

"Ghostly Gala," a NGC Standard Flower Show, was presented on October 28, 2023 by the Sarasota Garden Club, located in "The Bay" waterfront park, which features botanical gardens, mangroves, wildflowers, and a butterfly garden.

The logo (*above right*) was created by a club member, and the Autumn / Halloween theme was reflected in the show Schedule, signage, and throughout the show, with ghosts floating everywhere, on all the entry cards, and even on the shirts worn by the committee members.



The aura of autumn filled the club's Great Room with the golden leaves of fall, rustic colored flowering plants, corn stalks, bales of hay and, of course, scarecrows.

Since the show was held at the end of October, spooky Halloween décor also dominated – witches, spiders, Jack-o-Lanterns, flying bats, and lively skeletons adding to the festivities. Spider webs were particularly dominant in the Table Designs.

- As guests entered the showroom, they were greeted by the **Ghostly Focal Area** in the center of the hall (Left).
- Surrounding this welcoming presentation, was the Floral Design "**Spooktacular**" consisting of two Divisions featuring both Creative Designs and Table Exhibits.
- Continuing, the guests found themselves in the midst of the Horticultural Exhibits, "**Double, Double, Toil and Trouble**" consisting of 10 Divisions with 71 Classes.
- In between these two areas, the Education Division, "**Hocus Pocus**," featured 2 exhibits which highlighted Water Conservation and Butterfly Gardening.

The Ghostly Gala theme created a festive atmosphere that was celebrated by the guests and the garden club members. There were approximately 225 visitors (and 4 dogs) that came to enjoy this flower show that sparked both the imagination and gardening skills.



DIVISION I – DESIGN AWARDS

“Spooktacular”

Award of Design Excellence

Designer’s Choice Award

Floralia XVI Award

Section A - “HALLOWEEN PARADE”

Class 2 - “Moon Glow”

- A creative design containing reflective components giving back images of light.
- Staged on a 40” high, 18” square top clear acrylic pedestal.
- Plant material: *Serenoa repens* (Saw Palmetto), *Cycas revoluta* (Sago Palm).



Table Artistry Award

Section B - “TRICK OR TREAT”

Class 4 - “Potent Potions”

- A functional table for two is planned and set for actual service.
- Convenience and sense of order must prevail. A completed decorative unit must be included.
- Plant Material: *Eryngium* (Sea Thistle), *Ruscus aculeatus* (Butcher’s Broom) and *Hypericum perforatum* (St John’s Wort).



DIVISION II – HORTICULTURE AWARDS

“Double, Double, Toil and Trouble”

Award of Horticultural Excellence

Grower’s Choice Award

Section A – “Scary Skeleton”

Class 7 - Any Other Worthy Named Specimen

- Cactus, Container Grown for Foliage.
- Plant Name: *Echinopsis calochlora* (Lemon Barrel Cactus).



Grower’s Choice Award

Section B – “Spirits Delight”

Class 11 - Any Other Worthy Named Specimen

- Orchids, Container Grown or Mounted.
- Plant Name: *Dendrobium*.



Grower’s Choice Award

Section C – “Thrills and Chills”

Class 15 - Neoregelia

- Bromeliads, Container Grown or Mounted.
- Plant Name: *Neoregelia* (Fireball).



Award of Merit

Section D – “Enchanted Wand”

Class 21 – Orchid

- Cut Flower.
- Plant Name: *Cattleya*.



Grower's Choice Award

Section E – “Magic Broom”

Class 28 – Dracaena.

- Cut Foliage.
- Plant Name: *Dracaena reflexa* (Star of India).



Grower's Choice Award

Section F – “Spiders Web”

Class 35 – Beaucarnea.

- Succulents, other than Cactus, Container Grown for Foliage.
- Plant Name: *Beaucarnea recurvata* (Ponytail Palm).



Grower's Choice Award

Section G – “Witches Brew”

Class 46a – Euphorbia.

- Flowering Plants, Container Grown.
- Plant Name: *Euphorbia geroldii* (Thornless Crown of Thorns).



Grower's Choice Award

Section H – “Hauntingly Eerie”

Class 60 - Any Other Worthy Named Specimen.

- Foliage Plants, Container Grown.
- Plant Name: *Ludisia discolor* (Jewel Orchid).



Grower's Choice Award

Section I – "Boo-tiful Garden"

Class 62 - Grouping of plants in an indoor or outdoor container.

- A grouping of three or more botanically different plants with similar cultural requirements.
- Plant Names: *Portulacaria afra* 'Variegata' (Rainbow Elephant Bush), *Graptopetalum paraguayense* 'Variegatum', *Kalanchoe thyrsiflora* (Flapjacks), *Dracaena trifasciata* (Snake Plant), *Crassula tetragona*.



