

# A POSY PICKER'S PAPER

New Meadows Garden Club

Topsfield, Massachusetts

December 11th through January 15, 2019



Mistletoe is a popular plant for decorating at holiday time. According to Norse mythology, when Baldr, the son of Frigga, was killed by an arrow made from mistletoe, her tears on the arrow turned into white berries, which healed his wound and brought him back to life. Filled with extreme happiness, Frigga blessed the mistletoe plant and vowed to kiss all who passed beneath it.

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!*

## December 11



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 Saturday, December 8th 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**. For canned foods, low-salt is preferred. 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. In addition, the **Community Giving Tree** would greatly appreciate donations of new PJ's, sizes 2 to teen. These can also be brought to the luncheon.

## December 7



A workshop to prepare accessories for our **Topsfield Council On Aging Boxwood Tree Workshop** will be held at the home of Mary Connor at 1 pm. Please contact Mary if you can lend a hand, and please bring your scissors and clippers!

## December 13

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. The committee is 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 13**



Please deliver your centerpieces for the Topsfield Council On Aging Holiday Party 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!

► As an alternative, your design may be dropped off at the Council On Aging Boxwood Tree Workshop at the Trinity Church in the morning of December 13th!

**January 15**

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



\*\*\*As many of you know, it has been a long-standing custom for our club to place a small flower design or plant each week at the main desk at the Topsfield Town Library during the months of January, February and March. Co-Presidents Sandy and Jane have been busy compiling a list of volunteers for this public service we do for our club's home town. Thank you so much to those members who have graciously signed up. Your assigned dates are listed below.

For those who are participating, your assignment is very simple...on Monday of your week, just bring a plant, or a simple flower design to the library...the choice is yours and it doesn't have to be too elaborate...then come back to pick it up the following Saturday afternoon. You can even arrange with the member volunteer for the week following yours to pick up your plant or design for you. No lilies please because of their strong scent! It couldn't be easier!

If you find that circumstances have changed making it impossible to follow through with the commitment you made, please swap dates with a volunteer on the list who has signed up for a date following yours.

\*\*For your information, the library opens at 10 am on Mondays and closes at 5 pm on Saturdays!

Here's the schedule:

January 7	Joline Yeaton	February 18	Sandy Whelan
January 14	Mary Connor	February 25	Linde Martin
January 21	Gerrie Bunker	March 4	Lorraine Erickson
January 28	Jane Cullinan	March 11	Pat Durgin
February 4	Shirley Holt	March 18	Linda Flynn
February 11	Marsha Stevens	March 25	Janet Hanson

Many thanks to all of you for volunteering ♥♥

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

## *Art In Bloom at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts*

Here's spectacular news about our club's continued participation in Art In Bloom, a premier event at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts. Our club has been part of this event every year except for two since 1984, and, this year, we are happy to announce that Claudette Poor will be our designer, with Jane Cullinan assisting. It will certainly be a treat to see Claudette's creation. The event will take place on April 27–29, 2019. Be sure to mark your calendars and plan a trip into the museum to view Claudette's design and those of all the other garden clubs selected to participate in this exclusive event!

### *A few memories of our club's Art In Bloom entries past*



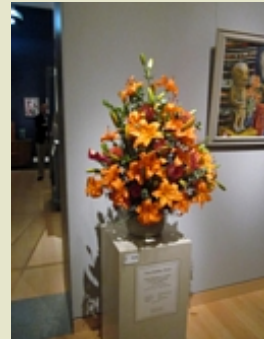
*Barbara Shade  
2013*



*Rita Galvin  
2011*



*Mary Dalton  
2009*



*Jane Cullinan  
2016*



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 are sparkling with thousands of shimmering holiday lights celebrating their very special Winterlights event. You can visit for 15 more days in December 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!

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



*...Bits and pieces...*



*Fall Cleaning at the Prospect Street Island with volunteer Scott Hayes and Jane's hubby, Chris!*



*Creating fall silk flower arrangements at our October Meeting.*

### ***Topsfield Town Hall Ribbon Cutting Ceremony October 2018***



*Mary Connor's design*



*Jane Cullinan's design*



*Table designs*



*Many thanks to all who contributed items for our fundraising table at this year's joint meeting of the five area garden clubs in November!*

### ***November Joint Meeting***



*Claudette Poor and Jane Cullinan become part of the show!*

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

## Green Thumb Corner

Last time, we talked about bringing plants that have summered outdoors back inside your home and we chatted a bit about selecting the best spot for them to spend the winter. In addition to light and warmth, another very important consideration for placement if you have pets is



whether or not your plants are toxic to Fido or Fluffy should they decide to munch on them in their spare time, and while you're not looking! You know your pets best, but the reality is that dogs and cats are curious creatures and many times have a penchant for eating strange things. My daughter had a cat (yes, I said "had") who ate rocks! That said, garden plants, houseplants or even cut flowers from a florist can be irresistibly tempting to our curious little furry friends. Flower and plants beat rocks any time! Unfortunately, many common plants, including some of those we are about to fall in love with at the plant nursery are very toxic to pets. But there are also those that are just as beautiful and are completely safe. It is best to know the difference. And so, what follows is a bit of what I learned in researching this very important topic.

