

Northern Exposure



Newsletter of the New England Garden Clubs, Inc.



**Connecticut – Maine – Massachusetts
New Hampshire – Rhode Island - Vermont**

May 2025

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

I am so delighted to see the spring bulbs and flowering shrubs bursting into color! Until recently, my only floral delights were from visiting the Spring Flower Shows in Connecticut, Vermont and Rhode Island as well as the Flora in Winter and the Orchid exhibit held in Massachusetts. These shows and exhibits showcased both floral design and horticulture and their creativity, beauty and the smell of spring were so inspiring!

Our region Photography Chair, Arabella Dane, continues to help us all hone our photography skills. I am grateful to her for taking the "bull by the horns" during my term as director to keep us active through photography shows, workshops and various presentations. Arabella has organized a Flower Photography webinar for July and the schedule for the NEGC Photography Show is available now – see the links in this issue of our newsletter. Entries are being accepted between April 1 and August 31. Last year's entries were breathtaking, and I hope you too will enter this year's photography show.

I would like to thank all the clubs, individuals and states that supported my Director's Project by donating to Plant-A-Tree (formerly known as Penny Pines) during my term. This reforestation project is a partnership between NGC and the USDA Forest Service, and I am pleased to report that all the states in our region participated in growing NEGC's contribution to this important program.

This is the last message of my term. I have been honored to serve as your Region Director and to get to know so many of our members throughout New England. I continue to be in awe of the commitment and service you show to your communities



and states, and I especially appreciate all the support you have given me over these past two years.

Later this month at the NGC Convention being held in Charleston, SC, I will hand over the gavel to Polly Brooks from Connecticut. She has already begun working with the state presidents for 2025-27 so you will all be in good hands. At this convention I will be installed as NGC Third Vice President for 2025-27 and I look forward to continuing to serve our members on the national level. Please always feel free to reach out to me with any concerns you may have or with new ideas to further strengthen our organization.

Thank you.

Susan Miner
NEGC Director 2023-2025



Polly Brooks and Sue Miner

Historic and Public Gardens in Massachusetts

Polly Hill Arboretum

809 State Rd.
West Tisbury, MA 02575
508-693-9426
www.pollyhillarboretum.org

Those planning to visit Cape Cod, or, as southern New England's residents call it, "the Cape," like there is no other, should consider these 2 properties for a stroll through inspiring designs and plantings. Taking a ferry to Martha's Vineyard, the primary gardener's focus should be the Polly Hill Arboretum, arguably the finest private arboretum in the country. Home to a diverse collection of trees and shrubs, there are also extraordinary plants, both woody and herbaceous. In early summer, Stewartia trees bloom in profusion, big-leaf magnolias open their enormous flowers, and the fields fill with wildflowers.

Founder Polly Hill passed away in 2007 at the age of 100, leaving this arboreal legacy after 50 years of experimentation. She inherited her parents' property in the 1950s, when she found Martha's Vineyard to have very little horticulturally and determined to



investigate what might grow in this soil and climate. Her experiments primarily resulted from planting seeds, and her now famous stewartia trees, of which there are now over 70 introduced by her, have been named a Nationally Accredited Plant Collection.

Equally impressive are unique magnolias, including a big-leaf plant which she named for her husband, Julian Hill. Its enormous white flowers bloom from March to early July among leaves that are nearly two feet long. The largest collection of the Arboretum is of rhododendrons and azaleas, most of which she planted from seeds collected in Japan and the southern US. The collection also includes ground cover azaleas which grow to less than two feet and are used dramatically in rock gardens.

Mytoi

Dike Road, Chappaquiddick Island
Martha's Vineyard, MA 02568
Phone: 508-627-7689
Fax: 508-627-3659



If you are searching for the perfect spot to slow down to immerse yourself in the meditative qualities of the landscape, look no further than Mytoi (pronounced mee-toy). Not far from the Polly Hill Arboretum, Mytoi is a Japanese-style garden set within an open pine forest with flora that includes mixed plantings of native and exotic trees and shrubs, some of which are quite rare. The garden's signature feature is a small pond with an island that is reached by walking over an arched bridge. Winding footpaths take visitors through a birch walk, camellia dell, stone garden and hillside garden. A rustic meditation shelter offers broad views of the garden and landscape.



In 1954, Mary Walkerman purchased land in Chappaquiddick for a summer home and employed Edgartown architect Hugh Jones to design a Japanese style house. She had sold a small parcel of land to Jones, a lover of Japanese gardens, who began the creation of what we know today as Mytoi. Rhododendrons and azaleas, true to

components of Japanese gardens, were planted alongside junipers and he spent so much time on the garden that he referred to it as "my toy," spelling it "Mytoi." On his death, his heirs sold the property back to Walkerman, who managed the gardens and opened them to the public at no fee. The garden was donated to the Trustees of Reservations in 1976.

In 1991, Hurricane Bob destroyed more than half of Mytoi. The Trustees hired Don Sibley and Julie Messervy to reconstruct the garden. Messervy, a renowned landscape designer who studied in Japan, was the first Western woman to be apprenticed to a Japanese master gardener. Japanese-inspired garden rooms were designed with Asian plants and traditional elements, such as the entry gate modeled on ones found at Japanese temples. New plantings include a birch allée, stewartia, thread leaf maples, mountain laurel, camellias and Japanese primroses.



Sandi Tinyk,
NEGC Historic and Public Gardens Chairperson

NOTE: a 2012 Booker Prize winner, *The Garden of Evening Mists* by Tan Twan Eng, is an elegant novel of war, art and memory which follows the Malaysian survivor of a Japanese wartime camp as she begins working for an exiled former gardener of the emperor.



We are pleased to introduce our new
Garden Club Steward Membership:
"Guardians of the Garden" \$500

This annual membership level can include either:

- 1 annual group tour of the gardens for your club led by BG leadership (weekdays, to be pre-arranged). (Note: We offer picnic space to

bring your own lunch, or we welcome you to book a lunch with our preferred caterers)

● 40 Day Passes that can be distributed among club members so they can visit on any regular open day through our open season.

