



# GROWING TOGETHER

Plantation Lakes Garden Club, Millsboro, Delaware

A Member of National Garden Clubs, Central Atlantic Region of State Garden Clubs, and Delaware Federation of Garden Clubs

## MAY 2022

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### *May Celebrations*

- 5<sup>th</sup> Cinco de Mayo
- 8<sup>th</sup> Mother's Day
- 21<sup>st</sup> Armed Forces Day
- 30<sup>th</sup> Memorial Day



*Donate your coins for the National Garden Clubs' Penny Pines project – saving forests \$68 at a time.*

<https://www.gardenclub.org/penny-pines>  
Mary Balasi, PLGC Chair



### MAY PROGRAM

#### *Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup> – Delaware Botanic Garden Tour*

- 9:00 am General meeting Flex Room at *The Landing*.
- 10:15 am Depart for Delaware Botanic Garden
- 11:00 am Tour begins.

**Wear comfortable walking shoes!**



DELAWARE  
BOTANIC  
GARDENS  
AT PEPPER CREEK

*Your mind is a garden; your thoughts are the seeds.  
You can grow flowers, or you can grow weeds.*

# ACTIVITIES

## SPRING PLANT SALE

Day One of the Spring Plant Sale was a great success with only 10 plants left at the end of the day. Deputy Ways and Means Chair Ralph Darr was pressed into action to pick up more plants for the second day. The beautiful weather provided an opportunity to showcase the sale in front of the Community Center offering visibility to neighbors walking and driving through the area. The cashiers reported brisk traffic early in the day as the pre-orders were picked up. Day Two of the plant sale was equally as profitable as the first day. The few plants that remained at the end of the second day will be used in the Youth Garden on May 21<sup>st</sup>.



There were no empty seats at the May Basket demonstrations that were provided each day by the dynamic duo of Betty Baeschlin and Sylvia Heidbreder. One of the baskets will be on display at *The Landing* and the other was given to our Corresponding Secretary, Patti Kircher, who is recovering from surgery.



Kudos to the committee members who gave their all to make the 2022 Spring Plant Sale a success. Many hours were spent behind the scenes in preparation for the sale and many hours were spent at the two-day sale to generate one of the most successful plant sales in PLGC history. And thank you to all our neighbors and friends who supported the sale.

## BLUE STAR MEMORIAL

Garden club members with help from several spouses performed a Spring cleanup of the Blue Star Memorial Garden on Friday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> during the plant sale event.



The pollinator plants that were planted last Spring and survived the over-zealous HOA landscaping crews have been supplemented with wormwood, lavender, purple salvia, delphinium, gaillardia, and dianthus perennials. Lantana and celosia annuals are included in this year's plantings. Thanks to all for the great group effort.

## OPEN HOUSE

The Membership Committee and garden club members were fully prepared for the event on Tuesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>. Cookies, beverages, floral arrangements for the tables were in place. Unfortunately, the fact that *The Landing* is closed on Tuesdays compounded by the blustery weather and the last-minute



HOA meeting at the Community Center appear to have been deterrents for guests who were expected to attend the event. Those PLGC members who were present enjoyed conversation and laughs, though, and chalked up the experience to a dry run for next time!

# NEWS FOR MEMBERS

## PLGC Members Honored

Members of Plantation Lakes Garden Club who joined in 2016 and 2017 were honored at our April meeting with the presentation of a magnetic name tag that features the club logo. Time constraints prevented listing all the contributions these members have made to our membership, affiliates, and the community. Each month two members will be featured in this section.

**Debbie Darr (2016) PLGC President** Debbie Darr is serving her second term as President, providing leadership through the difficult COVID years and overseeing a rebound in membership during the 2021-2022 return to in-person meetings. Debbie has chaired the **PLGC Ways and**

**Means Committee** since 2018, helping the club to raise funds for our club projects. This is the largest committee, and, under Debbie's leadership, our plant sales have expanded into two-day events that now include activities for children. As one of her collateral duties, Debbie also serves as a non-voting member of every PLGC committee – a time-consuming and important leadership role. Debbie is a life member of DFGC.

