

The Digest

THIRD DISTRICT FEDERATED GARDEN CLUBS OF NYS, INC.



MAY 2021

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From the Board



SPRING FORWARD

Hi, my name is Cynthia Teator, new First Assistant Director for the Third District of FGCNYS, Inc. A member of the Germantown Garden Club, I happily grew up in the Hudson Valley on a small farm in Mellenville, Columbia County. I earned a Business Administration degree and worked in public service for 33 years. Currently, I work as an organic farmer.

We are bursting at the seams this spring! Spring giddiness is catching amongst our daily challenges with the COVID-19 virus. Last year's 2020 disappointing cancellations of our meetings and events are behind us. Garden clubs are moving forward with 2021 plans for our garden members! What events are on your calendars? Please consider helping us by volunteering for open spots in our district. A new director is needed as well as openings on our committees. Interested? Reach out to us today to help strengthen our events, awards, projects, etc. Don't delay—volunteer today!

Another important issue on our minds is our environment. Mother Nature needs our help! She is telling us through her signs in nature. Bird species are extinct, climate is changing and warming, invasive plants are taking over, and toxic environments are negatively affecting healthy living.

We can act by taking environmental courses to learn how to improve our habitats. Go online to our FGCNYS website for many offerings of courses and knowledge available to garden clubbers. Find a course to learn from the “endless library” just for you!

We can schedule speakers, authors, and presentations about our love of the environment for meetings. One recent presentation I attended was by Tova Martin whose book, “The Garden in Every Sense and Season” is a wonderfully endless referenced periodical. Tova Martin recommends to experience Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter through sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste. She recommends to get your hands dirty, smell the fresh air, see all the bright budding cheery-colored flowers and leaves, listen to the chirping sparrows, witness plants emerging and struggling in warmth and chilliness. She describes clipping branches and loving trees, bushes, and all of nature with its healthy surroundings.

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CLUBS IN DISTRICT III

District Three Clubs, by County

Albany: Blue Creek, Guilderland, Helderview

Columbia: Germantown, The Garden Club of Kinderhook

Dutchess: Tioronda

Greene-Schoharie: Athens Community, Clematis, Schoharie Valley

Rensselaer: Greenbush

Schenectady: The Garden Explorers, Country Garden Club of Clifton Park, Glen Oaks, H. Gilbert Harlow, Hugh Plat, Western Hills

Ulster: Community Garden Club of Marlborough, New Paltz, Saugerties Society of Little Gardens, Shawangunk, Ulster

(from pg. 1)

Lastly, we can celebrate Earth Day 2021 by planting trees to slow down climate change. *Science* magazine proscribes, “The restoration of trees remains among the most effective strategies for climate change mitigation.” Let’s take action this Arbor Day, usually the last Friday in April, by participating. We can help protect our forests with regulations through lawmakers. Avoid buying products linked to deforestation. Donate and work with the Arbor Day Foundation at ArborDay.org or the Eden Reforestation Projects. Progress has taken place already with more than three million trees planted, negating five million miles of vehicle carbon emissions. Join ADF and receive 10 free trees, plus nursery discounts. Plant organic seeds in our earth with kindness. Support planting city trees. Trees remove pollution from the air, reduce emissions, improve energy efficiency in buildings, and sequestration of carbon. For more information visit EarthDay.org.

In closing, enjoy the outdoors as much as you can. Please participate in our clubs and organization. As Alice Sebold says, “I like gardening—it’s a place where I find myself when I need to lose myself.”

Best Regards,

Cindy

First Assistant Director, Third District

Congratulations to Lynne Arnold



Lynne is our new 2021–23 FGCNYS, Inc. President who hales from our Third District. She is a member of the Community Garden Club of Marlborough.

Did you know that as a non-profit educational organization, the membership of National Garden Clubs is composed of 5,602 member garden clubs with 178,946 members in the fifty states? In addition, there are 654 international affiliates, making NGC the largest volunteer gardening organization in the world.

