



# April 2026 Newsletter

*"Never yet was a Springtime when the buds forgot to bloom."*

*Margaret Elizabeth Sangster*



## Member Profile

Lisa Derderian



**Member since 2026.** "I retired a year ago after 41 years as a Dental Hygienist. I still enjoy keeping current and active in the office filling in for vacations. My husband, Stephen, and I love to travel, entertain, and cruise down 12 Mile in a '53 Chevy Pick Up truck during the Woodward Dream Cruise. I have wanted to use it to pick up dirt and mulch...that will never happen! I like to paint furniture and glass and donated a dining room chair for the March silent auction. I have a craft room filled with paper, vinyl, buttons, paint and holiday decorations and love to decorate my home for the holidays. As I am writing this, I am surrounded by boxes that need to be unpacked after a 3-month home renovation. My mother-in-law taught me how to sew. I like to re-purpose things like sweaters to create fingerless gloves, headbands, scarves and pillows. I like to bake bread. As a 4-year old, I was featured with my Mom in the *Royal Oak Daily Tribune* and more recently in the *Mirror Spectator* in New York. During COVID, I also published an article in our Dental Hygiene Magazine. I am active in our Church Women's Guild which stays connected with members through YouTube cooking and "how to" videos. My video was "Place Settings for Different Occasions." I had 15 different place settings on my dining room table. I love to set a pretty table, just like the ones at the garden club. Sometimes, I would rather set the table than cook the dinner. Desserts are a different story! I look forward to learning through sharing how my garden can be improved."

## President's Message

by Karol Carter



**We did it!** At our March meeting all nine tables were dressed with tablecloths, a centerpiece and many had table settings. Table themes were varied with St. Patrick's Day well represented. Jennifer Goldstein purchased peony placemats for those who wanted to follow our speaker, David Michener's topic. Your efforts not only liven up the meeting room but it invites conversation at the tables. So many members rallied to help with setting up Ways & Means, selling tickets or ferrying prizes to winners. Thank you to all who brought items to donate. The showstopper was a chair given a new life by member Lisa Derderian (*pictured left*). I was surprised with a yummy birthday cake, a card and a chorus of birthday wishes from the membership. Did you know, TGC member homeowners Becky Crocker, the Beckers (Dave & Mary) and Becky Thornton (Mike) offered to be one of the 6 private gardens on our 51st Troy Garden Walk? Reminders: Continue to sign up for available positions; either at one of the gardens or the plant sale. Our success depends on selling tickets + member support. More information regarding donating plants for our sale will appear in future newsletters. Gardening begins April 1<sup>st</sup> at the Troy Historic Village. Patrick and I hope to see anyone interested in burning a few calories, exchanging gardening practices, sharing your plant successes or failures with others or just wanting to learn. Read Tina Battle's article about her planned August field trip for members and note the date on your calendar. Finally, members are welcome to attend our garden walk planning meetings and/or board meetings. View the newsletter calendar for further information

## Calendar/April

April 1/9:30 a.m.: Gardening/Troy Historic Village

April 8, Wednesday/11:30 a.m.: General Meeting/Luncheon

April 15, Wednesday: Herb Study Group/Troy Public Library (see *Herb Study* article below)

April 22, Wednesday/11:00 a.m.: Garden Walk Meeting/Niles-Barnard House. **ALL WELCOME**

April 22, Wednesday/12:30 p.m.: Board Meeting/Niles-Barnard House, THV. **ALL WELCOME**

**Newsletter articles may be submitted from the beginning of the month until the 26<sup>th</sup>.**



# Happy Birthday!



**Pat Brown**  
4/1



**Joan  
McClelland**  
4/5



**Becky  
Crocker**  
4/10



**Norma  
Frame**  
4/15



**Sara Perron**  
4/16



**Kathy  
Brunner**  
4/22



**Kimberlee  
Urwiller**  
4/28

### SAVE THE DATE! with Tina Battle



**Wednesday, August 19, 2026** Field Trip to **Ankley Family Farm, 6767 Clear Lake Road, Imlay City, MI.** A centennial farm located in the southern thumb of Michigan, join members of the Troy Garden Club as we take a field trip to the Farm Stand at *Ankley Family Farm*, which features

a u-cut flower field, a u-pick vegetable field, a wildflower & sunflower trail, farm fresh produce, and locally sourced items. **Joe Ankley** will give a tour of the gardens and quick bouquet building recommendations based on what they have in bloom when we visit. **Admission:** U-cut flowers: \$15 jar/\$60 bucket (They supply clean jars, snips, and buckets). Sunflower and wildflower field admission: \$5. We will meet at Camp Ticonderoga on Rochester Road at **9:30 a.m.** to carpool to the farm. **Bring a bag lunch.**

You can even buy a delicious, home-made ice cream sandwich

cookie from the farm stand. Any questions contact **Tina Battle** at (248) 990-2049 or [tinambattle@gmail.com](mailto:tinambattle@gmail.com).



