

# THE GARDEN GATE

## FGCNYS District IV Newsletter

Winter 2025  
[www.nydistrictIV.org](http://www.nydistrictIV.org)



### Message from District IV Director Mary Lou Baker



“Baby, it’s cold out there!” As I contemplate what to write about for this issue, it is currently 7 degrees above zero. What gets us through a cold snap is knowing we have two more months of possible snow and very cold weather, and then Spring will be upon us.

Our District’s Fall Meeting and Luncheon was hosted by the Sacandaga Garden Club at the Hales Mills Country Club in Johnstown, NY. This was a new venue for us in a lovely setting. Our general meeting was very productive as we heard from our Committee Chairs and discussed some new initiatives. Our program was a very informative presentation by Fred Breglia, Executive Director (and a SA Certified Arborist) of the Landis Arboretum. Put this on your calendars for this year: **Monday,**

**May 5th**, the Schuylerville Garden Club will be hosting our **SPRING DISTRICT WIDE MEETING AND LUNCHEON**. It will be held at the Holiday Inn in Saratoga Springs. Hoping to see many of you there!

The District Roundtable in November received very positive reviews and we will be doing our third one again this year. This grouping included District officers, Club Presidents, Committee Chairs, and anyone else who was interested whether they hold a position or not. Many thanks to Charlanne McDonough for chairing and organizing the gathering. For the better part of three hours, we met in various groups, then intermingled between the groups, discussing a wide range of topics. Of particular interest was developing our repertoire of programs for the entire district. The Round table has resulted in clubs utilizing program ideas from each other, but also by having club members from one club do a program for another club in the district.

Many thanks to the efforts of our Assistant District Director Annette Newcomb, and subcommittee members Barb Millington, Janet Mitchell and Judy Esposito for their successful efforts to move forward with eliminating, consolidating and reorganizing the District’s committees. ***There are still some vacancies; I encourage all of our clubs to take on at least three committees.*** It is often the time and efforts of a smaller group that results in positive results for our clubs and the district. Continued on page 7.

#### The Garden Gate

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#### District IV Officers

Mary Lou Baker, Director  
Annette Newcomb, Assistant Director  
Sue Van Ommeren, Recording Secretary  
Sharon Meyer, Treasurer  
Barbara Millington, Corresponding Secretary

## Heritage Garden Club

[www.heritagegardenclub.org](http://www.heritagegardenclub.org)



In October, Carol English, Schuylerville Garden Club member and National Garden Club Master Flower Show Judge, presented flower arranging with store bought flowers. While preparing the first example, Carol gave us tips on buying bundles, finding out when the fresh flowers are

delivered and how to make the florist in Price Chopper your best friend! Carol successfully took the “fear of arranging flowers” aside for one hour! The photos are two of the lucky winners.



Fifteen residents attended the October Garden Therapy at Woodlawn Commons. Members brought a variety of dried cuttings for the residents to arrange in jars to take back to their rooms.

Residents decorated small trees and wreaths for the December Holiday Garden Therapy. The activities were enjoyed by all residents in attendance.

The Holiday Luncheon was held at the Ripe Tomato Restaurant. Members enjoyed fellowship together and a relaxing lunch. Donations were brought for Shelters of Saratoga, hats & mittens for school children, clothing for the homeless of Saratoga

Springs and a supply of bingo gifts for nursing home residents.

At the January meeting Mary Ann Fitzgerald, Saratoga City Historian, presented a program on the early Excelsior and Eureka Ten Springs Woods from 1794-1958.

Mary Ann talked about

the history of the ten springs from making the glass bottles, shipping by rail and mud baths for horses and then discovered for human use for its restorative powers.

Future programs are as follows: In February, Tom Denny, Chairman of SoBro Conservancy, will present a discussion on the mission of SoBro conserving vacant parcels transforming them into pollinator-friendly green gardens throughout Saratoga Springs. In March, Gina Grillo, owner of Grillo Essentials, will present a presentation on Feng Shui, “The principles of the outdoor garden to achieve tranquility and harmony in your home garden”. In April, Wendy Mahaney, Environmental Scientist, will present a program on “Lose the Lawn-Create a Pollinator Paradise”.