Thank you Lynne for being part of the largest volunteer gardening org!

YEARBOOK CONTEST



*You can't win it
until you are in it!*

Please send one copy of your Yearbook to me by June 1, 2021 so it can be judged.

Because of COVID-19 restrictions, we realize that not many clubs are publishing their Yearbooks this year. However, feel free to email me ways your club is keeping its members in touch—whether by Zoom, telephone chain, or in-person. With few entries, we may be just awarding certificates of thankfulness to those clubs that are trying to keep members together.

SEND TO:

Barbara Campbell
14 Deerpath Dr.
New Paltz, NY 12561

Any questions,
email me at bcdeerpath@aol.com

MEET OUR NEW OFFICERS FOR 2021!

We welcome all of our new Third District officers for 2021–22. Thank you for stepping up to the plate!



CINDY TEATOR
First Assistant Director, District III

Who I Am: Hello, my name is Cynthia Teator, proud mother of three busy, grown children, and seven beautiful grandchildren, and I am a happy lifelong resident of the Hudson Valley, currently residing in Columbia County, Chatham, NY. I was raised and grew up on a 200-acre dairy

and grain farm in Mellenville, NY during the 60s, 70s, and 80s, which is still family owned today. This is where I learned firsthand about horticulture, animal husbandry, and life management in the Hudson Valley economy. My fondest memories are when I belonged to a 4-H club called the Claverack Colts. I mostly raised vegetables and rode and showed my horses. My favorite poet, Emily Dickinson, was an early inspiration for flowers and nature.

Recently, I completed a managerial economics course at Siena College in Loudonville, NY to add to many computer networking, applications, and trainings that I have. Another tie that I have to our area is my on-going public service career. More recently, I was awarded with retirement after 33 years with the NYS Bridge Authority in senior tolls management and a member of CSEA Local 050, helping with the audit committee.

What is your gardening background? I like to say I have green genes! Living in the Hudson Valley has been an awesome privilege for me. I enthusiastically share knowledge and frequent our historical locations and visit nearby interesting landmarks and many different gardens. My ancestry is connected to East Camp in Germantown, with the first of my ancestors emigrating from Germany in 1650 to work for the Livingstons. My maternal side sees my Italian grandparents immigrating to Ellis Island from Milan, Italy in the early 1900s. They started a vegetable produce and grain farm in Chatham, around 1944.

Why volunteer your time and talents? Fast forward from 2016 to the present, when I was asked to volunteer numerous hours with our local Greenport and Germantown garden clubs in raising monies for high school scholarships. For the Third District, since 2016, I have served as registrar for our spring and fall meetings. We have planned and enacted various community environmental projects and meetings to benefit the gorgeous communities here where we live. I feel there is nothing more rewarding than to give

back with volunteering to the communities we live in! We are needed and valued!

Currently, my pet project is a nonprofit organic children's garden called "Minnie's Garden." The goal is to teach children about plants and planting seeds for edible flowers, herbs, veggies, and berries. Tending the garden helps teach children about nature and how to grow backyard food. It is important for our children to know where their food comes from and how to grow natural and healthy food for healthy minds and bodies.

How has gardening in a pandemic affected you? We can help climate change! Being in our gardens and spending time outdoors helps us from being cooped up, as we have recently experienced with the COVID-19 virus. Personally, I enjoy yoga and sound bathing in the woods and gardens. Getting out and being involved in garden club social activities helps our well-being also.

Finally, an important purpose of our clubs is friendship and membership to help our clubs succeed! I am inviting you to ask your friends, family, and neighbors to attend a meeting and join our clubs to help us grow!



