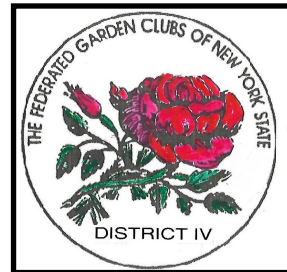


THE GARDEN GATE

FGCNYS District IV Newsletter

Spring 2026
www.districtivny.com



America250

Celebrating the Semi-quincentennial
Of the signing of the Declaration of Independence
July 4, 2026



Message from District IV Director Mary Lou Baker

Our District continues to be small but mighty. Our clubs do varied civic and beautification projects, community outreach and we provide meaningful, enjoyable and educational programs to our members.

Given the success of our DW Bus trip last summer, we have organized another one for July 23rd. We are touring the Vanderbilt Mansion and Gardens, having lunch at Coppola's, and then touring the Beatrix Ferrand Gardens **Please contact Mary Lou or your Club President ASAP if you are interested.**

The District has made, or is in the process of making, some changes to improve the business of the District and outreach to our clubs. The officers and I have met several times to see what might be possible from the many ideas that were generated from the District Roundtable held last November 2025. We brought these ideas to our Executive Board in April and presented them as well as implemented some of them at our most recent District Wide Meeting and Luncheon this past May 2026. These included:

The Garden Gate
Charlanne McDonough, Editor

Published 3x per year
Copy Due: 1/31, 5/31, 9/30 2026

District IV Officers

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

- changing the way we present our Awards;
- reorganizing/streamlining programs and providing a new program resource to the entire membership;
- shortening the Presidents' annual reports; and
- Lastly, moving forward with a possible change in the format of District Wide meetings, possibly as soon as Spring 2027. The idea of a "lite" meeting format was well received by the almost 100 people in attendance at our May DW. Current possibilities include doing a breakfast; casual dress, having no formal program or presentation but perhaps have a presentation /demonstration by a club member. Please let any of the District Officers know if you have other thoughts on this initiative.
Stay tuned for further details.

I wish you all a restful, enjoyable summer time. I look forward to seeing you in the fall for our Fall District Wide Meeting and Luncheon in October, and please think about joining us for another great forum at our Roundtable on November 13th.

Best regards, Mary Lou Baker

Heritage Garden Club

The Heritage Garden Club had a busy and productive Winter and Spring. We had wonderful speakers on a variety of topics.

In January, Stacey Simmons from Bob's Trees and Garden Center in Galway presented a program on Planting Perennial Plants, Shrubs, and Trees.

February's speaker was Dianna Goodwin of Sustainable Saratoga who spoke about Pollinator and Native Plants in Your Garden.

March brought us Jessica Luse from Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County speaking on the Latest Horticulture Trends in Gardening.

Turning to Spring, we held our Spring Luncheon with Tim Healy, Owner and Designer of the Posie

Peddler, presenting What's Old is New! Reinvented, Reworked, and Refurbished, showing us how to use containers we might have at home, such as silver creamers, sugar bowls, and pitchers to create beautiful arrangements at home.



The District Wide Meeting and Luncheon was held at the Holiday Inn in Saratoga.

We also had a Garden Therapy program at Woodlawn Commons where we assisted residents in





planting pansies in planters they could bring back to their apartments. We also created planters for former Garden Club members and the Main Office.

In May, we are looking forward to a presentation on the History of Yaddo and the Katrina Trask Gardens, entitled Then and Now presented by Leslie Le Duc, President of the Yaddo Association.

Renee Rosch Lewis, member, FGCNYS Judge, and expert gardener, designed an arrangement for the Hyde Museum's Art in Bloom Exhibit. Renee paired her floral arrangement with a woodcut print by contemporary artist Richard Deon. Residents from near and far are invited to view the 15 floral arrangements over Mother's Day weekend.



Closing out the months our Herb, Perennial, and Garden Decor Sale on May 30th at the Italian American Center, Grand Avenue from 9:00 'til sold out.

- Kay Stanczyk, Correspondent

Schuylerville Garden Club



January 2026

An ecological landscape designer, Kate Brittenham, from Front Stoop Gardens in Troy, gave a presentation to the club and encouraged the members to think about their total garden layout to

choose native plants in planned "groves" and pathways. By choosing an understory tree and surrounding it with appropriate shrubs and small native plants, an environment can be created that is more beneficial for insects and wildlife than just planting a tree in the middle of the yard. This is true native landscaping that eliminates large lawns and creates integrated native garden areas.



