

GARDENER'S CHIT CHAT BETHLEHEM GARDEN CLUB

Editor Cathleen Bannon

Volume 44 #6 District II/III

Nov/Dec 2025

President's Message

**A pollinator garden doesn't require acreage. It requires intention.
Plant natives. Skip chemicals. Let it be a little messy.**

Hello Everyone,

The holidays will be here before we know it. Fall cleanup should be almost finished and now we can do some of the indoor projects that we let get away from us while we were enjoying our gardens.

As most of you know, I had a knee replacement in September. I would like to thank all of you for your kind words, cards, phone calls, food and car rides while I was recovering.

September 9th was our District II/III annual meeting which was held at the Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort. All of our members had a great time and some even won raffle prizes.

Our new yearbook was handed out at our September and October meetings. If you have not received your book, please pick up your book at our November meeting.

Our bus trip to Place and Pumpkins on Thursday, October 23rd was a great success.

The Holiday Lunch will be December 11th at Blue Event Center. Fran Favretto will be announcing more information at our meetings. Our Flower Show 2026 will be held July 31 and August 1. The theme will be A Midsummer Night's Dream Garden. Please volunteer. We cannot enjoy these events without your help. More information to follow at our general meetings.

Christmas tree decorating at the libraries and museums are getting underway.

Sincerely,

Rosanne



BGC Fund Raising



A group of us enjoyed lunch at Pat's Bistro on September 11. When we mentioned that we were friends of the Bethlehem Garden Club, Pat's donated 20% of the bill to the garden club.

l: Nancy Wilkin, Mary-Frances Stone,
Sharon Donchez
r: Wendy-Webber Welsh, Jayne Shinko,
Fran Favretto

Photo taken by Cathleen Bannon



l to r: Nancy and Birdie

Birdie Makary and Nancy Schreffer were selling passes to the Boscov's Sale on October 22. For \$5.00 the purchaser receives a coupon to get 25% off whatever they buy at Boscov's on October 22. However, more importantly they handed out many fliers to folks who might be interested in joining the Bethlehem Garden Club!!! Our goal was \$500.000. As of Oct. 21, the goal was exceeded...\$1,015.00!!! YOW, Birdie you're the best.

BGC General Meeting Sept. 18, 2025



Andy Fedor, Environmental Education Specialist at Jacobsburg Environmental Center in Jacobsburg State Park gave a very informative presentation on Native Plants in Pennsylvania. Andy has been using Native Plants in his personal designs for over 20 years. He is in charge of planning and maintaining the park's native plant garden. Some of the natives he highlighted were Jacob's Ladder, Wild Columbine, Northern Highbush Blueberry, Butterfly Milkweed, Blue False Indigo, Virginia Sweet Spice, Purple Coneflower, Winterberry Holly and River Oats. For more information go to pa.gov and search Native Plants.



Centerpiece compliments of Wendy-Webber Welsh



Steve Fluharty won Best in Show for Horticuture



Karen Jahn won Best in Show for Design

Miller's House Garden Annual Picnic September 23 Advent Moravian Church



The Miller's House Garden Committee Annual Picnic was held on Sept. 23rd in the pavilion at Advent Moravian Church. Pictured from left to right: Carolyn Raring, Paul Salgado, Georgia Traupman, Jane Griffing, Felix Rodriguez, Sharon Adams, Ruthann Greishammer, Linda Bray, Steve Fluharty, Sharon Donchez, Sandy Gass, Michelle Ortiz, Jayne Shinko, Nancy Schreefer, Joanne McCarthy. Not pictured: Judy Keretz, Chris Schiffer and Eileen Hall.

From our members



View from Bonnie Klein's home on Lake Michigan,
Sept. 6, 2025



Cathleen Bannon won second place in
the Lower Milford Fall Festival Apple
Pie Baking Contest with Grandma's
Apple Pie.



