



# *Rocky Mountain Rambler*

## **Rocky Mountain Region Newsletter**



## Greetings From Your Director



## Hello Rocky Mountain Region.

I hope your winter has been typical for your area. Wyoming has not had typical weather, Today mid January and it is 58° at 11:30 am. I worry about our trees and shrubs not getting any moisture because it is so dry and warm.

My town has not had many days that have been below freezing. I hope that you go to your local extension agents and find out how to deal with your climates for planting trees this spring. Most states have an extension office where you can get information and advice. Don't forget your local Garden Centers. They, too, will provide you with ideas on how to take care of our yards. Remember to water your evergreen trees if it has been warm & dry.

I hope that each of you are planning to attend the Rocky Mountain Region meeting on August 21-22, in Fargo, North Dakota. It'll be fun and informative and if you have not been, this is a good time to grab a friend and make a trip.

Hopefully, you're all enjoying yourselves and I hope to see you in Fargo.

Just a reminder for your spring planting: **NGC wants us to plant red, white & blue flowers** to celebrate our nation's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday. Send us pictures on FB so we can enjoy them with you!

Sincerely,  
Shirley Pursel  
Rocky Mountain Re-



February 2026

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*Gratitude turns what we have into enough, and more.*

### Special points of interest:

- Photo contest
- Rev your engines!
- What do you see?
- Pruning Tomatoes



## Upcoming State Convention Dates

**Colorado, June 6, 2026**North Dakota  
Utah

Kansas

Montana

**Wyoming, June 12-14, 2026, Chugwater, WY**

Nebraska

South Dakota

## Dates to Remember

DATE	WHAT	WHERE
April 15, 2026	Article Deadline for May Rambler	<a href="mailto:rmrrambler@yahoo.com">rmrrambler@yahoo.com</a>
After May 1, 2026	Begin sending in RMR Registration	Pat Alm Fargo, ND
March 5 2026	Plant America funds passed out	NGC
July 30, 2026	RMR Award Applications	<a href="mailto:RMRAWARDS1@gmail.com">RMRAWARDS1@gmail.com</a>
August 21-22, 2026	RMR Convention	Fargo, ND
January 1 to March 1 2026	Ames Tool Grant Applications Due	<a href="https://gardenclub.org/awards-and-grants">https://gardenclub.org/awards-and-grants</a>

## Meet Your 2025-2027 RMR Officer Team



**Director**  
**Shirley Pursel**  
**Wyoming**



**Alt. Director**  
**Denise Fink**  
**Montana**

**Secretary**  
**Lorraine Patrick**  
**Nebraska**



**Treasurer**  
**Lynette Jeffres**  
**Wyoming**



**Mary Lerssen**  
**Parliamentarian**  
**South Dakota**



## Why Rotate Your Garden

Crop rotation is an important and beneficial factor when planning a vegetable garden. Problems with diseases, insect pests, and soil fertility can increase when the same crop is planted in the same area in successive years. With careful planning and consideration, crop rotation can reduce issues with diseases and pests and balance the soil's nutrients. Check out the sites below.\*



[How to Rotate Crops](#) | [Benefits](#) | [Rotating in a Small Garden](#) | [List of Vegetables by Family](#) | [Potential Crop Rotation Systems](#) | [More Information](#)

\*taken from Iowa State University

## How to find our Garden Club Websites

Let's stay connected! It's fun to see what other garden clubs are doing—their officers, activities, projects and gardens they have created. To connect easily, open the RMR Region Website. When open, view the new banner at the very top and select one of the categories e.g. Home, Awards, More. . It is simple as a few clicks of the keyboard. Ctrl + click Go for it!!

Site	Website
RMR Website	<a href="#">Rocky Mountain Region website</a> (includes our newsletters) <a href="https://sites.google.com/site/rockymtngardenclubs/home?authuser=0">https://sites.google.com/site/rockymtngardenclubs/home?authuser=0</a>
National Garden Club	<a href="https://gardenclub.org/">https://gardenclub.org/</a>
The National Gardener	<a href="https://gardenclub.org/national-gardener">https://gardenclub.org/national-gardener</a> It's free to members!

RMR Website:

Each of our eight states is listed and all you have to do is click on the state or topic you want to look at.



[Rocky Mountain Region Garden Clubs Facebook Page](#)

**NGC Conservation Pledge**  
I pledge to protect and conserve the natural resources of the planet earth and promise to promote education so we may become caretakers of our air, water, forests, land and wildlife.



Our beautiful Rocky Mountain Region includes the following States:  
**Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming**

The Rocky Mountain Region Garden Clubs is an affiliate of [National Garden Clubs, Inc.](#)

## Colorado Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.



Greetings from Colorado,

The weather in Colorado has been usually warm with daily highs in the 60's and 70's. The lack of moisture is very concerning. Leaf buds are starting to grow on my Maple tree.

Fall is usually our slower time of year. Our clubs have stayed busy learning, giving and speaking to them about how to care for and replant orchids. The Greeley club enjoyed listening to someone from Pawnee Buttes Seed Company talk about converting lawns using native grasses. Happy Transplants learned about planting Fall bulbs and about general soil health and composting.

The Greeley Morning GC purchased wreaths and participated in Wreaths Across America. They also participated in the Happy Transplants, supported the Irving Street Library and their community seed program which provides vegetable and flower seeds to community members. They also donated 32 bags of food and necessities to the Westminster Presbyterian Church's food bank for seniors. In addition, Happy Transplants made a sizable donation to Front Range College's scholarship for horticulture and environmental studies students. Queens of Spades decorated mini woven baskets to accompany holiday meals from Nourish Meals on Wheels.

