

A POSY PICKER'S PAPER

New Meadows Garden Club

Topsfield, Massachusetts

September 27th through October 25, 2016

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

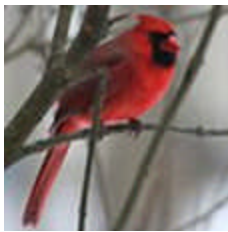
Welcome to our club's fifty-eighth year!

Congratulations to our newest Honorary Member, Jean Bilsbury!



"You are my sunshine, my only sunshine. You make me happy when skies are gray. You'll never know dear, how much I love you. Please don't take my Sunshine away."

September 27



Northern Cardinal

We have a change of pace this year for our opening meeting! Our garden club year will start with a **"Welcome Back Barbeque Dinner."** Bring your appetite, but don't be late! The fun starts at 5:30 pm at the Gould Barn, Topsfield. There will be an opportunity to socialize with your fellow members at dinner and then enjoy a special program entitled "Birds of the North Shore, Up Close and Personal" presented by Norman Russell. Board members (Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs) are requested to bring a bottle of wine. All members are requested to **RSVP** to Janet Hanson as soon as possible so there will be enough delicious dinner and desserts to go around!

****Thank you to our gracious hostesses for this meeting:
Judy Donovan, Rita Galvin and Janet Hanson**

September 30—
October 10



The Topsfield Fair, together with the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, will present **"Treasures from the Past"**, a Standard Flower Show, in the Flower Barn at the Fairgrounds. Once again this year, the **Georgia McHugh Award** will be awarded to the novice designer (never won a blue ribbon in a standard flower show) with the highest point score in the design division. Mei Schuster from our club was the recipient last year.

And, if you have never served as a hostess for this special flower show, here's your chance. A few two hour shifts may still be available for you and a buddy, and in return you will receive free entry to the fair and free parking. Please

contact Deb Falcinelli as soon as possible at debra.falcinelli@gmail.com if you are interested.

And what would the fair be without the annual Topsfield Fair Grand Parade? Hopefully the weather will be perfect this year and the float, which is being created by the garden clubs of Topsfield and local small farms, will win first prize. Come see all the fun on Saturday morning, October 1st at 9 am, as the parade rolls its way from the Topsfield Common, through town to the fairgrounds!

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

October 18

Our next board meeting will be held at the home Sandy Whelan at 10 am.

October 25



The Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts Fall Conference will be held at the Holiday Inn—Boxborough, 242 Adams Place, Boxborough, MA 01719. Our officers are planning to attend and invite you to join them. Registration before October 18th is \$55.00, which includes lunch. After October 18th, the cost is \$65.00. For more information and details about the day, contact President Shirley, or go to the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts web site at:

<http://www.gcfm.org/Meetings/FallConference.aspx>

October 25



Our October regular membership meeting will be held at the Gould Barn, Topsfield at 6:30 pm. Many of you are aware of our member Donna Ryan's long list of prize winning recipes, and now you will have the opportunity to taste her wonderful creations. Donna and her fellow member and friend, Cheryl Connors will be treating us to an Herb Cooking Class and Dinner. So mark your calendars for this very special meeting and please RSVP to Sandy Whelan regarding your attendance by October 18th!

***Thank you to our gracious hostesses for this meeting:
Tammy Glasser, Susan Keliher and Nancy Emmons*

NOTES



This year, a big thank you goes to Judy Donovan and Janet Hanson, who have done a splendid job as our new Program Book Publishers. Not many of us are aware of how much effort goes into compiling all the information

our book contains, and bringing it so beautifully into our hands at our first meeting of the year. Many thanks to both of you for jumping right in and taking over this complicated task and to our Honorary Member, Jean Bilsbury, for her expert guidance.



Our Horticulture Committee would like to express their great appreciation for all the help they received during the summer season from members who volunteered to "primp" the Memorial Garden at the Pine Grove Cemetery, and the Prospect Street and Linebrook Road Islands. Maintaining these gardens was a challenge this year because of the severe drought of the last several months, but in spite of it all, our public spaces looked wonderful. The committee will soon be looking for your help for fall cleanup at these gardens. Please watch for their sign up sheets, and get your gloves and clippers ready!

