

THE *Texas* CLUBWOMAN

FALL 2026

2026-2028 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CLUBS IN FOCUS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

A Conversation
with President
Novella Byrd



PROUD MEMBER OF GENERAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS



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A Note from Novella



It is with great excitement, gratitude, and optimism that I welcome you to the 2026-2028 GFWC Texas administration. Thank you for the confidence you have placed in me to serve as your State President. I am truly honored to begin this journey alongside each of you as we continue the proud legacy of GFWC Texas.

Our theme for this administration, "Together We Can Do Great Things!", reminds us that the strength of our Federation has always been found in our members. Every club, every district, and every volunteer brings unique talents, ideas, and passion to our organization. When we work together, support one another, and share our gifts, there is no limit to what we can accomplish for our communities and for GFWC Texas.

One of my greatest priorities during this administration is my President's Special Project, Supporting Our Military Heroes. This project is especially meaningful to me because of my family's connection to military service. Our active-duty service members, veterans, and their families have sacrificed so much on our behalf, and I encourage every club to find meaningful ways to recognize, support, and honor these heroes.

Whether through care packages, volunteer service, community partnerships, or local projects, together we can make a lasting difference in the lives of those who have served our nation.

I am especially looking forward to visiting all of our districts and as many local clubs as possible over the next two years. One of the greatest blessings of Federation is the opportunity to meet dedicated clubwomen from every corner of Texas, learn about your outstanding projects, celebrate your successes, and hear your ideas. I believe the best way to strengthen our organization is by listening to one another, sharing resources, and building lasting relationships.

As we begin this new administration, I encourage every member to become involved, ask questions, and never underestimate the impact of your service. Each act of volunteerism, no matter how small it may seem, helps strengthen our communities and advances the mission of GFWC Texas.

Thank you for your dedication, your friendship, and your commitment to serving others. I cannot wait to see what we will accomplish together over the next two years.

Together We Can Do Great Things!

With gratitude and appreciation,

Novella Byrd

Novella Byrd

President, GFWC Texas 2026-2028





GENERAL FEDERATION
of WOMEN'S CLUBS

2026-2027

ADMINISTRATION CALENDAR



2026

Sept 16-18	GFWC Texas Fall BOD Embassy Suites Austin Central Austin, Texas	Oct 24	Magnolia District-Kirbyville Women's Civic Club
Sept 26	International Day of Service	Oct 25-31	GFWC Advocates for Children Week
Oct 3	South Texas BOD-Kingsville	Oct 30-Nov 1	South Central Regional Convention Holiday Inn Phoenix-Mesa, Mesa Arizona
Oct 10	Trinity BOD-History Club of Whitesboro	Nov 7.	Alamo BOD-Women's Club of Pleasanton
Oct 14	Capitol BOD-Monday Review Club, Hillsboro	Dec 9	GFWC Holiday Open House
Oct 17	Pioneer BOD-Fort Worth Federation of Women's Clubs		

2027

Jan 18	GFWC Texas HF meeting-Austin, Texas	Apr 10	Alamo Convention-Bronte Club, Victoria
Jan 19	GFWC Texas EC meeting-Austin, Texas	Apr 20-26	Volunteers in Action Week
Mar 6	Magnolia Convention-Silsbee	Apr 24	Federation Day
Mar 13	South Texas Convention-Kingsville	April 21-24	GFWC Texas Spring Convention Hilton Garden Inn Temple, Texas
Mar 20	Pioneer Convention-Women's Wednesday Club of Granbury	June 26-28	GFWC Annual Convention-Westin Charlotte, North Carolina
Apr 3.	Trinity Convention-Amity Study Club, Atlanta	June 26-28	SCR Meeting during GFWC Annual Convention-NC
Apr 7	Capitol Convention-Franklin Women's Reading Club		

Dates and locations are subject to change. Please refer to official GFWC communications
for the most up-to-date information.



Pampering

A



PATRIOT



STAND UP, SPEAK UP, SHOW UP.

Join women from across Texas in showing love, honor, and support to our veterans—**especially those struggling with sexual abuse or trauma.**



All donations will benefit

**BROKEN
INTO
PURPOSE**

Broken Into Purpose is a faith-based organization that empowers survivors of sexual abuse and trauma—helping them heal, rebuild, and rise.



This is our project for the
GFWC INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE.

Please bring your donated items to the

★ **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING** ★

Austin, Texas



♥ NEW SOCKS



♥ TOILETRIES



♥ CANDLES



♥ BLANKETS



♥ SELF-CARE ITEMS



♥ ADULT COLORING BOOKS

Together, we can remind our heroes they are not forgotten.

THANK YOU FOR PAMPERING A PATRIOT!



UNITED IN SERVICE. STRONGER TOGETHER. CHANGING LIVES.



Save the Date!

130TH GFWC TEXAS

Fall Board of Directors Meeting

SEPTEMBER 16-18, 2026



BOOKING LINK IS OPEN!
Embassy Suites Austin Central
5901 N I-35
Austin, Texas 78723



Rate: \$129.00 + tax
Standard Double and King
per night



**LAST DAY TO BOOK
AT THIS RATE:**
AUGUST 27, 2026

Together we can do great things!





Save the Date!

GFWC South Central Region Conference

OCTOBER 29-31, 2026



ARIZONA



ARKANSAS



LOUISIANA



NEW MEXICO



OKLAHOMA



TEXAS



*Join us for a
Spooky
Good Time*



Holiday Inn

AN IHG® HOTEL

HOLIDAY INN PHOENIX-MESA/CHANDLER BY IHG

1600 S Country Club Dr
Mesa, AZ 85210





TOGETHER
WE CAN DO
GREAT THINGS

Meet the Dream Team



Introducing the Executive Committee: a group of dedicated women serving at the state level, stepping up to lead, embracing key leadership roles, and driving meaningful impact across clubs, their organizations, and the communities they serve.



President-Novella Byrd, President Elect-Dr. Kathy Horak Smith, First Vice President-Katherine Hajek, Second Vice President-Lou Hitt, Secretary-Cammie Hyatt, Treasurer-Julia Napper, Historical Foundation Trustee-Pam Windham, and Parliamentarian-Sue Mercer.

