

THE GARDEN GATE

FGCNYS District IV Newsletter

Spring 2025
www.nydistrictIV.org



Message from District IV Director Mary Lou Baker



Our District's six clubs have been busily engaged with wonderful programs, plant sales, beautification efforts and community outreach. We may be the smallest District in the FGCNYS, but we continue to astound with all that we do.

A huge shout out and THANK YOU to the Schuylerville Garden Club for all the time, effort and creativity that resulted in an incredibly successful District Wide Meeting and Luncheon in early May. The feedback has been resoundingly positive and people have shared how much fun and enjoyment they had at the event.

The District has been busy with several projects. Thanks to the efforts of our Assistant Director, Annette Newcomb, our District Committees have been reorganized and we are currently working on how the work of the committees can best serve the clubs.

A real highlight of our efforts this winter is the work of the District Trip Committee has resulted in the planning of our first trip since prior to 2020. We have 51 individuals who are coming from all six of our clubs to visit The Berkshire Botanical Gardens on July 17, 2025. This is going to be a sunny day (I am "directing" it to be so.....) We will have a guided tour of the gardens and a presentation by a Master Gardener. Lunch will be picnic style brought to you by our Trip Committee. Many thanks to Margaret Rishel (Schuylerville GC), Annette Newcomb (Schuylerville GCC/LGCGC), Judy Esposito & Barb Millington (BSH&GC), and Janet Mitchell (Sacandaga)) for their time and efforts to make this happen. We met a number of times to plan, and we are continuing to coordinate arrangements as the date approaches. It is truly exciting to have a fun outing planned with members from all of the clubs.

At the District level, a huge situation emerged in late February necessitating the formation of a District Website Committee. We have met a number of times via ZOOM to discuss the best course of action for our District and clubs. The final solution still eludes us, but we hope to have something in place by mid-summer.

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Charlanne McDonough, Editor

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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

Schuylerville Garden Club

In April several club members attended Flower Show School in Voorheesville, NY at the Cornell Cooperative extension. They studied flower show procedure by zoom, taught by Carol English, traditional floral designs taught by Judy Binns and horticulture by Cathy Felton.

Course II will be held on October 6-8, 2025, to study petite designs and table designs taught by Carol English, a member of Schuylerville Garden Club. We will also study arboreal branches and container grown philodendron taught by Heidi Muschick and member of Glenville Hills Garden Club. Procedure Course II will be by zoom on September 30th. Please try to attend.



Mary Lou Baker and Annette Newcomb, District IV Officers performed the Installation of Officers this winter. The outgoing officers were thanked for their service and the new officers were installed for two-year terms. President, Micki Green; Vice President, Evelyn Rybaltowski; Recording Secretary, Margaret Rishel; Treasurer, Diane Swartwout; Corresponding Secretary, Esther Blair; and Historian, Mary Maliki.

The club has been researching their archives and held a program highlighting their 80 years of existence as a garden club. Members wore period hats and jewelry, and the slide show was so informative. Part II will be the program for February 2026.

Since the winter, this club has been getting ready for many projects including hosting the District IV meeting. It was held on May 5, 2025, at the Holiday

Inn in Saratoga Springs. Nearly a hundred people attended. The lunch was a buffet with salad and pasta and chicken dishes and was delicious. Ways and means were very successful, and donations were of great quality and baked goods sold quickly. Twelve luncheon centerpieces



were created by club members and were raffled to participants. Program was "A Century of Beautiful Blooms" by Michelle Peters, owner of Ambiance Florals & Events in Albany, NY, who discussed and demonstrated floral arrangements of the past century.

The Schuylerville club held their annual plant sale on May 10th in Fort Hardy Park. Although the weather was cold and rainy, the sale was still a success with many members participating. The end of May will be the time for Village Beautification.

The club will fill the sidewalk planters with beautiful new plants. Work on the Herb Garden is still ongoing. Our June program will



be about Medicinal Herbs for Health and Beauty with Alexander Scrivo, a licensed esthetician and botanist as speaker.

The theme of the Flower Show for 2025 is Once Upon a Time, a show based on the creativity in Fairy Tales. The flower show will be held on July 12-13 at the Saratoga Town Hall, 12 Spring St. Schuylerville.

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The schedule has just been printed. All are welcome to attend but pre-registration is now taking place. Liz Gee will be the chair. There will be a class of Youth entries. A children's workshop will be held at the library to assist the children with creating fairy gardens. Photography is open to the public. Hope to see you all there.

The June Program will feature Medicinal Herbs for Health and Beauty presented by Alexander Scrivo, a licensed esthetician, nail specialist and Beauty Therapist as well as the manager of Sacred Spa and Wellness. Sounds like the club members are going to get even more beautiful if that's possible.

