

## A-2: Member Award of Honor

*Sandy Purvis: A Powerhouse for Gardening on Behalf of Others*

Sandy Purvis

1351 Elk River Drive  
Apex NC 27523

Areas of Outstanding Accomplishments: Horticulture, Youth Activities, Horticulture Therapy, All Round Excellence

Member of The Raleigh Garden Club

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*Frances Cain*  
Digital Signature

**The Raleigh Garden Club is a member of  
The Garden Club of North Carolina ( District 10 )  
And The South Atlantic Region of National Garden Clubs**

I. Brief Description: Sandy is a powerhouse gardener! She puts her extensive horticulture knowledge and boundless energy in the service of others through the Raleigh Garden Club's many projects. Sandy joined the club in 2015 and went right to work: lending a hand wherever help was needed and taking on jobs whenever she was asked. To every project, large and small, Sandy brings horticultural knowledge, an eye for detail, grace under pressure, and a talent for nurturing people. Sandy embodies the spirit of the garden club mission. She is an inspiration the gardening community at large. It is a privilege to nominate her for the Member of Honor award.

## II. Youth Activities

### A. **Co-Chair of the Rosey Girls Youth Garden Club**, 2018 to the present.

1. Sandy took over direction of the club in 2018, keeping the preceding chair as her co-chair. Based on guidelines of GCNC, she seeks to inspire the girls with a life-long love of gardening and the natural world.
2. The Rosey Girls Youth Garden Club (grades 3 through 6) began with a group of 12 girls, but in 2021 reduced the size of our group to eight so that we can manage COVID-19 safety precautions.
3. At monthly meetings the girls always participate in an activity related to gardening. Other activities include art projects such as preparing posters for GCNC and NGC competitions, as well as making table favors for RGC and GCNC events.

### B. Club projects are a bird sanctuary, vegetable garden, and a pollinator garden.

1. Bird sanctuary was designs and planted by Sandy with Girls Club permission.
  - a. 2018: Installed a bird sanctuary. Pokeweed was allowed to grow to produce berries for the birds, among many berried shrubs.
    - i. Tree dedication for Arbor Day to honor Shannon Harrison, Director, and Kourtney Barnes, Health & Phys Ed Director. We invited Girls Club administration, family of the honorees, and RGC members.
  - b. 2019 expanded and added a bird trail with feeders, a bird bath.
    - i. Sandy gave a lesson on what Arbor Day is all about, then planted a flowering cherry tree and a little leaf linden tree with the girls.
  - c. 2021 & 2022 : Tend bird feeders, added ground waterer for visiting mammals, birds and insects, and more berrying shrubs.
    - i. Sandy had the Rosey Girls plant two Eastern Redbud Trees in the Girls Club Bird Sanctuary in honor of Arbor Day
2. Vegetable Garden, 2018 to the present: Planted, maintain, and harvest so each Rosey Girl takes home a bag of produce from the meeting.
3. Pollinator Garden 2018 to the present: Established in 2018 and updated by the girls every year with annuals. The zinnias and other flowers attract Monarch butterflies, and the butterfly bush draws native bees and butterflies. Camellias, azaleas, and rudbeckia provide additional seasonal diversity in the garden.

### C. Awarded **Youth Club of the Year** by GCNC , 2022.

## III. Horticulture

- A. **2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of Programs, 2022-2024:** Sandy has set up a year of great horticulture lectures to educate our members on gardening and horticulture. Each program is accompanied by a supporting field trip the same month. These have been very popular.
- B. **Plant Sale Chair, 2018-2021:** The Raleigh Garden Club has organized a plant sale to generate funds donated to community programs and civic improvement projects. Sandy chaired the Plant Sales for 3 years. Her attention to detail, expansive publicity including even Facebook ads, made it a huge success each time.
1. 2018: Sandy moved the sale into downtown Raleigh to the Historic Polk House, and added many educational demonstrations and talks, turning it into a gardening event. And a success, raising \$2325.
  2. 2019: Pot ups parties at member gardens created a large inventory of plants to sell and taught propagation to members as well. Shay Blakemore read the NGC's From Seed to Plant and helped the kids plant radish seeds. Raised \$2677.
  3. 2020: Sandy Purvis stepped right up last fall when it was decided to have a Fall Plant sale. The one she had planned for the spring 2020 was cancelled because of Covid. Sandy knows all the "ropes" and took right over. It was very successful, raising \$3919.
  4. 2021: Sandy took over the Spring Plant Sale as chair again. RGC netted \$1359. What a shot for our Community Donations coffer!

#### IV. Horticultural Therapy

- A. Awarded the **McMillan Humanity Award** by Raleigh Garden Club – June 2021
- B. **Martha Franck Fragrance Garden, 2020-2021** – The unique 1.1-acre GCNC Legacy Garden is located in the heart of the Governor Morehead School for the Blind in Raleigh. The garden allows visually impaired students and those with multiple physical challenges to experience scent, sound, and touch. Signage and labeling in the garden are done in Braille or raised letters.
1. During COVID, Sandy took on maintenance of the garden, putting in 40 bales of pine straw and undertaking a long overdue "heavy" pruning of the shrubs to return the garden closer to its original design. Of course, there was plenty of weeding too.
- C. Boys and Girls Club of Wake County Food Pantry, 2020-2022: During COVID the number of families depending on the Food Pantry doubled, and Sandy donated the Rosey Girls Vegetable Garden surplus and her own garden surplus to the Food Pantry to help out.
- D. Transitions LifeCare Hospice Holiday Luncheon Chef –**2018, 2019, 2022**
1. Cooked enough to feed nearly 100 staff and volunteers for the Holiday Luncheon sponsored each December (except during COVID) by Raleigh Garden Club.