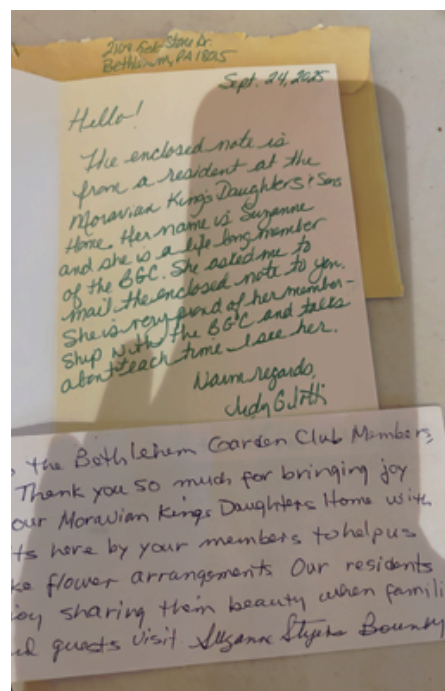
Bannon trip to Grim's Orchard
for apple, vegetable and
flower picking. Check out the
website Grimsortorchard.com



It is pumpkin and mum time at Unangst Farm on 512! This is Miles, Kathie
Klein's grandson who is a 6th grader at Northeast Middle School in Bethlehem!



Longtime BGC House Chair Robert
Cornelius enjoying his 80th birthday -
with a candle for each decade and a
bundle of beauties from Shirlene Moser's
flower farm..



A message from Suzanne Styers Boundy
expressing her appreciation for BGC coming
to the facility and bringing joy to the residents.

HORTICULTURE TOURNAMENT

November 20, 2025

Division I – Horticulture

Section A: Broadleaf Evergreens

Tip of branch must be present - Branch not to exceed 24"

- Class 1: Buxus (Boxwood)
- Class 2: Euonymus
- Class 3: Ilex, Berried (Holly)
- Class 4: Ilex, Non-berried (Holly)
- Class 5: Ilex, variegated (Holly)
- Class 6: Rhododendron
- Class 7: Any other, named

Section B: Conifers

Tip of branch must be present - Branch not to exceed 24"

- Class 1: Abies (Fir)
- Class 2: Chamaecyparis (Cypress/False Cypress)
- Class 3: Picea (Spruce)
- Class 4: Pinus (Pine)
- Class 5: Juniper
- Class 6: Any other, named

Section C: Container Grown Houseplants - Foliage

Single plant per pot Container not to exceed 10" diameter

- Class 1: Begonia
- Class 2: Cactus
- Class 3: Fern
- Class 4: Hedera (Ivy)
- Class 5: Succulent
- Class 6: Tillandsia (air plants) any/no container
- Class 7: Any other, named

Section D: Collection of Three (3) Different Conifer Cones

On a Plate Supplied by the Committee

Committee reserves the right to subdivide classes by genus, species, cultivar, type, size or color.

Design Tournament

November 20, 2025

Division II – Design: Celebrating the Months

Eligible for Best-In-Show Award

Section A: Holiday Time

Class I: Christmas *Novice Designers Only*

Design Style: Creative

Design Type: Creative Panel

Plant Material: Fresh and/or Dried Plant Material Only

Allotted Space: 30" high x 20" wide x 30" deep

Class II: Thanksgiving *Intermediate Designers*

Design Style: Creative

Design Type: Creative Panel

Plant Material: Fresh and/or Dried Plant Material Only

Allotted Space: 30" high x 20" wide x 30" deep

Class III: Veterans Day *Advanced Designers*

Design Style: Creative

Design Type: Creative Panel

Plant Material: Fresh and/or Dried Plant Material Only

Allotted Space: 30" high x 20" wide x 30" deep

*All entries must supply backboard and underlay**All entries must include a 3"X 5" index card with title, inspiration and plant material used.*

Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites (HBMS) Volunteer of the Year, Sharon Donchez



and beautiful too!!!

I met Sharon 13 years ago when I joined the BGC. She was the first member that approached me at the Holiday Luncheon way back when. She seems to have this special presence about her that makes her someone that everyone wants to get to know, and we have become great friends over the years.

I am so delighted to see that in the words of LoriAnn Wukitsch, President and CEO of HBMS, "her unwavering support of the HBMS mission over the decades has not gone unnoticed. Her decades of service in the community since 2001 stands out among the HBMS volunteer network as especially impactful. Well known for elevating every project she undertakes, the results of her efforts are seen throughout HBMS signature events and programs. From chairing the Kemmerer Museum's Christmas decoration committee to serving as volunteer host for Rooms to View house tour to leading BGC's support of the Miller's House Garden and Trees of Historic Bethlehem exhibit, her efforts have produced lasting impact."

