

# Benefits and Reasons for Belonging to The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania

[www.pagardenclubs.org](http://www.pagardenclubs.org)

1. Your club is part of the largest volunteer gardening organization in the world, National Garden Clubs, Inc (NGC). ([www:gardenclub.org](http://www:gardenclub.org)). The NGC is divided into 8 regions and Pennsylvania is part of the Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs, Inc. (CAR-SGC). CAR-SGC includes Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Delaware, Maryland, and the National Capital Area. There are many programs and opportunities available through NGC and CAR-SGC.
2. The Garden Club Federation of Pennsylvania (GCFP) offers clubs the opportunity to come under the 501 (c) (3) Federal Tax Umbrella for charitable organizations which gives qualified clubs tax exempt status. Clubs must have an EIN number (tax ID) and complete a tax information form provided by the GCFP on an annual basis. The GCFP, as a benefit to its members, has a CPA complete the required 990 series Federal tax form for each club. **This is a Federal Exemption only, and has nothing to do with State Taxes, including State Sales tax.** This benefit is important because all clubs must now file, or have someone file for them, a 990 Federal form each year. **Failure to file for three consecutive years results in revocation of tax-exempt status.**
3. The GCFP Liability Insurance policy provides liability coverage for all GCFP Clubs if dues are paid on ALL members by the required date. Clubs are responsible for updating any changes in membership including pro-rated dues for new members. This insurance covers the club's liability for bodily injury and property damage to "others". Others means a party other than you, "the insured". The policy extends medical payment coverage to, guests and non-member attendees. A certificate of Insurance may be obtained from the GCFP if a meeting place requires such proof. There is a \$500 deductible on all claims payable at the club level. Special events coverage is recommended for large fundraising events.
4. To be eligible for the GCFP Liability Insurance and shelter under the 501(c)(3) tax umbrella, clubs must achieve "good standing" by paying all their dues, including new member pro-rated dues, to the GCFP in a timely manner, and prior to established deadlines.
5. Club members can take advantage of the excellent educational opportunities offered by National Garden Clubs, Inc., and sponsored by the GCFP. The schools are:
  - Flower Show School
  - Landscape Design School
  - Gardening School
  - Environmental School

These courses are taught by instructors from National Garden Clubs, Inc. or instructors who have been approved by NGC. Flower Show School Course I must be taken first, then students can take any of the other Courses as they choose. All other schools' courses can be taken in any order. They can be either picked up courses when a new GCFP school begins or taken in another state.

6. Clubs benefit from their GCFP Membership by participating in regular District meetings, District events, and the Annual GCFP Convention. This is true with any organization, the more you participate, the more you get out of your membership.

7. Clubs can apply for “Seed Money Grants” to undertake a new civic beautification project. A specific GCFP committee reviews the written applications and selects the winning clubs. These “Grants” are awarded annually to the selected clubs at the GCFP Convention in April. The Seed Money application can be found on the Federation website at [www.pagardenclubs.org](http://www.pagardenclubs.org).
8. The GCFP website, [www.pagardenclubs.org](http://www.pagardenclubs.org), provides up-to-date information for its members on planned GCFP activities, such as District and State Meetings, Schools, Awards and Scholarships available, program ideas and links to NGC, Inc. and CAR-SGC resources. Upon approval by the GCFP President, clubs can provide the webmaster with details of club meetings or activities open to the public, including flower shows, and they will be publicized. Application forms for GCFP, NGC and CAR-SGC awards, scholarships, and the registration for junior gardeners can be found on the website and downloaded. The website also contains all pertinent information regarding upcoming conventions.
9. All Club members receive the *KEYSTONE GARDENER* as part of their membership. The *Keystone Gardener* is the official publication of the GCFP. It provides a calendar of upcoming events, important information and a host of other tips and helpful articles.
10. NGC accredited judges are available to judge club flower shows, and to assist clubs in writing their schedule.
11. Club officers and members may take advantage of the Bi-annual Leadership Workshop held in their area. The Workshops will be held in the Western, Northern and Central part of the state. GCFP Board of Director members will be the instructors for the Workshops.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF CLUBS

1. Clubs must pay their annual dues to remain Federated. Dues must be paid in a timely manner, and prior to the deadline established, if the club wishes to be covered by the GCFP Liability Insurance. They must also pay pro-rated dues for new members. If the club wishes to remain under the 501 (c)( 3) Federal Tax umbrella, they must also file, or have someone file for them, the required 990 series form annually.
2. Clubs must provide a complete listing of their membership (name, address, phone number and email where available) to the GCFP Headquarters Office at [gcfp205@gmail.com](mailto:gcfp205@gmail.com). They must provide updates on their membership (additions, deletions, and address changes) **as changes occur**.
3. Clubs must promptly report newly elected officers to the GCFP Office ([gcfp205@gmail.com](mailto:gcfp205@gmail.com)), and to their District Director.
4. Club Presidents are requested to complete a two-page annual report that goes to the GCFP President and their District Director on the activities of the club. Form can be found on the GCFP Website under Presidents Packet/forms.

**Club members are encouraged, but are not required, to do the following:**

- To attend District Meetings.
- To attend the Annual GCFP Convention, held in a different district each year.
- To attend the schools offered.
- To do local community projects.
- To apply for awards for their club based on club projects.
- To sponsor students for state scholarships.
- To hold Standard Flower Shows.
- Participate in NGC and CAR-SGC Inc. projects.