



SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

(Arkansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma & Texas)

The Communicator

2024 VOL. 15— February 2024

Sarah McReynolds, Director 2023-2025





Message from Our SCR Director...
Plant America - Pollinate South Central



Hello to all the Members of the Best Region of National Garden Clubs,

Your SCR Director has been busy visiting clubs, regions and schools in the last month or so and am awaiting more invitations to clubs in our region.

I am seeing that our clubs are evolving and changing on many levels. Overall, this has been for the good. We are shrinking in clubs but seem to be growing slightly in numbers. Organizations do these changes in order to grow in quality and depth. I am seeing many friendships developing across state lines.

Our members are getting smarter too. Many are attending the schools and special classes like never before, part of this increase is to Zoom platforms and part of this is due to the quality of schools held in our region. I encourage everyone to take a class in a school and learn something, develop friendships and share your knowledge.

A good example is of this is, the members of Arkansas have such a good convention planned for their members that others from our region are going to the Arkansas Spring Convention and then staying for the SCR Convention. Such good programs and good fun have been planned for both conventions by the Arkansas members, that you might want to go to both.

As SCR Director I want all of you to know, the SCR Award night is going to be memorable. Many of you still have time to get a partnership going for our pollinators. Contact Gwen DeWitt who is still taking applications for the SCR "Pollinator Partnership Award" with cash prizes.

The NGC "Pollinator Garden Award" is still available from NGC and if you take a picture of your sign when you receive it and send it to either Linda Love our SCR Awards Chair or Gwen with "Pollinator Partnerships" because it is a sort of partnership with NGC, then they will give to me, so I can award you with a gift for your newly designated garden. And put a quick pollinator herb garden in containers and send to Sherie Clarkson for cash awards.

Directors Message Continued from Page 2.

And don't forget to buy pollinator pins, scarves, ties and seed balls from Heather White, our pollinator guru of sales. The money from these gifts will allow each state to award their scholarship winner, with a \$1000 scholarship. We are excited to help our youth in such a special way this year. And plan to have more gifts available for you to purchase, so Christine Longthorp our SCR Scholarship Awards Chair can give these awards next year as well.

And remember to invite me to your clubs, conventions and schools. I am a member of the Oklahoma Gladiola Cushings Garden Club in Oklahoma so I can ZOOM and visit Oklahoma.

Looking forward to seeing all of you on my travels and please plan to attend the SCR Convention in Little Rock. I hear you will get a little rock of your own! Or consider coming early for part if not all of the Arkansas Convention.

Fondly, Sarah McReynolds



US Native Wildflower Seed Bombs for Pollinators Regional Wildflower Mix Seed Balls for Gardening (Southwest)... available from Heather White Chairman

“Pollinating South-Central Region Project for Scholarships”
Arkansas, New Mexico,
Oklahoma and Texas Specific
Seedballs.

- **ATTRACTIVE US NATIVE PERENNIALS & ANNUALS:** Vibrant flowers selected for beauty, durability, and pollinator value.
- **POLLINATOR FRIENDLY:** Great for attracting bees, butterflies (includes regionally native milkweed), and hummingbirds; Non-GMO, pesticide and herbicide free
- **SCIENTIFICALLY DEVELOPED SOIL:** Blend of sustainably sourced compost and iron rich clay
- **EFFORTLESS & ENJOYABLE GARDENING:** Perfect for new gardeners, kids, and seniors; use for native wildflower gardens, backyard habitats, and pollinator support
- **SATISFACTION GUARANTEED:** Contains multiple seeds per ball and the essential nutrients and microbes for optimal germination and growth.



SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

(Arkansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma & Texas)

SCR DIRECTOR'S PROJECT

POLLINATOR PARTNERSHIPS

Date of Application: _____ State Garden Club _____

Applicant (Club Name): _____

Contact (Individual Representing Club): _____

Email: _____ Phone#: _____

Divisions:

Partnering with Youth _____ Partnering with Adults _____

Partnering with Businesses _____ Cities _____ Communities _____

Power Companies _____ Other _____

ATTACHE A DISCRPTION OF THE PARTNERSHIP EXPLAINING HOW IT WORKS.

(You do the work they provide the money etc.)

INCLUDE DETAILS OF HOW THIS WILL POLLINATE SCR.

INCLUDE THREE PHOTOS.

SCR DIRECTOR'S PROJECT

POLLINATOR PARTNERSHIPS

Our theme “Plant America – Pollinating South Central” is the basis of the Director’s project. Our goal is to create opportunities in the four states to increase pollinators through partnerships to promote, to educate, to plant, and through conservation.

A CERTIFICATE AND PRIZE AWARDED –

\$100 – Will be presented to Club sponsoring the best Pollinator Partnership in Youth, in Adult’s and in Business.

\$50 – For second place

Resources include Pollinator Action Team [www.pollinator.org/take action](http://www.pollinator.org/take-action), Bee Smart School Garden Kit www.pollinator.org/bee-smart, and www.pollinator.org/guides.

WHO MAY APPLY: Any individual garden club that is a member of NGC Inc., and South Central Region. One project per garden club may be submitted.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Chairman must receive on or before **December 1, 2024, via email.**

HOW TO APPLY: The application will be on the SCR website, in “The Communicator” and available through the State Presidents.

PROGRAM CRITERIA: Involving and educating the public in our communities on the critical issues about pollinators and the devastating losses that can have a major impact on our food sources. The total involvement and participation by club members and the community. A one-page project including photos must be submitted to the Chair. Report not to exceed **3 pages.**

QUESTIONS: Gwen DeWitt, Chairman of the Director’s Project “Pollinator Partnerships”, 178 Fairway Rdg., Beeville, Texas 78102

Phone: (361) 813-9936

Email: dewitt462002@yahoo.com

South Central Region
“PLANT AMERICA -
PLANT POLLINATORS.”
SCR DIRECTOR SPECIAL AWARD



In addition to Pollinator Partnerships and in support of the NGC Pollinator project, our SCR Director will give a special pin and award at the Convention in Little Rock for each member that gets their yard certified as a Pollinator Garden.

The NGC program has members applying to have their yard certified by National. After the member’s garden is certified, they are given the opportunity to purchase their own sign.

