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CP WINTER 2013  
GARDEN CLUB OF THE UPPER KEYS  
MARILYN ROGERS  
PO BOX 1445  
TAVERNIER FL 33070-1445



## National Flower Arrangers

### Calendar of Events

*Stay tuned – there will be more!*

#### 2013 Fall Board Meeting, St. Louis, MO

- September 26, Thursday evening  
Design Dinner Program  
John Hosek "Our Surroundings"

#### 2014 National Convention, Norman, OK

- May 2, Friday afternoon  
Design /Demo
- May 2, Friday evening
- Design Banquet Program  
Sponsored by NFA  
"Designing with James Johnson"

#### 2015 Convention, Louisville KY

- Design Dinner Program
- Design/Demo Workshop

#### 2015 Fall Board Meeting, St Louis, MO

#### 2016 National Convention, MI

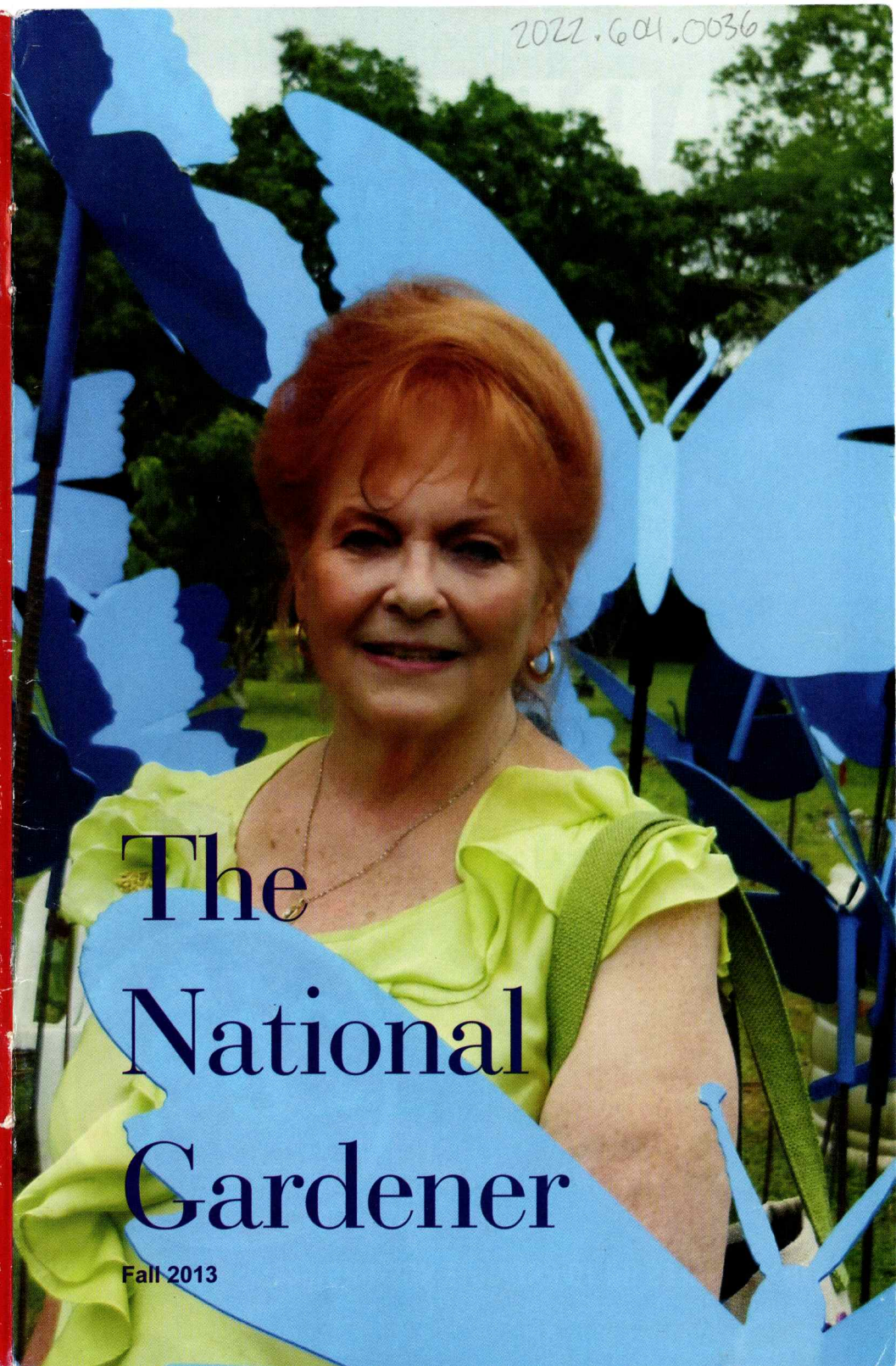
- May 3, Tuesday morning  
Design Workshop
- May 3, Tuesday evening  
Design Dinner Program

#### 2016 Fall Board Meeting, Portland, ME

- September 26, Sunday  
Floral Art in Bloom Reception  
Victorian Mansion

# The National Gardener

Fall 2013





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# The National Gardener

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## National Garden Clubs, Inc.

