



Troy Garden Club Newsletter

January 2026

**Taco Bar Month...
with a surprise!**

MEMBER PROFILE



Darcel Connors, member since 2022. "My husband, Dennis and I have been married for 37 years and have 5 children and one very special granddaughter. Our family lived in Troy...recently downsizing to Rochester Hills. I worked in social work initially, then transitioned to retail sales for over 20 years and have been interested in gardening since childhood. My father worked for a prominent family as a gardener when he was a young man and passed that passion on to me. When we lived in Troy our home was on a double lot, with lots of room to garden. Our new home is on a very small lot and I am hoping to learn how to make the most of a small space. Once I retired and had more time, I joined the Troy Garden Club and have learned much in this short time and look forward to putting this knowledge to use in my little yard." *[Ed.: I swear, they asked me to be in this shot! See page 2 for Award article.]*



President's Message

by Karol Carter

Happy New Year! Thank you, Dave for your guidance as our 2024 & 2025 president. Though a newer TGC member (2022), he willingly offered to serve as president when it became apparent no one else would. I joined TGC in 2007 and was president 2015 -2016. I "re-enlisted" because we have a very involved executive board of directors and committee chairs dedicated to serving TGC. It is commendable to see newer members volunteering with our civic projects, chairing community affairs (2026) and helping to compile our 2026 membership directory. On December 1, 2025 the membership chose to no longer be affiliated with WNF&GA and MI Division by a vote of 47 – 3. There are procedures that must be followed with the State of Michigan, the IRS and the parent organizations. The process has been started. I have obtained a membership form for those who would like to become a Member At Large (MAL) of WNF&GA when the time comes. The **Troy Garden Walk** is our principal annual fundraiser. Our 51st walk will be **Wednesday, July 8th** and participation is a requirement of membership, with few exceptions. Planning has already begun! Future meetings are held the **4th Wednesday** of the months of January through June at 11:00 a.m. We meet at the Troy Historic Village in the Niles Barnard House. Our board of directors' meetings are the same date and location with a start time of **12:30 p.m.** **Every member is welcome to attend these meetings!** Peruse the monthly newsletter calendar for changes. If you have any questions or even better, ideas you would like to implement, email me at karolvet@aol.com. You are encouraged to attend a board meeting, present your plan and receive approval.

Calendar/January

January 14, Wednesday/11:30 a.m.: General Meeting/Luncheon

January 21, Wednesday: Herb Study Group (*Kay Betke to provide*)

January 28, Wednesday/11:00 a.m.: Garden Walk Meeting/Niles-Barnard House. **ALL WELCOME**

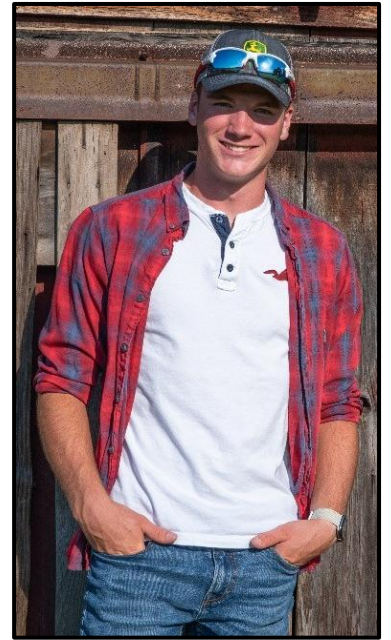
January 28, Wednesday/Noon: Board Meeting/Niles-Barnard House, THV. **ALL WELCOME**

Newsletter articles may be submitted from the beginning of the month until the 26th.

Troy Garden Club 2025 Horticulture Scholarship Winner

by Karol Carter

The 2025 Troy Garden Club Horticulture Scholarship in the amount of \$6,000 was awarded to **Nathan Hawks**, who will graduate from Michigan State University in May 2026. Nathan is studying Landscape and Nursery Management and has been an active member of the Student Horticulture Association serving as vice president last year and president for 2025-2026. He also owns his own business, *Hawks Lawn and Landscape*. His work ethic, passion for learning, involvement in leadership roles and commitment to his chosen field more than earned our support. The scholarship selection committee consists of **Jeanne Bolcer**, **Karol Carter**, **Marcia Mayer** and **JoAnn Preston** who reviewed 6 applications: Andrews University (3), Michigan State University (2), and Oakland University (1).