Arboreal Award

Section J – "Ghostly Greetings"

Class 64 - *Acalypha Wilkesiana* (Copperleaf.)

- Cut Arboreal Flowering, Fruited Berried, or Coned Tree or Shrub.
- Plant Name: *Acalypha wilkesiana* (Coral Glow).



DIVISION III – EDUCATION AWARDS - “Hocus Pocus”

For our Education Exhibit WATER CONSERVATION – “Every Drop Counts” - our mission was to show the extreme importance of conserving water, both on a global and local level, and ways for individuals to save water.

WHY CONSERVE WATER?

Although more than 70% of the Earth’s surface is water, more than 96% is unusable water. 2.5% is freshwater, more than half is locked up in permanent ice, 30% is held in ground water, and 1.3% is surface water, for human use.

“Florida is projected to have a possible short fall of about 337 million gallons of water/day by 2040” - (FDEP’s 2021 Regional Water Supply Report)

TIPS AND TRICKS ON HOW TO CONSERVE WATER

Indoors

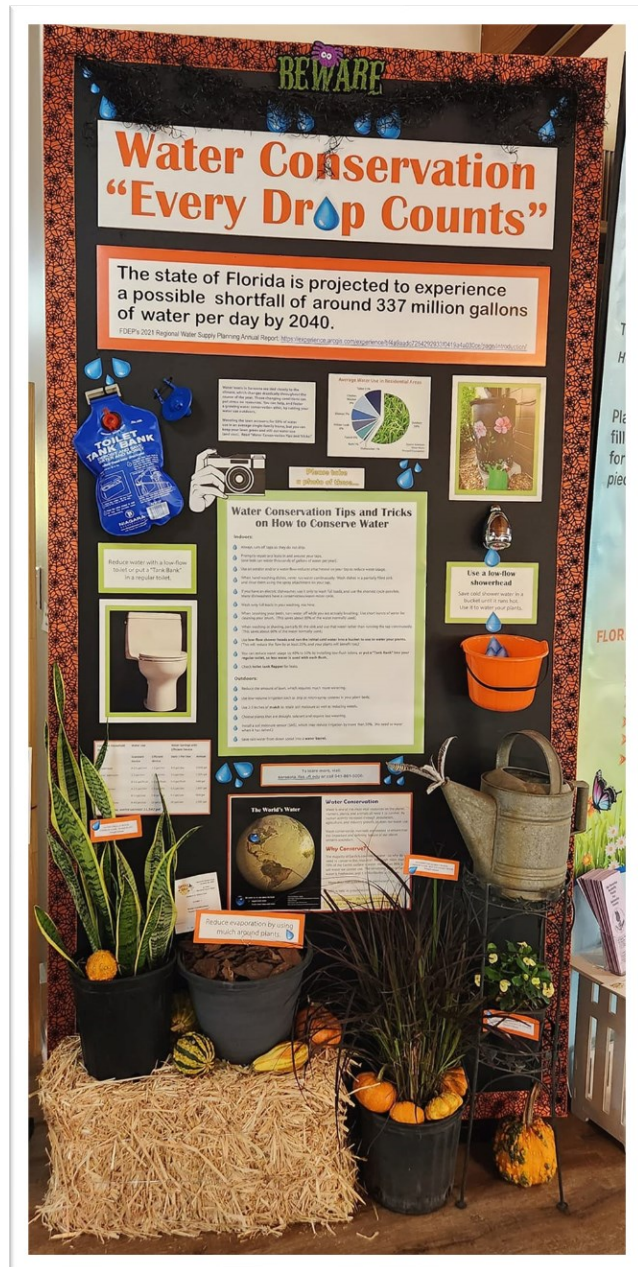
- Always turn off taps so they do not drip.
- Promptly repair any leaks around your taps (*1 leak can waste thousands of gallons per year*).
- Use an aerator or a water flow-reducer attachment on your tap to reduce water usage.
- When hand washing dishes, never run water. Wash dishes in a partially filled sink and rinse them using the spray attachment.
- If you have an electric dishwasher, only wash full loads, using the shortest cycle possible.
- While brushing your teeth, turn off water. Use short bursts of water to clean the brush, saving 80%.
- When washing or shaving, partially fill the sink and use that water rather than running the tap continuously. (*This saves about 60% of the water normally used*).
- Use low-flow shower heads, and run the initial cold water into a bucket to use to water your plants. (*This will reduce the flow by at least 5% and your plants will benefit too.*).
- You can reduce water usage by 40% - 50% by installing low flush toilets, OR put a “Tank Bank” into your regular toilet so less water is used with each flush.
- Wash only full loads in your washing machine.