### Sunshine/Rain with Pat Dodge

The warmer weather has generated a lot of enthusiasm for seeing several gardens and points of interest around Michigan. Here are just a few of the great ideas that were presented: **Jim Goldner-Judson Center** (by Judy Popyk); the **Peony Gardens in Ann Arbor** (by Bev Hydo); **The Kellogg Manor and Gardens**; **Dow Gardens, Whiting Forest and Dalia Hill**; and the **Holland Tulip Festival**. If you been to any of these places, know the best month to visit, have suggestions, or would like to help co-organize any of these activities, please contact me.

On a sad note, former member, **Olga Stevens**, passed away last month at 89. In her younger days Olga was an active charter member who served as vice president and chairwoman of several garden walks. Also last month we lost former member **Carolyn Simmons**. Carolyn was a member of the Herb Study group, and both she and her Husband **Carl** (who passed away last July) were long time members. You may remember Carl from "*Carl's Helpful Hints*" in our newsletter. They will all be missed.



**Speaker Series** by Rebecca Jaye

**Dr. David Michener** of UofM's *Matthaei Botanical Gardens* was delightful as he informed us with enthusiasm and humor about historic peony collections and the plight of peonies worldwide.

**Moving on to April:** **Annette Ferris**, *English Gardens "Queen of Hydrangeas"* will impart her knowledge of same on April 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Garden Walk Series**

with Dave Becker

**The Continuing Saga...**

Well, here we are in March/April, with the weather teasing us: 65 degrees one day and 25 the next. I've spent most of the month tackling some simple tasks around the garden. I cut back the honeysuckle vine/tree and managed to fill three trash cans in the process. I also raked the remaining fall leaves and removed thatch from the front yard. Toward the end of the month, when the forsythia begins to show signs of life, I plan to start cutting back and fertilizing the Panicle Hydrangeas and roses. I'm really chomping at the bit to get out there and clear the flower beds, but I know that as soon as I do, another cold snap will come along and harm the emerging plants. So, for the time being, I'll let them remain tucked under their winter blanket a little while longer.



**Troy Historic Village Gardens**

**April Opening Day**

Karol Carter & Patrick Hardy



We hope you have been scurrying around locating your sharpened gardening tools and the missing mate to your favorite gardening glove. There are a limited number of tools (mostly rakes) in a shed located just west of the Caswell House. The TGC will provide yard waste bags. When full, deposit by the dumpster in the main parking lot. Because school groups will be visiting the THV, please make sure tools are placed where they will not be a tripping hazard. **When: Wed., April 1<sup>st</sup>, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.** Flexibility within these scheduled hours is fine. **Parking:** Park in the smaller lot east of the main building OR on Lange Street, which is the first E/W running street north of Wattles. The back gate will be open as will the smaller east lot gate. **Sign-in sheet:** Will be located near the gazebo. If you have a favorite garden, then head there. If no preference, you will be directed to one. This activity is weather dependent. If it is raining or very cold, we will not garden. **Though you may consider yourself a novice, please come!** You could fill and dispose of yard waste bags, sweep the sidewalk areas or hang out with members and pick up some gardening tips. Verify the assignment with your garden captain before you start pulling or pruning. When you have completed your work at one garden, you are encouraged to visit another to offer your help. This is a great way to get to know our membership. **AND we need your help!** Please take the time to read the article from THV volunteer coordinator, Barbara Hubbard regarding **GUIDELINES** for all volunteers at the Village (*last page*). The article has been summarized by our previous newsletter editor. If you are coming to garden on a day other than our monthly Wednesday, TGC day, please sign in at the main building and remember to sign out

