

THE GARDEN GATE

FGCNYS District IV Newsletter: Spring 2009

www.nydistrictIV.org



Director's Message

Spring has finally arrived in the North Country. Most of the snow has melted and the tips of my tulip leaves are emerging from the ground. It is a time of renewal. A time to prepare the ground for the new plantings and to look forward to the emergence of the well-loved plants of the past.

This emergence of new officers and the return of those who have served so well is happening within FGCNYS. At the 85th Annual Meeting and Installation of Officers in Buffalo, I was installed as the District IV Director 2009–2011. I was truly honored. I thank all of you who served so brilliantly on the previous board, and I look forward to working with all of those who have volunteered to join me for the 2009–2011 term of office. Through the joint efforts of both boards, District IV is growing and flourishing. Recently we have revised and updated the District Manual and District By-laws, prepared a proposed budget, investigated insurance possibilities, revised the format and delivery system of the Garden Gate, scheduled a District IV trip as a Ways and Means project, and have started a District IV web site (www.nydistrictIV.org). We have also received State approval for the combined Districts IV, V, and VI Flower Show School which will begin this October in Oriskany. The officers and District IV board members have worked very hard and I thank them all for their efforts. It shows! Together we have accomplished so much.

New officers and board members of District IV will be installed by State President Elaine DiPietro at our Spring Meeting and Luncheon at the Great Escape Lodge in Queensbury. The Lake George Community Garden Club will be hosting this event. Co-chairmen, Irene Burns and Charlanne McDonough, along with their club members, have been working diligently to provide us with an exciting and enjoyable day. Their talents and enthusiasm are evident in every phase of planning. The program they have arranged, "Invasive Plants in the Landscape," has universal appeal and is very timely. The venue and the meal have also been chosen with great care. I sincerely appreciate their efforts and I anticipate a very productive and enjoyable event.

Please join us on May 5 at the Great Escape Lodge where we will conduct the business of the district, learn from the club presidents of the highlights of their programs, install and honor the new board, and socialize with our fellow gardening enthusiasts. I look forward to seeing you there.

Pat Wania, District IV Director

The Garden Gate

Sue VanOmmeren, Editor
svanommeren@gmail.com

Next Deadline:
August 1, 2009

District IV Officers

Patricia Wania, Director
Pat Leonard, First Assistant Director
Mary Leonard, Recording Secretary
Heather Cushing, Corresponding Secretary
Sue VanOmmeren, Treasurer

FGCNYS Inc. Extends 501(c)3 Status to Clubs

As of January 2, 2009, all clubs affiliated with Federated Garden Clubs of New York State, Inc., are eligible to be covered under the state's 501(c)3 status. In order to be covered, clubs must have the appropriate language in their by-laws and must have their own EIN from the Internal Revenue Service.

As members of the group exemption, clubs are required to file an "e-postcard" with the IRS by the 15th day of the 5th month after the close of the club's fiscal year. Instructions for this filing will appear in the spring 2009 issue of *The News*. The filing requires no fee and no penalty is assessed for not filing. However, failure to comply with this regulation for three consecutive years will terminate a club's group exemption.

Contact Marge Lansing at (518) 785-6312 or grannymar2@nycap.rr.com for more information.

Sue VanOmmeren, district treasurer
(as reported in a letter to club presidents from FGCNYS president Jeanne-Beryl Metz)

District IV Trip to Garden in the Woods

District IV's wildflower chair, Martha VanPatten, has planned a bus trip to Garden in the Woods in Framingham, MA.

The trip is scheduled for May 26, 2009, with the bus leaving from the Wilton Mall at 8:00 a.m. Lunch will be at Longfellow's Wayside Inn before the tour of the gardens. The cost is \$66, which includes the bus, luncheon, and tour fee for the Garden in the Woods. Please send a check payable to FGCNYS District IV to Jackie Viestenz, 38 Spring St., Port Henry, NY 12974-1013. It is anticipated that there will still be room on the bus at press time.

Call Martha Van Patten at 583-0688 or e-mail at gmvan6@aol.com for more information.

Ballston Spa Student Wins State-Level Poster Contest

Members of the Ballston Spa House & Garden Club, working with an art teacher at the Malta Avenue Elementary School in Ballston Spa, encouraged 4th and 5th grade students to enter the Smokey Bear / Woodsy Owl poster contest sponsored by FGCNYS and National Garden Clubs. Fourteen students submitted posters, of which five were

chosen for awards. Fourth-grader Austin Winter's poster was selected as the winning poster at the state level and will move on to the Central Atlantic Regional competition. All fourteen posters will be displayed and a congratulatory reception will be held on Saturday, May 9, at the Ballston Spa Library (time to be announced). The posters will be displayed through the following week.

