

# Club Beautifies Farmington



The Farmington Garden Club was again the title sponsor to the town's Beautify Farmington program this year.

**By Michael Walsh Staff Writer** (published in Hartford Courant August 11, 2016)

The Farmington Garden Club was again the title sponsor of the Beautify Farmington program that decorates the Vincent DiPietro Memorial Bridge and Unionville during the spring and winter.

The club donated \$2,500 to install flower baskets and holiday kissing balls in the two locations this year.

"They're the leaders on this," said Rose Ponte, the town's economic development director. "They are the reason we have the Beautify Farmington program. They take the first step."

Ponte said that the reason why her economic development department takes an interest in hanging flower baskets and decorating Unionville is to create a good first impression for visitors.

"Studies have shown that when you do outdoor landscaping projects, it really does not only contribute to community pride, but people notice and there's an increase in sales," Ponte said. "It's about making our community better."

The garden club has done this for four years now. Members said that the one year they skipped the program the lack of decorations was noticed by the public, which encouraged the club to return to the program.

"It's part of our mission statement of beautifying the town," said Kathy Lindroth, the club's president. "All of our members really get behind it. When we didn't have it, everyone said they really missed having the flowers on the bridge."

Donations for the project also came from more than 50 other businesses and residents in Farmington. The club also gets help from Winterberry Gardens in Southington.

"It's a lot of people coming together to pay for these flowers," Ponte said. "It's so much part of how we build community and a sense of place. When people drive in and see it, they know they are in Farmington."

The garden club said it enjoys being the title sponsor for the program because of how important it is to the mission. The club raises its portion of the donations from its annual holiday auction.

"It's welcoming, it's much more attractive," said Filomena Soyster, a garden club member. "It builds community pride. The more beautiful and presentable you look... it's essentially your first impression to the community."

The flowers will remain up until the end of September and the holiday kissing balls will go up in November.