

August 2026

Washington . Arizona . California . Oregon . Nevada . Idaho . Alaska . Hawaii
Newsletter of the Pacific Region Garden Clubs, Inc.

"Summertime and the livin' is easy"



Well, nothing is easy about Garden Club summer times. Even though most clubs do not meet in the summer it is the busiest time of the year! Flower shows at every Fair. Judges are busy! Garden tours and all the work getting your garden looking its best. Street fairs, Kids' projects, public gardens need attention every week and in between family and friends visiting from all over. So much fun! But busy!

And with heat domes covering most of the US it is not making it easier. I hope you all are doing well and enjoying sunshine and garden club friends.

In August we start our Firewise webinars again. Monday, August 10th and September 14th at 2 p.m. "Personal and Family Preparedness", and "Firewise Communities". If you missed the ones from earlier this year, they are all on the website now.

Thank you, Kim Rosenlof and Peggy Ahola! I really appreciate all the time you have given to the Pacific Region. Kim and Peggy are young and knowledgeable about modern tech. Which means that they have their own real jobs also! They are really hoping that some others will step up and either help out with the website or take over... If you are familiar with technology and think you can be of help, please let me know. That would be wonderful! We are also still looking for someone to judge the poetry contest. Interested? Let me know.

Earlier in July we had a Zoom meeting that the National President elect Gerianne Holzman organizes every few months. "Care to Share". This last one was about some real problems that are occurring now. How important it is to have Directors and Officers insurance, not only for the State, but also for every club! California has riders for their clubs that make it cheaper. A sample was that a club got sued, because their website was not ADA compliant... No, it wasn't a joke! It was a real court case! This case was about a picture without a caption under it that explained what was happening in the picture. Also, a website has to have color contrast and readable and findable lettering. And a whole lot more...



You can look it up on the internet. I think it is because AI can now search millions of websites and find any tiny infraction.

The same thing if you use copyrighted pictures from the internet on your websites or in your newsletters. They can sue you! My advice: Use the artists in your clubs to make art for anything that will be publicized, use your own pictures or be very sure that a picture that you use is not copyrighted.

And everyone knows that any pictures of people have to be OK'd. Most clubs have a form for new members that asks for their important information, their emergency contact, but also if they agree to have their picture taken. That way you are covered for your members anyway. Of course, taking pictures at events you'll have to ask to fill out a form that gives you the right to use their pictures. I hope NGC will come out with some guidance about all this.

Back to Fun! Have you registered for the PRGC Convention in October yet? All the info is on the website. It will be wonderful! I hope to see all of you there. I am looking forward to seeing all the new friends I made in Nevada and Washington. Both States really made me feel welcome and loved! Thank you again! I had such a good time at both conventions!

Love from Tanja!

Director, Pacific Region



Pacific Region Convention – Last Call

By Greg Pokorski, Convention Publicity Chairman

The 2026 Pacific Region Convention will be held in Thousand Oaks, California October 12-14. Tours will take place on October 10 & 11 (see article about the tours in this issue). The Call to Convention is posted on our website. **Register NOW!** Online registration by credit card is available. Mark your calendar. Share the news with your club members and friends and family. Come to sunny Southern California in October for *Palm Trees 'n' Ocean Breeze*. If you have questions, contact Convention Chairman Robin Pokorski, CGCIRobin@gmail.com.



Come to Convention – Participate in Your Organization

By Greg Pokorski, Parliamentarian

Information about the 2026 Pacific Region Convention is included in this issue and the May 2026 issue. PRGC Board members (officers, state presidents, former directors and committee chairmen) are expected to attend. Our standing rules state that committee chairmen attend the annual convention and report as requested, and if unable to attend, request permission to be excused from the Region Director, and prepare written reports as requested.

Convention includes committee meetings limited to members of those specific committees, the Board of Directors meeting (all are welcome, but only board members have a vote) and general convention sessions open to all (Board members and official delegates of the member states have a vote). Each of our six state garden clubs members is entitled to two to twelve official delegates, depending on its membership numbers as stated in our standing rules. Be sure your state is represented!

Convention is not only when the business and administration of the organization is carried out on behalf of the membership, but is also an opportunity for networking, education, celebration of garden club accomplishments, planning for the year ahead, as well as an opportunity to see old friends and make new garden club friends. There are also workshops, informative speakers at meals, presentation of awards and tours.