*- Charlanne McDonough, Correspondent*

## Glenville Hills Garden Club of Saratoga

[www.glenvillehillsgardenclub.org](http://www.glenvillehillsgardenclub.org)

In October, members were enlightened with valuable information from Kate Brittenham (Owner of Front Stoop Gardens in Troy) on “Incorporating Native Plant Species into Your Garden”. Essentials of





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ecological garden design principles and practices when incorporating native plants into our gardens was discussed. Nurturing Goldenrod and Milkweed in our gardens was highly encouraged.

Members Jules Constantine and Donna Zelanko demonstrated creation of a Holiday Door Swag at our November meeting using evergreens and other garden materials. Members were amazed at the variety of specimens the presenters provided for the project such as thistle, goldenrod, sprayed tree branches and of course, many varieties of pine branches. Following the meeting Tari Lee Muth and her helpers decorated the Galway Village Park Gazebo with swags, wreaths and branches.

The annual Wreaths For Veterans took place at six sites in the Galway Area. Local residents, Boy Scouts, Veterans, Students, Town and School officials joined members in honoring and paying respect to our veterans.



Our December Holiday Party was held at Kim Belizzi's beautifully decorated home. Members were filled with the spirit of the season as well as a feast of home made delicious dishes.

Denise Maurer, a Master Gardener Volunteer with CCE of Rensselaer, presented her program in January on "Forcing Bulbs and Stems". It gave members an opportunity to consider brightening our homes during the long winter months with the color and joy of flowers.

## Winter 2025 (3)

In our February Potluck meeting, members will travel down memory lane as we reminisce about the 75 years since the founding of our Garden Club.

Tim Biello owner and farmer of Featherbed Lane Farm CSA in Saratoga will be our presenter in March. He will teach members how to apply his successful farming systems to our gardens. Tim produces nutritious food while building the soil using cover crops, compost, manure and irrigation.

Our annual April luncheon at the Cock 'n Bull will celebrate the past year. Outgoing officers are recognized and incoming officers are installed.

*- Lenore Lanka, Correspondent*

## Lake George Community Garden Club [www.lakegeorgecommunitygardenclub.org](http://www.lakegeorgecommunitygardenclub.org)

In November we celebrated our annual wreath decorating for 16 municipalities around the lake and beyond. Also in November the club donated a 4 foot tree to the Festival of Trees. The tree won Judges Choice. Congratulations to decorators Diane Morency and K a t h y Vesterby.



The Lake George Community Garden Club had their annual Christmas party in December 2024 at the Log Joan Restaurant. Twenty-six pounds of socks were collected and donated to the Open Door Mission on Warren Street in Glens Falls. We also donated 14.25 pounds of toiletries along with several back packs for the Mission. Lastly, at our luncheon we collected



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\$376.00 for the North Country Ministry in Warrensburg. In addition a fun time was had by all the attendees.

In January we had the pleasure of listening to Lanette Browder Bowman, "The Plant Doctor" share basic gardening taken into the Capital Region Big

Time for Profit. This included a slide presentation along with a lecture.

In March we will enjoy a program about What Lies Beneath. Folks from the Soil and Water Conservation District took Videos beneath the surface of Lake George of plants, animals and other.

In April we will learn about the benefits of native wildflowers in the garden. Our speaker will be Megan Kerr from the Cooperative Extension.

In May we will have a program by Scheryl LoMonico and Adam Brown. This will feature information about growing cannabis in New York with topics covering uses and experiences.

*- Greta West, President*

## Schuylerville Garden Club

[www.schuylervilllegardenclub.org](http://www.schuylervilllegardenclub.org)



The Garden Club of Schuylerville had a very educational Fall.

In September, they travelled to the Landis Arboretum where they were able to enjoy learning about trees and other plants on the various trails with the help of QR codes on interpretative plaques.

## Winter 2025 (4)

Their trip to Garden works Farm in Salem was very helpful as they learned how to dry and arrange plant materials and hone their wreath making skills. In November they continued their quest for the perfect wreath, this time with fresh greens directed by Tim

Healy  
from  
Posie



Peddler.