PROGRAM CRITERIA:

To support the NGC Plant America – Plant Pollinators project by increasing habitat for pollinators one garden at a time. To increase the involvement and participation of club members. A one-page project including photos must be submitted to the Chair. Each member that completes the NGC project will send a picture of their garden, certificates, and the sign to the Chair. Report not to exceed **1 page**.

AWARD: Each member that completes this process will be presented with a pin and a special award at the SCR Convention in Little Rock.

QUESTIONS: Gwen DeWitt, Chairman of the Director’s Project “Pollinator Partnerships”, 178 Fairway Rdg., Beeville, Texas 78102

Phone: (361) 813-9936 **Email:** dewitt462002@yahoo.com



Message from Arkansas 2023-2025 President, Pam Ellis

My daffodils are up and the days are getting longer; spring is just around the corner. I've been looking at my beds trying to see what is peaking through. As I write this, the temperature is 68° but this is Arkansas and I know that we will have a few more freezing days left, so I am not cleaning up the garden yet yet to allow those pollinators and predators to finish their winter naps. Punxsutawney Phil may know about spring in Pennsylvania, but I don't think he has ever been to Arkansas. We still need to exercise restraint; we're not quite there yet.

In March, Rose Knight and her faithful crew will be holding Course 2 for Flower Show School at the Four Points by Sheraton on March 4-7. The subjects to be studied are Flower Show Procedure (learning how your club can put on a flower show), Sansevieria and Daffodils, and Table Designs, both functional and exhibition. These classes are taught by world class designers that are coming to Arkansas from various parts of the United States. This is a rare opportunity to study floral design with designers of this caliber.

Arkansas is proud to host the SCR Convention this year at the Four Points by Sheraton in Little Rock April 24th and 25th, immediately after the AFGC Convention. Nancy Rana and Rose Knight have done a wonderful job planning this and it is going to be the party of the year. We will be traveling the world without leaving Little Rock. We will start on a Caribbean island with the "On Island Time" theme. Hostesses will greet you with a warm smile and a lei. Dinner will be a delicious buffet featuring Caribbean foods. Janice Hamlin, retired NGC Design Instructor will be our guest speaker and immediately following her presentation of floral designs, there will be a fundraiser party benefiting our flower show schools. Theme dress is encouraged but not required and there will be adult beverages and activities.

Tuesday, April 23rd, will be the AFGC business meeting. An Italian buffet will be served to compliment our theme of "That's Amore". Our speaker for lunch will be Heather Runyan, Park Interpreter from Logoly State Park talking about native plants. Following the business meeting, Janice Hamlin will conduct a workshop. That evening the theme

Continued from Previous Page:

will be “Denim and Pearls with AFGC members designing the Western themed center-pieces and competing for a coveted “People’s Choice Award’. A BBQ buffet will be served and members may participate in activities such as line dancing. So come on over, ya’ll and show off your denim and pearls.

Wednesday, April 24 we will view the garden and have lunch at the Edgemont House, an historic Spanish Colonial Revival style home lovingly restored by owner Chris Olsen who will host the event. Chris is an award winning and nationally recognized home and garden guru. Following the executive board meetings, Janice Hamlin will conduct a workshop and our own SCR Director, Sarah McReynolds will present a session on Pollinator Punch! Doesn’t that sound interesting? That evening we will be transported to the French Quarter to enjoy the flavors of New Orleans cuisine at our evening event called “The Big Easy” and Janice Hamlin will present part two of her exciting demonstration on Floral Design.

Thursday, April 25, will be the SCR Business meeting and we will be traveling to “South of the Border” featuring a Mexican buffet for lunch. The luncheon speaker will be Dr. Victor Ford, Associate Vice President – Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service. That evening we will honor our director and state presidents with a reception before we arrive at the last destination on our journey. With the theme, “Under the Eiffel Tower”, members and guests will dine on Chicken Cordon Bleu. The featured speaker will be Christopher Norwood, Vice President of Tipton & Hurst Florist. He is an outstanding designer and we are fortunate to have him share his talent with us. Many of you have viewed the “Happies” that he started during the covid outbreak. If you haven’t check them out at the Tipton & Hurst website.

The most important ingredient for a successful convention, no matter how exciting the plan, is **YOU!** Please make plans to attend both conventions and make our “Spring Fling” in Little Rock an outrageous success! We want it to be over the top and only you can make it happen! See you in Little Rock in April!

Pam Ellis, Arkansas President



Message from New Mexico 2023-2025 President, Debra Sorrell

“Grow Through What You Go Through”

Winter is an unusual mixed bag of weather possibilities in New Mexico. We have had rain, which is a blessing for all of us who have suffered from drought. And, the higher elevations have been getting snow which is essential for the runoff in the spring. Every state has something to talk about in regard to their particular kind of weather phenomenon. We have very few notable events.....no tornados, hurricanes, earthquakes, etc. But, one interesting fact about our weather, year round, is different from the other states in our region. The diurnal (daily) temperature range! The difference between the high temperature and the low temperature in a 24 hour day averages from 20-30 degrees. Yesterday in Albuquerque (January 31), the high temperature was 60 degrees and the low was 35. Those temperature fluctuations make selecting plants for the garden tricky. Will it be too hot in the day? Too cold at night? We have an impressive group of gardeners that manage to figure out what to grow in an environment that has added this little EXTRA factor to consider. Ah, New Mexico!! It's no wonder we are called the Land of Enchantment.

The clubs around the state had some wonderful Christmas celebrations and I was very lucky to be able to attend many of them. In addition to wonderful food, funny gift “exchanges” (with thievery involved) and great time with friends, our clubs are all very generous around their communities. I saw toiletry collections for the homeless, toothbrush and related supplies for a dental clinic, houseplants for women starting out in their own homes and many other thoughtful projects for the holidays.

New Mexico Judges Council hosted Flower Show School III in Albuquerque on January 13, 20 and 21, 2024. We are excited to be training several new judges who have all passed in to their student exhibitor phase of school. Soon they will be on the floor of a flower show, student judging, and we couldn't be more proud of them! Thank you NMJC and Council President, Suzy Andrego, for your dedication and support that helps to keep our judges numbers growing.

