

MONTANA GARDENS



2023-25 MFGC President Diane Ward

Time flies when you're having fun! The State Officers Diane Ward, President and Cindy Carlton, 2nd Vice President visited each District at the end of September and the first week in October. Jeannie Bennett, 1st VP, was not feeling well enough to travel the many miles required to get from one District to the next. She was missed by everyone, and Cindy did her best to impersonate Jeannie's colorful personality!

We had so much fun seeing everyone and hearing the reports about the fantastic projects the club members are doing. I was very happy to learn that many clubs applied for NGC or MFGC grants to help them get their activities started or finished. I've shared pictures of some of the meetings on pages 3-4.

Congratulations to the Whitehall Garden Club on their 25th Anniversary! They had quite a spread—delicious salads and a beautifully decorated cake made by club president Kathy Ross for the occasion.

Our State Treasurer Glenna Waltee was happy to award the Glendive Garden Club an Endowment Grant of \$500. The members were thrilled to use it to purchase a projector for their club meetings. I want to emphasize that there is money in the Endowment Grant to help with your projects. Please take the time to apply for this grant; it can make all the difference in getting your planned undertaking off the ground.

SAVE THE DATES:

May 18-22, 2025 are the dates for the National Garden Club Convention. This will be held in North Charleston, SC at the Embassy Suites. If you want a taste of the South and some good ole Southern Hospitality, you won't want to miss this convention! All garden club members are invited to attend.

June 20-21, 2025 are the dates for the MFGC Annual Convention to be held in Helena. This is when our new officers are elected and installed. We are planning a great convention and invite all garden club members. Jim Sadler, Chair of the Nominating Committee, is seeking names for the following: 2nd VP, Treasurer and Recording Secretary. There is a leader in each of us! If you know of someone who could fill one of these positions, see his article inside and contact him.

On **February 18, 2025** at **10am** the **MFGC Winter Board Meeting** will be held via Zoom. One topic on the Agenda will be PLANT-A-TREE, formally known as Penny Pines. A minimum donation of \$50 and a 10% NGC transaction fee will be discussed. Another topic for discussion will be to decide if MFGC should purchase a brick to be placed in the Pathway of Success at the NGC headquarters. Mark your calendar now—all garden club members are welcome to attend. We'll send the Zoom link to each club president and state chairman. You don't want to miss this meeting.

GARDENING TIP Winter is just around the corner. By the time you get this issue of **Montana Gardens**, you will have put your beds to bed! Before you put that hose away, give your trees and shrubs a good watering but lay off the plant food. Mulch around their bases will help moderate winter cold. Finally, hold off on pruning as the wounds on trees and shrubs don't have time to heal and may cause more die back as winter progresses.

~ continued on next page

The holidays will be here before you know it! Indoor projects are in order now. Things like making wreaths and swags to sell at holiday shows or to give to the local nursing home are great and a fun activity for everyone. There's nothing better than the smell of fresh baked bread and cookies. Pot luck dinners and White Elephant gift exchanges are in order. Now is the time to relax, enjoy the company of family and friends, and think about making your New Year's Resolutions!



Happy Holidays
From my House to Yours

Diane

These are a few examples of Haiku written at the beginning of the Yellowstone District #10 Fall meeting held in Billings. It was fun hearing all the variations!

Gardening a gift I planted lots of veggies To harvest this fall

Diane Ward

Gardening a gift Flowers so bright and gay Smile enjoy happy Joyce Hendricks Gardening a gift
Pumpkins bright orange
call to us
Picking time is here
and
Gardening a gift
Soil, seed, sun, rain,
working hands
Heart raised high in joy
Linda Buckingham

Gardening a gift Sunshine flowers weed enjoy Happy place relax

Cindy Carlton

Club News Roundup





Whitehall Garden Club members and the beautiful table design and cake celebrating the club's 25th Anniversary.

Fall is such a fabulous time of the year – the leaves change from green to shades of yellow, orange and red. It's also a time when the bulbs and tubers we have planted pop their heads up and give us one last breath of nature's beauty.

Fall is also a time when children go "Trick-or-Treating". Mary Baughn, a flower show judge and designer, created a spooky design featuring a flying witch below. I photographed it but the second picture surprised me and is quite eerie. - Diane











Above left—The Bullhook Blossom Garden Club members.

