



PO Box 164, Cooperstown, NY 13326

## PRESS RELEASE: Light Up the Night and LVGC History

In September 1930 local men and women interested in learning about horticulture and gardening founded the Lake and Valley Garden Club (LVGC). Over the years the Club evolved into an organization where civic interest became a primary focus. Today's LVGC is committed to community service, conservation and sustainability. As a member of the national Garden Club of America (GCA), currently celebrating its Centennial, the Club continues the interests of its founding members while lending its expertise and funding to the village and surrounding communities.

Conservation is a main focus of LVGC. In 2005 the Club began working with the Otsego Lake Association to address the eroding shoreline at Lake Front Park. In 2008 LVGC was the recipient of the GCA's prestigious Founders Fund Award of \$25,000 to implement its Otsego Lake Buffer Strip Project designed to stabilize the Lakefront Park shoreline by filtering nutrient polluted storm water, eliminating erosion, deterring Canada geese, and improving water quality while serving as a model for preservation of all lake and river shorelines. Club members maintain the buffer strip with periodic work days to weed and plant bulbs. In the past LVGC partnered with the Biological Field Station to turn Goodyear Swamp into a nature habitat with boardwalks, an observation deck, a boat dock and signage for visitors. The Club also worked with the Biological Field Station to eradicate an invasive plant, purple loosestrife, over a 3-5 year period thereby allowing native plants to flourish. The Club is currently discussing reinstating this program.

As part of the national GCA Centennial Tree Project, members gave away seedling trees at the Farmers Market which had been propagated from nuts of local trees. To encourage interest in the art and practice of gardening and horticulture, LVGC has a scholarship committee that reviews applications from local high school students interested in pursuing a career in the field of conservation, horticulture or farming and awards scholarships to qualifying individuals. The Club has helped fund a summer intern at the Biological Field Station.

Every year LVGC quietly goes about doing projects for the community. Annual civic projects include: decorating the entrance to the Farmers Museum for the Harvest Festival; preparing the greens used to decorate Main Street; decorating the Fenimore Art Museum for the holidays; and preparing individual holiday favors and table arrangements for the residents of the Thanksgiving Home. At the Manor, LVGC built a sensory garden for the vision impaired on two raised beds that residents can smell or feel. The Club also maintains the garden for the residents.

This year LVGC is partnering with the Farmers Museum to enhance the village of Cooperstown for visitors on Candlelight Night, December 14th, by selling luminaires for residents and businesses to LIGHT UP THE NIGHT. Proceeds will help LVGC continue its important work and provide funding for awards to be given to other local entities with similar interests in conservation and sustainability. Order your luminaires online at [LVGCA.org](http://LVGCA.org) or by mailing in the order form below. Luminaires can be picked up at the Louis C. Jones Center at the Farmers Museum on Friday, December 6 from 12-5 and Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup> from 8-12 noon.