The TGC 2025 “Above and Beyond” Award

by Karol Carter

This newly created award serves to acknowledge a “newer” member who displays a willingness to make our club better through her/his volunteer contributions. Presented this year to **Darcel Connors** at our December 3rd meeting in appreciation for her extraordinary service to the Troy Garden Club, Darcel serves as recording secretary, message dispersal officer, Garden Walk Steering Committee member, THV gardener, Community Outreach participant and baker of 10 dozen garden walk cookies! This award may or may not become annual, but it is easy to spot that special individual. **Darcel, thank you and well deserved.**

Birthdays

Onita Fitz 1/9



Barbara Rosko 1/12

Barbara Stuecheli 1/12



Irene Koziel 1/16

Wendy Chessin 1/17

David Becker 1/21



Denise Karry 1/21

Jan Bancroft 1/29

(This is not Jan Bancroft, but it is her dog...I think!)



Inspiration from Troy Public Library by JoAnn Preston

Every year **Troy Garden Club** donates to the TPL for the purchase of gardening books to instruct, inspire, and just plain give a fresh look at gardening. Troy Garden Club is recognized on the **Wall of Donors** to the right of the circulation desk (bottom row furthest away from circulation desk). While anyone can “check these books out”, I’d like to encourage Troy Garden Club members to use the winter “down time” to take a look at some great books. **Yes, there are lots of photos!** The 2025 books purchased are:

Garden Wonderland by Leslie Bennett and Julie Chai 635 B

A Life in the Garden by Barbara Damrosch 635 D...not to be confused with

Life in the Garden by Penelope Lively (a large print) 635.9097L

A Year Full of Pots by Sarah Raven with Jonathan Buckley 635.986 R
Trellises, Planters & Raised Beds for Beginners 684.18 T

Gardener Scott’s Guide to Raised Bed Gardening by Scott A Wilson 635 W

(Don’t you love the idea that two books let you garden from bed?)

Growing Herbs for Health, Wellness, Cooking and Crafts by Kim Roman 635.7 R

Enjoy



Sunshine/Rain with Pat Dodge

My wish for you, as we start the New Year, is to stay happy and healthy and accomplish all those New Year goals. December was a rough month for a few (who prefer not to be named) of our members with surgeries and hospital stays, but I am happy to report that all are taking it easy and on the road to recovery. Keep all in your thoughts and prayers as we look forward to seeing each other at the January meeting. **Also** as we look forward to sunshiny days in 2026, there are a **few ideas for fun outings and adventures**: *The Kellogg Manor and Gardens, Taylor Conservatory & Botanical Gardens, Dow Gardens, Saginaw Rose Garden, Meadow Brook, Purple Rose Theater* and a few others. No dates are set yet, but you can show your interest by putting your name on the list that will be on the sign-in table in January.



Hospitality

Jackie Wilson & Cindi O’Neill



January – Taco Bar sponsored by the club!

TGC members have signed up as indicated below. Please arrive by **11:45 a.m.** with your food item already prepared and be sure to provide a serving utensil. **Dessert for 20:** *Rebecca Jaye; Barb Lepri; Darcel Connors; Kay Betke; Wendy Chessin; Kyla Remus.*
Clean Up: *Karen Cox; Kyla Remus.*
Reminder to members: We want to make sure everyone gets a chance to enjoy the food (especially if we have guests). Please take a smaller amount on your first plate. Please bring your own plate, utensils and cup to our meetings as we try to be mindful of our environment and help to reduce waste. At the conclusion of the meeting, be sure to police your table and toss disposal items and arrange chairs at the table.



Horticulture Corner

with Jennifer Goldstein

The Winter Solstice is the perfect time to start your milk jug winter seeds! **(1) Prep jug:** Cut a clean milk jug almost in half, leaving a hinge. Poke drainage holes in the bottom; **(2) Add soil:** Fill with 3-4 inches of damp potting mix; **(3) Sow seeds:** Sprinkle seeds on top; lightly press in (perennials, cold hearty and natives do very well); **(4) Label:** Write plan name and date on and inside the jug; **(5) Close & Vent:** Tape the jug shut; leave the cap off for airflow; **(6) Set outside:** Place outdoors in sun/snow/rain all winter; **(7) Spring Care:** When seedlings sprout, water as needed and open jug on warm days; and **(8) Plant Out:** Transplant after seedlings are sturdy and weather allows. **That’s it! Nature does the rest!**



Speaker Series by Patrick Hardy



Need we say more about the **Troy High Choir**? **LET'S MOVE ON TO JANUARY 2026:** **Mark Spencer** and his bees! His story...how we benefit. He will also have products for sale and his honey is delicious. Be there! **1/14/26**