All of this in preparation for the decorating of the town of Schuylerville for the holidays.



Once their work in town was done, it was time for the club's annual Christmas party held once again at the Wishing Well restaurant in Gansevoort. Their

usual silly fun and gift exchange set the happy tone for the season and was so enjoyed by the members. They collected donations for SAFER, a local food pantry, which was greatly appreciated.

January brought the time to explore Seed Sowing. Kathy Adams and Janet Chen from the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schenectady County demonstrated and discussed winter seed sowing without grow lights or a greenhouse. Helpful handouts were distributed for club members to try the technique at home. These seeds need to winter over to bloom. Maybe some will give it a try and be successful.

It is also time again for the Garden Club of Schuylerville to plan their annual Flower Show. This year they will explore Fairy Tales in a show titled, "Once Upon a Time" it will take place the weekend of July 11-13, 2025. Please mark your calendars. This looks to be another exciting show. Did you



know that this show has been held annually since 1938?

In February, the club will explore its over 80-year history by going through the archives and cataloguing important events. The program is titled “Schuylerville through the Decades” They were organized in 1938 and became federated in 1951. There is a wealth of information available, and members are excited to learn about the club’s past.

The Club will end the season in March with its fabulous “Winter Picnic”, a potluck event held indoors to celebrate the new officers.

- Carol English, Correspondent

### **The Ballston Spa House and Garden Club** **[www.bshgc.org](http://www.bshgc.org)**

Our regular business meetings resumed in September with terrific programs. In September, the program, *Don't Get Ticked NY* with Joellen Lampman from CCE Albany County was outstanding. Joellen provided an in depth presentation on ticks, explained how prevalent they are almost all year, offered prevention tips and answered many questions from the audience. She, also, gave each attendee a tick removal kit.



Later in the month, several members of the club traveled to the Berkshire Botanical Gardens in Stockbridge, MA, and toured their variety of

impressive garden scapes including meadows, cottage, rain and herb gardens. Following the garden visit, the group enjoyed a lovely lunch at a cute deli in town.

Our Wednesday walks began again in September and will continue through April. Members Walk the Zim Smith Trail, an easy, paved trail providing another opportunity for members to connect and get to know each other better. We typically have ten to fifteen members participating each week.



In October, Donna Lee Newsome from Wild Ones of the Capital Region presented *Native Plants Go Public*. Donna discussed dwindling biodiversity, the challenges it causes in nature and how native plants help protect and restore biodiversity. She encouraged us to all be ambassadors for native plants with our neighbors, friends and acquaintances to help our environment.

In November, we enjoyed a slideshow set to music, *Bringing Nature Home*, by Dave Williams, a local naturalist. The presentation included gorgeous photographs from the Adirondacks, a sampling of US National Parks and wildflowers from around the US.

Our philanthropy continued in support of the Ballston Spa community with a food drive in September and a clothing drive in November.

We began December by participating in the Veterans' Memorial Wreath Laying Ceremony, paying tribute to fallen veterans during the holiday season. The club then gathered for a festive holiday party at a member's home, enjoying an array of finger foods and a delightful cookie exchange.

In January, we shook off the winter blues with our Cabin Fever lunch at a local restaurant, where club members gathered to enjoy great food and wonderful company.



As we look forward, in February we will start our monthly meetings again with a great program. Genoveffa Vitale, VP of Wild Ones, will share her soil expertise and discuss the process of restoring and enhancing the health, fertility and biodiversity of soil. In March, we will hear from Tim Biello, owner of Featherbed Farm CSA about Sustainable Farming.

A sincere thank you to our programs committee for their exceptional effort, once again, in planning a year filled with engaging and educational activities.

*- Kathy Kane, President*

## Sacandaga Garden Club

<http://sacandagagardens.blogspot.com/>



Sacandaga Garden Club members were busy planning The District luncheon this fall. We gathered in November to make wreaths and other decor. We made a few changes to our annual Christmas party. Instead of having a Yankee swap, members brought gifts for Toys for Tots.