Dr. Kathy Horak Smith

President-Elect



Kathy began her affiliation with the Stephenville 20th Century Club in 1999. Once completing her PhD, her mother encouraged her to become involved in a civic organization and invited her to join the club.

One of Kathy's greatest joys in volunteerism has been participating in projects that make a difference in the community. Among her favorites is the Children's Fine Arts Auction, which raises funds for fine arts programs that might otherwise be underfunded. Seeing these programs thrive and knowing that students have access to valuable arts opportunities has been especially rewarding.

Kathy believes the greatest strength of GFWC Texas is its membership, and welcomes the opportunity to visit more clubs, particularly those that may be struggling or considering defederation. As Kathy explains, "GFWC has a mission. Its projects are nonpartisan and something we can all get behind," providing clubs with direction and purpose as they serve their communities.

When she is not volunteering, Kathy enjoys attending baseball and softball games, especially now that she no longer plays herself. She also loves "playing in the dirt" through gardening and jokingly warns, "Don't look too closely at my fingernails."

Kathy encourages all club members to discover their passion within their club and invite others to share in that passion through community service and the friendships that develop along the way.

Ever a lifelong learner, Kathy says that if stranded on a desert island, she would want a very large library filled with books to keep her company.



Katherine Hajek

First Vice President



Katherine, the oldest of five siblings, has been married for 46 years and is the proud mother of three daughters. She retired after 38 years as a Library Assistant at the Texas A&M University–Kingsville Library, where she worked in the Cataloging and Periodicals departments.

Her passion for volunteerism began through her children's activities. In 1983, Katherine joined the GFWC Woman's Club of Kingsville after an invitation from her sister-in-law. Since then, she has served in numerous leadership roles and has been actively involved with the Juniorette Club and Bluebonnet Drama Club. Katherine considers it a special privilege to have sponsored all three of her daughters, who are now active members themselves. She is also a member of the GFWC Presidents' Council and the GFWC Woman's Monday Club.

Since retiring, Katherine enjoys spending time with family, crocheting, baking, and exploring the great state of Texas. "Oh, let's not forget meeting all the federation sisters along the way," she adds.

Katherine finds mentoring young clubwomen both rewarding and inspiring. She has also gained enormous satisfaction from her district- and state-level roles, which she believes have challenged her to grow personally.

As Vice President, Katherine believes it is important to "tell our story," noting that reporting helps future members "know who we are and what we did to strengthen our future." She hopes to serve by encouraging members to step outside their comfort zones, try new projects and programs, and pursue leadership opportunities. "I encourage all clubs to report—in other words, tell us your club's story, which will one day become your history."

If stranded on a desert island, Katherine says she would bring her favorite children's book, The True Story of the Three Little Pigs by Jon Scieszka, and a radio.



Lou Hitt

Second Vice President



Growing up on a peanut farm in Central Texas, Lou enjoyed rural family life with her siblings. The year after graduation, she married her high school sweetheart, Roger. Together, they are blessed with one daughter and two grandsons. They will celebrate 55 years of marriage in October.

After moving to Decatur in 1976, and with the encouragement of her twin sister, Lou joined the Decatur Junior Woman's Club in an effort to meet other women in the community. At the urging of her sister-in-law, she joined the GFWC Decatur Woman's Club in 2005.

Upon retiring from teaching kindergarten, Lou became more active in club work, assuming leadership roles at both the district and state levels. She considers it one of her greatest joys to experience the "sense of belonging to an ever-expanding circle of friends while working together to make a difference in our communities."

As GFWC Texas Second Vice President, Lou's primary responsibility is to encourage membership growth. Her vision is to see enthusiastic members actively inviting other women in their communities to join, ultimately increasing the membership of GFWC Texas.

Outside of volunteer work, Lou enjoys reading and taking road trips with her husband. Together, they have visited all 50 states, as well as all 254 Texas county courthouses. Through the GFWC initiative ESO, Lou discovered a love for several genres of literature that she may never have explored before joining the group.

The one thing Lou would want with her on a desert island is a constantly charged phone, keeping her connected with loved ones, providing reading material, a calendar, and a radio, as well as serving as a vital tool for solving any problems she might encounter.



Cammie Hyatt

Secretary



Cammie joined The Woman's Club of Aransas Pass in 1998 while working at The University of Texas Marine Science Institute and raising her family. Drawn by a desire to give back to her community and connect with other service-minded women, she quickly discovered that the sisterhood formed through Federation would become one of the greatest blessings of her journey,

Believing that some of the most meaningful accomplishments occur when women combine their unique talents, experiences, and perspectives to create positive change in their communities, Cammie feels that while individuals possess great qualities on their own, it is when those qualities are brought together that we become "Totally Awesome" as an organization.

As Secretary, Cammie is committed to preserving and archiving GFWC Texas records and history. Recognizing that important documents can easily be lost as leadership changes, she is currently digitizing and archiving records for her home club through Texas Woman's University. She hopes to inspire clubs and districts across Texas to safeguard their histories so that the legacies of today's members remain available to future generations.

Now retired, Cammie considers this chapter of her life her "service" era. While volunteer work was always important during her career, service has now become a central focus of her life. Guided by her faith, she believes God has a hand in all that we do, especially in club work. She also values the role experienced members play in mentoring newer members and ensuring the tradition of service continues for generations.

For Cammie, there is something invigorating about collaborating with others to make a difference. The sharing of ideas, perspectives, and experiences keeps her engaged and inspired.

When she is not involved in club activities, Cammie enjoys reading, growing plants, sharing meals with family and friends, and supporting organizations that strengthen her community.

If stranded on a desert island, her answer is two-fold: "A good book, and a portal to take me back to civilization!"



Julia Napper

Treasurer



Julia, a retired RN, and her husband are the proud parents of a large blended family that includes five daughters, as well as guardianship of two nieces. She considers her greatest accomplishment to be raising strong, independent women and feels especially blessed by her six grandchildren. Deeply involved in her church activities, Julia finds spiritual renewal through service and enjoys traveling. She and her husband take one “big trip” each year and also travel often to spend time with their grandchildren.

