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THE *inside* press

SHARING THE HEART OF YOUR COMMUNITY

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Pleasantville Garden Club Members Share the Multitude of Ways to Beautify a Town

The Pleasantville Garden Club, a community service organization founded in 1975 is a fast-growing group of over 100 members who are actively engaged in beautifying the Town of Mount Pleasant and Village of Pleasantville, educating children in the local schools, sharing their knowledge of gardening with each other, and working toward protecting our environment. President Helen Krasnow provides the guidance and support for the club's dedication to the Mount Pleasant community.

A high priority of our club is beautification, with a year-round commitment to developing new gardens as well as maintaining and enhancing public spaces. The design, planting and maintenance is accomplished by the club's membership in cooperation with the Parks Departments of Mt. Pleasant and the Village of Pleasantville. As you drive around our towns, you will see rose gardens, hamlet sign gardens, town clock gardens, a native plant garden at the Pleasantville Community Television Station and many more.

With the worldwide decline in the population of bees, butterflies, and other insects, our club is among a network of communities addressing this problem. "One of our objectives is to work to enhance the Pollinator Pathways program," said Elsbeth Lindner, Publicity Committee Chair of the Pleasantville Garden Club. Last summer we held a Butterfly Fair to introduce a beautiful Butterfly Garden in Bradhurst Park. The garden offers nutrition for bees, birds, and especially butterflies through the planting of native plants, herbs, and vegetables. Many children and their parents came to the fair and enjoyed learning about butterflies through the many art and educational activities. Handouts, including "Simple Steps to Creating Pollinator-Friendly Yards" and a "Native Plant Resource Guide", were distributed to all. Everyone was thrilled as they watched us release monarch butterflies that flew around and landed on flowers in the garden. We thank the Town of Mount Pleasant Recreation for their support.

At the club's monthly meetings, visiting specialists discuss topics such as landscape design, native plants, and gardening with deer-resistant plants. Having a good number of knowledgeable master gardeners is one of the strengths of our club. Many presentations have been filmed and are available on PCTV, Pleasantville's Public Access television station. These shows can be viewed on their website: www.pctv76.org/video/2756/.



Our website, www.pleasantvillegardenclub.org contains all the information about the club including the monthly meetings, gardening resources, and three-to-five-minute videos starring garden club members who share their expertise in various topics. You can also follow the club on Facebook @Pleasantville Garden Club Group and Instagram @pleasantvillegardenclub.

Pleasantville Garden Club's incredible Annual Plant Sale occurs each year on the Saturday before Mother's Day at Memorial Plaza, next to the Pleasantville Farmers Market. This year the sale will be held on May 7th from 8 am to 12 pm. Gardeners will find member-grown, proven perennials; hundreds of annuals; vegetables and herbs; plush hanging baskets; and numerous gift ideas for Mother's Day. Our many knowledgeable Master Gardeners will be there to offer educated gardening advice. All the proceeds are used for beautification and conservation projects in our towns, and to support the environmental education programs in our local schools. The sale is so successful because of the hard work of the Plant Sale Committee and the hands-on help of every member.

In the spring and summer, we delight in sharing our gardens with other members. The property can be large and expansive with beds of wildflowers and perennials or small and personal with colorful patio containers. Each offers insight into personal style and preference. We also visit public gardens including dahlias at Stonecrop Gardens, daffodils and hydrangeas at Wave Hill, peonies at the Peony Envy Farms, and many more. Each visit is an enjoyable learning experience.

The Pleasantville Garden Club supports STEM education at the three Mt. Pleasant middle schools: Pleasantville, Westlake, and Valhalla. The programs are provided by the Science Barge of Groundwork Hudson Valley, based in Yonkers. Their environmental educators interact with the students on [a variety of eco-friendly programs](#).

In addition to all the wonderful events and garden commitments, a monthly newsletter called The Inside Dirt is sent to each member. Filled with photos and gardening hints and tips, the newsletter gives all the information each member needs to keep up with the club's activities, accomplishments, and undertakings. Plus, it keeps the members abreast of future meetings, presentations, pursuits, and obligations.