Above and right — Josh Pecukonis, owner of the Garden Barn, presented a program on bulbs and

Jennifer Weiss demonstrated how to maintain garden tools at the Lewis & Clark District #4 meeting.

Left—Sherry Corneliusen's dahlias are amazing.

Below—The Glendive Garden Club received a \$500 Endowment Grant.



In other news, the **Life Members in Central District #5** held a fashion show fundraiser for high school senior students attending a trade school in the county. **Dearborn Garden Club** has completed another year of providing the community of Cascade with colorful flower-filled barrels along their city streets. Theses barrels feature holiday colors and decorations to bring in the season. The **Malta Dirt Daubers** encourage local businesses to do the same in the 80 flower boxes sponsored by the club.

The **Conrad Garden Club** is going to maintain the gardens and flower beds at the Logan Health—Conrad Assisted Living facility as their newest project. The members have been busy this summer. They beautify the landscaping at the Courthouse, Sheriff's Office, Fire Station, and the Senior Center among other areas in town. The Conrad Club organized in 1953.



Club 'Pumpulents' for sale at Cashman Nursery

The Belgrade Bloomers Garden Club grew pumpkins, succulents and gourds for their fundraiser and to donate to a dozen local civic organizations, including the staff at each elementary, junior and senior high school. Members donated \$500 to the Gallatin Food Bank this year.



Club News Roundup

continued

CONRAD GARDEN CLUB



Missoula Garden Club hosted a very successful 'Soup Fest' this fall. About 100 people purchased tickets for the delicious food and camaraderie. The club also sold ways and means items and netted \$800. Members make swags for door decorations and sell them this time of year, too. See the image to the left. Their funds are earmarked for a Gold Star installation in the Memorial Rose Garden.





Designer JoAnn Gibbons,
Design Excellence Award,
Award of Distinction. A good
demonstration of how color
can influence a design's
overall effect. The
complimentary colors of the
unique components are the
story here.



Dried Design by Jim Sadler. Painted leaves interpret rocket smoke in "Rocket to the Future" with dried fox tail lilies to represent the rocket.

Floral Designs Western Montana Fair



A petite design by Cheryl Carroll titled "Stay on Key." Notice that even though the original is only 5" tall when photographed, it is still in proportion. This is a hallmark of an excellent petite design.



Dried design by Gary Clark demonstrating the unique use of metal sculpture enhanced by dried materials.



Best of Iris Designs



Floral Designs

Missoula Iris and Peony Show



Blue Ribbon Winner



Blue Ribbon Winner
Iris Merlo is strikingly staged in front
of a white backdrop giving a dramatic
effect.



It's almost time—no, not for holidays. It's almost time to offer Flower Show School in Montana. We hope to offer the first class in Fall 2025, or at least Spring 2026.

Flower Show School (FSS) is a series of 4 classes that cover everything involved in having a flower show in your club/area. It qualifies you for participating and competing in flower shows offered by other organizations, too-like Iris and Dahlia and Rose Societies - even Fairs and 4-H/FFA. National Garden Club (NGC) determines course content, certifies instructors, and provides support. NGC accredited judges are very well respected and in demand throughout the state. And, it is so much fun to be in a flower show!

Each course is $2 - 2\frac{1}{2}$ days with each divided into 2 hours of Flower Show Procedure, 5 hours of Horticulture, and 5 hours of Design. If you intend to be an accredited Flower Show Judge, and we hope at least 8 people will, you will also take a short test at the end of each class, that is the half-day part of the classes. You can take the course just to learn, too. The cost is the same, and we are working on that. We hope to subsidize the cost to students.

The 4 courses will be offered over a 3-year period at different places where club sponsors help organize and conduct the classes. We will try to get inexpensive/free rooms for classes and overnight guests. We already have interest from Missoula, Bozeman, Great Falls, Billings, and Glendive. We welcome everyone.

The Judge's Council is an official NGC association of all Montana judges that works hand in hand with the Montana FSS Chairperson Susan Billmayer. We try to lead the way to help new designers, exhibitors, and judges undertake flower shows. Ask any judge in your district to get more local info. Go to the NGC website, gardenclub.org, select the Schools menu, and you will find a lot more info about the FSS.

