



A GUIDE FOR CLUB PRESIDENTS 2025

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AN INTRODUCTION

Dear Club President,

Congratulations on being elected President of your garden club! Leading and guiding your garden club activities and projects can be a fun and rewarding experience. It is a team effort, with everyone on the team making a contribution. To help you in your job as President, this booklet contains information and resources that you may need – to help you conduct the business meeting, to give you background information that you may not know or to help guide you in finding resources for education and projects.

WHAT YOU ARE A PART OF

- **NGC** National Garden Clubs
- **NEGC** The New England Garden Club
- **GCFM** Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts.

The National Garden Clubs (NGC) is a non-profit educational organization whose headquarters is located in St. Louis, Missouri. In 1929, Massachusetts was one of its founding members, and the first national president, Margaret Motley, was from Massachusetts (read more here www.gcfm.org/history). The dues paid by your garden club to GCFM include dues to National Garden Clubs, Inc. Every member of your club is a member of NGC. NGC meetings are open to everyone if they choose to go. Check out their website www.gardenclub.org. NGC offers awards, grants and scholarships which come from them through GCFM.

The New England Garden Club (NEGC) of NGC consists of the six New England states and has a Regional Director elected every two years. They hold an annual meeting each Fall which is open to all garden club members. There are regional awards given out at this meeting. NEGC publishes a quarterly newsletter called *Northern Exposure* and has a photography club that is open to all garden club members. (www.newenglandgc.org)

Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts (GCFM) is dedicated to assisting our member clubs with education and appreciation of horticulture, landscape and floral design, gardening and environmental concerns. (www.gcfm.org)

WHAT DOES GCFM OFFER?

- 1) **GCFM has a website, www.gcfm.org** with Information on all the programs below as well as upcoming GCFM & Club events.
- 2) **501(c)(3) Umbrella is offered to help clubs obtain Federal non-profit status – additional information, application and renewal forms can be found on the GCFM website**
 - a) **[GCFM 501\(C\)\(3\) Umbrella Status Application](#)**
 - b) **[501\(c\)\(3\) Umbrella Renewal Information](#)**
- 3) **Club Insurance assistance:**
 - a) **Clubs can obtain General Liability insurance under GCFM's Umbrella policy.** Details about coverage can be found on the GCFM website
 - i) **[Umbrella Insurance Application Form \(Click Here\)](#)**
 - ii) **[Club Insurance Renewal \(Click Here\)](#)**

- b) **Directors and Officers insurance** - GCFM, with the help of our insurance agent, has helped negotiate affordable rates for this essential coverage
- 4) **Scholarships** for High School Seniors/College Students/Graduate Students available. [GCFM Scholarships Click Here](#)
 - 5) **Historic and Civic Beautification Grants** for new and ongoing club projects available. [Civic & Historical Grants Click Here](#)
 - 6) **Awards** - The complete list of NGC & GCFM Awards is available on the GCFM website, under the AWARDS tab including [GCFM State Awards Click Here](#), [GCFM Flower Show Awards Click Here](#) & **District Awards**.
 - 7) **Educational Programs, Schools** (see page 13) and Webinars [GCFM Webinars Click Here](#)
 - Webinars are offered free to our members throughout the year
 - In-person floral design workshops at a minimum cost (such as *FUNDamentals* and Design Workshops)
 - 8) **Club Websites** - GCFM offers a a small-scale website for your club under the GCFM Umbrella website for a minimal annual fee. [GCFM Club Benefits Click Here](#)
 - 9) **Youth Contests** awards are given on the state level by GCFM, on the New England level by NEGC, and on the national level by NGC. These awards include Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl Poster Contest, Youth Sculpture Contest, Poetry Contest, and a High School Essay Contest [GCFM Youth Contests Click Here](#)

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR PRESIDENTS

As club president, your duties are listed in your club's bylaws. As part of GCFM, there are some things that you need to be aware of.

