

THE TENdriL

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GARDEN
CLUB FEDERATION OF PENNSYLVANIA,
DISTRICT X.

Member, National Garden Clubs, Inc.

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Editor, Marie Mueller

mmueller150@aol.com



THE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Submitted by Kay Bair, Director, District X

DISTRICT X BOARD Officers

Director

KAY BAIR

Town & Country GC
124 Tin Can Hollow Road
Rices Landing, PA 15357-2175
724-966-5856
c. 724-710-7022
teba@windstream.net

Assistant Director

MARDELL PAGE Valley GC

1103 William Drive
Belle Vernon, PA 15012
724-929-9824
mardellpage624@gmail.com

Recording Secretary

LINDA COLEMAN

Martha Washington G C
850 Main Street
Washington, PA 15301-6280
724-225-8011
[ljcjc@comcast.net](mailto:ljcjmc@comcast.net)

Treasurer

SANDRA GRILLI

Martha Washington GC
418 Independence Blvd.
Washington, PA. 15301
H. 724-228-4522
C. 724-554-1363
slgrilli@hotmail.com

At our last District X Board meeting, Vina McLeod Rudolph spoke and said the following, which I agree with, and want to share with you.

Vina: I want to encourage our garden clubs to continue to find a way to meet. It doesn't have to be the formal meeting, which we are used to having. It doesn't have to be inside, we can meet anywhere. Many of the garden clubs in the central area of the state are meeting at each other's gardens, and doing a little tour. They take turns for each meeting, and some clubs are meeting in parks in the pavilions.



Each person brings his/her own drinks and snacks. You don't have to be the host, or hostess, or provide food, or drinks. It still gives us a chance to see each other to have fellowship. You can still socially distance, wear your mask and wash your hands, or sanitize. If we don't meet at all we get out of the habit of meeting, and when we get out of that habit it is so much harder to get people back together.

One of my fears with this pandemic, is that our organization will cease to exist. Garden Club does so much good in our communities, in our state, and in our country that I just don't want to see disappear. I encourage you, if you can, go to an outdoor park in your county, or community, or each other's gardens and take a walk with each other, look at the flowers, the foliage, the trees, the bugs, and the butterflies and share that joy with each other. Nature is so healing.

I miss seeing my garden club friends who are my social outlet, and we need to keep in contact for our own mental and physical health. If you are in a very high risk group, don't feel obligated to do that, but if you can—by social distancing, wearing your mask, please find a way to get together and to keep our clubs alive.



DISTRICT X GARDEN CLUB PRESIDENTS

GARDEN CLUB OF MUNHALL

Meet 4th Tuesday, at 7 PM

Michael Sarraino
135 Crawford Avenue
Munhall, PA 15120
412-461-0665

prince122@verizon.net

<http://www.facebook.com/GardenClubofMunhall>

GIANT OAKS GARDEN CLUB

Meet 1st Thursday at 11:30 AM

Mary Meta **ALL NEW INFO**
32 Vista Garadens Trail #104
Vetro Beach, FL 32962
c. 412-628-6712

marymeta@gmail.com

Facebook:; Giant Oaks Garden Club

GREAT MEADOWS GARDEN CLUB

Meet 4th Wednesday at 10:30 AM

Wanda Sherry
104 Burke Rd.
Farmington, PA 15437
724-329-4736

docnwanda@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/gmgc1957>

GREEN GARDENERS OF UNIONTOWN

Meet 1st Friday (for lunch)

Paula Flaherty **NEW**
pjflaherty1@yahoo.com

(No further information available at this time)

MARTHA WASHINGTON GARDEN CLUB

Meet 3rd Tuesday at 12:30 PM

Carole Malmgren
304 Oak Rd
Scenery Hill, PA 15360-1318
724-239-2357, 724-263-4639 (cell)
Golf lady15@hotmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/mwgcwashpa>

MON VALLEY GARDEN CLUB

Meet 1st Monday at 6:30 PM

Alice Harris
558 South Ridge Road
Coal Center, PA 15423-1023
724-466-0979
aliceharris141@gmail.com