Now that the seed catalogs are beginning to arrive in the mail and garden plans are being made, NMGC members are starting to dream of warmer, longer days! That itch to get outside, brave the spring winds and plant something is growing stronger! I have plans to be traveling to clubs around the state in the next few weeks.....attending meetings, giving programs and getting to spend time with our diverse members. There is so much to learn and share with each other! It is a great pleasure to have my perspective broadened by the many differences in our clubs (and the many more similarities!) so that I can try to serve each and every member well.

Debra Sorrell, NMGC President



Message from Oklahoma 2023-2025 President, Carolyn McCabe

“Green Grows the Garden— Plant OK”

Congratulations go to the members of the Lakeside Garden Club in Ketchum, Oklahoma, a member of the Northeast District, for being a recipient of the Plant America Community Project Grant this year. The Lakeside GC consists of approximately 36 members, five Honorary members, and 14 Oklahoma Garden Clubs Life Members. Way to go Lakeside!

I attended the Oklahoma Garden Club’s 44th Wildflower Workshop, “Wild About Wildflowers”, on Saturday, October 28, 2023 on the Northeastern State University, Broken Arrow campus hosted by the Northeast District. There were 46 participants and along with interesting talks and activities, there was a very successful interactive workshop included.

To keep the members of Northeast District informed the president, Brenda Michael-Haggard, sends an email to all garden club members in the District with a What’s Up NED? memo on a bi-weekly basis. This e-memo includes a calendar of events of activities of all the NED clubs with open invitation to participate.

Included is ‘need to know’ information from Oklahoma Garden Clubs, South Central Region of Garden Clubs and the National Garden Club. What’s Up NED? also promotes the NGC Schools encouraging members to become consultants in the four (4) schools.

The 2024 Oklahoma State Convention is being hosted by the Northwest District in Guymon, Oklahoma, on April 12th and 13th which is a huge challenge. The District consists of only 2 clubs, Delphinium and Rose with an approximate total membership of 21 seriously committed gardeners. There will be a meet and greet on Friday evening April 11th, with the meetings (including breakfast, lunch and dinner) on Saturday April 12th.

In December, I attended the South Central District fall convention hosted by the Shawnee Rose club. The convention was well attended and the speaker, a representative from the Shawnee City Council, gave an interesting talk about the attractions and attributes of Shawnee including being the hometown of actor Brad Pitt. There was a lot of oohing and aweing going on!

A tornado hit the town of Shawnee last spring and damaged the park under the care of the Rose Club and during the summer, the club members worked to get the park back to normal.

The Southwest District has a goal to make new friends and ignite new initiatives by inviting clubs from other Districts to activities such as field trips and workshops as a way

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Message from Texas
2023-2025 President,
Lee Taylor

“Choose your path and make a difference “

As they say, time really flies when you are having fun!!! Things have really been happening at whirlwind speed... conventions, schools, and general meetings.

This September was a lucky time for me because I was able to attend a Blue Star Memorial Flower Bed dedication in Mason, Texas. All the plants were Texas natives. The ceremony was inspiring and made each of us so very proud of our heritage and all the armed forces protecting us daily. October 26 found me in Devine, Texas, speaking to the Devine Garden Club on plant propagation. On November 26, I spoke to the Cotulla Garden Club on plant propagation and container gardening. What a wonderful time sharing knowledge and making new friends.

As mentioned in my last newsletter, one of my goals is supporting our four National Garden Club Schools. I attended Gardening School in San Antonio this past August. Dr. Joe Novak is the best! It is always a treat to attend his lectures...continuing to learn something new no matter how many times you attend. Another Gardening course is lined up for February 5-6, which I am also planning to attend. In January, another Hondo Garden Club member and I attended the Environmental School being held at Fort Parker State Park in Mejia, Texas. What a fabulous time. It was really cold (temps in the teens)...but we still managed to have a successful scavenger hunt outside finding items pertaining to the course. As cold as it was, it was really beautiful being out in nature. We did manage to avoid the poison ivy. February 12-13 will be a trip to College Station, Texas, to attend Landscape Design School which is always so very interesting. It is being held at the beautiful George H. W. Bush Library on campus. Flower Show School II is being held January 29-February 1 in Houston, Texas, this year. I am so very proud of our four National Garden Club schools and their accomplishments within our State.

Our Fall Board Meeting was held at Headquarters in Fort Worth, Texas, in October. Lots of business was discussed and approved which will receive final blessings and approval by membership at the general assembly meeting during the Spring Convention this year in Abilene, Texas, April 8-12. We are looking forward to a wonderful gathering. Our special guest, HONDO, the hummingbird, will again be visiting and available for photo

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South Central Region's Annual Convention 2024 "Spring Fling"

Arkansas Federation of Garden Clubs Pulaski District is honored to host the upcoming SCR Convention on April 24-25, 2024. The event will be held at the Four Points by Sheraton conveniently located at 925 S University Avenue in the midtown area of Little Rock. Shuttle service from the airport to the hotel is provided. Prior to this event is the annual AFGC Convention on April 22-23. We welcome you to attend it as well.



AFGC CONVENTION

Monday, April 22, 2024, we will begin our journey by traveling to the islands. "On Island Time" is the theme. Hostesses will greet you with a warm smile and a lei. Attendees will enjoy a delicious buffet featuring Caribbean foods. Janice Hamlin, retired NGC Design Instructor, will be the guest speaker. Immediately following her presentation of floral designs, there will be an "On Island Time" fundraiser party benefiting our flower show schools. We encourage attendees to dress to fit the theme and enjoy the adult beverages and activities!

Tuesday, April 23, 2024, will be the AFGC business meeting. An Italian buffet will be served to compliment our theme of "That's Amore!" Heather Runyan, Park Interpreter from Logoly State Park, will be speaking to us about native plants. Following the business meeting, Janice Hamlin will conduct a workshop.

The evening event is "Denim and Pearls." Members are designing the



Western themed cen-

terpieces and competing for a coveted "People's Choice Award." A BBQ buffet will be served, and members may participate in activities such as line dancing. It will be fun to see everyone dressed in their denim and pearls!



