



# *Lilac Letter*

*Spring 2025*

*VOLUME XXX*

*NO. 4*

## **President's Message**

I hope everyone enjoyed the beautiful New Hampshire winter! It was truly an old-fashioned New England wonderland for winter appreciators. Now it is time to get ready for the next of our four ever-changing seasons. A season of rebirth and wonder as spring brings longer days warmer weather and spring flowers!

Many clubs take the winter off officially but continue to plan for the coming Garden Club year. The NHFGC Board has been busy rewriting official documents and supporting District 3 and District 1 as they plan the Annual Meeting and Fall Gathering. Look for the details in this issue! Both Districts are planning some fun and unusual events to celebrate NHFGC membership!

As members of NHFGC we are also members of New England Garden Clubs, Inc., and National Garden Clubs, Inc. As a result of these three memberships, you have many opportunities to become more engaged in learning. There are classes, informational meetings using webinars, and trips available. I am including a list of many of these opportunities in the Calendar section at the end of this *Lilac Letter*. Everyone is

welcome to attend the classes or to join other states on their trip adventures. Many of the classes are available on Zoom so you can learn in the comfort of your home. You can also check the websites of NGC and NEGC for more information. Currently we have members taking Landscape Design School, Environmental School, and Flower Show School. Gardening School is also offered by NGC. There is a cost to take classes. Many gardeners are lifelong learners. This is a great way to learn.

I hope to see many of you at the Annual Meeting at the Keene Country Club on May 28th. We will have two special guests joining us at the meeting. The NGC Convention is the week before our Annual Meeting. At that Convention Donna Donnelly will be installed as the National President and Susan Miner will be installed as National Third Vice President! Both national officers will be joining us in Keene as we celebrate "Plant Seeds of Friendship" and enjoy a day together.

Happy spring!

*Winnie*

Winnie Schmidt  
NHFGC President

## NEGC NEWS

### New England Photography Competition

Arabella Dane

Follow this link for details on how to enter.

<https://conta.cc/41z64o3>

## NHFGC NEWS

### Come Have Fun With Winnie!

Dian Mathews

“SEEDS OF FRIENDSHIP” is the theme of this spring’s NHFGC Annual Meeting. Join us to plant seeds of new ideas at Keene Country Club in Keene, NH. Mark the date on your calendar: Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 AM to 3 PM. There will be the usual fun door prizes and opportunity drawings. Come cheer when your club receives an award from NGC or NHFGC!

Our special guests this year will be our new National Garden Club President, Donna Donnelly, and our very own Sue Miner. One week prior to the meeting Sue will be installed as the Third Vice President of National Garden Clubs. (In 2031, Sue will be the National President.) Come to give a cheer to Sue!

Our speaker will be Cole Campbell, Horticulturist from THE NATIVE PLANT TRUST in Framingham, MA. Cole will share his expertise on “Native Plantings for Birds” – the plantings we need for blossoms, fruits, seeds, and shelter for our feathered friends.

In the afternoon there will a surprise fun breakout activity before Sue Miner installs our officers for 2025-2027.

We hope you’ll join us - come make some new garden club friends! See more information and registration form on pages 3 and 4 of this *Lilac Letter*.

### 2025 Colprit Award Winner

Winnie Schmidt

The recipient of this years’ \$1,000 Colprit Award is Lydia Grant, a young woman with a strong passion for floriculture! For her FFA Supervised Agricultural Experience, Lydia started her own floral business. She designs, creates, and sells flower arrangements for family, friends, and others.

Our winner’s interest in floriculture isn’t limited to floral design. She grows her own flowers and vegetables from seeds, planting them in beds around her home. Last year she made a rock garden, bringing color and interest to the landscape. She enjoys learning about all kinds of plants, and cooks and cans much of her produce.

After high school Lydia plans to study business with the goal one day of opening her own floral shop. This talented student is a very active member of the Coe-Brown Much-To-Do FFA Chapter.

*Winnie Schmidt  
presents the  
Colprit Award  
to Lydia Grant*



# NHFGC Annual Meeting

## Seeds of Friendship

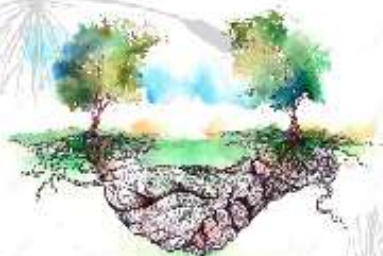
Wednesday, May 28th, 2025 8:30 AM to 3 PM

Keene Country Club, 755 West Hill Road, Keene, NH

Hosted by District III - New London, Fitzwilliam & Old Homestead Garden Clubs

Speaker: Cole Campbell, Horticulturalist from  
The Native Plant Trust\*

Topic: *Native Plantings for Birds*



Registration 8:30 to 9 AM — coffee, tea and pastries

Lunch menu choices:

- ♦ Chicken Marsala
- ♦ Autumn Pork Loin with Maple Sauce
- ♦ Eggplant Rollatini (vegetarian)

Ticket Price: \$40

\* The Native Plant Trust, founded in 1900 as the Society for the Protection of Native Plants, and long known as the New England Wild Flower Society, is the nation's first plant conservation organization. The society is dedicated to the preservation of native plants and operates Garden in the Woods at its headquarters in Framingham, Massachusetts.