Thank you. Questions? Email me at: MFGC.jeanniebennett@gmail.com

Jeannie Bennett, 1st Vice President

The beauty of winter in Montana takes my breath away. I am so joyful for all the Montana Federation activity this past year and for the 2025 festivities ahead. I hope you each find special times this winter. Thank you for all the friendship. Jeannie



Dried floral designs by Linda Lind-



The 2024 RMR meeting was held at the Good Earth State Park in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.



A Monarch Butterfly that hatched at the meeting. It was later tagged and released.

President Diane Ward and Phyllis White attended this year's RMR meeting. Phyllis is the RMR Facebook coordinator. They donated a huge basket of Montana goodies for the fundraising auction.



2024 Rocky Mountain Region Award Winners from Montana

<u>Award</u>	Name of Award	Winner and Award Level
1C	Garden Therapy	Bullhook Blossoms Garden Club, 1st Place
		Provides a service to a group of People (Valentine Floral Workshop)
1B	Garden Therapy	Belgrade Bloomers Garden Club, 1st Place
		Teaches Gardeners of Different Abilities. Worked with residents of
		the Gallatin Rest Home to stimulate their sight, hearing and touch.
3D	Writing in a State Publication	Phyllis White and Norman DeNeal, co-editors, Montana Gardens,
		1st Place
4C	Horticulture Excellence	Bullhook Blossoms Garden Club, 1st Place
		Expand Peony bed at the Hill County Courthouse
8A	Garden Tours	Bullhook Blossoms Garden Club, 1st Place.
		Monthly selection of yards including a Halloween Yard. Signs are
		placed in the yard and an article appears in the paper.
11	Conservation and Environmental Concerns	Bullhook Blossoms Garden Club, 1st Place
		Project that incorporates wildflowers or native plant materials
		Members gathered at Marilyn Grannels' cabin in Beaver Creek Park where they toured the meadow in front of her cabin that was filled with wild flowers
14	Landscape Design	Bullhook Blossoms Garden Club, 1st Place
		Project making a significant contribution to a facility
		Expanded the Peony bed at the Hill County Courthouse
18	Blue Star/ Gold Star Highway Marker	Bullhook Blossoms Garden Club
		*Established a Gold Star Marker in Havre, 1st Place
		*Established a Blue Star Highway Marker, By-Way Marker and Gold Star Memorial Marker in Harve, 2nd Place

Congratulations!

Garden Therapy

The Miracle of the Small Ones

We live in the most exciting epoch in history of expanding human knowledge. And, most of that knowledge has to do with knowing things larger...and smaller than we have ever before imagined. This is the era of space telescopes and electron microscopes that have opened worlds to us that a person could not have imagined even 50 years ago.

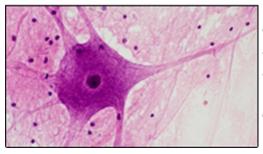


Norman DeNeal, Chairman

Several years ago driving home on my way from work, I saw someone raking up autumn leaves and placing them in plastic bags. Concerned that the bags would just be thrown into a garbage can, I asked if I could have the leaves because I "would turn them into flowers". The distinguished looking middle-aged gentleman introduced himself, recognized me from somewhere, and realized what I was proposing. That is that the leaves would be composted to make great soil for flowers.

The man was Dr. Pete Sorini who was probably Butte's most beloved doctor and a neurosurgeon. We talked for about 20 minutes during which he mentioned that he had just read an article in a French medical journal that noted that gardeners typically live longer than their peers. The premise of the article was that gardeners "play" in the soil, and in that activity some bacterial and viral cells break through the skin barrier and then inhabit one's body which provides immunity to diseases to which non-gardeners might not have immunity. Sadly, the doctor ironically died from brain cancer a few years later.

Over the next few years Dr. Sorini's conversation stuck enough to encourage further research as to why gardeners generally outlive their contemporaries. It all has to do with what in this last century science has revealed to health and medicine. The key was found in the smallest living organisms on the planet, namely viruses and bacteria. While both of these organisms can kill, usually they help us. Indeed, all of us would die within days if both viruses and bacteria were not working within our bodies.