KRIS VOGT
*Second Assistant Director,
District III*

What is your gardening background? My gardening experiences began as a young child living on a farm in western New York. We had a large vegetable garden, peonies, and poppies all around the house, and fields full of wheat, corn, oats, and hay. I was very active in 4-H, showing vegetables

from our garden at the county fair. As I grew older, I appreciated the knowledge I learned in my younger years. I remember growing vegetables in containers on the deck of my apartment so I could have home-grown fresh green beans and tomatoes. When I finally moved into my own home, I was able to 'dig in the dirt' and planted several perennial gardens around our house. I also tried a vegetable garden, but our lot is sandy and shady so it didn't do well. Once I retired, I joined our local garden club (Guilderland GC) and returned to my CCE roots by becoming a Master Gardener. I am now in my 'happy place,' working in my gardens at home and volunteering around Albany County as a Master Gardener.

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MEET OUR NEW OFFICERS (CONT)

(from pg. 3)

What inspired you to be a Board Member? This is my second term as an officer on the District III Board. I enjoyed my first term even though COVID-19 put a damper on many of our activities. I have made many new friends while serving as an Assistant Director. I truly appreciate all the assistance I received in my first term from other members of the Board. I look forward to working with the new Board members to continue in advancing the goals and achievements of the clubs in our District. Hopefully, we will all be back together at our Fall District meeting in October.

How has gardening in a pandemic affected you? The pandemic afforded me time to concentrate on my gardens at home. Truly my gardens never looked better than they did last summer. Garden Club and Master Gardener activities were limited during the pandemic. We were able to hold Club meetings outdoors and our programs were presented by our own Club members. I enjoyed learning how talented and knowledgeable my Club members are. I will say that gardening afforded me an outlet to the stress of being isolated during the pandemic. I look forward to seeing my gardening friends again now that some of the restrictions are being relaxed.



JOAN ROBINSON

*Recording Secretary,
District III*

What is your gardening background?

I was raised on a dairy farm and always enjoyed gardening. I have both a vegetable garden and flower beds at my home.

What inspired you to be a Board

Member? I joined the Saugerties Society

of Little Gardens in 2008 because a friend and member of the club invited me. In addition to participating in their regular activities, such as planting flowers in the boxes on street corners in Saugerties, I became treasurer for four years and then president for four years. I am currently not an officer in my local club so when the opportunity was presented to become a secretary for the Third District, I thought I could do it.

How has gardening in a pandemic affected you? The pandemic has had no effect on my gardening activities at home, but it has prevented our local club from holding gardening programs that were already planned. We are still planting the flower boxes for the Village of Saugerties and hope to get back to sponsoring gardening programs this coming year.



GARY BARRACK

*Correspondence Secretary,
District III*

Gardening Background: My gardening background goes back to when I was very young. My grandmother who lived next door to us was an avid gardener, and her flowers always fascinated me. She thought me the art of planting, cultivating, and propagating not only flowers, but

also fruit trees and ornamentals. Today my wife and I live in my grandparent's home and continue the tradition of beautiful flower gardens and grounds with many species of plants dating back to the 1920's.

What inspired you to become a Board member? Interacting with members of our clubs and observing the dedication and commitment of our District Board members convinced me that this organization was worth additional involvement, time, and support. My tenure as your District Director was a most rewarding experience. It has been an honor to serve the Third District and I am looking forward to a second term as your Corresponding Secretary. I would encourage each member to seriously consider a future leadership position on the Third District Board.

How has gardening during the pandemic affected you?

Unfortunately, the pandemic appears to have altered the American way of life for years to come. So much has changed in our lives. But in an ever changing world, it is good to know that some things never change. This is true of nature in general and gardening in particular. Gardening has become more popular in that it has provided an outlet to lock downs, quarantines, boredom, and fear. Many greenhouses and garden centers have reported record sales of seeds, plants, and garden supplies in 2020. Sunshine (Vitamin D) and fresh air have proven to be a natural enemy of the COVID virus. A resurgence in the interest of gardening and connecting with nature can be viewed as the proverbial "silver lining to the cloud." I am proud that our clubs, despite the many obstacles encountered during this pandemic, have found new and innovative ways to continue their work of beautifying America.



MARIE CELESTE

Treasurer, District III

What is your gardening background?