Most of our clubs had some type of holiday celebration. Greeley Morning Garden Club visited The Gardens at Spring Creek in Fort Collins and enjoyed the many light displays.

Soon our clubs will be planning their next plant sale, garden tours and flower shows. Plans for annual meetings are happening, too. The Greeley Morning Garden Club is preparing to celebrate their 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary in April. They even have a charter member who recently celebrated her 99th birthday. Colorado garden clubs are looking forward to a busy and exciting new year.

**Patricia Smit**

*“PLANT AMERICA, plant native,  
plant for pollinators.”*

**President, CFGC**



## Rocky Mountain Rambler — February 2026

### North Dakota State Garden Clubs



#### North Dakota the Peace Garden State

The Fargo Garden Society has started planning for the Rocky Mountain Region Convention held in Fargo August 21 and 22, 2026, with the enclosed registration form for you to start planning for the trip. We are inviting everyone to come to Fargo to see our beautiful home during the 250-year celebration of our country. We would like to highlight the newly built Teddy Roosevelt Library in Medora, North Dakota and the Medora Amphitheater. We also encourage everyone to leave some time to travel to the International Peace Garden between North Dakota and Canada border. Please don't send your registration before May 1, 2026.



**2026 Officers of the Fargo Garden Society** left to right:  
Wanda Borchert, Secretary;  
Pat Alm, Treasurer;  
Barb Sherburne, Vice President;  
Lori DeRemer, Co President for one year;  
Shirley McCaslin, President

Pictured below at **October Social**: left to right, Laurie Schlenker, Pat Karley, Jan Radcliffe, Carol Fairfield, Shirley McCaslin, and Joyce Hanna



Left to right: Donna Christianson, Arlan and Connie Kakac, and Sarah and Arlin Fisher



Pictured below left to right:  
Dianne Skramstad, Ronda Skramstad, Pat Newgard, Peggy Schaen, and Wanda Borchert



**Remember don't send in your Registration for the Rocky Mountain Region Convention until after May 1. Our Treasurer is a snowbird that goes to Arizona for four months each year. Lucky girl!**

**"Conserve Nature and Grow Friendships in North Dakota"**

**Linda Anderson**  
**President**  
**North Dakota State Garden Clubs**



## Rocky Mountain Rambler — February 2026

### The Utah Associated Garden Clubs, Inc.



It is with heavy and sad hearts that the Utah Associated Garden Clubs (UAGC) had to say good-bye to their home of 60 years this week; the Sugar House Garden Center (SHGC) located in Sugar House Park, Salt Lake City, UT. The Sugar House Garden Center was built in 1965 by the UAGC, Sugar House Park Authority (SHPA), Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County.

Its main purpose was to be the headquarters of the UAGC and a community resource. Through the years, garden club membership declined and the SHGC was also rented out for events, managed by the UAGC. The building is actually owned by the Sugar House Park Authority and they decided to take over management of the garden center and evicted the UAGC in 2025 😢

The UAGC is remaining positive moving forward with the hope that we can keep our 15 clubs banded together and find a new home.

**Sue McJames**  
**UAGC State President**  
*“Stewards of the Earth”*

### Food for Thought

As the seed catalogs come in and you are planning your gardens, give raised beds a thought! Here is a suggestion of **companion planting** your raised beds.

Raised beds reward smart pairings. When plants support each other instead of competing, you get better growth, fewer pests, and higher yields in the same space.

**Basil + Tomatoes:** Basil helps repel pests and improves air-flow around tomato stems, while benefiting from the partial shade tomatoes provide.

**Carrots + Onions:** Onions deter carrot flies, and carrots loosen the soil without competing for nutrients.

**Cucumbers + Radishes:** Radishes mature fast, break up soil early, and help discourage cucumber beetles.

**Lettuce + Green Onions:** Lettuce enjoys the light shade, while green onions help deter aphids and slugs.

**Peppers + Spinach:** Spinach acts as a living mulch, keeping soil cool while peppers grow taller.

**Corn + Beans:** Beans fix nitrogen in the soil, feeding corn while using the stalks for support.

For more information about companion planting, [click here](#).



## Awards



**Hello Everyone,**

**My name is Chris Martin, and I'm the Awards Chair for RMR. I'm excited to work with all of you. This note contains information on NGC Awards as well as RMR Awards.**

**The photography contest is included in this issue.**

### **NGC Awards:**

Here is the link to the NGC awards, which has all the information you need to apply for those awards. Please note that these awards are from **Jan 1, 2026 through December 31, 2026**  
<https://gardenclub.org/ngc-awards>

#### **Please note:**

#### **NGC AWARD Rules:**

No individual, single-member club, group of member clubs, Council, or District may make a direct application to National Garden Clubs. Your State Chairman must submit all applications and must include the appropriate NGC Application Cover Sheet. Application Cover Sheets are posted in fillable format on the NGC website under FORMS. Please ensure you are aware of the due dates required by your state chair. If s/he misses those due dates, your application won't be considered.