The week before Christmas my daughter told me about a family of 8 children who lived in a homeless shelter and would have nothing for Christmas. I sent an email out to our club asking for a small donation of perhaps \$5. To my surprise much more than \$5 was donated by many of our members. I was able to give my daughter \$350 to buy them gifts. They received hoodies, hats, mittens and toys for each child. There were basketballs, footballs, dolls, dinosaurs and other items. Our Club has decided to adopt families in the area next year.

Our January meeting is set aside to plan our year's events. We prefer to get all the members involved in deciding our yearly schedule. We will have a winter picnic in February. Our March meeting will be an interactive meeting about growing house plants. We will prepare gifts for a nursing home in April.

*- Janet Mitchell, President*



Continued from front page:

***Hear Ye! Hear Ye! The District is planning a day Trip!!*** May thanks to the temporary committee members that formed to work on this: Judy Esposito, Barb Millington, Margaret Rishel, Janet Mitchell, Annette Newcomb, Eileen Hurly, and yours truly! The purpose of the trip is **NOT** a fundraiser. It is a chance to have members from all six of our clubs engage in a joint experience together; let's anticipate lots of fun with friends and new acquaintances; there will undoubtedly be exchanges of information and lots of photos to be taken! The plan is for a short day trip by bus, most likely to the **Berkshire Botanical Gardens in Stockbridge, MA.** While the date is not yet firm, we are hoping for mid-July (to get beyond plant sales, the flower show, and to be able to view the gardens while many blooms are still at peak!) A **"Save the Date"** will be sent to Club Presidents to share with all members as soon as we have nailed down the particulars.

**Lastly, once again the FGCNYS Convention will be in our neighborhood: it will be June 1 - 3, 2025 at the Desmond Hotel in Albany.**



Photo I: Members of the Schuylerville Garden Club with Director Mary Lou Baker.

Photo II: The Sacandaga Garden Club hosted the District IV Fall Meeting and Luncheon.



## District IV Calendar of Events

April 1-2	Flower Show School: Course I, Voorheesville, NY
April 25	District IV Executive Board Meeting, Knights of Columbus, Saratoga Springs, 9:30 am (refreshments: Sacandaga GC)
April 25	National Garden Week begins
May 5	District IV Spring Meeting and Luncheon (hosted by Schuylerville GC) Holiday Inn, Saratoga Springs, 9 am
May 10	Schuylerville GC Plant & Garden Glove Sale, Fort Hardy Park, Schuylerville, 9 am-12 pm
May 17	LGCGC Plant Sale, Shepherd Park, Lake George, 9 am-12 pm
May 18-22	NGC Convention, Embassy Suites, North Charleston, SC
May 26	Glenville Hills GC Pie Sale, Galway Village Park, 9 am-12 pm
May 31	Heritage GC Herb, Perennial Plant & Garden Decor Sale, Italian American Center, 247 Grand Ave, Saratoga Springs, 9 am-sold out
June 1-3	FGCNYS Annual Convention, Crowne Plaza Desmond Hotel, Albany, NY
June 7	Glenville Hills GC Plant Sale, Dockstader Pavilion, 5078 Sacandaga Rd, Galway, 9 am-12 pm
June 7	Sacandaga GC Plant Sale, Methodist Church, Main St., Broadalbin, 9 am
June 14	Ballston Spa GC Plant Sale Plus! 48 Chapman St., Ballston Spa, 9 am-3 pm
July 12-13	Schuylerville GC Standard NGC Flower Show, "Once Upon a Time," Saratoga Town Hall, 12 Spring Street, Schuylerville, July 12: 1-5 pm, July 13: 12-4 pm
July 17	District IV Day Trip: Berkshire Botanical Gardens
Sept 26	District IV Board Meeting, Knights of Columbus, Saratoga Springs, 9:30 am (refreshments: Lake George Community GC)
Oct 6	FGCNYS District IV Fall Meeting and Luncheon (hosted by Heritage GC) Holiday Inn, Saratoga Springs, 9 am
Oct 6-8	Flower Show School: Course II, Voorheesville, NY
Oct 20-22	CAR-SGC Conference, Hyatt Regency, Cambridge, MD
Nov 7	District IV Roundtable, Knights of Columbus, Saratoga Springs, 9:30 am