My gardening started when I worked with my father in our garden, growing everything such as tomatoes, corn, peas, lettuce, etc. We never had to go the store to buy produce. We had apple, cherry, and peach trees and picked wild strawberries in the fields. Living out in

the countryside was very rewarding.

What inspired you to be a Board Member? I was inspired to be a Board member to meet people and share their gardening ideas. Also, I love accounting and working with figures and spreadsheets.

How has gardening in a pandemic affected you? During the pandemic, I was very much staying at home reading, cooking, and hoping that this would end soon.



JOAN GIORDANO

*Assistant Treasurer,
District III*

What is your gardening background?

I just love gardening!

What inspired you to be a Board

Member? I have been a member of the Greenbush Garden Club for over 30 years and have held several positions at both my club and in the Third District.

Also, I have done several duties at St. Michael's Church in North Greenbush and spent the last 13 years volunteering at Genet Elementary School in East Greenbush.

Anything else? I am happy to have twin grandsons going into their third year of college as well as a granddaughter starting college in the fall.

WILDFLOWERS REVISITED

Large-Flowered Bellwort

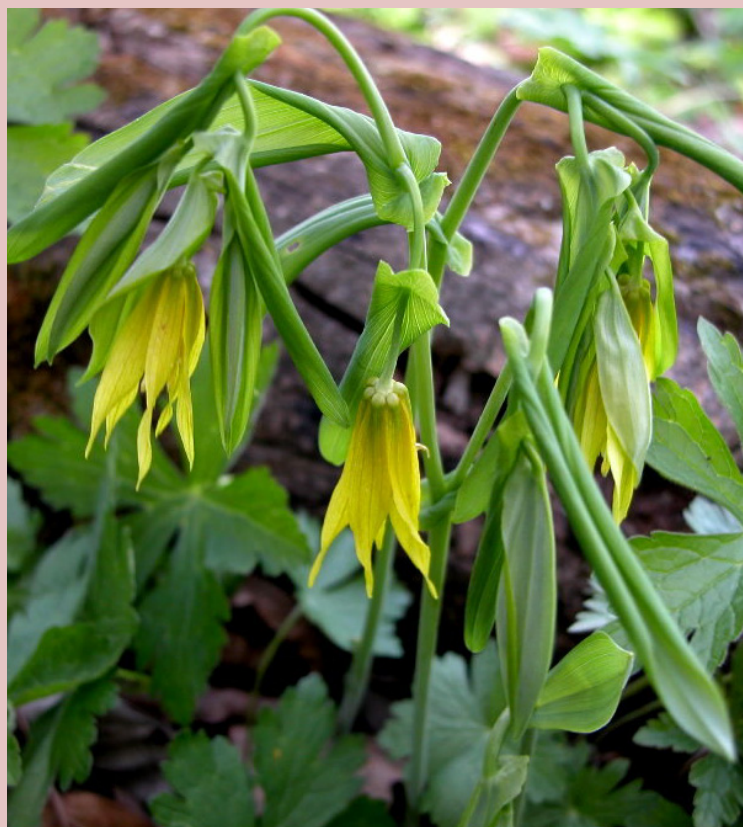
by Lynne Arnold

Uvularia grandiflora

Appearing on the heels of the first wave of April flowers is the large-flowered bellwort. This spring specialty seems to be perpetually drooping, hanging its head in a vain attempt to hide its subtle beauty. With long, slightly twisted petals held in a partially closed position, big merry-bells appears never to be fully in bloom.

Large-flowered bellwort makes a great focal center in a woodland garden. It spreads slowly by rhizomes to form attractive clumps. It does well in any well-drained soil, in medium to full shade. Flowers are 1–2-inches long, and the plant can reach 2-feet tall. It prefers well-drained, chiefly calcareous soils on steep to moderate slopes in rich woodlands.