### **THE MEMBER AWARD OF HONOR IS THE EXCEPTION for NGC AWARDS:**

#### **Member Award of Honor**

Awarded to one member in each region whose volunteer efforts during a period of five or more years, has made outstanding contributions to club and community, in one or more of the following areas: civic development, horticulture therapy, youth activities, conservation, landscape design, horticulture, floral design, or all-around excellence. Eligibility: any member of a State Garden Club, who has never been a member of the NGC Board of Directors. Eligibility and Rules listed on NGC Website, [www.gardenclub.org](http://www.gardenclub.org) , "Awards" – Member Award of Honor. A book of evidence should be submitted not to exceed 3 pages. Obtain state's deadline date. State Awards Chairman forwards one entry to Regional Awards Chairman by January 1. The eight Regional Winners will receive a NGC Certificate and a pin at the NGC convention. They will be recognized in The National Gardener.

#### **NGC YOUTH AWARDS:**

Poetry: Your state award winners need to be sent to me by 2/1/2026 (1from each grade K-12) in each of these Categories: General Education, Special Education, English as a Second Language I will send these to the appropriate NGC chairman. If there is more than one from each grade, I will have someone judge them as a Region, we can only send one entry per grade and category.

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## **Awards~~ cont'd**

RMR Awards:

The RMR Awards handbook is attached in this email, along with the form to be completed. Please look carefully at the email address to which you are sending the awards. The Photography contest rules will be sent in the spring Rambler. You can send your awards at any time. I kindly request that clubs refrain from sending duplicates for the same award. If there are sub-categories for an award, clubs can submit for each sub-category.

**All Awards are due to me by July 30, 2026**

**I ask that all awards be sent digitally unless they're scrapbooks or yearbooks. Those can be sent by mail.**

**(If you do these digitally, please send them electronically)**

**A certificate will recognize all submissions if it places first through honorable mention. There's no monetary award.**

**All submissions must fill out the award form as well as the permission form to be considered.**

**All award submissions should be sent to [RMRAWARDS1@gmail.com](mailto:RMRAWARDS1@gmail.com)**

**If submissions are mailed, please mail them to:**

**Chris Martin, PO Box 86, Friend, NE 68359**

**Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions.**

**Please tell us your club's story by submitting award applications**

**Thanks so much**

**Chris Martin, Awards Chairman**

**402-540-2241**

**Dzrcc8@yahoo.com**

**NOTE:**

**RMR Awards application can be found on page 23 of this newsletter.**

**RMR Award Handbook was sent as a PDF file along with this newsletter.**

**The RMR Website will also have all the awards and application forms.**



## Inspire Self-Reflection

What is the very first animal you see?  
Look at the image below and don't overthink it.



The way we interpret the world around us is fascinating. It often feels like our eyes are playing tricks on us, but in reality, our brains are just trying to make sense of what we see based on who we are. How you ever looked at a cloud and seen a dragon, while your friends saw a bunny.

That immediate reaction—that split second interpretation—is guided by your habits, your personality and your subconscious mind. While a single picture cannot define your life story, it can be a fun and surprisingly accurate way to explore your hidden traits.

The first animal you see reveals something amazing about your personality

1. **The Pony:** Did the pony catch your eye first? This suggests that you value consistency, effort and responsibility in your daily life. You aren't afraid of a challenge, and you understand that good things come to those that put in steady work to reach their goals.
2. **The Bear:** If the strong silhouette of the bear jumped out at you, it points to a calm sense of strength and loyalty. This reflects a personality that values protection, stability and strong connections with others. You may benefit from occasional flexibility, but your core is built on being a reliable guardian to those you love.

## Inspire Self-Reflection ~~ cont'd

3. **The Giraffe:** Seeing the giraffe first is a sign of a visionary. Because giraffe's stand tall, this choice highlights an appreciation for long-term thinking and the ability to see situations from a broader viewpoint.
4. **The Camel**-The camel is the ultimate survivor. If this was the first animal you spotted, it reflects patience and resilience, suggesting an ability to manage with composure and persistence. You understand that true progress often comes through steady effort over time rather than quick, fleeting results.
5. **The Lion**-If the King of the Jungle stood out, it symbolizes confidence, motivation and a willingness to take initiative. You likely enjoy leadership roles and setting clear goals, while understanding the deep value of cooperation with your team. You are a thoughtful planner who considers "the big picture rather than getting bogged down by minor inconveniences. It is no surprise that this symbolizes leadership.
6. **The Elephant**- The elephant reflects wisdom, empathy and reliability. If you saw this gentle giant first, you likely possess qualities associated with offering deep support and understanding to others
7. **The Deer**-Spotting the deer suggests you value independence, growth, and personal freedom. Like a deer in the wild, you move through life with a sense of grace and desire to explore your own path.
8. **The Ox**—Finally, if you see the Ox, it reflects focus, determination and commitment. You are someone who stays the course and puts in the hard work required to see a task thru to the end. \* Taken from the web.



## Rev Your Engines and Sharpen Your Shovels

Do you have or plan to have a **buzz worthy garden**? I received my fist seed catalog a couple of weeks ago. I'm ready to "dream" Let's all help our pollinators thrive!

Check out this site for **wildflower seeds** as well as many varieties of seeds at a **reasonable price**.

They have a section that suggests wildflower seed for most all parts of the country. The seeds in each packet are identified. One wildflower seed packet is formulated for our area or elevations above 7,000 feet in **AZ, CA, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, and WY**. They should grow here if they grow above 7,000 ft!

I know it is too early to have the "gardening itch", but it is never too early to dream and plan! Here is the web address of this site: (control + enter to open)

<https://www.outsidepride.com/seed/wildflower-seed/specialty-wildflowers/pollinator-wildflower.html>

## Facebook



Are you following RMR  
on Facebook?



To go to our Facebook page, hold down the “ctrl” key and click the space bar on either link below.