- Carol English, Correspondent

Heritage Garden Club

One of the highlights of HGC was the Instillation of Officers in May performed by Assistant District



Director Annette Newcomb and FGCMYS Corresponding Secretary Charlanne McDonough. Annette related garden tools and their purpose to the duties of each position on the Executive Board. Annette and Charlanne thanked all out going officers as well as introduced the new officers and wished the officers every success in their two year term.

Photo: 2nd VP, Mariann Gold; President, Barbara Thomas; 1st VP, Renee Rosch; Recording Secretary, Robin Ryan; Corresponding Secretary, Janice Burns; Asst. DD, Annette Newcomb.

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The instillation was followed by a lecture and slide show presented by Bella Osborn about the wildlife, Karner Blue butterflies, and wildflowers flourishing in the Wilton Wildlife Preserve and Park. Did you know that lupine grow a tap root to help anchor themselves in sand, their preferred soil. So...growing lupine in pots is NOT a successful endeavor.



Another highlight this spring was the Art In Bloom at the Hyde Museum in Glens Falls. Past Presidents June Keane and Brenda Morris entered flower arrangements in the first annual show. June was inspired by the painting Madonna and Child by Neri di Bicci. Brenda's inspiration came from the painting, The Blossoming Maple by W. L. Metcalf. The show of thirteen arrangements drew thousands of viewers over Mother's Day weekend.



Also in May at Woodlawn Commons, residents enjoyed a garden therapy session planting pansies in little silver pails. Residents took them back to their rooms to enjoy this spring.

The month of May ended with the Annual Plant Sale. It rained then it rained harder! Despite the wet weather, we had many of the regular buyers with an umbrella in one hand and the other loading wagons with an array of beautiful plants dug from members' gardens.



- Charlanne McDonough, Correspondent

Glenville Hills Garden Club of Saratoga County



Our February meeting brought members together to share Garden Club memories in commemoration of 75 years since the founding of the Glenville Hills Garden Club in 1950. It was a wonderful way to bridge

generations and appreciate the evolution of the clubs focus and traditions. For instance, early on, the main events were fashion shows, recipe books and barn sales. Presently, we hold plant and pie sales to create revenue to send students to Department of Environmental Conservation camps.

Nancy Caparulo hosted members at her home in March for a presentation by Tim Biello who described his Featherbed Lane Farm. It is a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) farmed with draft horses.

By embracing slower and less mechanized farming techniques, his

“Closed-loop farming system” is in sync with sound environmental nurturing of our planet.

In April, members enjoyed lunch at Galway's Cock 'n Bull restaurant. The past year was celebrated, present officers were recognized and incoming officers were installed. District IV officers Mary Lou Baker, Director and Annette Newcomb, Assistant Director presided over the ceremonies.

District IV 's Spring Meeting and Luncheon, hosted by Schuylerville Garden Club in May, was attended by 15 of our members. Speaker Michelle Peters, owner of Ambiance Florals and Events in Albany gave a delightful presentation of arrangements of the past century using containers and flowers typical of the various decades.

May also found members, parents, teachers and 6th grade students beautifying the Village of Galway Park, Library, Post Office, Methodist and Baptist churches and several school gardens in preparation of Memorial Day Festivities. Weeding, mulching, pruning and planting annuals were carried out by diligent students and their adult supervisors.

Our annual Pie/Quiche sale took place on Memorial Day. While some members sold over 70 pies, other members marched in our Memorial Day Parade passing out 1000 seed packets to spectators.

In June, our popular Plant sale will take place at the Dockstader Pavilion. Hundreds of members'



perennials as well as floral bouquets will be available to share with new and returning customers who look forward to the opportunity to add to their gardens.



Coming up in June will be our Potluck Picnic where members will enjoy one another's delectable dishes.

Our July field trip will be a private tour of Rogerland in Arlington Vermont. English gardens including topiaries, water features and unique architectural elements will be featured. A lunch on the patio will follow.

Wiawaka Center for Women on Lake George will be a welcome destination in August. After a buffet lunch and garden tour, members can relax on the

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lake shore. Swimming and hiking are other options for the hardy and energetic souls.

Our September workshop will be the creation of cement planters using a concrete covered towel draped over a bucket or planter pot.

- Lenore Lanka, Correspondent

Lake George Community Garden Club

LGCGC has been keeping very busy! Annette Newcomb passed the "Trowel" at our annual covered dish meeting. Members Deanna Payne, Greta DiAntonio and Michelle Karins accepted their new positions.

The monthly meetings have been very informative with The Soil and Water Department of Warren County presented a slideshow on underwater plants. Cooperative Extension presented a program on Native Plants and our very own Scheryl LoMonico gave a very informative presentation detailing Homegrown Cannabis in NYS.