I am so pleased to announce to the BGC that Sharon is being honored as HBMS Volunteer of the Year and will be recognized at the 33rd annual Holiday Dinner and Auction on Saturday, December 6, 2025.

Congratulations Sharon!!! We are so proud of you and all of your hard work and dedication to HBMS over the years.

For more information about the event go to www.HistoricBethlehem.org.

Cathleen Bannon

Bonsai Workshop Sept. 25, 2025



1st row l to r: Cathleen Bannon Janet Yandrisevits, Birdie Makary, Amber Samimi, Anthony Cilente, Rosanne Cilente

2nd row l to r: Geraldine Davies, Sharon Coe, Patrice Fedorak, Jane Szep, Jacqueline Adams, Jayne Shinko, Liz Lorenz, Sandy Gass, Nancy Schreefer

Weeks went by with no rain...today, Sept. 25 the forecast was 100% chance of rain so we moved the Bonsai Workshop from the outdoor patio to the basement. The weather, however, did not dampen the Bonsai spirit. Thirteen Fukien Tea Tree and three Chinese Elm Bonsai trees were created.

Bonsai Bash

What a special time was had by all who attend the bonsai workshop held at Cathy and John Bannon's home on Thursday, September 25. Our host and hostess could not have been any more considerate or attentive. From start to finish it truly was a special day.

After John did his duty as outside parking lot attendant, (in the pouring down rain I might add!) Cathy took over as our teacher. She gave us the bonsai plant and container we ordered, showed us how to plant our tree to get the best results and had all the dirt, stones and instruction sheets we needed to do a smashing job!!!

After our trees were finished and ready to go home, the Bannon's offered up a surprise and treated us to a delicious hot lunch! We also received a tour of their unique and picturesque home, green house and garden. What a absolutely wonderful time. We only felt a little sad because Cathy had prepared her patio so we could work outside in the beauty of the surrounding forest. Alas, the rain kept us inside...but it never dampened our spirits. The Bannon's provided us such a welcoming atmosphere that we hated to leave!

Thank you Cathy and John for giving us such an enjoyable and learning experience. We won't forget our "Bonsai Bash" for a long time!

