

OPEN GATE GARDEN CLUB OF MICHIGAN

April 2026 Newsletter



Photo by Martha Romanowski

NEXT MEETING: April 15, 2026, 6:15 PM

LOCATION: Father Harvey Activity Center

PROGRAM: Challenges of Growing a Garden in a Suburban Deer Park

SPEAKER: Pat Manion

HOSPITALITY: Note where your name is on this list and put it in your calendar.

Hospitality

4/15/2026

Pat Manion*

MK Schmelzer

Pat Laycock

Kay Baxter

Judy Lytle

Joan Runyan

Betty Sheehy

Amy Doyle

Melody Miller

5/20/2026

Lisa Rolls

Nicolette Ellinghausen

Patti O'Keefe *

Greta Gatzko Evo

Betty Sheehy

Deb Scribner

Jeanne Martin

Nati Horton

6/17/2026

Julie Buttigieg

Dave Buttigieg

Patti O'Keefe

Jeanne Martin

Betty Sheehy

Janice Cooley

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: If you are interested in running for any of the 4 officer positions, please contact Kathy Girgen. Nominations will be announced at the April meeting, and the vote will be held at the May meeting. Call or text Kathy at 810.252.4072.

GARDEN TOUR: Add the following dates to your calendars today! **July 17th** is the Preview night for all volunteers, **July 19th** is the day of the Tour, and **July 22nd** is the Afterglow party for all volunteers. VOLUNTEER SIGN IN SHEETS will be available beginning at the April Meeting. Opportunities to

volunteer include help before, during, and after the day of the tour. **Patsy Essenmacher is still looking for gardens** to complete the tour roster of gardens. Please reach out to her if you would like your garden to be on the tour or if someone you know has a garden that could be on the tour. Call or text her at **810.347.2289**

MEMBERSHIP: Norm and Nancy will have membership renewal forms in the back of the meeting room at the April, May and June meetings. There is a membership form attached to this email and there is one available on the Web site for download, www.opengategardenclub.com Follow the signs to their table.

ST. JOHN'S GARDENS SPRING CLEANUP: On April 18th at 0900 any members who are able are needed to clean and mulch beds around the rectory and chapel. Meet in front of the chapel. Bring your gardening tools: such as 5-gallon buckets, gloves, clippers, and leaf rakes. **For our new members, caring for these gardens enables us to use the Activity Center as our meeting space throughout the year.**

OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION.SOCIALIZATION:

Lynn Behr spoke with Gwen at Loose about putting together a trip to Meijer Gardens for Chihuly exhibit. She said if we had enough interest she would put a trip together. She needs thirty-two people interested. Could we try a sign-up list? Long shot but would be fun! May 2nd-Nov 1st. Let Lynn know if you are interested. Call or text Lynn at **810.348.1712**

Open Gate Garden Club Meeting Minutes March 18, 2026



6:15 p.m. St John Activity Center

- Welcome visitors Julie Gatza and Barbara Lund.
- Welcome new members from the Fenton Expo: Maurice Jackson, Patti Willmarth, and Sara Wilhelm (attended meeting)
- Thanks to hospitality group for potluck contributions: Mike Dietz, Nicolette Ellinghausen, **Karen Hall**, Nati Horton, Judy Lytle, Jim Pabst, Karen Poloski, Martha Romanowski, Shellie Smith, Debbie Tegard-Harroun, Linda Van Camp, and others.

6:20 p.m. dinner

7:00 p.m. Business Meeting

1. Vote on By Law changes: All approved. Addendum will be published with the details.
2. Pat Laycock announced that the Wojo dates this year are May 7th and May 21st. If you go to either Wojo's location (Davison or Ortonville) on these dates, be sure to tell the cashier

AT THE BEGINNING of checkout that you are from Open Gate Garden Club; the club will benefit 10% of your purchase price.

3. Karen Hall reminded everyone that there are still seven seats available for the Loose trip to Frederick Meijer Butterfly Garden on March 24th.
4. Patsy Essenmacher requested suggestions for the 2026 Garden Tour. One more home is required.
5. Kim Alexander announced this year's opportunity to support organizations that our members want to receive a donation from OGGC. Check the website for details. Members must attend the 5 p.m. Board Meeting on April 15th to answer questions about their nominations for donation.
6. Kim also requested a member volunteer for one more mini garden tour this summer.
7. Kim Fisher has volunteered her home for the Summer Picnic in August (date TBD).
8. Ann Barth mentioned that, in addition to the two new members at tonight's meeting (from the Fenton Expo), additional names were on the list and OGGC will reach out to each of these individuals.
9. Ann and Pat talked about Michigan Garden Club meetings in Frankenmuth (April 30th, Leadership Meeting) and Ann Arbor (June 7th, Annual Conference and Flower Show). These are opportunities that are close to us.
10. Tina Imerson announced that the entertainment for this year's holiday party will be a comedian. Also, she requested a volunteer to lead a craft project at the party.
11. Kathy Girgen announced that officer elections are still seeking nominations for all 4 officer positions (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer). If anyone would like to volunteer (themselves or others), please contact Kathy before the April meeting.
12. Karen Polaski mentioned that Spring cleanup on the Church grounds will be sometime at the end of April. Further details to come at our next meeting.

7:15 p.m. Break

7:30 p.m. Speaker Presentation – Donna Farley – “Make a Difference in your Garden and Beyond”. A few key points included:

You never know what effect your efforts/actions have on someone.

What would you change if you had your life to do over?

Spend time in silence

Choose joy

Be good to yourself

Use flowers to make a difference

Ask another person for help

Teach a child

Door Prizes: Book – Patsy Essenmacher

Bird House – M. K. Schmelzer

Shamrock Plant – Melanie Miller

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Please contact Ray Barth with suggestion(s) for a speaker for our June meeting.