## April Mulching at the Troy Historic Village

*Karol Carter & Partick Hardy*

Longing for outdoor time, a “little” exercise and the opportunity to experience the “garden” part of the TGC? Join **TEAM MULCH 2026** for our biennial event. Help us spread much needed “premium” mulch on the THV garden beds. The work dates are: **Saturday, April 18, 10am – noon,\* Tuesday, April 21\*** and possibly **Thursday April 23.\*** Work time begins at 2:30 p.m. to allow Troy High School students to help us. The 4/18 date will focus on the northern located beds. The 2<sup>nd</sup> delivery will be dropped at the front of the THV for our front beds. If you have teenage grandkids looking for acknowledged volunteer service hours, please encourage them. Adults are welcome too. We could also use someone to check in our volunteers each day and disperse them to areas of need. Please contact me if you can help and copy to Patrick Hardy. Provide me with the dates you would be available plus the names of any recruits you are bringing and a contact phone number or email. **Equipment:** If possible, bring a shovel, pitchfork and/or heavy-duty rake to spread the mulch. Put your name on your tools. Good mulch smells like cut wood. Sour mulch smells like vinegar, ammonia, or just unpleasant. Low oxygen levels plus moisture create the problems. Spreading the volume out between two deliveries will help. The odor issue resolves in a couple of days. Bring a mask if you think odor will bother you. **My contact info:** *karolv@tgc.org* or 248-854-3728. Patrick email: *paleha52@yahoo.com* or 248-571-8558. **\*Dates are totally weather dependent**

## Herb Study

*with Kay Betke*



For our March 19<sup>th</sup> meeting the group went to the **Rose Brunch House** to have brunch. The Rose Brunch House is a newer restaurant in Shelby Township located on Van Dyke, a little north of 21 Mile Road. There were 14 in attendance plus one of our former speakers, **Olivia Fuller**. Conversations flowed about many gardening tips. Next month we will be going to *Detroit Daffodil Day*.

## Hospitality

*Jackie Wilson & Cindi O'Neil*



TGC members have signed up as indicated below. Please arrive by **11:45 a.m.** with your food item already prepared for 20 people and be sure to provide a serving utensil for your food item. **Finger Food:** Judy Popyk, Mary Stout, Nancy Zambardi, Joan Burcar, Nancy Wietchy, Marilyn Frey, Becky Thornton; **Green Salad:** Pat Guibord; **Pasta Salad:** Bill Waggoner, Joanie Ugelow; **Fruit Salad:** Sara Merchawi, Darlene Eckhout; **Dessert:** Pat Brown, Judy Francis, Frances Stage, Tina Battle, Stacy Wdowik; **Cleanup:** Denise Karry; **Centerpiece:** Deb Hancock. *Reminder to members to 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.*

*Keep Smiling!*

## Ways & Means



*with Judi Milidrag*

Fundraising at our March general meeting could not have gone better and was only possible because so many members (veterans & newbies alike) stepped up to get involved! Volunteering is essential for an organization to survive and thrive! Our combined efforts resulted in proceeds of **\$306** from ticket sales; coupled with an extra **\$125** from our “silent auction” of the beautifully “reimagined” chair donated by Lisa Derderian; and lastly an anonymous donation of **\$100** by a generous member—taking us to a grand total of **\$531**. Kudos to all—and just a heads up that our next fundraiser is set for our May general meeting with a theme to be decided soon. Your ideas on all fronts are appreciated! *Stay tuned for the next great Ways and Means Event!*

## Tools of the Trade



**Dave Becker** gave a spirited and informative seminar on garden tool maintenance at the *Troy Public Library* in association with the Herb Study Group on the 18th. Several of us suffered from ‘tool shaming’ but we’ve now learned the error of our ways. It appears that one of us headed to Lowes to pick up some much-needed supplies. Dave’s grandfather, who instilled in him tool responsibility, would have been proud.



## Market with Lisa Derderian



The ***Emerald Lakes Village*** will be having a ***Makers Market*** held on **Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>** and **Sunday the 26<sup>th</sup> noon to 4:00 p.m.** on **Walker Beach** which is located on **Sandshores**. I will have some painted furniture and glassware as well as my blank note cards for all occasions along with coffee cakes and some other creative items. Come by to say hello! (See first page for Member Profile)

### 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/JoAnn Preston  
**Greeters:** Nancy Witchy  
**Herb Study Group & Directory:** Kay Betke/Kyla Remus  
**Horticulture:** Jennifer Goldstein  
**Hospitality:** Jackie Wilson & Cindi O’Neill  
**Membership:** Beverly Hydo  
**Newsletter:** Patrick Hardy  
**Sunshine & Rainy Days:** Pat Dodge  
**THV Gardens:** Karol Carter/Patrick Hardy

## Community Outreach

with JoAnn Preston and Bill Waggoner  
**Spring Egg Hunt Wrap Up**



“This little seed of mine, I’m going to let it grow.” So it was that our team of TGC members assembled 350 packages of bean seeds to be handed out to little Spring hunters at THV on March 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>. **Tina Battle, Ann Britton, Karol Carter, Becky Crocker, Debe Hancock, JoAnn Preston and Bill Waggoner** discussed, if not solved, some of the world’s problems while anticipating the joy of little kids planting and nurturing their first gardening experience. Thank you also to the teams of Spring Egg Hunt workers. If you have or find extra coin/seed envelopes for next year, you may donate them at any time. **On to: Perennial Plant Exchange!**