Liz Lorenz



l: Jane Szep , r: Sharon Coe, Back: Patrice Fedorak

Trimming the trees



l to r: Geraldine Davies, Jane Szep



Nancy Schreefer



l to r: Sandy Gass, Liz Lorenz

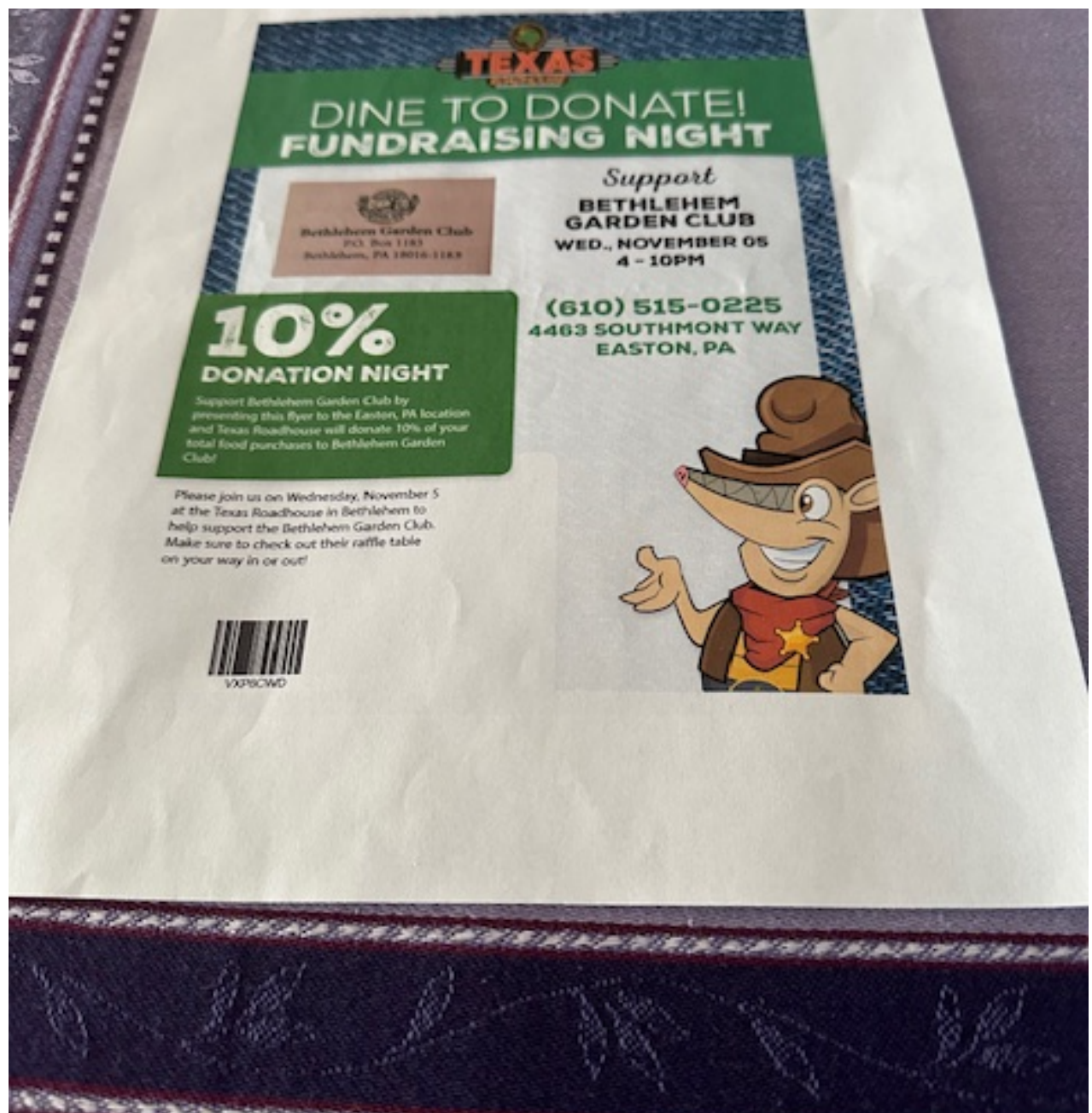
Texas Roadhouse BGC Fund Raiser November 5, 2025

Dear Members,

Mark your calendar for November 5th. Don't cook that night. Go to the Texas Roadhouse where the BGC will receive 10% of what you spend. Bring your family and friends. All you have to do is say, "I am from the Bethlehem Garden Club". How simple is that!

Thank you.

Jacqueline Adams



Annual Holiday Luncheon and Member Donated Raffle

When: Thursday, December 11, 11 am to 3 pm

Where: Blue Grillhouse

Cost: \$45.00

Sign-ups during September, October, and November General Meetings

Bring your check book, exact cash or credit card. If you use your credit card it will be \$47 (includes surcharge)

We will have a raffle as it is a big part of this event. Scour your kitchen, cupboards and closets to find items that are gently used for the raffle. Candles, garden books, wine, chocolate, glassware, baskets, containers, and dishes as well as ribbons. Of course, gift cards, wine, or service vouchers are always welcome too. Many retailers and stores are eager to donate if they recognize a good cause. Bring your items to our meeting.

Time to celebrate and enjoy,

Thank you.

Fran and Birdie



Congratulations to Becky Short

Runner-up 2025 Reader Garden Award

Hold on to your hats!!!

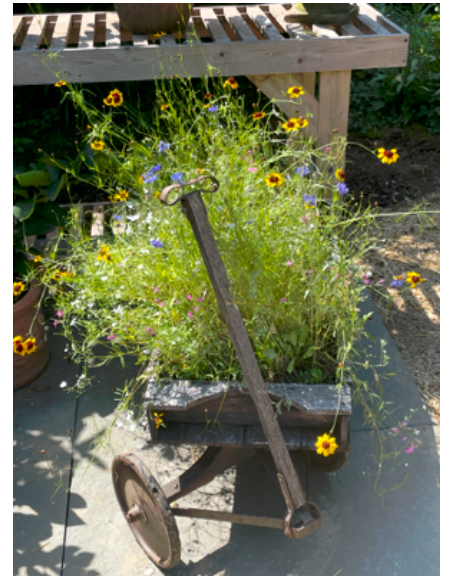
For Becky, the joy of gardening has been in the journey. Meaningful memories can be found throughout her yard, from the knot garden inspired by a vacation in England to an outbuilding that is a replica of the historic Tayloe House in Colonial Williamsburg. Pieces of inspiration get stitched together throughout the space to create something cohesive yet completely unique.



