

# A POSY PICKER'S PAPER

## New Meadows Garden Club Topsfield, Massachusetts

*January 10th through February 28, 2017*

*The objectives of the New Meadows Garden Club shall be to foster knowledge of home gardening, decorative arrangements and an interest in civic projects.*

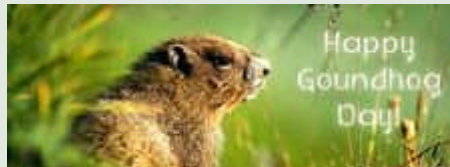


*While the official scientific name for carnations is *Dianthus caryophyllus*, its nickname became common because it was used in ancient Greece as part of their ceremonial coronation ceremonies! It is the birth flower of those born in January.*

*And, a bit more about carnations...did you know that they are edible? I can't attest to their taste, but at least they aren't deadly! You probably already know that carnations come in a wide variety of colors, but did you know that you can change the color of your carnations with food coloring? Start with white flowers, add a few drops of coloring and the blooms to a container of water, and let them absorb the new color! Bogotá, Colombia produces most of the world's carnations, but they are not the national flower of that country. However, they are the national flower of Spain, Monaco and Slovenia. Scarlet carnations are the state flower of Ohio, chosen to honor President William McKinley after his assassination in 1901. He was Ohio's former governor, and always wore a scarlet carnation in his lapel. And lastly, the French use the oil from carnations to treat hair loss, relax muscles and as an ingredient in skin cream!*

***There is no regular membership meeting scheduled for January!***

February 2



February 21

***Our next board meeting will be held at the Topsfield Town Library Meeting Room at 10 am.***

February 28



2016 Drought in Ipswich

***Our next regular membership meeting will be our Conservation meeting for this year and will be held at the Gould Barn at 12 pm. Our Conservation Committee Co-Chairs, Penny Rogers and Judy Donovan have lined up an exciting and very timely meeting for us. Our program guest will be Andi Ross of Andi's Garden Talks, who will present the program "Water, Water Everywhere" (How to Deal with Drought). We will learn how to understand one of our most precious natural resources - water, and how collect it and optimize our soil for greatest water retention during times of drought. Your guests are welcome. This meeting will be open to the public at 12:30 pm.***

*...more news on the following page...*

## NOTES

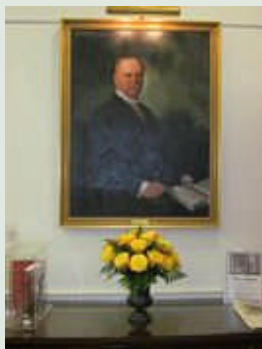


*...Coming Soon...*



### ► Grow Spring! EXPO

*The Topsfield Garden Club will be sponsoring their annual Grow Spring! EXPO on March 18, 2017, 10 am to 3 pm in various venues surrounding the Topsfield Common. Our club will exhibit once again this year in this “celebration of local agriculture, horticulture and environmental preservation.” Preliminary plans are in the works for our table, which will feature an educational exhibit highlighting the great concern regarding the drop in the Monarch Butterfly population. Also this year, we are hoping to provide very simple flower-arranging demonstrations in small containers by a few members throughout the day. We are hoping for one hour commitments from teams of (2) members with lots of imagination to think basic! If you are interested in making this plan a reality, please contact President Shirley as soon as possible, and mark your calendars!*



*Claudette Poor 2015*

### ► Art In Flowers at the Topsfield Town Library

*It's time to mark your calendars for Art In Flowers, our exclusive biennial event, which will be held at the Topsfield Town Library on Thursday, April 27, 2016! Artistic Co-Chairs Rose Ann Waite and Donna Graves are hoping that twelve members will participate with designs to coordinate with the beautiful artwork and artifacts at the library. Some have already sign-up, but there are more places available.*

*For the event to go forward, Rose Ann and Donna would like firm commitments for all designs by February 28th. So please contact them as soon as possible to secure your place! As the date for the event gets closer, Rose Ann will have photos of the artwork and artifacts available so that you can make your selection, and will also plan a meeting with those who are planning to participate to answer any questions and relieve any anxieties...Rose Ann is very good at that!*



*Rose Ann Waite 2015*

*...more news on the following page...*



As many of you know, our club maintains an account at Nunan's Florist and Greenhouses in Georgetown. For several years, they have supplied various Artistic, Horticulture, Sunshine and fundraising needs for the club. Members assigned to purchase items at Nunan's on behalf of our club can simply charge the cost of those materials to the club's account. Recently, there has been some confusion regarding the club's record-keeping of purchases charged to our account at Nunan's, and in order to prevent this in the future, we need your help. Please, when charging club purchases at Nunan's, ask for a receipt. Most times they provide this automatically, but sometimes they don't! In addition, please make a copy of your receipt and forward it to Treasurer, Mary Leahy. Thanks so much for your help!