Spring is **really here** because it is time for gardeners who have found an overabundance of some plants to dig them up and bring them to the **Perennial Plant Exchange** on **Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>** to trade for some new colors, new shapes, new plants. I know some gardeners just bring their extras to share with others; some have lost a tree and have morphed from shade garden to full sun and need some new stars in their plantings. **Free compost: Bring your own containers.** This year we are back in the **Troy Family Aquatic Center (TFAC) parking lot** next to the tennis bubble in the Civic Center complex. While we officially start at 10:00 a.m., many arrive early, so please check your shift time. **Sign-up sheets await you at the April General Meeting.** There is overlap so the first shift can orient the second. While we close at noon, there is cleanup time allowed. **Remember, we operate rain or shine so dress accordingly.**



## The Other Bees

by Onita Fritz



We all love the honey bees for what they can give us and what they do for our plants. But, as many of us know, the **native bees** actually do about 70% of the pollinating (one source said 60 – 90%). So in order to grow all the flowers we like and for the farmers to grow all the food that we need, we can do our part in taking care of these little creatures. They prefer to feed on...you guessed it...native flowers. We can tuck these in among flowers that come from other countries or our hybrids that don't produce pollen. And then we need to protect where they live. The majority live in the soil by burrowing very small holes to lay their eggs and protect themselves. You can provide space for this by leaving some soil totally uncovered. Tuck it behind some plants where it is not seen from the doorway or a walkway. And then there are bees that live and lay eggs in hollow tubes...plant stems left standing over winter...or holes in logs. A handy drill can create some of these holes for them, or let the Carpenter ants drill their own. Some of us have “bee houses.” Put them in the sun and take them into the garage over the winter. Most native bees are solitary and non-aggressive. An important point: How to tell a **bee** from a **wasp**. A quick way is to notice that bees have two sets of wings and wasps have only one, and a wasp has a very skinny mid-section. Bees tend to be a little fuller at the middle, especially honeybees and bumblebees. Good websites for more information about native bees are ***pollinators.msu.edu*** and, of course, ***Rochester Pollinators***, and on YouTube: ***Native bees of Michigan*** with *Dr. Rebecca Tonietto*, of Michigan State University.

## Gardening and All That Jazz – Designing a Better World

with Sally Bolle



How would you like to go to a daytime gardening affair that features four of the finest speakers in the country who fly in just to increase your gardening knowledge? This is the most educational, fun and fast-paced day you can imagine. The **Master Gardener Society of Oakland County** is hosting our 12th Annual Education Conference which is open to gardeners of all skill levels. Our four nationally known garden speakers/authors are impressive. **Alan Branhagen, Carol Reese, Jack Barnwell** and **Page Dickey** will present the latest and best horticultural information, and three of the speakers will be selling and signing their books that day. Our conference is located at **The Oakland Center at Oakland University**. In addition to education, we'll offer refreshments in the a.m., lunch and refreshments throughout the day as well as shopping at our outstanding garden market of 20 vendors. We have fantastic door prize drawings all day long, and grand raffle prizes at the finish. As always, we have live jazz during lunch – thus, **Gardening and ALL THAT JAZZ!** To learn more about our speakers and purchase your ticket, visit the Master Gardener Society of Oakland County website: <https://mgsoc.org/educational-conference>. There you may download a 2-page registration form to mail in a check for your payment (\$95), or sign up on Eventbrite using a credit card (\$8 more). Please note that on **Eventbrite**, you will purchase a ticket for the conference and will also need to make a luncheon selection.

**Saturday, April 25, 2026**

**7:30 a.m.– 4:45 p.m.**



## A Hard Lesson from My Own Garden Mistake



For years, I proudly welcomed praying mantises into my garden. Like many gardeners, I saw them as gift-free, natural pest control. I encouraged their presence by leaving egg cases undisturbed and accepting a few extras from a friend's yard. We both believed we were helping create a healthy, balanced ecosystem. But after attending the **Wildflower**

