

A POSY PICKER'S PAPER
New Meadows Garden Club
Topsfield, Massachusetts
March 25th through April 27, 2014



The official flower of March celebrates new beginnings, friendship and happiness.

March 25



Our Horticulture Committee is pleased to present Ginny Ballou, who will show us new strategies for gardening at all ages with her program "Gardening Older, Gardening Wiser." This regular membership meeting will be held at the Topsfield Library at 10 am. Ginny is a much sought-after speaker, and we are fortunate that she will be addressing our club. So don't miss what promises to be a very special program! If you are planning to attend, please RSVP to Horticulture Co-Chair, Jane Cullinan, as soon as possible so that Ginny can provide enough handouts for all, and, by the way, your guests are welcome to come too. See you there!

****Those members who attended Georgia McHugh's Artistic Workshop in February are invited to bring their collage masterpieces to today's meeting and "wow" their fellow members!**

March 27

The Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts will hold a Civic Development Workshop: "Civic Development Projects—What Worked/What Didn't." Learn how to work effectively with civic authorities to create successful civic projects. This workshop will be held from 9 am to 12:30 pm at the Espousal Center, 554 Lexington Street, Waltham. The cost is \$15 per club OR bring one item for the Raffle Table. (Multiple club members may attend for just one club donation.) To register, contact Louise Sironi at 781-826-8421 or sironied@verizon.net

April 7



Horticulture Morning will be held at the South Church, 41 Central Street, Andover at 10 am. Please note that this is a change in the schedule previously announced. The program will be "Vegetables For Your Garden" presented by Betty Sanders, garden-keeper of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society's bountiful vegetable garden at Elm Bank. Betty will be showing us how to grow delicious vegetables this summer in our very own gardens. All members and their guests are welcome to attend, and there is a donation of \$5.00 requested at the door.

April 15

Our next board meeting will be held at the home of Lorraine Erickson at 10 am.

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

April 27



Our April regular meeting has been changed! The new date is April 27, 2014 rather than April 22nd, and, instead of the Spring Door Arrangement workshop that was scheduled, we will be going to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston to visit their special event, Art In Bloom. We will be meeting at the Emerson Center parking lot at 9 am for carpooling to Boston. Rose Ann Waite requests that you RSVP to her by April 15th, if you plan to attend. (Don't forget that's tax day, too!) We also need drivers, so please contact Rose Ann if you can drive! This will be a splendid opportunity to see Mei Schuster's design, as she represents our club in this annual exclusive event at the museum.

And, a bit about Mei's assignment at the museum...it is pictured above, and is called "Parasites and Perishables" by Daniela Edburg, who is a contemporary American/Mexican artist. It is a display of photographs on the wall with a glass-encased collection of knitted objects in front. The artist handcrafted the objects and they are pictured in the photographs. This is quite an unusual assignment, but Mei is up to the challenge with Mary Connor by her side assisting.

NOTES



♥**Save the date #1! The Northern District Annual Meeting will be held at the Four Oaks Country Club, 1 Clubhouse Lane, Dracut on May 13, 2014. Please note that this is a change of date from that originally scheduled and announced. The morning session will feature John Trexler, who will present his program "The Influence of Public Gardens through History." The afternoon session will feature a display and presentation of Four Creative Designs. Registration should be made by May 1, 2014. Here is a copy of the registration form for your use:**

Please Register by May 1, 2014 with
Laurie Peloquin 12 Kenney Rd. Middleton, MA 01949 H: 978-777-1370

Cost: \$40, make checks payable to GCFMA, Inc. & please write Northern District on the memo line.