Be sure to “follow us” and see what wonderful things are region is doing.

[RMR Face book page](#) or

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=rocky%20mountain%20region%20garden%20clubs>

Does your state have news to share on the Region's Facebook page?

Send information to me, and I'll post it. Please include pictures, if available.

Who, what, where, when and why.



Phyllis White  
Facebook Facilitator



## Pruning Tomatoes

Have you ever wonder exactly how to prune your tomatoes to help improve growth and why it helps?

Check out the picture on the right for suggestions and [click here](#) for more detailed information.



## Nebraska Gardening Gloves

The Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, Inc. is selling Atlas 370 Gardening Gloves. All proceeds help support Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska, Inc. projects.

Gloves sizes are medium and large only. The cost is \$8.00 per pair or 2 pairs for \$15.00. The color choices are green, pink, purple and orange.

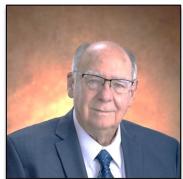
If you are interested, please send a check with your size and color preference to the following address:

Lorraine Patrick  
3716 Schuemann Dr.  
Bellevue, NE 68123

If you would like to call and place your order, the phone number is: (402) 502-2548.



## Flower Symposium



### Why You Should Host a Patriotic Flower Show?

In a world where community connections and national pride can sometimes feel distant, hosting a patriotic flower show offers a unique and meaningful way to bring people together while celebrating the beauty of our country. A patriotic flower show is more than just a display of blooms; it's a vibrant expression of unity, culture, and appreciation for the land we call home.

One of the most compelling reasons to host a patriotic flower show is the opportunity to strengthen community bonds. Such events encourage neighbors, friends, and family members to participate, collaborate, and share their talents. From decorating booths with red, white, and blue flowers to organizing group gardening projects, the flower show can become a hub for social interaction and collective pride. It's a chance for people of all ages to come together, work toward a common goal, and feel a sense of belonging.

A patriotic flower show provides a creative platform to honor your nation's history and values. Flowers can be arranged to represent national symbols, important historical moments, or even famous landmarks. Including elements such as flags, banners, and educational displays helps attendees reflect on the sacrifices and achievements that have shaped the country. This connection to heritage inspires greater appreciation and respect for the freedoms and opportunities enjoyed today.

A flower show is an excellent way to inspire creativity among participants. Children and adults alike can experiment with floral arrangements, color schemes, and themed displays. Workshops and demonstrations can be included to teach new gardening techniques, floral design, and the historical significance of various flowers. This educational aspect ensures the event is not only beautiful but also enriching for all who attend.

Hosting a patriotic flower show creates lasting memories for both organizers and guests. The vibrant visuals, festive atmosphere, and shared excitement contribute to a sense of joy and accomplishment. Whether it's the awe of seeing a sea of patriotic blooms or the pride in contributing to a community event, these moments leave a positive and enduring impact.

In conclusion, a patriotic flower show is a powerful way to celebrate national pride, foster community connections, educate others, and promote environmental stewardship. By hosting such an event, you're not only showcasing nature's beauty but also strengthening the bonds that make your community and country strong.

#### **THEME: American Heritage**

Here are the 25 patriotic flower show design titles with interpretive descriptions to guide exhibitors. The schedule committee may select design types based on expected exhibitor experience.



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## Flower Symposium ~~ cont'd

### American Heritage

1. **Stars and Stripes Forever**--Celebrate the enduring symbol of freedom with bold stripes and star motifs in red, white, and blue.
2. **Liberty in Bloom**--Express the spirit of independence through graceful lines and uplifting floral forms.
3. **Red, White, and Beautiful**--Showcase the national colors in harmonious balance, emphasizing beauty and pride.
4. **Glory in the Garden**--Create a design that radiates strength and honor, inspired by America's natural landscapes.
5. **Patriotic Petals**--Combine vibrant blossoms to evoke unity and national pride in a fresh, modern interpretation.

### Historical & Inspirational

6. **Founding Flowers**--Reflect the simplicity and elegance of colonial times with traditional forms and textures.
7. **Spirit of '76**--Capture the energy and optimism of America's birth with dynamic movement and bold color.
8. **Blossoms of Freedom**--Symbolize liberty through open, airy designs that suggest limitless possibilities.
9. **Colonial Charm**--Incorporate classic shapes and muted tones reminiscent of early American gardens.
10. **Heritage in Harmony**--Blend historical references with modern styling to honor America's evolving story.

### Symbols of Unity

11. **United We Bloom**--Represent strength in diversity by combining varied forms and colors into one cohesive design.
12. **Freedom's Bouquet**--Create a lush, abundant arrangement that celebrates the richness of American ideals.
13. **Land of Liberty**--Use expansive lines and open space to evoke the vastness of the American landscape.
14. **Banner of Blossoms**--Interpret the American flag through creative placement of color and form.
15. **America the Beautiful**--Showcase natural beauty with flowing lines and vibrant hues inspired by the nation's scenery.

### Military & Honor

16. **Salute to Service**--Honor those who serve with strong vertical lines and disciplined structure.
17. **Valor in Bloom**--Express courage and sacrifice through bold color contrasts and commanding shapes.
18. **Honor and Glory**--Create a dignified design that conveys respect and admiration for national heroes.
19. **Tribute in Petals**--Use symbolic flowers and colors to pay homage to those who gave their all.
20. **Courage in Color**--Incorporate vibrant reds and deep blues to represent bravery and steadfastness.