The Tayloe Office from Williamsburg that was reproduced.



Suitcase planter



This was a meadow in a wagon....it was in the magazine.



The garden...looks like Longwood Gardens



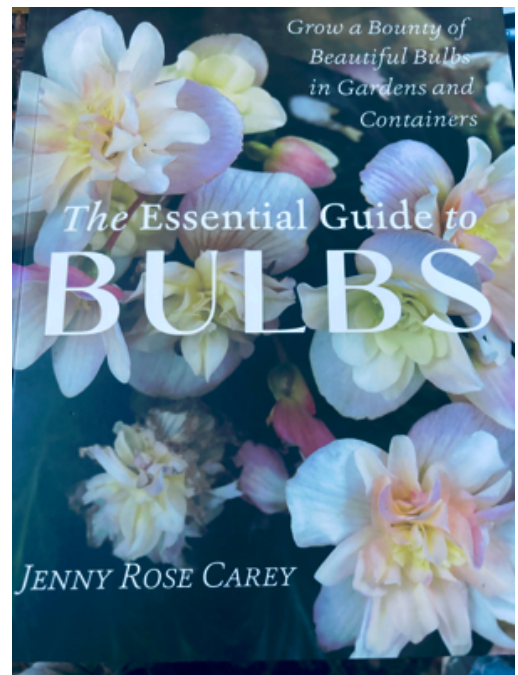
BGC General Meeting Advent Moravian Church Oct. 16, 2025



Keith Lentz, Program Chair and Jenny Rose Carey

Jenny Rose Carey! This lady is filled with so much great information about growing bulbs. Born in England to a family of botanists and gardeners, she grew up in the countryside and designed her first herb garden when she was 16. She moved with her American husband to Ambler, Pa. and has gardened here ever since.

Well done Keith finding this gem!!!



Her latest book "The Essential Guide to Bulbs" was just published last week.



Nancy Riley won Best in Show for Design

Tournament Results

Design - Novice
Third - Nancy Thatcher
Second - Jill Sperandio
First - Donna Sands

Design - Intermediate
Third - Birdie Makary
Second - PJ Ivens
First Nancy Riley - Best in Show

Design - Advanced
Third - Wendy-Webber Welsh
Second - Nancy Schreeffer
First - PJ Ivens

Horticulture
Third - Birdie Makary
Second - Eileen Hall
First - Sharon Donchez
Jayne Shinko - Best in Show



Jayne Shinko won Best in Show for Horticulture



Birdie Makary making us laugh!!!



New members l to r: Nancy Thatcher, Trish Wingerter, Helen Woodbridge

Year Three: The Healing Garden at Lehigh Valley Hospital, Muhlenberg Campus

Inspired by hospital patient and community member Peter Wayne Yenawine in May of 2022, the garden was made possible by the steadfast support of an amazing force behind making a hospital rehabilitation area into a rich green space with a crystal fountain at its center:

- Original Force: BGC Master Gardeners, Kristen Lissy, Leesa Wimmer, Becky Short; BGC Horticulturist, Trish Mowen
- BGC Chairs: Angelika and Robert Cornelius; BGC President, Liz Lorenz.
- Hospital Support Team: Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg Campus, including LVHN President, Vice President, campus maintenance members.
- Muhlenberg Campus Auxiliary: Gracious funding contributors.
- Community Support: Unexpected and from many local and distant sources.
- Crystal Fountain: Designed by Peter Yenawine and created by Bethlehem community members.

Anecdotally, many patients and visitors have enjoyed the garden - and through frequent personal upkeep presence in the garden Kristen, Leesa and Becky often learn from staff and volunteers about the appreciation and joy of the variety of plantings and herbs that have become a fragrant and seasonal core of the Healing Garden. The support from the original team and LVHN of the Healing Garden has been uninterrupted since early 2022. The garden "shows" it!

The production of a pamphlet of this educational garden process was donated and will be available to members at the next BGC general meeting.