Outdoors

- Reduce the amount of lawn (*lawn requires more watering*).
- Use low-volume irrigation, such as drip or micro-spray systems in your plant beds.
- Use 2” – 3” of mulch to retain soil moisture as well as reducing weeds.
- Choose plants that are drought tolerant, requiring less watering.
- Install a soil moisture sensor (SMS) which may reduce irrigation by more than 50% (*no need to water when it has rained*).

Education Award

Exhibit 1 – Water Conservation “Every Drop Counts”



Visitors were instructed to photo the information, as handouts were NOT supplied at the exhibit, to reduce paper.

Theme Staging

Visitors were welcomed to the Sarasota Garden Club at this table outside the entrance where the Membership Committee (in their themed outfits) were on hand to provide information about the flower show and the garden club, with the help of scarecrow and pumpkins.



As guests entered, they were provided with a shortened version of the flower show Schedule, listing all the exhibits (right), and the opportunity to vote for the **People's Choice Award** for both their Design and Horticulture favorites - with a **BALLOT** box! (below).



As guests entered the Great Room, they were greeted by the **focal display** with a jolly couple (of skeletons) who were enjoying Happy Hour at a cobweb-covered table amidst fall foliage and flowers.



On the flip side of the focal area, another pair of skeletons could be found – busily strumming their violins (Below).

Overseeing both these couples, and the entire show, was the Ghostly hostess of the day.



The focal display was visible from all angles: with musical skeletons, more ghosts, spiders and arrangements.

Besides the large Focal Area, there were additional scenarios tucked away in the corners.

They continued the spooky, autumn theme as guests moved around the room – pumpkins, gourds, mini-mums, ghosts, witches and, of course – spiders in their webs.



Overall Staging

Below is an overall view of the Great Room featuring both **Design** and **Horticultural** entries.

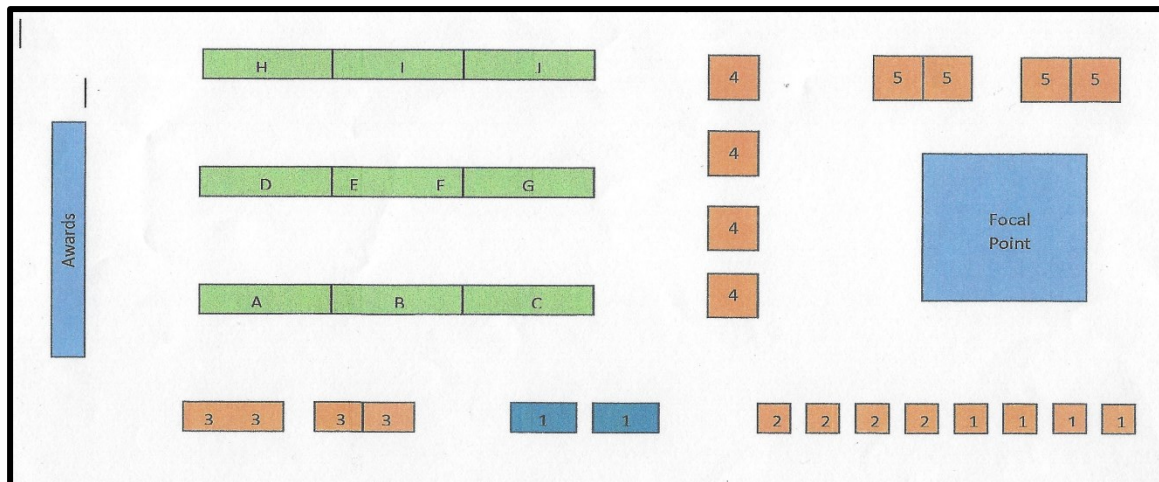
The major portion of this view is the Horticulture Division of the show, ***“Double, Double, Toil and Trouble”***.

Along the wall on the left is a creative Design class, ***“Monster Mash”***, a design incorporating multiple parts of only one plant family.



Above: In the foreground is the Design class, ***“Potent Potions”***, a functional table setting for two.

Below: Show Floorplan



Design Staging



“Witch Craft”

(the four designs to the left in the above picture). A Creative Design where the line is dominant. Staged on a 36” high clear pedestal, with an 18” square top.

“Moon Glow”

(the four designs to the right in the photograph above). A Creative Design containing reflective components giving back images of light. Staged on a 40” high acrylic pedestal with an 18” square top.



“Bobbing for Apples”

An Exhibition Table – not meant to be functional.

It is to be created artistically to suggest the service of food.

Staged on a black, rectangular frame 30” high by 24” wide. The frame of reference is 36” wide by 30” deep.



