

# PASSION FOR PLANTS: *Sou'Wester Garden Club holds annual Green Thumb Plant Sale*

By **KATHERINE LACAZE**  
FOR COAST WEEKEND

**S**EASIDE — When the Sou'Wester Garden Club takes over the Seaside Civic and Convention Center for its 24th annual Green Thumb Plant Sale, visitors can smell the scent of flower blossoms, mulch and plants long before they see the rows of tables spread with the verdant merchandise.

Yet even with such an abundant offering, garden club members still encourage visitors to come early to glean from the plant sale being held from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, May 25.

“For many years, the entire sale has been sold out within the three hours, so buyers are encouraged to come early for the best selection,” said Diane Somers, a garden club member and organizer of the annual plant sale.

While the types of plants and other items varies slightly from year to year, the groups generally offer a wide range of categories, including ferns, fuchsias, vines, hydrangeas, dahlias, grasses, ground covers, succulents, bulbs, annuals, perennials, vegetables, tomatoes, herbs, house plants and



Submitted photo

**The Sou'Wester Garden Club's annual Plant Sale will be held May 25 at the Seaside Civic and Convention Center.**

planted containers.

According to Somers and club president Ann Pilger, they strive to provide plants that flourish in the coastal environment and climate. During the event, club members are present to help shoppers identify the plants and to provide advice on planting and growing selections.

Other items provided by garden club members and sold during the event include unique garden art, gifts, planters, baked goods and preserves.

The nonprofit club uses proceeds from the sale to support a number of community initiatives that align with their mission. They offer financial and in-kind support

for the Downtown Seaside Hanging Flower Basket Project, the Seaside High School Garden, and garden and grounds maintenance at the Seaside Museum and Historical Society's iconic Butterfield Cottage.

## Supporting local organizations

Last year, the plant sale also included a silent auction and raffle drawing to fund the garden club's Grant Project, an initiative that is returning this year.

Local projects and groups can submit applications for grants ranging from \$100 to \$500 to go toward projects that benefit the local community and support the

## IF YOU GO

**What:** 24th annual Sou'Wester Garden Club Green Thumb Plant Sale

**When:** 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 25

**Where:** Seaside Civic and Convention Center, 415 First Ave. (Enter from the west side of the building, as the lobby is closed for construction)

For more information, call 971-221-4680 or email gardenclub.sw@yahoo.com.

club's educational mission to “become caretakers of our air, water, forests, land and wildlife.”

Gardening, beautification and conservation project proposals are all considered, Somers said, adding they also award grants “in support of continuing education for

students in pursuit of careers in horticulture, forestry, wildlife, environmental conservation, landscape design, botany and related sciences.”

So far this year, the club has awarded grants to Camp Kiwanilong, which connects young campers to local ecosystems and the natural envi-

ronment, and the Wildlife Center of the North Coast for their inaugural one-week summer camp.

## A rich history

The Sou'Wester Garden Club was organized in April 1946 and is part of the Oregon State Federation of Garden Clubs. When the group's annual plant sale was initially established, it included a flower show component and was held at the Bob Chisholm Community Center.

Over time, the flower show element was discontinued and the plant sale — growing larger each year

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