



May 2026 Newsletter

William Kent: Garden as though you will live forever.

MEMBER PROFILE: Denise Karry

Member since 2024, **Denise Karry** has been married for 52 years. She and her husband Bruce built their home in Troy 37 years ago on a half-acre lot adjacent to a park where they raised their two girls. She enjoys traveling and when her oldest daughter joined the Air Force after graduation they traveled to England, Germany, Egypt and Guam to visit her. The couple is involved in the entertainment industry and Bruce's band "**MERGE**" plays locally. Denise has been active in the THV gardens and has enlisted sponsors for the GW in 2025 and again this year. "I have met interesting people and gotten some good recipes from them. I like to cook...about the closest thing to a hobby. I won't call myself a gardener, I just like to be outside and play in the dirt." What road led her to the TGC? Not a road, actually, but her neighbor, long-time member **Yolanda Tenorio-Thomas** who says: "Denise is a kind and caring neighbor who is always willing to lend a helping hand. She so enjoys her gardening."



President's Message by Karol Carter

Our Financial Story: Main sources of income include our membership dues, guest fees, our 2-3 Ways & Means events and our principal fundraiser, the Troy Garden Walk. None of these guarantee a set amount of income. Membership and guest numbers vary yearly. Our Ways & Means participation is entirely voluntary and it is intended to be an enjoyable activity. Success is based on members willingness to donate items, or purchase tickets to win an item or doing both! Per our bylaws, **85%** of our garden walk net proceeds must be distributed as donations to non-profit organizations nominated by members and approved by vote of the board of directors. The remaining 15% goes to general operating expenses. **Jeanne Bolcer** dedicates many hours to her position as TGC treasurer, a role she has held for 9 or 10 years. Review her monthly reports and if you have questions, contact her. It will soon be time to begin promoting our July 8th garden walk by encouraging others to buy a ticket to view the gardens or to stop by the Troy Historic Village to visit our vendors and plant sale. **As a TGC member and participant working a shift, you will receive a complimentary ticket.** Please consider supporting the businesses who have agreed to sell our garden walk tickets or the local restaurants who offer ticket holders discounts on garden walk day. Tell them you are a TGC member and appreciate their willingness to help our organization. You will also see a section of our ticket acknowledging businesses or individuals who have sponsored our garden walk with a donation of \$100 or more; support them too if appropriate!

Calendar/May

May 6/9:30 a.m.: Gardening/Troy Historic Village

May 13, Wednesday/11:30 a.m.: General Meeting/Luncheon

May 20, Wednesday: Herb Study Group

May 27, Wednesday/11:00 a.m.: Garden Walk Meeting/Niles-Barnard House. **ALL WELCOME**

May 27, 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 20th.



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. (Note: **The meeting will begin promptly at 12:00**)*

Finger Food: Gail Kobal, Onita Fitz, Kimberlee Urwiller, Cindi Yosin, Becky Crocker, Nancy Schleicher, Dokeen Alpert; **Green Salad:** Karen Gray, Norma Frame; **Pasta Salad:** Jeanne Bolcer, Mary Stout; **Fruit Salad:** Denise Karry, Marianne Stout; **Dessert:** Karen Cox, Nancy Wietchy, Cathy Rohlman, Marcia Mayer; **Cleanup:** Open; **Centerpiece:** Open. *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!

Herb Study

with Kay Betke



For our March 18th Herb Meeting, **Dave Becker** did a presentation on tool maintenance. Our group invited anyone from the garden club to join us at the Troy Public Library for this presentation. Some tips on taking care of your garden tools are as follows: Use a wire brush to clean off most of the dirt. Sandpaper can be used to remove rust. Steel wool is helpful if a tool is pitted. Cover the steel wool with 3 & 1 oil and rub generously on the tool. Wipe with a rag and the tool will look like new. It is much easier to dig with a shovel or trowel that has been cleaned and oiled. Never push your tool to do a job that it was not designed to do. *(Apologies for running an older article last month!)*

After the presentation the Herbies made plans for the remainder of the year. Because Daffodil Day falls on our April meeting date, we met at Kay Betke's house on April 29. A report on Cilantro was made by Kimberlee Urwiller. The group repainted some of the Herb stones that needed refurbishing. The May 20th meeting will be held at the **Pink Lady Tea Room** in New Baltimore.



