

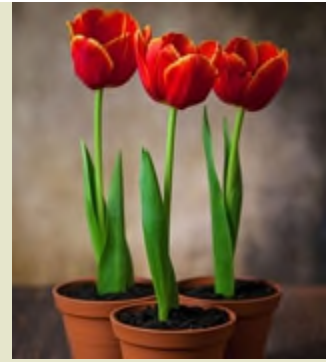
A POSY PICKER'S PAPER

New Meadows Garden Club

Topsfield, Massachusetts

February 27 through March 26, 2018

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



Potted bulbs are our houseplants for the month of February!

With no more than a quick trip to your local garden center this month, you can bring the color, joy and cheer of spring-time right into your home, into every room if you'd like. Just make sure that you find spots for your potted bulbs that are cool so that the blooms last as long as possible. And no dry soil for these beauties. Water your pots regularly, but be careful not to wet them too much otherwise your bulbs will rot. No need to feed since most nutrients are already inside the bulb. If you would like to plant these bulbs in your garden once spring arrives outdoors, here's what to do: once your flowers fade, keep your pots indoors in a sunny location, and keep them well watered until all the foliage dies down naturally. Remember not to drown your bulbs! You don't want any rotting to take place. At this point, I wait until spring with not too much frost is going on anymore and then plant my bulbs to the proper depth in the garden. At this point, rather than planting, you can also remove the bulbs from the pot you bought them in and store them in a cool, dry place until fall and plant them then. This works well for your daffodils, hyacinths and most other bulbs, except tulips. Tulips don't seem to perform as well, but I have successfully moved these from pot to garden as well.

February 27



Our next regular membership meeting will be held at the Topsfield Town Library at 12 pm. The program will be presented by Shirley's husband, Glen Holt, who will share with us the beauty of English Gardens. Have an early lunch before you arrive and then enjoy dessert at our meeting.

Hostesses are Claudette Poor and Jane Cullinan.

March 14—March 18

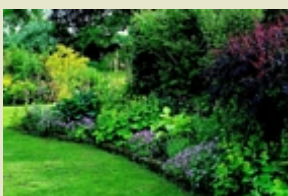


The Boston Flower and Garden Show will be held at the Seaport World Trade Center. This year, in keeping with popular gardening trends, elements of food gardening will be highlighted. Visitors to the show will learn about organics, small-space gardens, homesteading hobbies, edibles as ornamentals and family-friendly spaces for outdoor dining and entertaining. We are invited to enjoy the first taste of Spring while gathering the recipes and ingredients needed for the coming season's successful garden.

March 20

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

March 26



Our next regular membership meeting will be held at the Topsfield Town Library at 6:30 PM. Please note that this a Monday evening meeting. Our guest speaker will be Suzanne Mahler, who will present a very special program entitled "Gardening in the Shade." Considering that we live in an area blessed with so many trees, this is a program not to be missed! Guests are welcome.

Our hostesses for the evening are Janet Hanson and Linda Flynn, who is very kindly stepping in for Marsha Stevens at this meeting.

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

NOTES



♥ The Topsfield Garden Club will sponsor its Grow Spring! EXPO on April 7, 2018 at the Emerson Center, the Gould Barn and The Commons 1854 on the Topsfield Green from 10 am to 3 pm. *Save the date!*

♥ Join us at Pettengill Farm for our April 24, 2018 meeting, which will feature Container Gardening! *Save the date!*

♥ This year's Northern District Annual Meeting will be held at the Tyngsboro Country Club on April 25, 2018. Our Awards Chair, Barbara Shade hints that she has submitted an award application for one of our members. *Save the date!*

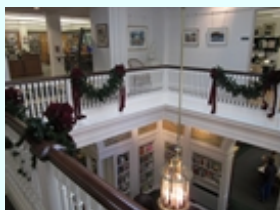
♥ Art in Bloom will be held at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston April 28th to April 30, 2018. We are pleased that Barbara Shade will be representing our club with a design in this prestigious show. Rose Ann Waite will be assisting. *Save the date!*