Sincerely,
Angelika Cornelius



Floral Workshop at Southern Lehigh Library

On Tuesday, September 30, Sharon Coe led a well-attended floral workshop at the Southern Lehigh Library. Most of the flowers were from her own gardens. Twenty-five women participated, with several more on a waiting list. Many had never created a floral arrangement before. Sharon shared Bethlehem Garden Club program brochures and described what typically happens at a club meeting, including the club's community outreach efforts. The group showed great enthusiasm and interest—perhaps a few new members will join us soon! Because most of the attendees work during the day, afternoon meetings can be difficult for them to attend. And to everyone's delight, a therapy dog even joined in the fun!



Fellow Bethlehem Garden Club members

Please bring non-perishable food/other donations for the Northeast Community Center to our meeting on Thursday, November 20th. This is the fifth year of this community outreach program by the Bethlehem Garden Club, hoping to help our neighbors in need.

A letter from Paula Johnson, Executive Director:

The Northeast Community Center's is a non-profit, social service agency located in the Marvine-Pembroke low-income housing development in Bethlehem. Our mission is to provide help and hope to the residents of the Marvine-Pembroke neighborhood, and surrounding Bethlehem communities, through programs and services uniquely designed to meet their needs. It is a non-profit 501 C-3 organization and is completely dependent on contributions. In 2025, we are proud to celebrate 45 years of dedicated service to our community.

The NECC provides a range of essential programs, including our Choice Food Pantry, Hygiene Pantry, Family Bingo Night, and special holiday initiatives, such as Thanksgiving meal distributions and Christmas gift giveaways.

The food pantry is the most critical and far-reaching program. As one of the most accessible pantries in the region, we operate nine times a month, serving an average of over 300 families. We distribute a variety of food items, including canned goods, non-perishables, refrigerated items, frozen meats, and fresh produce. As a proud partner agency of Second Harvest Food and an officially recognized emergency food pantry in PA, we strive to combat food insecurity in our community. We began Thanksgiving and Christmas sign-ups last week and in just 2 days, we had over 141 children signed up for Christmas assistance. We are seeing an increase in need this year and are very happy to have supportive partners like the Bethlehem Garden Club help us make holiday wishes come true!

We are thrilled that the garden club is interested in facilitating a collection of food and toys for NECC again this year! A list of the most needed food items, as well as a list of toys that would be great: Food – rice, pasta, cereal, pancake mix, canned meat (tuna/chicken/spam), meals in a can (SpaghettiOs/raviolis/beef stew, etc.), boxed milk, oil, tea bags, coffee, sugar, flour, jelly.

Toys – baby dolls, Legos, toy cars, slime/slime kits, craft kits/art sets, Barbies, learning toys, stuffed animals

If you prefer, a monetary donation is always welcome. Make your check payable to Northeast Community Center.

Thank you for your generosity!

Sharon Donchez



Trip to Washington Irving's Sunnyside

Washington Irving's Sunnyside is his historic former house and his residence until his death in 1859.

We explored the romantic riverside cottage and landscape designed by America's "Founding Father of Literature." Nestled along the banks of the Hudson River, the landscape of Washington Irving's much-loved Sunnyside has been charming guests for generations. We heard about Washington Irving's storied past and how he came to be America's first internationally famous author. His characters, from the Headless Horseman to Rip Van Winkle, are global icons, and Irving's legacy lives on at his whimsical estate. We went into Tarrytown, NY for an early lunch/dinner and strolled the streets, until our next adventure. Then it was time for the "Blaze". The "Blaze" is a path of approximately 7,000 pumpkins. We returned to Advent Moravian Church at 11:50. It was a long day!

Jacqueline Adams



Lunch at the Bistro 12 restaurant

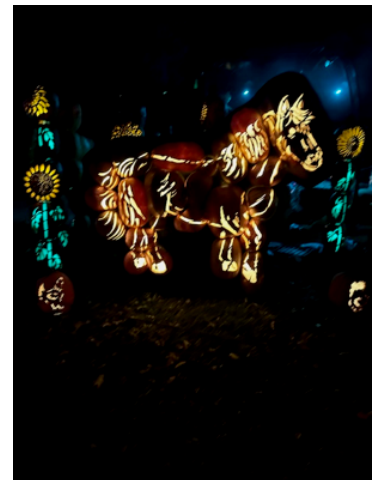
The ladies l to r: Christian Dormans, Ruthann Grieshammer, Fran Favretto, Jacqueline Adams