- 1) Your club belongs to a district and each district has a designated District Director who is there to assist you with your club and other concerns.
- 2) Notify the GCFM President and your District Director when the Club President changes. Send the contact information as soon as possible so the president will receive all pertinent information.
- 3) Encourage all members to attend District meetings, the Annual GCFM Meeting, and Schools (Flower Show, Landscape Design, Gardening and Environmental). Further information on schools is on the [GCFM website](#), sent to you in the [Monday Memo](#) and is listed in the GCFM yearbook
- 4) Apply for Awards: **District, State, Flower Show, Region**, and **NGC** awards through the GCFM Awards Chairperson for the work the club is doing. The monetary award can add funds to the project. The recognition for a job well done helps to promote the club and serves as a source of ideas for other clubs. (*Award information is on the website*) [GCFM Award Information Click Here](#)
- 5) Invite the District Director and State President to a club meeting and to special events of the club, such as anniversaries, flower shows, etc. (*Contact information for officers is in the Federation yearbook*). Be sure to introduce them at meetings and allow them to speak if they wish. See Protocol page 15
- 6) Embrace technology
 - Use email, Facebook, Instagram or Zoom to contact members and cut down on meetings.
 - Use social media to advertise your clubs.
 - Use text messaging to remind members of meetings.
 - Use PowerPoint and other computer visual aids for programs.
- 7) Consider giving a scholarship to one or more of your members to attend GCFM schools. This would be a line item under EDUCATION in your budget.

IMPORTANT GCFM DUE DATES

Sept/Oct		GCFM District Meetings are scheduled in September & October
October	15	501(c)3 information & Club yearbook deadline
November	15	Club filings -IRS & MA State Form PC deadline (or 4 ½ months after end of your fiscal year)
December	1	Applications for all State Awards deadline
January	10	Youth Poetry & Smokey Bear Poster & Sculpture Contest deadline
February	1	NGC Scholarship application deadline
March	31	Freidberg Scholarship Application deadline
April	1	Applications for GCFM Scholarships deadline
April	15	Applications or renewals of GCFM Insurance deadline
May	1	GCFM dues deadline
May	10	Cindora A. Goldberg Award application deadline
June		GCFM Annual Meeting
June	15	Online Club information for GCFM yearbook deadline

Running the Meeting

As President, you should always have a written AGENDA, or ORDER OF BUSINESS for each meeting.

- Prior to putting the agenda together, ask your board members to send a copy of their report to you and the recording secretary so you can make an accurate agenda (Note: *Read the reports beforehand and be sure you understand them or if there are questions, get the answers before the meeting. If you feel there is not enough information, you can request more or table the report until the next meeting when more information is available*)
- Include only those who have sent reports and any business that you wish to discuss at the meeting.
- Send the agenda out to club members 5-7 days prior to the meeting so they will be aware of items being discussed.
- At the meeting, when the agenda items are finished, and if there is time remaining in the meeting, you can ask if there is any further business at that time. Any others, who did not send in a report, may report at that time. This will keep your meeting running smoothly and on time. (Note: *You are allowed to set time limits on reports (2 - 3 minutes) and use a timekeeper to let a speaker know when their time is up*)
- Possible meeting locations:
 - Art Museum / Art Center / Historic House
 - Church / School / Library
 - Community Center / Life Centers / Senior Center / Town Hall
 - American Legion Hall, Knights of Columbus, The Elks, VFW Hall

SAMPLE AGENDA

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER AT (Give the time)

- Opening exercises, such as invocation or pledge of allegiance are optional.
- A quorum, as established in your bylaws, is necessary to conduct business. Check to see that one is present. *(If you don't have a quorum, you may continue, but no vote can be taken until one is present)*

2. RECORDING SECRETARY'S MINUTES

- If not previously distributed by email, the minutes should be distributed or read by the Recording Secretary.
- After additions or corrections by a member say, "APPROVED AS READ OR AS CORRECTED" usually by general consent. No motion or vote is needed to approve, unless required by your bylaws.
- **Minutes are the written record of the proceedings and should include:**
 - Date, Time, Place of Meeting, Quorum present
 - Presence of president and secretary or their substitutes
 - Approval of minutes of the previous meeting
 - Treasurer's Financial Report
 - Record of actions taken, including all main motions whether adopted or lost (but not withdrawn) name of maker of the motion, but not the second.
 - Time of Call for Adjournment
 - Signature of the Recording Secretary.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

- Emailed ahead of time or distributed and/or read by the Treasurer.
- After any questions or corrections say, "THIS REPORT WILL BE FILED."
- No motion or vote is needed to accept the report unless required by your bylaws.