**Patricia Minnigh (2017)** Upon joining PLGC, Pat immediately joined the **PLGC Photography Committee**. She has a real talent for taking great candid photos that have often been featured in our hard-bound scrapbooks and on our website. In 2019, Pat was elected to the Executive

Board as **PLGC Treasurer**, with the collateral duty of chair of the **Finance Committee** and she is serving a second term in that role. Additionally, she serves on the **Membership Committee** and **Blue Star Memorial Committee**. Pat is also on the Delaware Federation of Garden Clubs Board as chair of the Delaware Blue Star Memorial Committee. Pat is a life member of DFGC.

## DFGC Meetings

### Wednesday, June 15, 2022

10:00 a.m. Dover Modern Maturity Center  
1121 Forrest Avenue, Dover, DE  
Awards Presented

### Wednesday, November 16, 2022

10:00 a.m. Hyatt Place – Dewey Beach  
1301 Coastal Highway

## CAR-SGC Annual Meeting

November 2 – 3 **SEVEN SUPER BLOOMS THAT CHANGED OUR WORLD**  
Seven Springs Mountain Resort  
Champion, Pennsylvania  
<https://www.car-sgc.org/conference>

The CAR-SGC annual conference rotates among the seven member entities. Due to COVID restrictions, Delaware was cancelled for 2020 and Pennsylvania was postponed for 2021. There will be workshops and tours. One tour will be to the Frank Lloyd-Wright House at Fallingwater and the other will be to the Flight 93 National Memorial. Registration will be opening soon.

## Looking Ahead

### UPCOMING PLGC PROGRAMS

#### Sunday, May 1 – May Basket Display

All Day Front Porches in Plantation Lakes

#### Thursday, May 5 Monthly Meeting

11:00 am Delaware Botanic Garden Tour

#### Saturday, May 21 – Community Fun Day

#### Thursday, June 2 Monthly Meeting

12:30 pm Patriot Cruise Historic Tour of St. Michael's



## THIS AND THAT

### HOW TO GARDEN WITH PERLITE POTTING SOIL

Perlite, a natural wonder born from volcanoes, is an inexpensive soil additive that will help your garden plants grow faster and larger.

Those little squishy white balls in your potting soil aren't Styrofoam. They're actually perlite as known as volcanic popcorn. In the building industry, perlite is used in ceiling tiles and lightweight masonry fillers. In gardening soil, it's an expensive additive with a wealth of benefits.



#### What is Perlite Soil?

In nature, the mineral perlite comes from water-saturated obsidian, a volcanic glass mined primarily in Greece, the U.S., Turkey and Japan. To turn it into a garden ingredient, it's crushed and heated to around 900°F. That volcanic popcorn is then sold as a soil additive or mixed in with potting soil and seed-starting mixes. Hydroponic gardeners also use it.

#### Benefits of Perlite Soil

Perlite's main benefit is its high porosity. That's why it's so popular in gardening. Other benefits include:

- Helps soil drainage, which prevents root rot and increases oxygen to roots;
- Helps retain added soil nutrients;
- Made from naturally occurring compounds with no toxic chemicals;
- Neutral pH;
- Retains its shape in a soil mix, even under pressure;
- Inexpensive and readily available;
- Increases aeration.

Perlite allows for better airflow around the roots of plants, thus encouraging faster growth and a bigger harvest.

### Disadvantages of Perlite Soil

While Perlite is truly a gardener's friend, it does have a few downsides:

- Can blow away in the wind or float in excess water;
- Doesn't add nutrients to soil;
- Not a renewal resource.

#### Is Perlite Soil Safe?

As a naturally occurring mineral, perlite is considered safe and nontoxic. However, when working with fine grades of perlite, wear a mask and protective eyewear to prevent respiratory problems and eye irritations. And keep it away from kids and pets.



#### How to Use Perlite in Gardening

Gardeners use perlite in several applications:

- Soil mixes. Buy it pre-mixed into soils at a garden center or make your own by mixing up to one-third part perlite with your soil. For succulents and orchids, you can use more.
- Garden beds. Every few years, add a two-inch layer with compost and other soil amendments. It's optimal to work it into the top six to 12 inches, but some people just scatter it and let it work its way in over time.
- Propagating cuttings and seeds. Put root cuttings in a small jar or plastic bag with moistened perlite.

#### Perlite vs. Vermiculite

Perlite and vermiculite both improve moisture retention and help aerate soil. Vermiculite is ideal for plants that need lots of water because perlite dries out faster.

*Reference: Ebert, Karuna (Updated January 18, 2022) Family Handyman Online.*

*Photos: Getty Images*