**Association of Michigan Native Plant Conference**, I've completely rethought that assumption. It turns out the mantises I had been fostering were **not** native or helpful. They were non-native, Asian species that grow to 3-6" long which is up to triple the size of the rarely seen native Carolina mantis that are 2-2.5" long. Besides the size at maturity, the way to distinguish if you have a bad guy or not is the length of their wings. The wings of the Asian/Chinese Mantis extend the full length of the abdomen or even slightly past it. They are far from the gentle "garden helpers" I imagined. These mantises are aggressive, indiscriminate predators. They lie in wait on top of a heavily pollinated flower and with a lightning-fast strike, they seize their prey and trap it between their spiked front legs with a death grip. Unfortunately, they don't just eat garden pests. They also prey on beneficial insects, and because of their large size they grab butterflies, bumblebees and even hummingbirds! Learning this was genuinely unsettling. I put so much effort into attracting pollinators to my garden—planting native flowers, creating habitat, and avoiding pesticides—only to realize I had also been supporting a predator that was harming them! In hindsight, I should have recognized the problem sooner. Last summer, I witnessed a mantis in my own garden eating a large bumblebee (*right*). Even then, I dismissed it, holding onto the belief that mantises were "the good guys." That moment now stands out as a missed opportunity to question what I thought I knew.



Since the conference, I've taken a closer look at my garden. It was just 3 or 4 years ago that I saw the first weird looking egg case, and at that time I had to research to find out what it was. So now, a few years later, this March, I went searching for mantis egg cases (*oothecae*) and was shocked to find sixteen of them! Armed with new knowledge—and guidance from keynote speaker **Douglas Tallamy**—I removed and destroyed them. Recommended methods include freezing, crushing, or burning. It's important not to compost them or dispose of them in yard waste, as they can continue to hatch and spread.



This experience has been a humbling reminder that not all "beneficial" insects are beneficial in the larger ecological picture. As gardeners, we're always learning, and sometimes that means revisiting long-held assumptions. In Michigan, zone 6, the nymphs emerge from their overwintered egg cases in late May or early June when we have consistent 70° temperatures. So now, along with your Easter Egg hunt, be on the lookout for these egg cases!

As I am giving more consideration to what it takes to support the native ecosystem in my garden, I need to make careful and thoughtful choices—even if it includes difficult ones. Let's continue together to be curious and share information as we stay informed so we can make decisions that truly benefit the balance we're trying to create. Be sure to give me your tally of destroyed egg cases this year. Who will beat my sixteen?

## Guidelines for Volunteers at the Troy Historic Village

“Thank you so much for the Troy Garden Club’s many years of labor and love spent in the gardens at the Troy Historic Village (THV). Every single year we get SO many compliments on the gardens, and we agree – we think they’re phenomenal! In hopes of making our partnership even stronger, we want to go over a few guidelines that all volunteers at the Village follow to make sure that everything is safe and fun.”

The document’s following six points maintain their headings below, but the information is somewhat condensed & summarized:

### 1. **Check-in Process:**

- a. Always notify the Troy Historic Village (THV) of your arrival & presence.
- b. On an official Work Day, you should check in with the Troy Garden Club (TGC) organizer.
- c. On any other day or time, sign our volunteer whiteboard in the kitchen.
- d. Upon leaving, stop in the building to notify us of your departure, or call the Village at 248-524-3570 & request the removal of your name from the whiteboard.

### 2. **If you have concerns/questions** with how things are managed or operated at the Village, *in a non-emergency situation*, please speak with the TGC site leaders, who then will talk directly with the THV Volunteer Coordinator or the THV Director.

### 3. **In an emergency** (anything more than a band aid), notify any THV staff member in person or by calling the building at 248-524-3570. The THV staff will take over from there. Other emergencies (severe weather, fires, active shooter, etc.): THV staff will notify site leader by phone or in person & give further instruction. The TGC site leader will notify all other TGC members on site about the instructions. In general: the main building (large red brick building facing Wattles) will always have at least one THV staff member inside and will likely be your primary safety location.

### 4. **Gate Policy:** All guests visiting the Village must check in at the main desk inside the main building. While working in the gardens, you may need to bring things inside or take them outside through the main gate. **It is very important for the gate to close each time.** Visitors may notice you walking in and out. If they follow you, please direct them to the main building to check in. Also, please help each other and us by making sure the gate stays closed. A gate left wide open is a safety concern.

### 5. **Interaction with Visitors:** Please remember that your interaction with visitors reflects on the Troy Historic Village. When interacting with guests, they cannot tell the difference between a TGC member and a THV staff member. When in doubt, kindly send guests to the main building where a THV staff member will be happy to greet them.

### 6. **Drugs / Alcohol / Smoking / Firearms:** The Troy Historic Village has a zero-tolerance policy for drugs, alcohol, smoking and firearms. If a volunteer is found with the above items, a Troy Historical Society staff member will ask the offender to leave immediately. A formal meeting with the Troy Garden Club and the Troy Historical Society leadership will follow.

Troy Garden Club – Founded in 1971

Website: [www.TroyGardenClubMI.com](http://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