Example of a brief form of Treasurer's monthly report:

Balance on hand (date of last report)	\$ _____
Receipts (for current month)	+ - _____
TOTAL	\$ _____
Expenses (for current month)	- _____
Balance on hand (date of report)	\$ _____

(Signature), Treasurer

4. REPORTS OF OFFICERS & STANDING COMMITTEES (Reports should only be 2 - 3 minutes long and state what was done, when it was done, and leave out embellishments.)

5. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES
6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – business that was discussed at the last meeting, but not voted on.
7. NEW BUSINESS
8. ANNOUNCEMENTS
9. ADJOURNMENT (take a motion for adjournment and include time)

Be sure you close your meeting. If you are having a program, and want to charge, it should be separate from the meeting and thus closing the meeting prior to the program is important.

MAKING MOTIONS

1. Who makes the motion? Anyone can make a motion except the president. If a committee makes the motion, it does not need a second as it is coming from the committee, unless specified in your bylaws.
2. What is the exact wording to present a motion? Begin a motion with, *“I move that. . .”*
3. Can the President vote on the motion? The president does not vote on the motion, but all others can vote unless there is a conflict of interest (i.e. if the result will personally affect them.)
4. What is the wording to change a motion? To change a motion, you amend it and so say, *“I would like to amend the motion by. . .”*
5. What is the wording to end the motion and vote? Once the motion is made the recording secretary reads it back to be sure the wording is correct, the president asks, *“is there debate?”* Hearing none, the vote is then taken. The President asks for all those in favor; then all those opposed; and finally, all those abstaining. A count is taken from those ‘for’ and ‘against’ and a majority, consisting of those present and voting and not of membership unless the club’s bylaws state differently, passes the motion.

CLUB FINANCES

1. **Employer Identification Number (EIN)**- The club’s bank accounts and filings should use the EIN (Employer Identification Number) obtained by the club, not the Social Security Number of an individual member in the club. There are a variety of ways to obtain an EIN number. Clubs getting their tax-exempt status under the GCFM 501(c) (3) umbrella, will receive their EIN number through that process. An EIN can be obtained from the IRS using form SS-4, which can be found on the IRS website, www.irs.gov. Applications can be made by phone, fax, online or by mail. Check out the IRS 1023-EZ streamline process for applying for tax exempt status.

Remember that you also need to obtain and maintain Massachusetts tax exempt status by registering with the Non-Profits/Public Charities Division of the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office (AGO)

<https://www.mass.gov/orgs/the-attorney-generals-non-profit-organizationspublic-charities-division>

2. **Donations** to your club can be tax-deductible to the donor if the club has obtained its IRS 501(c)3 status from the IRS, has registered with the Non-Profits/Public Charities Division of the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office (AGO), and has obtained a Certificate of Solicitation from the Massachusetts Attorney General. For more detailed information about tax exemption, we suggest you review “What You Need to Know About Your Club’s Financial & Legal Responsibilities, about Raffles, Record Keeping, and other FAQ’s” found on the GCFM website at <https://www.gcfm.org/resources>
3. **Tax exemption** under a 501 (c) (3) status means that the club’s revenue and income is usually exempt from Federal and State income taxes if revenues are generated in connection with their

“charitable” mission. There are some exceptions.

