

# A POSY PICKER'S PAPER

New Meadows Garden Club  
Topsfield, Massachusetts

October 25th through November 17, 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.



Goldenrod is native to North America and belongs to the aster family. We consider them weeds, but they are considered prize perennials in Europe. Young leaves are edible!

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 her many awards, 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. Donna was a guest at our board meeting last week and described to us the dishes she is planning to prepare with a large selection of yummy herbs, starting with appetizers, through a lovely dinner and dessert. From the sound of it, this will be an event not to be missed! Hopefully, you have advised Sandy Whelan whether you will be there by now so Donna and Cheryl will be prepared to serve you! And there will be a door prize too!

**\*\*Thank you to our gracious hostesses for this meeting:  
Rose Ann Waite and Nancy Emmons**

November 3



The Salem and Peabody Garden Clubs will present "Art in Bloom Road Show" at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 97 Washington Square, Salem at 7 pm. This program will feature Meade Fasciano, Senior Associate of the MFA, who will present the behind-the-scenes story of Art in Bloom, and award winning floral designer, Linda Ladd, who will present a live floral interpretation of a work of art. A \$5.00 donation is suggested.

November 4—6

The Massachusetts Orchid Society presents "World of Orchids" at Mahoney's Garden Center, 242 Cambridge Street, Winchester. More details about this great event are included in this month's Green Thumb Corner!

November 8



Horticulture Morning will be held at the Tower Hill Botanic Garden, 11 French Drive, Boylston at 10 am to noon. The program will be "Succulent Love" presented by Katherine Tracey, co-owner of Avant Gardens, Dartmouth. Admission is \$5 for club members, and \$10 for their guests.

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

November 15

*Our next board meeting will be held at the home Shirley Holt at 10 am.*

November 16



*The Topsfield Garden Club invites us to **The Annual Joint Meeting of the Tri-Town Garden Clubs**, which will be held at The Commons, 4 N Common Street, Topsfield at 6 pm. An exciting program is planned and will be presented by Tony Elliot from Snug Harbor Farm, Kennebunk, Maine. Those of you who have been to Snug Harbor Farm know that it is a wonderful place to visit, and so Tony's program can't be anything but just delightful! And, as always, the garden clubs will each offer enticing items at their fundraising tables.*

November 27



*Last year's crew!*

*Our club will decorate the Topsfield Library for the holidays at 1 pm. Once again this year, Artistic Co-Chairs Rose Ann Waite and Donna Graves are planning simple, beautiful and joyous decorations very tastefully placed throughout the interior of the building, with wreaths and swags on the outside of the building. Helping hands will be needed, so Donna will be circulating a sign-up sheet at our October 25th meeting. Please seek her out and volunteer to join in the fun!*

December 8



*Our Garden Therapy Committee will hold a Boxwood Tree Workshop for members of the Topsfield Council On Aging. Time and place are not yet arranged, but helpers will definitely be appreciated! Mark your calendars and please stay tuned.*

December 13



*Once again this year, our Holiday Social will be Brunch and a Yankee Swap at the Bradford Tavern, 87 Haverhill Street, Rowley at 12:00 pm. Stay tuned for further details about this year's festive occasion and be sure to mark your calendars!*

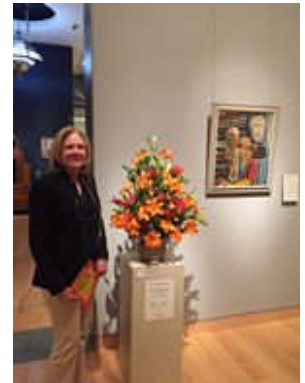
*...more news on the following page...*

## NOTES



*Good news...our club is now welcoming new members. If you have a friend who might be interested in participating as an active member of our group, why not extend an invitation to a few of our meetings to see if the fit is a good one!*

*The first year for Art in Bloom at the Museum of Fine Arts was way back in 1976. According to the research done by our Historian, Barbara Shade, in 1984 the museum invited garden clubs to participate in this very special annual event. Our club participated that first year, and every year since, except for one. A very special achievement for us indeed! Now, it is time once again to look for a designer and an assistant among us who will represent our club at this event in the spring. The dates are April 28th through May 1, 2017. If you are interested, please contact President Shirley as soon as possible. Entry in this event at the museum is on a first-come first-serve basis.*



*Last year's designer,  
Jane Cullinan*

## **Topsfield Fair News**



This year, the garden club float for the Topsfield Fair Parade held Saturday, October 1st celebrated the 90th anniversary of the Topsfield Garden Club and won First Prize in The Grand Theme Float category! It was a dismal day, with lots of rain during the parade, but there were many brave spectators along the way, which made all the preparations totally worthwhile!