Garden in the Woods is open to visitors between mid-April and mid-October. Garden in the Woods was founded in 1931, and is the largest landscaped collection of wildflowers in New England, containing more than 1700 kinds of plants representing about 1000 species, including more than 200 rare and endangered native species. Garden in the Woods also contains the largest retail native plant nursery in New England.

Make your reservation through, and payment to, your garden club no later than May 14.

Menu choice: \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken Marsala      \_\_\_\_\_ Pork Loin      \_\_\_\_\_ Eggplant Rollatini

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position or Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Wednesday, May 28th, 2025 8:30 AM to 3 PM**

Hosted by District III - New London, Fitzwilliam & Old Homestead Garden Clubs

Please submit list with meal choices and full payment by May 16, 2025, to  
Ron Trexler, 205 Campbell St., Manchester, NH 03104-2148

Club Event Organizer or Treasurer Name, Phone & Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Participants: \_\_\_\_\_ Payment Amount: \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

# **SAVE THE DATE!!**

## **2025 NHFGC Fall Gathering on Golden Pond**



### **Squam Lakes Natural Science Center**

The mission of Squam Lakes Natural Science Center is to advance understanding of ecology by exploring New Hampshire's natural world. Through spectacular live animal exhibits, natural science education programs, guided Squam Lake Cruises, an informal public garden, and Blue Heron School, (a nature-based Montessori early learning center,) the Science Center has educated and enlightened visitors since 1966 about the importance of our natural world.

**September 24, 2025**  
**Squam Lakes Natural Science Center**  
**Holderness, New Hampshire**



## NGC Environmental School

Susan Miner

NGC offers four schools that our members can attend – Environmental School, Flower Show School, Gardening School, and Landscape Design School. Each school consists of four courses that can be taken in any order. You can audit the courses or take them for credit by taking the exam and once passed, become a consultant in that area. Courses are in person or, in some cases, virtual.

I recently took my first course online - course 4 of the Environmental School. It involved two days of presentations by experts in their field along with a virtual field trip. Course 4 focuses on WATER. I learned so much about Ecology, Sustainability, Aquatic Plants and Animals, Manatees, Earth Stewardship, and Youth Programs. Our virtual field trip was to the University of Wisconsin School of Freshwater Science on Lake Michigan – the only Freshwater Science program in the US. This was well worth the time to increase my knowledge of environmental issues and studies.

The four courses in the Environmental School are:

- **Course 1** The Living Earth - An Overview and Introduction: Ecology, Plants - Biodiversity, Environmental Science, Environmental Issues, Backyard and Wildlife Habitat, Networking and Outreach, Historic Environmental Actions and Leaders, Sustainability
- **Course 2** The Living Earth - Land and Related Issues: Ecology - Land, Plants - Agriculture, Source Reduction of Pollutants, Toxics and Materials,

Coastal Zone Management, Environmental Resources, Wildlife - Animals -The Misunderstoods, Gardening with Nature

- **Course 3** The Living Earth - Air: Ecology - Air, Plants - Rain Forest, Environmental Ethics, Environmental Science - Pollution, Wildlife - Endangered Plants and Wildlife, Initiating Schools Programs, Earth Stewardship, Material Sources and Citizen Education Programs
- **Course 4** The Living Earth - Water: Ecology - Water, Plants - Aquatic Plants, Environmental Science, Sustainability, Wildlife - Aquatic Animals, Youth Programs in Environmental Education, Earth Stewardship - Effective Citizenship

The mission of the Environmental Schools is to teach environmental literacy to cherish, protect and conserve the living earth. The courses teach participants environmental literacy, appreciation of the natural world, encourage action for sustainable development, and appreciation for, the interrelation of all natural things. Land conservation, water conservation, and air quality are particularly emphasized.

For further information, visit the NGC website [Environmental School | National Garden Clubs, Inc.](#)

## Plant a Tree

Rosalind Spiller



Formerly known as Penny Pines, much of the mission remains the same. Due to rapidly rising costs, the Forest

## Plant a Tree – continued

Service has changed what we as Garden Club members can do to help. The cost for each planting is less, \$50, but the Forest Service will plant what they can afford with that money. They will still plant what was growing before fire or disease killed the trees. The amount of \$50 also makes it easier for smaller clubs to participate and for others to do even more. Please consider having your club part of this program.

## Awards

### Susan Miner, NHFGC Awards Chair

NHFGC scrapbook, yearbook, and award judging will be held on Tuesday, April 8, beginning at 9:15 AM at the Bow Old Town Hall, 91 Bow Center Rd, Bow, NH. Please consider coming to lend a hand and to see all the beautiful scrapbooks and informative yearbooks. This is a great way to see what other clubs are doing and get ideas for programs, activities, and projects. All are welcome to come and help. Refreshments will be available at 9:00. I hope to see you there!