For Sales tax, the question is a bit more nuanced. Sales tax-exemption, applied to nonprofits, means that, in most cases, the sales tax for certain sales is waived for transactions relating to the club’s “charitable mission.” In Massachusetts, 501(c)(3) status qualifies you for a Sales Tax exemption (ST-2 certificate), but this must be applied for separately from the MA Department of Revenue

4. **Liability Insurance** - If your club is sponsoring an event in a location that requires liability insurance, check with your state organization to see if they offer participation in liability insurance coverage for the clubs in the state. If not, the club will need to acquire their own policy. Check with GCFM 2nd VP for detailed information.
5. **Budget**- It is a good practice for the club to have a yearly budget approved by the club’s Board at the beginning of the fiscal year. That way you won’t have to vote to approve every expenditure if it is in the budget.
6. **Raffles**- In Massachusetts, raffles require a raffle permit for any ticket sold at your meetings. The permit must be obtained in the town where the meeting is taking place and can be applied for through the town clerk. These permits are valid for one year. The raffle proceeds are subject to a 5% tax. Detailed information can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/guides/guidance-on-raffles>
7. **Document retention** –Your Club is a legal entity and has some specific document retention requirements. It is important to know what documents your club must retain, and how long to retain them. I suggest that you and your board review the guidance available in “Nonprofit document-retention requirements — understanding what merits retention”, found on the GCFM website at <https://www.gcfm.org/resources> . Keep in mind, however, these are guidelines. Some will apply to your organization, others will not. Your organization may choose to keep certain documents permanently—or on a schedule recommended by your finance or legal advisers. We also recommend creating a written “Document Retention and Destruction Policy” (a sample can be found <https://www.gcfm.org/resources> under the Treasurers tab).
8. **Incorporated vs not incorporated.** Some garden clubs in Massachusetts are Incorporated, most are not. The most common reason for incorporation, especially in a larger club, is an additional layer of legal liability protection. It is not a requirement for obtaining a non-profit status either with the IRS or with the State of Massachusetts. The decision to incorporate should be guided by your legal and financial advisors. If you are incorporated there are some additional annual filing requirements.
9. **1099 IRS reporting requirements.** You are required to issue an IRS Form 1099 if you’ve paid someone more than \$600 for services, (typically, for clubs, speaker fees). Each form type can have its own reporting threshold, and it is important to know what each one is.

The IRS uses these forms to track the money others make and ensure everyone pays their fair share of taxes.

Clubs must accurately gather information from vendors, contractors, or individuals they’ve paid throughout the year to issue the appropriate 1099 forms. It is a good policy to obtain W-9 forms from recipients when you enter into contracts or when you pay them, to ensure correct identification and tax reporting. Failing to comply with IRS regulations regarding 1099 filings can result in penalties.

SAMPLE CLUB BUDGET

Club Name:

Year: _____

Contact Person:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

INCOME (List all sources of income*)

	AMOUNT
Dues - 20 members @ \$25 per member	\$500.00
Fundraisers	
Plant Sale	\$200.00
Calendar Sales	\$120.00
Donations	\$115.00
Interest from Savings Account	\$15.00
Interest from Certificates of Deposit	\$50.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$1,000.00

EXPENSES

Membership Expenses	
State & National Dues - 20 @ \$5.00 per member	\$100.00
Meeting Expenses	
Programs	\$250.00
Room Rental Fees	\$100.00
Printing/Postage	
Yearbook	\$100.00
Newsletter	\$75.00
Recording Secretary/Treasurer	\$25.00
Corresponding Secretary	\$15.00
Activities	
Fundraiser - Plant Sale	\$50.00
Fundraiser - Calendars	\$60.00
Flower Show	\$75.00
Donations	
Nature Camp	\$75.00
State Life Membership	\$50.00
Blue Star Memorial	\$25.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,000.00

SAMPLE YEAR-END FINANCIAL REPORT

Green Things Garden Club ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT JULY 1, 2024 – JUNE 30, 2024 Jane Gardenclubber, Treasurer