**Congratulations to the Topsfield Garden Club.**

*\*See the float in action at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDgZwHRP5PU&feature=youtu.be>*

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



*...Bits and pieces...*



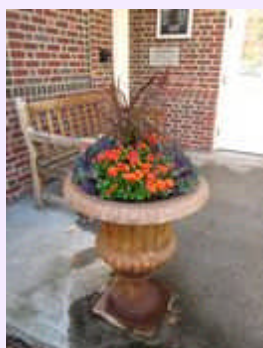
*Welcome Back Dinner  
September 2016*



*Jane Cullinan on kitchen duty!*



*Bird program with Norman Russell*

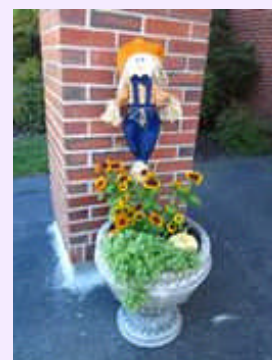


*Topsfield Library*

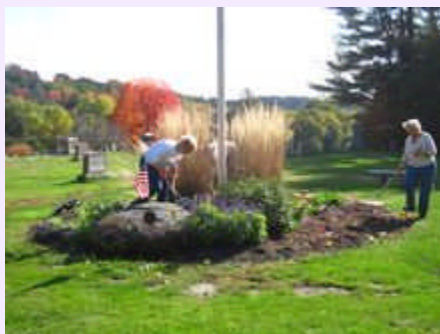
*Our Urns Around Town*

*Cemetery and Island  
Fall Cleanup*

*Many thanks to the "Six  
Musketeers", Nancy  
Emmons, Jane Cullinan,  
Claudette Poor, Mary  
Connors, Sandy Whelan  
and yours truly!*



*Steward School*



*...Green Thumb Corner follows...*

## Green Thumb Corner

*Okay, so last month we spoke a bit about the history of orchids. You'll remember that we said that orchids were on this planet long before the first man appeared, and in spite of our 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! With this in mind, it is probably a smashing idea to next talk about how we can choose the right orchid to bring into our homes and actually have it survive for more than a few months!*



*Phalaenopsis*

*Armed with the following information, you will be amazed at how easy and rewarding growing orchids can be! You, too, can be a Master Orchid Gardener!*

► *Here's your first hint: before you jump in the car to look for your orchid, slow down and consider the environment you will be able to provide for your plant once you bring it home. If you skip this step, you may find that you and the gorgeous orchid you have just brought home may be all wrong for each other! First, be sure that your plant will fit in the space it will be moving into. You should have a good idea what the low and high temperatures are there, whether there is good air circulation, and how much light your orchid will get there. Since orchids love humidity levels of 50 percent or greater, can you help provide this? You can find lists of orchids outlining their temperature and lighting preferences on-line, but if you are just starting out, the easiest orchids for conditions we can provide here in the Northeast are the *Phalaenopsis* (known as moth orchids) and *Paphiopedilum* (known as Lady's Slippers Orchids, not to be confused with the wildflower Lady's Slippers that grow outdoors.) Both of these orchid types are known for their long-lasting flowers. Blossoms on *Phalaenopsis* can easily remain open and fresh for two months or even several months longer.*



*Paphiopedilum*

*Just a word about each of these orchids...*Phalaenopsis* orchids are called epiphytes because, in nature they grow in the branches of tropical trees, clinging to them for support, absorbing moisture from the bark. For this reason they should be planted in bark chunks rather than soil. They do not like wet feet! On the other hand, *Paphiopedilum* orchids are terrestrials or soil-dwellers. They should be grown in a typical houseplant mix that holds moisture, but still drains well.*

► *Here's your second hint: So, now you have a pretty good idea about the environment your orchid will need and have made a solemn promise to provide it! Your shoes are on, your purse is in hand and you are ready for the excitement of going out into the world to find the perfect orchid for you! Where to go? While finding a place to purchase orchids used to be difficult unless you lived in a warm climate, these days you can go to a myriad of places to shop. Reputable orchid specialists have been selling orchids for many years, and can provide excellent advice, so they would probably be the first choice. However, specialist growers and supplies might not be too close-by unless you decide to make a special day trip. I did check the internet for specialist growers near us, and it looks as if there are some in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, but none of these are just down the street.*

*So what next? A trustworthy local garden center might be the next best choice. Look for one that specializes in tropical plants and houseplants. Unless the garden center is noted for its orchids, the selection there may be limited.*

*Another great source for quality orchids is Orchid Shows. There are usually vendors at these shows who have spectacular selections of orchids for you to buy! And, in this regard, here is very good news: the Massachusetts Orchid Society's annual orchid show, World of Orchids, will be held at Mahoney's Garden Center in Winchester November 4th through 6th. All the necessary details are on the last page of this newsletter, or check out the following website: <http://www.massorchid.org/show!>*