Great Job all Around with JoAnn Preston

Great job singing along with the **Troy High choir** (although they were very good on their own). **Joan Burcar** has a spring/summer version about 'blooming flowers' (unfortunately NO "5 handsome farmhands") that we should try out in May or June just for fun. Congratulations to our **Cocoa and Crafts** team with Santa (*lower right*) headed by **Debe Hancock** including **Cathy Rohlman, Tina Battle, Debbie, Pat McDermitt, Carole Packla** and **Karen Cox**. I have it from reliable sources that new Community Outreach Chair **Bill Waggoner** stopped by to meet the crew and even got a tour of the General Store basement where many supplies for outreach projects are stored. *Hip Hip Hooray* to the **Troy Community Chorus** including our own **Pat McDermitt** and **Ken Heck** for a lovely Holiday performance at Athens High School to a packed audience. Maybe Pat can help give us cues for our blooming flowers singalong and recruit "5 lovely gardeners."



Community Outreach

with JoAnn Preston and
Bill Waggoner



We have a fresh, new Community Outreach Coordinator - **Bill Waggoner**! Please welcome him to his exciting new position by letting him know that you are eager to assist or chair a 2026 event. The dates will be in your new listing from Kay Betke, but if you want to get a jump on your favorite activity or want to give your personal touch to a project, here are some dates to put on your calendar:

March 27-28 Spring Egg Hunt at THV (what can we give kids to inspire interest in gardening besides a seed packet?)

May 16 Perennial Plant Exchange (how can we publicize better or add new, exciting dimension?)

Oct 23-24 Trick or Treat at THV (another opportunity to reach out to young families and foster a love of gardening)

Nov 11 Pantry Drive for Troy People Concerned (Would YOU like to be the connection with St. Anastasia pantry?)

Dec 5-6 Cocoa and Crafts with Santa at THV (How can you garden with Santa in December?)

We are so lucky to already have locations for everything **but** the Perennial Plant Exchange, so let the creative ideas flow and tell Bill how you can help him in his new position!



TGC Meetings - Inclement Weather Policy

The winter season has begun and with it, the potential for nasty weather. If Troy Schools are closed, the general membership meeting will be **CANCELLED**. An attempt to email the membership will be made. Rescheduling would be dependent on the church, the speaker and enough members being available on an alternate date. Please use your own judgement as to whether you are comfortable attending a meeting when conditions are less than ideal. For Garden Walk and Board meetings, we will first contact the Troy Historic Village and then notify you of any cancellations.



Holiday Memories



2026 Board of Directors/Committee Heads

President: Karol Carter

Vice President: Rebecca Jaye

Treasurer: Jeanne Bolcer

Recording Secretary: Darcel Connors

Corresponding Secretary: Judi Milidrag

Advisor: David Becker

Community Outreach: Bill Waggoner

Greeters: Nancy Wietchy

Herb Study Group & Directory: Kay Bethe

Horticulture: Jennifer Goldstein

Hospitality: Jackie Wilson & Cindi O'Neill

Membership: Beverly Hydo

Newsletter: Patrick Hardy

Sunshine & Rainy Days: Pat Dodge

Troy Historic Village Gardens: Karol Carter/Patrick Hardy

Troy Garden Club – Founded in 1971

Website: www.TroyGardenClubMI.com

Mailing address: 2844 Livernois #833, Troy, MI 48099-0833

Monthly meetings at Big Beaver United Methodist Church: 3753 John R, Troy, MI 48083

Second Wednesday of the month at 12:00 noon, September through June

Troy Garden Club

2026 Presentations and Speakers

January 14, 2026



"The Bee's Knees"

Mark Spencer

Owner, Spencer's Apiaries

February 11, 2026



"What's New in 2026"

George Papadelis

Owner/Operator

March 11, 2026



"Peonies"

David Michener

Curator, Matthaei Botanical Gardens

April 8, 2026



"Hydrangeas"

Annette Ferris

English Gardens

May 13, 2026

"Making a Butterfly Garden"

John Blair



September 9, 2026



"Backyard Composting"

Mary Gerstenberger

October 14, 2026

"The Tree Doctor"

Dr. David Roberts



November 11, 2026



"Weeds: The Wicked, Wild and Wonderful"

Jennifer Ott

My Thyme Gardens

December 2, 2026

MEMBERS ONLY

"Holiday Celebration"

Adrienne Covian

Conductor

Troy High Concert Choir

Troy Garden Club meetings: 2nd Wednesday of the month, September through June,
EXCEPT for the 1st Wednesday in December.

Check in between 11:40 a.m. and 12:00 noon. Lunch at NOON. Speaker to follow.
Meeting location: Big Beaver United Methodist Church, 3753 John R. Road, Troy, MI 48083
(south of Wattles)

www.TroyGardenClubMI.com

2026 Guest Fee: \$10.00