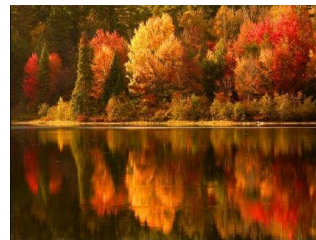


# A POSY PICKER'S PAPER

New Meadows Garden Club

Topsfield, Massachusetts

September 27th through October 16, 2011



*Another beautiful Fall.*

*Let's celebrate the dawn of our club's fifty-third year!*

September 27



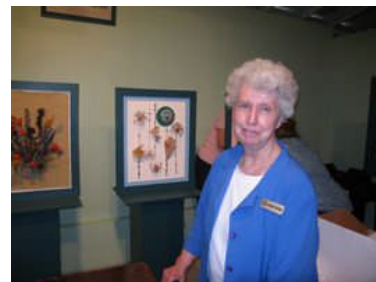
For our first meeting of the year, we are all invited by our Club Officers to an *Old Fashioned Ham and Bean Supper*. Be ready for dinner at 6:30 pm at the Gould Barn, Topsfield, and don't be late! Also invited to the festivities is Architect, Ben Nutter, who will bring us up to date on Topsfield's Parson Capen Caretaker's Cottage and Garden Project.

September 29

Our club will once again be hosting a *Hospitality Table* on the first entry day of the *Topsfield Fair Flower Show* in the Flower Barn at the Fairgrounds from 3 to 5 pm. Judy Donovan and Helen Gaffey have already volunteered to help, but we need a few more volunteers to bake some goodies and help set up. Keep a look out for a sign up sheet, or contact Rose Ann if you can lend a hand.

September 30 -  
October 10

The *Topsfield Fair*, together with the *Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts*, will present a *Standard Flower Show* in the Flower Barn. When you visit the Fair, be sure to stop by and see the beautiful prize winning designs, gardens and plants.



*Georgia McHugh with her design at the Topsfield Fair October 2010*

October 11

Our board meeting will be held at the home of Liz Henkel, 7 pm.

October 12

*Horticulture Morning* will be held 10 am to 12 pm at the *Espousal Center*, 554 Lexington Street, North Waltham (Exit 27A, Rte I-95). The program will feature Russell Stafford, who will present his program "Rare & Choice Bulbs For Your Garden." A donation of \$5.00 is requested, and all club members are welcome to attend.

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

October 16



*Our October fundraiser will be a Topsfield Chocolatefest, to be held at the Gould Barn, 1 to 4 pm. Every one of us will be asked to whip up our most decadent chocolate treats for this special event, which will be open to a very lucky public. Our Ways and Means Fundraising Chair, Carol Westhaver, is busy coordinating this event, so take out your favorite recipes, and be ready to contribute your treats, and also be ready to help set up the barn up for this festive afternoon. A sign-up sheet will be available at our September meeting and on line, or give Carol a call with questions or to volunteer.*

October 24

**The Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts Fall Conference will be held at the Andover Country Club, 60 Canterbury Street, Andover, MA 01810. President Rose Ann and Vice President Judy will be attending and invite you to join them. The registration deadline is October 12, 2011. Please contact Rose Ann for more information.**

## Notes



A big thank you goes to member, *Jean Bilsbury*, who, once again, has done an excellent job putting together our new program book for this club year. Not many of us know how much effort it takes to compile all the information and bring it so beautifully into our hands at our first meeting of the year. Thank you, thank you, thank you so much, Jean.



**Happy Birthday** wishes from all of us go to our September babies!

**FYI...**Since many of you are new to our club, and perhaps for some of you who have been in our club for a while, here's a quick primer on your responsibilities when called upon to serve on a **Hostess Committee** for one of our meetings:



It is always a good idea to review the schedule of programs for the club year when each new program book is distributed to see if you have been assigned by our Hospitality and Membership Committee to serve on one of our Hostess Committees.

The first hostess mentioned will be the coordinator for that committee, and is responsible for contacting the other members of the committee to plan the refreshments for that month's meeting.

If for some reason a member assigned to a Hostess Committee cannot serve, that member is responsible for finding a replacement, so that the committee will not be shorthanded.

If you have any questions about this procedure, please contact the club's Hospitality and Membership Chair.

...more news on the next page...