PLEASANT HILLS GARDEN CLUB

Meet 2nd Monday at 12:30 PM

Helen Galluppi
504 Parkview Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15236
724-496-8701

Hlg632@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/373595246449599>

Web site: <https://pleasanthillsgc.org/>

TOWN & COUNTRY GARDEN CLUB

Meet 2nd Thursday at 6 PM

Dianne Nicholson
5237 Gardenville Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15236-3373
412-726-6603-cell

diannenick123@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/tcgcr1pa>

UNIONTOWN FLOWER CLUB

Meet 2nd Friday at 1 PM

Monica Sweet
10 Ridgeview Drive
Uniontown, PA 15401
724-437-2894

monicaksweet@gmail.com

VALLEY GARDEN CLUB

Meet 2nd Thursday at 10 AM

Roxanne Huss
309 Crest Avenue
Belle Vernon, PA 15012
724-929-3391

crhuss@gmail.com

When you fill out the "Officer Change Form" to notify GCFP when your Club President changes, please also send copies, with the updated contact info, to the District Director and TENdril Editor.



2020 IMPORTANT DATES

- Sept 24-26 NGC Fall Board meeting, Fargo, ND
Cancelled due to Covid 19.
- September 21 District X Annual Meeting, **New**
New date **Location:** Waynesburg Lions Club
Community Park, 1090 Park Ave.,
Waynesburg, PA 15370, outside in
the Jaycee Pavillion.
- Oct 12 GCFP Board Meeting – **Changed to**
virtual meeting, more info to follow.
- Oct 18-20 CAR Fall Conference, Dover Downs
Hotel & Casino, Dover Delaware-
Cancelled due to Covid 19.



2020 DISTRICT X BOARD MEETINGS

*All Board meetings begin at **10:00 a.m.***

- October 26 Location to be determined



DISTRICT X CLUB NEWS

GIANT OAKS

Submitted by Barbara Jo Nerone

It's been a challenging time for our club as we had to cancel all of our events for the year because of the pandemic. We are still hopeful that we will be able to have our Christmas Party in December. Of course, this all depends on CDC rules, what the venue will permit, and how our members feel about being in a group.

The Club has been staying in touch throughout this time via e mail updates and our monthly newsletter, the *Oak Leaf*. While group activities have mostly ground to a halt, many of our on-going commitments continue. Our members have worked on the four community gardens we maintain: the Giant Oaks community sign, the Peters Township Library garden, the Wright House garden, and the SHIM garden at St. David's Episcopal Church.

Our Meals on Wheels Chair continued to create favors for Meals on Wheels throughout the quarantine and we have delivered many favors once they began accepting items. Our Garden Therapy group, which goes to a local nursing home on a regular basis with treats and programs, has been unable to enter the building because of the virus. The committee, however, was able to bring the residents some beauty by planting a garden outside the facility that residents can enjoy.

We are looking ahead to 2021 with the hope that our club, and others in our district and state, can return to normal activities. Dates have been set for 2021 for the Plant Sale and Garden Market (May 15) at Peters Township Library and for the popular Tinsel Luncheon Nov. 5 set for the Southpoint Hilton Garden Inn.

UNIONTOWN

Submitted by Sharlene Lehman

The Uniontown Flower Club was impacted by you know what. However, members soldiered on and our Social Committee found an outdoor venue for our socially distant August meeting to be held at the Summit Inn outside dining area. We hope to catch up on flowers and assorted club items and of course, each other. Beyond that, our President, Monica Sweet, will plan month by month as the pandemic continues.

Several members picked up some beautiful Belgian Mums at the Garland Greenhouse as well as geraniums from the Connellsville Flower Club sale. Member Sharlene Lehman attended two Zoom meetings hosted by Penn State. One was on tick prevention and the other on attracting pollinators. Of special interest was a chart showing the best flowers and plants for pollinators by season. This includes winter!

Members are excited to begin planning our next spring planting of the Club's newest venture, the Nemaocolin Woodlands Fountain across from the Uniontown Courthouse.