Mary Becker
5/5



Cindi O'Neil
5/7



Barb Lepri
5/13



Becky Thornton
5/19



Frances Stage
5/25



Cyndi Yosin
5/30



Yolanda Tonario-Thomas
5/30

Garden Walk Series

with Dave Becker

The Continuing Saga...

April in the garden has officially begun and, apparently, so has my annual attempt to outwork my own stamina.

So far, I've cut back and fed the paniculata hydrangeas; given the roses their spring haircut and breakfast; and planted pansies like I'm trying to impress the neighborhood judges (there are no judges...but still). The perennials are starting to poke through the leaf cover like, "Oh good, you're finally awake." I even built a proper support frame for the peonies, because last year they flopped over like they'd had one too many at a garden party. Not this year they will stand tall...or at least lean with dignity. Next up: the final bed cleanup and taking down the "perimeter security fencing" around the perennial beds. (This was mainly to keep critters out, though I suspect they viewed it more as a mild suggestion than a rule.) Meanwhile, the lawn has started complaining loudly, so I've begun seeding and fertilizing in an effort to quiet it down. I've also spent over \$80 on bulbs and tubers, which felt very reasonable at the time and slightly less reasonable when I got home. They'll be going in as soon as remember where I planned to put them. In a bold strategic move, I relocated the bird feeder to outsmart the squirrels. Early results suggest the squirrels are not only smarter than me, but possibly organized. Despite all this progress, I've come to a sobering realization: I don't quite have the stamina I used to. I now find myself, as my grandpa would say, "taking a blow," which sounds tough, but mostly involves me standing still, hands on my hips, pretending I'm surveying the garden when I'm actually just catching my breath.

Still there's no time to waste. **The garden walk is only three months away!** In truth, I'm somewhat haunted by the possibility that visitors will think this all just happened effortlessly. All right, back to work, after one more completely strategic, definitely necessary "blow."



Community Outreach

with JoAnn Preston

Perennial Plant Exchange

May 16: 10:00 a.m.-12 Noon

Thank you to all the wonderful members who signed up for May 16 Perennial Plant Exchange help. The following areas still have openings and I hope **YOU** will check your calendar before the May meeting to sign up or even better (keep my blood pressure under control) by emailing me at jakpre24@msn.com. Openings are:

Direct Traffic: 9:00-10:30 a.m.

Master Gardener: 9:30-10:30 a.m. AND 10:30- Noon

Greeter/Host/prize sign up/clean up: 11:00-12:30 p.m.

We will all be working together. You will not be "left on your own" even at the orphan table. Come join the fun of sharing plants, telling planting success stories, repeating gardening nightmares and the fun of new friendships. Remember to dress for the weather rain or shine and feel free to bring some of your overachieving perennials -disease and pest free -to trade. Including a label with sun or shade, color of bloom, name always is helpful for folks making the first acquaintance with your plants.

May 13th Ways and Means

with Yolanda Tenorio-Thomas



Get ready for an exciting raffle you won't want to miss! We're bringing together a beautiful collection of your donated gently used jewelry, purses, scarves and trinkets. With these items in good condition you can refresh your wardrobe, find a unique accessory or gift for someone. Each item is selected ensuring the charm you are looking for this season. Every winning ticket is a chance to win something special. Join the fun while supporting the *Ways and Means* event. We are looking for donations of jewelry, scarves, purses, jewelry holders, and related items. **Please arrive by 11:15 a.m.** with your items in a box or bag. We could use a few boutique bags to send home items. **Also looking for a few volunteers to help me set up the raffle!**

