

Award #: 22 **Award Name:** Myrtle Walgreen Memorial Award for Civic Project

Club Submitted by: Springfield Civic Garden Club

Number of Members in Club: 255

1. **New Project: Yes** **Project Beginning Date:** Jan, 2025

2. Brief summary and objectives of project:

The Lincoln Presidential Foundation, in partnership with the Lincoln Home National Historic Site, asked the Springfield Civic Garden Club (SCGC), to assist with their on-site gardens. The goals of the project are to clean, beautify, and maintain the landscape around the site. The main gardens requiring immediate attention included gardens surrounding the Lincoln Home (LIHO) visitor center, gardens along the Capitol Street perimeter, and gardens adjacent to the parking lot. Objectives of the project were to restore these gardens to a more beautiful attractive look while focusing on pollinator-friendly plants native to the area, or plants that may have been in the area during Lincoln’s time.

3. Involvement of club members, other organizations, etc.:



Figure 1. Stripped beds of poison ivy and other weeds ready for replanting. See Figure 5 for results.

Two SCGC committee chairs worked with the LIHO Maintenance team to determine how best to accomplish the goals. Together, we established which areas could benefit from weeding, thinning, and editing, and which needed to be completely torn out, redesigned, planted and maintained. We assessed what plants were available either through donations by SCGC

volunteers, or from a shipment of plants that LIHO had purchased from a local native plant provider. We then designed the layout of the gardens.

The LIHO Maintenance team used their equipment to manage the difficult parts of the project, such as removing old shrubs, stumps, and fabric covering, and delivering mulch to areas where the volunteers could spread it. SCGC volunteers dug and split many overgrown *Hosta* beds, and moved these to four new locations. They also weeded and prepped the area around the Visitor Center and planted Irises.



Figures 2 & 3. BEFORE and AFTER: Removing poison ivy and weeds, uncovering daylilies, hostas and large planting areas.



Figure 4. Installing fencing to prevent animal damage to new pollinator garden.

In spring of 2025, a native-plant pollinator garden near the Visitor parking lot was installed. After the stumps and garden fabric were removed, a critter fence was installed, the soil was prepped, planted and mulched. Weekly work sessions of 2-3 hours were scheduled from May to August for these tasks. Nineteen SCGC members volunteered 246 hours, planting over 400 new plants, and splitting and transplanting over 200 existing plants. An additional 30 hours were dedicated to National Parks volunteer orientation, led by Linsey Hughes, Park Ranger, Lincoln Home Historic Site. Volunteer hours were tracked in a LIHO book at the Visitors Center.

4. Project expenses and means of funding:

LIHO Foundation received a \$2,050 Community Project Grant from SCGC to purchase 1000 native plants. These plants were used in the gardens we oversaw and in a native prairie area of the Lincoln Home.

SCGC volunteers donated irises and ferns: LIHO Maintenance team provided the heavy equipment labor, mulch, trash removal, and fencing.

Figure 5. Renovated Visitors Center bed.



5. Continuing involvement, follow-up, maintenance:

SCGC Committee Members will continue to weed, dead-head, and edit the gardens for the coming years. We anticipate adding plants where needed in the spring, including planting and maintaining 4-6 large planters around the property.



Figures 6 & 7: Planting at the Visitor's Center and planting at the Pollinator Garden.