

A POSY PICKER'S PAPER

New Meadows Garden Club

Topsfield, Massachusetts

November 19th through January 21, 2020

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

Best wishes to all for a very special holiday season!



Thanksgiving is upon us, with the rest of the holiday season not far behind. If some traveling is on tap for you during this busy season, check out this issue's Green Thumb Corner for tips about keeping your plants happy during your absence and healthy upon your return.

November 25



A workshop to prepare accessories for our Topsfield Council On Aging Boxwood Tree Workshop will be held at the home of Mary Connor, 138 Haverhill Road, Topsfield at 1 pm. The Boxwood Tree workshop is expected to be very well attended, so lots of accessories will be needed! Please contact Sandy Whelan and copy Mary if you can lend a hand, and please bring your scissors and clippers!

December 10



Our annual Holiday Luncheon and Yankee Swap will be held at the Bradford Tavern, 87 Haverhill Street, Rowley at 12 noon. As in past years, we will be ordering individually from a limited menu of delicious dishes. For those who would like to join in the fun of the Yankee Swap, the suggested gift value is \$15.00.

► The deadline for your reservation is Friday, December 6th to Gerrie Bunker.

► Since the holiday season should be a time of cheer for everyone, our board is requesting that members bring a non-perishable food or household item to be donated to the Topsfield Food Pantry. Please avoid glass containers. For canned foods, low-salt is preferred. Items like coffee, canned fruit, tuna and cereal are good! Also needed are items such as laundry detergent, toothpaste and other household items. Small sizes are preferable. Cash donations and supermarket gift cards are also welcome.

December 11



Our Garden Therapy Committee will hold a Boxwood Tree Workshop for members of the Topsfield Council On Aging at the Trinity Church Meeting Hall, Topsfield at 9:30 am. ► Please note that this is a change in location from that printed in our Program Book! We expect a large group to participate in the workshop this year, so please set aside some time to lend a hand. We need all the help we can get! Helpers are requested to arrive at 8:30 am for set-up prior to the workshop. Please bring newspapers to cover tables, and clippers!

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

December 12



*The Topsfield Council on Aging Holiday Party will be held at the Topsfield Town Hall. Containers for the centerpieces our club will once again create for this event will be available from Mary Connor. Please deliver your completed centerpieces to the back entrance of the Topsfield Town Hall by 2:30 pm. There will be a table just inside the entrance for your masterpieces! **Many thanks in advance to all who will volunteer to create one of these centerpieces!***

January 21

Our next board meeting will be held at the Topsfield Library Meeting Room at 10 am.

There is no regular membership meeting scheduled for January.

NOTES



Once again this year, here's an event to brighten your holiday season that's not too far away to attend! The gardens at The Stevens-Coolidge Place in North Andover will be sparkling with thousands of shimmering holiday lights celebrating their very special annual Winterlights event. You can visit Thursdays to Sundays, except Thanksgiving Day, from November 21st to December 29th 5 to 8 PM to see the lights and share in each day's special programs. Tickets are \$12.00 for members and \$17 for non-members, and may be purchased at the following website, which will also provide you with details of each day's special program: <http://www.thetrustees.org/things-to-do/special-events/winter-lights.html> Children 12 and under enter free. Be sure to don your winter coats and boots, and prepare to be dazzled!

Coming soon! Sometime near the end of November, our club will be decorating the urns at the Topsfield Library and the outside of the building with wreaths and swags for the holiday season. Helping hands will be needed, so watch your inbox and be prepared to be part of the merry crew once more details are available!

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

...Bits and pieces...



Jacki Harrington presents her Pressed Flower Program.

October 2019 Meeting



Choosing our pressed flowers.



Voila! Our club members' finished note cards!

Putting our Community Gardens to sleep for the winter



Many thanks to Scott Hayes for his fall cleanup at the Prospect Street Island on a rainy day!



Jane Cullinan's photo of the last blossom of the year at the Prospect Street Island.



The Linebrook Road Island all clean thanks to Co-Presidents Jane and Sandy, and Steve Whelan



Cleanup at the Memorial Garden at the Pine Grove Cemetery. Many thanks to the crew: Co-Presidents Sandy and Jane, Treasurer, Marsha, Secretary Joline and husband Bob, Nancy Emmons and Linde Martin.

...more on the following page...

*Our club hosts the November 2019 Joint Meeting
At the First Church Congregational, Boxford
Presenter: Bill Graham of Beautiful Things, Salem*



Delicious food offerings for our guests!



*Honorary Member, Jean Hampton's punch bowl
graces our beverage table.*



*Mary Connor's fall design perfectly adorns our food table.
Following the meeting, the folks at Masconomet
Healthcare Center in Topsfield were very pleased to accept
from Mary her design for display in their reception area.
Thanks so much, Mary.*



*Honorary Member, Barbara Shade, collects
PJ donations for the Community Giving Tree*



Janet Hanson tends our fundraising table.