♥ Join us at our May 22, 2018 meeting for an Ecological Boat Trip down the Merrimack River. A limited number of friends are welcome and the estimated cost is \$20.00 per person. *Save the date!*

♥ Our Annual Meeting and Installation of Officers will be held on June 5, 2018 at the Brewer's Table at the Ipswich Ale Brewery. *Save the date!*

♥ Our fundraiser at the Strawberry Festival will be held on June 9, 2018! *Save the date!*

► A quick reminder for those members who are bringing "plants and things" for the circulation desk at the Topsfield Library to snap a photo of your masterpiece and send it to Artistic Co-Chair Donna Graves for her file!



Up for adoption! Our club no longer has need of the holiday decorations we have used to doll up the Topsfield Library interior at holiday time the last several years. Among what's available for the taking are the swags, which graced the vestibule, pictured on the left. If you are interested in these, or the interior window wreaths, swags and bows, please contact Linde Martin. If there are no takers, we will donate these items to the Boy Scout Troop 81 Yard Sale in May.

...more on the following page...

***Got cabin fever???** How about taking a class or two at **Nunan's Florist & Greenhouses** in Georgetown? Here's their list of fine offerings for the next few months:*

*Sunday, March 4th 1 pm **How to take care of your Orchids** with Brian Liem of the Massachusetts Orchid Society. This seminar is free and open to the public! (This one's right up my alley!!!)*

*Sunday, March 11th 1-3 pm **Making Cards with Botanicals** with local artist, Linda Germain. The fee for this class is \$40.00, and sign up is on Linda's website at www.LindaGermain.com.*

*Saturday, March 17th 1 pm **Celebrate St. Patrick's Day** by making a Green Mug of Beer arrangement, in addition to a corsage and boutonniere. The cost is \$25.00. Call 978-352-8172 to register.*

*Saturday, March 24th 1 pm **Create a fresh flower arrangement** for your table or for a friend. The cost is \$35.00. Call 978-352-8172 to register.*

*Sunday, April 8th 1 pm **Plant a spring container.** Bring your own container or select one at Nunan's. Participants pay for the plant material and the container, if you choose to buy one. Call 978-352-8172 to register.*

Celebrate spring at Nunan's Spring Open House April 21st and 22nd.

...Bits and pieces...



Georgia McHugh shows us how to design with tropical blooms September 2010



A trip to the Flower Market April 2012

A STROLL DOWN MEMORY LANE



Jean Bilsbury tells us the story of Mr. And Mrs. Wright at our Holiday Party Swap December 2011

...Green Thumb follows...

Green Thumb Corner

Well, it's February, and the holiday season has wrapped up for another year. Hopefully, you've survived all the excitement and by now have safely packed away all your decorations until it's time to retrieve them once again in just over nine months. As you know, at holiday time, our local garden centers and florists are well stocked with beautiful and irresistible seasonal plants, tempting even the strongest



of us to add to our ever-expanding collections. Of course, these plants don't get packed away when all of the festivities are over, and are now probably anxiously waiting for care from your tender, loving hands! So, today I thought it might be a good time to chat about the care of some of these seasonal plants. By any chance, were any of you given, or did any of you purchase a beautiful, blooming Christmas Cactus during this past holiday season? Do you already have these plants in your collection? Have you ever wondered what makes these plants bloom when they do? Have you had problems making them bloom at all? I hope these questions have piqued your interest to read on.

First of all, let's talk about what to do to keep them alive! Christmas Cactus, and also the variety that blooms closer to Thanksgiving, are succulents that come from the Brazilian rainforest, and are not desert plants. For this reason, they like neither full sun nor dry conditions. In spite of this, they are very tough plants and can survive near-freezing temperatures. A place with bright indirect light for your plant is ideal. Normal indoor temperatures are fine, although they do like cooler temperatures at night. Keep the soil moist, but not saturated.