## CLUB NEWS

### Ashland Garden Club

#### Susan Hendricks

Our members are staying connected this winter with our monthly Zoom sessions. The first session was a nice get-to-know session with Jyllian Thurston, the Shirley Spaine Horticultural Scholarship Award winner from PRHS. She chatted with us about her first semester at Endicott College.

Our second meeting was a poetry and book discussion with the Holderness Free Library Director Adam Di Filippo and PSU professor and poet, Liz Ahl.

We are planning an exciting spring.

Established in 1985 by Shirley Splaine, this is the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ashland Garden Club. Lots of fun programs and workshops are in the planning stages. Our first big event is our Annual Plant, Day Lily, Pie, and Vintage Market Sale on May 17 at Memorial Park in Ashland from 9 am to noon. Don't miss out on some great plants, delicious pies, and unique vintage items!

At the FGCCTFlower Show in Hartford, CT, held in February, Ashland Garden Club's own Sue Cram's beautiful necklace, created from dried and treated plant material, secured the 2nd Place award in the Botanical Arts Division 'Enchanted Jewels' class. Congratulations to Sue Cram! The Ashland Garden Club is delighted to have such a talented designer!!

## ASHLAND GARDEN CLUB Two Sales In One!!

**Saturday, May 17, 2025**

**“A Daylily Sale of Special and  
Different Named Varieties”**

9am to 12 Noon      Ashland Memorial Park 36  
Main St in Ashland, New Hampshire

**AND**

**Annual Plant Sale**

Browse our perennial plants, shrubs, herbs,  
ground covers, house plants, homemade pies,  
and unique garden-related vintage wares tents!

Sponsored by the Ashland Garden Club

## Atkinson Garden Club

### Jeanne Vickery

With a long, cold, and sluggish winter in our rearview (hopefully!), the Atkinson Garden Club wishes you all a spring in your step, delight in your heart, and a very happy 2025!

Our late October-November Activities included designing table centerpieces for our Senior's Harvest Luncheon and attending an informative presentation at our November meeting by Amy Cardello. She is the co-founder of the "Proven Winners" brand. We learned how their plants are selected and bred and got the scoop on some new varieties coming to garden centers this season!

During this time, club members were very hard at work with fall cleaning, including divesting planters and barrels of the last of their fall blooms, then filling them again with freshly cut greens and bows. Decorating the Dow Common, Fire Station, and other areas in town was accomplished just in time for the tree lighting ceremony!



*Jane Kowalski and Janet Snowden stuffing the containers at the Atkinson Fire Station with all varieties of festive greens*

Our December Meeting was buzzing with conversation and filled with creative hands finishing up Holly Trees, Kissing Balls, and Centerpieces. Flower-filled mugs were also the bright, red and white carnation centerpieces for our senior's Holiday



*Table Centerpieces for our Senior's Holiday Luncheon courtesy of Hedi Shikes and her Senior Outreach Committee.*

Luncheon, courtesy of our Senior Outreach Committee. Decorated swags and wreaths filled the room, along with Golden Apple Centerpieces and a dazzling display of beautiful, unique, eye-catching creative designs! Members were also treated to a delicious luncheon.

Following our Greens and Gifts Sale, we again had a successful Pop-Up Sale the next day, for those items remaining.



*Expertly creating Holly Trees for our Gifts and Greens Sale are Tanya Tsentalovich, Ellen Witherell, Cathy Bastek, Joanne Roy, Sally Hewit, and Sue Carter.*



## Atkinson Garden Club - continued

Before the year rang out, we were treated to another festive and fabulous Christmas party at the home of Michael and George Hosker-Bouley. This year Christmas caroling was an addition to the over-the-top buffet, amazing decor, and of course, George's famous, indescribably delicious layer cakes!

And to ring in the New Year, once again Jeanne Geisser graciously hosted our club's beloved January celebration – our annual Pizza Party – an event looked forward to by all!

Cindy Knight, designer extraordinaire, led our first in a series of creative design classes organized by Estelle Halchak. In addition to our club members, we were very happy to welcome members from area garden clubs. There were so many beautiful arrangements made by all. Those from our club were showcased throughout the room at our March 5 meeting the next day!



*Designer Cindy Knight assists guest with her arrangement at our Design Workshop.*



*Figure 1 Dessert table featuring striking arrangements by Atkinson Garden Club members, created at our Design Workshop the previous day.*



*Ann Grogan, Estelle Halchak in foreground admiring Ann's arrangement at March workshop.*

The featured presenter for our first meeting of the year was the very engaging, humorous speaker and author, Neal Sanders, who gave us his take on gardening as seen through the eyes of the spouse of an active and accomplished gardener.



*Figure 2 Guest speaker and author, Neal Sanders, at our March meeting.*

## Atkinson Garden Club - continued

Everyone is invited to our Spring Open Meeting on April 2, 6 PM. at Kimball Library, Atkinson. The topic is *Gardening in a Changing Climate*. Featured speakers are UNH Master Gardeners Mike Koutelis and Betsy Coes. Hope to see you there!