Continental Breakfast and
Plated Lunch – Chicken Francaise _____
Herb Crusted Haddock. _____

♥**Save the date#2! Arbor Day will be held at the Steward School, Topsfield on May 15, 2014 at 1:30 pm. Our club annually contributes to the cost of a tree to be planted on the school grounds, and participates in the Arbor Day ceremony. All are welcome to attend.**

♥**Save the date #3! And, The Ruth A. Wallack Fund will present "Floral Fantasy" presented by the Internationally Acclaimed Designer, Marie-Francoise Deprez on May 21, 2014 at Regis College. Tickets are \$20.00, and may be purchased from our Northern District Director, Lisa Bourgeois at 978-957-3922, lisa.bourgeois@lowellgeneral.org.**

...more on the following page...

And, exciting news to report ! As you may know, the term of the current officers of our club will come to an end on June 30, 2014. The Nominating Committee is pleased to announce its proposed slate of officers for the 2014-2016 club years:

Co-Presidents
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer

Mary Connor and Helen Gaffey
Shirley Holt
Joline Yeaton
Mary Leahy

Nominations from the floor will be accepted at our regular membership meeting on March 25, 2014 at the Topsfield Library. The election of our officers will take place at our regular meeting on April 27, 2014.

...Bits and pieces...



*Enjoying an afternoon of
Artistic Expression with our
dear Georgia McHugh*



...Green Thumb follows...

Green Thumb Corner



Okay, let's talk. Like me, have you put on some unwanted pounds over the winter? Be honest now. If you have, here's a way to get into shape that may be right up your alley...yard work. Now we all know that all the snow out there will melt some day, and

it will be wonderful to finally be free of the eternal snow cover featured during this winter season. The downside is that we will most certainly be left with yards full of debris, which has fallen from our trees all winter, and gardens needing a lot of help. This may be just what the doctor ordered! Did you know that working in the yard is one of the healthiest hobbies? Gardening involves a wide variety of movements involved in digging, squatting, lifting and just walking from one place to another in your yard, all of which burn calories, and may even provide some muscle toning. And, I know that when I am working in my garden, I don't watch the clock, counting down minutes, like I do at the gym or while doing my indoor workouts. You and I both could probably very easily spend a whole afternoon on a beautiful day just doing things here and there in the yard, gleaning all the benefits of this wonderful activity. And, if that's not enough to entice you to venture out, here's more. Science backs up the fact that gardeners have higher levels of optimism, and satisfaction with life. It's better than Prozac! Also, active gardeners easily get more than the recommended 150 minutes per week of exercise, which helps to either manage diabetes, or lower the risk of getting it altogether. And then there's osteoporosis...the physical activity of gardening can improve the health of your bones, and it has been shown that women involved in yard work and other types of gardening had lower rates of osteoporosis than joggers, swimmers and those who did aerobic exercises! This makes sense if you think about it, because gardening involves all sorts of weight training type exercise such as carrying heavy loads of soil or rocks, digging holes and even pulling weeds. Gardening also promotes better sleep. The mental health benefits of gardening are so strong that there is a field of medicine called Horticultural Therapy, which has been developed to help people with psychiatric disorders improve their sleep patterns and improve the quality of their rest. All this while you are out in the sunshine and fresh air! And, if you play your cards right, you can grow your own food as well. Remember, the food you grow is the freshest food you can eat.

Do I have you yet? If not, here's my next line of defense...those calories I mentioned at the beginning! Here is a chart published by Dr. Mark Kantor at the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, defining the amount of calories burned during various gardening activities:

Calories burned* during each 10 minutes of various gardening activities:

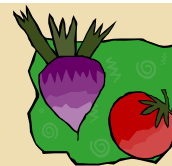
	Body Weight		
	125 lbs	175 lbs	250 lbs
Light gardening	30	42	59
Weeding garden	49	68	98
Mowing grass (power)	34	47	67
Mowing grass (manual)	38	52	74

*Please note that the total calories used is approximate and depends on your weight, metabolism, gender, age, muscle content, and just how vigorously you work. Here are two good web sites to consult if you would like to estimate how many calories you will use performing various activities: <http://caloriecount.about.com/activities-lawn-garden-ac8> and <http://www.mycaloriesburned.com/>.