February

Schuylerville Garden Club continued the history of the club with Part 2. This presentation references the 1960's through the present.

Several members dressed in period clothes for the occasion.

The club now has the task of preserving the archives in a digital media for future generations to enjoy. A tea luncheon was provided including tea sandwiches and cookies in the garden club style.



March, our official opening of the garden club year began with our traditional Winter Picnic. Everyone brought food to share and their own plates and silverware, picnic style. Yearbooks and programs were presented. Lots of good

things to come.

April

This month, the club explored "container gardens" with a presentation by Denise Maurer, a Master Gardener who has created video presentations for the Cornell Cooperative Extension. The discussion showed examples how to match plants with the appropriate containers. The You Tube video is part of the "Lunch in the Garden" series.

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The club has prepared the schedule for our upcoming flower show, “America the Beautiful”. We will touch on different features of the country.

Classes will include a “Companion Class” in which two exhibitors will present one design. This is an opportunity for new and experienced members to work together. There will also be a challenge design class where participants will be given 8 different components and must use at least three in their design. A “novice” class will be incorporated for those who have never won a blue ribbon in the flower show. A special award to honor deceased member, Mary Seymore, will be offered in the design division. Petite designs will feature music genre from Jazz to Country and Rock. The challenge plant classes will feature red, white and blue flowering plants.

May

Several members have signed up to participate in the Schuylerville High School Art show by providing floral arrangements to interpret student work. The event will take place at the high school on May 19th.



The club has partnered with the woodshop classes at Schuylerville High School to construct new wooden surrounds to upgrade and repair town planters damaged by plows this winter. We hope to get these installed before our seasonal plantings go in on May 28. The club will supply additional native plants to compliment the traditional annuals normally planted.

The club continues to work on the Schuyler House Herb Garden. Research is ongoing to find historical information on the original plantings in the garden.

The annual plant sale was held May 9th. Plants were sold out in the first few hours.

Spring 2026 (4)

The May meeting will present details for the summer flower show “America the Beautiful” with helpful hints and information provided by Liz Gee, Master Judge and Flower Show Chair and Carol English, Master Judge.

June

The club will participate once again in created floral arrangements for the Schuylerville High School Graduation ceremony.

Final preparations for the Flower Show will be addressed.

- Carol English, Correspondent

Glenville Hills Garden Club of Saratoga County

The clock is ticking and soon GHGC will be celebrating a 75th Anniversary. Committees have been busy brainstorming possibilities for special activities for 2027, the Anniversary year, and collecting and compiling the club’s history.

Sue VanOmmeren presented to the membership a tentative timeline and a list of events for the Anniversary celebration for discussion at our February meeting.

This meeting, postponed to March 1st because of snow and icy conditions, was finally held in the warm and welcoming atmosphere of Mari Fettke’s home where we all enjoyed a potluck lunch.

Monica Judd reported that 4 youths were interested in attending DEC Summer Camp in 2026 with GHGC sponsoring them all. On-line registration opened on March 22 and all 4 campers were able to sign up for a week at camp.

The March 23rd program featured member Jules Constantine who demonstrated techniques to



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assemble a simple “travel” flower press.

District IV Officers Mary Lou Baker and Annette Newcomb joined us for an April Luncheon at the Cock ‘n Bull. They installed our new officers and applauded our old officers as their terms ended.

It is “all hands on deck” as we reach the busiest time for member participation. Member event coordinators are organizing our two annual fundraisers and passing out sign-up sheets and information for garden maintenance of the areas we care for as part of our Beautification Program.



The first phase of the Veteran’s Garden renovation project in the Village Park was successfully completed in time for Memorial Day

festivities.

Lynn Kindinger, Beautification Chair, has assessed the gardens that we maintain and chosen annuals that will be planted on Spring Clean Up Day. We will keep our fingers crossed that all the plantings flourish over the next few months with proper care and luck with weather.

On May 20th, we joined with sixth grade students and parent volunteers for Spring Clean Up Day. Nine sites in Galway were chosen to receive the attention of participants who weeded, raked, and planted annuals while instructing students in the proper use of garden tools and plant identification. A delicious lunch prepared by Donna Zelanko and served at her home was a reward to members for a job well done.



Spring 2026 (5)

Our member’s versatility was apparent when we switched hats and baked pies for the ever popular pie sale. Mary Hallgren and Elaine Podwirny chaired the event on Memorial Day when over 60 pies made by our members were offered for sale to the community.



