

The Garden Clubs in District 1 have had very busy and productive months since early January 2024. Besides completing many of their current projects, the clubs have planned and programmed many summer activities that will serve their communities and their neighborhoods.

In February the Federated Garden Clubs of Huntsville and Madison had their "Make it, Sell it, Bake it, and Grow It" auction. It was a huge success. The Federation made 3 to 4 times more money than they thought possible, which was wonderful news to members as they all worked very hard to fund, protect, and improve their "Canopy of Trees" activities in the Huntsville area.

Cultura Garden Club in Russellville has had many interesting and informative speakers as well as planning for their Spring fundraiser which is selling flowers from a local nursery. In January, members learned how to make cut blooms last in their decorations as well as information concerning types of roses. In February a farmer from Olive Farm shared information about the creamery that is made in our country as the club focused on local farm to table items. In March a Franklin County Extension Person spoke on how to become a Master Gardener and April's meeting was held in a local woman's home who grows a wide variety of herbs and the many uses of these herbs. As always Cultura members will plant flowers in downtown Russellville for spring & summer for the enjoyment of all.

The Redstone Garden Club is always very active in year-round projects. Members plant and maintain flowers, shrubs, and trees at two garden areas on Redstone Arsenal near Gate 8, which is one of the main entrances, and around an electronic sign at a main entrance on the post. The club is very involved in Recycling projects. At each meeting items such as glass jars, bottles, corks for crafts, calendars, cards, notepads for elderly homes and senior centers, and mascara wands for wildlife rescue used to smooth feathers/fur and remove parasites are always requested. Programs so far in 2024 are: Safety and Crime-prone areas to include "Defensive Plantings", "There is No Climate Crisis by Dr. Roy Spencer", "Out of This World Gardening" a NASA program to grow plants in outer space, and NASA's AI project to detect lightning prior to sporting events.

Members from Blossomwood Garden Club go monthly to the Manna House Hydroponic Garden to harvest lettuce which feeds families with food insecurity issues. The Madison Garden Club said its plant sale is the focus as it's the big fundraiser and the opportunity to help Madison residents with garden and lawn questions/concerns.

Radiance Garden Club members received insightful information about the Learning Garden Initiative which is an integral part of the Lawrence County School System's signature school. It plays a crucial role in introducing students to the principles of gardening and sustainability, fostering a hands-on educational experience. The club also enjoyed a presentation of the history and symbolic significance of herbs as well as other demonstrations of table décor.

The Rivermont GC will put flower arrangement in the Helen Keller home on the weekend of the Helen Keller Festival.

Rural Acres of Waco Club reminded members of the importance of trees. Members were encouraged to plant one tree.

The Red Bay Garden Club this spring became very active in finding a place to create a native plant garden. New officers were elected, and club members planted an amaryllis bulb for each member to take home and enjoy.

A special thanks to Town and Country, Rivermont, and Helen Keller Garden Clubs for their planning and hard work on our Spring District 1 meeting on April 25, 2024.

Carolyn J. Ellinger,

District 1 Director