"Autumn shows us how beautiful it is to let things go."
– **Unknown. We have all had to let things go, but in that, perhaps we have found beautiful things we did not have time to discover before.**

PLEASANT HILLS

Submitted by Helen Galluppi

It is with great sadness to announce that we lost longtime member, Billie McCormick, on March 12. Billie was someone you could always count on and was very involved with our club, her church, and the Meals on Wheels program. She will be missed.



On a positive note, at the last virtual GCFP Board meeting President Joyce Milberg issued a Presidential Citation for Marie Mueller, which states: "Thank you for the encouragement and your responsiveness in making the KG ONLINE (newsletter) a success right out of the box! Job well done."

Additionally we are very pleased that this year, so far, we welcomed five new members.

~~~~~  
"IF YOU HAD A BAD DAY, DON'T WORRY.  
WE ALL HAVE A RESET BUTTON – IT'S  
CALLED TOMORROW".

Author unknown.

~~~~~

**GCFP ANNUAL MEETING
& BIRTHDAY PARTY!**

*The plans were to celebrate the 90th "birthday" of GCFP at the GCFP Convention, which was cancelled this year due to the Covid-19 virus. So we, are celebrating GCFP's "birthday" at our District X Annual Meeting. Please note the **NEW DATE and LOCATION**. The event will be held outside under a three sided pavillion.*

DISTRICT X ANNUAL MEETING
September 21, at 10:30 AM

Waynesburg Lions Club Community Park, 1090
Park Avenue, Waynesburg, PA 15370*,
at the Jaycee Pavillion

Catered hot lunch choices:
Eggplant Parmesan, Chicken Marsala, Pork,
Tenderloin, or Orange Roughy Citrus

Birthday Celebartion,
Trash to Treasure entries displayed,
State awards presented by Marilyn Backus,.
District Awards given by Roxanne Huss
and Haddie Weber,
Installation of officers for the 2020-2022 term.

50/50 raffle, White Elephant table, Raffle baskets.
(Each club is to bring its raffle basket, by 10 AM.)

**Reservations are due by Sept 10. Send form and
check for \$10 to cover part of the cost for lunch.**
The District will subsidize the balance of the cost.

Name _____
Phone # _____
Garden Club _____
Attending _____
Entree choice (s) for each person: _____

Send form to: **Haddie Weber, 1009 Broughton
Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15236**, or by e-mail to
haddieweber@mac.com. Phone: 412-655-3469, or
412-897-8002.

**When using GPS, the address above is for a house
on the left side of the street since the park does not
have an address. Turn right at this address onto
Oakview Drive, which will lead you into the Lions
Club Community Park parking lot.*



DISTRICT X AWARDS FROM GCFP

Submitted by Marilyn Backus, GCFP Awards Chair

Congratulations to all of our District X members,
Youth entries and Scholarship winners who received
awards from the Garden Club Federation of
Pennsylvania. Please see the complete list at the
end of this newsletter.



SPECIAL INVITATION
**Our friends from District VII sent
us this invitation.**

GCFP DISTRICT VII
invites all Club Members & Guests to its
ANNUAL MEETING, PICNIC SOCIAL
& PROGRAM

Friday, September 18, 2020 at 11 A.M.
MONROEVILLE COMMUNITY PARK WEST
PAVILION #4
(Handicap accessible, Rain or Shine, limited to 55
attendees, masking and social distancing required)

All Attendees received a FREE Raffle Ticket!

PROGRAM: "Floral Designers are Here!"
with Iris Cisarik, Marie Mueller, Joyce Peterson, &
Angie Raitano

- * Installation of District VII Officers by GCFP 2nd VP
Leeanna Ryba
- * Presentation of Laurels, Daffodils, New Member
and Hummingbird Awards
- * Drawings: 50/50, Door Prizes and
Program Design Arrangements

\$5 per person RSVP by September 10, 2020
Make Checks Payable to: GCFP, District VII
Send to: **Margie Wolff, District VII Director,
3109 Treeline Drive Murrysville, PA 15668**
(724) 325-4133 , or mgwolff@windstream.net

Name _____

Garden Club _____
Please circle: Pres, V Pres, Treasurer, Recording
Secretary or Member and add any additional
names on the back of this form.