l ot r: Ruthann Grieshammer and Jacqueline Adams



l to r: Lynn Norton and Sharon Smith



Garden displays throughout the property



District II/III Meeting

On September 9, the Bethlehem Garden Club was well represented at the District II/III meeting at the Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort in Shawnee on the Delaware, PA. The charming riverside resort in the Poconos was a lovely place to meet. The weather was perfect, the luncheon was delicious and there were 12 members of the BGC to enjoy it. The club members at my table were very lucky that day – they took home many raffle prizes (among them some really stunning floral arrangements). The program featured a fabulous floral designer, Chuck Chatham, who created innovative arrangements and entertaining stories. His arrangements gave us all fresh inspiration for incorporating fall fruits and vegetables into floral designs. And believe it or not, he's a vacuum salesman in his day job! Although the meeting was a bit longer than anticipated, the day was filled with fun, beauty and great company.

Submitted by Sharon Coe



l to r: Jayne Shinko, Sharon Coe, Sharon Smith, Nancy Schreefer, Keith Lentz

Some of the arrangements on display at the meeting.

CELEBRATING HALLOWEEN AT THE MORNING STAR CAFE

The Morning Star Cafe team from the BGC celebrated the Halloween holiday with our Morning Star guests at the Advent Moravian Church on Thursday, October 23. As always, it turned out to be a wonderful time.

We started out playing a Halloween phrase game....Trick...(or Treat).....Black....(cat). Our guests won prizes for the correct answers. We then held a Halloween Bingo game! Chocolate covered and decorated stick pretzels were given to the winners! Keith Lentz's church makes these and they are a HUGE hit with the guests!!!

We finished our time with the group by helping them create an autumn design made in decorated bottles with a mixture of fall flowers including chrysanthemums. A cute Halloween pumpkin accentuated the design and they were perfect to take home and enjoy.

We look forward to planning activities for this group again in the new year. Thanks to everyone who participated in this extremely worthwhile event!

Liz Lorenz



From left to right:

1st Row: Barbara Miller, Liz Lorenz, Judy Keretz, and Keith Lentz
2nd Row: Ruth MacKenzie and Kristen Lissy



Happy faces!!!



Cedarbrook Horticulture Therapy Allentown Oct. 29



l to r: Ruthann Grieshammer, Cathleen Bannon, Janet Yandrisevits
Front: Wendy-Webber Welsh

We had a small group BGC of members today, but the residents still had a good time making Halloween floral arrangements. Two of our team members were sick and could not attend. Sarah Wills and Catherine Basile...get well soon.

Cathleen Bannon



Wendy-Webber Welsh





November 2025

- Nov. 1-12** Historic Bethlehem Museums & Sites
Christmas Decorating days 9:00 am to 3:00 pm
- Nov. 3** Design Meeting, Kay Marsh, Sharon Coe
4015 Devonshire Road, Bethlehem 10:00 am
- Nov. 4** GCFP Floral Design/Horticulture Webinar
7:00-8:00 pm on Zoom
- Nov. 17** BGC Board Meeting
9:30 am - Luckenbach Mill, Old York Road
- Nov. 20** BGC General Meeting - Advent Moravian Church
Program: Wreaths for the Holidays
Presented by Sarah Petryk
Advent Moravian Church
Tournament Set-Up: 9:30 am -
10:45 am; Doors Open: 12:30 pm; Meeting: 1:00 pm; Program: 1:30 pm; Refreshments
- Nov. 24** Horticulture Enrichment
Fountain Hill - Thanksgiving Theme
Cedarbrook Nursing Home, 724 Delaware Avenue Ave., 2:30 pm
- Nov. 25** Horticulture Enrichment
Moravian King's Daughters
61 W. Market Street, Bethlehem; 2:00 pm
- Nov. 28** Southside Library - Decorate for Christmas 1:00 pm



December 2025

Dec. 2	Northsidee Library Christmas Decorating; 10:00 am
Dec. 11	Holiday Luncheon and Raffle - Blue Grillhouse 4431 Easton Avenue, Bethlehem 11:00 am to 3:00 pm 11:00 am Social Hour/Cash Bar/Raffle Ticket Sales Noon Luncheon - 1:30 pm raffle
TBA	Horticulture Workshop - Glick's Greenhouse 57 Fisher Mill Road, Oley, Pa. 19547
Dec. 23	Gardener's Chit Chat Deadline - email Cathy Bannon