

A POSY PICKER'S PAPER

New Meadows Garden Club

Topsfield, Massachusetts

September 26th through October 23, 2017

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-ninth year!

And, welcome to our new member, Marsha Stevens!



Asters, stars of the autumn garden, are the birth flower of September births. They are members of the sunflower family, and symbolize patience, lasting love, good luck and feminine energy. They have been used medicinally to treat headaches, colds and muscle aches.

September 26



Nunan's Florist

Our first regular membership meeting of the year will be held at Nunan's Florist and Greenhouses, 269 Central Street (Route 97), Georgetown at 6 pm. Our Administrative Board will be treating us to an "early fall" picnic dinner, including sandwiches, salads and chips. The Hostesses Committee will add beverages and dessert! And our Executive Board will be bringing wine for the wine lovers out there. In addition, members also have an

opportunity to participate in an optional seasonal workshop to create their very own "Pumpkin People." The cost of the workshop is \$15.00 payable to Nunan's at the meeting. Reservations must be made with Jane Cullinan as soon as possible if you wish to take part in the workshop. There will also be an opportunity to receive a 20 percent discount on purchases made at Nunan's that evening. There is something for everyone, and this is definitely a meeting not to be missed!

****Thank you to our gracious hostesses for the evening, Gerrie Bunker and Linda Flynn**

September 29—
October 9



The Topsfield Fair, together with the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, will present "Blooming Ahead," 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.

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 DebFalcinelli as soon as possible at debra.falcinelli@gmail.com if you are

interested in doing this.

As always, the Topsfield Fair Parade will begin at 9 am Saturday, September 30th, and will proceed from the Topsfield Green to the Fairgrounds. No garden club float this year...it was decided to take a year off! However, if you are at the fair, be sure to stop by at the Flower Barn and view the landscape gardens that will be created by the Topsfield Garden Club!

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

October 17

Our next board meeting will be held at the home Sandy Whelan at 6:30 pm.

October 25



The Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts Fall Conference will be held at Boxborough Regency Inn and Conference Center, 242 Adams Place, Boxborough, MA 01719. Our officers are planning to attend and invite you to join them. Unfortunately, details are in the planning stages and are not available at this time. Please go to <http://www.gcfm.org/Meetings/FallConference.aspx> for additional information as it becomes available.

October 23
Monday!



Our October regular membership meeting will be held at the Topsfield Library Meeting Room at 6:30 pm. Please note that this is a Monday evening meeting. Our Artistic Committee has planned an exciting meeting for all of us! Artistic Co-Chair, Rose Ann Waite will expertly demonstrate three floral arrangements in a special ceramic pumpkin container. There will be a fresh flower arrangement with flowers available at our local supermarkets, a silk floral arrangement, and a secret simple arrangement anyone can do, even your Posy Picker Editor! We will each be receiving our very own ceramic pumpkin container to bring home to create our own floral masterpieces!

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

NOTES



This year, a big thank you goes Janet Hanson, who, single-handedly has done a splendid job as our Program Book Publisher. 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 again to Janet for taking on this complicated and time consuming project so important to our members.

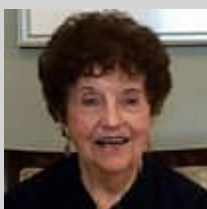


Nancy Emmons, who volunteered to coordinate the planting and upkeep of the gardens our club maintains throughout the Town of Topsfield, would like to express her great appreciation for all the help she received during the summer season from members who volunteered to "primp" the Memorial Garden at the Pine Grove Cemetery, and the Prospect Street and Linebrook Road Islands. Nancy will soon be looking for your help for fall cleanup at these gardens. Please watch for her sign up sheets, and get your gloves and clippers ready!

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



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!



Helen Gaffey is our newest Honorary Member

By a unanimous vote of your garden club Executive Board, Honorary Membership was conferred posthumously on Helen Gaffey in appreciation for her never-ending commitment to the well-being of the New Meadows Garden Club of Topsfield. If you can hear us, Helen, many thanks for your loyal presence in our club and your friendship!