A member of Women’s Civic Club of Jasper, Julia joined the club after being invited by another member. “From the moment I stepped into the clubhouse, I felt welcome and knew I wanted to be part of the club and its legacy of service.”

One of Julia’s greatest joys has been mentoring new clubwomen and helping them discover where they can make the greatest impact within the organization. As the wife of a 20-year Navy veteran, she also takes great pride in her club’s partnership with the local VFW Post.

As Treasurer, Julia is committed to maintaining GFWC Texas’s financial stability for the future by overseeing all financial activities in accordance with accepted accounting practices and managing investment accounts to maximize returns for the organization.

A proud member of GFWC Texas, Julia believes the impact of its collective membership is “felt far beyond our own backyards.” She especially enjoys participating in GFWC initiatives such as the National Day of Service and the Legislative Action Center because their influence extends well beyond local communities.

When asked what she feels is the greatest strength of GFWC Texas, Julia replied, “I believe our greatest strength is the legacy of service we provide, especially as that service relates to supporting women and children. I hope we can take that same legacy of service and apply it to supporting veterans, especially women veterans, who are often overlooked.”

On a desert island, Julia says she would want”, “Audiobooks and lots of sunscreen!”



Sue Mercer

Parliamentarian



Sue was raised on a peanut farm in Comanche, Texas, alongside her siblings. After graduating from high school, she attended Tarleton State University, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree before beginning a career with an electric utility company in Decatur, Texas. Over the next 45 years, her career took her family across Texas, before retiring in late 2021.

Serving as a member and officer on various community boards, professional organizations, and company committees helped shape her lifelong commitment to community involvement. Upon retirement, she and her husband returned to Decatur to be closer to family, including their two sons and five “amazing” grandchildren.

With encouragement from her sister-in-law and twin sister, Lou Hitt—both devoted Federation members—it felt only natural for Sue to join the Decatur Woman’s Club, marking the beginning of a new and meaningful chapter in her lifelong dedication to service.

Sue believes that being a member of GFWC has “offered opportunities to work alongside some fabulous women dedicated to serving our mission and making our communities stronger.” As Parliamentarian, Sue’s vision is to expand the organization as a vibrant, forward-thinking Federation that honors its legacy while embracing innovation and continuing to change lives across Texas and beyond.

Considering her family to be her greatest source of joy, she stays busy keeping up with all the grandchildren’s sports and activities. She also plays in the bell choir and serves on the church council. In addition to her club activities, she belongs to two Bunco groups and a ladies’ investment club. She and her husband also enjoy traveling and have visited all 50 states and 14 countries. One item still on her bucket list is visiting every county courthouse in Texas. When not traveling, Sue enjoys evening walks to unwind and spending time baking.

As a member of ESO, Sue has been introduced to many new genres but especially enjoys historical fiction. If stranded on a desert island, however, she says she would want “a means of communication for social interaction and a source of information that I might need to survive.”



Pam Windham

Historical Foundation Trustee



Pam's introduction to club work came in 2012 when a friend invited her to a luncheon at the Moody Bradley House hosted by the Fairfield History Club. Shortly after joining, she attended her first Trinity District Fall Board Meeting, which was held in Fairfield. After experiencing her first TFWC State Spring Convention the following year, Pam was inspired to become more involved and has rarely missed a convention since.

One of Pam's greatest joys as a member of GFWC has been building friendships with women from across Texas and the nation while learning how clubs of all sizes make a meaningful impact in their communities.

Asked why she believes it is important for clubs to remain in Federation, Pam says, "I believe in the mission of the organization and love being part of an organization that serves the communities in which we live."

As TFWC Historical Foundation Chairman, Pam is dedicated to preserving The Mansion, TFWC's historic Austin clubhouse, ensuring it remains a treasured landmark for generations to come.

When she isn't volunteering with her club or serving at her church, Pam enjoys spending time with her family, and would want her husband and beloved furbaby by her side if on a desert island stating, "If I'm going to be in paradise, I don't want to be alone."



A portrait of Novella Byrd, a woman with short, wavy brown hair and bangs, smiling at the camera. She is wearing a blue off-the-shoulder top, a pearl necklace, and a gold bracelet. The background is a light-colored, textured wall.

A Conversation with Novella

We sat down with our incoming president, Novella Byrd, to ask the questions that matter most. Not just about her vision for the GFWC-Texas, but about the woman behind the gavel.

Firstly, on behalf of GFWC-Texas, thank you for taking on the role as president. In an effort for its members to get to know you, tell us a little about yourself and how you first got involved in club work with the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs.

NB: I grew up in Houston, the oldest of five siblings. After 12 years of Catholic Schools, I received my Bachelor of Science at Texas A&M University in College Station. My husband Teddy and I have been married 35 years in August. We have two children, Jeremy and Meghan; and two grandchildren Bayli and Owen. The teenagers are proving the old adage: "you pay for your raising". My daughter has her hands full!! I retired from Cotulla ISD in 2019; I taught Prekindergarten for 15 years and was the district librarian for the last 13 years.



Novella, pictured with her family at the recent GFWC-Texas Spring Board Meeting and 2026-2028 officer installation

I joined the Woman's Club of Cotulla in the spring of 2014 after receiving an invitation from my neighbor. While I accepted the invitation to attend, I had no intention of becoming a member. However, I decided to become a member after reviewing the yearbook I was given and learning about the impact they were making with the many projects and community service activities the club was involved in. I quickly became involved in club activities and wanted to help spread the word about the wonderful work our club was doing in the community. To accomplish that, I created the club's Facebook page and newsletter.

While attending my first district Fall Board meeting in 2015, the district president noticed me taking photos with my phone and asked what I was doing. When I explained that I was photographing the event and sharing updates on our club's Facebook page, she asked if I would do the same for Alamo District. From that conversation, the Alamo District Facebook page was born.