Pam Relyea, reporter

Patriotic Tree Planting

In 2007, as part of a countrywide effort promoted by National Garden Clubs, the Ballston Spa House & Garden Club held its first Patriotic Tree Planting at the Veterans' Transitional Home in Ballston Spa to coincide with national Arbor Day celebrations. Subsequently, club members agreed to make Arbor Day and the honoring of veterans an annual event. In 2008, the ceremony was held at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 358. The Third Annual Patriotic Tree Planting is planned for Saturday, April 25, 2009, at 11:00 a.m. at the American Legion Post 234. This annual ceremony is open to the public and honors all those in military or civilian service whose sacrifices enable all of us to enjoy the freedom, security, and opportunities our society offers.

Pam Relyea, reporter

Katrina Trask Garden Club

The Katrina Trask Garden Club is pleased to report that they have added three new members to their roster. Two are area natives who have returned after retirement, and one is a long-time resident.

The club's yearbook is a work in progress. New programs under consideration include a series on landscape architecture, recycling and conservation (including a demonstration of home canning), and a number of field trips.

The club is also working on a theme for the fall district conference which they will host at the Georgian on October 6, and they are participating in the Aveda recycling project recommended by FGCNYS.

Shirley Rice, president

Lake George Community Garden Club

The winter "blahs" didn't seem to affect the ladies of this club! They report that seed catalogues became standard reading material; thoughts of refreshing their home gardens have kept them motivated! *continued*

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A few snowbirds are beginning to return and they are noticing that the club has gained several new members.

Drew Monthie from Ecologic Consulting brought "Wild Gardens" to life as he presented his brilliant photos by PowerPoint. So much information was given, especially dealing with native and non-invasive exotic plants that thrive in this area. This lecture is a must for your club—keep it in mind for your next year's program planning.

The March meeting was a definite classroom experience for club members. Jim McAndrew of The Barton Group taught the specifics of wind turbines and wind energy. Our need for alternative energy sources was made very clear by Mr. McAndrew's statistical charts. Now that the Adirondack Park Agency has honored a process for approving small turbines to generate electricity, perhaps the larger turbines will soon follow.

The thrust of the club these next two months will be planning for its Annual Plant Sale on May 29 and 30, at St. James Episcopal Church in the village. And of course the biggie is detailing all that makes a flower show successful. That will be held on June 17, at the Lake George Senior Center on Schuyler Street, also in the village. Come visit and be our guests!

*Debbie Hoffman, president
Nancy Cathers, reporter*

Glenville Hills Garden Club of Saratoga County

The club's Beautification Committee has taken steps toward initiating several projects in and around the Village of Galway, and has focused on re-landscaping the Galway Post Office. A local landscaper donated his time and equipment to remove overgrown shrubs, and the club purchased a flowering crab apple, a tree-form hydrangea, and a viburnum at bargain basement prices in the fall, and, with the help of some very dedicated husbands, got them into the ground in time to get settled before the winter. This spring, the work will continue with planting perennials and bulbs around the new shrubs and designing garden beds



for the sides of the building. Members have been inspired by the Indian Lake Garden Club's plantings at their post office.

Meanwhile, members of the Beautification Committee have been giving presentations to the public and to local organizations about the post office project as well as other civic beautification projects which are on the drawing table. Club members have had meetings with the Galway Village Board of Trustees and have developed a working relationship with the trustees to cooperate on various projects.

The club's January meeting featured Stacy Simmons, a civic beautification consultant, who provided much-needed advice and information specific to the on-going project.

Sue VanOmmeren, president

Heritage Garden Club

The Heritage Garden Club will have a Standard Flower Show, "Our Empire State," on September 22 and 23, 2009, at the New York State Military Museum and Veterans' Research Center in Saratoga Springs. The club did not have a flower show in 2008, but the members have been attending workshops and presentations regarding the many aspects of putting on a flower show. This was done to maintain and increase interest and enthusiasm and to educate the newer members. The flower show committee is busy finalizing the schedule and hopes it will entice area garden club members to enter. More information will be sent out in the next few weeks.

Ellen Engels and Heather Cushing, co-presidents

Indian Lake Garden Club

Indian Lake Garden Club opened its 2009 year with a potluck social for the year-round members. Several of the club's members are snowbirds who return to the Adirondacks in April. In addition, other members felt the need to escape the snow and cold of this past winter and went south for several weeks.

The club's April meeting will officially start the year with a video tour of the Butchart Gardens in Victoria, British Columbia, using a video rented from Member Services of National Garden Clubs, Inc.

