

# A POSY PICKER'S PAPER

New Meadows Garden Club

Topsfield, Massachusetts

May 28th through June 30, 2015



*Chives are the herb for the month of May, and are the meekest member of the onion family. They are the easiest culinary herb to grow!*

May 28



Our regular meeting promises to be one not to be missed at the [Crane Estate](#), 290 Argilla Road (off Route 133), Ipswich, starting at 10 am. This is our horticulture meeting for this year and will feature a house and garden tour. *\*When you arrive, please let the parking attendant know that you are with our garden club so you won't be charged for parking!*

Our hostesses for this meeting will be providing some snacks, and in addition, drinks and lunch will be able to be purchased at an outside café at the estate for a nominal fee. In charge of our outing will be our member, [Pat Gagnon](#), who will be "pinch-hitting" for Program Chair, Shirley Holt and Horticulture Chair, Jane Cullinan who will not be able to attend. Thanks so much, Pat.

June 8

**\*\*\*Dues payments for our garden club year 2015 –2016 are due to Membership Chair, Janet Hanson. Thank you to those who have already renewed their membership and forwarded their dues payment to Janet. For those who haven't, it's time to get going!**

June 9



**Hospitality Co-Chair, Sandy Whelan reports that plans are right on track for our [Annual Meeting and Banquet](#), which will be held once again this year at [The Hardcover Restaurant](#), [15A Newbury Street, Danvers](#) starting at 6 pm. Here's what to expect for dinner: a garden salad bowl, freshly baked rolls, assorted cheese, fruit and vegetable crudités, choice of Prime Rib or Baked Haddock, vegetable medley, rice pilaf and hot roasted potatoes, finishing with a "sinful" dessert, coffee and tea. The cost for all of this is \$45.00, and promises to be a fun evening filled with lots of socializing! To participate in this most special event of our garden club year, please send your check for \$45.00 payable to NMGC to Sandy Whelan, 37 Kinsman Lane, Topsfield by June 1, 2015. As an alternative, if you plan to attend our exciting event at the Castle Hill Estate on May 28th, you can give Sandy your payment at that time!**

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

June 13



*Strawberry Festival time is almost here!* As all of you know, this exciting event is held annually on the Topsfield Green. It is a fun day for all ages, and a perfect venue for our most important fund raising effort of the year. And, again this year, we will need the help of each and every one of you to make our booth the best ever! Jean Bilsbury has very graciously volunteered to coordinate our event, and here is what's needed:

Each member is requested to bring either a small annual or herb basket or container, suitable for display on a deck or patio, and, of course your potted perennials. If you intend on bringing potted perennials, now is the time to take them from your garden and get them settled into pots for our sale. Please drop baskets and pots off at our booth on the Topsfield Green by 9 am. If the timing is inconvenient, please call Jean, who will make arrangements for someone to transport your items to our booth for you.

Please note that, because our space is limited again this year and we wish to make sure that we display your beautiful baskets, containers and potted perennials in the most enticing manner for our customers, we will not be including the Green Elephant Sale, as we have the past few years. Please do not bring these items to our booth this year...hold onto them until another time.

And last but certainly not least, we will need lots of hands at the booth...there's set up to do, selling to do, and breaking down to do at the end of the day. You will have a chance to help by signing up through an e-mail message or a sign-up sheet Jean will be circulating very soon. Please be looking for it, and mark your calendars for our special day...June 13, 2015!

**\*\*All workers at our booth are requested to don their club aprons!**

**\*\*\*And, if you are looking for a source of plants for the containers you plan to bring to our booth on Strawberry Festival day, word has it that Connor's Farm in Danvers sells their annuals for half price after Memorial Day!**

June 30

Members who are holding receipts for reimbursement by the club must submit these to Treasurer, Mary Leahy, as soon as possible, or before June 30, 2015.

