

A POSY PICKER'S PAPER

New Meadows Garden Club

Topsfield, Massachusetts

May 24th through June 30, 2016



Lily of the Valley symbolizes good luck, fertility and return of happiness. Both Kate Middleton and Grace Kelly carried them in their bridal bouquets.

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

Garden Club Stars of the Month



Our club's designer at Art In Bloom at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Jane Cullinan.



This year's recipient of the Northern District's Pauline Jensen Award, Claudette Poor.

May 24
weather permitting



Our Conservation meeting this year will be an **Essex River Cruise!** For those who have made reservations with Conservation Co-Chairs Gerrie Bunker and Linda Flynn, please plan to be at the dock at 35 Dodge Street, Essex at 10 am for the cruise, which will take place from 10:30 am to 12 pm. The cost for members is \$20.00. If you haven't forwarded your payment to Gerrie and Linda as yet, please be prepared to pay before we board on Tuesday. And, for those interested and have worked up an appetite during our cruise, tables have also been reserved for our group at the Village Restaurant, 55 Main Street, Essex. Payment for lunch is to be made directly to the restaurant.

****It is suggested that you wear comfortable clothes...jeans, socks, sneakers, and a jacket in case it gets chilly while we're out. Bug spray might be good to bring as well. If the weather doesn't cooperate, you will receive a call by 9 am.**

June 7

You should have received your Membership Renewals for the club year 2016-2017 in the mail recently. Just a reminder that your dues payment and completed renewal form are due back to Membership Chair, Janet Hanson, by our Annual Banquet June 7th.

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June 7



Our Annual Banquet and Installation of Officers will be held at the Captain's Quarters at the Danversport Yacht Club, 161 Elliott Street, Danvers at 6 pm. The room is located to the left on the ground level as you face the main building. We have been cordially invited by our Hospitality Co-Chairs, Sandy Whelan and Agnes Salvatore, and have been requested to respond by June 1st. The cost is \$47.00 and should be paid by check made to the New Meadows Garden Club and forwarded to Sandy Whelan with your response. Dinner sounds delightful, appetizers, buffet dinner and dessert. And, among the special events of the evening will be the installation of our new officers for the next two years. Please join us for what promises to be a very enjoyable evening to cap off our club year.

June 11



***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! Linda Mann and Janet Hanson have 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, potted perennials from your garden. 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. This year it is requested that perennials from your garden be brought in an attractive pot to entice our buyers! And, your plants will appreciate a name tag identifying who they are!

Also, we are hoping that the "crafty gals" in our group have been busy making eye catching, garden themed items to be sold at our booth!

Price suggestions from members on all items donated would be extremely helpful!

***Please drop baskets, pots and craft items off at our booth on the Topsfield Green by 8:30 am on festival day. If the timing is inconvenient, please call Janet, who will make arrangements for you to drop off your items at her home.*

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 Linda and Janet will be circulating very soon. Please be looking for it, and mark your calendars for our special day...June 11, 2016!

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



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, 2016.

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NOTES



The Horticulture Committee, with Jane Cullinan at the helm, 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 primping our Linebrook Road Island and to Claudette and her crew, who 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. Please be on the look-out for the work schedule and sign up to do your share in these community service projects, which are a joy for our club to offer and the public to behold.

*Open Garden Day will be held on July 14, 2016 from 10 am to 4 pm. The gardens are all local in the towns of Topsfield and Boxford, and admission is free. This is the **20th year** for this special event, and once again we are invited to enjoy and share these gardeners' "love, passion and craziness for gardening." Here is the list of open gardens for this year:*



*Darcy Fulton
13 Rowley Road, Topsfield*

*Pembroke Kyle
26 Canterbury Hill Road, Topsfield*

*Leslie Voss
74 Washington Street, Topsfield*

*Martha Morrison
217 Rowley Bridge Road, Topsfield*

*Audrey Boyle
159 Perkins Row, Topsfield*

*Deb Luther
14 Cedar Knoll, Boxford*

*Kathy Kinney
44 High Ridge Road, Boxford*

*Paula Guilbault
396 Ipswich Road, Boxford*

► The Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts is currently sponsoring a "Save an Heirloom Plant Contest" in order to call attention to the fact that many of these plants are in danger of fading into the past. While, our club is not participating in the contest, wouldn't it be nice if we did our part to help appreciate, cherish and preserve these plants for future generations? Here's a list of plants you might want to seek out and plant: Blue False Indigo, Maltese Cross, Peony "Festive Maximum", Sweet Pepper Bush, Mock Orange, Snowberry, Gas Plant and Moss Rose. These plants are all hardy in our growing zone and are available online at specialized nurseries and at Weston Nurseries.

...more on the next page...

...Bits and pieces...

Art In Bloom at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



Designer Jane Cullinan with assistant Rose Ann Waite



Our members see the exquisite design first hand!



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

Northern District Annual Meeting, May 10, 2016



Our members share Claudette Poor's special day.



Claudette Poor displays her Pauline Jensen Award with Awards Chair, Barbara Shade.