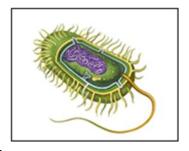
Human Cell

In only three tablespoons of good soil there are enough living organisms to equal the total human population on the planet, namely about 8 billion living individuals. Within the human body there are about 36 trillion cells. That is 36 followed by 12 zeros. And within the human body, there are also about 380 trillion individual viral cells, or over 10 times as many viral cells as there are human cells. Also, in a human body there are typically 38 trillion bacterial cells, or about just as many bacterial cells as there are human cells.



Viral Cell

Viruses are the most common microorganisms on earth with about 100 million types. Both viruses and bacterial cells are much smaller than human cells; anywhere from 10 to 1000 times smaller. Indeed, when it comes to just bacterial cells on our body in the two most common areas where these bacterial cells live it is on our forearms with over 44 species and then behind our ears that typically have about 15 species of bacteria. But in terms of mass all the viruses in your body would together only be about 1/10th to 1/1000th the size of a poppy seed.



Bacterial Cell

(continued on next page)

The point is because of the size of viral and bacterial cells combined with the porosity of skin, it is easy to see how these microorganisms can easily move from where they were in the soil to where they can enter and become part of our bodies. The effect on the whole is usually beneficial, and why gardeners outlive their peers. This is no accident. Over time there has been a continual evolution of bacteria living with viruses in such a way that the bacteria "learn" to reject harmful viruses, and human cells come to reject harmful bacteria and viruses. In short, evolution favors life over death, though obviously there will always be exceptions resulting in a negative outcome. Thus, the cook with a sanitized countertop is at a disadvantage to a gardener with dirty hands. So other than getting exercise, this is medically why gardening is a healthy therapy. In the next reflection on garden therapy, the psychological advantage of gardening will be explored. •

Conservation

Ever Wonder —

Why is roadside vegetation burned each year?

WELL -

Some are **Prescribed Burns** (permit needed) for

- soil stabilization
- storm water management
- weed/brush control

Fires help maintain habitats for wildlife and rare plants
Fire can control ticks and/or parasitic worms in livestock areas

Agriculture Burning

- removes crop residues
- removes orchard, vinyard prunings
- removes trees/weeds
- prevents disease
- controls pests
- plant matter is broken down releasing nutrients into the soil to promote future plant growth
- roadside ditches control dead plant matter that builds up quickly
- helps seed new plants. Some seeds have thick outer shells which are broken by fire, then deposited in rich nutrient soil for growing

Native Americans used fire to manage grasslands. They saw improved plant growth after a fire and how the animals they hunted gravitated to the new growth. By setting spring fires when the ground is wet, has low wind, and humidity is high makes the fires easy to control and direct. Ugly burns turn into lush, rich vegetation.

Dig Deeper -

https://deq.mt.gov/air/resources

https://apps.msuextension.org/montguide/guide.html?sku=MT202302AG

https://deq.mt.gov/air/Programs/burning



Mary Baughn, Chair

Nominating Committee

In the life of every organization comes the time when the current officers' terms end. New officers are in due course nominated and elected. In June at the Helena convention the First Vice, Jeannie Bennett who will be the President Elect will be installed as President for the 2025 to 2027 term. Cindy Carlton is automatically nominated and upon election will move up to First Vice President. We will elect a new Second Vice President. We will also elect a new Treasurer and a Recording Secretary. Charged with confirming officers who will move up and finding new nominees is the Nomination Committee. As immediate past president my duty is to chair the committee.



James Sadler, Chairman

The Nomination Committee is concentrating on the office of the Second Vice President as candidates for Treasurer and Recording Secretary have been identified. The Second Vice President term is where a person learns about the organization. Duties of the Second Vice President are assigned by the President. Presently the office is in charge of awards. Some trips are expected such as attending State Conventions and District Meetings. It also would be helpful if the person has a working knowledge of computer programs and uses email. Mileage expenses are paid by the Federation. It is expected that the person elected will agree to move up to President.

At the June 2024 convention in Malta, the membership nominated and elected Cheryl Carroll representing District 2; Barb Andreozzi District 3; Phyllis White District 4; Sue O'Leary District 5; Susan Yurman District 6; Mary Davis District 10 Cindi Byron District 12 to serve on this committee. While the committee is officially charged with finding nominations, it is really up to the whole membership to help in the search.