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South Central Region's Annual Convention 2024 "Spring Fling"

SCR CONVENTION

Wednesday,
we will view
and have
Edgemont



April 24, 2024,
the gardens
lunch at the
House, a

historic Spanish Colonial Revival style home lovingly restored by owner, Chris Olsen who will host the event. Chris is an award winning and nationally recognized home and garden guru. Following the executive board meetings, Janice Hamlin will conduct a workshop and our own SCR Director, Sarah McReynolds, will present a session on Pollinator Punch! Doesn't that sound delicious! That evening we will be transported to the French Quarter to enjoy the flavors of New Orleans cuisine at our evening event called "The Big Easy." Janice Hamlin will present part two of her exciting demonstration on floral design.



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Thursday, April 25, 2024, will be the SCR Business meeting and we will be traveling "South of the Border" featuring a Mexican buffet for lunch. The luncheon speaker will be Dr. Victor Ford, Associate Vice President - Agriculture and Natural Resources, University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service.



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Thursday evening will be a reception honoring our director and president before we arrive at the last destination on our journey. With the theme, “Under the Eiffel Tower,” members and guests will dine on Chicken Cordon Bleu. The featured speaker is Christopher Norwood, Vice President of Tipton & Hurst Florist. Chris began his career in the industry at the age of fourteen. He is an outstanding designer, and we are fortunate to have him share his talent with us. Many of you have viewed the “Happies” that he started during the covid outbreak. If you haven’t, check them out at the Tipton & Hurst website.



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The most important ingredient for a successful convention, no matter how exciting the plan, is YOU! Please make plans to attend both conventions and make our “Spring Fling” in Little Rock an outrageous success! We want it to be over the top and only you can make that happen! See you in Little Rock in April 2024! <https://www.marriott.com/event-reservations/reservation-link.mi?>

SPECIAL NOTICE:

**Registration for the South Central Region
Convention, in Little Rock, April 24-25, 2024 is**

**ATTACHED to the Email with this February issue of
the Communicator!**

Continued from Oklahoma State President article on Page 10.

to increase involvement and support for special projects. Additionally, a Membership luncheon was hosted by the Walter's Dahlia Club Walters, Oklahoma in October for the women in town who contribute time and support for the club. I attended as well as members from the Marlow Patio Club and the Grandfield Rose club.

All of our District and club members are looking forward to a busy year of gardening and continuing camaraderie and I'm looking forward to attending the AFGC and SCR conventions in Little Rock, Arkansas in April and the NGC convention in Westminster, Colorado in June.

Carolyn McCabe—OGC President

Continued from Texas State President article on Page 11.

ops. What a doll he is!! Ruby throat and all.

One of our Ways and Means projects is hummingbird pins in various colors as well as earrings and hummingbird suncatchers. This project has been a terrific success. It also fits right in with the Pollinator theme of our South Central Region Director. Hummingbirds are great little pollinators. I signed up for my National Garden Clubs Pollinator Gardens Certification. Go to the NGC Website and sign up for yours, too!!

The National Garden Club Fall Board Meeting was held this year by ZOOM and reservations have been made to attend the Spring Convention being held in Denver, Colorado this June. I will be attending the South Central Region Convention in Little Rock, Arkansas in April. Hope to see lots of friends in both locations. It is so true, I must say, that the "garden club experience" has greatly expanded my friendship base as well as my knowledge base...meeting so many wonderful people and sharing so many experiences with each other is a real plus!!

A note of thanks to my entire staff, board, and all Texas Garden Club members for all their help, dedication, and support as we navigate through this 2023-2025 administration.

Lee Taylor, Texas Garden Clubs President



Explore Little Rock

For those who will be attending the SCR Convention on April 23-23, 2024, we would like to share some places you might like to see while you are visiting our wonderful state.

Arkansas State Capitol Building – Designed in the Neo-classical style and built over a century ago as a replica of the US Capitol. It features Arkansas granite, six bronze doors, and three chandeliers crafted by Tiffany’s of New York.

William J. Clinton Presidential Library and Museum - Located in the River Market District at 1200 Presidential Clinton Ave.

William E. 'Bill' Clark Presidential Park Wetlands - Adjacent to the library, is a 13-acre wetland located along the banks of the Arkansas River.

Little Rock Zoo - 1 Zoo Dr. is the location of the 30+ acre park conveniently located in the heart of the city. The zoo is one of the oldest attractions and was originally built in 1926.

Quapaw Quarter – This district is home to several historic and beautifully restored private homes or businesses. Most were built between 1890-1930, but one was built in 1870.

Museums – Little Rock hosts several museums. The Historic Arkansas Museum - 200 E 3rd St., Old State House Museum - 300 W. Markham, Esse Purse Museum, Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts, Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum to name a few.

The Old Mill – Visit the mill featured in the movie, ‘Gone with The Wind’, at 3800 Lakeshore Dr. North Little Rock.

Park Avenue (Plaza) Mall and Midtowne Little Rock Shopping Center – Those wishing to indulge in a little shopping can visit these centers which are conveniently located near the hotel at 207 N University Ave.

Search the link - Little Rock Things to Do and Attractions - Arkansas Vacation Ideas - Visit LR for more attractions and ideas.

SCR Youth Activities Coordinator , Linda Jean Brown

Where has the time gone? One minute we are Thankful for all our blessings, the next minute Christmas music is heard in all the stores. Now, here we are Valentine's Day is just around the corner.

South Central Region has a great group of Garden Clubs who support the youth.

SCR Youth Chairmen are in the process of receiving the youth contests from the four State Youth Awards Chairmen. I believe this year will prove to be a very rewarding one as we give out cash prizes to the first place winners in the appropriate grade levels. This is an exciting event and I always look forward to seeing what our children are thinking and doing as we continue to educate them for their responsibilities in regards to our environment.

We always look forward to meeting other garden club members attending conventions as they proudly receive the certificates and prize money that their youth competed in. They will be handed out during the SCR Spring Convention in Little Rock, AR at the end of April, 2024.

I hope your excitement working with our youth continues to grow year by year. Each year seems to be racing by faster and faster. We need to stay on top of our connection with the youth so they will continue to learn the important lessons from the past. South Central Region has a vibrant garden club history which will continue for many years to come as long as we stay connected to our schools interacting with youth garden clubs. As garden club members in our region we need to continue with the drive and determination to educate our youth on the importance of keeping our environment safe and clean.