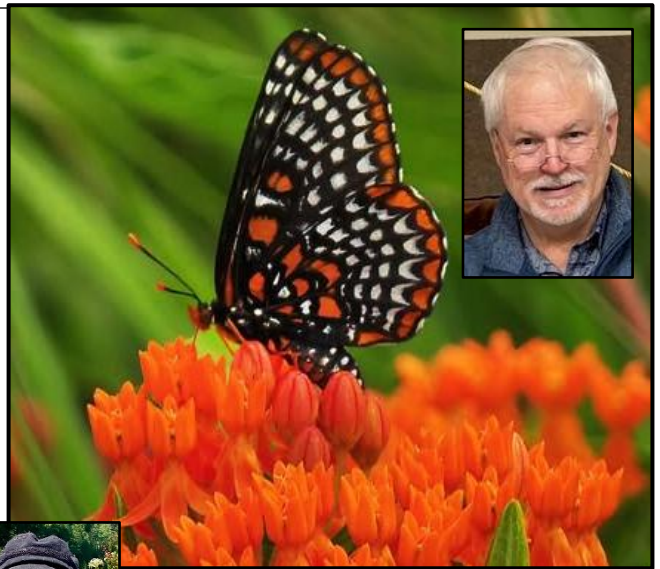


Speaker Series by Rebecca Jaye

Annette Ferris of *English Gardens* presented an excellent overview of Hydrangeas that grow best in Michigan. She shared her knowledge of selecting planting locations, techniques, watering, and pruning tips to keep our hydrangeas blooming from season to season.



Moving on to May: On the 13th **John Blair** will present Part II of his prairie adventure with “*How to Make a Butterfly Garden.*” John’s a brilliant speaker!



Horticulture Corner

Jennifer Goldstein

At our April meeting, we were delighted to welcome **Annette Ferris** of English Gardens—fondly known as the “*Queen of Hydrangeas.*” Her expertise inspired many of us to look at these beautiful blooms in a whole new way. Building on her theme, here are a few practical tips to revive wilted hydrangeas, extend their vase life, and even preserve them for future enjoyment. As Annette reminded us, “hydro” means water—and hydrangeas are famously thirsty. This is just as true for cut flowers as it is for plants in the garden. If your fresh-cut hydrangeas start to droop, don’t worry, there are two simple and effective revival methods.

The first is the hot water treatment. **Start by re-cutting each stem at a 45-degree angle**, ideally underwater to prevent air bubbles. Then dip the bottom 1–2 inches of the stems into very hot (but not boiling) water for about 30–60 seconds. Immediately transfer the flowers to a vase of fresh, room-temperature water. You can also lightly mist the blooms, since hydrangeas absorb moisture through their petals. Within a few hours, you should see them perk up again. This works because the heat dissolves sap that can block water uptake. If that doesn’t do the trick, try the full submersion method. Fill a sink or tub with cool water, trim the stems again, and submerge the entire flower—blooms and all—for 30 minutes to 2 hours. This deeply rehydrates the plant and is often remarkably effective. To keep hydrangeas looking their best, change the water daily, trim stems regularly, remove submerged leaves, and keep arrangements out of direct sun. With proper care, your blooms can last up to 10 days—or even longer! Hydrangeas aren’t just beautiful in the garden—they also make wonderful materials for creative projects that can last long after the growing season. With a few simple techniques, you can preserve their color and shape for crafts and décor. **There are four easy drying methods to try.** Air drying is perfect for a rustic, vintage look. **Simply cut slightly mature blooms, remove leaves, and hang them upside down in a dry, dark space for a few weeks.** Water drying is the easiest method and helps retain more color—just place stems in a vase with a small amount of water and let it slowly evaporate. For more detailed crafts, silica gel drying produces the most vibrant, professional-looking results by preserving both color and structure. Finally, pressing works well for flat projects like cards and framed art. Once dried, hydrangeas can be used in a variety of ways. They’re lovely in wreaths, arrangements, and seasonal displays, and are popular in candles, soaps (for decoration only), and resin jewelry. Petals can even be used as natural dye or eco-friendly confetti. For best results, harvest blooms when slightly mature, avoid humidity, and store dried flowers out of direct sunlight. With proper care, your hydrangeas can last for months—or even years—bringing lasting beauty to your home and handmade creations. **Gardeners should note that Hydrangeas contain compounds that can release CYANIDE if ingested. For this reason they should never be used in ANY consumable product!**

Pollinators and More

Pat Dodge



'Insects, Birds and Man' what do we all have in common? Most gardeners know that we need the insects to pollinate our flowers, but did you ever stop to think that they also pollinate our crops and without them the quality and quantity of our food source would dwindle? Bees alone pollinate 1/3 of our crops. But you say *"those bee, mosquito and insect bites are so annoying."* Have we disrupted the balance of nature? The massive decline in our birds and insects is proof that the idea of our traditional lawns and yards is not working. Bats, who eat 300 times their own body weight in insects a day, and our birds, have no food to eat. Think about it, when we were kids and we drove at night, our car windshields would get splattered with bugs, now you rarely find the need to clean them off. According to *U.S. Fish and Wildlife*, in 2023 alone 21 species of birds have gone extinct in North America. Their food, the insects, have no place to live and are being killed by chemicals. What can we do as gardeners right now? Here are few ways:

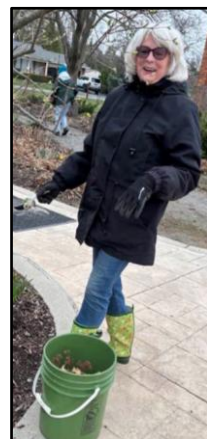
- Please resist the urge to get out into your gardens and clean up your winter leaf litter until **after** we have had at least 7 or more consecutive days of 50° weather. Many insects overwinter in the stems and leaves left on the ground.
- **Evaluate your yard:** Remove invasive plants and think of ways you can reduce the unproductive grass that uses water and chemicals and replace it with native plants that provide food for the pollinators.
- **Change your outdoor white lights to yellow bug lights.** White lights confuse and disrupt the mating patterns of insects.
- Stop spraying for insects and look into making an easy Mosquitoes Bomb.
- Plant an Oak tree and mulch around it.
- Read about and join the '*Home Grown National Park*' initiative.

So, what do insects, birds and man all have in common? We are all connected and we must do our part to sustain our planet. Spread the word!

Troy Historic Village Gardening April 2026

Karol Carter & Patrick Hardy

Our April 1st gardening day could be best described as **COLD** with winter refusing to pack and leave! Our hardy (*no pun intended*) twelve gardeners were greeted by smiling daffodils and it was good to be back in the gardens. **Denise Kerry** brought her battery powered trimmer and leaf blower, plus spare batteries. She roamed through the village buzzing through the *Karl Foester grasses* and *Russian sage* in a blink. We volunteered 23 service hours. **May 6th** we gather again. Park in the small east lot or on Lange Street, the first east-west running road north of the village. **Remember to sign in and OUT on our volunteer log!**





Garden Walk Plant Sale 2026

Karol Carter & Patrick Hardy



Garden Walk Plant Sale Facts: Every year, thanks to your efforts, our one-day plant sale continues to thrive. Last year, with the plant donations of our membership, our net sales were \$1,800. Day of sale weather is a contributing factor, BUT it really is all about those homegrown plants! Our membership has always been willing to share their interesting, healthy and attractive plants. Equally important, you have taken the time to carefully pot and nurture them until garden walk day. They are staged in an eye appealing way. Will we do as well in 2026? The only certainty is that we KNOW the membership will provide us with irresistible plants. Please begin to explore your garden for sale possibilities!

Plant Sale Specimen Guidelines:

- We welcome and sell all types of plants – cactus, succulents, small shrubs, vines, perennials and grasses. ***Your donations should be non-invasive and something you would purchase at a plant sale.*** Historically, common green hosta, common daylilies, and black-eyed Susans or house plants have not sold well.
- Garden tools, decorative pots, statuary, trellises and other attractive garden items in sellable shape.
- ***Plants that are in bloom are very popular.*** By July bee balm, cone flower, daisies and colored- leaf hosta will be attractive.
- ***Plants should be potted up early*** so they have a chance to recover from the shock of repotting. They look wilted for several days after potting.
- ***Potting medium*** - light weight, such as potting soil or compost. Fill the pots half full, enough to cover the roots and provide support. Fertilize and water them regularly so they look great on garden walk day.
- ***Labeling is Important: provide the name of the plant, sun or shade requirement and color of bloom if appropriate.*** Labels can be made from venetian blinds, plastic knives, craft sticks or typed label in zip lock bag attached with a clothespin. Be sure to use a water proof ink.
- ***Consider creating a container arrangement***, it doesn't need to be large. ***Make sure the container has a drainage hole.***

If you don't feel you have worthy plants to donate, consider purchasing a plant or hanging basket to donate. By July, plants are marked down at most garden centers.

There will be no presale of plants on Tuesday, July 7th. Club members and the public will have the opportunity to purchase on Wednesday, July 8th.

Instructions for plant drop off on July 7th will appear in subsequent newsletters.