Our District VII June and August Board Social
Meetings have been fun & informative. Please join
us!

FACEBOOK SITES OF INTEREST

Submitted by Sue Swala

Check out the Facebook sites for the organizations listed below, for good gardening information.

Penn State Extension Master Gardener
Pennsylvania Gardener
Central PA Gardener

Butterflies and Flowers
Backyard Flowers and Gardens
Heirloom Tomato Seeds and Pictures
Secret Heirloom Garden Tomatoes
Heirloom Tomato Addicts Anonymous

Additionally, check out the Town & Country Facebook page which also has lots of interesting things gardeners might like to see.



LET'S TALK FLORAL DESIGN!

Angie Raitano

LET'S TALK about DOMINANCE. We know that in floral design, initial *visual impact* is important. Something attracts your eye and impacts the brain *first*. That component is usually the starting point from which your eyes start moving through the design. But, if one component is so strong that it overpowers the rest of the design, that is **DOMINANCE**...and may surely negatively affect RHYTHM, SCALE and/or PROPORTION.

Ask yourself, "What dominates?" The container may be too large and overpower the other components. Too much plant material may overpower the container. Some singular component may overpower other components. Even SPACE may dominate, if there is too much void area within the design.

Of course, there are times when **DOMINANCE** is intended. **CREATIVE DESIGN** allows for a degree of **DOMINANCE** and it is a positive factor. I think manipulating the **ELEMENTS** of **DESIGN** can achieve the **PRINCIPLE/S** of **DESIGN**. **COLOR**, especially, serves as a strong visual impact. Sometimes it might be **FORM**, **LIGHT**, or **TEXTURE** that is the strong impact. But is it **TOO MUCH**? So...*positive* or *negative* **DOMINANCE**....another challenge we must consider!

Now, think about CONTRAST. If we view a floral design and the overall reaction to it is passive, we often say "boring!". That means: a weak visual

impact, very possibly because it lacks **CONTRAST!** **CONTRAST** means "difference" or "opposite", a factor that always stirs interest.

How do we achieve **CONTRAST**? I think **CONTRAST** is achieved most often with contrasting **COLORS**; or sometimes contrasting **FORMS** or **TEXTURES**. Be careful with **SIZE** differences,

because too much **SIZE** difference starts to get **SCALE** involved. We all want interesting designs, so remember to consider **CONTRAST** when designing.

When I view a design, **RHYTHM** is what I notice... immediately after **COLOR**. **RHYTHM** depends greatly on *choice of components*, and, like **BALANCE**, on *placement of components* in the design.

RHYTHM is how the viewer's eyes move through the design. *Placement of components* creates the visual path. Ideally, the viewer's eyes start at some point in the design and move easily through the design and return to the starting point, then repeat the same path.

If a component in the design stops/stalls the eyes on the visual path, that is a **RHYTHM** fault. Not to make things easier!...there are times when the designer deliberately intends to challenge the viewer via abstraction or juxtapositioning components to cause *tension*, thereby stretching the usual **RHYTHM** standards.

I think that **SCALE** is easy! In Floral Design, **SCALE** is *size relationship*. Choosing components that are very different in size, *large* overpowering the *small* will result in a **SCALE** fault. It's easy to avoid. Pay attention to your *choice of components!*



WILDFLOWER QUIZ

Submitted by Diane Hughes,
Wildflower Chair

What flower has a name which is the same, or sounds the same, as the following descriptions?



1. A container for holding foliage.
2. A preacher in an old-fashioned church.

3. A Hollander's trousers.
4. A place where money is made.
5. Groups of ducks and geese.
(See page seven for answers.)



HORT IN TEN

Submitted by Grace Mitchell



Rant: I wish this entire year could be cancelled! My granddaughter was cheated out of her college graduation, and my grandson his high school graduation. All the garden

club meetings, conventions and activities - gone. It's hard to believe that every aspect of our lives is affected.