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In June, club members will travel to Hildene, the Lincoln Family Home, in Manchester Vermont. The formal gardens are expected to be filled with more than 1,000 peony blossoms.

Members who attended the District IV Fall Meeting were so impressed with Pauline Muth's presentation that the club has scheduled a field trip to her home in July and they plan to visit Shades of Green while in the area.

Pat Leonard, president

Elizabethtown-Westport Garden Club

2008 was a wonderful year for the Elizabethtown-Westport Garden Club, full of challenges, education, and hard work!

A major drive and passion of the club is fundraising to help give back to our communities. The club's 53rd Annual Green's Tea Luncheon

and Sale raised \$1800 for the local hospital, EMS, hospice, and Life Flight. And the 21st Annual Luncheon Fashion Show helps with community beautification projects and will send a local youth to environmental summer camp this coming summer.

This year's club theme is the "Lake Champlain Quadricentennial," fitting in with New York State's celebration of Samuel de Champlain's journey down Lake Champlain and Henry Hudson's voyage up the Hudson River 400 years ago. Club members are looking forward to this year's programs featuring local historians and learning about what our area was like back in 1609.

Spring is slowly creeping into the North Country and veggie seeds are sprouting on windowsills waiting for the warm weather and a workable garden. The snow is melting and the bluebirds are on their way north. Club members are looking forward to seeing everyone at the Spring District Meeting.

Kathy Linker, co-president

Warrensburgh Wildflowers

by Teresa Whalen



Warrensburgh Wildflowers: Seasonal Wildflowers in the Southern Adirondacks, chronicles the many locations of wildflowers found in the Warrensburgh Watershed. Diane Collins, wildflower photographer and owner of Wildflowers in Your Own Backyard, has created a photographic inventory to help identify and catalogue the diverse flora that exists in the Hudson and Schroon river watersheds of the southern Adirondack region. This book will be used as an educational tool for residents and visitors, identifying the plant species by both their common and botanical names, and categorizing them as either native or introduced. The research and publishing of this sixty-four page book filled with color photographs, historical references, and horticultural information was made possible by the fund-raising efforts of Warrensburgh Beautification Inc. (WBI) and a Warren County Occupancy Grant through the Town of Warrensburgh.

The publication coincides with the celebration of the quadricentennial of the discoveries of the Hudson River and Lake Champlain, and the twenty-fifth anniversary of WBI. The information contained within will create awareness and guide many future horticultural projects in our region.

Book signings have been scheduled for Thursday, May 7, at the Glen Lodge B&B in Warrensburgh, and Saturday, May 23, at the Green Thumb Perennial Swap from 8 a.m. to noon at the site of the Warrensburgh Riverfront Farmers' Market. Please call or e-mail Teresa Whalen for more information.

TO ORDER: Call Teresa Whalen at 518-466-5497 or e-mail at taawhalen@yahoo.com (\$8.00 per copy).

The Forward Violet*

by Liz Gee

Spring comes with an explosion of violets in our lawns and flower borders. Where do they all come from? The common blue violet (*Viola papilionacea*) is one of five hundred species of *Viola*, fifty of which live in the north-east United States. It has adapted to have remarkable reproductive strategies.

The violet plant is a rhizome, a creeping horizontal structure that produces natural clones underground. Casual weeding breaks off the vegetative growth stimulating it to reproduce.

Violets are highly scented and have brightly colored flowers.

Blooming at a time of year when few other flowers exist, they attract a variety of insect pollinators. Bumblebees, wasps, sawflies, hoverflies, dance flies, March flies, hawk moths, and butterflies are all drawn to the nectar and pollen feast. The fine lines on the petals are nectar guides pointing which way to go.

To accommodate this variety of pollinators the violet flowers are long-lived. During their life cycle, the flower changes its orientation to present a landing platform suitable for each type. Flies and butterflies like to drink nectar in a prone position, while bees like to stand on their heads. The nectar collects deep in the flower in the spur petal. The insect's acrobatics cause pollen to rub off on them while they feed.