Either choice represents added value for your club and its members, as well as the knowledge that you are supporting this emerging and inspiring horticultural gathering place for generations to come.



Enjoy an outing for your club members at Bedrock Gardens.



And explore our unique shop and lunch options while you are in the area.

Feeling generous? You can gift a membership to your garden club. If you have questions reach out to Freya Hoffman-Terry at development@bedrockgardens.org

Bedrock Gardens is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

The 2025 NEGC Photo Show

"WE GROW GARDENS & GARDENERS"

Entries open April 1, 2025, and close August 31, 2025.

Finalists' images will be displayed at the Annual Meeting of the New England Garden Clubs, Inc. October 14-15 at the Sheraton Hartford South Hotel, 100 Capitol Blvd., Rocky Hill, CT 06067-3575, telephone 860-257-6000.

Here is the link to [the registration page](#)



"We Grow Gardens & Gardeners" is the Theme of our Incoming Regional Director, Polly Brooks, & the Class Titles are the Themes of our NEGC State Presidents

Class 1 "Bee Resilient: Garden for Nature" - Connecticut
A close-up or macro photograph featuring pollination.

Class 2 "Invasives Out - Natives In" - Maine
A monochromatic or black & white photograph of New England native plant(s) or animal(s).

Class 3 "It Takes a Village: Communication, Cooperation and Working Together is Key"
-- Massachusetts
A landscape photo of an example of rewilding, wildlife corridor, homegrown national parks.

Class 4: "Sharing: Plant Seeds of Friendship" – New Hampshire
A creative photo of mutualism in the garden, habitat or ecosystem.

Class 5: "Cultivate Your Strengths -- Share Your Knowledge" – Rhode Island
A nature photograph featuring an example(s) of resilience and/or adaptation in nature.

Class 6: "Gardening Fosters Connections" -- Vermont
A still image or still life photograph featuring gardening tool.

Rules:

Any member of a federated garden club in the New England Region may submit entries. The images submitted must be the exclusive work of this photographer. Images submitted to this competition may be used by the Region to further the mission of National Garden Clubs, Inc. "The NGC mission is to provide education, resources and national networking opportunities to its members, to promote the love of gardening, floral design, civic and environmental responsibility."

- Please submit your digital photo by filling in [this registration page](#) including your name, email, garden club, address and telephone number.
- Please select the class you wish to enter and give each image a title. Your registration goes automatically to Arabella Dane arabellasd@aol.com. Please contact her if you have any questions.
- Your Image file size should be no larger than 5 mb and no smaller than 1 mb. You may submit only 2 images.
- 6 images in each class will be selected to be the finalists and will be printed by the committee and displayed at our October 14-15, 2025, Regional Meeting.

Definitions:

Close-up -- an image taken of the subject showing it at large scale.

Macro -- an extreme closeup of a subject with size projected as 1-1 ratio or larger.

Color – Color photography is photography that uses media capable of capturing and reproducing colors. Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Color_photography.

Monochromatic -- By contrast, black-and-white or gray-monochrome photography records only a single channel of luminance (brightness) and uses media capable only of showing shades of gray.

Nature Photography — Nature photography showcases the beauty and grandeur of our natural world like landscapes, wildlife, plants and natural scenes.”
<https://www.studiobinder.com/blog/what-is-nature-photography-definition/> Nature photography -- per the rules of Photography Society of America nature and wildlife images must not show the hand of man. As we, the NEGC Photography Group, belong to PSA and compete in the New England Camera Clubs Council’s interclub digital competitions, these PSA Rules may apply.

Still Life or Still image -- A still image is a single, static image, while a still life is a work of art that depicts inanimate objects. Still image: A single, static image that conveys meaning visually. Still images can be in the form of photographs, posters, graphs, diagrams or documentary architectural drawings. Still life: A work of art that depicts inanimate objects, such as fruit, flowers, utensils or other everyday items. Still life can be natural or manmade and can be simple or complex in composition. They are often associated with oil painting, but can also be made in other media, such as watercolor, mosaic or photography. Still life art can be used to explore the qualities of form, color, texture and composition. One theme often portrayed in still life paintings is vanitas, which is concerned with the fragility of life.

Creative Techniques -- Creative photography techniques are intentional ways to improve a photograph by adding elements outside of the normal photographic process. The goal is to capture a mood or story by manipulating the gear, settings, light, perspective, composition and processing. All parts of a creative image must be exclusively your work, i.e. use your own skies and other additions and not clip art or the work of another photographer!

Awards: will be given at the discretion of the committee.

NEGC 2025



New England Garden
Clubs
Photography Group
Newsletter



May 2025 - Photo Newsletter Director's MAY Message
Welcome to the last photography newsletter of my term. Our region photography chair, Arabella Dane, has continued to help us all improve our skills. I am grateful to her for taking the bull by the horns during my term as director to keep us active through photography shows, workshops and various presentations.

This issue has information about a photography Zoom webinar-workshop by Lisa Cuchara focusing on Flower Photography in August.

Also, you will see the schedule for the upcoming NEGC Photography Show. Entries are being accepted now through August 31st. Last year's show was beautiful!

So, let's get our cameras out and capture the signs of spring as our gardens come alive for the season and this summer during the succession of blooms in our gardens and local parks.
Welcome Spring!