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

Helpful
Tips

Each year, many of our members will be assigned by the Hospitality Committee to serve on a hostess committee at one of our membership meetings. When you receive your new program book for the year, please check the listings of our club meetings to determine whether you have been assigned. The first hostess listed is the head hostess and is in charge. If you cannot serve on the committee to which you were assigned, please find a replacement. Members sometimes find it convenient to switch months with one another to accomplish this!



Remembering Bill Flagg

A year ago at this time, we had just said goodbye to our dear member, Betty Flagg. Now, sadly, we say goodbye to her dear husband, Bill, who passed away last June. What a couple these two special people were! Bill was the perfect counterpoint to Betty's quick wit. He was also a faithful supporter of our club, always ready to help when help was needed. As a team, Bill and Betty worked tirelessly at the Veteran's

Memorial Garden at the Pine Grove Cemetery, and at both the Prospect Street and Linebrook Road islands. Advancing age didn't seem to make any difference! And, Bill was also always at the ready to lend a hand during our fundraising efforts at the Strawberry Festival. But perhaps we remember him most for the beautiful piano music he provided at many of our special club events. For his many contributions, he was voted Honorary Membership in our club...our very first male Honorary Member! He will certainly be missed, as is his dear wife, Betty. They are gone from us but will never be forgotten.



2012 was a very good year for the Flaggs!

Helpful
Tips

Remember the days when the Garden Club of Massachusetts' newsletter, The Mayflower was mailed to us seasonally and we had to pay for it??? Well, those days are gone forever, as so many things are in this ever-increasing, electronic world we all live in. Now everyone has access to the magazine electronically, and here is the link:

<http://gcfm.org/Mayflower.aspx>

...more on the following page...



As many of you know, our club donates books to the Topsfield Town Library to honor members of our club who have passed away. Here are two books, which were added to the library's collection over the summer, and if you find yourself there, you might want to take a look at them:

*In memory of Myra Hollis: "The Flower Appreciation Society" by Anna Day and Ellie Jauncey.
In memory of Angela Johns: "Wildflowers of New England" by Ted Elliman.*

...Bits and pieces...



*A great cruise on
the Essex River!
June 2016*



Linda Mann receives the club's President's Award

*Annual Banquet
June 2016*



Enjoying a little social time!



Our new officers are installed!

...continued on the next page...

Strawberry Festival June 11, 2016



Our setup on a glorious day!



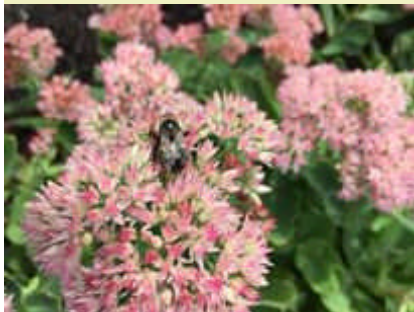
This year's "Oney's Bench!"



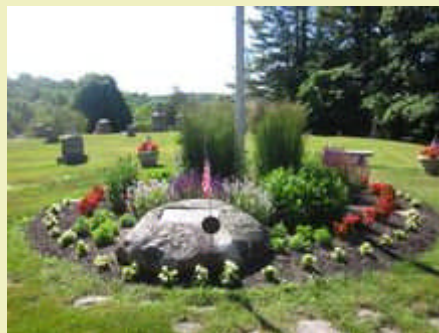
The Crew!



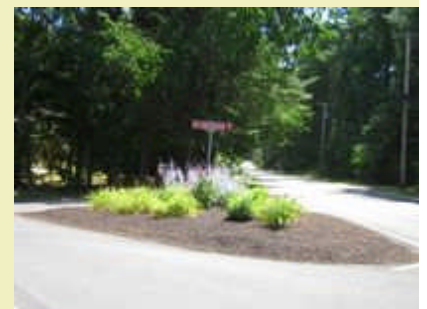
Our Topsfield Civic Projects



Jane Cullinan's Fall at the Prospect Street Island



Pine Grove Cemetery Garden



Linebrook Road Island in July

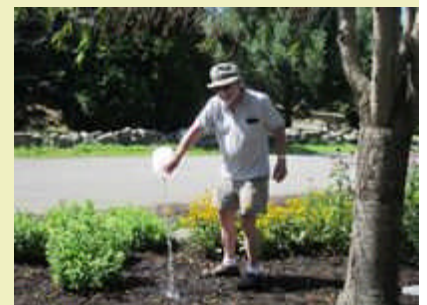


Oney Shade waters our drought-stricken tree at the Prospect Street island.

