



August 2026 Newsletter

"A garden is not a place. It's a journey."

Monty Don

President's Message

by Karol Carter

"How Does Your Garden Grow?"

Having just survived the third official heat wave of the summer, my plants are screaming "enough!" Living in a condo, my backyard has limited space. The three or four bee balm purchased a number of years ago at our garden walk plant sale have galloped. I am barely tolerating their boldness. But when I spot their flowers covered with bees of all sizes, the now fewer-in-number butterflies, the occasional hummingbird moth or hummingbird, all is good. The lovely showstopper lily was gifted to me several years ago from a member who had to move out of state. She was a lily-holic and had many gorgeous specimens. Some of you may remember Gerry Young.

The garden walk may be over but we need your help finding gardens for 2027.

If something grabs your attention jot down the address and follow the instructions found in Judi Milidrag's August newsletter article. I am looking forward to our field trip to **Ankley Family Farm** on **August 19th** organized by **Tina Battle**. Enjoy the remaining weeks of summer and your own gardens.



Calendar/August 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Judy Francis 
2	3 Nancy Cardon 	4	5 9:30 a.m. THV Garden	6	7 Darcel Connors 	8
9	10	11	12	13 Eileen Winkel 	14 Bev Hydo 	15
16	17	18	19 Herb Study Field Trip Ankley Farm 9:30 a.m.	20 Rosemary Kornacki 	21	22
23 30	24  Nancy Wietchy 31	25 Marietta Crabtree 	26 11:00 a.m. Board Meeting	27	28	29 Jacquelyn Cutright 



Field Trip to Ankley Family Farm Wednesday, August 19, 2026

6767 Clear Lake Road, Imlay City, MI

Meet at Camp Ticonderoga on Rochester Road at **9:30 a.m.** to carpool out to the farm. Bring a bag lunch.

Any questions contact **Tina Battle** at (248) 990-2049 or tinambattle@gmail.com.



Speaker Series

by Rebecca Jaye



Mary Gerstenberger will present "Backyard Composting" at the **September 9th** General Meeting. **Come October**, we will have the "Tree Doctor," **Dr. David Roberts**, ready to answer all of your questions.

Hospitality

There is no General Meeting in August, but September will usher in a Club-sponsored lunch...and it's TACOs!



Community Outreach

with JoAnn Preston

Summer Camp with Troy Community Coalition Students

Troy Garden Club's **Community Outreach** takes a variety of forms including a day at summer camp with students hosted by *Troy Community Coalition for Prevention of Drug and Alcohol Abuse*. We bring plants, pots, potting soil and give a 45-minute tutorial on flowers and plants; what they need; and how humans can help, to 44 students in three different age groups up to 6th grade. Some are veteran gardeners having helped dad or grandma since they were little and some are so new to the idea we have to explain which part goes in the soil! It is a true delight to represent YOU and Troy Garden Club to this lively group of eager learners.

I Need Seashells From the Seashore

JoAnn Preston

I know upcoming Labor Day will still be on your mind, but Chairwoman **Debe Hancock** is planning ahead for *Halloween Trick or Treat* at Troy Historic Village. This year's theme is "*Under the Sea*." We would like to have enough clean seashells to allow each child to have a choice of their very own seashell from a variety of sizes and shapes. If you have some you are willing to part with, please bring them to Debi or JoAnn at the **September** meeting. Thank you.



Garden Walk '26 Series

with Dave Becker



Some Final Thoughts...

Well, it's been a couple of weeks since I participated in the Troy Garden Club's Garden Walk. It was an amazing experience, though it required a great deal of planning, hard work, and at times stress. As every gardener knows, you can plan all you want, but nature has a way of reminding you who's really in charge. Deer, rabbits, insects, heat, rain, and plants that don't perform as expected all create their own challenges. Despite that, I truly enjoyed the experience. Anxiety crept in from time to time, but with the support of my wonderful wife and several garden club friends, I persevered. One friend gave me advice I needed to hear: 'stop worrying about everything being perfect. The overall design and planting were beautiful, and visitors weren't going to notice a weed or two.' Now that it's over, I would encourage anyone considering a future garden walk to jump-in and enjoy the experience. The only thing you won't control is the weather, and that's true for every gardener. The visitors were wonderful. They offered generous compliments, asked thoughtful questions, and clearly appreciated the time and effort that went into the garden. Watching people pause to admire a favorite flower, ask about a particular plant, or simply enjoy the peaceful setting made all the work worthwhile. Looking back, I realize that the Garden Walk was never really about perfection. It was about neighbors opening their gardens, gardeners encouraging one another, and visitors sharing in the beauty that grows when people come together. In the end, the weeds, weather, and the imperfections mattered far less than the joy of sharing something living and beautiful with others. That is the kind of experience that stays with you long after the last bloom has faded.