Some photos from my trip to DC – the first two at the Tidal Basin during the Cherry Blossom Festival and the third at the US Botanical Gardens in DC.:




Sue
Susan Miner
NEGC Director 2023-25


Here is the link to our website

Garden Club Flower Photography Class

Improve your Garden, Flower, Landscape, and arrangement photography
 Zoom, August 14th 4pm ET
 Details and Sign up here:
<https://www.lisatom.photos/photo-events/cuchara-gardenclub-august14>



Scan with your phone to signup



**Please join us for for NEGC's 2025 Photography Zoom
Webinar-workshop**

FLOWER PHOTOGRAPHY

***Mastering Composition, Exposure, and Depth
with Your Camera and Smart phone***

with LISA CUCHARA internationally renowned photographer-writer

cost: \$10

**August 14, 2025 Time: 4:00 pm-5:30 pm EDT
*on Zoom - to be recorded***

Here is the link to Lisa's workshop

REGISTER & Pay NOW

**After registering, you'll receive an e-mail with the link for joining
the webinar. You'll receive a reminder one week, one day and one
hour before the webinar starts.**

**You can log on from your computer and view the webinar from the
safety and comfort of your home.**

**NECCC - New England Council of Camera Clubs - update from Susan
Mosser, NECCC Steering Committee Chair**

www.neccc.org

To enjoy all the images here is the link to the [NECCC's gallery](#)

[Sign up for The NEGC Photography Group Newsletter](#)

***All members of New England's federated garden clubs are welcome to
participate in the NEGC Photography Group. We will showcase the
work of our garden club photographers, in furtherance of the mission
and programs of National Garden Clubs.***

***Our NEGC garden club members will have access to learning about the
art and science of photography thru our activities and publications.***

Our New England Garden Club members will have access to online and in-person workshops with noted photographers, thru the Photography Group's membership in NECCC - New England Council of Camera Clubs, a member group of the Photography Society of America PSA.

We will provide photographic educational information to our garden club members; opportunities for dialogue and discussion; image critique and evaluation of members' images; information about photography exhibiting opportunities; and information about photography judging.

Additional Photography Links - click on the icons below



Enjoy the NGC photography page! We will be adding photographic tips and articles here; hosting a facebook page and a blog featuring discussions about photography



The New England Camera Club Council (NECCC) is a nonprofit umbrella group for 70 camera clubs and photography groups in the New England states (CT, RI, ME, MA, NH, and VT).



Consider taking advantage of PSA's extensive educational opportunities and free programs that are exclusive to individual members.



This remarkable organization offers its members great opportunities for workshops, lectures and field trips for nature photography. They, like PSA, offer contests too.



**NEGC Photography Group
Coordinators**
Arabella Dane,
arabellasd@aol.com, Chair
Suzanne Bushnell, Assistant
Michelle Mensinger, Derry GC
Susan Miner, New England Garden
Clubs, Inc. Director



NEGC Youth Contest Winners

Compiled by NEGC Youth Contest Chairperson Sheryl Hanson

Congratulations to the NEGC Youth Sculpture Contest Winners

Grade 4: Ellis Hutchins, Danbury GC - Connecticut
Abstract Water Design by Ellis Hutchins; Danbury Garden Club

Grade 5: Adelyn Bush, Barrington GC - Rhode Island



Grade 7: Ashlyn Poulos, Danbury GC - Connecticut
Flowers in Container by Ashlyn Poulos; Danbury Garden Club



Congratulations to all the NEGC Poetry winners!

Kindergarten: Samantha Alleine - North Haven GC - Connecticut

Second Grade: Paige Leahy AND Fourth Grade: Rosalie Dopfel - Framingham GC – Massachusetts

Third Grade: Deanna Deecken - Westport GC - Connecticut

Fifth Grade: Tessa Lederer - Westport GC - Connecticut

Sixth Grade - Vivienne Vigneault - Barrington GC - Rhode Island

Seventh Grade - James Kim - North Haven GC - Connecticut

Eighth Grade - Savanna Allen - North Haven GC - Connecticut

Congratulations to all the Poster Contest winners!

Grade 1: Audrey Nasser - Stonington GC – Connecticut



Grade 2: Vivienne Karl - Stonington GC - Connecticut





Grade 3: Helen Paxton - Burlington GC - Vermont



Grade 4: Alaina Charity - Holliston GC – Massachusetts

Grade 5: Winston Delong - Springfield GC – Massachusetts



Congratulations Sarvesh on winning the NEGC Youth Essay Contest

Innovative Solutions for Plastic Waste: From Pollution to Progress

Sarvesh Ram Sankarnarayan
207 Whisconier Rd. Brookfield, CT
Age 14
Brookfield High school – Grade 9
Local Garden Club – The Garden Club of Brookfield
State Garden Club - Federated Garden Clubs of Ct

The increasing concern of plastic regulation has defined the beginning of the twenty-first century and has remained unresolved. Plastics can be found across the world in almost every ecosystem, ranging from the most secluded ocean depths to the highest mountain tops, poisoning habitats and threatening various species. With a huge amount of plastic created every year, many people look to recycling as a potential option. But while recycling is important, it cannot deal with the problem of plastic trash alone. More competent approaches include reducing plastic manufacturing, proper waste disposal, and the establishment of eco-friendly substitutes will be required to tackle the menace of a task.

To begin with, the scale of plastic pollution must be recognized. As stated by the UN, approximately 400 million tons of plastic are manufactured on an annual basis, it needs to be noted that only a small portion of that complies with recycling. Most of it is disposed of on land or in the open sea where it is estimated to take several centuries to decompose. Plastic litter is known to disrupt animal life as plastic is often viewed as food, prompting consumption and entrapment. This greatly affects marine life as an estimated 10 million tons of plastic find their way to the oceans each year causing the "Great Pacific Garbage Patch."

Recycling plastics appears to be an effective way to reduce plastic waste. The plastic could be collected, sorted, and turned into new products instead of left in useless dumps. However, plastic recycling has its own set of issues. First, not every type of plastic can be recycled. Plastics are produced from different materials and chemical structures that make it hard to recycle them together. Most plastic bags, straws, and food wrappers are non-recyclable and food contaminated. Thus, making them unrecyclable.

Recyclable plastics as only around 9% of plastic waste in the USA is recycled. Most of the waste is either buried in landfills or burned. Facilities offering recycling services face several challenges including contamination, infrastructural absence and very low demand for recycled materials. Additionally, the recycling of plastics degrades their quality over distinct processes, which makes the recycled plastic lower than new plastic products

Nevertheless, recycling has its own limitations, which should not be relied upon too much. The focus should also be on reducing consumption of plastic which can be

achieved by regulations that restrict usage of items like straws, bags, and bottles. Already, many countries are implementing such bans or applying a surcharge on single-use plastic items. Further, consumers can also do their part by minimizing their use of plastic items and using metal straws, cloth bags and glass containers instead.