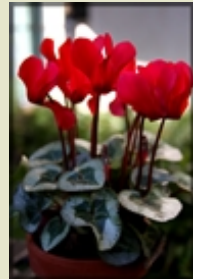
When you first acquired your plant, if it was around holiday time, chances are it was in full bloom. Does this mean that it will be blooming again at the same time next year? Not at all. Professional growers manipulate temperature and light to make these plants bloom just when they want them to. It will take you a year before you'll know exactly when or if your plant will bloom in the conditions you have provided for it. **But, if you would like your plant to bloom for the holidays, here's what to do...during the third week in September, when nights are longer than 12 hours, make sure it has total darkness every night for at least three weeks.** During this period, keep your plant a bit drier and if you can provide temperatures around 65 degrees, that would be good too. This will encourage the plant to set buds. Once the buds are 1/8 inch long, total darkness at night is no longer essential, so you can move the plant back to its usual spot and resume your normal care. This procedure to bring your Christmas Cactus into bloom at just the right time sounds similar to bringing Poinsettias back into bloom, don't you think? I hope this information makes you a "Christmas Cactus Pro." ♥



Speaking of Poinsettias, I wonder how many of you have at least one in your home right now? The chances are good since these plants are the most popular holiday plant in America. Here's what to do to keep your plant looking its best and perhaps bring it into bloom once

again next year: during the rest of the winter, find a place for your plant where it will get a half-day of direct sun...I know this is hard, but try your best! Water only when the soil is dry. In spring, repot and as side shoots develop, prune back the old branches to where new growth starts. Begin fertilizing your little darling with a good all-purpose houseplant mixture. After the last frost, take your plant outdoors and, starting in the shade, gradually start moving your plant to a place where it will get morning sun. Keep her well-watered and prune off growing tips twice a month to create a bushier plant. Don't forget the fertilizer! Then, in fall, the fun begins...be sure to bring your plant in before the first frost. Now, to encourage blooming, starting at the beginning of October, give your plant good light during the day, direct sun if you can, and then 14 hours of uninterrupted dark each night. So I don't have to keep moving my Poinsettias around each day, I keep them in a room that is not lit at night. During this period, stop fertilizing but keep the soil moist. If you're fortunate enough to be aligned with the stars, color should form on bracts in six to eight weeks and the cycle starts anew! ♥

Ah, and here is my nemesis, the Cyclamen! This plant, as beautiful as it is, is just as difficult to grow for me. That said, I will tell you the best I can how to take care of this one. Considering my success, or the lack of it, maybe you shouldn't listen! This one likes cooler temperatures, 60 to 65 during the day, and 45 to 50 at night. That's a tough one inside your home, unless you're saving on heating fuel. In winter, the best place



for your plant is in an east-facing window with bright, indirect light. Water only from the bottom since the crown and foliage are very susceptible to fungus when they are kept too wet. After the flowers fade, withhold water until the foliage withers. Then store the pot in a cool, dry location. Once July arrives, place the pot outdoors in a shady spot. When new growth begins, fertilize with that all-purpose houseplant food of yours, and keep the soil evenly moist. Remember to water from the bottom. Before the first frost in fall, bring your plant indoors and place back in you east-facing window, if you still have room for it there. And...remember to water from the bottom! ♥



Now here's a plant that I can grow! Kalanchoe comes in so many great colors, but the red for the holidays is stunning. These plants thrive on dry air, so our winter indoor air is just perfect! They like temperatures on the warm side...70 to 75 during the day, but at night, prefer 50 to 60 degrees. In winter, Kalanchoe likes bright, direct sun for a half-day with soil drying out between

watering. Repot in spring, pinching new growth to encourage new leaves, and begin fertilizing. After the last frost, move your plant outdoors to a partly shaded spot and continue fertilizing and watering. Before the first frost in fall, move your plant back inside and, to induce bud set, allow it to go dormant by providing cool conditions, about 50 degrees, and 14 hours of uninterrupted darkness each night for two months. And last but not least, have you ever wondered how to say the word Kalanchoe? According to David Beaulieu of The Spruce Website, there are four correct pronunciations: KA-lun-KO-e (my preference), kuh-LANG-ko-e, KAL-uhn-cho and Kuh-LAN-cho. ♥