I attended my first state convention in 2016 when Patti Poe was installed as State President. Experiencing the excitement, fellowship, and dedication of clubwomen from across Texas left a lasting impression on me. From that moment on, you could say I was hooked!

Novella is pictured here with Patti Poe (l) and Angela Short (r)



Looking back on your journey in the Federation, what has brought you the greatest joy or satisfaction?

NB: Without a doubt, the greatest joy has been the incredible women I have met across Texas and throughout the United States. When I joined the Woman's Club of Cotulla, I never imagined the friendships and connections that would grow beyond my hometown.

Serving in state office has given me the opportunity to attend many district meetings and events, allowing me to meet clubwomen from all corners of our state. Getting to know these dedicated, talented, and service-minded women has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my GFWC journey. Each district has its own unique personality, traditions, and projects, yet we are all united by a common purpose of serving our communities and making a difference.

The friendships I have formed and the lessons I have learned from clubwomen across Texas have enriched my life in countless ways. I strongly encourage every member to visit neighboring districts whenever possible. Not only will you gain new ideas and perspectives, but you will also build relationships that strengthen our organization and remind us that we are part of something much larger than our individual clubs.

Your motto for this administration is “Together We Can Do Great Things.” What does that mean to you personally, and what do you hope it inspires in our members?

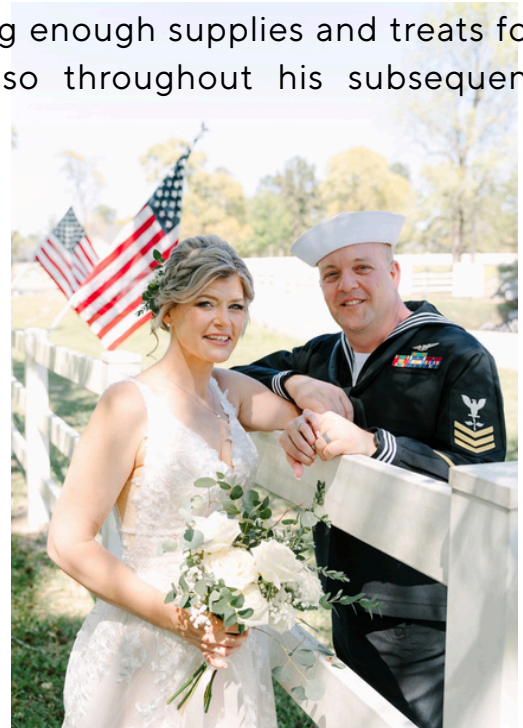
NB: In my first “Meet the Candidate” speech when I was running for First Vice President, I shared that I am a team player. I believed then—and I believe even more strongly today—that success is not about what I accomplish as an individual, but about what we accomplish together as GFWC Texas. That philosophy continues to guide me, and it remains at the heart of my personal and leadership values.

You've chosen Supporting Our Military Heroes as your special project. What drew you to that cause, and what does it mean to you?

NB: Those who know me know that my son is currently serving in the United States Navy. During his first deployment aboard an aircraft carrier, I regularly sent him care packages. He shared with me that some of his fellow sailors never received anything from home. From that point forward, I began sending enough supplies and treats for him to share with others and continued doing so throughout his subsequent deployments.



Son, Jeremy along with members of his squadron on a recent deployment to the Mediterranean



Jeremy and his wife, Theresa at their wedding this past March.

While serving as District President, our One-and-Done projects focused on supporting a San Antonio organization that advocates for and serves active-duty military personnel and veterans. Through that experience, I learned that many of our military heroes do not always receive the services and support they have earned and deserve.

Many of our clubs already sponsor projects that support military members, veterans, and their families, and I commend those efforts. I encourage every club to consider adopting a project that honors and assists our military heroes, recognizing their sacrifices and demonstrating our gratitude through meaningful service.

Another goal is to foster leadership at every level through member's participation in our state LEADS program, which is for clubwomen considering taking on a leadership role at every level; whether to serve as an officer or committee chairman. I highly encourage members to sign up for the class; the first 2 meetings are in person with the remainder of the meetings via zoom. There are leaders in every club; we are providing the tool through Texas LEADS to develop that leader that is already within!!

What do you feel is the greatest strength of the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs?

NB: The greatest strength of TFWC is our Texas-sized pride and loyalty to our state clubs and organization.

In today's world, we often hear clubs question the significance of remaining Federated. Why do you feel it is important for clubs to be a member of the General Federation of Women's Clubs?

I believe it is important for clubs to be members of General Federation of Women's Clubs because membership transforms individual acts of service into a powerful collective force. GFWC provides opportunities to learn, lead, and serve on a broader scale while still allowing clubs to maintain their unique identity and focus on local needs. Being part of GFWC means being part of a network of dedicated women who support one another, share ideas, and work together to make a difference. It truly demonstrates that together we can do great things.

Club work can ask so much of us – when you're not volunteering, how do you recharge and enjoy life?

NB: I like to visit with family, spend time at the beach, travel, crochet, and read. I also like to make cookies! I bought a stand mixer several years ago; needless to say it was a game changer. One of my favorite cookies is molasses cookies or ginger snaps. My grandmother made these every Christmas-whenever I make them and eat them; I smile and think about her.

Novella credits her mother, Mary Jo Choate, with inspiring her to always seek the positive rather than dwell on the negative—a perspective she believes will serve her well as GFWC Texas President



Is there anything you'd like to say to the members of the Federation as you begin this new chapter?

NB: I want members to feel comfortable reaching out to me with their questions, concerns, ideas, and suggestions. I firmly believe that the only "dumb" question is the one that is never asked. If something is important enough for a member to wonder about, then it is important enough to discuss and receive an answer. Open communication builds trust, prevents misunderstandings, and helps us work together more effectively as an organization.



*Pictured with former GFWC-Texas
President, Cindy Simmons*



*President, Wedy Carriker
Pictured alongside GFWC International*

I also want every member to know how important they are to GFWC Texas. Whether you are a new member attending your first meeting or a longtime clubwoman with decades of service, your contributions matter.

Every volunteer hour, every project, every donation, every idea, and every act of service helps strengthen our clubs and our communities. Our organization is successful because of the dedication of our members. No one should ever feel that their voice does not matter or that their efforts go unnoticed.