In addition, my garden has not had a decent rain since it was planted! Plants that are still alive are half the size they should be. I don't have to worry about my beans, sunflowers or cabbages. The groundhogs ate them very efficiently. Rant over.

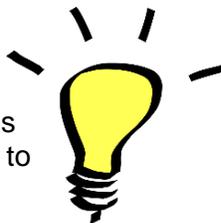
On the positive side, I am not sick. Looking at flower catalogs always makes me feel better. FYI the 2020 Perennial Plant of the year is **Sun King** Aralia. It has chartreuse (my second favorite color) to golden yellow leaves and forms mounds 3 ft. tall and wide. Small white flowers turn to purple-black berries.

A new dwarf Monarda, Blue Moon, grows 20 inches tall and has lavender blue blossoms which appear profusely in midsummer. I found these in Jung Seeds & Plants catalog at www.jungseed.com. We must keep planning for the future, no matter how uncertain it may be. Happy Horting!



SHARE YOUR IDEAS

If you have a clever yard decoration, send a photo of it for inclusion in the next TENDril issue. Also send any garden tips that you know of, or have discovered, to share with our members.



TEN STEPS TO BUILDING A BACKYARD POND

Submitted by Martha Alexander

In early spring we started dreaming of a restorative place in our own backyard where we could watch and listen to the sounds of our local birds, frogs, and other critters. We wanted to enjoy a water feature that would also attract wildlife and make calming gurgles and splashes. So, we decided to build a backyard pond. Because wildlife is threatened by



the loss of habitat, we wanted to provide a safe haven for them by including native plants for food, shelter, and water. Birds like shallow areas that can be formed by having a few rocks on a ledge in a pond. Birds are also attracted to moving water. Placing a waterfall near shrubs and tree branches provides a safe area for birds while bathing and drinking. At the end of this newsletter are the ten detailed steps that summarize the methods we used in building our backyard pond.



WHITE MAN'S FOOT

Kay Bair

Have you seen these plants? They are called Broadleaf or Broadleaf Plantain. It grows especially well in poor, rocky soil (such as driveways) and is often seen alongside dandelion. More often than not, you will see plantain growing in gravel pits and construction sites as nature seeks to regenerate the soil. Introduced to North America in the 1600s, it was once called "White Man's Foot" by the Native Americans who witnessed that where the Europeans tread and disrupted the soil, plantain sprung up.



Plantain has often been the go-to remedy for hikers plagued by mosquitos. Because it draws toxins from the body with its astringent nature, plantain may be crushed (or chewed) and placed as a poultice directly over the site of bee stings, bug bites, acne, slivers, glass splinters, or rashes. Bandage the area and allow the plantain to work its magic for 4-12 hours.

Plantain may also be used to create a balm for emergency kits, or an infusion used as a skin or general wash. It is also a notable, soothing remedy for hemorrhoids.

Plantain is renowned for its healing effect on the digestive system. This is especially useful for anyone who has been damaged by antibiotics, anti-inflammatory or pain medications, food allergies, or Celiac disease. Both leaves and seeds specifically target the digestive system for healing.

The leaves may be steeped as tea, added to soups, or dried with a sauce similar to kale chips. The seeds – a type of psyllium – can be ground or soaked for bulk mucilage or absorbable fibre, which, consumed before meals, may help with weight loss.

Because plantain is a gentle expectorant and high in silica, an infusion can be helpful for lung problems, coughs, and colds.

Plantain is almost a panacea for the human body, treating everything from all menstrual difficulties, all digestive issues, to nearly all skin complaints, and even arthritis. Add to salads, chew to ease thirst, or enjoy in stir fries. This versatile wild vegetable will keep you in good health for years to come!



SIGN OF THE TIMES



DECEASED MEMBERS OF DISTRICT X

We are remembering the following District X members who passed away March, 2019 to March 31, 2020. May they rest in peace.