Some of the ways we can stay connected is working with our National, SCR, State, District levels. We are able to reach some of our youth through Youth Contests such as: The Bird Art Work, Smokey Bear/Woodsy Owl Posters, Poetry, and Recycle/ Sculpture.

By reaching out to our youth one never knows the impact it will have in their young lives or how they will touch our lives. Just by letting these kids know we care about them and by visiting their schools to teach them gardening is such a rewarding time to spend with this group of eager minds. ***Our youth...Our future***



What makes a superior flower show? *By Pam Grotts*

You know the ones you see published in your National Gardener in odd years or is available online in the members section of the National Gardener website?

A superior flower show is one that has been vetted and the forms secured from the State Awards Chairman. This show must be a Standard, Small Standard, or Specialty Flower Show as defined in the NGC Handbook for Flower Shows.

The Judges of the Flower Show will be looking for superiority in the following arenas:

- Uniformity – the Schedule and the Show are uniform.
- Staging – follows the theme of the show, showcasing the exhibits as the stars.
- Divisions – the required number of divisions are present as part of the show.
- Exhibits – the number of entries per class satisfies the requirements for the type of show and the quality of the exhibits should draw the judges and their curiosity in.
- Signage – the signage follows the theme, is informative, well placed, and easy to read.
- The layout is clean, walkways are well marked leading the viewer through all divisions.
- Additional Exhibits – any additional exhibits should add interest and not detract from the show's required exhibits.
- The Show should be neat, clean, and complete by the time the panel starts to judge.

Who judges a flower show for an Achievement Award?

The judges are selected from the judging pool of the show by the State Awards Chairman. These three judges can be on separate judging panels so that they evaluate the show on their own before coming together to determine the score for the show. If the score is 95 or above, the show is eligible for consideration for the Flower Show Achievement Award.

Once the determination has been made that your show is eligible for the award, the judges notify the Chairman of the Show that your show is eligible. The judges will then complete their evaluations and return them to the State Awards Chairman. The sponsoring club will prepare a book of evidence, including those sealed evaluations as part of the award submission for consideration.

That's it! Basically, you put on a well-planned, well organized, and full flower show after you secure the forms from your State Awards Chairman. After that – it is all about an informative book of evidence.

Stay Tuned – Books of Evidence are for next time!

WAYS TO ENCOURAGE MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN FLOWER SHOWS

By Dana Serafine

Most clubs have mentors for their members who give them the rules of the flower show. They have workshops to work on their individual designs.

Two clubs I know of Plano Garden Club in Texas and The Oklahoma Garden Club have classes throughout the year to practice or learn a specific design such as Creative line, Mass, Angular and so on.

The Oklahoma group led by Judy Grotts meets several Wednesdays in the months preceding their Flower Show. The newer members and anyone else who is interested practice the Designs which will be in the Show. This gives the members a great idea as to what constitutes a complete design and how to arrange the components. They have increased their membership by leaps and bounds. Their flower shows, show the results the attention paid to the basics of design do for the quality of the show.



Plano Garden Club has had Creative Designers for many years. They meet 5 times a year and qualified Judges lead the program for that day. After the last SCR Convention, it was decided to do one class on angular designs. Members were encouraged to make their own angular components to bring and supplies were also provided at the meeting for those members who might not have brought one. To the delight of the leader, the class mostly brought their own components to the class, most of the materials and flowers were provided, and the designs were amazing.

The New Mexico Garden Club extends an invitation to Members of the South Central Region to attend our annual convention.

**“Rising from The Ashes”,
April 10-11, 2024 in Santa Fe, New Mexico.**

It is being held at the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel in Santa Fe, NM. The address of the hotel is: 3347 Cerrillos Rd and the phone number is: 505-303-0787. Besides the interesting meetings and speakers 3 special tours have been arranged for the attendees. The Wednesday, April 10th tour is to a living history museum, El Rancho de las Golondrinas (The Ranch of the Swallows), situated on 200 acres south of Santa Fe in the village of La Cienega. On Thursday, April 11th we will tour the Santa Fe Botanical Garden, situated on Museum Hill. The Garden was designed by nationally recognized landscape architect W. Gary Smith. On Friday, April 12th, a day after the convention, a tour has been arranged at the famous Allan Houser Sculpture Garden at Haozous Place. There are over 70 monumental works-both representational and abstract-on display.

NMGC looks forward to you joining us in April!

Registration is with Diane Thurston. Email: dianethurston5@gmail.com.



SCR LIFE MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN,

Mary Ann Holman



Theis Valentines Day Honor that special friend or someone in your club with the gift of a SCR Life Membership! You can remember someone special with a SCR life membership! A very nice way to acknowledge those special Garden Club members. I will mail it or deliver it at the next SCR Convention!!! In Little Rock next spring.....see you there!!!

ONLY \$50 + PIN \$ 5 = \$ 55

(available with a magnet back or standard pin back)

All proceeds from the SCR Life Membership sales now go to the \$1000 SCR Scholarship given in the second year of a term (Which will be 2025).

Order from:

Mary Ann Holman, SCR Life Membership Chairman
505 S. First Street, Walters, OK 73572-2209
580-875-3720 or 580.875.3720
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Recycling Chairman, Carol More

YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD RECYCLE THESE COMMON HOUSEHOLD GOODS— BUT HERE'S HOW TO DO IT!

Recycling may not be a cure-all to pollution and landfill issues— following a zero waste lifestyle to limit use of landfill - clogging items may be a more environmentally friendly route - but for recyclable items already out there, recycling is the best way to do whatever possible to keep items from damaging natural resources.



AEROSOL CANS - these are usually recycled with other cans, as long as you pull off the plastic cap and empty the canister completely.

BACKPACKS - The American Birding Association's Birders Exchange accepts donated backpacks, which its

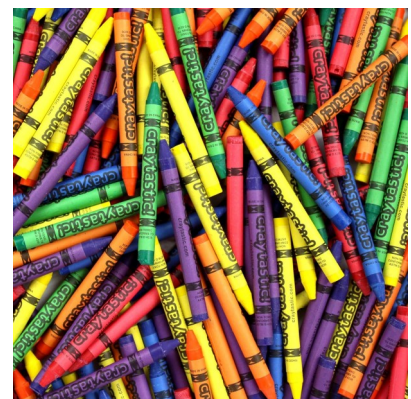


scientists use while tracking neotropical birds.