INCOME (List all sources of income*)	BUDGET	ACTUAL
Dues - 20 members @ \$25 per member	\$500.00	\$500.00
New Member Dues - 2 @ \$25	\$50.00	
Fundraisers		
Plant Sale	\$200.00	\$235.00
Calendar Sales	\$120.00	\$135.00
Donations	\$115.00	\$149.00
Interest from Savings Account	\$15.00	\$12.35
Interest from Certificates of Deposit	\$50.00	\$50.00
Activities		
November Box Lunch		\$220.00
Holiday Party		\$120.00
Annual Installation Luncheon		\$440.00
Floral Design Workshop		\$150.00
District Meetings - Registration/Lunch Fees		\$100.00
Bus Trip - Botanical Garden Tour		\$300.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$1,000.00	\$2,461.35
EXPENSES		
Membership Expenses		
State & National Dues combined- 22 @ \$5.00 per member	\$120.00	\$120.00
Meeting Expenses		
Programs	\$235.00	\$225.00
Room Rental Fees	\$100.00	\$75.00
Printing/Postage		
Yearbook	\$100.00	\$105.75
Newsletter	\$75.00	\$78.80
Recording Secretary/Treasurer	\$20.00	\$12.25
Corresponding Secretary	\$15.00	\$8.95
Activities/Fundraisers		
Fundraiser - Plant Sale	\$50.00	\$45.63
Fundraiser - Calendars	\$60.00	\$55.50
Flower Show	\$75.00	\$72.29
November Box Lunch		\$211.23
Holiday Party		\$105.40
Annual Installation Luncheon		\$445.50
Floral Design Workshop		\$145.50
District Meetings - Registration/Lunch Fees		\$100.00
Bus Trip - Botanical Garden Tour		\$300.00
Donations		
Nature Camp	\$75.00	\$75.00
State Life Membership	\$50.00	\$50.00
Blue Star Memorial	\$25.00	\$25.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$1,000.00	\$2,256.42

**Note: Any funds that are deposited in the bank are considered part of gross income such as dues, lunches, fundraisers, plant sales, interest, etc.*

CLUB BYLAWS

A nonprofit's bylaws are a legal document that outlines how the organization is governed and operated:

- **Purpose:** The organization's purpose and activities
- **Structure:** The board's size and how it functions, including officer positions and responsibilities
- **Meetings:** Rules and procedures for holding meetings and electing directors
- **Membership:** Provisions for membership and voting rights
- **Committees:** What kinds and duties
- **Amendments:** How the bylaws can be amended
- **Dissolution Clause:** What happens to club's assets if the club dissolves
- **Discrimination:** Club is open to any and all people
- **Conflict of Interest:** Required by law for non-profit organizations in Massachusetts (see #3 below)

Bylaws are an organization manual that helps ensure responsible governance and compliance with State and Federal regulations. They can also protect board members from personal liability. Here are some hints for your bylaws:

1. Bylaws should be reviewed periodically, about every 5 years or so to be sure they still apply to the operation of the organization.
2. If you change your bylaws, you will need to notify the IRS and the State Attorney General's office with your next annual filings.
3. The government requires
 - *Dissolution Amendment* to cover if the club dissolves. All club monies left must be donated to another non-profit organization.
 - *Discrimination Amendment* means your club is open to any and all members.
 - *Conflict of interest Amendment* is how the organization will manage conflicts of interest between the organization and a member. See the IRS website for more information www.irs.gov.
4. There are three types of committees: Standing, Ad Hoc/Select and Special
 - Standing Committees are permanent committees that specialize in specific areas and are necessary to run the organization such as Nominating, Finance/Budget, Membership, Program, Scholarship, etc.
 - Ad Hoc/Select Committees are set up for a specific purpose during the year and may change with the following year; Horticulture, Youth Gardening, Civic Beautification, Garden Therapy.
 - Special Committees are usually set up on a short-term basis for a question or problem that has arisen during the year such as: the need to find a new place to meet; what to do with a special donation that was given to the organization or a one-time project such as a club anniversary.
5. Do not include items that may change on a yearly basis, such as your dues amount. There should be a separate Financial Policy and/or Standing Rules which can be changed at any meeting by a majority vote for items that may change often.