Each member brings unique talents, experiences, and perspectives that enrich our organization. When we listen to one another, support one another, and value every member's contributions, we create a stronger and more vibrant GFWC Texas. Together, we can accomplish far more than any one person could achieve alone.

Lastly, If you were on a desert island, what would you want to have with you?

NB: A striker to start a fire- fire keeps you warm, cooks your food and most importantly purifies your drinking water.

SERVICE IN ACTION

Bringing you club updates from across Texas, featuring the latest news, program highlights, and member achievements from organizations statewide. Stay up to date with the work clubs are doing to empower youth and strengthen communities.

MEMBERS OF GFWC-TEXAS ATTEND GFWC INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION IN SCOTTSDALE

Members of GFWC Texas proudly attended the GFWC International Convention, held June 25-30 in Scottsdale, Arizona. Throughout the convention, attendees participated in a variety of educational and fellowship activities, including cooking classes, an aquarium tour, and networking with fellow clubwomen from across the country.

A highlight of the event was State Night, where each state president proudly marched in a parade carrying their state flag. Members also took part in the traditional Passing of the Pin ceremony, a highly revered tradition to symbolize the formal transfer of leadership.

GFWC Texas was especially honored to receive numerous awards recognizing outstanding projects and achievements completed by its member clubs during the past club year. The convention provided an opportunity to celebrate success, gain new ideas, and strengthen the commitment to community service.





GFWC President Suellen Brazil snaps a photo with Christi Melton & Angela Short



GFWC 2024-2026 Executive Committee performs to Leader of the Pack



GFWC President Suellen Brazil presents Christi Melton with award



GFWC-Texas Delegation pictured with newly installed GFWC President, Wendy Carriker



Kathy Smith gets hands on at cooking class.



Sherry Eishen and Nancy Snead enjoy time at the aquarium.



Members of GFWC-Texas attend State Night



President, Barbara Harvey receives award on behalf of GFWC-Texas

GFWC-TEXAS RECEIVES AWARDS AT INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION



2024-2026 President Barbara Harvey and President-elect Novella Byrd represent Texas during the parade of states.

GFWC Texas celebrated an outstanding year of achievement as several clubs and members received top honors for their dedication and service at the 2026 GFWC convention.

The **GFWC Lake Area Woman's Club** received the **Communication/Public Relations Club Creativity Award**, recognizing its creative efforts in promoting club activities and community service.

The **Epsilon Sigma Omicron (ESO)** program earned **first place**, highlighting excellence in education and lifelong learning. GFWC Texas also received **first place in Legislation/Public Policy**, recognizing the federation's commitment to advocacy and civic engagement.

Two clubs were recognized for successfully completing the **Legislative Ladder initiative**: the **GFWC Florence J. Scott Woman's Club of Rio Grande City** and the **GFWC Woman's Club of Cotulla**. Their participation demonstrates the importance of grassroots involvement in legislative and public policy efforts.

Membership was another area of success, with GFWC Texas earning **first place in Membership**. Texas also received a **Special Membership Award for Newly Federated Clubs**, celebrating continued growth and the addition of new clubs to the federation.

Adding to the accomplishments, **Barbara Harvey** received the prestigious **2026 Charlotte Emerson Brown Platinum Award**, an individual honor recognizing outstanding service and commitment to GFWC.

These awards reflect the dedication, creativity, advocacy, and leadership of GFWC Texas clubs and members and celebrate their continued impact in communities across the state.

MELTON ATTENDS GFWC LEADS LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

Amity Club of Bowie member Christi Melton recently represented Texas at the GFWC LEADS (Leadership Education and Development Seminar), a one-day leadership workshop held the day before the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) Annual Convention. This year's seminar took place in Scottsdale, Arizona, as part of the GFWC Convention held June 25-30, 2026.

LEADS is designed to identify, educate, and encourage emerging leaders by providing participants with valuable leadership training, networking opportunities, and inspiration to serve at higher levels within GFWC. Christi embraced the experience with enthusiasm, saying, "I had a fabulous time! Everyone is always so positive and energized at the conventions!"

Christi is already a dedicated leader within the Amity Club, serving as Second Vice President, Community Improvement Contest Committee member, Mad Hatter Tea Chairman—the club's major fundraiser—and ESO Chairman. Her leadership extends beyond the club level as Pioneer District Fundraising Chairman and GFWC Texas UT MD Anderson Chairman. Looking ahead, Christi hopes to continue her federation journey by serving in Pioneer District Officer roles; ultimately serving as Pioneer District President.

Amity Club President Angela Short praised Christi's commitment, saying, "Christi always jumps into a leadership role whenever needed for any of our club events. She is very active and very supportive of her club, district, and state."

With her passion for service, willingness to lead, and desire to continue growing within GFWC, Christi exemplifies the purpose of the LEADS program. The knowledge, skills, and connections she gained in Scottsdale will undoubtedly benefit the Amity Club, Pioneer District, and GFWC Texas for years to come.

MELTON PICTURED WITH 2024-2026 GFWC PRESIDENT BARBARA HARVEY



A Legacy of Service: Amity Study Club Marks 65 Years

Trinity District's Amity Study Club celebrated six and a half decades of friendship and purpose with an anniversary gala befitting its storied history.

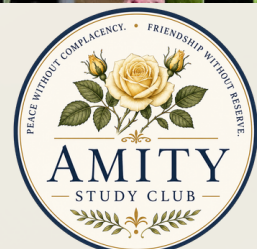
Members arrived in hats and gloves, a nod to the visionary women who chartered the club in 1960, as hors d'oeuvres were passed and punch was ladled from the same crystal bowl that graced club meetings of that era.



The atmosphere was less nostalgia than living memory as photographs, yearbooks, keepsakes, and memorabilia placed throughout the venue traced the club's journey across the decades. The centerpiece of these displays was a collection of vintage clothing donated by charter member Donna Gail Hanner.

The day's most memorable moment came when Hanner was surprised with the key to the city and the announcement that the day had been proclaimed Donna Gail Hanner Day.