Husbands at work!



Dave Donovan waters our cemetery garden

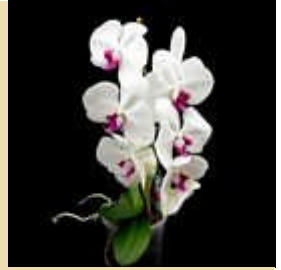


Harry Martin brings more water to the tree at the Prospect Street island.

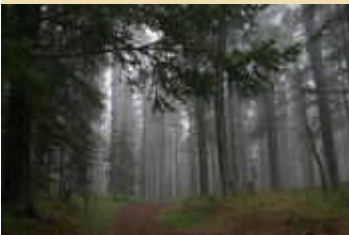
...green thumb follows...

Green Thumb Corner

Many of you already know of my love affair with orchids! Since I moved to New England 44 years ago, I have consistently been “Mom” to an enormous number of plants. If someone came along and said that I could only keep one of them, it would be an orchid, without any doubt!



I haven't forgotten that at one of our meetings last year, Barbara Shade suggested that I write about these “lovelies” in our Green Thumb Corner, and so I decided that we should start this year doing just that. It will be a good way for me to entice you to enter the exciting world of orchids, if you haven't already done so. Maybe you have already tried, and not succeeded to your satisfaction. My hope is to convert you through a series of articles I will write, this being the first of them. Today we will talk a bit about what they are and their history, next time a bit about choosing orchids and how to grow them, and then how to transplant and propagate them. For me, the key is patience, and I think it will be for you too. Very few of us are part of what I call the “instant gratification generation.” Most of us know what the word patience means and we know how to do it, most of the time! After all, we were taught that “patience is a virtue.” Patience will come in very handy, and will be essential, as you wait for your orchid plant to re-bloom!



And so, the adventure begins. In the time of the dinosaurs, much of our world was covered by primordial (or ancient) forest. During this period, plant life was evolving rapidly, and one of the first plants to develop was the orchid. Modern plants such as roses and asters were non-existent. As time went on, both animal and plant life died out or were replaced by other species, but at the same time the orchid family

flourished and expanded, populating every corner of our world except Antarctica. Orchids lived on trees, rocks, under the ground and above it in tropical rainforests, grasslands, high on mountains and even in bogs. Nothing seemed able to disrupt their evolutionary process. They were definitely on a mission. (These days we'd probably call them invasive!) Today there are over 35000 different species of orchid in existence. These facts make orchids one of the most successful and adaptable families of plants. Ever clever, what they lack in internal resources, they obtain elsewhere. A good example of this are orchids that prefer a more acidic condition. They encourage ants to live on them by creating suitable chambers for them to live in, which in turn protect the ants from their enemies, and in return the ants increase the acidity on the plant through their own use of formic acid from the atmosphere as a defense system. But, contrary to myth, orchids are not parasitical plants, even though they do grow on trees. The fact is that they do not feed on anything they attach themselves to. They merely use these places as their “hangouts!”

When it comes to reproduction, orchids are extremely versatile. Of course, some pollination is achieved by crawling insects, hummingbirds, small mammals, including bats, and wind. But these plants also attract pollinators by mimicry. They know how to design their flowers to either look like an aggressor of the pollinator or it's sexual partner! This satisfies their desire for choice in a pollinator, and ensures the continued purity of the species. This capacity to choose only the perfect pollinator captivated the 19th century British naturalist and geologist, Charles Darwin. Best known for his contributions to the science of evolution, he also did evolution related experiments and investigations on orchids, which led him to write books on the subject.

So, this is the thought to hold until next time: orchids were on this planet long before the first man appeared, and in spite of man's penchant for cutting back forests, polluting the atmosphere and in general interfering with ecology, orchids will probably still be here long after we have gone!♥

► Next time...choosing your orchid and taking care not to kill it!