Garden Walk Day and a Hidden Treasure from the Plant Sale

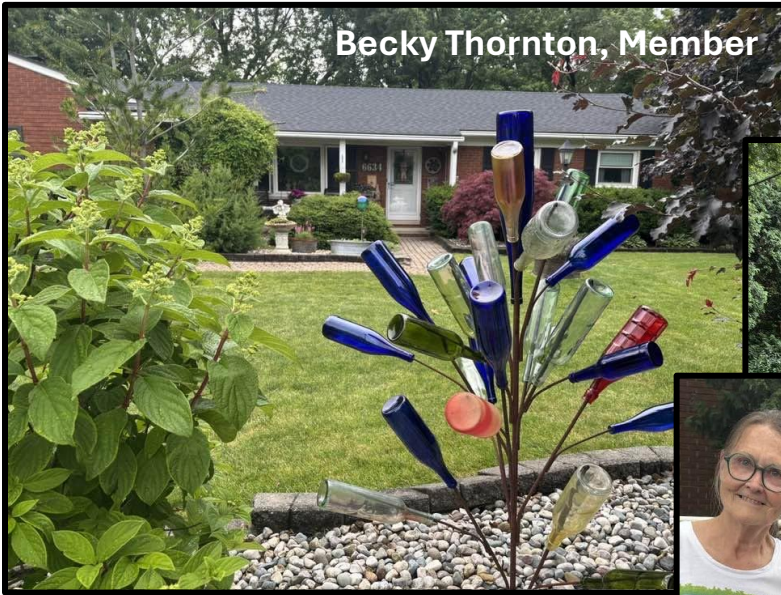
Garden Walk Day is always one of my favorite days of summer. Of course, I enjoy strolling through the beautiful, creative gardens whose homeowners so generously open their gates to visitors, but I have to admit that another highlight for me is our Garden Club plant sale. There is something special about purchasing plants that have been lovingly divided, propagated, and nurtured by fellow club members. Every plant comes with a story, along with expert advice from experienced gardeners who are eager to share growing tips and encouragement. It is gardening at its best—a wonderful combination of community, generosity, and learning. This year's Garden Walk looked a little different for me. My husband underwent hip replacement surgery just two days before the event, so my participation was necessarily limited. Thankfully, so many club members stepped in to fill my volunteer shifts, and I am incredibly grateful for the helping hands that made everything run so smoothly. Despite my abbreviated day, the weather couldn't have been more beautiful, and the Historic Village grounds were filled with talented vendors, enthusiastic visitors, and the festive spirit that makes this event such a success each year.

One of the flats of plants I donated to the sale remained largely untouched, so I'd like to introduce you to what I think is one of the most underappreciated gems for adventurous gardeners: **Job's Tears** (*Coix lacryma-jobi*). This fascinating warm-season annual grows four to six feet tall with graceful, arching foliage that resembles a smaller, more elegant corn plant. Its true charm appears later in the season when it produces distinctive, pearl-like seeds. These naturally polished seed cases already contain a tiny hole through the center, making them perfect for jewelry, ornaments, and other crafts—a feature that has delighted gardeners for centuries. However, Job's Tears is more than just ornamental. The mature grain is edible once its hard outer shell is removed and has long been used in soups, porridges, teas, and desserts throughout Asia. It also offers ecological benefits in the garden. The seeds provide food for finches, sparrows, doves, and other seed-eating birds, while the dense foliage creates shelter for beneficial insects, spiders, and even toads that help keep garden pests in check. Because it tolerates wetter soils than many grains, it performs especially well in low spots or along the edges of rain gardens. In Michigan, Job's Tears grows as an annual, so it is unlikely to become invasive. Although it will self sow if you let the seeds drop to the ground. They are easy to pull up and share if you get too many. Plant it in full sun after all danger of frost has passed, provide consistent moisture, and you'll be rewarded with an unusual conversation piece that combines beauty, wildlife value, and practical uses. While it doesn't replace the importance of native grasses and wildflowers, it fits beautifully into a diverse garden alongside coneflowers, bee balm, asters, goldenrods, sunflowers, amaranth, or sorghum. Together, these plants create a landscape that supports wildlife while offering beauty and harvests for the gardener. So, if you spot Job's Tears at next year's Garden Walk plant sale, don't walk past it! It may not be the first plant to catch your eye, but it just might become one of the most interesting and rewarding additions to your garden.