Further, upgrading waste management systems is also crucial to make sure plastic waste is offered in a responsible manner and not introduced into landfills or the environment. Many countries lack the means or organization to be able to deliver an acceptable level of performance for plastic waste management. Helping in this case might include the introduction of appropriate technology for waste disposal, as well as educational campaigns that could drastically reduce plastic pollution.

Biodegradable alternatives to plastic that are also environmentally friendly is another viable solution. Some researchers are developing plastics that are environmentally friendly and degrade faster. For example, bioplastics that are made from cornstarch, a renewable resource, can decompose at a significantly faster rate than most petroleum-based plastics. Though these alternatives are not yet commercially accepted, they have great potential to reduce plastic consumption levels.

In summary, while recycling helps, tackling plastic waste is a larger challenge that extends beyond just recycling. To address this crisis, we must integrate recycling efforts, with measures to curb the production of plastic, and create other alternative materials. Only with a multi-dimensional approach can we hope to minimize plastic pollution and save our planet for the future.

The Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont, Inc.



Blue Star Memorial Marker Dedication Ceremony will be held May 27 at 11:00 a.m. at American Legion Post 91, Colchester, Vermont. After a successful year of securing donations, gifts from several Vermont Garden Clubs, a spaghetti dinner and generous local stores, the Blue Star Marker was ordered. The marker arrived in Vermont in January 2025. With the earth frozen, a spring celebration and ceremony is on the

Blue Star Memorial Marker Dedication Ceremony will be held May 27 at 11:00 a.m. at American Legion Post 91, Colchester, Vermont.

BLUE STAR MEMORIAL MARKER DEDICATION CEREMONY

We invite you to attend the **honorable dedication** of the Blue Star Memorial Marker, commemorating our brave military service members.

The ceremony will take place on **May 27, 2025 at 11:00 am, located at the American Legion Post 91, 8 South Street, Route 2 & 7, Colchester, Vermont.**

Your presence will pay tribute to those who have served our nation with **courage and dedication.**

Let's celebrate their sacrifices together.

FEDERATED GARDEN CLUBS OF VERMONT, INC (FGCV)

Doris Van Mullen
FGCV President



Flora Bell
Blue Star Chair

horizon. We are happy to honor and celebrate our Veterans and the sacrifices they make for our freedom.

The Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont (FGCV) are holding three District Meetings in April. Coming together to share and grow from experiences and ideas make us stronger.

The FGCV Annual Meeting will be June 3, at Rutland Country Club, Rutland, VT. Gardeners will gather for a business meeting, social time and a guest speaker - Henry Homeyer "The Gardening Guy" presenting "Tips for Selecting and Growing Trees, Shrubs, Perennials and Annuals that have Stood the Test of Time: Heirloom Plants I Love". The installation of new officers for 2025-2027 will take place. New President will be Martha Dale with her theme "Gardening Fosters Connections." The Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont North District 2025 National Garden Club Small Standard Flower Show held March 7-9 was extraordinarily successful. There were 108



"Dining in Vermont"
Blue Ribbon - Margie Lawson



White Ribbon &
Overall Sweepstakes Award
BJ Winders
Granite Center Garden Club



Red Ribbon - Pat Gagne
St Albans Garden Club



"Flowers at Every Turn"
Angular Design
Blue Ribbon
Barbara Gaida
Burlington Garden Club

horticulture plants and shrubs, sixteen floral designs (Line Mass, Angular, Still Life, Functional Table), seven educational Exhibits and five Youth displays (not judged).

horticulture plants and shrubs, sixteen floral designs (Line Mass, Angular, Still Life, Functional Table), seven educational Exhibits and five Youth displays (not judged).

horticulture plants and shrubs, sixteen floral designs (Line Mass, Angular, Still Life, Functional Table), seven educational Exhibits and five Youth displays (not judged).



"Dining in Vermont"
Blue Ribbon - Margie Lawson
Blue Ribbon - Margie Lawson

Doris Van Mullen
President, Federated Garden
Clubs of Vermont

Plants for a Slope

Charlie Nardoizzi - Burlington Garden Club member

Charlie is a radio, TV personality with shows in Vermont, Connecticut and Regional Emmy Award winner

One area I often get garden questions about is slopes. Some homes have yards with a slope that's too steep to mow. However, many gardeners don't like the look of just "letting it go." It often looks weedy and out of control. So what are some options for gardening on a slope?

If the slope is more than a 25% grade, don't try to mow it. It's too dangerous. There are two options. If you're up for a big project, consider terracing the slope. Using stone or landscape timbers, create a few terraces to level the ground and give you more accessible planting space. You don't have to terrace the whole slope. Even just a few terraces can make a big visual difference.

The second option is slower, but more manageable. Start integrating landscape plants that will take over the slope and crowd out the weeds. Start with flowering shrubs that will root along their stems covering an area over time. Start small in one area and leave space between the plants to grow. Occasionally cut back the weeds between the plants. Eventually the plants will grow together to cover the area, blocking out the weeds and making for a more beautiful, low maintenance slope. A good flowering shrub for a slope is forsythia. Select dwarf varieties that still root along their stems. Anchor lower branches to the ground with ground stakes or stones to help them root and spread. If color isn't a priority, try growing a creeping juniper. The thick, evergreen foliage blocks the light so other plants can't grow. For an interesting twist,

why not grow a vine normally used for growing vertically? Virginia creeper is a native climber, but also sprawls more than 40 feet, rooting along its stems. This salt tolerant vine can grow in part or full sun and has beautiful fall foliage color. You can also add creeping perennials such as geraniums, creeping Jenny and Pennsylvania sedge to fill in around the shrubs.