► First and foremost, here is a partial list of common houseplants that are toxic in varying degrees to dogs and cats: Aloe vera, Amaryllis, Begonia, Cyclamen, Ivy, Oleander, Poinsettia, Pothos, Sago Palm, Asparagus Fern, Dracaena, Diffenbachia, Jade Plant, Geranium, Kalanchoe, Peace Lily, Philodendron, Euphorbia, and Gardenia.

► And, in the garden, here are some plants that are toxic to your furry friends: Chrysanthemums, Dahlias, Daisies, Lily of the Valley, Peony, Coleus, Lavender, Forget-Me-Nots, Daylily (toxic to cats, not dogs), Azaleas and Rhododendrons, Boxwood, Holly, Hydrangea, Lantana, Yew and Rose of Sharon. Bulbs such as Caladium, Crocus, Daffodil, Hyacinth, Iris and Tulip are also toxic, as well as Clematis, Morning Glory, and Wisteria vines. Acorns are on the "no-no" list as are Tomato Plants, Mint and Parsley. Who knew!

► Lastly, beware of these cut flowers, again only a partial list: Chrysanthemum, Carnation, Daisies, Lilies (safe for dogs, but not cats), Foxglove, Larkspur, Lupine and Baby's Breath.

Oh my, is there anything left that is safe for Fido and Fluffy? Be optimistic...the answer is "certainly!" Houseplants such as these are perfectly safe around dogs and cats: African Violet, Aluminum Plant, Bromeliads, Orchids, Spider Plant, Boston Fern, Christmas Cactus, Hens and Chicks, Peperomia, Lipstick Plant, Hibiscus, Swedish Ivy, Polka Dot Plant, Ponytail Palm, Prayer Plant, Hoya, Air Plants and many others.

In the garden, among pet-friendly plants are Alyssum, Aster, Snapdragon, Cornflower, Marigolds, Impatiens, Magnolia, Pansies, Petunias, Sunflowers, Sweet Potato Vine, Zinnia, Sage, Thyme and Cilantro.

And what's more beautiful than a bouquet of roses? Perfectly safe around your pets. But remember, no Baby's Breath!

Oh, but what if you already have the most gorgeous Asparagus Fern on the face of the Earth with which you have totally bonded??? Must it be relegated to the compost heap because it is not on the safe list for your dog or cat? As I said at the beginning, you

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know your pets the best, and if they are super mischievous, or at home alone most of the day, perhaps avoiding plants on the toxic list is best. If you think a compromise can be struck, here are a few tips that may help:

► Know which plants you have, which are toxic and which are safe. I have mentioned some of the very common plants, but for a complete list, check the ASPCA's Animal Poison Control website at: <https://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/toxic-and-non-toxic-plants>. There are also loads of sites you can Google for information on plants you might have or are thinking about acquiring.

► Hang plants high or use tall plant stands, which may be out-of-reach for most pets.

► Display plants in rooms where pets aren't allowed, or don't normally visit.

► Beware of placing plants on dangling tablecloths or table runners.

► Line the rim of your flower pot or the edge of the shelf the pot is on with double-sided tape...cat's are not big fans of double-sided tape!

The key is to keep your plants and flowers out of your dog's reach, and, since cats are sometimes more inventive, to convince kitty that that plant really isn't worth the trouble! But, if all else fails, and your pet shows any worrying symptoms, don't waste time looking at plant lists. Immediately call your vet or visit the ASPCA poison control hotline website.♥



### *'Twas the Night before Christmas for Gardeners*

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the yard the branches were bare and the ground frozen hard; the roses were dormant and mulched all around to protect them from damage if frost heaves the ground.

The perennials were nestled all snug in their beds while visions of 5-10-5 danced in their heads.

The new planted shrubs had been soaked by the hose to settle their roots for the long winter's doze; and out on the lawn, the new fallen snow protected the roots of the grasses below.

When what to my wondering eyes should appear but a truck full of gifts of gardening gear.

Saint Nick was the driver — the jolly old elf — and he winked and he said, "I'm a gardener myself."

"I've brought Wilt-Pruf, Rootone, and gibberlins too — father can try them and see what they do. To start new plants — a propagating kit; sparkling new shears, for the old apple tree."

"To seed your new lawn, I've a patented sower; in case it should grow, here's a new power mower. For the seed planting days I've a trowel and a dibble. And a row of wire mesh if the rabbits should nibble."

"For the feminine gardener, some gadgets she loves; plant stakes, a sprinkler and water proof gloves; a chemical agent for her compost pit. And for pH detection, a soil testing kit."

"With these colorful flagstones, lay a new garden path; for the kids to enjoy a bird feeder and bath. And last but not least, some well-rotted manure! A green Christmas year round, these gifts will insure."

Then Jolly Saint Nick, having emptied his load, started his truck and took to the road. And I heard him explain through the motor's loud hum:

"MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL, AND TO ALL A GREEN THUMB!"

...author unknown