In April we had 2 members attend the Flower Show School sponsored by FGCNYS. April also included a

clean-up day at The Harrisena Church in Lake George. We had an excellent team of hard workers and a fun day was had by all.

May brought the annual Plant Sale in LG Shepard Park. The sale was well attended on a beautiful sunny day.

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The FGCNYS District IV Spring Meeting was held in Saratoga and LGCGC received a Recognition Award for several of our programs.



- Michelle Karins, 2nd VP

The Ballston Spa House and Garden Club

The Ballston Spa House and Garden Club launched our 2025 meeting season with a series of outstanding programs.

Genoveffa Vitale, Vice President of Wild Ones, gave an enlightening talk on how to *Regenerate Your Soil*. Sander Bonvell of EarthView Environmental followed with a practical and informative overview of composting basics.

We also enjoyed a dynamic presentation from Tim Biello, owner and manager of Featherbed Lane Farm. Tim shared insights into how his team runs a successful, sustainable farm business—producing nutritious food while nurturing the soil, caring for livestock, and being responsible stewards of the land. His thoughtful approach to sustainability, employee

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respect, and community involvement made for a truly engaging session.



We celebrated Earth Day once again at the Saratoga Tree Nursery volunteering to sort and package tree seedlings for

sale to the public encouraging plantings that help conserve NY's natural resources and foster the next generation of forests. It was great fun!

Through April, members continued our 'Seasonal Wednesday Walks' at the Zim Smith Trail in Round Lake.

We have had terrific engagement from the committees who volunteer to maintain our community gardens. In between the far too frequent raindrops, they made short work of spring cleanup and planted annuals in the Iron Spring Garden (ISG) in Ballston Spa and the Plant-it-Pink Garden, in honor of those touched by breast cancer in front of the Ballston Spa Library. We prepared and planted our new garden, the Giving Garden in Malta, where we will grow vegetables to donate to the local food pantry.

We held our annual May Geranium fundraiser selling over 800 geraniums, wave petunias and sweet potato vines. We had strong involvement from club members reaching out to family and friends for sales. It was a terrific success, improving over last year by 15%!



Winter 2025 (6)



At our May meeting, we celebrated the club's 70th anniversary reminiscing through old photo albums, making

plant stakes for our plant sale and enjoying fun finger foods and delicious cake.

Several members attended the District IV Spring Meeting & Luncheon at The Holiday Inn enjoying the opportunity to get together with fellow gardeners in the district. We truly appreciated Michelle Peter's demonstration of floral arrangements of the past century. Michelle was a very interesting and engaging speaker!



Several club members pitched in to help rejuvenate a fellow member's garden after the removal of several trees left the area looking a bit sparse. Thanks to many hands, it took just a couple of hours to replant and refresh the space. With time and care, the garden is expected to fill in beautifully.

The club has a busy summer on its calendar beginning in June with our Plant Sale Plus! major fundraiser. We have expanded the sale to include garden themed items and gently used home decor items. We're hoping for a dry Saturday! In addition, we will visit Schenectady Central Park's Rose

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Garden and Sustainable Living Center and attend the 30th Annual Soroptimist Secret Garden Tour in Saratoga. Later in the summer, we will visit Dalton's Gardens in Greenfield Center, attend the Schuylerville Garden Club's Flower Show and begin our member's home garden visits which are always a highlight of the season.

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Once again, we will hold our Celebrating Summertime! Ice Cream Social in mid- August and our Garden to Fork annual picnic in mid-September. Both of these events provide members and their significant others to come together for fun, relaxing social events.

We will close out our summer season with a mid-day sightseeing cruise on Lake George aboard the Lac Du Saint Sacrement. Should be great fun!

- Kathy Kane, President

Sacandaga Garden Club will report next issue.



Enjoying Flower Show School in April 2025 are (left to right): Carol English, Mary Lou Baker, Judy Espsito, Annette Newcomb, Margaret Rishel

Continued from front page:

In the interim, the District will be going “dark” as of May 31st as there will no longer be access to our website, nor to any of the Clubs whose websites were linked to the District site on the FGCNYS site.

IF YOU ARE NOT ALREADY ON OUR DISTRICT WEBSITE COMMITTEE AND ARE INTERESTED IN ASSISTING OUR EFFORT TO REBUILD OUR WEBSITE ON THE NEW HOSTING PLATFORM, PLEASE CONTACT ME OR OUR DISTRICT WEBSITE CHAIR, LEONA BROWNELL.

We are excited to have a **NGC Flower Show** in our District, organized by the Schuylerville Garden Club, on July 12 and 13. Come and see the beauty.

Wishing you all a glorious gardening season!!!

District IV Calendar of Events

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