*...Bits and pieces...*

*Our Holiday Social and Yankee Swap!  
The Bradford Tavern, Rowley*



*The gifts are ready!*



*Looking forward to a delectable lunch!*



*There's Honorary Member, Sandy Duffy!*



*What could Joline Yeaton's gift choice be?*

*...more from our Holiday Social follows...*





*Janet Hanson welcomes new member, Noreen Cousins.*



*Designer of the month, Rita Galvin, with her creations!*

### *Topsfield Council On Aging Boxwood Tree Workshop*



*Rita Galvin provides some expert guidance!*



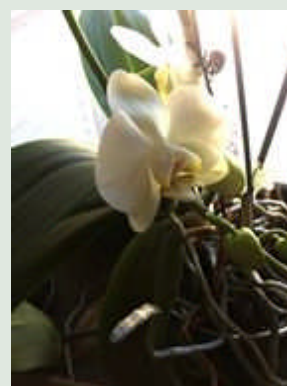
*Busy at work!*



*Showing off the masterpieces!*



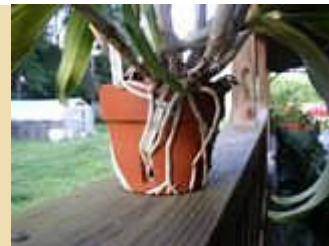
*A green thumbs up to Donna Ryan for very successfully getting her special orchid plant to bloom once again! This Phalaenopsis orchid was originally sold as a blue orchid. Since blue orchids are extremely rare in nature, producers inject the stalk of a white blooming plant with blue color, which turns the immediately ensuing blossoms blue. Once these blossoms have passed, any subsequent blooms will revert back to the natural, beautiful white color, which is what Donna's plant has done here!*



*...the Green Thumb Corner follows...*

## Green Thumb Corner

*Just a reminder that for the last few months we have been delving into the world of orchids. We learned a bit about their history on our planet, how to choose them and what to do once you have brought one into your home. By now, I expect that you know enough to become a very proper parent to one of these “lovelies!” But the story doesn’t end there!*



*Time to repot!*

► *Sooner or later, probably within the first 18 to 24 months of opening your home to your orchid, you may find that it is time to repot. But how do you tell that it is time? Take a good look at your plant... are several roots dangling over the edge of the pot like the photo above? Are some of the roots rotting and is the potting material soggy and no longer draining properly? Is the plant itself growing over the edge of the pot and leaning way over it? If the answer to these questions is yes, your plant would love to be repotted soon. All of this said though, don’t repot orchids unless you really need to. Only consider doing it if the signs are there. It’s better for your plant to get a little overcrowded than to repot it too soon. \*\*Do postpone repotting if your plant is in bloom! The ideal time is when the plant starts new growth, which is usually right after it flowers.*

*When you know that repotting should not be put off any longer, **it’s time to round up the potting material you will use.** For my Phalaenopsis orchids, which are epiphytes, (they cling to tree branches in nature), I prefer bark to sphagnum moss as I mentioned previously, so my next step if I don’t have any on hand would be to take a trip to my local garden center for bark produced specially for these orchids. **\*\*Remember that if your orchid is classified as a “terrestrial orchid,” you will be planting in potting mix since terrestrials in nature thrive growing on or in the ground. I will only be addressing “epiphytic” orchids like Phalaenopsis here!***



*The next step is to decide on the new pot type and size. Plastic pots are a good choice because they not only retain more moisture than clay, but roots can also be more easily detached when it is time to repot again, or the pots can simply be cut apart. Ceramic orchid pots work well too!*

*Regarding the pot’s size, you’ll need a pot just an inch or so bigger than the original pot. Your object is to provide a little more space, but not too much, otherwise the plant will concentrate its energy on growing more roots, rather than on producing blooms! And, make sure that the new pot has drainage holes! If there is no drainage, the orchid’s roots will most likely rot.*

*Now, we’re ready for real hands-on stuff! **Your potting mix will have to be prepared.** Here’s what to do: measure the amount of potting mix you will need by filling your new orchid pot. Then dump the material into a larger container. Cover the potting mix with hot water and soak it overnight. Yes, you will have to plan ahead when repotting your orchid! Don’t start with cold water here since the potting materials won’t absorb the water as well. Once this step is complete, use a strainer or some cheese cloth to drain out all the water from the potting mix.*

***Your next job will be to remove the orchid from its old pot!** Do this by carefully lifting the plant from the pot, loosening each root individually. Put the plant on some newspaper and very carefully remove as much of the old potting mix as you can and discard it. Using a clean pair of scissors (sterilize by wiping the blades with rubbing alcohol), clip away rotten or dead roots, taking care not to damage any healthy ones. Carefully, untangle the remaining roots.*



***Now it’s time to get the new pot ready!** If you are using a pot that you have used before, be sure that you have done a thorough cleaning job on it! I like to put a thin layer of styrofoam packing material in the bottom of my pots because I feel that this improves drainage, and also lessens the chance that the bottom of my plant will be sitting in water that has drained into the saucer beneath. This step is totally optional!*

*...more on the next page...*





*Next , place a small amount of the soaked potting mix into the bottom of the pot. Gently hold your plant over the pot at the same level at the rim that it was in the previous pot. The roots should be hanging and resting in the pot now. Pour the potting mix around the roots, while shaking the pot and tapping on the side to help the mix settle lightly around the roots. If you choose to use*



*your fingers, press very gently so you do not damage the roots! Your object here is to make sure there are no big air pockets. Be sure to cover the roots as best you can. Some may be stubborn and want to remain outside the pot. That's okay, but try to cover as many of the roots as you can. Continue this process until*

*the mix is level with the top of the pot. Make sure the plant is stable and can stand upright when the job is done. No wiggling allowed! Staking your orchid will keep it more stable, especially right after repotting! Sometimes I merely push a stake on either side of the crown to stabilize the plant. I have found that bamboo shish kabob skewers that you can buy in the supermarket very cheaply work very well for this job! Now place your orchid where you have hopefully discovered it likes it best, partial shade is good, and care for it as you did before. Water it sparingly to begin with, and then go back to your regular watering schedule for that plant! **Congratulations, you've done it!***



Some thoughts for the New Year...



*Until next time, be healthy, happy and safe!*