RIP

Giant Oaks GC: Pat Pohlmann (April, 2019)
Karen Thompson (March 2019)

Great Meadows GC: Mary Louise Martina (Nov. 2019)

Martha Washington GC: Karla Hilzendeger

Pleasant Hills GC: Gloria Lepaine (Sept. 2019)
Mary A. Lamb (Dec. 2019)
Billie McCormick (June 2020)

Town & Country GC: Norma Kline (Nov. 2019)

Valley Garden Club: Evelyn Parent (Nov. 2019)



WILDFLOWER QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Pitcher plant
2. Jack-in-the-Pulpit
3. Dutchman's britches
4. Mint
5. Phlox



*** SEE MORE BELOW ***

DISTRICT X AWARDS FROM GCFP

Submitted by Marilyn Backus, GCFP Awards Chair

Place	Club(s)	District	Sent to	CAR-SGC or NGC
	2019 GCFP Forget-Me-Not District Award	Grace Mitchell	Martha Washington GC	X
	2019 GCFP Gold Seal Award	Vina McLeod Rudolph	Martha Washington GC	X
	2019-2020 Presidential Citation	Marie Mueller GCFP Keystone Gardener Online Newsletter Editor Pleasant Hills GC	X	

	2019 GCFP Smokey Bear Woodsy Owl Poster Contest	"Only You Can Prevent Wildfires!"		
	GRADE 1 - Johnny Baldrige - 1st Place	Giant Oaks GC	X	GCFP: \$10
	CAR-SGC (no results yet)			
	2019 GCFP Youth Sculpture Contest	Recycle, Repurpose, Reuse! GRADE 4		
	Samuel Fleisher - 1st Place	Giant Oaks GC	X	GCFP: \$10 CAR-SGC (no win)
	2019 GCFP Youth Sculpture Contest	Recycle, Repurpose, Reuse! GRADE 5		
	Victoria Bates - 1st Place	Giant Oaks GC	X	GCFP: \$10 CAR-SGC (no win)
	2019 GCFP Youth Sculpture Contest	Recycle, Repurpose, Reuse! GRADE 5		
	Callie Kaplan - 2nd Place	Giant Oaks GC	X	
	2019 GCFP Youth Sculpture Contest	Recycle, Repurpose, Reuse! GRADE 6		
	Alina Heineman - 2nd Place	Giant Oaks GC	X	

	GCFP Standard Flower Show FS-1C (50-99 members)	"A Midsummer Night's Dream"		
	2nd Great Meadows GC	X	NGC Certificate of Merit and Blue Ribbon	
	GCFP Standard Flower Show Schedule Award for 50-99 Members	"A Midsummer Night's Dream"		
	Honorable Mention	Great Meadows GC	X	

	GCFP 45-69 Club members	Club Yearbook Award A	1st	Martha Washington GC X
	NGC no response received			
	GCFP Standard Flower Show Schedule Award for 50-99 Members	"Stayin' Alive at 85!!"		
	2nd Martha Washington GC	X		
	GCFP Standard Flower Show FS-1C (50-99 members)	"Stayin' Alive at 85!!"		
	4th Martha Washington GC	X	NGC Certificate of Merit and Blue Ribbon	

	GCFP Small Standard Flower Show Schedule Award for 21-49 Members			
	"County Fair"	1st Pleasant Hills GC	X	CARSGC no response received yet

	GCFP <20 Club members	Club Yearbook Award A	2nd	Town & Country GC of Rice's Landing
	X			

	Mary Alice Wheeler 2020 GCFP Scholarship of \$1,000	Noah James Quattro	Valley GC	X

	GCFP Extra- Large Club	Newsletter Publication Award	3rd District X clubs	X

	GCFP Standard Flower Show Schedule Award for Judges Council	"Autumn Creations"	1st	Pittsburgh
	Area Judges Council & L			



TEN STEPS TO BUILDING A BACKYARD POND

Martha Alexander

1. **Decide on a location and size of your pond.**

After doing a considerable amount of research, we decided to make our pond about 11 feet long by 9 feet wide. It is 3 feet deep in the deepest part to allow for overwintering of fish and certain plants. A location that receives at least 6 hours of sun is ideal for most water plants. Select a level area so you do not get much runoff into your pond that may contain pesticides or other chemicals. Do not place your pond in an area with a high water table as it may cause the liner of your pond to buckle. It is best to form the outside shape of the pond with a rope and then use spray paint. You want to make sure the top of your pond is level for aesthetic reasons.

