

FGCMD offers publications, our website and various forms of social media as a service to our members. These platforms enable us to create visibility for our events, network between members and clubs and as a vehicle for sharing resources. Our services are intended first and foremost as a benefit to our members. These services are provided by our volunteer staff. We are grateful for their creativity and efforts but recognize we have limited resources, so the following guidelines are intended to help guide clubs in preparing their submissions. Communications apply to all FGCMD communications, whether through print, digital, visual, oral, social, or other media.

Editorial Policy

Content published on the website of the Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland, Inc. (hereafter FGCMD), <https://fgcofmd.org/>, is for the fostering and support of FGCMD's mission, values and projects, and is meant to be a communication tool to further the organization's educational, community and outreach goals in the US and abroad.

All content submitted for publishing on the website, Facebook or Gardenews is to be first submitted to the FGCMD Webmaster, Facebook or Gardenews Chairman for content review and approval. (Hereafter referred to as Communications Committee).

Editorial decisions to publish, or not to publish, content are made at the discretion of the FGCMD Communications Committee, and/or the FGCMD Executive Committee based upon factors including, but not limited to, relevance to the mission, purpose and interest of the FGCMD community, subject priority and timeliness, caliber of content and other available submitted materials. The FGCMD Communications Committee, reserves the right to exercise its editorial judgement and reject any content at any time for any reason.

None of the content published by FGCMD is influenced by advertisers, politicians, private or industry sponsors. Partnerships supported by the FGCMD are fully disclosed on where appropriate.

The FGCMD Communications team will rewrite, if necessary, all titles and subtitles as well as perform content revisions, to conform to the accepted style guide.

Images, whether photographs or other art, submitted that are not of the proper size, quality or resolution will not be considered.

Submitted content involving minor children must be accompanied by a signed release from their parent or guardian to be published.

Submitted content referencing businesses or other organizations must have proper permissions and releases in place before publishing.

All content submitted to FGCMD for publication on its communications properties becomes the sole property of FGCMD. FGCMD acknowledges credit for photographs, submitted for use but does not compensate photographers for images used in publications unless required by copyright.

Acknowledgement of Copyright

FGCMD observes all copyrights. Photographs/images may be used with newsletters, flyers, postings to social media and other publications that meet the following criteria:

1. Photograph is taken by a member or non-member and used with their permission. Utilize the Media Release form located on the FGCMD website: <https://fgcofmd.org/membersupport/> Credit to the photographer should be published with the photo.
2. Number 1 would also apply for original pieces of art created and submitted with the publication.

3. If the photograph or image is taken from a free source. This information should accompany the submission. For example, this photo was taken from a free resource <https://pixabay.com/photos/flower-tulip-spring-garden-7108871/>
4. If the photograph or image is copyrighted. The source should be noted and an invoice evidencing the purchase should accompany the submission.
5. Lacking such approval we can post information without artwork, as per the guidelines for calendar submissions: Calendar postings should be emailed to website@fgcofmd.org. Include the sponsor of the event, date, time, location and type of event along with any contact information. Please place all your information in a word document, not in the text of your email. Plan on it taking a week before your information is posted. PLEASE NOTE: Due to copyright issues, postings are limited to text only on our website calendar. Please, no art or photographs unless permission has been granted. You may add "For more information, contact _____."

Sponsoring Organization

We are a non-profit and to guard this status are sensitive to IRS guidelines: <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/charitable-organizations/exemption-requirements-501c3-organizations>. As a result, several of our policies which may initially appear arbitrary are in fact put in place to safeguard this status. Thus, we observe a standing practice to limit all postings on our website, publications and social media to activities or events sponsored by FGCMMD garden clubs, districts, and councils or National Garden Clubs and CAR-SGC programs.

Affiliate Organizations

Affiliate activities may also be featured in the calendar e.g., the Maryland Daffodil Society, Frances Scott Key Iris Society, etc. We limit these relationships primarily because we are not staffed to provide extensive news from other organizations.

Approved Educational Resources

Periodically FGCMMD may use posts from well-known reputable federal, state and non-profit gardening and environmental sites. These include but are not limited to:

- the Maryland Department of the Environment
- Maryland Natural Resources
- Umd.edu Home and Garden Information Center (HGIC)
- Mount Cuba

Credit will be given for all such materials.

Effective June 12, 2023