Old botanical manuals swear by a Colonial-era poultice made from the leaves and flowers used to remedy toothache. Its medicinal value was well known to New England's indigenous population, which used a root tea to alleviate a whole host of rheumatic pains and fevers.



GERMANTOWN GARDEN CLUB

COLUMBIA COUNTY

by Fran Bufi

The Germantown Garden Club will hold their first meeting after 20 months this May. To say that our members as are all garden club members anxious to once again meet is an understatement. Our usual venues are not yet available. For our first meeting this year, we will gather at the Palatine Parsonage garage and we will socially distance and wear masks. May is usually a busy month for our club. We hold our annual plant, bake, and tag sale and have an annual bird walk. These events are still possible and on our schedule for 2021 because they are outside events. We plan to have our annual luncheon in June at a restaurant that has an outdoor dining area. We are hoping that by July some restrictions concerning indoor gatherings will be relaxed and that will signal a return to our normal programing. With that in mind, we are tentatively planning to hold an in-person flower show in September. All our plans are contingent upon the positivity rates for the virus. Luckily many of our members have been vaccinated. This should make meeting somewhat safer. On a brighter note our club has welcomed 4 new members.



We held our Annual Plant Sale on May 15 at the Palatine Park Pavillion. There were annuals, perennials, herbs, vegetables, and houseplants on offer. Some of the plants were donated by members. The others came from a local nursery.

GUILDERLAND GARDEN CLUB

ALBANY COUNTY

by Michele Santoli

I am so happy for many reasons. First of all, spring is here and a real one with beautiful weather, forsythia and daffodils in boom and trees that are ready to POP! Secondly, with many people vaccinated, normalcy seems to be getting closer. Last but not least, Guilderland Garden Club is ready to begin gardening and forge ahead into 2021.

Members have already been at the gardens at the Mynderse-Frederick House determining what has to be done to get all the beds ready for planting. Work will begin this week with the cleaning of winter debris and raking of leaves so planting can begin. Plans are also underway to begin planting in the newly built raised beds with a collection of herbs. This new addition will be at the rear of the house near the kitchen. This has been in the planning stage for awhile and everyone is anxious to see the final results.

Our first meeting, May 11, is later than usual. Meetings will be held outdoors for a majority of the year; so it was decided to begin when there would be a greater chance of warmer weather. Our

programs will be presented by some of our members since there are so many talented people in our ranks. Many of us enjoy sharing ideas and seeking advice of our Master Gardeners and experienced flower judge. Topics will range from making seed bombs, the history of Victory Gardens and what they are like today. Decorative flower holders and floral arrangements will be custom designed. Autumn will be seeing pumpkins created from paperback books. Wreaths will be designed later in the year. A field trip will hopefully occur in August which we always find enlightening and fun.

Community work has always been important to us and still is alive and moving forward. One event we plan on conducting is creating floral gifts to distribute to local food banks. These will arrive with Thanksgiving meals presented to those who are in need.

It is so good to be back in action! I know that we are all ready to return to our gardening here in Guilderland and throughout our District. Happy gardening to one and all!

THE GARDEN CLUB OF KINDERHOOK

COLUMBIA COUNTY

by Cynthia Bogardus

The board of directors of the Garden Club of Kinderhook met on April 20 to discuss recently completed projects as well as plans for the remainder of 2021. Due to the pandemic, President Sue Sweet and the current board will remain in place through March 31, 2022, as agreed to by the membership at large.

The collection of food and personal hygiene products for the Ichabod Crane student pantry was a huge success. Club members donated bags and boxes of items, as well as monetary donations. The donated items filled a Toyota Highlander. Teacher representative Robin Sullivan was thrilled with the contributions, emphasizing that the need of students and their families has been even greater during the COVID-19 crisis.

To celebrate Earth Day 2021, member Wendy Power Spielmann has planted pansies at the Kinderhook Memorial Library. Wendy will also purchase gardening related books to be donated to four area libraries during National Garden Club Week in June. Coordinating with Kinderhook Mayor Dale Leiser, club members Sue Sweet, Geraldine Smith, and Betsy Seeley will purchase and plant flowers at the Persons of Color Cemetery at Rothermel Park.