As the gala drew to a close, its central message was clear: the spirit of Amity — goodwill in action — is as vital today as it was in 1960.





A TASTE OF TEXAS

Featuring recipes from around the region while showcasing what makes Texas food so special.

Molasses Cookies *aka Gingersnaps*

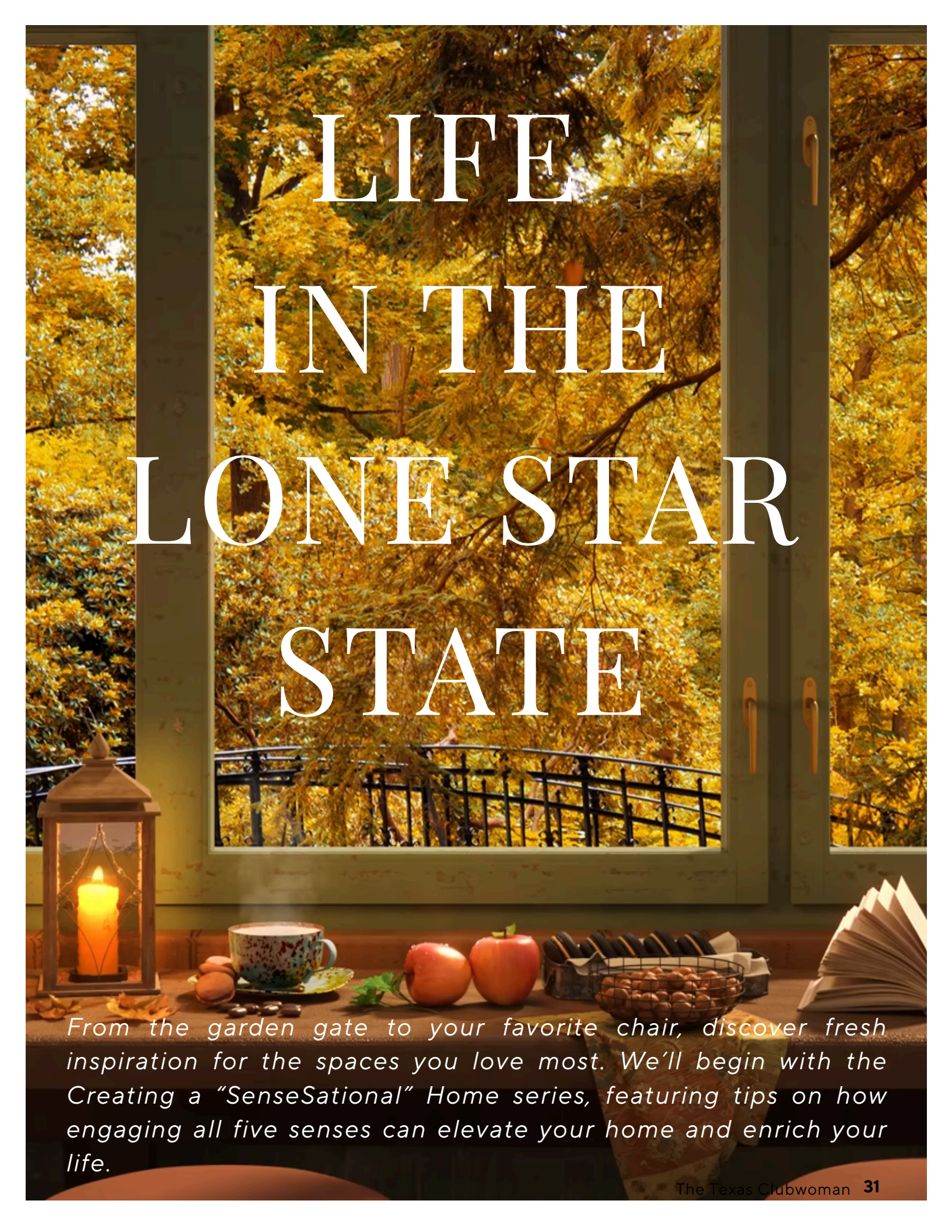
When the air turns crisp and the leaves begin to paint the landscape in shades of gold and amber few treats capture the essence in fall like molasses cookies. This recipe is a favorite of our state president, and makes the perfect seasonal bake. Whether shared alongside a steaming cup of coffee or shared at a cozy gathering, these molasses cookies bring comfort and nostalgia with every bite, making them a quintessential autumnal recipe.

- **1 ½ cups of shortening**
- **2 eggs**
- **4 cups flour**
- **2 tsp cinnamon**
- **1 tsp salt**
- **1 ½ cups of sugar**
- **½ cup molasses**
- **2 tsp ginger**
- **1 ½ tsp soda**
- **1 tsp cloves**



Cream shortening and sugar. Add eggs and molasses. Combine flour, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, salt, and baking soda. Gradually add to shortening and sugar mixture on low speed. Using a cookie scoop, roll dough into balls then into more sugar. Bake at 375° for 12 minutes. Store in airtight container.

You can't eat just one! Delicious served with coffee, hot tea, or milk.

A large window with a view of autumn trees and a balcony railing. On the sill, there is a still life with a lantern, a cup of coffee, apples, and a basket of nuts. The title "LIFE IN THE LONE STAR STATE" is overlaid in white serif font.

LIFE IN THE LONE STAR STATE

From the garden gate to your favorite chair, discover fresh inspiration for the spaces you love most. We'll begin with the Creating a "SenseSational" Home series, featuring tips on how engaging all five senses can elevate your home and enrich your life.

Creating a “SenseSational” Autumn

It's Fall, Y'all!

There is something almost magical about autumn. Maybe it's the relief that comes after a long, hot Texas summer or the anticipation of holidays just around the corner. Whatever the reason, fall invites us to slow down and experience the world a little differently. It is a season that engages all five senses in the most comforting ways, reminding us to savor the small moments that make life meaningful.