COMPACT FLUORESCENT LIGHTBULBS (CFLs AA): CFLs contain mercury and shouldn't be thrown in the trash. IKEA and Home Depot operate CFL recycling programs; you can also check with your local hardware store or recycling center to see if it offers recycling services.

CRAYONS: Send them to The National Crayon Recycling Program, which melts down crayons and reforms them into new ones. Leave the wrappers on: When you have black, blue and purple crayons together without wrappers, it's hard to tell them apart.



HAPPY RECYCLING!

Bodnant Gardens in North Wales,

By Sherrie Clarkson

Recently I traveled to Wales for a two-week tour and discovered one of the most beautiful gardens in the United Kingdom, Bodnant Gardens. This 80-acre garden, hewn out of a hillside in North Wales is a Grade I-listed horticultural paradise forged by the Victorian vision of one extraordinary man – Henry Pochnin – perfected by his descendants.



The garden drops from manicured terraces, five in all, through buzzing wildflower meadows and pastoral glades, into an awe-inspiring dell of waterfalls and towering trees, founded in 1874 and cared for by the National Trust since 1949. Bodnant is a garden of firsts- home to Britain's earliest and grandest laburnum arch, to new plants species discovered by botanica explorers and to unique plant hybrids which have been born and bred there. Exotic trees, shrubs and flowers from the Andes to the Himalayas have made their home in the Snowdonia foothills, providing a year-round spectacle of garden creativity.

Today, Bodnant is world famous for its five Italianate terraces, built between 1904 and 1914. They were designed by Henry McLaren and his mother, Laura, who also designed the garden terraces at the Grade-II listed Golden Grove nearby in Flintshire. Of all of the five terraces, my favorite is the Top Rose Terrace, which is the first and highest, a breathtaking panorama of the Carneddau Mountains.

There are two rows of rose beds lined with saxifrage, and Verbena bonaniensis, billows now in the autumn. Two of the oldest inhabitants of this terrace, planted around 1906, are the Strawberry Trees with their eye-catching glossy pink bark and gnarled trunks.



Nearby is the heliochronometer, a precision sundial dating back to around 1910.

Bodnant Gardens in North Wales, (continued from previous page).

Overlooking the terrace are two sphinxes bought by Henry McLaren in 1936, (there are two more on the Lower Rose Terrace) and a classical statue depicting Bacchus, a god of fertility. The top Rose Terrace was renovated in 2006 and the Lower Rose Terrace in 2012 when ageing hybrid tea roses were replaced by David Austin New English Roses, providing a long display from June to October.



“Wild About Wildflowers”.

The Northeast District (NED) of Oklahoma Garden Clubs (OGC)

On October 28, 2023, 46 participants from across Oklahoma, northwest Arkansas, Texas, and Oregon enjoyed “Wild About Wildflowers”. The Northeast District (NED) of Oklahoma Garden Clubs (OGC) sponsored this OGC 44th wildflower workshop in a full-day, hands-on workshop featuring the past, present and future of wildflowers and more. Participants ranged from seasoned gardeners seeking new insights to novices eager to learn more about wildflowers and their cultivation--native wildflowers, specifically those most frequently found in Oklahoma’s “Green Country”. Everyone enjoyed interactive lectures, "scavenger-hunt-style" walking identification and networking lunch, followed by hands-on DIY and recipes for registrants' home use. This educational study of pollinators, native wildflowers, and their importance, acceptance, prep, planning, selection, harvesting and practical uses inspired participants to continue to learn and apply new knowledge in daily living.



“Wild About Wildflowers” (Continued from Previous Page)

Northeastern State University (NSU) campus in Broken Arrow hosted the day. NSU Building and Maintenance Department’s Assistant Director of Physical Plant Julia Rogers launched the morning with her experiences in just four years transforming the campus. What was heavily planted with overgrown evergreen bushes and little aesthetic appeal is becoming a more welcoming place for students, staff, faculty, visitors, and wildlife. Julia shared how she has used donations and contacts to install the Pollinator Garden, visible in the campus courtyard, now teeming with color and life.

After Julia’s inspirational message, participants broke into two groups to visit a Pollinator Garden and the pond and meadow with abundant wildflowers. Both groups were armed with a “scavenger hunt” checklist and instructions to email their photos of their finds back to OGCNEDist@gmail.com for inclusion in a wrap-up PowerPoint presentation before breaking for lunch.



Forager and wildcrafter Ashley Clouse, with her husband, Stewart, of Restoration Farms in Peggs, Oklahoma, shared ethical use and gathering of native plants for personal use.



The Clouses led three stations to make individual elderberry syrups, scoop dried anise hyssop, passionflower and elderflower into tea bags, and preparation of wound salve made with dried beebalm, plantain, and yarrow in a

one-ounce tin.

OGC, Oklahoma Native Plant Society, and NED garden clubs had information tables. OGC President Carolyn McCabe shared details about the relaunch of a tapestry throw to raise funds for the President’s Project promoting educating and planting edible gardens. Vendors answered questions and offered guidance on selecting, planting and caring for natives. All types of native plants at great prices were brought by Oklahoma nurseries Prairie Wind Nursery in Purcell, Wild Things Nursery in Seminole, and Duck Creek Farms in Glenpool.

“Wild About Wildflowers” (Continued from Previous Page)

More than a dozen door prizes were presented, including plants from Duck Creek Farm. NED presented outgoing president Judy Grots with Art by Bridgette sculpture to support Judy’s floral artistry. Judy’s name was called as the winner of the anonymous donation of OGC’s vintage tapestry throw featuring state icons.

The workshop Workbook and cotton tote both featured original art of beebalm, yarrow and goldenrod. The tote held Monarda citridora seeds from Native American Seeds, educational and promotional item. The Workbook acknowledged leadership, NED’s Green Thumbs, Jenks, Lakeside and Tulsa Garden Club members/volunteers, and local businesses and vendors who organized or supported the Workshop by donating their time and in-kind services or products.