Board members and convention delegates should know which meetings they are to attend and be familiar with the issues that are to be voted upon. If in doubt, ask the Parliamentarian or the Director. Come to convention in California to be part of parliamentary procedure in action and to have fun, learn, and get information to share with your clubs, districts and state organizations. The Workshop Extravaganza on October 12 is intended to give you ideas for activities you can use in your clubs.

2026 PACIFIC REGION CONVENTION TOURS

By Alexis Slafer, Convention Tours Chairman

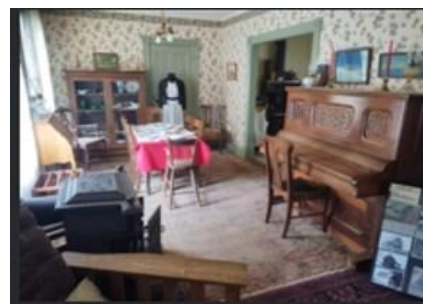
Members of California Garden Clubs, Inc. are looking forward to welcoming the garden club members of the Pacific Region Garden Clubs, Inc. (PRGC) to PRGC's 2026 Convention. We are planning exciting and fun pre-convention tours around Southern California, so mark your calendars and arrive on Friday, October 9 to take advantage of these adventures.



Doctors' Colony Houses

Our tour on Saturday, October 10, takes us to two unique sites with a stop for a tasty lunch. We will start with a visit to **Strathearn Historical Park** in Simi Valley. The 6½-acre park is dedicated to preserving many of Simi Valley's earliest buildings. The museum has photos, letters, and other artifacts that record the

lives of the early pioneers. Docents will lead tours through the site, or you may stroll on your own.



Interior of a Doctor's Colony House

Lunch will be at **The Hat**. The Hat is a beloved Southern California restaurant, famous for its "World Famous Pastrami" dip sandwiches. Established in 1951 in Alhambra, the restaurant quickly made its signature pastrami a local favorite and is known for its generous portions and casual, retro atmosphere. You can also enjoy regular classic American fast food. We will partake of our delicious, order-your-own lunch at the Simi Valley location.

After lunch, we will continue our tour with a visit to **America's Teaching Zoo** at Moorpark College. Established in 1974, it is one of only two zoos in the United States located on a college campus. America's Teaching Zoo serves as the "living classroom" for the students of the Animal Care and Training Program. This collection of 125 animals provides students with a unique opportunity to learn about domestic and non-domestic animals and to develop the skills necessary to work in facilities that care for all types of animals. We will meet with the students, tour the zoo, and, of course, see the animals (tigers, reptiles, Galapagos tortoise, African lion, and more). If you would like to attend a "show," there will be a Wildlife Presentation by the students in the Wildlife Theater.

Following our time at The Teaching Zoo, we will board the bus and return to Thousand Oaks and our hotel for a relaxing evening.

Replica of the Oval Office



Sunday, October 11, will be a one-stop tour. Join us as we visit the **Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum** in Simi Valley. With views of the Pacific Ocean, the 125,000-square-foot museum tells the story of our 40th President. This, the



Air Force One

largest and most visited presidential library, tells the story of his life, his career as an actor and politician, and houses the final resting place of the President and First Lady. You will see displays and exhibits, including a chunk of the Berlin Wall; the plane the President flew as Air Force One; Marine One; and a replica of the Oval Office. **As you walk the gardens, look for the Blue Star Memorial Marker**, sponsored by Southern California Garden Club, located near the F-117 Nighthawk Stealth Fighter.

Lunch is on your own. There are several options. The Gipper's Bar + Bistro, near the gift shop, has several stations serving salads, soup, pizza, and grilled options. Perhaps you might want to try President Reagan's famous chili? The Ronald Reagan Pub on the first floor of the Air Force One Pavilion offers sandwiches, salads, drinks, and snacks. Enjoy your lunch while looking up at Air Force One. And before departing, you might want to set aside time to visit the gift shop.

After our day of history and inspiration, we'll return to our hotel and prepare for the business of the 2026 PRGC Convention.

Attention NGC Consultants

Environmental Consultants, Gardening Consultants and Landscape Design Consultants, take note. If you need to refresh this year or just want to refresh this year (you can refresh for credit in each School as often as once each calendar year), there is a Zoom opportunity coming up.

Cushing Gladiolus Garden Club (a virtual Oklahoma garden club) is collaborating with the Ohio Tri Consultant Council to present a Zoom Tri-Refresher on October 2 & 3, 2026. See the NGC website for details. Click on Schools/Multiple Refreshers/Learn More/Multiple Refreshers Courses/October 2026.