## Community Garden Club of Meredith Sandy Dodds

The Meredith club doesn't meet in the winter months, but our board has been busy planning for the upcoming season.

We'll kick off our meetings in March with our annual meet and greet. Last year this event was very successful in helping us grow our membership. With the aging of our membership, we find ourselves struggling to maintain our numbers so this is a crucial event for our survival.

We are lucky to have a beekeeper in our membership and in April Samantha will be our speaker.

In May we'll focus on our beautiful lake and hear from The Winnepesaukee Association. Their mission is to "Keep Winnie Blue." Their presentation will help us understand how our gardening activities can affect the health of our beloved lake. May is also when our "Weed and Feed" activities kick into high gear as we do our part to keep Meredith in Bloom.

The rest of our year will be filled with a mix of presentations and field trips.

## Derry Garden Club Carry Dugan

As we welcome the warmth of spring and thaw from the cooler weather, we're excited for another vibrant season ahead. With winter behind us, it's time to look forward to all the things blooming in our club!

We had a fantastic turnout for both our annual Winter Greens Workshop and Holiday Mystery Ride. It was wonderful to celebrate the season together, and share in the joy of gardening, even in the colder months.

Our March meeting had us ready to prune and care for our shrubs! We were joined by arborist and horticulturist Sean Trainor, who led an insightful presentation and Q&A session on all things shrubs. We also had the pleasure of welcoming four new members to our club—what a great way to start the season!

Looking ahead, we're busy preparing for our annual plant sale, organizing community clean-up projects, and gearing up for another successful year of our Children's Garden in partnership with the Boys & Girls Club. We can't wait to watch young gardeners dig in and grow their love for plants!



## Derry Garden Club – continued

We are also excited to announce that applications are now open for our annual scholarship program! Each year, the club awards a \$1,000 scholarship to a graduating senior from Pinkerton Academy or Londonderry High School who plans to pursue a course of study in horticulture, forestry, botany, or a related field. As always, we're grateful for the dedication of our members and the joy that gardening brings to our community. Here's to a season of growth, beauty, and shared passion for nature!

## Epping Garden Club Eunice Miller

By the time this edition comes out we will have enjoyed Willa's talk on Coneflowers and Cardinals, snowbanks will be shrinking and our pansies will be arriving the week before Easter at just two large bowls for only \$30!

Have a wonderful Spring! from Eunice and the rest of our tiny club.



## Fitzwilliam Garden Club Theresa Robbitts

The Fitzwilliam Garden Club held its first meeting in February. Member Laurel Cameron helped us paint rocks that we plan to give to children at our spring plant and bake sale in May.



*Members absorbed in painting rocks*

Dian Mathews, our District Director and Master Gardener, presented a program on March 11th at the Community Church on the importance of using non-GMO (genetically modified) seeds in our gardens. She discussed the different ways these seeds are created and the ramifications they create in our natural wildlife and vegetation ecosystems. Dian also discussed why we should not plant any of these seeds, and she discussed the sources of seeds that have not been treated.



*Dian Mathews discussing the importance of using non-GMO seeds*



## Fitzwilliam Garden Club – continued

We are holding a potluck dinner on April 30<sup>th</sup> with a program presented by Amber Dewey on pollinator bees and wasps native to New Hampshire, and how we can support them. She is a member of the Monadnock Beekeepers Association, and she can provide us with more information about that organization and the work they do.

In May we plan to visit the Native Plant Trust in Massachusetts during Trillium Week. It will be a good opportunity for members to learn about these plants and purchase some for our own gardens.

Our garden club will hold its spring plant and bake sale on Saturday May 24, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. We will sell perennials from our gardens, some purchased from local nurseries, annuals, and baked goods.

Our club does not meet in June or July as we look forward to working in our own gardens and planting some of the plants we purchased.

## Fremont Garden Club

### Leslie Milde

At our regular October meeting, the Fremont Garden club heard a wonderful presentation by Paula Rand about invasive species. The fall was also a busy time for the Club. In October members prepared the town gardens for winter and, on election day, they offered voters soups, baked goods and raffle baskets for sale at the Garden Club table.

Holiday preparations took place at the Fremont Library on November 19<sup>th</sup>. Members dined on hearty soups and then created colorful holiday swags for town buildings.



In December, the Garden Club enjoyed a festive Christmas party at the home of Denise Contino. Food, good conversation and laughs were plentiful.

In January, members enjoyed a program by Doug McElroy of Newton Greenhouses. Of course, everyone enjoyed purchasing colorful blooming plants during cold weather.

February's meeting had a program on several plant societies, their offerings, and some propagation techniques by Leslie M. We also celebrated the 90<sup>th</sup> birthday of dedicated member, Pat R.



## Goffstown Community Garden Club

Rosalind Spiller

Our November meeting featured a speaker from the Squam Lakes Science Center discussing the New Hampshire Osprey population. We invited the public to attend. At our December meeting, we each created a winter centerpiece using Boxwood and Juniper. We added a center figure to finish it off.