2. **Dig your pond so that you have some flat shelves at various depths.**

Having shelves make it easier to clean your pond and will allow for plants to live at various depths. Some plants only like to be in a few inches of water. A shelf will allow you to have plants at various levels with the use of rocks. A shallow area will also be a good place for birds to bathe. We made shelves that are one and two feet deep, with the bottom having a depth of three feet.

3. **Level your pond**

Once you have the pond dug, it is important to make it as level as possible. We found that a good method for doing this is to pound in stakes every foot where the edge of the pond will be and attach black landscaping edging to them with screws. This way you can raise or lower a section if it is not level. We used a board over the pond and a level to get it as close to level as possible. You will also need to dig a trench on the outside of the edge so that you can secure the liner.

4. **Add an underlayment and a liner**

Measure the maximum length of your pond. Start at the edge, go down to the maximum depth including the shelves, and measure across to the opposite side. Do the same for the width. Add approximately two feet to both measurements. Use this and a formula you can find on a pond Internet site like 123ponds.com to calculate the amount of material to buy and the number of gallons it will take to fill your pond.

An underlayment should go in the hole you dug for the pond to protect the liner from any rocks or sharp objects that may be in the ground. The best type of liner for a free form pond is EPDM which is made of rubber and lasts longer than other liners. This will go in next. Place the liner so that there is an extra foot of material all the way around the pond edge. Tuck the edges of the liner in around the black landscaping piece you attached to the stakes. In order to make the pond look more natural, we added a final external layer of "Rock on a Roll". This sandy brown colored material blends in with our local rocks and makes a pleasant and softer look.

It is important to secure your liner and fill up your pond to make sure it is level. We filled our pond in thirty-minute increments so we would not make our well run dry. We made a few adjustments to the outside posts after filling the pond because there was one slightly lower spot. Let the liner settle, and then trim the edges to about 6 inches all around with a box cutter.

5. **Add rocks and soil**

Place rocks around half of the sides of the pond. Most people ring their whole pond with rocks, but we went with a more natural look of a combination of rocks and soil for plants. We searched our local area for good moss-covered rocks and other objects of interest such as unusual wood pieces.

6. **Add a pump, filters, and waterfall**

This step is optional if you do not want to have fish and you do not care if your water gets murky. If you want clear water, you should add a filter and a waterfall or fountain as this will help aerate the water and keep it clear. A skimmer will help eliminate anything floating on top of the pond.

We decided to put in a filter, pump, and skimmer to help keep the pond clean. There are three types of filters; a mechanical filter removes large particles, a biological filter removes high nitrogen levels, and a plant filter has water go through a gravel bed to remove bacteria, and enzymes remove ammonia.

It is important to purchase a pump that is the right size for the amount of water in your pond. Place the pump at the bottom of the pond but raise it up slightly so gunk will not clog it up. We added a splitter to the outflow of the pump so that some of the water went through a tube up to the back of our waterfall and the rest emptied into the pond.

7. Add plants to the outside of your pond

Your pond should fit in with the rest of your yard. For this reason, we collected ferns, rushes and other plants from the local area to fit in with our natural yard. You can add a whole variety of plants to the surrounding area of your pond. Many species of plants attract birds, bees, and butterflies and other insects. Adding a diverse array of plants along with logs and rocks will provide food and cover for both water and terrestrial species around your pond. Beneficial native flower species that you can plant around your pond include dwarf joe-pye weed (*Eutrochium pupureum* 'Little Joe'), cardinal flower (*Lobelia cardinalis*), bee-balm (*Monarda didyma*), and black-eyed susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*). Shrubs include black chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*), winterberry (*Ilex verticullata*), and spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*).