*\*\*Our Sunshine Committee Chair, Helen Gaffey, just loves to send out beautiful cards, so please let her know of any member who needs a little sunshine from our club!*

*And, since Topsfield Architect, Ben Nutter, will be speaking to us about Topsfield's historical Parson Capen House, here are some quick facts from the Historical Society's web site: The Parson Capen House overlooks the Topsfield Common, and is one of the finest surviving examples of Elizabethan architecture in America. It was the home of the Reverend Parson Capen, who served the Church in Topsfield for 44 years. The Topsfield Historical Society purchased the house in 1913, and in 1960 it was designated a National Historic Landmark.*



*Here's last year's first prize float!*

Did you know that the garden clubs of Topsfield annually collaborate with the Agricultural Commission to produce prize winning parade floats for the Topsfield Fair Parade? Very soon you will be able to join in the fun of putting one of these floats together. Volunteers will be needed to paint the structure, and assemble it during the week before the Fair, as well as to help make the colorful paper flowers that will adorn the float. If you would like to participate, please contact Rose Ann.

### *...Bits and pieces...*



*Here's our group of capable workers at the Pine Grove Cemetery garden preparing for Memorial Day, May 2011.*



*The Pine Grove Cemetery garden is all ready for the Memorial Day Observance, May 2011.*



*Tammy Glasser receiving the President's Bowl at our Annual Meeting, June 2011.*



*Our club tent provided good cover from the rain during this year's Strawberry Festival!*

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



## Green Thumb Corner

*Dare I say the “W” word? Yes, “Winter!” You know for us in the Northeast, winter always comes. It never forgets. With that in mind, I am sorry to say that it is time to start preparing your yards for the inevitable.*



*Here are a few tips for things you can do now to keep winter damage to a minimum:*



*Water, water, water...the best way to insure that your plants will be healthy after our long winter is to make sure that they are well hydrated going into it. Water your evergreens and new plants, especially in October and November since, when the ground freezes, your plants cannot take up any water, and must wait until the Spring thaw. I'm sure you're not thinking of doing much watering at this time of year, but it is very important to do it.*

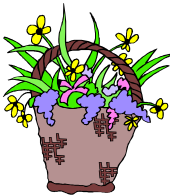
*It is not a good idea to fertilize your plants right now since this can encourage new growth which will not have enough time harden off before our winter sets in. If you wish to fertilize, you can do it in late November or December, when the ground is beginning to freeze. That way your plants will have this food available when they wake up in the Spring.*

*Okay, now a few words about clean up. There are two types: thorough cleaning, which can help prevent plant diseases and insect problems in the next season, and selective cleaning which will allow you to leave some plants uncut for winter beauty, and to provide food for those birds who stay around and brave our winters. The choice is yours. At any rate, it is a good idea to pull up annuals such as petunias and marigolds and trim the foliage on*



*perennials back to the ground to minimize shelter for rodents and other garden pests, who will be looking for winter homes. Be sure to leave pruning of your roses until the Spring. After this, give your garden a final raking. After the first hard freeze, you may add compost or other soil amendments. Mulching is a great tool to protect tender plants during the winter because it insulates the roots, and protects them from damage caused by heaving. Even though they can increase your soil acidity, pine needles and oak leaves make great mulch. It is best to apply mulch when the ground freezes or is about to freeze, probably around the end of November. Applying mulch earlier may encourage rodents to move in!*

*And now, let's address spraying and other plant protections. An application of an anti-desiccant spray such as Wilt-Pruf to protect your evergreens from the drying winds of our winters is a great idea. Spray the top of the foliage when the temperatures are still above freezing. You might also consider using burlap for plant protection on hillsides and along the street. Tree wraps are good if you have unruly rodents girdling your plants or deer rubbing the trunks of trees with their antlers. Start at ground level and work your way up to the branches. The use of a variety of deer sprays...not just one because the deer may get used to the scent...may protect your shrubs from winter grazing. I apply deer netting as well. I attach it to shrubs with wood clothespins. And, next time you're out, pick up some reflective markers to guide those who will move your snow, so that there will not be any plow damage to your grass and shrubs.*



*And, what to do with plants in containers, or with containers themselves? Containers that hold soil and remain outside can crack from the expansion of freezing water. The best solution is to bring them inside a porch or garage if possible. Water plant only to keep the soil moist. If this is not an option, at least try to empty the container, and invert it. If this is still not an option, you may try covering with heavy weight plastic. Be sure the plastic is well*

*secured. For containers with plants that must stay outside all winter, it is important that you water until the soil in the container freezes. If the plant is an evergreen, it is a good idea to spray with anti-desiccant spray. If possible, wrapping with burlap will add extra protection from the harsh winds and sun of winter.*

*Happy Fall gardening!*