We do not meet as a club in January or February, but our board meets and plans all our meetings for 2025.

Our first meeting in March will be a Terrarium Workshop. It will be club-led, and each member will make and take home a small terrarium. Pictures will be in the next *Lilac Letter*.

## Hooksett Garden Club

Carolyn Taylor

The Hooksett Garden Clubs wreath sale went on as usual this year although we met at a different venue, the Hooksett Congregational Church instead of the Hooksett Public Library. All meetings for this year will be held at this new venue. Many members showed up to help on the Saturday after Thanksgiving and many hands made light work. The club owes its wreath sale success to the many people in Hooksett and surrounding towns who support us each year.



*Member Donna McDowell  
taking wreaths off the truck that delivered our wreaths*

In early December, Program Chair Susan St. Germain put together a holiday party which met at the Tap House Grille in Hooksett. She had prepared fun games and prizes, many of which she had made herself and everyone had a great time. The club also participated in their annual ringing of the bells for the Salvation Army for one day at Bass Pro Shops.



*Members attending the HGC Christmas party  
at the Tap House Grille in December*

*L-R:*

*Row 1: Susan St. Germain, Doreen DeRose, Diana Proulx,  
Connie Snair, Carolyn Taylor, Karen Derie, Charlotte Bell  
Row 2: Rachel Sweeney, Donna McDowell, Bill Kirmes, Irene  
Bergeron, Susan Carvalho*



## Hooksett Garden Club – continued

The signature community beautification project of the HGC is the flowers on the Memorial Bridge. On February 20, three members, Rachel Sweeney, Paula Harris, and Carolyn Taylor met at Flora Bella in Allenstown to plant pansy plugs that will eventually be the pansies that go into the 52 flower boxes on the bridge. When these plugs get large enough, they will be transplanted again into those larger boxes. Flora Bella is owned by Chris and Danielle LaValley who generously donate the flowers to the club each year.



*Rachel Sweeney, Carolyn Taylor, and Paula Harris planting pansies at the Flora Bella greenhouse*

Our first meeting of the year was held on February 26 and featured member, Brianna Bowden, presenting a program on *Seed Starting*. Brianna demonstrated three different methods of starting seeds – winter sowing, planting in cells and planting directly in pots, and then raffled off her supplies.



*HGC member Brianna Bowden demonstrating seed starting at the February meeting.*

At the first meeting, we discussed what is coming up including our plant sale which will be held on June 7th. We welcomed three guests who are interested in becoming members. A lot to look forward to in 2025.



# Hooksett Garden Club

## Annual Plant Sale

### Saturday, June 7

**9am - noon (Rain or shine)**

**Hooksett Public Library,**  
 31 Mount St. Mary's Way, Hooksett    Plenty of Free Parking

◆ Annuals   ◆ Perennials   ◆ Vegetables

◆ Herbs   ◆ Bulbs   ◆ House Plants

• Ask a Master Gardener Booth • Childrens Table

• Garden-Themed Yard Sale • Raffle with Items  
 Donated from Local Crafters and Businesses

## Littleton Garden Club

### Betsy Fraser

The LGC Photography Show was held in October. Members were invited to submit photos in five categories. The photos were presented on a large TV screen monitor to the oohhs and aahhs of attendees. Best Photo was selected in each category. Several photos were selected and greeting cards were published and offered to members at a nominal price.



*Examples of photos submitted for the Best Flower category.*



In November, members enjoyed decorating wreaths, and everyone went home with a beautiful creation for their front door.



*Members display the wreaths they decorated.*

The Club participated in the Littleton Santa Claus Parade. We staged a Christmas tree, kids and presents in the back of a bright red pickup truck and blared holiday music from a boom box. It was a big hit.



*Our float in the Littleton Santa Claus parade was a big hit.*



## Littleton Garden Club - continued

In December, we held a holiday potluck lunch. Everyone brought an item for a raffle, and we sold ourselves raffle tickets. Everyone won a prize, and the \$200 proceeds were donated to the Littleton Community Center where we hold our meetings.

A group of members made 110 mini-evergreen arrangements (tiny cat food cans with chicken wire “frogs” held the greens). The arrangements were delivered to a senior living home, so every resident had some greenery in their room.



*Members made 110 mini-evergreen arrangements that were donated to a senior living home.*



In January, a team updated the Littleton Garden Club By-Laws. It had been a long time since this was done, and several things were out of date. The updated By Laws will be voted on this Spring.

In February, President Betsy Fraser was invited to make a presentation about the club to the Littleton Rotarians. LGC also donated \$250 to the Littleton Area Chamber of Commerce to support their fundraising for hanging baskets of flowers in Littleton this summer.

The club tends a small garden area with benches at Littleton Community Center that is well utilized but underdeveloped. We have partnered with the Center to apply for an AARP Livable Community grant to transform the 30 x 110 ft. area into a well-designed, multipurpose pocket park, with ADA compliant walkways winding through gardens and with seating for up to 30 people. The club donated \$6,000 to the Center to hire a professional historic landscape architect to prepare the design which will be period-appropriate for the Queen Anne style mansion that anchors the property.