Two views of:

“Eat, Drink, and Be Scary”

A functional table set for four for actual food service which must include a completed decorative unit.

Staged on a 30” square table, 26” high.

Horticultural Staging

An overview of the Horticultural Division, featuring 10 sections of plants – foliage and flowering, orchids and cacti, and more. You name it – it was here.



“Hauntingly Eerie”

Foliage plants, container grown.

(The black tablecloths created a uniformity for the 10 classes. The dividers that separated them could be quickly adjusted to the changing number of entries per class.)



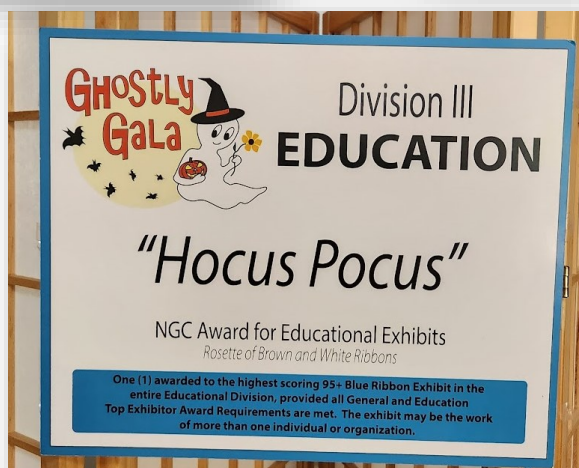
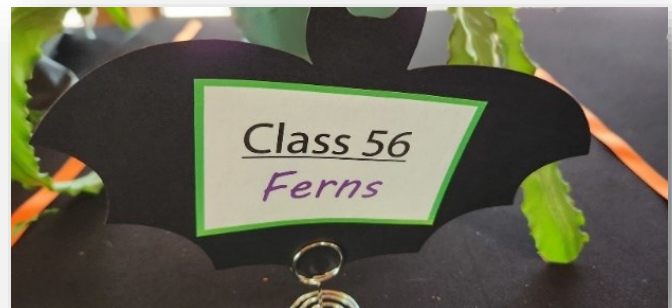
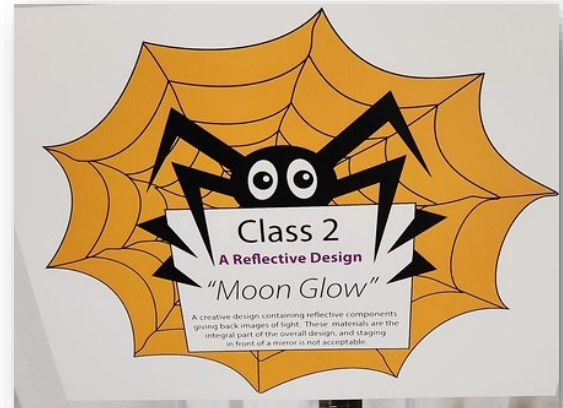
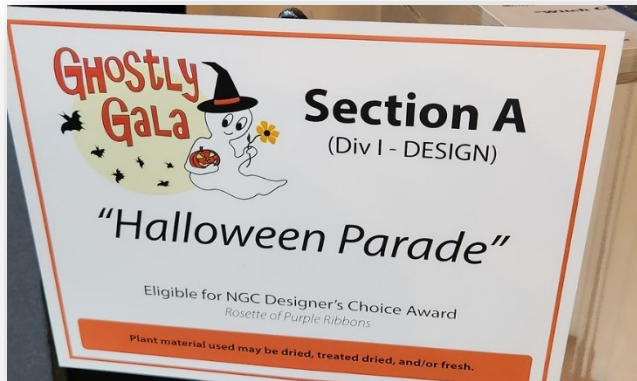
“Spiders Web”

Succulents other than Cacti, container grown for foliage.

Signage

Halloween could be found in all the Signage but there was still continuity as each Division featured the Ghostly Gala logo.

- Each **DIVISION** was color coded: Design - orange, Horticulture - green, and Education – blue.
- The Design classes were represented by spiders, and the Horticulture classes by bats.



Judges Hospitality

As the judges gathered, they were treated to hors d'oeuvres atop the head of a ferocious Mr Pumpkin.

Next was their luncheon, still reflecting the Halloween theme in the table settings and menus, and then on to the judging of the day.



Show Schedule



An NGC
Standard Flower Show
Presented by
Sarasota Garden Club
1131 Boulevard of the Arts
Sarasota, FL 34236
Saturday, October 28, 2023
10 am – 4 pm
Admission Free and Open to the Public
Proud Member of:
National Garden Clubs, Inc. (NGC)
Deep South Garden Clubs, Inc.
Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc. (FFGC)
District VIII

