

A POSY PICKER'S PAPER

New Meadows Garden Club

Topsfield, Massachusetts

September 25th through October 23, 2018

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 sixtieth year!



The happy faces of Sunflowers are everywhere right now as fall approaches and, if you are lucky, you'll pass a whole field of them as you ride through our beautiful countryside at this time of year. Too late to view the glorious field at Colby Farm in Newbury, but do put it on your To-Do list for next year! See this month's Green Thumb Corner for more sunflower talk!

Congratulations to our newest Honorary Members, Barbara Shade and Rose Ann Waite.

September 25



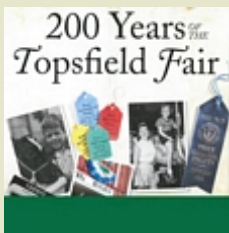
Nunan's Florist

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 Sugar

Pumpkins topped with succulents. The cost of the workshop is \$20.00, payable to Nunan's at the meeting. Reservations must be made with Sandy Whelan as soon as possible if you wish to attend and 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, Linda Flynn and Sue Keliher*

September 28— October 8



*The Topsfield Fair is celebrating its 200th anniversary this year, and to honor this achievement, the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, will present a Standard Flower Show, "200 Years of Farming, Flowers and Fun" in the Flower Barn. This year, the flower show will also feature a Horticulture Division. And, once again, 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. The perfect tribute to our very dear past member!*

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.

By the way, when you visit the Flower Barn to see the flower show and the magnificent gardens, be sure to view the landscape garden which will be created by the Topsfield Garden Club once again this year!

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

October 2

The Northern District Coffee will be held at The Chapel at Lowell Cemetery, 17 Knapp Avenue, Lowell at 10 am. All are invited to come and share ideas with other clubs in our district. Let Sandy Whelan know if you are interested in attending.

October 16

Our next board meeting will be held at the home Joline Yeaton at 10:30 am. Please note that the time has been changed from that listed in your program book!

October 18



The Village Gardeners have invited our club to join theirs at their meeting featuring Sean Ward, who will be speaking about one of his ancestors, who invented the "Wardian Case," the forerunner of our modern terrariums. You might remember that he was a guest speaker at one of our club's meetings a few years ago! The meeting will be held at the Topsfield Library Meeting Room at 6:30 pm.

October 20



The Topsfield Town Hall Ribbon Cutting Celebration will be held at 10 am, followed by an Open House to 2 pm. Our club will be supplying eight centerpieces and a design for the foyer for this festive occasion. We're hoping that many of you will want to participate in this historic occasion by helping to create these designs at a workshop to be held on October 19th at the home of Mary Connor. Details about the workshop will follow soon!

October 23



Our October regular membership meeting will be held at the Clubhouse at Amberwood Farms, 281 Rowley Bridge Road at 6:30 pm. Please note that this is a change of venue from that printed in your program book. Our very own Co-President, Jane, will create a fresh flower design for us, and also a fall silk flower design. A workshop will follow, during which we will create fall silk designs to be sold at our fundraising table at the Joint Meeting of the five area garden clubs on November 7th. All materials will be provided!

Our hostesses for the evening are Janet Hanson and Gerrie Bunker

October 24



The Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts Fall Conference will be held at The Massachusetts Horticultural Society, Elm Bank, 900 Washington St., Wellesley. Our officers are planning to attend and invite you to join them. Please go to <http://www.gcfm.org/Meetings/FallConference.aspx> for additional information and to register by October 12th. Sandy Whelan can also provide a registration form to you. The registration fee of \$55.00 includes a Continental Breakfast, luncheon, morning and afternoon programs and, as always, lots of boutique shopping!

NOTES



Many thanks to Janet Hanson for putting together our club's Program Book once again this year. This is a complicated and time consuming project and Janet's efforts are greatly appreciated. The books have been printed and will be ready for you at our first meeting.



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

Where oh where could our Strawberry Festival equipment be? We packed up our belongings after a very successful fundraising day on the Topsfield Common, but what happened to our tables, ladders, tent and other "stuff???" If you know where some of these items are located, please let Sandy Whelan know ASAP!



Nancy Emmons, who tirelessly coordinates 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 months 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. More details will follow. In the meantime, get your gloves and clippers ready!



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 to serve as a hostess at one of our meetings. 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!

Art In Bloom at the Museum of Fine Arts

It will soon be time to sign up for one of the coveted spaces available at the Art in Bloom event at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts April 2019. Co-President Jane has volunteered to assist any member who would like to represent our club as the designer. Please let Jane or Sandy know as soon as possible if you would like to participate!