Garden Tour: If you're interested in seeing what other gardeners do with slopes and other problem areas, consider joining me on a garden tour. This September 8 -18, we're offering a Garden Tour of Scotland. We'll be visiting public and private gardens and have a chance to chat with the owners about their solutions and problems. We'll still have free time to explore the culture and scenery of this beautiful country. Contact me for more information. Mr. Nardozzi's web site [Garden Tours | Gardening with Charlie](#)

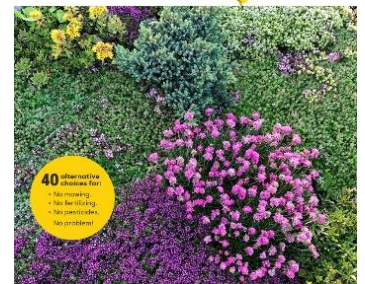
Garden Club Federation of Maine



It's bittersweet being at this point in my term as President of GCFM; I feel as though I'm just now getting to really know the clubs and their activities. I've spent the last months trying to fit in as many club visits as I can. Maine is a large state to travel around!

Our Annual District meetings are about to start, giving me one more opportunity to meet with members in person. We've been fielding an increased number of inquiries about joining a club and we have a brand-new club in the works in a part of the state that is far away from any existing clubs. By the time this newsletter comes out the club should be just about fully on board. Interest in gardening is out there; we just need to capitalize on it!

At the end of March GCFM sponsored a Zoom presentation by Kathy Jenz called *The Groundcover Revolution*. Her presentation was amazing – she shared all sorts of interesting information on using groundcovers in our gardens to provide “soft landings” and support pollinators. She has a new book out that is full of helpful information on various ground covers. Check it out.



In this article I will feature a few of the GCFM clubs that have unusual and interesting community projects that other clubs may wish to take on.

Several clubs hold bulb sales in the fall as major fundraisers, the Gorham Garden Club being one of these. In addition to selling the bulbs, they planted them around the community, providing a bit of sunshine in public spaces. It's at this time of the year that I always wish I had been



Gorham Garden Club
bulb plantings

more aggressive about planting bulbs everywhere last fall. There's no such thing as too many daffodils!

As we all await signs of spring, the Southern Maine Garden Club participated in the first Sanford Garden Fair in late March. While the weather was dreadful outside, attendance was high, and everyone had a good time. The club had a table there and signed up a new member and had interest from others. They also gave away butterflies on flexible metal wands to children stopping by with their parents. These were very popular and can be put in the garden later in the season.



Throughout the program year the Garden Club of Wiscasset holds mini-floral design sessions prior to each meeting, focusing on creating a design around a particular theme. And twice a year they hold a floral design workshop for those members that want a bit of extra help. One of the design sessions this spring was titled "Tempest in a Tea Pot." Here is a sample of one of the arrangements – certainly bright and cheery.



The Mt. Blue Garden Club in Farmington has been busy with two programs. First, they have partnered with the Town of Farmington to install a Blue Star Marker. While the ground is still frozen it is being stored in the presidents' garage, but the plan is to have it in place for the dedication on Memorial Day this year. In addition to this, they are in the process of establishing a Community Grant Program, giving out grants to community organizations to start their own gardens. The applications have just come in and are being reviewed now. Stay tuned for how this program develops.



The Longfellow Garden Club just finished celebrating its 100th Anniversary. The Club was started in March 1924 to restore the Longfellow Garden behind the Maine Historical Society (MHS) in Portland. For the celebration, banners were placed on the light poles along Congress Street outside MHS, a new sundial was dedicated in the garden, an Art in the Park event was held in collaboration with the Maine College of Art and Design with the artwork shown in a special exhibit in the MHS Museum over the summer and a video was created documenting the story of the garden and what it looks like today. The video may be viewed on the club's website: www.longfellowgardenclub.org. It turned out to be a very ambitious but successful anniversary year.



The Foreside Garden Club has a very unusual project. Since 2022 it has offered bare-root fruit trees to community organizations around Falmouth. In 2022 It planted six hazelnut trees that became the foundation for the 160 tree Cumberland Community

Orchard. In 2023 two peach trees were planted at the UMaine Tidewater Farm in Falmouth; in this photo four club members are planting one of the trees. In 2024, working with the Town of Cumberland's Lands and Conservation Commission (LCC), the club focused on keystone plant trees. The plants were either started from seed or purchased bare root from a nursery and repotted. The club reports that around 200 trees such as white and black oak, river birch, black cherry and wild plum, were distributed to residents in the towns where the club members live. They look forward to continuing this project in 2025.



The Kennebec Valley Garden Club in Waterville annually sponsors a one-day "Art in Bloom" at the Lithgow Library in Augusta. This started in 2020 and has been going on annually since then. The theme is developed in conjunction with the library director and floral designs are made to go along with the theme. This year's theme was "Music." Over 20 arrangements were made and placed throughout the library. Last year more than 300 people toured the exhibit – the best attended event the library has ever had! We don't have the figures yet for this year, but there were a lot of people there, escaping the rain!



Two GCFM clubs have taken on responsibility for a historical building in their community. The Hampden Garden Club in Hampden has maintained Harmony Hall since 1967. It was purchased by the Hampden Highlands



*Harmony Hall
Hampden*

Garden Club (the former name of the club) for the grand sum of \$1.00. The building was built as a Unitarian Universalist church in 1840 and used as such until 1895 when it began being used by the town for meetings. The building now requires \$80,000 in repairs, with the work to be phased over three years. The club is doing well with its fundraising campaign.

The Harpswell Garden Club is the second club to maintain responsibility for the upkeep of a historic building. The Union Church on Harpswell Neck was built in 1841 and has been cared for by the club for decades. They recently undertook more than \$40,000 in repairs with the help of community fundraising. Complicating use of the church is the lack of a septic system and well and not enough land to put them in place. The club does not own the church outright; it is unclear who actually does despite undertaking extensive legal



*Union Church
Harpswell Neck*

searches. Caring for both of these historic buildings is truly a labor of love.

I'd like to mention two upcoming Garden Tours this summer. The Boothbay Region



Garden Club will hold its Annual Home and Garden Tour *The Sea Around Us* on Friday, July 18 from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. (www.boothbayregiongardenclub.org). And the Bar Harbor Garden Club will hold its Garden Tour *Gardens by the Sea* on Saturday July 19, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. (www.barharborgardenclub.org). How

fortunate that they are on different days this year! At times in the past there have been multiple tours on the same date. It's nice that we can easily hop from one to the other.

