

## **District V**

### **Pam Baker, GCI District Director**

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**The Collinsville Garden Club** went on an interesting tour of the National Garden Clubs' headquarters next to the Missouri Botanical Gardens. We visited the Villas of Collinsville Garden Club: Hollybrook in September and helped the residents make flower arrangements. With the Lakeview Garden Club, we had a speaker from the Benjamin Stephenson House who spoke on historical gardening. Carol Frerker from Willoughby Farm presented a program on composting. We are looking forward to decorating the D.D. Collins House for Christmas and our Christmas party.

**Lakeview Garden Club** invited Collinsville Garden Club members and guests to the program "Keeping Bees in the Metro East" given by retired College educator and beekeeper Dave Paeth. It was a very uplifting and fun presentation, updating us on what's happening in our area and how we can personally help bees and other pollinators. Members shared techniques and experiments during a garden walk. Gardeners explained their theme with their variety of landscape and unusual plantings. Our successful plant sale helps support many community projects. On Arbor Day, we assisted and mentored 80+ middle school students at Willoughby Farm and Conservation Reserve. They weeded and planted perennials and annuals around the 1930's Farmhouse/barnyards. Hiking trails were mulched to enhance the farm for the many visitors. Another fun community project is our annual Explore Drost Park Rock Hunt. We get together to hand paint 100+ rocks. During the month of July members hide them in the park for exploring different areas of interest. When a prize rock is found they take the rock to the library for a free book and gift certificate for ice cream. The winners keep the rock for their own landscape. This project started during the pandemic as a way to explore the outdoors. We had no idea that it would be so popular. In addition to having fun our members are getting to be skilled artists. The summer's excursions and educational trips included placing wreaths on our Blue Star Marker for Memorial Day and Fourth of July. We enjoyed lunch at Neon Greens – Hydroponic Farm in Manchester, MO and toured their farm. It's amazing how much delicious lettuce you can grow in a shipping container. Visiting the National Garden Clubs Inc. headquarters made us realize the importance of being members of a garden club and what the organization has to offer. Missouri Botanical Gardens in St Louis inspired us with new plants to add to our gardens. During a guided tour of the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center – East Alton, we learned about the LEED building process and the important river research. Along the way to the rooftop, we walked up a prairie garden path to view the Mississippi River. A member demonstrated the basics of flower arranging at our August meeting then the arrangements were given as a thank you to the teachers and staff at Maryville Grade School. A Tussie Mussie (a small bouquet of flowers) was made by each member to share with someone special.

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**The Trenton Tumbleweeds** have been busy as usual. We participated in the annual Trenton Fest by running the dessert booth and had a float in the town's parade. We have continued to maintain our education garden in the park. We also had a great community turnout for our annual memorial paver dedication ceremony. This year we had 13 pavers dedicated. Next up, we will be handing out candy to the kids for downtown Halloween trick or treat. And, in November, we will decorate wreaths that we deliver to public buildings throughout the community.