My experience has been that announcing at a meeting "Is anyone interested in being nominated" generally does not produce candidates. By the nature of things garden club members will do anything asked if they are able. They may not volunteer but do prefer being asked. Most Folks are busy and to take on added new responsibility need to be encouraged. Folks appreciate it when their talents are acknowledged, they generally do not like to place themselves forward as they may not see themselves as others do. In other words, folks generally do not nominate themselves. The Committee's task then is complicated. We need to identify talented people and have a plan on how to approach the prospect.

It is this complicated need that I am appealing to the general membership for help. Do you have a person in your district that has special talents and leadership abilities? The position of second vice-president has plenty of time to learn the duties and time to rehearse before they become State President. A candidate needs not to have experience holding state offices but rather to have demonstrated leadership in your club. If you have such a possible candidate, call a member of the nomination committee or me. We will readily interview the person.

The nomination committee thus needs your input. Our duties will be more successful if upon reading this article, you decide to suggest a person to the nomination committee. My term as a State Officer was one of the highlights of my life. The friends I made across the state, the clubs I visited, the discussions I had are very special to me. The adventure of attending National Conventions in cities that I would not necessarily have visited was very educational. My time as an officer occurred because of the encouragement of friends who put my name forward. Being a state officer was not on my agenda. My club supported me and spoke favorably to the nomination committee. When asked, I was very pleased to know that my club was behind me. I found that members across the state were very supportive. I also found that I was given time to find my legs and grow in the position so that when I became President I was prepared. I was never alone and could reach out for help any time I needed it. •

88th MFGC Convention June 20-21, 2025—Helena "Last Chance Gold Rush"



History and Gardening will come together next June in Helena. The officers are hosting the 88th annual Federation meeting with the help of surrounding clubs—Dillon, Gallatin Empire, Belgrade, Townsend, Butte, Anaconda, and Great Falls. Life Members and Judges Council are lending a hand, too. National Garden Clubs, Inc. President Donna Donnelly will attend.

One of the highlights will be a Small Standard Design Speciality Flower Show similar to the one held in Billings in 2022, which was so much fun.

Here's a look at the tentative flower show schedule — all members are welcome to enter. More information will be printed in the next issue of **Montana Gardens**. Put your creative thinking caps on and plan to bring a floral design!

Frontier Days

Section A Table Artistry Section "Pretty dishes make food taste better."

- Class 1: "TEA at the Montana Club" a functional table set for 1 person. Dimensions allotted 12."
- Class 2: "PIONEER'S FEAST" an Exhibition Table must contain some vessel meant for the service of food and set within the allotted space of 12"
- Class 3: "TRAILBLAZER'S PICNIC" an Exhibition Table must contain some vessel meant for the service of food set within the allotted space of 12"

Section B Designers Choice Section "Adventure is found where you seek it."

- Class 4: "GOLD RUSH" 5" designers' choice.
- Class 5: "SCOUT'S DISCOVERY" 5" designers' choice
- Class 6: "CATHEDRAL CHOIR" a Multi-Rhythmic 5" design.

Section C Award of Distinction Section "Roadside treasures can be fascinating."

- Class 7: "TIMELESS JOURNEY" 8", Designer's Choice.
- Class 8: "UNSTOPPABLE SPIRIT" 8", Designer's choice.
- Class 9: "WESTWARD HO" 8", Spatial Thrust.



Cindy's Dispatch,

Since the state convention, your Executive Board has traveled to the 8 district meetings during the latter part of September and early October. I reported on Awards and gave stats on the number of participating clubs and monies and certificates handed out at our convention in Malta. I enjoyed hearing about the many activities and community projects reported on by our 22 club presidents and district directors. Some of these activities include planting barrel planters along Main Streets and trail maintenance, planting, and weeding in Central Montana. I enjoyed learning through various programs,



such as 'How to Plant Bulbs', 'Invasive Plant Species', and 'How to Grow Garlic' to name a few. It is fun to eat delicious snacks and lunches provided by members (and share a recipe or two) and become better acquainted with each of you. I truly look forward to this annual event!

As far as Awards go, a new award concerning 'Pollinators' will be posted to the website in the next month or so. The award will be sponsored by Kathy Waters of the Malta Dirt Daubers Club. It will be sponsored with a \$20.00 monetary award and a certificate. Like all MFGC Awards, the deadline for applications will be April 15th. Award applications include a cover sheet and 2 pages of photos for a total of three pages on the front sides only. Award information is on the MFGC website. Also, NGC awards are due into national by **December 15th**. Awards are submitted through me. Thank you!