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://files.constantcontact.com/6c224ab0101/0c9d2360-246f-4481-8fb3-0761e76f254d.pdf>

► Please forward any changes in your contact information to Membership Chair, Janet Hanson!

...more on the following page...

...Bits and pieces...



*Merrimack River Cruise
May 22, 2018*



*Planting the Memorial
Garden at the Pine
Grove Cemetery*



*Mary Connor receives our club's
President's Award*

*Annual Banquet
June 2018*



Our club's new officers are installed

...continued on the next page...



*Strawberry Festival
2018*



Oney's Bench!



Prospect Street Island

Our Topsfield Civic Projects



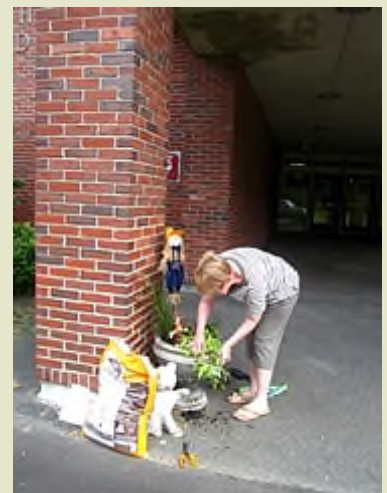
Linebrook Road Island



Pine Grove Cemetery in August



*Shirley Holt's urns at the
Topsfield Library*



*Linda Flynn readies the urns
at the Steward School*

...green thumb follows...

Green Thumb Corner

Have you been fortunate enough to see a field alive with a riot of Sunflowers this year? I spent a very memorable afternoon surrounded by these beauties just a few weeks ago at Colby Farm on Scotland Road in Newbury. It was truly magical, and not hard to understand why these blooms inspired the likes of artists Van Gogh, Gauguin and Monet, among others.



I was so taken by my experience that I decided to do a bit of research on this delightful flower and pass what I learned along to you today. The first thing I discovered is that I am not the only one struck by the beauty of a sunflower field. Apparently, a sunflower farm in Ontario, Canada was recently forced to close after thousands of tourists seeking the perfect selfie caused complete chaos! Seven thousand vehicles caused a traffic jam from hell!

But not so fast...sunflowers aren't just another pretty face! Sunflowers actually originated in this country way back around 3000 BC, when they were grown for food, dye, medicine and oil. However, they were met with lukewarm reception when exported to the rest of the world by the Spanish conquistadors in the early 16th century. Enter Tsar Peter the Great, who was fascinated by these dancing headed flowers when he saw them in the Netherlands. He brought some back to Russia, where they became extremely popular when people discovered that sunflower oil was not banned as other oils were by the Russian Orthodox Church during Lent.

Meanwhile, back in the US, sunflower production exploded in the 1940s to produce sunflower oil, and especially in the 1970s, to meet the demand of diet-conscious consumers looking for low-cholesterol alternatives to butter and other animal fats. Today though, most sunflowers are grown in the former Soviet Union.

And, this wouldn't be a garden club article without a bit about sunflower culture...these flowers not only resemble the sun, but need a lot of it to grow! The best conditions provide six to eight hours a day of sun, or more. Matter-of-fact, sunflowers are one of several plants that make optimum use of light by turning to face the sun. This is called heliotropism, and is essentially solar tracking, which enhances the photosynthesis process and increases growth rates. The flower buds and young blossoms will follow the sun from east in the morning to west as the day goes by. Sunflowers average between 10 and 20 feet in height. The Guinness Book of World Records reports that the tallest sunflower ever grown measured 30 feet 1 inch, and was grown in Germany!

Looking a bit closer at the center of the sunflower's head itself, (put your glasses on if you must) you will see that it is made up of smaller flowers! The large petals around the outside of the flower head are called ray florets, and cannot reproduce. The function of these petals is to help attract pollinators. The smaller florets in the center have both male and female sex organs, and each produces a seed. Bees go merrily from flower to flower in the center of each head, becoming covered with pollen. They then travel from plant to plant pollinating other sunflowers as they go. Growing a successful sunflower crop for seeds and oil depends totally on bees!

And, finally, one last tidbit! Did you know that sunflowers have the ability to remove toxins such as uranium, arsenic and lead from soil that has been contaminated? Well, they do have this ability, and have actually been used to clean up soil at some of the biggest environmental disasters, included nuclear disasters in Chernobyl, Ukraine and Fukushima, Japan.

If you haven't been to a sunflower field in full bloom as yet, why not make yourself a promise to experience the delight in one of our local sunflower fields next summer. I promise that you will not be disappointed!

