

Art en Fleurs 2024 “Cooler by the Lake” GCA Article

Art en Fleurs 2024 - Cooler by the Lake:

*Over 169 volunteers including forty-three committee chairs from the four Wisconsin Garden Club of America Garden Clubs

*Approximately 86 judges (Approved, Prospective and Candidates) from across the nation

*A 65-page schedule including 132 classes accommodating multiple entries plus an offering of two new specialty classes

*Two educational exhibits

*Thirty-four special awards presented beyond traditional ribbons

*Three informative guest speakers

The Art en Fleurs 2024 - “Cooler by the Lake” GCA Major Flower Show was coordinated and managed by four Kettle Moraine Garden Club co-leaders (Susan Blott, Jan Ewald, Maureen Hill and Kari Pietsch-Wangard) working together to create the final event. The show was held over two days in the beautiful setting of Saint John’s On The Lake senior living community in Milwaukee overlooking Lake Michigan. A two year planning commitment was required with each Wisconsin garden club (Green Tree, Kettle Moraine, Lake Geneva, and Town and Country) playing a critical role in its success. One of the stand-out features was the collaboration and enthusiasm brought forward, shared and implemented; truly an incredible but rewarding achievement appreciated by all.

The show featured divisions in Floral Design, Horticulture, Photography, and Botanical Arts as well as Educational Exhibits in Conservation and Garden History and Design. Two non-GCA Specialty Classes of Needle Arts and Botanical Illustration were introduced as well. Finally, three guest speakers presented topics related to our water-theme: Melinda Myers (Gardening Expert) on Adding Native Plants to Your Landscape to Help Protect our Water, Jennifer Bolger Beceda (Milwaukee Riverkeeper) on Helping Milwaukee Thrive by Truly Becoming a Healthy Centric Community, and Rebecca D. Klapar (UWM School of Freshwater Sciences) on Our Important Freshwater Resources: Threats from Contaminants, Invasive Species and Overuse.

Monday, September 9th, was a flurry of activity as exhibitors brought in Horticulture potted plants and cut specimens. Volunteer Passers and Stagers worked diligently to ensure entries met requirements and were properly set up. In addition, Floral Design arrangements were created and Educational exhibits were assembled. Judges from across the country were welcomed to Milwaukee and treated to a delectable dinner at the historic Milwaukee Club.

On Tuesday, September 10th, more Horticulture cut specimens were brought in and additional Floral Design entries were created. After a delicious breakfast provided by the Saint John’s On The Lake staff, the Judges began their difficult task of determining winners. That afternoon, the show opened to the residents of Saint John’s and an

eager public. A steady crowd of appreciative viewers roamed through the halls of Saint John's until the show closed that evening to prepare for the celebration party, "Seas the Night". GCA members and guests as well as judges enjoyed catered heavy appetizers, and the GCA Major Flower Show Awards and Sponsoring Club Awards were presented.

GCA Major Flower Show Awards included:

Floral Design

Carol Coffey Swift Medal of Excellence - Debbie Stockstill:

Monroe Garden Study League

Fenwick Medal - Sara Ledbetter and Shirley Rouse: GC of Houston

Margaret Clover Symonds Medal - Ginny Noyes and Carol Swift:

Evanston GC

Best in Show - Katherine Kreutzer: Portland GC

Horticulture

Elizabeth Platt Corning Medal - Sher Quasius: Town and Country GC

Louise Agee Wrinkle Horticulture Propagation Award - Granis Allport:

Somerset Hills GC

Certificate of Excellence - Katherine Palmer: Green Tree GC

Best in Show - Janet Montgomery: Green Tree GC

Photography

Certificate of Excellence - Retta Boyd: Jackson GC

Photography Creativity Award - Margie Schubert: Glenview GC

Best in Show - Stephanie Young: Paducah GC

GCA Novice Award - Jane Kadala: North Shore GC of MA

Botanical Arts

Botanical Arts Creativity Award - Christina Kramer: GC of Palm Beach

Certificate of Excellence - Sarah Boyton: Cohasset GC

Best in Show - Marnie Clay Holoubek: Lexington GC

GCA Novice Award - Marnie Clay Holoubek: Lexington GC

Education

Certificate of Excellence in Conservation - Lake Geneva GC (Beverly Birck)

All Classes

Annie Burr Jennings Sweepstakes Award - Town and Country GC

Sponsoring Club Awards included:

Floral Design

Byrnicie Dickinson Leininger Medal - Sonja Durkee: Kettle Moraine GC

Anne H Vogel Award - Pat Schutt: Town and Country GC

Horticulture

Betty Quadracci Memorial Award - Julia Syburg: Kettle Moraine GC

Elizabeth Ott Stenger Award - Town and Country GC

Green Tree Garden Club Certificate - Liz Lavezzorio: Lake Forest GC

Harriet M. Purtell Award - Barbara Anderson: Green Tree GC

Photography

Green Tree Garden Club Photography Award - Jo Anne Roser: Seattle GC

Lake Geneva Garden Club Photography Award - Margie Schubert:
Glenview GC

Botanical Illustration

Best in Botanical Illustration - Ann Roberts: Town and Country GC

Best Interpretation of Class - Dana Boyle: Saint Paul GC

Best Use of Color in Class 1 - Celine Lillie: Lake Geneva GC

People's Favorite - Celine Lillie: Lake Geneva GC

Saint John's On The Lake Botanical Illustration Award - Claudia Lane:
Evanston GC

Needle Arts

Best in Division Needle Arts - Deborah Walker: Green Tree GC

On Wednesday, September 11th, the show opened to the public in the morning and our three guest speakers made their presentations. After 4:00pm, the show ended and all entries were removed. During take-down, a number of visitors lamented how quickly entries were taken away!

The feedback received from Saint John's On The Lake residents, GCA members and judges as well as public visitors was positive. Not only were they impressed by the size and magnitude of the Art en Fleurs 2024 "Cooler by the Lake" GCA Major Flower Show, but they also expressed appreciation for the chosen venue. Having the show at a senior living community gave the event a welcoming and intimate feel. Residents were able to attend and listen to the speakers without having to travel anywhere. In addition, having the show free of charge made it inviting to those who might want to enjoy such an opportunity. With education being a large component of GCA Major Flower Shows, we felt our mission had been accomplished!