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## Flower Symposium ~~ cont'd

### **Modern Patriotism**

21. **Stars Over the Garden**--*Suggest a starlit sky with sparkling accents and upward-reaching forms.*
22. **Liberty Lights**--*Use bright, luminous elements to evoke hope and freedom shining through darkness.*
23. **Bold and Free**--*Design with strong, confident lines and vivid colors to express independence.*
24. **Harmony of Red, White & Blue**--*Balance the national colors in a contemporary, artistic composition.*
25. **Pride of the Nation**--*Create a statement piece that radiates strength, unity, and American pride.*

**Jim Sadler**  
**Chairman**

## Photo Contest



Hello Everyone,

Here is the information on the **photography contest**. We are going to **feature different types of gardens**. Entries are due on **July 30, 2026** and everything will be in digital form. If you have questions, please contact me. Photos are to be sent to: [RMRphotos2023@gmail.com](mailto:RMRphotos2023@gmail.com) Please make sure you send in the paperwork that goes with it, too.

Looking forward to seeing many beautiful photos. (**More photo information on the next page.**)

Chris Martin  
402-540-2241



## The National Gardener

The official publication of National Garden Clubs, **The National Gardener**, appears quarterly. We highlight articles of interest to environmentalists, gardeners, landscapers, floral designers, educators, and even nature photographers. It is free to all of our gardeners. "Ctrl" click on this link, and sign up to receive your free copy. It's worth the read!!

[The National Gardener](http://www.ngc.org/tnng)



## Photo Contest

### **Rocky Mountain Region Photo Contest Theme: “Beautiful Gardens”**

**Rules & Guidelines:** Submit up to **two images per category** by **July 30, 2026**, uploaded along with the completed entry form and the signed release form. This year, we are going to celebrate gardens. All categories should depict what you love or something unique that you find in a variety of gardens. I will acknowledge receipt of your photos within 72 hours. If you haven't heard anything from me within that time, then please email me at [dzrcc8@yahoo.com](mailto:dzrcc8@yahoo.com)

There are three categories.

**Junk Gardens:** A junk garden is a creative, sustainable style of gardening that repurposes discarded items—such as old tools, furniture, kitchenware, or structural materials—as unique containers, focal points, and, artistic decor. It blends rustic, "trash-to-treasure" charm with plants, creating a, personalized, whimsical, and often eco-friendly, green space.

**Flower or Vegetable Gardens:** anything depicting flower or vegetable gardens. Your favorite flowers, vegetables, etc.

**Fairy or Rock Gardens :** Fairy gardens are miniature, whimsical, and enchanted landscapes designed to resemble tiny, inviting homes for fairies, pixies, or gnomes.

#### **Types of Fairy Gardens**

- **Container Gardens:** Created in containers such as pots, baskets, or old, repurposed items like teacups or suitcases.
- **Outdoor Gardens:** Built around the base of a tree, in a flower bed, or in "nooks and crannies".
- **Indoor/Terrarium Gardens:** Small, contained, or, sometimes, using artificial plants for year-round, low-maintenance enjoyment.

**Rock Garden:** A rock garden (or rockery) is a landscape feature that highlights natural or arranged stones, boulders, and gravel, interspersed with specialized, often small, plants. Typically, these gardens mimic mountain scenery, focusing on low-maintenance, drought-tolerant species (like alpine plants or succulents) that thrive in limited soil. They are designed for year-round, four-season interest.

Your images should be of high resolution (300 dpi) with a file size of at least 2 megapixels and a minimum dimension of 1600x1200 pixels. Smartphone photos generally are large enough files. The image should be **labeled with your last name, first name, and title of your photo: for example, Martin-Chris-junk garden**

The exhibitor's manipulation of the image in camera or post-processing is allowed. The digital images will be juried, and the finalists will receive certificates. The photos receiving certificates will be presented on a PowerPoint at our annual RMR meeting in Wyoming, and the **first place** and juror's choice will be published in the Rambler.

Photo entry form can be found toward the end of this publication.

## Blue Star



### FEATURING THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA



Joyce Hanna is the Blue Star/Gold Star representative for the state of North Dakota. Recently appointed to this position, she has set very futuristic goals to accomplish during her term. She is sorting through a “box” of North Dakota Blue Star memorial historical documents to organize and “construct” the North Dakota Blue Star history while she plans for the future.

By National Garden Club memorial logs, there have been 19 memorials sent to North Dakota. Also, there is a note that three are “unaccounted for”. The first two were recorded as being ordered by the National chair on the same day, April 29, 1971. These were ordered by the Agassiz Garden Club and the Original Garden Club. No placement locations were given. Lack of placement information seems to be a commonly neglected issue with the National Log, especially in the early years of memorial orders.

But as the written records can be “fuzzy”, oral history has the first Blue Star being placed at Washburn, ND in July 1973. To allow for highway expansion and the new Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, the highway department moved this memorial to the Center, ND in 1995.

The National Log has 12 garden clubs from North Dakota ordering memorials. These garden clubs include Agassiz, Original, Milnor, Fargo, Town and Country, North Dakota State, Good Neighbor, Prairie, Rose, Four Seasons, Country, and Foster County Horticultural Society. At present, only the Fargo Garden Club remains. As Joyce, in time, sorts the documents in that box, she may be able to assist in clarifying the National Log.

As of now, there are seven Blue Star Memorials in North Dakota and no Gold Star Memorials. There were Blue Stars in Park River and Jamestown, which have “disappeared”.