For the past 76 years the Camden Garden Club has

sponsored a Garden Tour. This year they decided to offer something different to the community. On July 17 Camden Garden Club will offer their inaugural Garden Expo, "Edible

Gardens & Bountiful Tables." The day will begin with a PechaKucha-style presentation featuring four local horticulturalists. PechaKucha is a Japanese-originated format where speakers address the audience using 20 slides, each displayed for 20 seconds, resulting in a concise 6-minute and 40-second presentation, emphasizing visual storytelling and brevity. Other events will be presentations by keynote speakers Barbara Damrosch and Nancy Harmon Jenkins, horticultural demonstrations and a tour of David Kibbe's Old Souls Farm in Camden. The farm is a small-scale, ecologically minded growing space focusing on regenerative practices, seasonal crops, and community connection. Tickets may be purchased on the Club's website: www.camdengardenclub.org. This is certainly an ambitious undertaking!

Coming up in June is the GCFM Annual Convention in Wells at Village by the Sea. All are invited to part or all of this two-day event. The Keynote speaker will be Dan Jaffe Wilder giving his classic "Kill the Lawn"

Camden Garden Club presents its inaugural **GARDEN EXPO** "Edible Gardens & Bountiful Tables" on **JULY 17, 2025** from **9AM - 4PM** for **\$40** at **CAMDEN-ROCKPORT MIDDLE SCHOOL**, 31 KNOWLTON ST., CAMDEN, ME.

- TABLESCAPE DISPLAYS
- PECHAKUCHA STYLE PRESENTATION
- GARDENING DEMONSTRATIONS
- MICRO-FARM TOUR

FOR TICKETS & INFORMATION VISIT CAMDENGARDENCLUB.ORG



Bar Harbor Garden Tour
July 19, 2025

2025 GCFM Convention June 17th & 18th

Village by the Sea Resort & Conference Center
Wells, Maine



Gardening for the Future Requires Change

Meet our Speakers
Dan Jaffe Wilder, Director of Applied Ecology Notcross Wildlife Foundation, also known as the "plant tinkerer" with a program titled "Kill Your Lawn"
Kerry Ann Mendez, Award winning speaker, author and garden designer with a program titled "Power Up Garden Beauty; Power Down Garden Maintenance"

presentation, a fitting end to my theme of "Rethinking the Lawn." Registration is open on the GCFM website www.maineclubfederation.org.

And coming up in July will be two Open Garden Days in the more northern parts of the state. Details are still being worked out. More details will be available on the website as they are developed as well as in the July *Northern Exposure*.

Karen Rea
President, Garden Club Federation of Maine, Inc.

The Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, Inc.

Hello and Farewell Everyone,

Once the new year arrives, it seems like there are so many things that occur quickly one after the other. Nature sheds its winter coat, and the advent of spring gives us a sense of renewal. Gardeners get excited and talk incessantly about the weather and the plants wake up by showing bud growth, the old reliables are in bloom and the traditional spring trees add color to our neighborhoods. We are itchy to get outside and nurture nature. The cacophony of chirping by the backyard birds each morning brings a smile to my face and warms my heart as I listen to them.

It's hard to believe how quickly time flies. As a newly elected president in 2023 I was plunged into the planning of the New England Garden Club Annual Meeting which was held in Plymouth, MA, which was very successful

and a lot of fun. It seems so long ago now.

Our membership continues to grow, gaining 460 members just last year and winning an award for most increased membership from NEGC in October 2024. Our membership hovers at 11,000 and we have 170 garden clubs with two newly acquired clubs this year with another waiting.



Nurture Nature

This year, all in the same week of April, we celebrate Passover, Easter, Earth Day and Arbor Day. Many garden clubs in Massachusetts have activities around these days. On top of all this, we have everyone getting ready for their garden club Annual Plant Sales with many clubs celebrating installation luncheons as well. Since there are so many plant sales around the state we post all of the locations and the [flyers](#) on our website so plant lovers can go shopping, visit several clubs on the same day or go to other [neighboring towns](#). Goodness! I read so many club newsletters and there is so much, much more going on as well. Busy, busy, busy time of year for clubs.



GCFM offered so many classes and schools this spring. We had Landscape Design School, Garden Studies School, Flower Show School, Design Workshop and the last of our free webinars was on Organic Lawns. I am so appreciative of the Chairpeople who oversee these programs. They do an exceptional job.

Upcoming events are the special Prelude to GCFM's Centennial Fundraiser featuring Michael Derouin, AAF, AIFD, PFCI A second-generation floral designer and educator on April 30th. FUNdamentals is coming in May & June. You can always check out my Monday Memos for current updates each week. [Click here](#)

Although it is a bit hectic, I am also feeling a bit melancholy as my term comes to a close. It has been such a pleasure being state president and representing GCFM wherever I travel. With the nearly 100 year history of our organization, there is so much I have learned and continue to learn about our Federation. I have tremendous respect and admiration for the former presidents who held this position before me. I hope you will take some time to read about these extraordinary women on our history website page which goes back to 1927. It's rich with their activities and accomplishments. [Click here](#)



It has been a pleasure working with Sue Miner, our Region Director, the New England State Presidents and enjoyed receiving the invitations to visit their states during my term.

It's time for a change not only of the seasons of the life cycle, but at GCFM, a new Administration will take over at our [98th Annual Meeting](#) in Danversport Event Center in Danvers on June 19 this year. I hope you will consider attending.

Thank you for sharing this experience with me. I will treasure the memories, the conversations and the laughter we shared.

Marjorie Dienhart
President, Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts

Greetings from Rhode Island

The Rhode Island Federation celebrated 95 years at this year's April Annual Meeting, Awards and Installation Lunch for the 2025-2027 RI Federation of Garden Clubs officers.

Our new slate of officers is Kathleen Damiani, Pres. ~ Eileen Dennis, Vice Pres. ~ Sally Troup, Treasurer ~ Carol Horta, Recording Secretary and Heather Fraga, Corresponding Secretary. Congratulations!