Thanks to support of so many, sales of raffle tickets and seed packets, plus National Garden Club’s Operation Wildflower Grant, participants experienced informative sessions led by knowledgeable speakers who shared valuable insights into the importance of wildflowers in sustaining local ecosystems. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive as everyone expressed gratitude for practical tips on wildflower gardening and plant uses, which they found inspiring and educational. Participants left with the commitment to plant the Monarda seeds, use the products crafted during the workshop, incorporate wildflowers into their gardens and daily living, and to “be well and be wild about wildflowers!”



Blue Star/Gold Star Report, Shirley Tetreault, Chairman



Every day is a new day, and we take steps just one day at a time. Our Blue Star program honors our veteran's past, present and future and we move in that direction. Our Gold Star recognizes the sacrifice that families have endured which lasts a lifetime. Both markers have very special meaning and a major part of NGC for many years. This Chair is happy to report that New Mexico will be receiving three Gold Star markers in the Spring. They will be the first in New Mexico. Angel Fire will receive the first followed by the New Mexico Memorial Garden in Albuquerque and then Clovis, New Mexico. All these markers were obtained by various methods. Gold Star Mothers, local clubs, VFW posts and anonymous donors. With the price increase on January 1, 2024, we all must work together to make these markers present in our society. Below is a list of the new prices from Sewah Studios effective January 1, 2024 - December 31, 2024.

Blue Star Gold Star 2024:

Marker W/7' post	2350
Marker (no post)	2225
Marker w/10' post	2460
By-Way	750
Replacement 7'	375
Replacement 10' post	475
Refurbishment	1200
Refurbishment/cap repair	1450



IT IS AWARDS TIME AGAIN!

It is awards time again and we are all hoping for a lot of awards from all the clubs in every state. I hope you state sent lots of entries!

Looking forward to seeing everyone in Little Rock for the SCR Convention and Awards Presentation!



SCR Awards Chairman, Linda Love

“PLANT AMERICA- POLLINATING SOUTH CENTRAL REGION”

SCR theme for 2023-2025
Pollinator state specific seeds will
be available as well as pollinator
pins of all sorts to fund the
scholarships.



Did you know that South Central Region has a website with lots of information, upcoming convention information and archived copies of “The Communicator” (The Official tri-annual publication of South Central Region).

Website address: scrgardenclubs.org

Password: FUTURE



Texas Environmental School with SCR Director, Sarah McReynolds, Texas State President, Lee Taylor and NGC 1st Vice President Donna Rouch and her husband, who are graduating!

DOWN THE GARDEN PATH

By Gwen DeWitt NGC Inc. Garden Consultant



When I think of bats, I think of Halloween! Of course, bats are more than a Halloween decoration, they are pollinators! One of my new jobs for garden club happens to be the South Central Region's Pollinator Partnership Project Chair and bats are super pollinators!

The Earth has approximately 8.7 million species of plants and animals that live in the seas and on the land. Mammals make up a small portion of that number with only 6495 species. Of that number, bats make up 21%. Bats have been around for approximately 50 million years. They have adapted over that lengthy period of time to become integral to our ecosystem.

Bats come in many sizes, from the Bumble Bee Bat which is one inch large to the flying Fox Bat with a wing span of five feet. Mostly nocturnal, bats are divided into two categories – microbats and megabats. Micro bats, the smaller nighttime flyers, rely on echolocation to hunt insects. Bats are super bug zappers! Each evening, they fly out and eat mosquitos, moths, and beetles, keeping those populations in check. Bats eat half their body weight in bugs each night. They are the U.S. farmers best friends, saving them \$1 billion in pesticides and crop damage each year.

Mega bats tend to live in the tropics and have larger eyes and better olfactory senses which help them locate fruit for their meals. Nectar eating bats are master pollinators for more than 500 plant species. Bats are able to fly further transporting pollen longer distances than bees making them super pollinators. Two of the best-known plants they pollinate are the cacao for chocolate and agave for tequila! In the tropics, bats help prevent deforestation by dropping seeds over barren areas. They are responsible for 95% of the regrowth in cleared areas.

Austin, Texas has one of the largest urban Mexican Free-Tailed Bat colonies residing under the Congress Avenue Bridge. They migrate from central Mexico and call the bridge home from March through early fall. Austin's bats are almost all female. In early June each bat gives birth to one single baby known as a pup. The pups take five weeks to learn to fly and hunt insects on their own. The mother bats nurse their babies and have the ability to find her pup from the thousands of other pups located under the bridge.

As the sun sets on Lady Bird Lake bats will pour out from the bridge to begin their nightly hunt for insects. They eat between 10,000 to 30,000 pounds of insects. It's fun to take a cruise to watch the bats fly out across the evening sky in search of food!

DOWN THE GARDEN PATH (Continued from Previous Page)

The milder weather and rain have been a boon to our favorite pollinators -butterflies. Greggs Blue Mist is blooming and the Queens and Bumble Bees are visiting the garden for the nectar. Other visitors to the garden include the Giant Swallowtail, Spicebush Swallowtail, skippers and hairstreaks and the occasional hummingbird.

To welcome those pollinators into your garden, don't use pesticides. Use insecticidal soap or remove the pest by hand if problems occur. You can also use predatory insects. To reduce the need for pesticides, start with the soil. Healthy soil will be teeming with good microbes and earthworms. Healthy soil feeds the roots and the roots feed the plants. This process creates healthy plants that have few problems with insects and disease.

Be prepared for damage from caterpillars – remember they turn into butterflies! I always plant extra for the caterpillars – one for me and two for them. More important, as I age with my garden I am depending on more perennials, shrubs and small ornamental trees to do the job of making a beautiful pollinator garden.

Some shrubs that are great for hummingbirds and butterflies include Turks Cap (*Malvaviscus arboreus drummondii*) which is in bloom right now. Native from Florida to Texas and down into Mexico, the bright red blooms are a favorite of our hummers. The brilliant red blooms shaped like a Fez appear from early summer through the fall. They have prominent stamens that are similar to their cousin, the hibiscus. The shrub will die back to the ground in winter. Wait until it starts to warm before trimming back the dead foliage. The tough shrub tolerates our alkaline soil. It will adapt to our droughty conditions and is deer resistant. Of course, in a drought deer will eat anything.