Many members have been requesting an in-person meeting. The board is arranging a meeting of the regular membership at an outdoor venue for sometime in June. The tentative plan is a bring-your-own lunch event, with a brief business meeting and a great deal of socializing and getting reacquainted. Further into the year, the scholarship luncheon committee is hoping to host a fund-raising event at the home of member Susan Gibson, who has graciously offered her spacious property for the luncheon. The scholarship committee is currently reviewing applications for this year's awards, which will be given to qualified students in June.

Lastly, the board is in early stages of acting on a request from the staff at Lindenwald to provide arrangements of permanent botanicals for the period rooms in the historic home. Details are being worked out for this fun project, the results of which will be seen by visitors to the home of President Martin Van Buren.

With many members having been vaccinated, the board sincerely hopes that meetings, projects and outings can safely resume.

NEW PALTZ GARDEN CLUB

ULSTER COUNTY

by Margaret McDowell

We usually are quiet during January and February—kind of like the New York gardening world. We regrouped in March and were able to have a Zoom member and board meeting for both March and April.

In March, our member Zoom meeting was on the 'Planned Pollinator Garden' sponsored by the Village of New Paltz. The village has become a designated Bee City and this is one of their projects along with educational opportunities throughout the year for its residents. We heard of the various plants that will be used and their collaboration with other county groups with similar missions.

For April, we will have a past member speak of local climate action initiatives including composting and food recycling. For May, we hope to start in-person meetings and field trips. We will head to the

Orange County Arboretum for a tour of the gardens and hope the tulips will be in bloom. In June, one of our members will host our meeting outdoors and we will make decorative garden steps. Also we are planning a Spring Plant Sale.

Time will tell what other events we can plan and how confident our members feel about in person gatherings, we will be polling our members to get their input.

Happy Spring to everyone and enjoy this time of renewal in the Natural World.

TIORONDA GARDEN CLUB

DUTCHESS COUNTY

by Gary Barrack

The Tioronda Garden Club welcomed Springtime with its signature daffodil gardens to brighten the City of Beacon after a long winter. William Wordsworth, the famous British poet wrote: “If one Daffodil is worth a thousand pleasures, then one is too few.” Taking a cue from Mr. Wordsworth, the club has been planting hundreds of daffodils over the years, which never fail to herald the arrival of Spring. In one of his most famous poems, he writes: “I wandered lonely as a cloud. When all at once I saw a crowd, a host of golden daffodils; beside the lake, beneath the trees, fluttering and dancing in the breeze, continuous as the stars that shine.”

On April 14, the club held its first in-person meeting of the year. President Carol Demicco demonstrated the art of stamping to create beautiful greeting cards, note cards, and stationery. Copies of the Yearbook for 2021 were distributed to the membership. This year, programs are scheduled for each month, including, but not limited to, field trips, a picnic, guest speakers, and a Garden Club Tea. Hopefully this will include a return to normalcy for the club as it celebrates its 92nd Anniversary. All programs and events for 2021 are tentative depending on COVID-19 guidelines in effect at the time.



Above left: One of three locations where Golden Daffodils welcome motorists into the City.

Above center: Not to be outdone, a farewell for those leaving the City.

Above right: Daffodils adorn the Verplanck Avenue Triangle in front of the statue of Hebe, the Greek goddess of youth.

Left: The Beacon Patriots Garden sponsored and maintained by the Tioronda Garden Club in full bloom.

HUGH PLAT GARDEN CLUB

SCHENECTADY COUNTY

by MaryAnn DeFonce

On February 12, members of Hugh Plat Garden Club met at the home of club secretary Fran Scrafford. We wore our masks and socially distanced with great excitement, so happy to see each other again! Our group is small in numbers but not in enthusiasm! We celebrated together the fact that we all were in the process of being vaccinated. We spent our time discussing plans for this year's calendar and for the future of our club. What could we do for our community in these troubled times? What kinds of meetings and events could we manage safely?