*This underdeveloped makeshift garden maintained by LGC is highly utilized by residents and tourists. The club is partnering with the Community Center to apply for a grant to transform the area to a well-designed, multipurpose pocket park*



## Manchester Garden Club

### Stephanie Burlo

The Manchester Garden Club closed their fall club activities with a small moss terrarium workshop led by Kathy Dwyer, an environmental educator and naturalist. The workshop was well attended, and the plant material was varied and plentiful.

In December we celebrated the end of the Club's year at our Annual Meeting and Holiday Luncheon at the Puritan conference Center. At this meeting, the officer baton was passed from outgoing officers to the incoming officers for 2025-2026. Also, at this meeting members were given a beautiful selection of Belleek China that was bequeathed by a cherished member, Janet Corriveau.



*Our outgoing officers pictured at our Annual Meeting and Holiday Luncheon*



*Our 2025-2026 Incoming Officers*

Also in December, in keeping with tradition, members set up beautiful holiday decorations at the New Horizons Soup Kitchen.

In January, members were busy preparing the Pansy Bowls for the Club's annual fundraiser in March. The Pansy Bowls are planted by volunteer members at the Frizz Home Garden Center in Bedford, NH. The proceeds from the sale go to support various local fundraisers.

The Board and club members look forward to resuming club activities at their March 2025 meeting and look forward to the programs and events planned for the coming year.

## Mountain Garden Club

### Sue Clark

December seems like ages ago!! Our December was filled with preparations for our annual Holiday Boutique. This is an all-hands on deck occasion, where our members design beautiful arrangements, create table-worthy boxwood trees, and make craft and boutique items. All are perfect for sale or gift giving. This is a three-



## Mountain Garden Club – cont.

day event. On the Monday before the sale, we are a busy group of elves creating items for our sale.

We also purchase and decorate wreaths to be donated to Town Halls, libraries and churches in North Conway, Jackson, Bartlett, Conway, Tamworth, and Freedom! This is done every year. Friday we set up the North Conway Community Center for the sale on Saturday.

On Saturday morning we always have a line waiting at the door for their boxes to encase their purchases. The Holiday Gift Shoppe is one of our largest fundraisers. Proceeds go to our scholarships.

Next, we had our Holiday luncheon at the White Mountain Hotel and resort in North Conway. Their spectacular dining area was filled, and a fire was flaming in their huge stone fireplace. The dining room looked out over the White Mountains - a perfect spot to celebrate with members and guests. Door prizes, raffles, OH MY!!! Merry Christmas!

January brought us together to hear Jean Stefanie talk to us about “Orchids Around Us.” She is a member of the American Orchid Society, NH Orchid Society, and an Educator, and Naturalist who has traveled all over the world. With her PowerPoint presentation she introduced us to native NH orchids. Then there was a hands-on session where folks could bring their struggling orchids. Jean talked about soil, watering and how to bring your orchid back to health. A huge turnout...we love our orchids!

Our February meeting is always well attended. Titled “Ask a Master Gardener,” our very own master gardeners: Joan Van Landingham, Grace Keeler, Wendy Ann Smith, and Ginny Kanzler, fielded the questions. The meeting ran over due to so many questions!

All of our meetings have a beautiful spread of food and beverages. Each month members volunteer their creative food choices, and we are so thrilled to have this back. It had lapsed since Covid.



*Valentine's Hospitality*



*Cathy Legere at the raffle table*

March will find us at The Preserve at Chocorua a beautiful wedding venue. Tea Party and Presentation!! Wear your tea hat! We will have plenty of pictures for that one!!



## **New London Garden Club**

### **Sandy Schmid**

The New London Garden Club is very excited and proud to start the Spring season. We have 10 new members and now are registering 107. We hope we can attribute these numbers to our informative and pertinent programs, friendly activities, and dedicated members.

So far this year we have offered a member-produced “Floral Zoo” in January when we made arrangements that were inspired by our favorite zoo animals.

In February we offered our members-only meeting to lay out the year’s activities, but also had the town archivist tell us about the beginnings of our 97-year-old club. A second February program gave us and the public great ideas for designing with annuals in a mixed border. That was complimented by our March program using Native Perennials.

April will bring a program about Glen Villa, May will provide ideas of Filler, Spiller, Thriller plants and we are preparing for the May 28 Annual Federated Meeting hosted by District 3.

In addition to our normal nine public programs, four member-only gatherings, we continue to organize, plant and care for 14 public gardens in New London, provide weekly Library flowers, make and distribute 37 wreaths and gifts for the town, offer scholarships yearly, offer every third grader a chance to participate in our “Wildflower Program” (now in its 5<sup>th</sup> year), and some of us volunteer at the Fells and the Garden at Tracy Library. Our yearly Boxwood tree fundraiser is popular and this year we are

having a Flower Show on August 14-16. We’re busy, dedicated and having fun!