Standing Rules

Standing rules govern the administration of the organization as opposed to rules regarding parliamentary procedure. The standing rules would include items that would further explain the operation of the club such as:

- Ad Hoc Committees and their responsibility.
- Dues and fundraising expectations.
- Any information that will benefit members and/or the club.

CLUB MEMBERSHIP

BE PROACTIVE ABOUT MEMBERSHIPS. Realize that most volunteer organizations are losing members, not just garden clubs.

RECRUITMENT

Are your Bylaws Member-Friendly?

- If there is a cap on membership, consider removing it.
- If you have been voting on members, consider an application with automatic acceptance instead.
- Are your dues too high or too low?
- Do you meet in private homes or in public places? Most visitors are more comfortable meeting in a public place.
- Is your club meeting only daytime or only evening? Many younger or working people cannot make a daytime meeting.

Make Visitors Feel Welcome

- Are visitors greeted and made to feel at home? Consider assigning a greeter at each meeting who sits with the new person and explains things and makes them feel welcome.
- Introduce them and invite them back and follow up with a card or phone call. *We're glad to have met you, please come back.* Email them and remind them of an upcoming meeting.

Advertise Your Club

- List your Garden Club meetings in your newspaper in the community calendar.
- Wear shirts with your Garden Club's name on them when working in your community.
- Distribute posters or flyers around town inviting people to attend your meetings.
- Advertise events such as flower shows. Invite other clubs in your district.
- Use signage on your community gardening projects to show who created and/or maintains it.
- Consider a small magnetic logo or window decal for your car if you don't have a Garden Club license plate.
- Consider creating a club logo for brand identification.
- Offer garden educational seminars to the public.
- Have booths in local fairs and festivals.
- Work cooperatively with other groups, including Master Gardeners, scouts, etc.
- Invite members from disbanded clubs to join your club.
- Invite new neighbors.
- When you are in a store and notice someone purchasing plants or gardening magazines or books, start a conversation about gardening and invite them.

RETAINING MEMBERS

- Make sure every member is spoken to, especially newer members.
- Call club members who have stopped attending your meetings. Let them know they are missed. Offer to pick them up and bring them to meetings.
- Listen to the needs of your members and implement and highlight their talents.
- Realize not all members can do the same work due to time restraints, physical restrictions or finances.
- Make sure every member serves on the committee, including older members as mentors.
- Offer fundraisers so that members aren't constantly giving financially to projects.
- Send cards for special accomplishments, etc. Make members feel special
- Avoid gossip
- KEEP MEETINGS SHORT

CLUB PROGRAMS

GCFM offers a program workshop each spring that allows speakers to present their topics and explain their programs. Listings of the speakers can also be found on the GCFM website.

Ideas that will save the club paying for a speaker at a meeting:

- Join with other clubs for a monthly program.
- Visit gardens or flower shows and take field trips to garden related places for a monthly meeting
- Occasionally have hands-on projects that members can take home.
- Consider having your garden club members share their expertise with the club. If someone attends a GCFM or NGC school, they can offer a program for free from what they learned.

SCHOOLS

These educational courses created by National Garden Clubs are offered by GCFM yearly and are open to anyone. To receive credit for the course you must be a garden club member. Each school has 4 courses. For those taking the course for credit an exam is given at the end of each course. Flower Show School courses need to be taken in order, but the other three schools' courses are separate entities and can be taken in any order. Dates, registration forms and information on the schools are on the GCFM website. Once you are accredited all four schools have Councils that you can join that provide further programs and education in their area for continued education.

Helen Freidberg Scholarship. Every calendar year, one member from each of the 9 GCFM districts can receive a scholarship (tuition only) to attend GCFM Landscape Design School, GCFM Flower Show School or GCFM Gardening School. An application form is available on the [Helen Freidberg Scholarship Click Here](#).