The Pleasantville Garden Club received recognition for its multifaceted work in the community. In 2019, Club was awarded the "Public Service Award" by the Westchester Recreation and Parks. We continue to be dedicated to the practice of horticulture, beautification, environmental protection, education, and friendship. We are eager to serve our community and welcome others to join us.

We are reminded of the Audrey Hepburn quote, "To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow." — *Info and Photos Courtesy of the Pleasantville Garden Club*

Plant Sales for Mother's Day!

Chappaqua will hold its annual Plant Sale from May 5th – May 7th at the Chappaqua Train Station, over Mother's Day weekend. "What is most rewarding about the sale," Club President Gwinne Porter said, "is not just the selling of plants to the community and raising funds for our programs but the way we help answer questions about what plants are best for specific locations. Shade vs. sun, wet vs. dry, our members want to help the community make the right decisions so as to be successful gardeners."

In Pleasantville, the Annual Plant Sale will be held Saturday, May 7th, 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Memorial Plaza, next to the Pleasantville Farmers Market. Gardeners will find member-grown, proven perennials; hundreds of annuals; vegetables and herbs; plush hanging baskets; and numerous gift ideas for Mother's Day. Knowledgeable Master Gardeners will be there to offer educated gardening advice. All proceeds are used for town beautification and conservation projects and to support school environmental education programs.

PLEASANTVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

MAY and JUNE 2025

Pleasantville Garden Club Front Garden Project

With appreciation for using our church as a regular meeting place they have grown to love, Pleasantville Garden Club is redesigning and revamping the church's Front Garden to be completed in May. The project aims to realize the outdoor area's long-term vision by prioritizing ease of maintenance.

Several variegated Red Twig Dogwood and little Lime Punch Panicle Hydrangea shrubs will be the centerpieces, layered with Daisies and Cornflowers, creating a harmonious and pleasing environment.

Sue and Dave Smutzler have been watering the shrubs in their home garden. Thank you!

Pleasantville Garden Club Front Garden Project

Great News! The Pleasantville Garden Club completed the Front Garden project on May 20th. Seven shrubs and other perennials were added, and the existing azaleas and irises were pruned and shaped, with extensive weeding and mulching done. The combination of watering by congregation members and rain helped the plants adapt to the new soil.

We thank Josie DiCostanzo for implementing a long-term vision for a beautiful, low-maintenance church garden. We also appreciate Maria Sanderleaf, President of the Pleasantville Garden Club, for her support in building a sense of community around the club's activities.

Additionally, we acknowledge PHS seniors Lucas De Borba Silva and Jack Chisholm, who are interning with the Garden Club, for their hard work and dedication to digging and planting.

We are so grateful to everyone who contributed to the success of this project!

The 'Really Crazy Gardeners' Behind One of Pleasantville's Favorite Annual Traditions

May 8, 2026 Adam Stone

Opinion

We are part of The Trust Project

By Adam Stone

When I reached Carolyn Ramsey by phone Thursday afternoon for an interview, she was (not surprisingly) surrounded by plants.

Ramsey and a trio of other Pleasantville Garden Club devotees were at a supplier's greenhouse in New Windsor, preparing for tomorrow's annual plant sale at Memorial Plaza.

Ramsey was joined by fellow Garden Club members Josephine Di Costanzo and Erica Babad, along with "honorary member" Dominique Nguyen-Ngoc, as the group sorted through various options for the Saturday sale.

"We are committed to having a really nice assortment so people can see things they haven't seen before," Ramsey told me.

The club works with half a dozen suppliers in total, from Hartsdale to Chester and beyond. Some plants arrive through online bare-root orders from states as far away as California. Unlike the fully grown plants shoppers usually see at nurseries, bare-root plants often arrive looking like little more than "a stick with roots," Ramsey explained.