As President it was my honor to award The Ely Medal of Beauty to De Feldman, Barrington Garden Club. This award is the highest award offered by RIFGC. The recipient of this award has made an outstanding contribution to RIFGC over a period of years, which affects the community at large. This award is only awarded when merited. Many awards were given to clubs and members, along with the President's Certificate of Merits and Commendations as well as youth participation

certificates for entering this year's NGC Youth Contest. Two youths were awarded NEGC awards and were sent off to NGC competition.

We finally closed the door on our most recent state flower show. 'Dance Through Design,' an NGC Design Specialty Flower Show was just what the weatherman called for. Overcast and not too pleasant outside gave people a chance to put down spring cleanup jobs and head inside for the flower show. A vibrant, diverse and creative schedule was all designers needed to get in the groove, and they came from all over New England to design.

Numerous club plant sales are being planned as a fundraiser for clubs. However, there is a greater effort to curb the Asian Jumping Worm, and clubs are working towards alternatives to the traditional dig up your backyard plants to offer for sale.

We look forward to seeing all the plantings from Arbor Day, which is part of the RIFGC giving back to the community. Each club receives a \$50 donation from RIFGC so that they can plant a tree in their community.

As I wind down my presidency, I look at what I set out as goals and, surprisingly, I managed to accomplish many of those. My experience has been without a doubt touched by the generosity of our membership and the growth they have accomplished in the past two years. I look forward to seeing club ideas and membership blossom further under the guidance of our new slate of officers. One of the bonuses of being President is all the new relationships that have formed and the friendships that will last a lifetime.

The excitement is in the air as my family will have to acclimate to me being around. My gardens are cheering: "good she is back, can you please rid us of these invasive

weeds you let go unattended?" I'll take care of that. I'm glad to be back. And I finally can see the light at the end of the tunnel: my dining room table after two years of it being command central (the office). Thank you for the great run. It has been an honor to serve RIFGC, Inc., NEGC, Inc. and NGC, Inc.
Best

Judy Gray
President, RIFGC

Photos from RIFGC Flower Show "Dance Through Design"



Class Title: Prom Class
Designer: Maria Kallis, Barrington GC of RI
First and Novice Award



Class Title: Pole Dance
Designer: De Feldman, Barrington GC of RI
First, Designers Choice, Design Excellence Award
Judges Award and RIFGC President Award



Class Title: Balance
Designer: Julie Lapham, Worcester GC and Southborough Gardeners GC



Class Title: Line Dance
Designer: Kim Cutler, Worcester GC of MA First and Tricolor Award

Class Title: Hoedown
Designer: Margo Yie, Beth Shalom GC of MA First and Table Artistry Award



Herbaria in New England

One of the excellent presenters in the recent Environmental School Course 2 that I attended through the Federated Garden Clubs of Missouri in March was Dr. Jordan Teisher, the Curator and Director of the Herbarium at the Missouri Botanical Garden in St. Louis.

I did not know specifically what an Herbarium was, but Dr. Teisher educated us on the role of herbaria in the preservation and identification of plant specimens. I immediately thought of the Ware Collection of Blaschka Glass Models of Plants at the Harvard Museum of Natural History in Cambridge, MA. This amazing collection of over 4,000 life-sized educational models from the late 1800s is well worth a trip to the museum. It was used to study the plants even when they are typically dormant and unavailable.

However, an herbarium is a collection of pressed, dried specimens that have been carefully preserved, labeled, mounted, catalogued and stored in natural history collections. These specimens help botanists increase their basic knowledge about plant diversity and to identify new species. The Missouri Botanical Garden's Herbarium, one of the world's outstanding research resources for specimens and information on plants, has a collection of more than 7.5 million specimens — one of the largest collections of its kind in the world. The collection includes plants collected in the early 1700s through present day.

In our New England area, there are 31 Herbaria with collections. The largest is the Harvard University Herbarium in MA with over 5 million specimens. The Peabody Museum of Natural History at Yale University in CT houses about 365,000 specimens. University of Vermont's Pringle Herbarium is close behind with 350,000 and the Steven T. Olney Herbarium at Brown University in RI has about 100,000. Maine has Herbaria in Bowdoin, Bar Harbor, and Waterville, as well as at the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens in Boothbay. New Hampshire's largest is at Keene State College.

Though Herbaria are typically only open for qualified researchers for scientific study and consultation, they may entertain a visit from a garden club if you call ahead and request a tour.

Susan Miner



Left: Example of specimen from the Harvard University Herbarium

Right: Some of the glass flowers at the Harvard Museum of Natural History



New Hampshire Federation of Garden Clubs



Is it the beginning or the end?

I have enjoyed my term as New Hampshire State President, and I am looking forward to my next term as New Hampshire State President. Like spring flowers, our federation has bloomed under the leadership of a wonderful group of leaders at the club and board levels. We have two new federated clubs and are always looking forward to having others join us. When we visit clubs to introduce them to the advantages of becoming a federated garden club, we tell them about also being members of the National Garden Club and all of the educational experiences offered by this national group. We tell prospective members many, many advantages available to them when they join us. What we have come to learn is many of our current members are unaware of what we are telling others. It is our responsibility to continue reminding members of the wide range of learning opportunities through attending schools, webinars and using the information available on the NGC website.

My theme remains "Plant Seeds of Friendship." Friendship with other members, clubs and NEGC State members. It is always a joy to meet and greet members who have become friends. We have encouraged inter-club friendships by providing more time at the Fall Gathering for members throughout the state to enjoy a day together at a beautiful garden themed venue. This is in lieu of a formal Fall Meeting. Members from different clubs share a day in the sun (hopefully!) and have time to share ideas about programs, projects and events. Networking and idea sharing are a purposely planned part of the day.

The theme for the 2025- 2027 term will remain the same "Plant Seeds of Friendship." The friendships we will center on this term are friendships with nature. Our Annual Meeting speaker's topic is "Native Planting for Birds." Members are encouraged to continue their efforts to plant for pollinators and birds by using plants native to our state. Samples of seeds and native trees and bushes will be available to our clubs at the meeting to take home to plant in a public space to encourage local communities to become involved and informed about this issue.