Art In Bloom at the Museum of Fine Arts

Here's excellent news to pass on to you! Club member, Barbara Shade, has graciously volunteered to represent our club at Art In Bloom at the Museum of Fine Arts next spring. Her assistant will be Artistic Co-Chair, Rose Ann Waite. How fortunate we are that a pair of pros with previous Art In Bloom experience will be keeping our club tradition of participation in this exciting event alive! Jot down the dates for this event...April 27th through April 29, 2018. Many thanks to both Barbara and Rose Ann for making this commitment on behalf of our club.



Just a reminder that the Garden Club of Massachusetts' newsletter, The Mayflower, is now available electronically to all members, free of charge. Here is the link:

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

...more on the following page...

...Bits and pieces...



*Planting the Memorial
Garden at the Pine
Grove Cemetery*

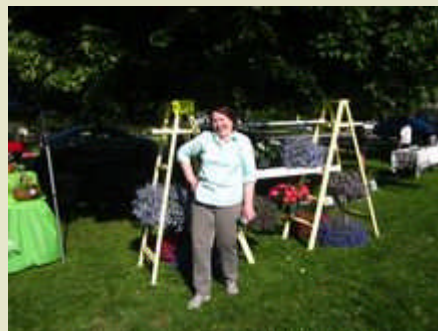


The Crew!

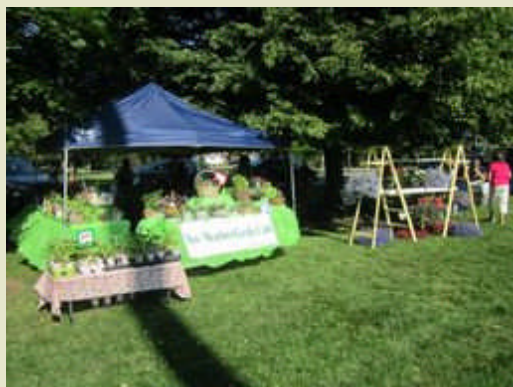


Succulent workshop at Rose Ann's home.

*Strawberry Festival
2017*



Hail to our Chief, Donna Graves!



Oney Shade's Bench!



*Barbara Shade and Shirley Holt with our
club's award.*

*GCFM Annual Meeting
June 2017*

*William H. Thompson
Award
in recognition of the
Club's Monarch
Butterfly Project*



...continued on the next page...



*Annual Banquet
June 2017*

*Barbara Shade presents the President's
Award to Janet Hanson.*



*Nancy Emmons receives her 40th year
charm from Barbara Shade.*

Our Topsfield Civic Projects



Pine Grove Cemetery in July



Linebrook Road

Our Islands



Prospect Street



Steward School Urns



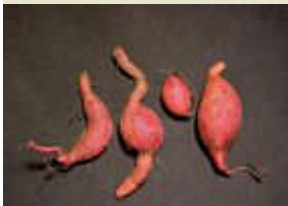
...green thumb follows...

Green Thumb Corner

Do you agree with me when I say that the foliage of the Ornamental Sweet Potato Vine is spectacular? I had admired containers which included this plant for years and then decided to plant them in the containers that adorn our deck during the summer months. They



were glorious as they spilled over the edges of my pots! And, then, as we all know, fall arrives, and it is time to bid our container plants adieu, unless there are plans to over-winter some of them. I had no plans to do this with my Sweet Potato Vine, so I went about cleaning out my containers to get them ready for winter storage. Lo and behold, as I dug down into the soil to remove the roots of the Sweet Potato plant, out came a bunch of sweet potatoes! What a surprise.



Once I thought about it, this made perfect sense. The Ornamental Sweet Potato, which is grown primarily for its purple, chartreuse or variegated foliage is a true sweet potato. So, then my next thought was “are these potatoes edible???” Thanks to my trusty computer, I was able to do some research on the matter that I am sharing with you here.

While the tubers that are formed by your beautiful Sweet Potato Vine are edible, you’ve really got to want to eat them! These plants are bred for vigor and fanciful color rather than for taste. While varieties of sweet potato plants developed specifically as a vegetable are likely to be orange-fleshed and sugary tasting, the flesh of the tubers of the decorative vine is generally white and doesn’t taste very appealing. So, if you are pining for a delicious sweet potato with butter melting inside, it is better to grow those plants specifically developed as a vegetable, or stick to those you buy in the supermarket!