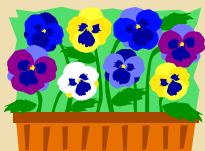
Want to get started on a small scale? You really don't need a large yard or a green thumb to benefit from gardening. You can start with a few houseplants and some containers for outside annual, perennial or even vegetable gardening. A cherry tomato plant can be grown in a five gallon container, provided you keep it well watered. Pot up some basil too! And, just think...once you're done, the photo to the left could be you!

In the previous article I mentioned that you don't need a whole lot of room in your yard to do vegetable gardening. You can garden without a garden! Just get yourself some containers and you are good to go. You can successfully grow peppers, lettuce, tomatoes and even broccoli in containers, barrels, milk



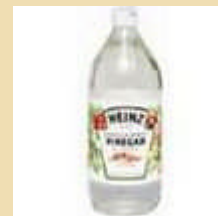
jugs and window boxes, as long as there is good drainage in these containers and you remember to water. Here are the minimum depths of soil you will need in your containers for various plants:

<i>Lettuce, radishes, herbs and beets</i>	<i>4 inches</i>
<i>Turnips, chard, shallow-rooted carrots</i>	<i>6 inches</i>
<i>Peppers, bush cucumbers, eggplant</i>	<i>8 inches</i>
<i>Broccoli, cauliflower</i>	<i>10 inches</i>
<i>Deep-rooted carrots, tomatoes</i>	<i>12 inches</i>



Since it is officially spring, and there will be no planting outside any time soon, why not plant your garden on the following web site: http://www.procreo.jp/labo/flower_garden.swf. Left click with your mouse on the black screen to arrange your very own flower garden. Have fun!

And finally, let's chat about the wonders of vinegar... even in the garden. Having read about the versatility of vinegar some time ago and wishing to avoid using chemicals while cleaning around my home, I have been using a half and half solution of vinegar and water in a spray bottle for cleaning my kitchen counters, windows, mirrors and anywhere else I might think of using commercial glass cleaner. I have been extremely pleased with the result. Now let us go a step further...let's talk about the use of vinegar in the garden.



*First, let's make a few things clear. Both white and apple cider vinegars are effective in the garden, but white vinegar is generally less expensive, so it's your best option for this use. Also, keep in mind that vinegar is very potent, and can act as an herbicide, so **avoid spraying on plants**, especially full strength. Instead, try to spray away from plants and roots, and apply directly on the offenders. And remember that vinegar is acid, so do **protect your eyes** when working with it. That being said, here's what you can do with vinegar:*

- 1) Vinegar kills weeds and grass growing in unwanted areas when used full strength. Heating the vinegar makes it even more effective! This works well for brick walkways and patios.*
- 2) Stop ants in their tracks by regularly spraying them and their anthills with vinegar.*
- 3) Clean mineral deposits from clay, glazed and plastic pots by soaking them in a half water half white vinegar bath. Increase the amount of vinegar for stubborn deposits.*
- 4) Clean your birdbath by scrubbing it often with undiluted white vinegar, rinsing well afterward.*
- 5) Avoid skin problems after working in the garden by rinsing your hands in white vinegar. Vinegar can be used to calm the itch of poison ivy and help dry the rash.*
- 6) Kill slugs by spraying them with a mixture of half water and half white vinegar.*
- 7) Clean plastic patio furniture with a solution of 1 tablespoon of white vinegar to 1 gallon of water. To sanitize your furniture, use the vinegar full strength on a rag.*
- 8) Soaking your gardening tools in a bucket of half-strength vinegar will kill fungus and anything else lurking on them so that you will not cross-contaminate your plants when you use your tools next.*
- 9) And, my favorite, undiluted white vinegar applied to the skin with a cotton ball will keep mosquitoes at bay. The vinegar will dry on your skin and leave no perceptible odor behind.*

"No winter lasts forever; no spring skips its turn."

...Hal Borland, Author and Journalist...