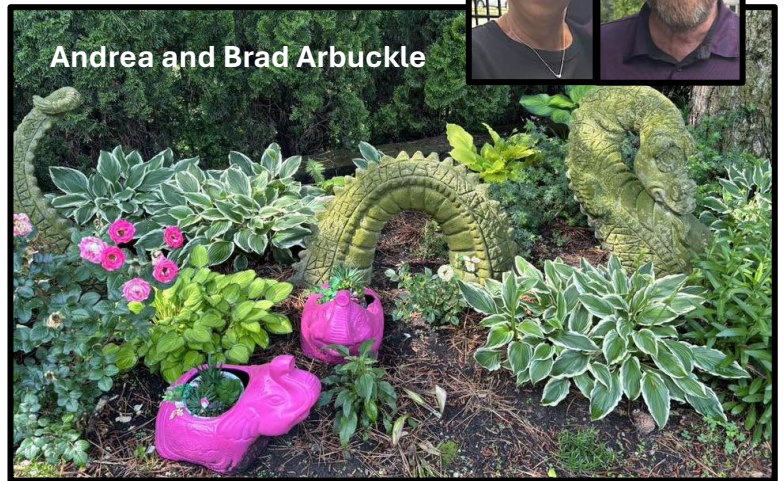


Troy Garden Club's 2026 Garden Walk

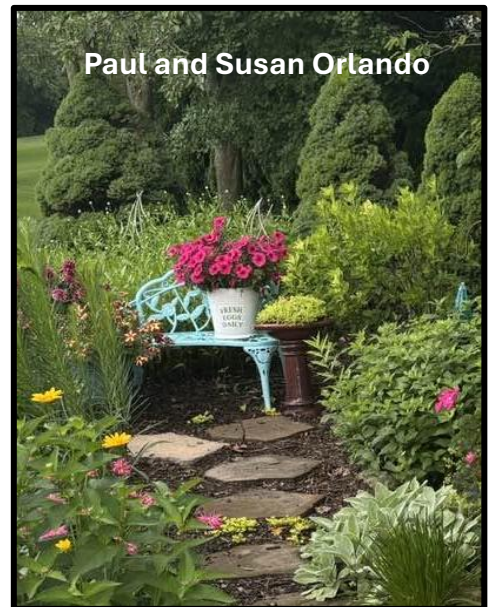
Becky Thornton, Member



Andrea and Brad Arbuckle



Paul and Susan Orlando

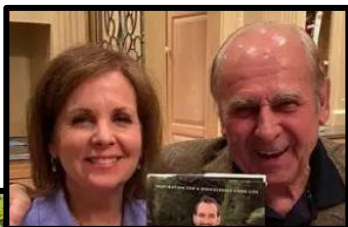




Mary and Dave Becker, Members



Becky Crocker, Member



Pam and Jack Krasula

Pam founded *Beyond Basics*, a company that provides professional reading tutors to elementary and high school students. Jack, an entrepreneur, started a YouTube channel, has a weekly show on WJR radio, and has a lifelong passion for autographs.

From the labor intensive Plant Sale set-up on Tuesday (where we managed not to take a single photo!), to the efforts of every member and student volunteer on July 8th working in the gardens and sale, here is a small photo montage of our volunteer members at work. The TGC has a reputation as being one of the friendliest and most helpful Clubs in the State as well as one of the most organized. It took work. YOUR work. But we can't rest on our laurels...2027 is right around the corner!



Herb Study



Pat Dodge



“Some see weeds...some see wishes”

The Herb Study group had a delightful day visiting **Marietta Crabtree's** gardens; heard an interesting talk on dandelions; and had a fascinating tour and high tea at the *Octagon House* in Washington Township. Marietta is an accomplished civic leader, having been involved in several preservation and environmental causes, but we were overwhelmed seeing her hybrid lilies abloom that she has collected over the past 40 plus years. She even had several that were specially cultivated and named after her, her children and late husband and mother. Her pollinator gardens were buzzing with bees, none of which bothered us – the pollen must have tasted better! Another facet of the morning was our herb of the month: **‘dandelion’** - who knew it was more than a weed and bursting with loads of nutrients and medicinal value? Historically, a cup of dandelion tea has been compared to the popular saying “an apple a day keeps the doctor away”, being high in vitamins and minerals like A, K, C, calcium and potassium. All parts of the plant can be used: The roots as a tea can be used to support liver health, stimulate bile flow, and increase the body's natural probiotics aiding in digestion; the leaves can be eaten fresh in salads or steeped as an infusion and can be used as a natural diuretic to flush out toxins and reduce water retention; the flowers are rich in antioxidants and protect against free radicals when steeped for tea, infused in oils for topical skin soothing or made into salves to treat acne and inflammation. Dandelion has been proven to help type 2 diabetes by regulating and reducing blood sugar and reduces crystal deposits in the urinary track which can flush and optimize kidney function. The extract is a mild anti-viral and boosts the immune system and the phytochemicals helps reduce inflammation, which plays a major part in many ailments. Just be sure before use that they are clean, not sprayed with pesticides, 50 feet from roads and exhaust, and check with your doctor if you are on any medication. If you would like to grow them in your garden beds, they now have a hybrid pink color dandelion, although I am not sure about the nutritional properties, but it looks pretty!