Greg Pokorski
Parliamentarian
Governance Committee Chairman
Gardening Schools Chairman
California Garden Clubs, Inc.

Secrets of the Desert

Vicki Yuen

PRGC Climate Concerns/Conservation Chair



When you think of the Mojave Desert, what comes to mind? Maybe creosote, and agaves. Not much else. A great place to put up solar arrays, right? There's nothing there.

But wait! There is much more to our desert landscapes than meets the eye. If you could see what is going on underground, you would be amazed, and you'd probably decide that solar arrays and other disruptions in the desert are actually a bad idea. Most of the plants that grow in our deserts are quite slow-growing and long-lived. They have evolved to thrive in extremely harsh conditions. They can survive heat waves, droughts, floods, frosts and diseases and pests (though not bulldozers...). Many of these plants have very deep root systems that access water which seeped down years before. Their root systems may actually dwarf the plants we see aboveground. One thing we often see on the surface is the "biocrust", the crunchy surface that is built up over the years. This is actually a living layer of microscopic algae, fungi and bacteria. It serves to prevent erosion, prevent dust storms, and capture and store carbon. If this crust is destroyed; it can take hundreds of years to develop again. (So, stay on the trail!) Many plants, including those in more humid climates, have partnered with fungus to increase the uptake of water and nutrients by their roots. In return, the plants provide sugars to the fungus, which cannot make its own food. This happens in the desert as well. Another benefit of this partnership is that it enables plants to communicate through the network created, warning others of insect attacks and disease, allowing the other plants to create repellants against those enemies.

A major benefit of all this underground activity is that a good deal of carbon is sequestered underground, keeping it out of our atmosphere. Plants breathe in carbon dioxide aboveground, and the roots breathe it out and deposit it underground. The carbon dioxide breath of the roots and their fungal partners combines with calcium in the soil, creating "caliche" (calcium carbonate).

If the desert is bulldozed to install a solar array or other project, this carbon is all released back into our air. Whatever environmental benefit the developers might claim they were bringing in is completely cancelled out by the escaping carbon. Much better to place solar arrays over already disturbed areas or parking lots – where they can also provide shade for parked cars.

This is just a small example of what is going on underground to make our Earth more livable. If you would like more information, I recommend the book *Desert Underground* by Robin Kobaly. Much of this information is sourced from that book.



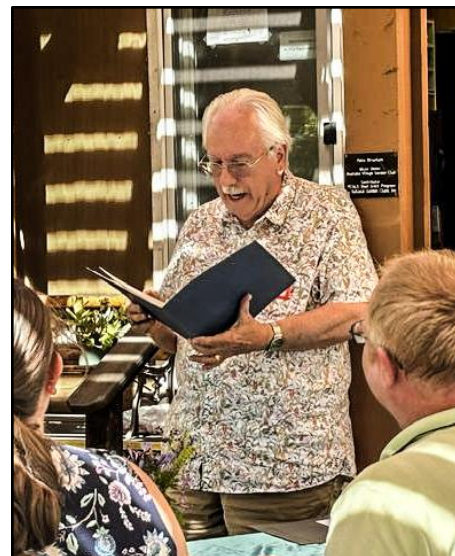
BEVERLY BRUNE HONORED AT CONEJO VALLEY BOTANIC GARDEN



On July 21, 2026, Beverly Brune, who served as the Director of Pacific Region Garden Clubs, Inc. (PRGC) from 2005 to 2007 and as the President of California Garden Clubs, Inc. (CGCI) from 1997 to 1998, was celebrated for her unwavering dedication, commitment, and passion by the Conejo Valley Botanic Garden (CVBG) in Thousand Oaks, California. In a special ceremony, a bronze plaque was unveiled and placed in the Trail of Trees section of the garden. Beverly served CVBG, an all-volunteer garden, in many capacities, including as President. She now holds the title of President Emerita.

During the ceremony, Greg Pokorski spoke on behalf of CGCI President Adele Kelly. He presented

a certificate from CGCI recognizing Beverly as a "Cultivator of Success." Additionally, Greg presented a check from CGCI, signifying the completion of a five-year state project that supported CVBG. Beverly's and Robin Pokorski's CGCI President's Projects supported the garden. CGCI President Maryanne Lucas was instrumental in establishing the Kids Adventure Garden at CVBG.