## NOTES



The Horticulture Committee extends its sincere thanks to those of you who pitched in to successfully complete the planting of the exquisite Veteran's Memorial Garden at the Pine Grove Cemetery. And many thanks to Claudette Poor and hubby, Roger, for priming our Linebrook Road island and to Claudette and Shirley Holt, who together readied the Prospect Street island for its public! And a big thank you in advance to all those who will volunteer to care for these public places over the summer. Your many helping hands make these community service projects a joy for our club to offer and the public to behold.

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

As many of you know from the announcement in last month's Posy Picker Paper, Artistic Co-Chair, Rose Ann hosted a special design workshop at her home last week. The purpose of the workshop was to highlight chosen types of flower designs, with special tips for creating them. The Northeast District of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, which oversees the planning of the flower show at the Topsfield Fair each year, sponsored this workshop and will sponsor another in August, again at Rose Ann's home. A few of our



members attended last week's workshop, and Rose Ann is again extending an invitation to club members who would like to attend the next workshop in August. This is a great opportunity to learn more about designing with flowers, and perhaps even enter the Topsfield Fair Standard Flower Show! It's not too soon to start making plans...all of you know how fast the summer goes, and before you know it, Topsfield Fair time will be upon us. And, for those of you who are new to flower design, there is a special opportunity to compete for the award established by the family of our dear Georgia McHugh for a novice designer with the highest point score, who has never won a blue ribbon in a standard flower show. This will be the second year that the award will be presented at the Topsfield Fair. How wonderful it would be for our club if this award was won this year by one of our members! More details will follow in coming weeks about the next workshop. Stay tuned!

**Sunday Strolls at the home of Karl R. Ackerman and Mary E. MacDonald  
202 Haverhill Road, Topsfield (across from the Linebrook Road island)**



In honor of Mary's mother, Margaret, who passed away in 2008 after a long struggle with dementia, Karl and Mary have established on their property in Topsfield the **MargFMac Front Garden Loop**, a .1 mile path accessible to wheelchairs, walkers and baby strollers through a cut flower garden, a kitchen garden, roses, their Orchard Avenue, Raspberry Patch, an Ornamental Tree and Shrub Garden, a Cedar Grove and Tunnel, and a Koi Pond. All are invited to walk, wheel and simply sit and rest along the loop on the following upcoming Sundays: Sunday June 21st will feature their Foxglove Forest (special for Father's Day), July 12th the roses will be in bloom, August 9th it will be time for the fragrant lilies, September 13th will feature Harvest Fruits and October 11th the Dahlias will delight. Guests are invited to bring a picnic (carry-in, carry-out). Karl and Mary request that guests call 978-887-4202 ahead to reserve an accessible parking space, if needed. To learn more about this amazing project, go to **[rest-stop-ranch.com](http://rest-stop-ranch.com)**

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



*...Bits and pieces...*

*What a difference a few weeks make! The Arbor Day Celebration was held at the Steward School on April 17th this year, but, as reported last month, after our tough winter, the grounds weren't ready for the actual planting of the tree. As you can see in the photo to the right, things can change quickly here in New England, and the tree our club funded for this year, together with Eastgate Garden Designs, a Butterfly Magnolia, is now planted on the school grounds. Present at the mini-tree planting ceremony is Eastgate Garden Design's Dan Peabody and Will LeRoy with their families.*



### *Art In Flowers, Topsfield Town Library*



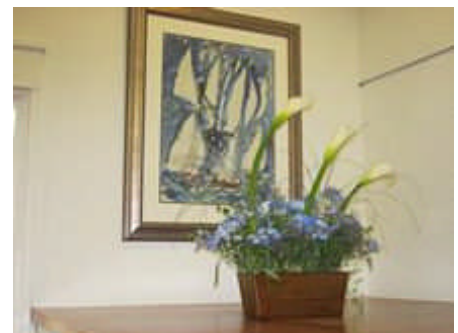
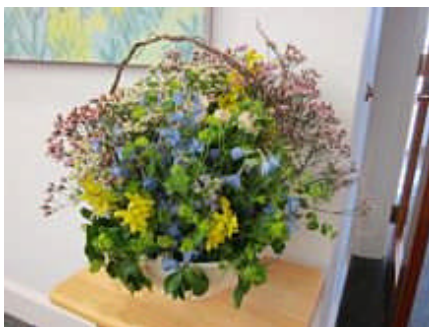
*Designers had fun at the Boston Flower Market choosing the best plant material for their designs*



