



2025-2026 Annual Report

As winter made its way through Maine, our federation hosted two zoom programs to support the President's Project, Invasives Out—Natives In. Amy Thomas of Camden Garden Club spoke to our federation about habitat restoration that follows the removal of invasive plants, and Zac Smith-Hess of Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens spoke on the importance of native insects in our gardens.

The annual district meetings began in April, and I enjoyed the opportunity to meet so many federation members and learn more about each district's accomplishments.

The federation's annual convention was held in June in Bar Harbor. The views were stunning, the weather delightful, and the speakers were exceptional.

Many clubs added patriotic colors to their gardens and Blue Star Markers during the summer. Photos were featured in our federation's September newsletter, *Thyme to Garden*. One club held a contest in their town for best patriotic gardens, while another club teamed with other town organizations to host events throughout the summer in celebration of the nation's 250th anniversary.

Our organization's website has proved to be a way to publicize the federation. We receive requests from publications and in July, a request came through our website to assist with a televised feature on gardening on our local CBS affiliate. Their August 7 feature "Forecasting Growth" focused on GCFM. Suzanne Bushnell and I were filmed for over 30 minutes, only to be edited to less than two minutes of television time!

Garden Club Federation of Maine added two new clubs this past year. The Poland Garden Club was formed in April, 2025 and joined the federation a year later. The second addition is Pittsfield Community Garden Club. This club has existed outside of the GCFM umbrella for many years, often asking about joining the federation, but then backing off. Finally, on September 19, I addressed a more receptive club membership, which then voted in favor of joining GCFM. We look forward to working with an established club that has been an active part of their community for several decades.

Maine looks forward to hosting the 2027 NEGC annual meeting at Sebasco Harbor Resort & Golf Club on the shores of Casco Bay. We hope you will join us next October 4 and 5.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Gallery
President, Garden Club Federation of Maine