The first thing many of us notice about autumn is the way it looks. Trees transform almost overnight into rich shades of gold, crimson, and burnt orange. Front porches begin to fill with pumpkins, mums, and hay bales, while stores sparkle with cozy seasonal décor. Even the softer sunlight of fall seems to paint everything in warmer tones. A simple walk through the neighborhood suddenly feels like stepping into a postcard.

Autumn also has its own unmistakable soundtrack. Leaves crunch beneath our feet, geese call overhead as they begin their migration south, and football games fill Friday nights with cheers and marching bands. There is comfort in the familiar sounds of the season: the crackle of a fire pit, wind rustling through the trees, or laughter around a backyard gathering on a cool evening. These sounds create an atmosphere that feels both nostalgic and grounding.

Of course, no season may be more connected to taste than fall. Autumn flavors are warm, rich, and comforting. Apples, cinnamon, pumpkin, caramel, Texas pecans, and soups simmering on the stove all seem to bring people together like a warm hug.



Whether it's sharing chili at a tailgate party, baking homemade bread, or sipping hot cider on a chilly afternoon, fall foods create memories as much as meals. The season encourages us to linger a little longer around the table, savor simple pleasures, and enjoy the comfort of gathering with family and friends.

Our sense of smell may be the quickest way autumn captures our hearts. One breath of crisp air mixed with wood smoke or the scent of cinnamon candles instantly signals that fall has arrived. The aroma of fresh coffee, pumpkin bread in the oven, or earthy leaves after a rain shower can transport us back to treasured moments from years past. Scents have a powerful connection to memory, and autumn seems especially gifted at stirring feelings of comfort and belonging.

Even touch becomes part of the autumn experience. We pull soft sweaters from storage, wrap ourselves in cozy blankets, and enjoy the coolness of evening air after months of summer heat. There is something deeply comforting about holding a warm mug between your hands or feeling the texture of a warm knit against our skin. Fall invites us to physically experience comfort in ways that feel like a long exhale after a trying day.

Creating a "sensesational" autumn does not require elaborate decorating or expensive plans. Often, it is the simplest experiences that matter most: taking a scenic drive, lighting a favorite candle, baking with family, visiting a pumpkin patch, or simply pausing to enjoy the beauty of a changing season.

Autumn reminds us that joy can be found in ordinary moments if we are willing to notice them.

As the days grow shorter and the pace of life begins to shift, perhaps the greatest gift of autumn is the invitation to become fully present.

By engaging all five senses, we are reminded not only to observe the season, but to truly experience it.

Michelle Warren

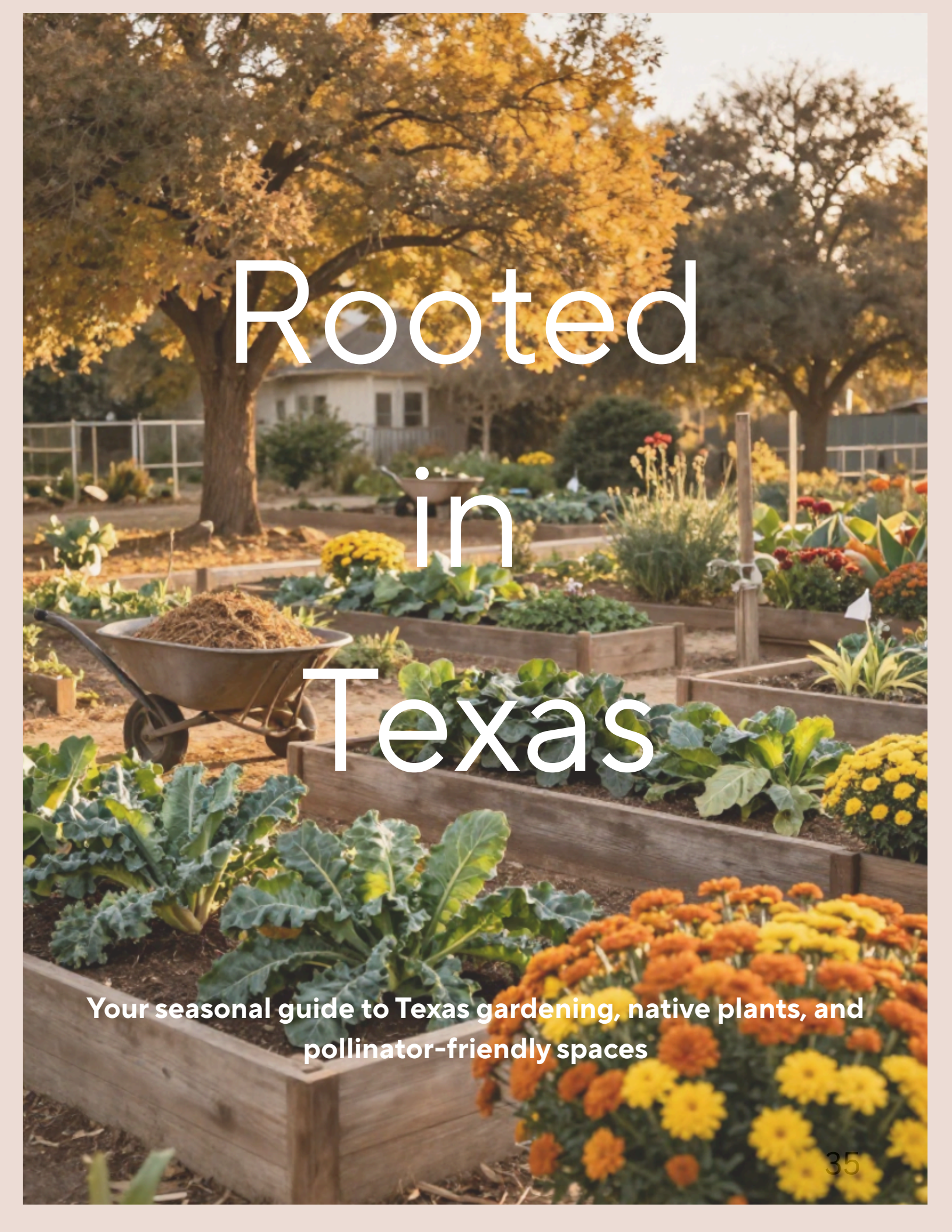


The Five Senses of Fall: Ten Ways of Creating Seasonal Comfort at Home

Autumn offers a chance to bring warmth, comfort, and beauty indoors. Here are ten simple ways to enjoy the season through all five senses.