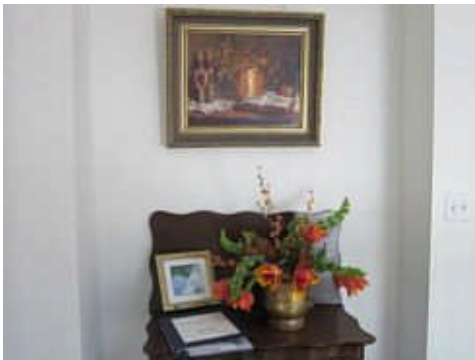
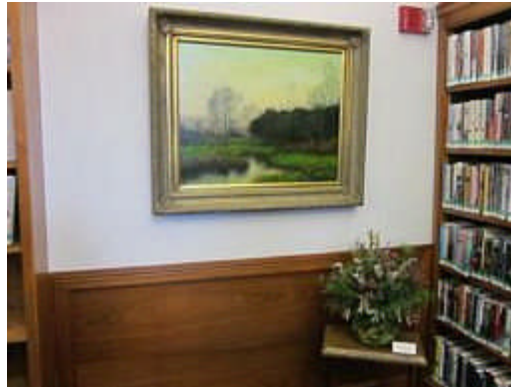
*The pre-show workshop!*



*What talented designers are among us!*



*...more photos on the following page...*



*Congratulations to all our designers for a job very well done!*



*The Northern District Annual Meeting in April featured the first presentation of the Georgia E. McHugh Mentor Award to Emma Housemann of the Open Gate Garden Club of Chelmsford with our honored guests, Georgia's children Rob and Leslie, present.*



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





*The "Pine Grove Cemetery Rockettes" complete the Veteran's Memorial Garden planting!*



*Claudette and Roger Poor readied our island at Linebrook Road for the summer.*

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*The Prospect Street island in all its beauty thanks to the spring cleanup work of Claudette Poor and Shirley Holt*



*Anne Mahen's garden at the Parson Capen House is ready for the season's visitors to the house.*

## **Green Thumb Corner**

*So, the meekest of the onion family, the chive, is the herb of the month of May. Lest chives go unnoticed, here's all you wanted to know about these easiest of herbs to grow. Chives are actually related to the lily family. Leeks, garlic and onions are also members of this family. They have been used for cooking since 3000 BC, and like full sun and rich soil. However, they will tolerate the partial*



*shade most of us have. The ancient Romans correlated their strong taste to physical strength and fed them to workers, wrestlers and racehorses to make them strong! An old tradition in Britain suggests using chives to border a garden or hang over a doorway will prevent evil spirits from entering. I wonder whether this would keep the hungry deer away??? And the Dutch settlers in America created chive-scented milk for making cheese by planting them in their cow pastures...clever!*

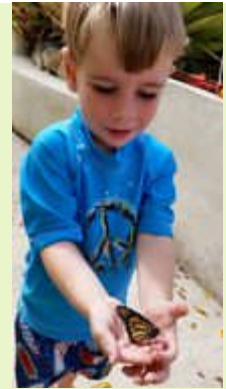
*When using fresh chives for cooking, add them towards the end of your cooking time for the best flavor. And the lovely blossoms they produce in spring are edible and add luster to your salads and other dishes! Pick them before the seeds start to form. The blossoms can also be used to make a delightful pink, chive-flavored vinegar by steeping them in white wine vinegar for a few weeks.*