POTS NEEDED: If you have any additional pots you would like to share with members who are repotting for our walk, ***please bring to our JUNE 10th meeting. Sizes 4" or larger are best. Please leave them on the table located outside the church entrance. Do not bring inside the meeting room.***



FREE BASKET RAFFLE AT OUR 51st GARDEN WAL

with Judi Milidrag

If you were able to attend the club’s April general meeting, you received a brief overview from Barb Lepri about this year’s **FREE Basket Raffle** to be held at the Troy Historic Village on Walk Day 2026! To remind members why we refer to it as a *FREE Raffle*—it is because raffle tickets are **EARNED** by all who visit gardens with their Walk ticket **AND** by all who purchase from our abundant plant sale and from the over 14 vendors on site that day at the Village. Tickets are completed with name and phone number and dropped into the receptacle or receptacles for the basket(s) they wish to win! The three basket themes for this year’s event are: (1) **Out in the Garden**; (2) **All Things Bright & Beautiful**; and (3) **Fabulous Finds** —and the success of this year’s raffle depends on members donating small to medium new and/or like-new beautiful, colorful and imaginative items within these themes mentioned! Please use your imagination and bring your donations in boxes or bags to the May general meeting to deposit on the table back in the corner behind the sign-in table upon your arrival. **Call Judi Milidrag with any questions!**

2026 Garden Walk Sponsorships Update

Karol Carter

Thank you to our members who contacted businesses or individuals to sponsor our walk. This year we have 14 sponsors and as of April 10th, \$2,100 has been received. That amount will grow with a matching grant. Thank you to **Jeanne Bolcer** for sending acknowledgement letters to each sponsor. We gained a new sponsor and for the 17th year, *MK Private Wealth Management* (new name) is a patron.

MK Private Wealth
Merrill Private Wealth Management

REMINDER: Field Trip to Ankley Family Farm – August 19, 2026, 6767 Clear Lake Rd., Imlay City, MI

On Wednesday, 8/19 we’re taking a field trip to the *Ankley Family Farm* to make bouquets from the u-cut flower field, walk through the wildflower & sunflower trail, and purchase farm fresh produce and locally-sourced items. Joe Ankley will give a tour of the gardens and quick bouquet building recommendations. We will meet at **Camp Ticonderoga on Rochester Road at 9:30 a.m.** to carpool. Bring a bag lunch. There will be a sign-up sheet for the field trip at the May and June meetings. Any questions contact **Tina Battle** at (248) 990-2049 or tinambattle@gmail.com.



WINNER TAKES ALL!

Pictured left is **Laura McDonald**, one of last year’s Garden Walk Free Raffle winners. She was so excited after winning this treasure trove that as soon as she arrived home she texted this photo and her thanks to Judi Milidrag. While not a member of the Troy Garden Club, Laura does volunteer in the gardens at St. Anastasia so is a familiar face to a number of our members. A former Troy resident she now resides in Rochester Hills...very near a potential 2027 garden! Or could it be two?!



Lisa Derdarian, Tina Battle, Bill Waggoner, Fran Stage



Bill W., Nancy Zambardi, Cathy Rohlman



Becky Crocker, Kayla Remus, Ann Britton

Easter at the Troy Historic Village

From the *Troy Times*: "Members of the Troy Garden Club handed out seed packets and candy to the kids. The club handles gardening and landscaping for the Village. Some families were more excited about the seeds than the candy. "I was surprised (so many families) did not take the candy," said **Tina Battle**, a member of the Troy Garden Club. "The parents said, 'Uh, no candy,' and that's fine...but the kids were (still) very excited. I think they're really in tune with nature, which I thought is kind of cool."

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

Garden Walk Sign-Up – Wednesday May 13, 2026

Members: The Garden Walk sign up sheets will again be available for those who have not signed up for a shift or choose to sign up for a second shift. We urgently need members to sign up for garden guards and the 5:00 to 8:30 p.m. shifts at a couple of the homes. It is optional to volunteer for a second garden. **Volunteering for two shifts will make it possible for you to attend the club's garden pre-walk in June.**

According to the TGC by-laws, members are required to volunteer for at least one garden walk shift and/or plant sale shift. Members who do not volunteer for at least one shift must contribute a \$20 non-participation fee.

Jackie Wilson
TGC Home Head Hostess



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