Greg then shared fond memories of Beverly, recalling how he and his wife, Robin, who was also involved with the organization, worked alongside Beverly at CVBG. He also credited his success as parliamentarian to Beverly's emphasis on parliamentary procedure, which played a significant role in the efficient management of CVBG board meetings.

Following the tributes and Beverly's response, she, her family, and many others headed to the entrance of the Trail of Trees to view the bronze plaque that had been placed in her honor.

When you visit CVBG, take time to enjoy the garden and include a stroll along the Trail of Trees, which honors Beverly for her dedication to enhancing CVBG.

For information about CVBG, visit: <https://www.conejogarden.org/>

Patricia Clayes

Golden Gardens Editor, Awards & Social Media Chairman, CALIFORNIA GARDEN CLUBS, INC.

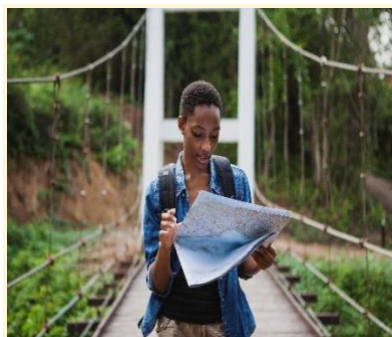
<http://www.CaliforniaGardenClubs.org>

UC Master Gardener

<https://ucanr.edu/sites/RiversideM>



From Janet Wells: Marketing Coordinator for the Arizona Federation Of Garden Clubs Schools



MARK THE DATES!!

Arizona Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc (AFGC) is excited to share that planning is underway to offer courses through our Gardening Educational Schools for Fall, 2026.

Each AFGC School offers a series of 10-hour courses VIA ZOOM. The curriculum will follow the National Garden Clubs school format. Unique to these AFGC Courses is the Southwestern Design focus. Instructors for these courses are Professional Educators in the covered fields of study and have received training and certifications in areas such as Landscape Architecture, Urban Design, Horticulture, and Arborists. All are award winning members of Professional Associations. Several of the Presenters from the previous Landscape Design Courses 1 and 2 will be returning for Courses 3 and 4.

Participants do not have to have taken Course 1 or 2 to take these Classes.

*** Landscape Design School (LDS) Course 3**

Friday, November 6 and Saturday, November 7, 2026, from 9:30am MST until 4:30pm MST each day VIA ZOOM.

Course Topics to be covered include Landscape Design Process, Woody Plants in the Landscape, Herbaceous Materials in the Landscape, Landscape Design with Maintenance in Mind, Graphics Interpretation, Creating Your Own Home Garden Landscaping Plan.

***Landscape Design School (LDS) Course 4**

Friday, December 4 and Saturday, December 5, 2026, from 9:30am MST until 4:30pm MST each day VIA ZOOM.

Course Topics to be covered include Contemporary Landscape Design Trends, Community Participation in Landscaping Project, History and Development of Community Gardens, Suburban Design, Guidelines for Evaluating Landscape Designs of Residential, Public and Commercial Property, Evaluations of Landscape Designs.

Registration for these Courses will begin in early September 2026.

Please share these dates and Course information with other Garden club members, family, friends, Master Gardeners, Plant Society members, and any other gardeners in your area.

Watch for additional information coming soon. Contact Peggy Ahola at azgardenschools@gmail.com for any questions.

From: Gail Vanderhorst

PLASTIC FREE PICNICS—YES YOU CAN!

By Maria Orefice of Southern California Garden Club

Summer is here, and there will be plenty of opportunities to picnic outside in a park, on a hike, on your patio, or in your backyard. Host a "PLASTIC-FREE PICNIC" and encourage your friends and family to use no plastic at the celebration. Your plastic-free gathering is a chance to show your friends there is life without plastic. And they will see how easy it is to live sustainably.

To start, here are a few suggestions:

- Encourage guests to bring food and drink without plastic wrap. They can buy in bulk, go to the local farmers market, and make something homemade from scratch.
- Ask friends to bring their beverage in a reusable bottle or serve drinks from glass bottles or cans. And please, no plastic straws.
- Use a cloth tablecloth. Please, no single-use tablecloths allowed.
- Bring salads and sandwiches in reusable containers or

wrapped in wax paper bags.