Some of our favorite local ferns to use are the *Bracken fern* (*Pteridium aquilinum*), Christmas fern ([*Polystichum acrostichoides*](#)), Cinnamon fern ([*Osmunda cinnamomea*](#)), and Marsh fern ([*Thelypteris palustris*](#)). We also used rushes (*Juncus gymnocarpus*) inside and just outside the pond.

8. Add plants to the inside of your pond

Plants provide shade and cover for fish and help keep down the algae by limiting sunlight and removing excess nutrients from the water. Plants help improve the pond water quality, so you do not need to use harmful and expensive chemicals. Using native plants will help make it harder for invasive species to take over. Deep water, submerged, floating, and marginal are the type of plants you find in a pond.

Marginal or shallow water plants are good filter plants because of their large root systems. Marginals or bog plants have roots at least partially submerged. Many marginal plants, such as joe-pye weed, Northern blue flag (*Iris versicolor*), rushes (*Juncus gymnocarpus*), and pickerel weed (*Pontederia cordata*), are especially attractive to either butterflies or dragonflies. To place marginal plants in a pond, you will have to adjust the depths at which their pots stand in the water. Shelves built right into the pond can hold marginals. These plants can be placed in geo-textile bags of soil, pea gravel or clay so their roots can spread and get nutrients from the water.

Submerged plants, or oxygenators, are those that are completely under water in a deep area. Submerged plants release oxygen and primarily obtain their nutrients from the water, so they remove excess nutrients. A water lily ([*Nuphar and Nymphaea spp.*](#)) is a deep-water plant. The lotus flower (*Nelumbo* spp.) is a large deep-water plant, making it better suited to large ponds. Plant submerged plants in shallow pots with some clay and gravel, place some rocks on top, and slowly and sink them to the bottom.

Floating plants need no soil as the roots gather nutrients from the water. Some floating plants such as the water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*), water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*) are the easiest to incorporate and help filter out waste from the pond. If there is room left on the surface of your pond, you can fill in that empty space with floating plants. You want no more than 70% of the pondwater covered with plants. Aquatic forget me not (*Myosotis scorpiodes*), and arrowhead plant (*Sagittaria latifolia*) are two other good floating plants.

9. Make a floating plant island

A plant island is like a floating pond planter. It allows water in while protecting the plants from being eaten by hungry fish. It is constructed to stay afloat on the surface of a pond. These may contain plants that help clean the water. This is especially helpful if you have not built shelves into your pond. An island also helps keep plants from taking over a pond.

We constructed our island by forming a pool noodle into a small circle and attaching it with PVC pipe and duct tape. We covered the foam ring with some extra pond underlayment and then placed a mesh plant basket in the center and covered it with underlayment so as to hold the soil, gravel, and plants.

10. Add some Fish

Fish need to have a safe, relaxing place to go to escape from predators. A good pond fish habitat will provide fish with hiding places as well as areas for algae, plankton, and other food sources to grow.

If you decide you want to add fish to your wildlife pond, it is best to include native species that you would find in a natural pond. Many smaller sunfish species or minnows can be kept in a backyard pond. Goldfish or koi are most appropriate in an ornamental pond. Adding any type of fish to your backyard pond means additional effort in maintaining water quality, temperature, and an adequate food source. Most fish also require a pond with three feet of water.

Once you are done, relax as you watch the dragonflies and damselflies flit about your pond. Enjoy the birds as they discover a newfound pond of water in which to bathe and drink. Being near the sight and sound of water works wonders on humans as well as wildlife. Hopefully your pond will bring you and your wildlife joy for many years to come.

The deadline for submissions for the December 1 issue of the TENDril is **November 15. Please e-mail your submission to mmueller150@aol.com and put "TENDril submission" in the subject line. We welcome submissions from any District X garden club member.**

The TENDril is published four times a year on the GCFP website, on March 1, June 1, September 1 and December 1. Mark your calendar to access it then, by going to "Districts", and choose "District X".