We have already started a community outreach project. We decided to adopt the Animal Protective Foundation on Maple Avenue in East Glenville. Because of the pandemic, many of their donations of simple items like pet food, pet toys, newspapers to line cages, towels, and blankets have diminished. We saved items and purchased food and toys. On March 25, we met outside at the APF to donate our items. Foundation member Chris Morgan met with us to accept our donations, expressing on behalf of the APF much gratitude and appreciation for our efforts. We will be donating to them again soon.

Our April meeting was held at the home of club president Sue Bushman. We made Tussie Mussies to brighten the day of someone special to us. Tussie Mussies have existed since medieval times. Might be a nice surprise for a shut-in perhaps! Since April was Friendship Month, Sue Bushman posted on the Facebook site 'Glenville Next Door' with an invitation for people to think about joining Hugh Plat Garden Club.

May and June will hopefully be outdoor trips to Toadflax Nursery in South Glens Falls and Yaddo Gardens in Saratoga. These are two destinations that we have planned over the last few years and have not yet managed to accomplish. If area pandemic restrictions cooperate this may be the year.

Of course there are no restrictions on our GARDENS, so we will be planting, weeding, watering, and APPRECIATING our own flowers, fruits and vegetables all spring, summer and even into autumn.

HAPPY GARDENING!



Left: Sue Bushman, Mary Ann De Fonce, Fran Scrafford, and Fran Fazio pose with donations to the Animal Protective Foundation.

Above top: Chris Morgan, APF member, greets us.

Above bottom: Donations we gathered for our animal friends!



Saving Forests \$68 At A Time

NGC and the USDA Forest Service are proud to have formed a partnership sustaining our national and urban forests through this reforestation/forest education program.

Your Garden Club can participate in a meaningful and practical conservation project by contributing \$68 to a Penny Pines plantation as part of the costs of replanting replacement trees indigenous to a particular damaged area. Whether by fire or by other natural catastrophe, pine trees and other trees are replaced. You may designate a specific state you wish to have benefit from this contribution.

Under a conservation agreement, the forest service will do the planting, using your donation together with federal funds, and

will provide to the plantation the same protection from fires, insects, and disease given other forested areas. The plantations are a part of the regular national forest reforestation program planted on burned-over and brush-covered areas which are potentially productive timberlands. Planting sites are selected by the supervisor of each national forest. These plantations provide soil protection, watershed protection, soil stabilization, future harvestable timber, as well as beauty and shade for recreation.

States, regions, districts, clubs, and/or individuals may participate in this program by donating in multiples of \$68. A \$68 donation may be made in honor or in memory of ONE individual, organization, or theme.



Celebrate National Garden Week in Your Community

Join NGC clubs across the country and celebrate National Garden Week, June 6-12, 2021.

This week is an opportunity to encourage pride in your community, interest new members, and work with other groups to be part of those efforts.

From the amateur to the master gardener, celebrations, workshops and educational events swing into high gear during National Gardening Week. Gardens provide fresh fruits and vegetables, beautify neighborhoods and communities and provide social and physical activities throughout the year.

HOW TO OBSERVE

Visit your local library, county extension service, or check local listings for events near you. Visit gardenclub.org for more information on how to get involved. Use #NationalGardenWeek to share on social media.

The Digest Online is published quarterly in February, May, August, and November. Deadlines for submissions are the 15th of the month before each issue (January, April, July, and October).

Please send news of your club's activities, events, and plans—it's a great way to share what you are doing with other clubs. Unlike print newsletters, there is no prohibitive cost factor for using color, so send in your photos. Articles on various gardening and flower arranging topics are especially welcome.

Material for *The Digest* should be sent to Karin Janson via email at kjanson@aol.com.

To access *The Digest*, go to the State website—fgcnys.com—select District III on the home page and then select Digest Online.