- 1 Fill your home with autumn scents such as cinnamon, apple, pumpkin, or cedar through candles, diffusers, or stovetop simmer pots.
- 2 Add seasonal colors like rich reds, oranges, golds, and browns with cushions, throws, and table decorations.
- 3 Layer cozy textures with soft blankets, knit pillows, and warm rugs to create inviting spaces.
- 4 Enjoy autumnal sounds by playing gentle music, listening to a crackling fire, or opening a window to hear the wind rustling through the leaves.
- 5 Bake seasonal treats such as apple crisp, pumpkin bread, or molasses cookies (recipe shared in Taste of Texas) to delight both taste and smell.
- 6 Bring nature indoors with colorful leaves, pinecones, acorns, gourds, or fresh autumn flowers.
- 7 Create a hot drink station stocked with tea, coffee, hot chocolate, and seasonal spices for easy comfort.
- 8 Use warm lighting from candles, lamps, and string lights to create a cozy evening atmosphere.
- 9 Serve seasonal comfort foods like soups, stews, roasted vegetables, and apple-based desserts.
- 10 Make space for gathering and relaxing with comfortable seating, blankets, books, and opportunities to connect with family and friends.

Autumn's greatest pleasures are often the simplest. By engaging all five senses, you can create a home that captures the warmth, comfort, and beauty of the season.

A photograph of a well-maintained garden in autumn. In the foreground, there are raised garden beds filled with various plants, including large-leafed greens and clusters of bright orange and yellow flowers. A metal wheelbarrow filled with brown mulch sits on a path. In the background, there are large trees with golden-yellow leaves, a white house, and a chain-link fence. The overall atmosphere is warm and inviting.

Rooted in Texas

**Your seasonal guide to Texas gardening, native plants, and
pollinator-friendly spaces**

Fall into Gardening: Your Guide to September–November

In Texas, fall arrives on its own schedule. While calendars may say autumn has begun, lingering heat often keeps temperatures in the 90s well into September. Fortunately, the cooler months ahead provide the perfect opportunity to prepare gardens, strengthen landscapes, and set the stage for the beauty of spring.

September: Prepare and Plant

September's heat can still be intense, so focus on preparing your garden rather than making major changes all at once. Remove spent plants and enrich garden beds with a layer of organic compost to restore nutrients depleted during the summer growing season.

This is also an excellent time to plant trees, shrubs, and hardy perennials. The combination of warm soil and cooler air allows roots to establish before next summer's heat arrives. Newly planted seedlings may benefit from temporary shade cloth during the hottest part of the day.

October: Maintain and Refresh

As temperatures become more comfortable, turn your attention to garden maintenance. Divide crowded perennials such as irises, daylilies, and coneflowers to improve plant health and create new planting opportunities throughout the landscape.

Deadhead faded flowers to encourage additional blooms, but avoid major pruning until plants enter winter dormancy. Homeowners with traditional turf lawns should also consider applying a pre-emergent herbicide to help prevent winter weeds from taking hold.

November: Prepare for Winter

November is the time to get ahead of the season's first freeze. Apply a generous layer of mulch around plants and throughout garden beds to help conserve moisture and protect roots from sudden temperature changes.

Keep frost cloths or row covers on hand for cold nights, especially if you are growing vegetables or other frost-sensitive plants. Tender tropicals, citrus trees, and container plants should be moved indoors or to a protected location before temperatures drop too low.

With a little preparation each month, Texas gardeners can transition smoothly from summer's heat into a productive and healthy fall season.

TRAVEL TEXAS

Visit the locations that make our state the place everyone wants to be.

Where Small Town Charm Meets Big Possibilities



Annie Jack Boutique on Pecan Street



Celina, Texas, is quickly becoming one of North Texas' most exciting destinations. Known for its small-town charm and historic downtown square, the city has embraced thoughtful growth by investing in new attractions, restaurants, shopping, and entertainment that welcome both residents and visitors.

At the heart of this transformation is the continued revitalization of Downtown Celina. The addition of retail shops, restaurants, event spaces, offices, and luxury residences is creating an even more vibrant destination where people can gather, explore, and connect, all while preserving the unique character and charm that make Celina special.



Members of GFWC-Texas Trinity District break from their Spring Convention at The Silos



THE *Texas* CLUBWOMAN

Hello! I'm excited to serve as your 2026-2028 editor of The Texas Clubwoman magazine. Our goal is to showcase the incredible work happening across our clubs and bring your stories to life in every issue.

Our new section, **Service in Action** highlights our Texas clubs, amplifies member voices, shares service success stories, and highlights rising leaders. Your contributions will make this magazine meaningful, inspiring, and fun!

WHAT TO SUBMIT: *We welcome content from all levels.*

- Club Activities.
- Club Events.
- District, State, and Nationwide Projects.

Share stories that highlight community impact, member involvement, and creative or unique programs. Tell us what made your event meaningful.

PHOTO GUIDELINES: *Strong photos make your stories shine!*

- High-resolution, clear, and well-lit images.
- Action shots (members engaged in activities).
- Group photos that represent your club.
- Name members left to right.
- Include event name or activity.

MAKE YOUR STORY STAND OUT: *What made your event special?*

- Include quotes from members or participants.
- Share impact (Who did it help? How?).
- Group photos that represent your club.
- Add interesting or unique details.

LET'S TELL YOUR STORY!

To submit your stories and photos email me at: chelw11@sbcglobal.net with the subject line: *Texas Clubwoman Submissions.*

We can't wait to hear from you!

Michelle Warren

JOIN US IN THE "QUEEN CITY"

2027 GFWC ANNUAL CONVENTION
JUNE 25-28, 2027

CHARLOTTE

NORTH CAROLINA



THE WESTIN CHARLOTTE
KING ROOM: \$242
DOUBLE QUEEN: \$262