## **Salem Friendship and Garden Club**

### **Carol Demers**

I’m thrilled to share the wonderful experiences we are having this winter! Our club’s membership has been growing rapidly, allowing us to create numerous opportunities for members to gather a few times each month. It has been heartwarming to see friendships form, social connections flourish, and an incredible team spirit develop among our volunteers.

For those who may not know, SFGC is more than just a garden club; we’re a vibrant social community! We welcome individuals eager to forge new friendships while exploring exciting activities. Our gardening aspect draws passionate enthusiasts committed to projects that enhance our town’s beauty, host garden tours, and deepen our understanding of pollinator gardens. We truly enjoy the best of both worlds, and I look forward to discovering more together!

In November, we celebrated a delightful “Friendsgiving” potluck luncheon. As expected, with such great food, there was a fantastic turnout, and it was truly a success!

December was equally bustling with activity. We proudly participated in the local Chamber of Commerce Festival of Wreaths, showcasing a stunning bee-themed wreath created by our talented Pat Learned. Its bright yellow decorations added a cheerful touch to the hall, reminding everyone of the vibrant spring ahead.

## Salem Friendship and Garden Club – cont.

Moreover, we launched our first monthly "Cocktails and Conversation" gatherings, attended a performance of "A Christmas Carol" at the Palace Theater, and enjoyed a festive Christmas party at Gourmet Bites in Salem. The highlight of our season was our participation in the Salem Holiday Parade, a project that our holiday parade committee worked on tirelessly for months. We also attended gardening workshops at Lake Street Garden Center to ensure there was indeed something special for everyone. Here's to more joy and growth in the coming months!

Salem Friendship and Garden Club is open to everyone. Under the dedicated leadership of our founder and president, Lorie Ball, we are always focused on our mission to "bring people together to foster meaningful connections through various social activities and community service projects. Whether you're looking to expand your social circle or simply have fun with others while beautifying our wonderful town, we welcome you to join us!" To learn about us, please visit <https://sfgc-nh.org/>.

Sending you all a warm hello and hope you are having a safe and beautiful New Hampshire winter!



## Sandown Garden Club Alison Hartung

Our February program was on seed starting from the viewpoint of the everyday gardener, not the experts. It was well received and was presented by two club members. We welcomed a couple of new members at our February meeting. We will continue discussions on how best to use funds for civic programs.

The Sandown Garden Club hosted their second public program on March 3 and discussed how to start a Monarch garden. We worked on plans for our June plant sale.

Our April program will be a presentation on *Planting for Cut Flower.s*

Here at the SGC, we do more than just get dirty!

## Windham Garden Club Deb Drake

We have had some fun activities and a wonderful set of meeting speakers over the last few months. Our October meeting once again featured Nichole Keyes, Greenhouse Manager at Lake Street Garden Center, one of our favorite speakers. Nichole spoke on "*Herb Gardening Year-Round.*" Nichole talked about how to have fresh herbs all year round, how to dry herbs, and her favorite herbs for cooking.

On a beautiful October day, we hosted a pumpkin-decorating table at Windham's Harvest Fest, a wonderful community event! The kids loved picking out and decorating their pumpkins and were extremely excited to take them home. We had 150 pumpkins, and they were gone in 2 hours!

## Windham Garden Club - continued



*WGC Pumpkin Table*

colors were quite stunning! And several others just enjoyed the good food and conversation!



*Hydrangea wreath*



*Kids decorating their pumpkins*

On the same day, a group of members also cleaned up our butterfly garden at the Nesmith Library.

Our November meeting was a craft-oriented meeting as well as our holiday gathering celebration. Some members focused on making acorn and milk weed pod decorations for our Holiday Tree on the town common. A few others tried their hand at dried hydrangea wreaths. The variety and



*Hydrangea wreath 2*



*Members busy crafting*



## Windham Garden Club – continued

At the beginning of December, we decorated our Holiday Tree on the Windham Town Common. As always, we keep the decorations natural and this year we used milk weed pod decorations, holly, pinecone garland, acorns, homemade bird seed ornaments, and more. We do use solar lights, and it was fun to drive by at night and see our tree twinkling!

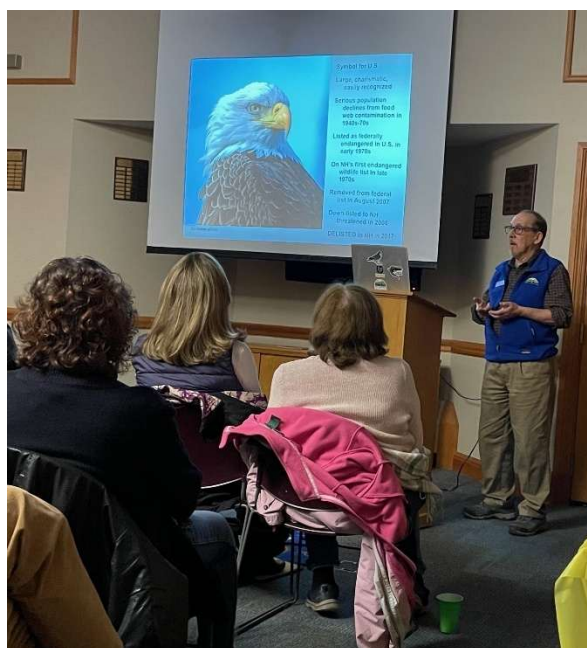


*Close-ups of beautiful Decorations on Town Common Tree*

Our January meeting was via ZOOM and featured Donald Allen, a New Hampshire Fish and Wildlife Steward, presenting “*Black Bear Happenings in New Hampshire*.” There have been many bear-sightings here in Windham. Donald shared information about black bears in the state, the natural history of this intriguing mammal, its habitat needs,

and ways to avoid potentially costly conflicts.