Troy Historic Village Gardens Update

Karol Carter & Patrick Hardy

July 1st was a scorcher with 95° temps predicted by afternoon. In spite of the forecast, 12 members banded together for the gardens final prep prior to our walk. We moved like locust from garden to garden weeding, deadheading, pruning and edging. Our sweat equity totaled 21 hours and thank you to all who endured the heat.

**The August gardening date is
Wednesday, August 5th at 9:30 a.m.**

The Search is On for TGW '27 Gardens

Judy Milidrag

This year's *Troy Garden Walk* was considered by many ticket purchasers and club members alike as one of our best in recent years. Some members have already referred lovely properties they have encountered in Troy for consideration as “featured gardens” in next year's 52nd Troy Garden Walk. We were lucky during this year's walk to have 3-4 local homeowners offer their own gardens for consideration for our next year's walk. The current garden walk steering committee is in the process now of arranging to tour these referred properties and come up with a slate for next year; however, if any member has a property in mind that they would like added to the mix, now is the time to pass the address to a board member so it can be included; since how a property looks now is pretty much how it will appear next year at this time! All we need is an address to be able to provide an Introduction letter for a local homeowner to act on. Thanking members in advance for any and all referrals that will result in another successful event in 2027!

Another Successful Basket Raffle!

Judi Milidrag

Once again, our basket raffle resulted in a flurry of excitement and activity on Garden Walk day! **Pat Guibord** and I met lovely walkers and lovely vendors all day long! Our three ticket bins started filling up late morning as early walkers and early shoppers came to deposit their “earned” tickets with the hope of winning the basket of their choice. Many smiling faces showed up at our raffle table multiple times as they made additional purchases from vendors, increasing their chances of leaving the Village with a large beautiful basket. The three baskets were organized and stuffed by **Darcel Connors, Yolanda Tenorio-Thomas** and I at Yolanda’s home prior to the Walk—made possible by the many donated and creative items received from club members. **So thank you to all for your contributions!** Below is a list of the lucky winners. One basket was collected at the Village just after the drawing at 6:01 p.m. and the other two were picked up within the next two days at my home in Troy. All Winners were super excited! Tickets deposited at this year’s event totaled approximately 3,175 as opposed to approximately 2,100 last year and **Pat Dodge** was a tremendous help as winning numbers were drawn and winners contacted!!



“FAB FINDS”: Allison Topalian

“OUT IN THE GARDEN”: Julie Thiel

“ALL THINGS BRIGHT & BEAUTIFUL”: Barb LaRouere



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: JoAnn Preston

Greeters: Nancy Wietchy

Herb Study Group & Directory: Kay Betke/Kyla Remus

Horticulture: Jennifer Goldstein

Hospitality: Jackie Wilson & Cindi O’Neil

Membership: Beverly Hydo

Newsletter: Patrick Hardy

Sunshine & Rainy Days: Pat Dodge

THV 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

Garden Styles in Style!

Not only were the gardens amazing for 2026...and there is no doubt that in that regard this was the most varied and successful Walk in memory...but the weather, while warm, 'held up' and things ran smoothly. Our earnings will make it possible to fund our charitable work, the Club horticulture scholarship and pay our bills! And here are the numbers:

Ticket Sales: \$10,053

Vendor Fees: \$1,390.61

Plant Sale: \$2,148.46

Sponsors: \$2,700

[Expenses]: [\$1,265.27]

This isn't possible without the work of the entire membership and from Tuesday's Plant Sale set-up to Wednesday's main event our efforts provided an appreciative public a day of beauty, community and joy. It's also a day when we get to know one another a little better, too. Thank you, Troy Garden Club...and give yourself a pat on the back for a job well done!