I am enjoying this warm Fall weather and using it to finish preparing my gardens and lawn for winter- cutting back irises and daylilies, mulching, and draining hoses to name a few chores. The weather will change soon! I hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year 2025 spent with family and friends.

Cindy Carlton, 2nd Vice President

Wishing all of our MFGC members a blessed Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Bearborn Garden Club

Greetings to all our gardening friends during this bright time of year! May you experience the light of laughter, the warmth of love, and the joy of gratitude this season and beyond.

Belgrade Bloomers

Gallatin Empire Garden Club wishes everyone the special things that the holiday bring: family, friends, sparkling snow, hot chocolate, twinkling lights, joyful music and giving to others! Nappy Nolidays and a peaceful New Year!

Oh what good times await us!. Rakes, hoes, mowers, and spades are carefully stowed for a long winter's rest. The snow shovels and scrapers will appear soon enough but the air smells so clean we can't complain. Missoula Garden Club wishes a wonderful Season to all of our brothers and sisters in the Montana Federation.

Notes, Dates and Links

Warm wishes to all our gardening families and friends. May you have a joyous holiday season full of love, peace, and health! Montana Gardens Staff



Notes from the Treasurer —

Plant-A-Tree Donations:

\$68, Gumbo Gals Garden Club of Nashua

New Members:

Butte Garden Club —

Carol Compton, Bob/Denise Delakovich, Jenny Ellis, Linda Lodders, Maggie Crowley, Lyle/Cheri Cusson, Sherry Thomas and Steve McGrath

Dearborn Garden Club —

Vickie Sheppard

Rainbow Garden Club —

Lillian Fowler

Would your club like to host the MFGC conventions in 2026 or 2027? Do you need more information on how to do that? Contact Jeannie Bennett or Cindy Carlton, and they will give you more details.

Images in this issue provided by Diane Ward, Jim Sadler, Cindy Carlton, Jeannie Bennett, Christie Copeland, Mary Baughn, Norm DeNeal and Phyllis White.

Contact information for Officers, Chairmen, District Directors and others is available in the MFGC website's Member Section. Please send ALL change of address information to Beverly Geary, Montana Gardens Circulation Editor, bevmg@hotmail.com

Please update Club information on the MFGC website by contacting Elaine Wood, mfgweb@gtfalls.com

In Memoriam —

Madelyn Anderson, 99, passed away in October, 2024. A lifelong learner and contributor to her community, Madelyn spent 60 years as a proud member of the Malta Dirt Daubers Garden Club, earning the distinction of National Garden Clubs Master Flower Show Judge with many flower show design achievement awards.



Dates to Note —

MFGC and NGC meetings are open to Montana Garden Club Members. View the MFGC Directory in the Member's Section of the website for chairmen address information.

December 10, NGC Awards digital books of evidence due to Cindy Carlton. Refer to gardenclub.org for more information.

January 7, Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl Poster Contest entries due to Jennifer Strzelczyk.

January 15, NGC Poetry Contest entries due to Louisa Tierney. See the NGC website for details. gardenclub.org

February 18, MFGC BOARD MEETING, 10:00, ZOOM link will be emailed to the clubs and chairmen.

April 15, MFGC State Awards, Sections A, B, C, D. Send to Cindy Carlton.

April 15, MFGC State Awards, Section E. Send to Vicky Barbieri.

May 18-22, NGC Annual Convention, North Charleston, South Carolina

June 20-21, MFGC 88th Convention and Installation, Helena.

August 22-23, Rocky Mountain Region Annual Meeting, Cheyenne, WY.

September 4-5, Flower Show Symposium, Missoula.

MONTANA Gardens

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The Montana Federation of Garden Clubs. Inc. promotes education, resources and networking opportunities for its members and Montana youth to promote the love of gardening, floral design and civic and environmental responsibility.

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Editors reserve the right to edit all submissions for content and length. Submissions are encouraged

Submission Deadlines: April 15, 2025—Spring July 15, 2025 – Summer/Fall November 15, 2025– Winter

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Montana Garden Clubs