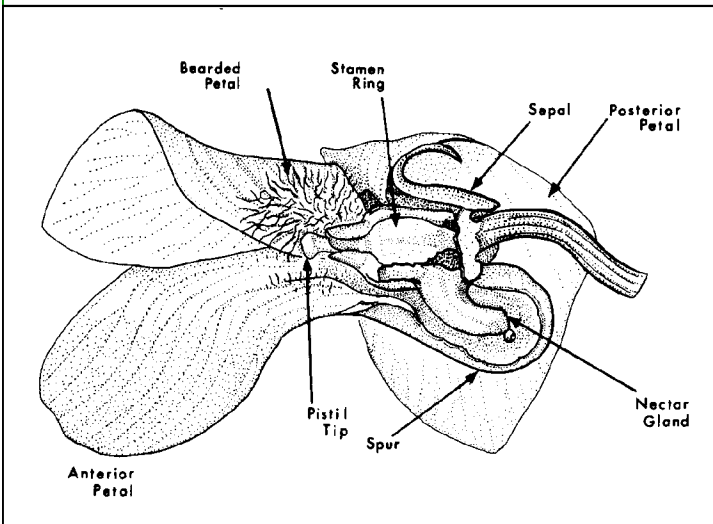
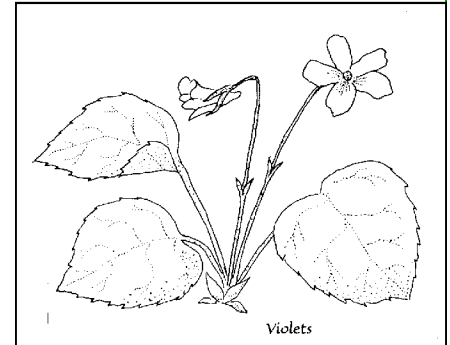
The seeds form in a spring-loaded capsule that broadcasts them a surprising distance away. But this is not all. Violets have a second cleistogamous type of flower that grows low on the ground. This is a back-up flower, a fat green bud that is self-pollinated and never opens. These seeds fall to the ground by the plant and grow there. Also violet seeds have a tiny oil gland at the tip which is attractive to ants, they collect the seeds and take them to their nest. The ants only eat the oil leaving the seed viable and scattered to a new place. One can only admire this arsenal of reproductive tactics.

Take advantage of this bounty. Violet leaves and flowers are edible and contain quantities of vitamins A and C. Freeze the flowers in ice cubes, use them whole in salads and sandwiches, the leaves too. Infuse violets in hot milk and use it in cakes and puddings. Candied violet flowers can be used to decorate cakes and will keep for a long time. This is how to do it:

Pick the flowers on a cool dry morning leaving enough stem to handle them. Choose perfect blooms. Wash and allow to dry. Use lightly beaten egg white and a paint brush to carefully coat the entire flower. Sprinkle with superfine sugar. It is important to completely cover the flower to preserve it. Lay flowers on a cake rack, arranging the petals to look natural. After an hour or two move them around so that they don't stick. Put them in a warm dry place such as a gas oven with the pilot light on or a dehydrator. Leave for a few days until fully dry. The flowers are ready to use now or will keep up to a year. Use broken flowers like confetti.

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* "The forward violet I did chide" —Sonnet 99, William Shakespeare



District IV Calendar of Events

- May 5** Spring District Meeting and Luncheon, Great Escape Lodge, Queensbury (hosted by Lake George Community Garden Club), 9 AM
- May 9** Annual Plant Sale, Fort Hardy Park, Schuylerville (Schuylerville Garden Club)
- May 13-18** National Garden Clubs Convention, Houston, TX
- May 25** Annual Plant and Pie Sale, Village Park, Galway (Glenville Hills Garden Club)
- May 26** District IV trip to Garden in the Woods and Longfellow's Wayside Inn, Framingham, MA (reservations required)
- May 30-31** Annual Plant Sale, St. James Episcopal Church, Lake George (Lake George Community Garden Club)
- June 6** Tag and Plant Sale, 17 Pinewood Ave., Saratoga Springs, 9 AM-3 PM (Katrina Trask Garden Club)
- June 7** "Square Foot Gardening" with Martha Honeywell, place TBA, 3:30 PM (Elizabethtown-Westport Garden Club)
- June 17** Flower Show, Lake George Senior Center (Lake George Community GC)
- July 11-12** "School Days," Standard Flower Show, Town Hall, Schuylerville
July 11: 1-8 PM, July 12: 1-4 PM (Schuylerville Garden Club)
- July 17** Fresh Flower Note Cards (children 5-12), Kelley Park, Ballston Spa, 12:30 PM (Ballston Spa House and Garden Club)
- July 18** "E-town Days" Yard and Plant Sale, Hale House, Elizabethtown, 9 AM (Elizabethtown-Westport Garden Club)
- August 18** "Sailing into Fashion" Luncheon/Fashion Show, place TBA, 11:30 AM (Elizabethtown-Westport Garden Club)
- August 26** District Board Meeting, Pat Wania's home, Hague, 9:30 AM

District IV Clubs

Ballston Spa House and Garden Club
 Carillon Garden Club
 Elizabethtown-Westport Garden Club
 Glenville Hills Garden Club of Saratoga County
 Heritage Garden Club
 Indian Lake Garden Club
 Katrina Trask Garden Club
 Lake George Community Garden Club
 Schuylerville Garden Club