As State Presidents we have a wonderful opportunity to visit our neighboring states. It has been a joy to travel throughout New England and enjoy many different garden club sponsored activities. The opportunity to travel to NGC meetings and events results in gathering information to share with NHFGC clubs and members. I am looking forward to this next term as NHFGC President so to answer my question is this the beginning or the end of my term. No, it is the middle!

Looking forward to seeing many of you at the Annual Meeting in May and the NEGC Regional meeting in the fall.

Plant Seeds Of Friendship!

Winnie Schmidt
NHFGC President

Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut



Greetings!

As I reflect on the last two years, it has been such a treat to visit clubs throughout Connecticut. I've met so many club members who will continue to be my friends. Our five Round Tables throughout the state brought neighboring clubs together and allowed sharing of successes and concerns. My final community act as FGCCT President was to dedicate a Blue Star Memorial in Guilford, CT.

Most of our clubs are busy planning for The Annual Plant Sale!! As we peruse our gardens to decide which of our perennials need to be divided or shared, we begin the potting process, and our hands and nails get dirty. . . so much for the manicure! Many potted-up divisions last fall to ensure viable plant material! I've encouraged bare root or well washed roots potted in fresh soil to reduce the spread of the dreaded Asian Jumping Worm. We will offer tool sharpening this year as well as native dogwood giveaway sponsored by Bartlett Trees.

The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut celebrated the changing of the guard on April 16, 2025, at our Annual Meeting. Sue Miner graciously installed our new President, Nan Merolla as well our First Vice President Kelle Ruden and Norma Jean Maucato as our Second Vice President. Our speaker, Larry Weaner, a landscape designer, got our creative juices flowing. Larry is the author of *How Our Landscapes Can Be a Sources of Environmental Change*. His talk supported Nan's Presidential Project *Bee Resilient, Garden for Nature*. Visit this link to learn more about Nan's project <http://ctgardenclubs.org/projects/presidents/>

September and October will be a very busy months for Connecticut! Environmental School course 4, Water and Related Issues, will be held via Zoom on September 18 and 19, 2025. Check out the link <https://ctgardenclubs.org/education/schools/environmental-school-2-2/> Gardening School Course 2 will take place, again via Zoom on September 25 and 26, 2025. We will not only host the New England Garden Clubs Annual Meeting on October 14 and 15, 2025 but Flower Show School 3 and Symposium during the same week and in the same place: The Sheraton in Rocky Hill, Connecticut! We are most fortunate to have Lynn Fronk and David Robson as instructors for both Flower Show 3 and Symposium. Please remember Flower Show School and Symposium are not just for judges. Both offer a wealth of information for all interested in design and horticulture. Registration for the Symposium is open and if you want a seat in the front ... register early. Click on this link <https://ctgardenclubs.org/events-overview/connecticut-symposium-2/>

I do hope to have a chance to visit with my New England friends at the National Garden Club Annual Meeting in Charleston in May.

With Gratitude,

Karin C. Ohr Pyskaty
President, The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut

NEGC Calendar

Deadline for the **August 2025** issue of Northern Exposure is July 25 – please e-mail articles or questions to editor Nancy Atwell at atwelln@aol.com

National Garden Club Meetings

May 18-23 – NGC Convention, North Charleston, South Carolina.

Regional Meetings

October 14 and 15 – New England Garden Clubs Annual Meeting in CT, hosted by Federated Garden Clubs of CT.

Environmental Schools

None scheduled at this time.

Flower Shows

June 20-22 – Newport Flower Show “A Floral Fair” will be held at Rosecliff Mansion. FMI see [The Newport Flower Show: "A Floral Fair" | Newport Mansions](#) Tickets must be purchased in advance for specific dates and time blocks. Special Events: An oceanside garden display and a presentation by Lucy Hunter.

Flower Show Schools

September 10-13 – Course 3 - hosted by FGCT.

Landscape Design Schools

None scheduled at this time.

Garden Club Lectures and Programs

May 7 - Sogkonate G C, Tiverton, horticulturist Sean Conway shares his recollections of noted landscape designer Lloyd Lawton, pointing out what made Lawton's local gardens so unique and gave them the ability to stand the test of time. The program begins at 7:30 p.m. at Little Compton (RI) Community Center, 34 Commons, 2nd floor. Five of Lawton's gardens were on the 2024 SGC garden tour.

July 2 - Sogkonate G C, Robert Thorson, professor of Earth Sciences at University of Connecticut, coordinator of the Stone Wall Initiative and author of numerous publications, will discuss the unique formation, historical significance and threats to the existence of the many stone walls in town. The program begins at 7:30 p.m. at Little Compton (RI) Community Center, 34 Commons, 2nd floor.

State Garden Club Meetings

May 28 – NHFGC Annual Meeting, Keene, NH.

June 3 – FGCVT Annual Meeting.

June 17 and 18 – Garden Club Federation of Maine Annual Convention, Village by the Sea, Wells, Maine. Keynote speaker will be Dan Jaffee Wilder, author of "Native Plants for New England Gardens" and Director of Applied Ecology at Norcross Wildlife Foundation, MA. Luncheon speaker June 17, Kerry Ann Mendez "Power Up Garden Beauty, Power Down Garden Maintenance."

June 19 – 98th GCFMa Annual Conference, Danvers, MA

State Garden Club Fundraising Events and Trips

May 12-22 – Best of English Gardens, FGCT.

July 8-9 - New England Botanical Garden (at Tower Hill) and Isabella Gardner Museum, with host Charlie Nardozi, sponsored by FGCVT. For further information visit FGCVT website <https://www.vermontfgcv.com>

July 13 - Newport International Polo Series "All Charity Day." The Polo Grounds (250 Linden Lane, Portsmouth RI) will open at 1:00 p.m. The match will begin at 5:00 p.m. Please join RIFGC at this event where all proceeds of ticket sales for RIFGC's location will be donated to RIFGC, Inc.