*Presenter, Bill Graham works magic creating an
exquisite design while entertaining us all with his
endless stories.*



...Green Thumb Corner follows...

Green Thumb Corner

Holiday time is approaching quickly now, and many of us may be planning for trips out-of-town to visit family or to just enjoy some glorious time away at this very special time of the year. It's always a busy time getting ready for traveling...we all know the drill! Plan your wardrobe and pack your bags...check! Arrange for pet care...



The Patch Plant Hotel

check! Prepare your home for your absence...check! Everything all set? Not so fast! What about your beloved houseplants? Are they ready to take care of themselves while you are on your adventure? Hmmm...what to do?

If you lived in London, one option would be to check your plants into the very first 5-star, all inclusive botanicals-only plant hotel, known as the Patch Plant Hotel. While this hotel isn't as yet open year round, what a concept it is! Your plants are looked after by a team of specialists who see to it that your darlings stay hydrated and happy while you are away. They receive a check-up from a wellness team, which includes a custom hydration spa treatment. Sounds just perfect, doesn't it? Alas, this place is the only one like it so far. Absent this option, if you will be away for more than a few days to a week, here are some tips on how to keep from returning home from your peaceful and calming time away to a house full of wilted, dried-up and shriveled plant material inhabiting the places your prized plants used to occupy before you left on your adventure:

- First and foremost, leave your houseplants well watered and move them out of direct sunlight. Also, turn down your thermostat so that temperatures during your absence remain between 60 and 65 degrees.*
- Ask a plant-savvy friend to tend to your plants a few times a week, perhaps in exchange for your providing the same service in return. A non-plant-savvy friend will also do, if you provide detailed instructions as to how much water to provide your sweeties, and at what intervals of time. Be sure to measure the amount of water you provide your plants, and pass this info on!*
- If you don't have anyone you can call on to attend your plants, another option is to make your very own mini-greenhouse using a large clear plastic bag. Place the open bag on a waterproof floor...even a bathtub or shower will do. Line the bottom of the bag with a moist towel, and arrange as many well-watered potted plants as will fit on top of the towel. Place a few stakes into your pots to insure that the plastic does not rest on the foliage of your plants. Pull the sides of the bag up carefully, and blow some air into the bag to expand it. Seal your bag securely with a twist tie, and you will be good to go.*
- Another option is to line the bottom of a shallow tray with pebbles, adding water just to the top of the rocks, and then placing your well-watered plants on top.*
- For large plants, placing several layers of damp newspaper over the top of the soil will help keep the top surface from drying out and the roots moist.*
- Set up a wicking system with some absorbent wicking material such as thick yarn or strips of an old cotton T-shirt, and a container to hold water, such as a bowl, pail or a bottle. Set the container of water next to your plant, and place one end of the wick into the water, all the way to the bottom of your container, and the other end about three inches into your plant's soil. It's best to set this up ahead of time and make sure your system is working before you leave!*
- And, if you would like to do a bit of shopping, there are several houseplant self-watering systems available for purchase on-line!*

Hopefully, some of these tips will help keep your houseplants alive and kicking until your return, and happy travels!

...more on the following page...

A GARDENER'S THANKSGIVING

Let us give thanks for a bounty of people:



For children who are our second planting, and though they grow like weeds and the wind too soon blows them away, may they forgive us our cultivation and fondly remember where their roots are;

For generous friends with hearts and smiles as bright as their blossoms;

For feisty friends as tart as apples;

For continuous friends, who, like scallions and cucumbers, keep reminding us that we've had them;

For crotchety friends, as sour as rhubarb and as indestructible;

For handsome friends, who are as gorgeous as eggplants and as elegant as a row of corn, and the other, plain as potatoes and as good for you;

For funny friends, who are as silly as Brussels Sprouts and as amusing as Jerusalem Artichokes, and serious friends, as complex as cauliflowers and as intricate as onions;

For friends as unpretentious as cabbages, as subtle as summer squash, as persistent as parsley, as delightful as dill, as endless as zucchini, and who, like parsnips, can be counted on to see you through the winter;

For old friends, nodding like sunflowers in the evening-time, and young friends coming on as fast as radishes;

For loving friends, who wind around us like tendrils and hold us, despite our blights, wilts and witherings;

And finally, for those friends now gone, like gardens past that have been harvested, and who fed us in their times that we might have life thereafter;

For all these we give thanks.

~ Reverend Max Coots 1928-2009. Reverend Max Coots passed away in 2009 after a long and full life. He served as the Minister Emeritus of the Unitarian Universalist Church in Canton, New York.

Best wishes to you and those special to you for a glorious, peaceful and healthy holiday season. ♥