

GCA 2024

ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

The GCA Annual Meeting is always an impressive event. It is such an honor for us to be part of the 199 GCA clubs and this year's 576 attendees.

The 2024 GCA Annual Meeting, "Beyond the Green" was held in Hartford, CT, the last weekend in April. It coincided with our Daffodil Show, so sadly, I couldn't attend that this year. All clubs sent their President and most also a delegate. I was thrilled to have Mary Ellen Ferrel join me as our delegate. Other NGC members were also involved. Nina King was a judge for the Flower Show, Penny Lisi helped with a shift and Gina Crenshaw also attended. If there were more NGC members, I am not aware and apologize if they have been omitted.

Our schedule was packed from the moment we arrived on Friday to the post meeting optional trip to Newport on Monday. Friday afternoon, we met the GCA 2024 Honorary Members, attended the Flower Show Preview Reception and the Zone Dinners. The Zone dinners are a nice time to catch up with friends and to meet new friends from our Zone I.

Saturday morning, we were greeted by Marilyn Donohue, the GCA President, who opened the official GCA business meeting. It was an informative meeting on the current state of the GCA.

There were a lot of scheduled meetings and workshops, but the Annual Meeting wasn't all work. After the business meeting on Saturday morning, we had a field trip to various locations in Hartford. Our location was the Wadsworth Atheneum and Art Museum which was very historic and interesting.

The evening events introduced the 10 new GCA National Medalists at dinner. The 2024 GCA Medalists and Honorary Members are an exclusive group of environmental advocates and experts. All are listed on the GCA website for you to learn more about them.

On Sunday morning, there was a GCA workshop for Presidents and Zone delegates. The Presidents' workshop was a round table discussion by club size. NGC is considered a large club because we have more than 120 members. We have about 138 members, and two Houston Texas clubs at our table had a combined total of over 850 members! Most clubs represented at our table had approximately the same size club as ours.

At the roundtable, there was discussion of strategic planning and a cap for membership. (We do not have a cap for membership.) There were also discussions about leadership issues and community involvement. NGC is very strong in both categories. We should all be proud of our club and proud to be part of GCA.

Presidents and delegates disbursed in the afternoon to go home, see an Imax movie about the arctic (3-D!), shop at the Boutique one more time or prepare for the post meeting trip to Newport.

The 2024 GCA Annual Meeting was well organized with diverse events and well planned. We thank all the Zone II clubs for their involvement to make the Hartford, CT meeting a success.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Poole

Photograph: Mary Ellen Ferrel with the Underwater Design in the Flower Show which won Best in Show and other awards.

Photograph: GCA Annual Meeting logo: Beyond the Green