Here are a few horticultural tips if you decided to grow Ornamental Sweet Potato next summer: Keeping in mind that these plants grow quickly and can take over small spaces even when bought small, use a container that will provide lots of room, and trim them aggressively to keep them under control! The vines are better hanging down over the sides of containers than growing up a trellis. They prefer moist, well-drained soil. Full sun is great, but they will tolerate light shade if that’s what you can provide.

If you have a very “green thumb,” you can over-winter your Sweet Potato Vine. There are a number of methods involving the tubers themselves, but the easiest might be to take 10 to 12 inch cuttings of your plant before the first frost in fall, remove the bottom leaves, and root in a clear glass of water. When the roots have developed on the cuttings, pot them up and place in a sunny window, keeping the potting soil lightly moist, but not soggy. Then, take your plant back outside in the spring once the danger of frost has passed!

Got green tomatoes? The growing season isn’t very long for us New Englanders and I am sure that I am not the only one growing tomato plants that has a whole bunch of green ones hanging on the vine that haven’t a prayer of a chance to get nice and ripe the way they did during the summer! What to do. Here are a few ideas:



Leaving your green tomatoes on your plant as long as possible will increase the taste and the nutritional value. To give your plants as long as possible to do this, the easiest route on chilly nights is to cover the entire plant with something like a sheet or garden row cover to keep them toasty warm, and then uncover them for the sunny and warm days we still get in fall. You can do this until the temperatures consistently fall below 50 degrees. At that point, the fruit will stop ripening.

...more on the next page...

At this point, you can pull the entire plant out of the ground with the tomatoes still attached, and hang it upside down in a cool and dark space...a basement, if you have one, is good. Check your tomatoes every couple of days removing those that seem to be rotting, and pick the good ones to eat!

As an alternative, the green tomatoes can also be picked from the vine and wrapped in newspaper. Then, place the tomatoes in a cardboard box, checking for ripeness every few days. Remove any tomatoes that seem to be rotting. Make sure you put the box in a place where you won't forget about your little juicy gems!

And my last tip is to simply cook with green tomatoes! Here are a few recipes:

Mystery Fudge Cake

2-1/2 cups regular, all-purpose flour	1/2 cup cocoa
2-1/2 teaspoons baking powder	2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon salt	1 teaspoon cinnamon
3/4 cup butter or margarine	2 cups sugar
3 eggs	2 teaspoons vanilla
2 teaspoons grated orange peel	1/2 cup milk
2 cups coarsely grated green tomato 1 cup finely chopped walnuts	

1. Combine dry ingredients in a large bowl and set aside.
2. In another bowl beat together butter and sugar until smooth and blended.
3. Add eggs one at a time and beat well after each addition.
4. With a wooden spoon, stir in vanilla, orange peel, and green tomatoes.
5. Stir the nuts into the sifted dry ingredients and add to tomato mixture alternately with milk.
6. Pour batter into a greased and floured 10-inch tube or bundt pan.
7. Bake at 350° until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 1 hour.
8. Cool in pan 15 minutes then turn out onto a wire rack and cool thoroughly.
9. Sprinkle with powdered sugar before serving.

**** I've made this cake several times, and can definitely say it never lasts long around my house!**

Fried Green Tomatoes

6 medium sized green tomatoes, sliced 1 inch thick

1/2 cup all-purpose flour	2 beaten eggs
1 cup seasoned bread crumbs (salt, pepper, parsley, chopped onion and dried oregano)	

1. Dip tomato slices first in flour, then in egg, then in seasoned bread crumbs.
2. Cook in a small amount of oil, in a large skillet, over medium heat, until lightly browned, about 3 minutes on each side. Tomatoes should be tender when pierced with a fork, but not overdone.
3. Drain on absorbent paper. Serve warm, with lemon wedges, if desired.

Enjoy!

****For our orchid lovers, September often brings with it cool evenings and shorter days, which are signs that the season is changing. It is time to start thinking about bringing indoors any orchids that have been summering outside. However, before doing this, examine your plants for pests. If spraying is necessary, it is much easier to do it before your plants come in for their long winter inside!**