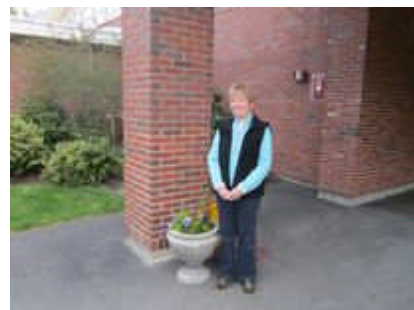


Mary Jo Baur is the second recipient of the Georgia E. McHugh Mentor Award



The Pine Grove Cemetery Planting Crew!

Our Civic Projects



Linda Flynn tends to the urns at the Steward School



The crew at work at the Pine Grove Cemetery

...more on the next page...



The students await the start of the ceremony on a beautiful day.

Arbor Day 2016 Steward School Topsfield



A new Dogwood Tree is our club's contribution.



Milkweed Seeds to support Monarch Butterflies were provided to each of the students by our club.



Our club members enjoy the ceremony!

Green Thumb Corner

Oh, do I love air plants! My love affair with these plants goes back many years...long before their current popularity. One of the perks of having a child who lives on a tropical island is the opportunity to learn first hand about all the beautiful plants that grow there.



*Tillandsia, or air plants, as they are commonly called, is one of these plants. For the purpose of this article, I will call them by their nickname, "Tillys." Tillys are one of about 730 species of evergreen, perennial, flowering plants in the family of Bromeliads. They are native to warm places like the southern United States, Central and South America and the West Indies. They can thrive in many kinds of environments including deserts, swamplands, mountains and forests. Tillys need water and sunlight to survive. It is interesting that they do not use their roots to provide their water needs...the roots are only used to anchor themselves to other objects, usually trees. For this reason they are called *epiphytes*, another fancy word meaning a plant that grows on another plant, but*

is not parasitic. Tillys do not require soil, and, in fact will die if they are planted in it. They gather water and nutrients through structures in their leaves called Trichomes. In the wild, Tillys can go weeks without rain. They have evolved as "tank plants," which means that they can hold onto water they collect for extended periods. That said, one needs to remember that, in the wild, these plants live in places where the air is much more humid than it is in our neck of the woods, and that is worth remembering if you would like to grow them here.

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Now that we have a little background information about these little sweeties, let's get more serious and talk about how to keep them happy in our environment. Since we are on the threshold of the summer season, perhaps we should talk about growing Tillandsias outdoors in our area first. The optimum temperature range for Tillandsias kept outdoors is 50 to 90 degrees. They love bright but filtered light at this time of year, so if you have a protected, lightly shaded patio, that would be a perfect place for your Tillandsias to spend the summer. It is a good idea to thoroughly wet your plant 2 to 3 times a week...more often if it is very hot and dry, less if there is a cool, humid spell. Why not hose them down whenever you water your other plants? But remember to let the plants dry out completely between watering because they are susceptible to rot if left wet too long.



In fact, Tillandsias should be given enough light and air circulation so that they take no longer than four hours to dry. Here's a tip to tell when your Tillandsias need water...do the plants look different? Are the edges of the leaves curling up toward each other more than normal? Do they appear to be shrinking in size? If this is the case, it is best to submerge the plants in a bucket of water overnight...ASAP!



Come fall, it is time for your Tillandsias to move indoors with you! Location...location...location! Try to place your Tillandsias near a window that will provide bright but filtered light. (No direct sun in the summer months, if they stay inside year round.) That said, they like a bit of direct sun in the winter months. The best exposure are windows facing east, west or south. Water is super-critical indoors. The perfect way to water your Tillandsias indoors is to submerge them upside down in room temperature water with a bit of water

soluble fertilizer in your sink once or twice a week. Leave them there for a few hours, and then return them to their usual location. If, every once-in-a-while, you just can't get to it, misting can hold your plants over. But please do not do this in lieu of soaking. And here are some other watering tips for your Tillandsias: since well water and softened water are high in sodium, these are not the best. Neither is distilled water because it has no nutritional value. I read somewhere that what Tillandsias really like is something like birdbath water because it contains lots of nutrients!

A few additional growing points...most Tillandsias only bloom once in their lifetime, most commonly between winter and spring. After the bloom, the "mother plant" will concentrate on producing "pups" or babies, as we may call them. They will appear at the base of the plant, and may look like new leaves at first. Once the pups grow to about a third of the size of the mom, just pluck it off, and you've got another plant!



And, last but not least, Tillandsias are so very versatile when it comes to displaying them in and around your home. They never need dirt, heavy containers or large spaces to grow! Glass terrariums are super homes for these plants and are easy to come by these days. Tillandsias can also be mounted to grapevine and driftwood and provide a pretty display. If you are thinking about this, be sure to use glue which is waterproof and safe for air plants, such as E-6000, available on Amazon.com. Tillandsias can also be used to create beautiful vertical gardens when attached to cork bark or to wire installed in wood framing! And, of course, in our travels we have all seen Tillandsias displayed in natural containers such as seashells and Urchins. Another home for Tillandsias could be in miniature antique vases or salt dips! The possibilities are endless! I hope I have inspired you to experiment with these sweeties...happy Tillandsia gardening!

I send my heartfelt best wishes to all of you for a special, healthy and safe summer season.♥
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