FLOWER SHOW SCHOOL: Consists of a series of four courses towards becoming a Flower Show Judge. Flower Show School is an excellent tool for gaining valuable information on judging, flower show procedure, horticulture, and floral designing. [GCFM Flower School Click Here](#)

The purpose is:

- 1) to train and accredit prospective judges.
- 2) to provide opportunities for Accredited Judges to keep in good standing.
- 3) to increase interest and knowledge in horticulture and design, through lectures on types of floral design and various categories of horticulture.
- 4) to encourage educational Flower Shows of high caliber.

Anyone can attend FSS and not have to become a judge.

LANDSCAPE DESIGN SCHOOL: Consists of a series of four courses towards becoming an

Accredited Landscape Design Consultant. [GCFM Landscape School Click Here](#)

The purpose is

- 1) to learn the value of designing outdoor spaces for the use and enjoyment of people.
- 2) to learn about ecology and landscape design in urban and suburban settings.
- 3) to gain ideas for the home landscape.
- 4) to gain knowledge to assist with civic projects.

GARDENING SCHOOL: A series of four courses towards becoming an Accredited Gardening Consultant.

[GCFM Gardening School Click Here](#)

The purpose is

- 1) to provide educational information to those especially interested in gardening, horticulture and related subjects.
- 2) to cover all aspects of growing, from understanding soil structure to pruning techniques, plant identification, basic botany, soils, growing annuals, perennials, trees and shrubs, fruits and vegetables, lawns and pests and diseases of plants, plant classification, and selected subjects of local interest.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCHOOL – is a series of four courses towards becoming an accredited

Environmental Consultant. [GCFM Environmental School Click Here](#)

The purpose is:

- 1) to teach environmental literacy.
- 2) to cherish, protect and conserve the living earth.
- 3) to teach appreciation of the natural world, encouragement of sustainable development and appreciation for the interrelation of all-natural things.
- 4) to place emphasis on land conservation, water conservation and air quality.

GCFM PROJECTS

- **Plant-A-Tree.** Your garden club can participate in a conservation project by contributing \$50.00 to a Plant-A-Tree plantation as part of the costs of planting replacement trees indigenous to a particular damaged area. [Plant-A-Tree Click Here](#)
- **Shriner's Tabs.** Tabs from aluminum cans are collected from garden club members all over Massachusetts. A metal recycling company converts the weight to the prevailing value for aluminum, then a monetary donation is returned to Shriners Hospital. [Shriners Tabs Click Here](#)
- **Blue and Gold Star Memorial Markers.** This memorial began after WWII and honors all men and women that served in the United States Armed Services. It consists of Blue and Gold Star memorial markers in cemeteries, highways, by-ways and other approved locations that are funded by local garden clubs in conjunction with civic beautification. [Blue & Gold Star Memorial Markers Click Here](#)

PROTOCOL

There are a few protocol procedures that you should follow when you invite the State President for a social visit. The President likes the opportunity to visit the clubs and Districts during their administration and to meet your members, so, please invite them.

1. **Invitations** should be sent out **well in advance** with several dates that they can select from.
2. After acceptance, **send** a follow-up letter with a **good set of directions**, including the **time, date, place of the event**, and the time and allotted time that they President has to speak to your members. If this is a fundraiser, it is a courtesy to send one or two complimentary tickets.
3. **Assign an individual** or page that is familiar with the President as well as your own members **to greet the President when they arrive** and make them feel welcome. The President can then be shown to their reserved seat (which is usually in the front row), or to their place at the head table. At all times the President should be treated as you would treat a guest in your own home.
4. **When the President is introduced, you ask your members to rise and greet them.** This is our way of showing respect to the highest voice in our organization.

*Please invite your District Director to one of your meetings as well, following the protocols above. (Members do not need to stand upon introduction for the DD).

5. When **refreshments** are served, it is always **courteous to allow your guests to go first.** You certainly would not serve yourself before your guests at home, would you?
6. All facets of protocol should be covered from the initial invitation to the thank you note written after their visit. Just remember **GOOD MANNERS, GOOD ORDER AND GRACIOUSNESS.** That's protocol.