*I find that chives freeze very well, so if you snip them during our growing season, you can have a supply all year! However, when harvesting your chives, don't snip just the ends of the shoots, otherwise the remaining stalk will become tough. So, when cutting your chives, snip them close to the ground. This can be done several times during the season. I freeze mine in canning jars. And there you have it!*

*As an old saying goes, "The chef whose potato salad lacks chives is a chef who himself lacks soul."*

*... more Green Thumb on the next page...*

*News from the St. Croix contingent of my family is that the eastern population of Monarch Butterflies passing through the island on their way north are emerging and readying themselves for their long trek to southern Canada! The Monarch is considered by many to be the most beautiful of butterflies, and even the king of them all, hence the name "monarch." But, in addition to being a sight to behold, they are quite awesome creatures! Monarch butterflies actually go through four stages during one life cycle, and through four generations in a single year. Let's talk about the four stages first...these are the egg, the larvae, which is the caterpillar stage, the pupa, known as the chrysalis, and then the adult butterfly. The four generations during one year actually produce four different butterflies. So, the butterfly that leaves its winter home in Mexico to migrate north is not the same butterfly as the one that returns to Mexico after the summer is done. Here's how it*



*Fly butterfly, fly!*

*works: in February and March, the fourth generation of Monarchs from the previous year comes out of hibernation in Mexico and other points south, in search of a mate. They then fly north and east to find a good place to lay their eggs. This is known as stage one of the first generation. It is thought that the timing of this migration is affected by the number of hours of daylight and also the maturation of Milkweed plants without which the butterfly cannot survive. In March and April the eggs are laid on these plants, and when the*



*caterpillars (larvae) hatch from the eggs, they feed on the Milkweed. Of the 500 eggs the female Monarch will lay individually, only about 20 will make it to adulthood! After about two weeks, the caterpillar is full grown and ready for its metamorphosis into the Monarch butterfly we know. A chrysalis (pupa) is formed on a stem or leaf, and in about ten days the old body parts of the caterpillar become the beautiful parts of the butterfly that will emerge. Now the butterfly will fly away, feeding on flowers and enjoying what life it has left, which is a mere two to six weeks, but not before laying eggs for the next generation...generation two, which will be born in May and June. The cycle repeats itself yet again with the third generation being born in July and August, each generation dying after two to six weeks of becoming a butterfly. All this while making their northward journey.*

*The fourth generation, which is born in September and October, is a bit different. The process of metamorphosis is the same except that the fourth generation of butterflies live for six to eight months, migrate to and winter in warm climates such as Mexico for the eastern population and California for the western population, until it is time to start the whole process once again. For this reason, the fourth generation is sometimes referred to as the "super generation." While all Monarch butterflies have the ability to make the long journey south, only this fourth southern-flying generation does it because of outside triggers, such as the angle of the sun, the age of Milkweed plants and dropping temperatures in fall. The really interesting part is that, to conserve energy for the long perhaps 2000 mile journey, the butterflies of this generation do not develop the mature internal sex organs the summer generations develop. These organs develop in the spring, which enables the whole cycle to start over once again. Pretty amazing process don't you think? It is thought that the Monarch butterfly exhibits the most highly evolved migration pattern of any known species of moth or butterfly, and perhaps more evolved than any other insect. Nature is truly awesome and out there for all of us to stop and see...what a precious gift.*

*The bad news is that Monarch butterflies continue to be threatened by changes in drought and rainfall patterns in our country and Canada, decreasing availability of Milkweed because of herbicide use, and the competition with human needs for land and resources, which creates pressure on their habitats. As a result of doing the research for this article, I definitely have a new appreciation for this wonder of nature...the Monarch butterfly. Hopefully they will find my garden for many summers to come! Thank you to site [www.learnaboutnature.com](http://www.learnaboutnature.com) for some of the information I gathered to pass onto all of you.*

*I extend my best wishes to you, my dear garden club friends, for a beautiful, peaceful and safe summer.  
Your Posy Picker Paper editor.*