In the meantime, there are new monuments being planned. The Fargo National Cemetery is being expanded and is working with Fort Snelling in Minneapolis to install a Blue Star Memorial. North Dakota Veterans Cemetery in Mandan and the Veterans Bridge over the Red River connecting Fargo with Moorhead, Minnesota, have plans for Blue Stars.

Interesting to note, there is a Blue Star Memorial placed in a stone wall near a bridge in Fargo. Maybe this is a bygone memorial. Memorials do seem to disappear (as previously noted) and sometimes mysteriously reappear in a new location.

The Blue Star Memorials in Carrington and Cooperstown are in gardens maintained by the cities. The Fargo Memorial has a neat, small garden with stones encircling it. The planting is maintained by the Fargo Garden Club. Included with this article is a photo of the Fargo Blue Star with a fresh planting being watered by club member Nancy McKinnon. Also, a photo of the mature flower bed.

This is a garden that always blooms in red, white, and blue and is ready for our nation's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday. The red is a red bud geranium, which was started from slips from Nancy's very old

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## Blue Star~~cont'd

plant. The geranium grows high like a shrub. The blue is blue salvia for the pollinators and then white is petunias. This well-thought-out combination of plants and an underground sprinkler system makes for almost a carefree flower bed.

**The Rocky Mountain Region annual meeting is in Fargo in August 2026.** Hopefully, RMR members attending will visit the Fargo Blue Star Memorial and enjoy the red, white, and blue tribute to our nation.

Joyce and Nancy welcome you to come to Fargo in August when the winter snow and cold are only a memory and flower gardens are at their best.



Nancy McKinnon Fargo Club helping Joyce with the flowers at the memorial



Blue Star late summer



### THE ONLY BIRD THAT DARES TO ATTACK AN EAGLE IS A CROW, BUT THE EAGLE NEVER FIGHTS BACK. HERE IS WHY:

1. The crow is one of the only bird bold enough to sit on the eagle's back and peck at its neck. Relentless. Annoying. But the eagle... **stays calm.**
2. The eagle doesn't flap. Doesn't fight. Doesn't waste energy. It does one thing: **It rises.**
3. The higher **the eagle soars.** The thinner the air becomes. The crow? It can't handle the altitude.
4. Eventually, the crow gasps. Loses strength...And falls off. Not because the eagle attacked. But because the eagle **ascended.**
5. Let the crows talk. Let them peck. You don't have to respond. Just keep going higher.
6. They can't follow you forever. Your growth will suffocate their noise. So **don't engage. Elevate.**



## Wild Flowers and Native Plants



Welcome to the ongoing saga, part two, of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, the intrepid Explorers of the “Corps of Discovery” and their wildflower discoveries. As in the previous article we explored the wildflowers they discovered and that were named after them-selves.

In Fort Mandan, North Dakota they assembled a shipment of specimens for President Thomas Jefferson in Washington. Clark had collected a root of the narrow-leaf purple coneflower, “*Echinacea angustifolia*”, which was used by the Indians for curing the bite of a mad dog and curing rattlesnake bite.



Looking for the Great Falls of the Missouri, Lewis wrote that the prickly pear, “*Opuntia polycantha*”, was now in full bloom and formed one of the beauties of the plains. Members of the party suffered mightily from stepping on the plants and one time Clark extracted seventeen spines from his feet. The soles of their moccasins were not thick enough to keep the spines out despite several extra layers of leather. Of the 3 species encountered, this one was “peculiar to this country”, the Bitterroot Mountains.



In June and July of 1804 the explorers crossed Kansas and Nebraska seeing calliopsis, “*Coreopsis tinctoria*”. They commented on the beauty of the prairie with its variety of flowers rising delicately above the grass perfuming the senses and amusing the mind. The American Indians used Coreopsis for a dye. The British born botanist and ornithologist, Thomas Nuttall, followed the Corps trail later and introduced the coreopsis to nurserymen and customers in the US and England. It became known as Nuttall’s weed or often called tickseed or plains coreopsis. It has earned a bad reputation because of its ability to easily self-sow.



Heading for the Yellowstone River, on July the 4<sup>th</sup>, Lewis came to extensive plains where he recorded and collected yellow monkeyflower, “*Mimulus guttatus*”. *Mimulus* means buffoon. The two lobed flower reminds some people of a grinning monkey’s face and *guttatus* means spotted, referring to the dark red spots in the throat of this bright yellow flower.

There are still discoveries by our “Corps of Discovery” for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and next edition. As 2026 will be celebrated for our **historic 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our country**, it is only appropriate to learn about our wildflowers, as Lewis and Clark’s historic trip described them, “peculiar to this country”.

Audrey Coyle, Colorado  
RMR Wildflower Chairman.

## Rocky Mountain Region Officers 2025-2027

Office	Officer	E-mail
<b>Region Director</b>	<b>Shirley Pursel</b> "Many Hands Make All Work Light," PO Box 6105 Riverton, WY 82501	307-851-2966 shirleypursel@yahoo.com
<b>Alternate Director</b>	<b>Denise Fink</b> Montana	406-939-0959 fink52daf@gmail.com
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Lorraine Patrick</b> Nebraska	Lorraine-patrick0809@yahoo.com
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Lynette Jeffres</b> 915 East Roosevelt Ave. Riverton, WY 82501-2937	307-856-4399 307-851-1972 c ljeffres@gardenclub.org
<b>Parliamentarian</b>	<b>Mary Lerssen</b> 2615 East Woodland Hills Rd. Sioux Falls, SD 57103-4335	605-759-7837 c lerssenm@sio.midco.net
<b>Historian</b>	Open	