#### V. All Around Excellence. 2015 to the present

- A. Sandy does not hold as many titles as some in garden club life, but she is tireless in supporting the projects through hands-on work and sweat equity. Her efforts are always to help others – from baking lunch for the 100+ staff and volunteers of Hospice every December to gardening in her home community, and to raising her many hives of bees.
- B. Sandy supports RGC and GCNC by participating in the Awards, helping out with meetings and the many tasks of table favors, table decorations, gift bags and more.

## Rosey Girls Youth Garden Club



1 -Sandy, with four of the Rosey Girls showing off their spring wreaths (left, 20??) and the Rosey Girls (20??) holding the birdfeeders they decorated with beneficial bugs plus the bags of produce from their vegetable garden.



Programs include an educational talk and then a garden activity. The goal is not only to improve and maintain our environment but also to share the sheer fun of "digging in the dirt". For example: Sandy talked to us about insects and bugs in the garden and the environment. She pointed out that creepy looking critters are often very good guys in the garden. She provided insect collection kits, divided up the girls into teams and we went out to see what we could find. Digging and finding bugs, beetles and worms (and spiders) was a lot of fun!

Another day Sandy passed out a vegetable and herb survey and asked the girls to choose their favorites to plant in the garden. To wind up the meeting, we went out to the garden to harvest okra, peppers, turnips and tomatoes. Then we pulled up the summer plants to make room for fall vegetables. Vegetable Garden and its two raised beds and pots are home to herbs, climbing beans, melons and in the past, gourds.

## Horticulture

### Plant Sale

Plant sales educate and advise the public about gardening here in the Triangle. Sandy helped make our plant sale an event, encouraging us all a chance to chat with like-minded plant lovers. She included speakers Brie Arthur on “FoodScaping in Pots” and many others on “Gourds,” bee keeping, and container planting.

Sandy herself raised 100 vegetable and herb plants to sell, starting them from seed. Her meticulous records of plants sold, and savvy publicity through Facebook and many other online local groups raised over \$10,280 in her 3 years as Plant Sale Chair. All of this money was given in Community Donations to the community.



### Bird Sanctuary Garden and Trail at the Boys and Girls Club

Sandy designed and installed the Bird Sanctuary in 2018, and each year improved it. In 2019 she began a tradition of planting trees with the Rosey Girls to celebrate Arbor Day. In 2020 they added a path with more bird feeders and a hanging water supply, planted with shrubs that attract and support birds. In 2022 they added plants and ground water for bugs and small mammals as well.



### Pollinator Garden at the Boys and Girls Club

Sandy designed and installed the Pollinator Garden at the Boys & Girls Club Wake County in 2018, and with the girls help she maintains it every year. During 2021 when the pandemic had the facility closed, she had to maintain it single handed – AND despite having both hips replaced. Another testament to her horticultural dedication.



### Rosey Girls Vegetable Garden

The mission is to serve as a teaching tool to the girls, so that they learn where food comes from and how to grow it. It turned out some also had to learn how to cook and eat it!

Surplus food is donated to the Food Pantry at the Boys & Girls Club of Wake County. During COVID, all of the produce was able to be donated and that was a blessing as the number of families depending on the Pantry doubled.

## Horticulture Therapy



In one sense, all of Sandy's gardening for the Club could be considered horticultural therapy, as providing food for physical health and gardening as mental health is always a paramount mission of hers. During COVID lockdowns she took on the Martha Franck Fragrance Garden to restore the shrubs to their designed proportions. Maintenance of this garden is especially important as it serves as a teaching classroom for the students. Harvesting from the Rosey Girls vegetable garden to donate to the Food Pantry during the pandemic.

A major overhaul of the garden beds to make them safe was undertaken in 2021 by Sandy and a partnership with member Emily's marketing company.

## All Around Excellence

Boundless ability, generosity, and a willingness to get the job done "better," typifies Sandy's approach to garden club work and to life. She embodies the garden club mission, putting her love of gardening, horticulture and environmental improvement in the service to others less fortunate, and her community. She is a strong supporter of the garden club, knowing that a community of gardeners can expand the impact and make a bigger difference.



Sandy is a beekeeper. She shares her hives sweet bounty with the club and the public at plant sales. She shares her expertise too. Sandy spoke about *Honey Bees, Pollination and Honey* at our Plant Sale and meetings. She even offered 8 different kinds of honey to taste – all from her own hives!



On receiving the McMillan Humanities Award from the Raleigh Garden Club, President Betsy Dupree said, "Sandy is ... why the Rosey Girls continue to make such an important impact on these young girls. They learn to grow and feed themselves and their families, learn about preserving our world and birds, with the Bird Sanctuary. There is no greater mission than to help young people grow to love and respect Nature, so that our environment remains healthy and habitable."