Our February meeting was our first ever program collaboration with the Windham Nesmith library and we hosted Chris Martin, a raptor biologist for NH Audubon for more than 30 years. His presentation “*Resurgence of Bald Eagles in NH*” was a highly enjoyable and informative talk which drew a large audience. We had almost 50 club members and guests!



*Chris Martin speaking on eagles*

Our annual plant sale is scheduled for May 17th and preparations are underway. Members are starting seeds for annuals, herbs, and veggies. We have bareroot perennials coming in a few weeks and spring digs in members gardens will begin in several weeks. Hopefully, the snow will melt soon!



## Upcoming Events!

### NHFGC CALENDAR

April 10-13	RIFGC Design Specialty Flower Show
April 23	NHFGC Board Meeting
May 17	Ashland Garden Club Daylily and Plant Sale, 9-Noon, Main St., Ashland
May 19 -23	NGC Convention, Charlotte, SC
May 24	Fitzwilliam Garden Club Spring Plant and Bake Sale, 9-Noon, Fitzwilliam Common
May 28	NHFGC Annual Meeting and Installation of officers
May 31	Deadline for Espoma Grant Applications <a href="#"><u>Espoma Grant   National Garden Clubs, Inc.</u></a>
June 7	Derry Garden Club Plant Sale, 9-2, Robert Frost Farm
June 7	Hooksett Annual Plant Sale, 9-Noon, Hooksett Public Library
June 20-22	Newport Flower Show
June 25	NHFGC Board Meeting
July 16	NHFGC Bus Tour to Berkshire Botanical Gardens, registration details p. 4.
August 27	NHFGC Board Meeting
September 24	NHFGC Fall Gathering
October 14-15	New England Garden Clubs Annual Meeting
October 22	NHFGC Board Meeting
December 17	NHFGC Board Meeting
May 2031	NGC Convention and installation of Sue Miner as President of NGC



## NEGC AND NGC OPPORTUNITY CALENDAR

### Schools

The classes do not need to be taken in order. Each class stands alone. More information can be found on the NGC website or the state website of the sponsoring state.

March 4-5	Virtual Environmental School Course 4, via Zoom hosted by NGC
March 24-27	Virtual Environmental School Course 2, via Zoom hosted by NGC.
Mar 25-26	Virtual Landscape Design School Course 2, via Zoom hosted by CT
Mar 25-27	Virtual Landscape Design School Course 3, via Zoom hosted by MA
April 12-15	Flower Show School Course 2, Milford, MA
Sept. 10-13	Course 3 - hosted by FGCCT. Landscape Design Schools
Sept 18-19	Virtual Environmental School Course 4, via Zoom hosted by CT

State Garden Club Fundraising Trips - Traveling with a like-minded group is both fun and a safe way to travel.

Mar. 31-Apr. 6	Texas Wildflowers Tour, FGCCT.
May 12-22	Best of English Gardens, FGCCT.
June 17	NY Botanical Garden Van Gogh Painting with Flowers, RIFGC
July 8-9	New England Botanical Garden and Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, FGCVT.
July 19-28	Pacific Northwest, FGCCT
Sept 16-19	New Hampshire, FGCCT
Oct 3-13	Treasures of Greece, FGCCT
Feb 1-6, 2026	Yellowstone Winter Wolves & Wonder, FGCCT

### **Editor's Notes:**

We hope you enjoy this edition of *The Lilac Letter*. Articles are subject to minor editing. The **preferred font** is **Calibri 12**, single spaced. Use either a Word program or .rtf (rich text format). Alternatively, please paste or type your article into your email. Please make sure you **include the first and last name of the author**. Email submissions to TAMARGAL2@aol.com or LEditor@nhfgc.org. Please do not submit files in pdf or Apple pages format. I cannot convert them.

The Summer 2025 edition will be published in early July 2025. **Deadline to submit articles: June 7.** Please email photos – **do not insert them into your text.** **Include photo captions either in your article or in your email clearly matching them to your photos.** Sponsorship materials should be submitted in .jpg format.

**Most important of all, please ensure Club Name and Lilac Letter appear in the subject line of your e-mail to avoid classification as spam which is deleted without being opened.**

## ***THE LILAC LETTER***

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**Member, National Garden Clubs, Inc.**

Winnie Schmidt, President  
Brenda Moore, President, National Garden Clubs, Inc.,  
Susan Miner Director, New England Garden Clubs, Inc.

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