Beauty Berry (*Callicarpa*) another native that flourishes in the garden has small pink flowers in late spring to early summer which are followed by tight clusters of little purple fruits that last into the winter. It's important to trim back the shrub in late winter as the blooms and fruit occur on the current season's growth. Beauty Berry can freeze to the ground with a hard freeze but will come back from the roots. The shrub has large oval shaped light green leaves and arching limbs and can reach 6ft. tall and 5ft. wide. Like Turks Cap, Beauty Berry is deciduous.

Texas Lantana (*Lantana horrida*) is native to southern Texas and Mexico and has a place in my garden. The brilliant yellow to orange blooms are easily spotted in the countryside. The blooms provide nectar for a wide range of butterflies.

My favorite small flowering tree is the Texas Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*). This deciduous tree is drought tolerant once established. It welcomes the spring with pinkish, purple blooms followed with heart shaped leaves. The blooms attract bees and butterflies.

Planting for the pollinators will provide beauty to the garden. You will enjoy watching the visitors as they come to feast. And if you hear the swoop of wings in the evening, remember pollinators are more than butterflies – they are bats!

Are Microplastics Affecting Our Weather?

By Karen Taylor - Environmental Chair

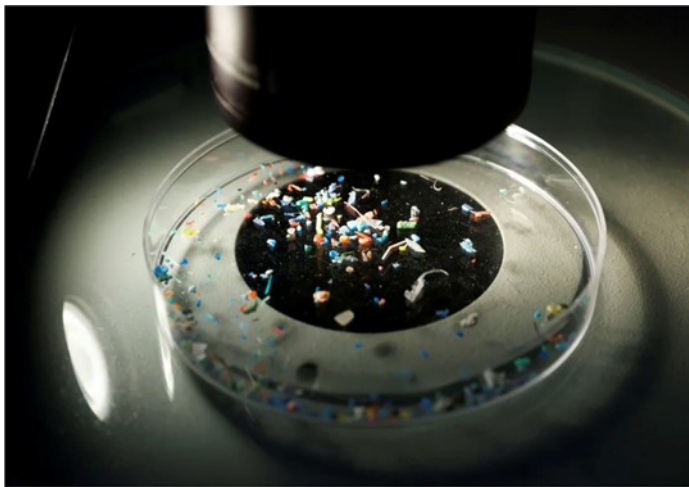
Microplastics are turning up in unusual places more and more often as they filter into nearly every facet of life on Earth. They've shown up in our drinking water, food, air and even in blood. Scientists now are finding that these tiny particles might even be influencing our weather.

A new study published in the American Chemical Society's Environmental Science & Technology Letters reported that microplastics have been detected in a majority of cloud samples taken from a mountaintop in China. The study discovered that microplastics could play a role in cloud formation by tracing how the microplastics ended up at their final location.



Sunset scenery at Mount Tai in Tai'an, east China's Shandong Province on May 23, 2018.

via Shutterstock/Zuma



Microplastics collected from the sea near Barcelona, Spain, are shown under a microscope on July 5, 2022.

Albert Costa/Reuters

What are microplastics?

Microplastics are tiny pieces of plastic that are no larger than five millimeters, which is about the size of a single sesame seed. They are in the air we breathe, our drinking water and our bodies.

Microplastics form when larger plastics break down, either by chemically degrading or physically wearing down into smaller pieces. Anything plastic will create microplastics eventually. The

smaller the microplastic is, the easier it will move through environmental cycles, like the water cycle, eventually ending up in the human body. The effects on the human body are still unclear. More research is needed to determine the full impact of microplastics on the human body. Studies have shown that there are some clearly apparent adverse health impacts.

Are Microplastics Affecting Our Weather? (Continued from Previous Page)

How microplastics affect weather

Microplastics affect cloud formation and could be of huge importance to the weather we experience. Clouds produce precipitation in the form of rain, snow and everything in between. They block sunlight and less solar radiation means cooler temperatures.

Once water droplets cling to microplastics and other tiny particles, more water droplets are pulled together and clouds form. The process is akin to how a single spark can eventually set an entire field ablaze. Once tiny particle in the atmosphere can set in to motion a process that becomes something much bigger.

Could a greater concentration of microplastics lead to more clouds? Will an increase in clouds lead to more precipitation?

How do microplastics get into the atmosphere?

Microplastics are tiny. They are light enough to get picked up by the wind and hoisted into the atmosphere. Samples of microplastics were found in the air over Mount Tai in China. A computer model recreated the journey those particles would have had to take to end up there. Models suggest that the flow of air from nearby, highly populated, inland Chinese cities served as a major source of the microplastics. This suggests that microplastics produced at ground level were lifted and carried large distances.

More microplastics are found in cities than in rural areas, due to higher population density. However, rural areas are quickly catching up with microplastic production.

What can we do?

This problem is much bigger than all of us. That doesn't mean we should do nothing. We can start by making sure we are properly recycling our plastics. But more importantly, we need to practice refusing plastics, not bringing them home in the first place. There are so many alternative options to purchasing items provided in plastic packaging. Look for other ways to purchase items like laundry detergent, shampoo, bath soap, etc., the list goes on and on.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS AROUND THE REGION:

March 16 & 23, 2024	Garden Study Course 3—ZOOM Cushing Gladiolas Garden Club, OK Judy Grotts—JudyGrotts@cotc.net
April 8-9, 2024	Texas Garden Clubs State Convention , Abilene TX
April 10-11, 2024	NM Garden Clubs State Convention, Santa Fe, NM Diane Thurston. dianethurston5@gmail.com.
April 22-23, 2024	Arkansas Federation of Garden Clubs State Convention, Little Rock, Arkansas Nancy Rana—nancygmrana@gmail.com
April 24-25, 2024	SCR Convention Little Rock, Arkansas Nancy Rana - nancygmrana@gmail.com
May 4 & 18, 2024	Garden Study Course 4—ZOOM Cushing Gladiolas Garden Club, OK Judy Grotts—JudyGrotts@cotc.net
July 20, 27-28, 2024	Flower Show School IV, ABQ, NM New Mexico Judge Council Suzy Andrego—Sandrego@aol.com

The South Central Region Website address: scrgardenclubs.org

To access the Members Section use the password - **"FUTURE"**

South Central Region is also on Facebook and Twitter!

South Central Communicator Editor

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