rays or by magnetic forces, but they end up at the same spot in

Mexico where they spend the winter. In spring Monarchs mate and produce 3 generations of butterflies that live up to 5 weeks. The 4<sup>th</sup> generation lives 6-9 months. This generation makes the long migration.

After this informative and entertaining program, the business part of the convention commenced. Officers came to the microphone and gave their reports. We learned that District IV has 250 members. Our own Sheila Anderson is directing Area 5 within the district.



Sheila gave reports from the different garden club presidents in her area which stretches from Brenham to Lake Jackson. It was interesting to hear about the diverse activities of the different clubs.

After a catered lunch we were treated to a presentation by Kackie Dunwoody of the River Oaks Garden club. She is a very active member of her club and a judge at the annual 'Florescence' flower show.

Her topic was “Gardening and Flower Arranging”. She learned the principles of flower arranging by creating bouquets for family and friends. Appreciating the colors and textures of flowers in her own garden, she incorporates them into her creations. To make an elegant arrangement, she recommended to consider the colors of the room, or of the food and even the outside, then choose seasonal warm or cool colors to match. Plants with different texture make flowers stand out and add interest. The flower arrangement to be displayed should match the size of the room. Ms. Dunwoody then gave a demonstration by arranging flowers in a vase.



Next the slate of new officers was introduced (see District IV newsletter for details) and award winners were announced by Pam Randall. Seasoned members, 90 years of age or older, were honored. Our club members Marilyn Christopher, Carolyn Calvert and Zelma Mikolajczyk received this award. Our club further received awards for the presidents report, the year book and the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

The Garden Angels from every club were announced. LF garden club had elected Gabriele Klopp as their Garden Angel for the year. She received her certificate from district director Cindy Heckaman.



First time attendees received a rose from Cindy and were encouraged to come back next year.

New LF garden club members Debbie Jones and Jayne Wilson received the recognition.





The silent auction closed and winners of the Raffle and 50/50 pot were announced. Barbara Durr was the big winner as she cleaned up the 50/50 pot and won \$120.00 cash. Debbie Jones won books from the raffle.



After a group picture was taken, we made our way back home. We reflected on the friendly fellow gardeners we met, the knowledge we gained and the many new ideas that sparked our imagination.



COASTAL PRAIRIE COUNCIL of TEXAS GARDEN CLUBS, Inc.

Proudly presents this

*Certificate of Award to*

*LAKEWOOD FOREST GARDEN CLUB*

for 3rd PLACE Achievement

*TGC, Inc. President's Report*

for *Bronze Large Club*

on this day

*March 27, 2024*



*Cindy Heckaman*

Signed:

District IV Director

COASTAL PRAIRIE COUNCIL of TEXAS GARDEN CLUBS, Inc.

Proudly presents this

*Certificate of Award to*

*Lakewood Forest Garden Club*

for 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Achievement

*Yearbook*

for *Lrg Bronze Club*

on this day

*March 27, 2024*



*Cindy Heckaman*

Signed:

District IV Director