- Bring nuts, cheese, and treats from a bulk food store.
- Have reusable cutlery and dishes available. No plastic plates or cutlery allowed!
- Bring along cloth napkins—so easy!
- If you are decorating, no balloons. Decorate with real flowers or paper flowers and paper cutouts. A crafty guest may volunteer to decorate for the event.
- Please compost any food scraps and pack leftovers in reusable containers for your friends to take home.

Your plastic-free picnic will introduce friends and family to the joy and ease of living sustainably. Not only will you be contributing less waste into the environment, you will also connect with nature while celebrating the beauty that surrounds us.

Enjoy a PLASTIC-FREE PICNIC this summer!



Xerces Society's Habitat Kits Help Pollinators

Karen Bowen, Pacific Region Butterfly Chairman

We are all aware of the decline of pollinators nationwide, and we want to help increase their populations. According to the Xerces Society, western Monarch butterflies have declined by 95% since the 1980s and eight of California's 25 bumble bee species are at risk. Many more pollinators are also in decline because of habitat loss. One of the best ways you can help restore their habitats is by planting native plants that feed pollinators in your area.

Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation is an international non-profit that works to protect invertebrates and their habitats. Three of their main programs are pollinator conservation, endangered species conservation and reduction of pesticide use and its impact on the environment. For information about the Xerces Society, go to: <https://xerces.org>.

As part of Xerces Society's Pollinator Conservation Program, each year the society offers **free** Xerces Habitat Kits to the public for specific regions of the U.S. Each kit contains native plants that offer nectar for at-risk pollinators. Some kits can only be planted in public spaces, while other kits can be planted in personal gardens. The Society determines which regions will receive their kits each year.

The 2026 program is closed, but another will begin soon for 2027. Areas receiving habitat kits for 2026 were: New Mexico, Southern California, Central California, Oregon, Washington, Wisconsin, mid-Atlantic and Detroit. Since 2019, the Xerces Society Pollinator Habitat Kit Program has planted 49,000 milkweed plants and 614,000 native plants in various areas of the U.S. For more information about this program, go to: [Xerces Society Pollinator Habitat Kit Program](#) | [Xerces Society](#).

With over 70 species of milkweed in the U.S., it is important that the species you plant grows well in your area. Xerces Society has created an online milkweed recognition guide for 16 regions of the lower 48 states in collaboration with Monarch Joint Venture. The guide highlights the most common milkweeds found growing along roadsides in each region of the country. The names of the milkweeds and their photos make it easy for gardeners to choose correct milkweed species to plant in their yards or in a public space. The guide is found at [Managing Roadsides and Rights-of-Way for Monarchs](#) | [Xerces Society](#).

The habitat kit program works well with NGC President Donna Donnelly's theme "Plant America for the Next Hundred Years". Whether you obtain a habitat kit or purchase your own native plants to grow, you are helping "Plant America for the Next Hundred Years" while also feeding our important pollinators.



State Presidents

Brynn Tavasci
Pacific Region Credentials Chairman
05/29/2026

It is that time of year again when we need to know who your state's delegates will be for the 82nd Pacific Region Garden Clubs, Inc. Convention October 12th – 14th, 2026 in beautiful Thousand Oaks, California. These are people who are not on the Pacific Region board of directors now. Each state is allowed a certain number of delegates in addition to the people who are on the board, according to our Bylaws. I need to know who your delegates are by October 1, 2026.

Representation

Delegate numbers are determined by number of State Garden Club members based on dues remitted to NGC by October 31st and additional dues remitted prior to March 31st. FROM NGC BYLAWS, Article XII, Section 2. B.

- a) Membership of 500 or less - two
- b) Membership of 501 to 1000 - three
- c) Membership of 1001 to 1500 - four
- d) Membership of 1501 to 2000 - five
- e) Membership of 2001 to 3000 - six
- f) Membership of 3001 to 4000 - seven
- g) Membership of 4001 to 5000 - eight
- h) Membership of 5001 to 6000 - nine
- i) Membership of 6001 to 8000 - ten
- j) Membership of 8001 to 12,000 - eleven
- k) Membership of 12,001 and above - twelve



The maximum number of delegates of any State Garden Club is twelve. Each State Garden Club shall be entitled to the same number of elected alternates as elected delegates. An alternate shall become the delegate when a vacancy occurs.

I know that it feels early, but it is something to think about at your upcoming state meetings.



PRESERVING CULINARY HERBS

Marva Lee Peterschick

Pacific Region 2025-2027 Chairman for Herbs

The Pacific Region area is diverse; some areas can grow herbs year- round while others need to harvest their herbs. Many parts of the herbs are saved from seeds, roots, stems, leaves, flowers, bulbs, or stamens depending on the herb.