## RMR State Presidents 2025-2027

<b>Colorado Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.</b> <b>Pat Smit</b> "PLANT AMERICA, plant native, plant for pollinators." pat.smit@live.com	<b>North Dakota State Garden Clubs</b> <b>Linda Anderson</b> "Conserve Nature and Grow Friends in North Dakota 1501 – 28 ½ Ave S., Fargo, ND 58103 rwandljanderson@gmail.com 701-893-5233
<b>Kansas Associated Garden Clubs, Inc.</b> <b>Penny Morgan</b> 1321 SW Pin Oak Parkway Topeka, KS 66615 785-250-8219 pmorganks@aol.com	<b>South Dakota Federation of Garden Clubs</b> <b>Pam Catalano</b> "Planting Native Plants Benefits Everyone" 606 S Minnesota St Mitchell, Sd 57307 605-630-0719 pamcatalano062@gmail.com
<b>Montana Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.</b> <b>Jeannie Bennett</b> "Theme" jeanniebennett@gmail.com	<b>The Utah Associated Garden Clubs, Inc.</b> <b>Sue McJames</b> "Stewards of the Earth" 1669 Redstone Ave., A-2, Park City, UT 84098 435-901-2707 <a href="mailto:susanmcjames@hotmail.com">susanmcjames@hotmail.com</a>
<b>Federated Garden Clubs of Nebraska</b> "Theme" <b>Rod Ruzanic</b> ruzanicrod@gmail.com	<b>Wyoming Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc</b> "the love of gardening is a seed once sown that never dies... - Gertrude Jekyll <b>Susan Pixley</b> sannpixley@gmail.com

## Rocky Mountain Region Chairman\* 2025-2027

Project	Chairman	E-mail
Awards	Chris Martin	dzrcc8@yahoo.com
Birds	~~	~~
Blue Star Marker	Mary L. Carlson, NE	marylcarlson5@gmail.com
Butterfly	Margaret Straley, Sioux Falls, SD	zebrabread@gmail.com
Chaplin	Linda Anderson. Fargo, ND	rwandljanderson@gmail.com
Environmental Concerns; Energy, Land, Water	Rod Ruzanic, Ogallala, NE	ruzanicrod@gmail.com
Facebook	Phyllis White, Bozeman MT	gardens@bresnan.net
Flower Show Schools and Symposiums	Jim Sadler, Missoula, MT	jimsadler1220@gmail.com
Gardening School Liaison to RMR	~~	~~
Invasive Plant Species		
Judges Council	Doris Duckworth, CO	dorisduckworth@yahoo.com
Life Membership-NGC & RMR	Lynette Jeffres, Riverton, WY	lynjeffres@gmail.com
Membership	Barb Yates	Barb.yates@me.com
NGC President's Projects	Robbie Kupper	kupperro@gmail.com
Plant A Tree	Rod Runzanic	runzanicrod@gmail.com
Personnel	~~	~~
Protocol, Courtesy Resolution	Mary Lerssen, Sioux Falls, SD	lerssonm@sio.midco.net
RMR Award of Excellence for Regions	Robbie Kupper, Nebraska	
RMR Rambler	Joanne Jeffres, Riverton, WY	rmrrambler@yahoo.com
RMR Webmaster <a href="#">RMR Website</a>	Patricia Smit - Colorado	pat.smit@live.com or rockymtnregiongardenclubs@gmail.com
Smokey Bear, Woodsy Owl	Connie McKay, Holladay, UT	mcm31@icloud.com
Wildflowers & Native Plants	Audrey Coyle, Colorado Springs, CO	afloris@stratisiq.com
Xeriscape Gardens	Doris Duckworth, Monument, CO	dorisduckworth@yahoo.com

\* If you need an address or phone number please let me know at rmrrambler@yahoo.com

North Dakota State Garden Clubs Presents  
**90<sup>th</sup> Annual Rocky Mountain Region Convention**  
 Registration Form

***“Cultivating Flora and Friends in Fargo”***

**August 21 - 22, 2026**  
**Urban Plains Park and Atonement Lutheran Church**  
**Hosted by Fargo Garden Society**



Please print, fill in, and mail with your check **after May 1**, postmarked before August 1, 2026. Registrations postmarked after August 1 will be charged a \$10 late fee. Make checks payable to RMR and mail them to:

**RMR Convention Registrar:**  
**Pat Alm**  
**2702 26<sup>th</sup> Ave S, Fargo, ND 58103**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City & State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I belong to the \_\_\_\_\_ Garden Club

**PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:**

<input type="checkbox"/> NGC Officer _____ include office	<input type="checkbox"/> RMR Chairman	<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Studies Consultant
<input type="checkbox"/> NGC Chairman	<input type="checkbox"/> RMR Life Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Garden Studies Consultant
<input type="checkbox"/> NGC Committee Member	<input type="checkbox"/> RMR Previous Director	<input type="checkbox"/> Flower Show Judge
<input type="checkbox"/> NGC Life Member	<input type="checkbox"/> State President	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Design Consultant
<input type="checkbox"/> RMR Director	<input type="checkbox"/> Club President	<input type="checkbox"/> Garden Club Member
<input type="checkbox"/> RMR Officer _____ include office	<input type="checkbox"/> State Life Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Guest

Friday Registration: 1:30 to 4:00 Urban Plains Park

Registration Fee \$30.00\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Friday Dinner: 4:00 to 6:00 PM Heart and Soul food truck Urban Plains Park

\$20.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Lunch: 1:00 PM Buffet, Atonement Lutheran Church

\$25.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Banquet: 6:00 PM Social, 6:30 Dinner, Atonement Lutheran Church

\$35.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL COST \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for entire package** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Dietary Choices:**  Vegan  Gluten-Free  Food Allergies \_\_\_\_\_

We would like each club to bring at least one silent auction item. If you would like to bring more than one item, or a door prize, please feel free to do so. All invitees are invited to participate.