*...more on the next page...*



*A result of the orchid's current popularity is that home centers, discount stores and supermarkets now carry a limited selection of them. The good news is that they usually carry orchids that are easy to grow and are less expensive to purchase than elsewhere. The not-so-good news is that getting information about the orchids is difficult in these stores, and, if you are not there soon after their stock arrives, the plants may be a bit "worked over." And yet, if you are shopping for your first, inexpensive orchid, and you don't have easy access to the sources mentioned previously, these are good places to start. It's a perfect idea to find out when your store receives its shipments and plan to be there as soon after as possible for the best selection.*



*And now, in our on-line world, there a whole new, endless source for orchids!*

*Most orchid suppliers now have web sites, a lot of them very detailed and informative. Two that you might want to look at are **Orchids by Hausermann** and **Odoms Orchids**. For a nice list of suppliers, you might also check out **Orchid Mall** at [www.orchidmall.com](http://www.orchidmall.com)! I personally have never purchased orchids on-line, so I cannot pass onto you any experience in that regard. I'm into instant gratification, so shopping for orchids around town is my passion. However, if you would like to try on-line orchid shopping, do try to establish the vendor's guarantee, and also take note of the vendor's shipping policies during the winter months. And, if you can find them, reviews from other buyers can help too! And here's one last suggestion if you are searching for orchids on the web...use the **Latin name for the plant rather than the common name**...you'll get many more "hits."*



*►Here's your third hint: now that you've chosen a vendor for your orchid purchase, picking out a healthy plant is essential, especially since it will have to adjust to changes in its environment when you bring it home. The stronger and more robust the plant, the better it's chances will be to survive this ordeal! Here are a few things to look for when you are selecting your orchid:*

- The leaves should be a healthy, uniformly green color, stiff, thick and rubbery, and not shriveled or dehydrated. Spots on the leaves may or may not be a problem. It's best to ask the vendor about this. Steer clear of plants whose leaves are limp or yellow.*
- Look for signs of insects, especially on new growth, on flower buds or on the undersides of the leaves. White webbing on the leaves is definitely not a good sign either.*
- The plant's aerial roots should be white with green tips and firm, not black, soft or mushy.*
- Look at the potting mix...it should be barely moist, and not soaking wet or extremely dry.*
- Make sure the plant is labeled. Labels will come in very handy if you want to look up information on the particular variety of orchid you have purchased.*
- If your vendor seems to be knowledgeable on orchid culture, it might not hurt to ask about the temperature, light, space and humidity requirements for the orchid you are considering.*

*►And here's your last hint for today: start with a mature plant, even though they tend to be more expensive than younger plants. Younger plants are much less expensive, but some species take seven to sixteen years to bloom! Do not confuse the "younger plants" that I refer to here with orchid species that are mini's. Mini-orchids are just what the name implies...little orchid plants. They remain small no matter how old they get. Young orchid plants take a lot more attention and energy to grow, while mature plants are much more forgiving if you happen to over or under-water them. And the advantage of purchasing a mature, blooming plant is that you get to see exactly what the flower is like. And, since orchid flowers tend to last quite a while, you will be able to have many weeks of enjoyment after you bring your plant home. Pick the plant that has the most unopened buds for more extended enjoyment! **One last word...if it is cold outside, be sure to provide some protection for your plant on it's way home!***

***Next time...you've gotten your orchid home...now what???***



Tantalize your sense of smell and sight at the Massachusetts Orchid Society's annual Orchid Show, November 4 to 6, at Mahoney's Garden Center in Winchester, MA. The ten-thousand square foot greenhouse will feature exotic displays of blooming orchids from around the world to showcase this year's "World of Orchids" theme.

The show will feature something for every level of enthusiast, from beginner to advanced, including hourly tours of the displays, plant raffles, seminars and educational events, vendors of specialty orchids and growing supplies, orchid art, lessons on how judges award their ribbons, and an opportunity to pick-up a magnifying glass to study an orchid the size of your thumbnail.

**Purchase tickets [online](#) or at the door.**

**Dates & Times:**

Friday, Nov 4, 2016: 12:30 pm - 5 pm  
 Saturday, Nov 5, 2016: 10 am - 5 pm  
 Sunday, Nov 6, 2016: 10 am - 4 pm

**Location:**

[Mahoney's Garden Center](#)  
 242 Cambridge St, Winchester, MA  
[\(directions\)](#)

**Admission:**

Adults \$10  
 Free to MOS members as well as children  
 8 and under  
 Purchase tickets [online](#) or at the door.

**More Information:**

[Event Schedule](#) - Schedule of events planned for the weekend

[Directions to Mahoney's](#) - How to get to the show

[Vendors & Exhibitors](#) - Learn about the vendors and exhibitors attending this year's show

[Awards](#) - Learn about the trophies awarded at the show and sponsor a trophy. Sign up online.

**Questions?**

Contact [show@massorchid.org](mailto:show@massorchid.org)

**Participant Information**

[Registration](#) - Vendor and Exhibitor Registration Information

[Volunteer](#) - Sign up online to help at our show