You want to harvest herbs when most oils are present. This is when the buds open into full flowers. Cut early enough in the season so that new growth stimulated by pruning will not be winter-killed or depleted of the food reserves in the plant. Do not harvest too much at one time or growth will be stunted. The best time of day is on a dry sunny morning after the dew has dried, but before the sun dissipates the volatile oils.

You have many choices in drying herbs. Let's talk about each one slightly so you can make the best choice for your types.

Screen Drying: Works best with short stemmed leafy herbs such as thyme. Wash and blot dry your herbs. Strip fresh leaves from stems and spread thin on window screens covered with cheesecloth and propped up off the ground for good air circulation. Dry in the shade so they will not lose their oil content. Drying time will take from 4-7 days in dry weather. An attic or garage or some outdoor building can work to dry also.

Oven Drying: This type drying does not work well due to the uneven temperatures however if damp weather comes in the middle of the drying period, then oven-dry on baking sheets at low heat, about 250F, with the oven door open.

Bunch Drying: This works best with long-stemmed, leafy herbs. Tie into small bundles and hang them upside down. When dry, lay bunches in basket and strip leaves from one kind, grind up for cooking, and keep whole leaves for teas. If the herb is woody or has tiny leaves, such as thyme, put leaves and stem through food processor.

Dehydration: Dehydrators can produce the highest quality herbs because of the temperature control and air circulation. Preheat the dehydrator with the thermostat set for 95F. Some herbs may require heat as high as 105F, but temperatures any higher will ruin the flavor. Most herbs will require 2-4 hours to completely dry. Dried herbs are crisp and crumbly.

Microwaving: Wash first and dry thoroughly, patting dry. Line a micro-wave safe bowl with a few sheets of paper towels. This helps absorb any moisture released by the herbs. Make sure the towels cover the entire bottom of the bowl. If drying different types of herbs, separate them into different bowls or use different layers of paper towels to prevent the mingling of flavors. Start by microwaving herbs for short bursts of 20-30 seconds. This will

prevent them from over-heating or burning. After each burst, check closely to see how dry the herbs appear. Depending on moisture content, and wattage of your microwave, it might take several bursts to fully dry them. Avoid over-drying. Once herbs cool to the touch, and are completely dry, crumble them into a jar or storage container.

Freezing herbs: Some types of herbs are better to freeze than to dry; they include basil, fennel, dill, parsley, chervil and chives. Mint, tarragon, and sweet marjoram freeze well. Harvest and wash as you would for drying. Remove leaves and place them in a small plastic freezer bag. Label and date each container.

When using your preserved herbs, try a small amount, taste, and then use more if needed.



Terry Critchlow
Youth Committee Coordinator

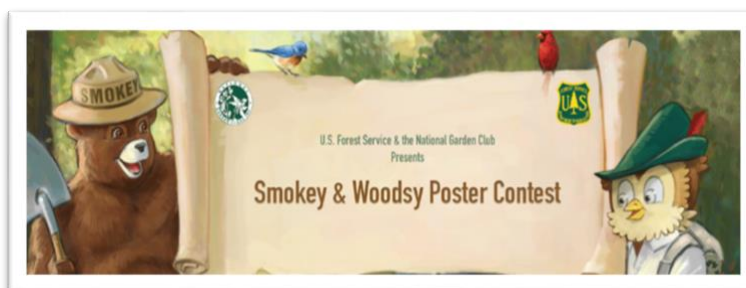
Presidents, Directors and Chairmen,

The 2027 Smokey Bear Woodsy Owl poster contest info and announcements are now on our web page. Also available, free from the forest service is a certificate of participation and the entry label to be attached to the back of the poster.

<https://gardenclub.org/smokey-bear-woody-owl-youth-poster-contest>



<https://www.symbols.gov/ngc-poster-contest>



We are working on updating the look of our youth web page, with a bit more color a bit more jazz.

<https://gardenclub.org/youth-awards-and-opportunities>

Spread the word.

Thank you to all who contributed to this issue. Where did the summer go?

See you in November.

In the meantime, Happy Labor Day, Happy Halloween.



Remember to send in your articles between

October 15th to October 31st

with November WACONIAH in the Subject line.

Myrna Cabanban, Editor

PrgcWaconiah@gmail.com