**Friday tours:** Sandra Vigen's Garden tour and Healing Garden at Urban Plains Park with dinner

**Saturday tours:** Edible Forest and Japanese Gardens at Northern Plains Botanical Gardens

Demonstration Gardens and Daylily Collection at North Dakota State University

**Convention****ACCOMMODATIONS**  
**Standard Rates**  
**Per Night**

AAA, AARP, Senior and Military discounts may be available

La Quinta Inn  
2355 46th St S Fargo  
701-639-9731  
\$133/night if 2 night stay

Comfort Suites  
4417 23rd Av S Fargo  
701-707-0061  
\$183

AmericInn by Wyndham  
4325 23rd Av S Fargo  
701-235-4699  
\$181

Sleep Inn  
4625 23rd Av S Fargo  
701-492-6245  
\$135

C'Mon Inn  
4338 20th Av S Fargo  
701-277-9944  
\$139

Holiday Inn Express I-94  
4711 19th Av S Fargo  
701-356-3232  
\$128-157

Hilton Garden Inn  
4351 17th Av S Fargo  
701-499-6000  
\$147

Club House Hotel and Suites  
4450 15th Av S Fargo  
701-282-5777  
\$233

Best Western Kelly Inn and Suites  
1767 44th St S Fargo  
701-282-2143  
\$139-176

Delta by Marriott  
1635 42nd St S Fargo  
701-277-9000  
\$185

**DOWNTOWN LOCATIONS**

Radisson Blu  
201 5th St N Fargo  
701-232-7363  
\$184

Historic Hotel Donaldson  
101 Broadway Fargo  
701-478-1000  
\$252

Jasper Hotel  
215 Broadway Fargo  
844-535-6689  
\$201

Voted by Conde Nast Top 15 Hotels  
in the Midwest

**CAMPGROUNDS**

Lindenwood Park and Campground  
1955 Roger Maris Drive Fargo  
707-232-3987  
\$35-50

Red River Valley Fair Campground  
1805 West Main Av West Fargo  
701-282-2200  
\$40

# Rocky Mountain Region Award Application

2025-2027  
**National Garden Clubs, Inc.**

Send awards to RMR Awards Chairman to arrive no later than **July 30,2026**,

RMR Awards Chairman: Chris Martin 402-540-2241  
PO Box 86 [rmramps1@gmail.com](mailto:rmramps1@gmail.com)  
Friend NE 68359

**Award#**    **Award Name**

Name of State Garden Club \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

**Type or print** exactly as name should appear on any award received (name of club, group of clubs, individual, etc)

### Number of members of Garden Club

**Please complete each topic, if applicable.** Use numbering as below when completing form.

1. New project: Yes  No  Beginning date: \_\_\_\_\_ Completion date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Brief summary and objectives of project:

### 3. Involvement of club members, other organizations:

#### 4. Project expenses and means of funding:

## 5. Continuing involvement, follow-up, maintenance:

6. Attach or insert photos, digital photos, and/or landscape plan (does not need to be professionally drawn):

## Photo Contest

**Image Release Agreement** By entering this contest, you agree to the terms of this agreement: You grant the Rocky Mountain Region the use of any images you upload for educational and promotional purposes only on a royalty-free basis and without compensation, including any reproductions of those images, which are deemed necessary. You will be given full credit for any photos used for these purposes. You retain your copyright to any images that you upload. You also agree that you captured the images that you uploaded, and they are your possessions.

**TO REGISTER AND UPLOAD YOUR PHOTOS**, use the email below:

[RMRphotos2023@gmail.com](mailto:RMRphotos2023@gmail.com)

**Scale Of Points:**

- **Conformation/Interpretation: 20 points** (Does the photo comply with the class title and does the image interpret the theme?)
- **Composition: 25 points** (Elements and principles of design are used to define the components of the composition of the photograph)
- **Creativity: 25 points** (Expression of the imagination of the photographer)
- **Technical Merit 20 points** (Successful use of mechanics of the camera)
- **Distinction/Wow Factor: 10 points** (The wow factor; marked superiority in all aspects)

**Total Points: 100 Points**

**Rocky Mountain Region Photo Contest Entry Form**  
**Theme: "Our Beautiful Gardens"**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Club Name: \_\_\_\_\_

State Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

**Weather:**

Picture #1 Name \_\_\_\_\_

Picture #2 Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Trees:**

Picture #1 Name \_\_\_\_\_

Picture #2 Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Forms in Nature:**

Picture #1 Name \_\_\_\_\_

Picture # 2 Name \_\_\_\_\_

~~ cont'd

## Photo Contest ~~ cont'd

### **Image Release Agreement**

By entering this contest, you agree to the terms of this agreement: You grant the Rocky Mountain Region the use of any images that you upload for educational and promotional purposes only on a royalty-free basis and without compensation. Including any reproductions of those images, which are deemed necessary. You will be given full credit for any of your images used for these purposes. You retain your copyright to any images that you upload. You also agree that the images that you upload were captured by you and they are your possessions.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_