On that same day a group marched in the Galway Parade handing out 1000 seed packets that were filled with seeds members harvested in the fall.



Next up, is the Plant Sale on June 6th at the Galway Town Pavilion. Members dig and pot an array of perennials and shrubs from their home gardens.

Houseplants and Cut

Flower arrangements may also be purchased. Member Barb Spencer nurtures over 100 tomato plants and herbs that will be included in the sale.

Scheduled for the summer are a Garden Photography and a Kokedama Workshop and field trips to Daylily Days/Town Line Museum and Bowterra Farms.

We will celebrate summer and highlight our successes at Kiley Gregory’s home on June 22 with a Pot Luck picnic.

- Mary Ellen Cusano, President

Lake George Community Garden Club

What a vibrant and engaging start to the year for our garden club! From January through May, members gathered to learn, create, and celebrate all things gardening, with a wonderful



mix of education, hands-on activities, and community spirit.

We began the year in January with a fascinating program on **seeds and basic botany**, giving members a deeper understanding of plant beginnings and helping sharpen plant identification skills.



During this time, we also welcomed our **2026 leadership team**, with Michelle Karins serving as President, Greta DiAntonio as First Vice-President (Programs), Nan Leeper as Second Vice-President (Community Service), Scheryl LoMonico as Treasurer, Denise Desmond as Assistant Treasurer, Kim Cavarretta as Corresponding Secretary, and

Jean Bruce as Recording Secretary—guiding us into a new year of growth and connection. Alongside this, our Perennial Planters subgroup kicked things off with a creative workshop, repurposing holiday cards into new treasures—an inspiring blend of sustainability and artistry.

In February, we came together for one of our most cherished traditions: the **Annual Covered Dish Luncheon**, paired with the **installation of officers**, setting the tone for a new year of leadership and collaboration. The Perennial Planters continued the exchange of ideas with a session focused on **raised garden beds**, where members shared experiences and practical tips from their own gardens.

March brought us closer to nature with a program on **backyard birds of the Adirondacks**, offering insight into the ecological importance of songbirds and ways to attract them to our gardens. Members also enjoyed a creative Perennial Planters activity, crafting



decorative spring flowerpots, adding a personal and artistic touch to the early garden season.

In April, the club turned its attention to the broader landscape with an informative talk on the **benefits and limitations of residential trees and conservation-minded landscaping**. This timely topic complemented the environmental focus of Earth Day and Arbor Day, both highlighted during the month. Perennial Planters members gathered to learn the art of designing **beautiful and functional window boxes**, perfect for spring displays.



In May, we explored the **important role of women in gardening history at the Chapman Museum** and Scheryl LoMonico and Kathleen Moore created arrangements for the *Art in Bloom* Exhibit at the Hyde Museum.



The Perennial Planters prepared for the upcoming plant sale with a lively **potting party**, digging and sharing perennials from members' gardens—a true celebration of community and generosity.

Throughout these months, the club not only provided enriching educational programs but also strengthened friendships, encouraged creativity, and supported ongoing community projects. For those who couldn't attend, you were certainly missed—but we look forward to seeing you at upcoming gatherings as we continue to grow together!

- Holly Malave, Correspondent

The Ballston Spa House and Garden Club

What a spectacular event Ballston Spa gave us in May. The decor reminded me of *Alice in Wonderland*. The members of District IV thoroughly enjoyed the stream lined meeting, social time and the menu at the Holiday Inn of Saratoga Springs. Thank you Ballston Spa House and Garden Club and all your hard working and creative members!



District IV Calendar of Events

2026 DISTRICT IV CALENDAR

July 11-12	Schuylerville GC Standard NGC Flower Show, Saratoga Town Hall, 12 Spring Street, Schuylerville, July 11: 1-5pm, July 12: 12-4pm
July 23	District Bus Trip - Tour the Vanderbilt Mansion and Beatrix Ferrand Gardens
Sept 25	District IV Board Meeting, Knights of Columbus, Saratoga Springs, 9:30 am (refreshments: Schuylerville GC)
Oct 5 (Mon)	District IV Fall Meeting and Luncheon, location TBA, 9 am (hosted by Glenville Hills GC)
Oct 6-8	Flower Show School, Course 4, Cornell Cooperative Extension Albany County, 24 Martin Road, Voorheesville, NY 12186
Oct 19-20	CAR-SGC Conference, Holiday Inn Cleveland, Independence, Ohio (optional bus trip-10/21)
Nov 13	District IV Roundtable, Knights of Columbus, Saratoga Springs, 9:30 am