From left, Carolyn Ramsey's son Dante, her brother Norman, daughter Aria and her at the Pleasantville Garden Club's plant sale last May.

Others are grown by club members themselves.

"One person has a greenhouse, and I have a setup with five racks of grow lights," Ramsey said with a laugh. "Kind of really crazy gardeners, I have to say."

The approach Ramsey and her fellow Garden Club members bring to the event also serves as a reminder of the kind of spirit that keeps many local traditions going and gives the community much of its character, from the **Pleasantville Music Festival** to the **Pleasantville Farmers Market** and much more.

None of it happens by itself.

'HIGH LEVEL OF FRIENDLINESS'

The Pleasantville Garden Club's annual sale has become one of those local traditions, held on Mother's Day weekend each year. The club has been beautifying Pleasantville and surrounding areas since 1975, **celebrating its 50th anniversary** last year.

As a last-minute Mother's Day shopper myself, I stopped by the sale last year and quickly learned the volunteers are patient with people who know next to nothing about gardening. It also turned out to be a pretty solid way to earn brownie points at home.



Photographed here are core members of the Pleasantville Garden Club. The group has approximately doubled in size over the past 16 years, growing from about 60 or 70 members to roughly 120 today.

Shoppers show up early to the sale (many start arriving by 7:30 a.m. for the 8 a.m. opening) looking for unusual perennials, native plants and the "glorious hanging baskets," Ramsey said.

This year, the sale will feature more than 10,000 plants, including vegetables, herbs, annuals and perennials. There will also be a new setup at the north end of the train station.

But talking with Ramsey, it quickly became clear the sale is only part of the story.

The club itself has nearly doubled in size over the last 16 years, growing from roughly 60 or 70 members to about 120 today.

Ramsey believes part of that growth came after and as a result of Covid, when more people found themselves eager to spend time outdoors and reconnect with nature.

But she also thinks the club's culture plays a major role.

"It's a high level of friendliness," she said. "Everybody is welcome, all walks of life."

Then she paused before adding another detail she clearly enjoys.

ot "This is going to make you laugh," Ramsey said, "but all the members seem to be somehow really good cooks."

The club's monthly meetings at the Pleasantville Presbyterian Church are held the first Thursday of the month from October through May and feature guest speakers on gardening topics, trips to places like Untermyer Gardens in Yonkers and botanical gardens, and what Ramsey described as impressive spreads during coffee hour.

"We have amazing homemade treats," she said.

'TIME OUTSIDE'

The club also maintains roughly 25 public gardens throughout Mount Pleasant and runs educational programs for adults and children.

One recent workshop focused on winter sowing, a method of growing seeds outdoors that mimics natural conditions.

Saturday's plant sale is the organization's only fundraiser of the year, Ramsey said, with proceeds going back into those beautification and educational efforts.



Pleasantville Garden Club members assist shoppers during last year's plant sale.

"We hope to sell 8,000 to 10,000 plants," she noted.

Ramsey herself traces her love of gardening back to childhood. She grew up outside Binghamton, where her father was a master gardener.

"I'm sure I was out in the garden with him from the time I could walk," she said.

In fact, Ramsey ultimately brought that same love of the natural world to her family in motherhood. Shortly after moving into their Pleasantville home, she brought her twins, Aria and Dante, outside to pick cherry tomatoes when they were not quite two years old.

Aria picked one and ate it immediately. Dante looked at his tomato, declared it a "ball," and threw it across the yard. His sister then ran after it and ate that one too.

Ramsey chuckled, recalling that "there were tears because his ball disappeared."

The twins are freshmen now at Pleasantville High School and both are involved in Science Olympiad. Aria is especially interested in ecology and forestry.

"So I think, you know, the time outside has made a difference for her," Ramsey said.

As it can for all of us.

For more information about the Pleasantville Garden Club, visit its website, at www.pleasantvillegardenclub.org/home.



Adam Stone

Adam has worked in the local news industry for the past two decades in Westchester County and the broader Hudson Valley. [Read more from Adam's author bio here.](#)