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70 National Affiliate Member Organizations  
654 International Affiliate Member Organizations

**Linda G. Nelson**, President  
543 Lakefair Place N., Keizer, OR 97303-3590

## The National Gardener

**Susan Davidson**, Editor  
102 South Elm Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63119  
Ph: 314-968-1664; [susand102@charter.net](mailto:susand102@charter.net)  
Direct all advertising inquiries to the  
TNG Editor, Susan Davidson  
**TNG Circulation**, 4401 Magnolia Avenue,  
St. Louis, MO 63110; 314-776-7574

## NGC Headquarters

Monday-Friday 9:00 am — 4:30 pm CST  
4401 Magnolia Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63110  
Tel: 314-776-7574 Fax: 314-776-5108  
E-mail: [headquarters@gardenclub.org](mailto:headquarters@gardenclub.org)  
Internet: [www.gardenclub.org](http://www.gardenclub.org)

**Michelle Smith**, Ext: 14; Executive Director  
**Teri Virga**, Ext: 17; Member Services  
1-800-550-6007 - Orders Only, Please  
**Bill Trapp**, Ext: 12; Accountant  
**Brittany Patzius**, Ext: 11; Accounting Assistant  
**Kathy Romine**, Ext: 15; Administrative Assistant  
**Katie Roth**, Ext: 10; School Secretary

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## The Cover

**NGC President Linda Nelson**  
Photographed in Villavicencio, Colombia,  
during the 33rd National Standard  
Advanced Flower Show "When the  
Harps Play, the Flowers Sing."





# Keeping In Touch

NOVEMBER 2013



Linda G. Nelson

2012-2015 President

"Autumn arrives in radiant splendor and is but a fleeting yet exhilarating bliss." (*borrowed from a state publication*) We are in the midst of this brief splendor across our states, and it is my great fortune to view it from Tennessee to New England to Indiana and finally in Bethesda, Maryland as I visit our members. Tennessee meets in Paris Landing State Park near Buchanan for their 60<sup>th</sup> annual Conservation Camp with speakers on such programs as Water, Bees, and Native plants... and Leaf-O (as in Bingo) with prizes! It is encouraging that our states are embracing the tenets of our Conservation Pledge and educating their members on the impact their choices have on our natural resources. *Our Choices do Matter.*

Did you know that 97% of bugs we find in our gardens are good bugs? They do not harm the plants. They eat pests, pollinate the plants and improve our soil quality. To learn more about good bugs/bad bugs go to <http://bugguide.net>. And did you know that if we will compost old plant material, grass clippings, leaves, weeds, and paper, even cardboard, we can keep 25% of what usually fills the landfills out and turn it into good stuff for our soil? *Our Choices do Matter.*

Did you know that 1 out of every 3 bites of food we eat must be pollinated by bees? Alarming, the bees are dying off for unknown reasons. *Time* magazine had this focus as their cover story in their August 19, 2013 issue. They state "we are very close to

only the shape shape and surface of the container but the relative height, weight and shape of the plants that it will contain.

Individually, the concept of Form encompasses the outside dimensions of container, leaves, flowers and other materials. While the form of a pot can be as simple as the generic top-heavy terracotta trapezoid, expand its horizon by building out with slabs of added stone, tracteries of steel or chunks of tile. Think of leaves, fruits, and flowers as concrete building materials. Use them to assemble the foundations of good container gardening. The form of additional materials, such as slabs of tile or glass, outcroppings of stone or inclusions of shells, bamboo rods, and wooden beams should all be considered in completing the basic design of the container.

Texturally, the design of a container hinges on the knowledge of mature plant characteristics. Plants come in all sizes and shapes--play the heaviest and coarsest against the lightest and most delicate. Knowing that a mature leaf on a Banana (*Musa spp.*) or an Elephant Ear (*Colocasia spp.*) can grow to enormous proportions with a very sleek finish would suggest a pairing with equally bold lacey-leafed Elderberry (*Sambucus*) or Sumac (*Rhus.*) All of which are done with such creative ease at the garden.

In considering Mass, force the weight of a



**Containers are massed to impress. They focus attention on the combinations and meticulous horticulture.**

top-heavy lollipop of topiary to balance against the drape of cascading vine. Group a selection of both large and small containers. Use the rule of threes to pull together a cohesive grouping with rhythmic balancing. Pair

tall with short, round with oval, textured with smooth to create a naturalistic whole.

At Chanticleer, knowledge of horticulture assists the designers in using just the right mature characteristic any plant will exhibit as its seasonal peak. But knowledge of plants is a learned skill. Investigate a plant that's new to your palette by using the digital interface of smart phones, computer searches, or iPad images. By constantly refreshing your sense of art through the flickering lens of Pinterest, Google Images, Shutterfly, Snapfish or Flickr you will be renewing and invigorating your own definition of beauty. The Rooster Crows at dawn. We should all be awake and sensitive of the changing world around us.

—**Kirk R. Brown** (*author, horticulturist, designer and international lecturer*) is executive officer for Garden Writers Association. He and his recreations of John Bartram and Frederick Law Olmsted appear at international conferences and symposia with motivational keynote presentations and dozens of unique lectures. He has taught fourteen units of the Landscape Design School's certification programming. His landscape designs have won awards from PPA, PHS and PLNA, while his message of Sustainability carries through all of his design, business, dramatic and horticultural communications. He can be read at [www.JohnBartramLives.com](http://www.JohnBartramLives.com).