

Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont 2023 FALL REPORT

Doris Van Mullen President – 2023-2025

**From the Green Mountain State -also known as the “tiny little state”
- I bring greetings.**

If you have traveled to VT I think you would agree, Vermont’s forested natural beauty, majestic green mountains, scenic hiking trails, picturesque wooden covered bridges all set the scene for the garden clubs in Vermont to work, promote, aid in the protection and conservation of our natural resources, encourage civic planting and community beautification.

The environment, after all, is where we all meet, where we all have a mutual interest. It is one thing that all of us share. Lady Bird Johnson

The theme of the Vermont gardeners is to “Cultivate and Nourish nature...Play Outside.”

- 1. The Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont** held its Annual Meeting in June with a record number of garden club participants with the installations of new officers.
- 2. We welcomed a new FGCV club**, The Weathersfield Garden Club (WGC) was greeted into the Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont on June 20, 2023. I had the honor of welcoming 22 of its new members. and presented Amy Beth Main, the new president with a FGCV map of clubs, a federation certificate. A press release was written and published in their local paper. The interesting aspect of this club is that 90% + of their members are 50 or younger.
- 3. Middlebury Garden Club (MGC)**, one of the oldest clubs in the FGCV, celebrated its end of year Annual banquet in June and honored two lifetime members. One of the members was instrumental in creating their club’s logo and their newsletter publication “Garden Thymes”. Last week the same club celebrated their 90th year of club membership.
- 4. Penny for Pines** – A survey was sent to club presidents to determine how many FGCV clubs participate in the Penny for Pines – the partnership with the US Forest Service dedicated to sustaining national and urban forests. We found very few clubs participate. A press release was completed honoring The FGCV and the clubs participating, as well as encouraging other clubs to join in for this worthy cause.

- 5. Speakers Bureau Speaker and Topic Listing** – Clubs asked for assistance in finding speakers and topics for monthly meetings. The listing was created and shared which has over 35 speakers and topics.
- 6. The FGCV generated a tutorial** for helping clubs file for or maintain their 501©3 status and Vermont Secretary of State registration. Included in the document were the three (3) important parts of having a 501(c) (3) status in Vermont.
 1. Applying and securing a federal tax identification number.
 2. Applying for and receiving tax exempt status with the IRS, keeping your status active and filing a 990N postcard annually.
 3. Registering your club with the Vermont Secretary of State (SOS) as a nonprofit organization. It will be an addendum to our Policy and Procedure manual.
- 7. Club Members joined a zoom link with Vera Bowen National Garden Club Awards Committee member** to learn more about the award application process.
- 8. Our club's Bylaws** are in the process of revision.
- 9. Club member presidents** joined our website designer chat on starting and maintaining their club's website.
- 10. The FGCV has completed a history collection of the Blue Star Memorial Markers in Vermont**, in addition to raising funds for a new marker in the northwest region of the state.
- 11. Communication ties with club presidents** is a "Keeping in Touch" brief every other month as well as the state's newsletter The Leaf twice a year publication.
- 12. A fundraising trip for 2024 is the Coastal Maine Botanical Garden Tour** scheduled for June 2024.
- 13. The club's Finance Audit** will be completed in November 2023.
- 14. The 2023 FGCV Fall Meeting – was** held at Rutland County Club last week with the largest members present for several years.
- 15. The college Scholarship of \$1000** was presented to a UVM student. The student joined us at our annual meeting. Publicity with a press release was completed.
- 16. A FGCV Flood Recovery Project with the Barre - Granite Center Garden Club was held.** The club and the north district of the FGCV distributed over 40 potted plants to Main Street businesses whose flowerpots had washed away in the flood as well as over 30 flats of flowers to restore their gardens washed away. A truly humbling appreciated event
- 17. Photography Series – the first state contest for "Fall In its Glory"** with orange and yellow photos going on this month.

In closing, Vermonters have been crowned as the fifth happiest residents in the country. The state's Vermont Day is celebrated on October 12 every year and the day honors the state's rich culture through fun and educational activities. Vermont was one of the first states to legally abolish the practice of slavery and gain independence from European settlement. The state's historical value is immeasurable and should be brought to the forefront. The day encourages us to learn some of the locals' traditions in celebrating this day, from museum tours, and nature exploration to cooking delicious desserts with Vermont's maple syrup. Fun and learning go hand in hand in celebrating this special holiday as well as the garden club's events of closing flower beds, making holiday wreaths and decorating Christmas trees for town's libraries and municipals offices. We stand proud to be vibrant garden clubs.