



The Mayflower

GARDEN CLUB FEDERATION
OF MASSACHUSETTS



The President's Message

With all opening seasons, I feel that this is a really big one at GCFM this summer. We saw many changes on the Board and many newcomers chairing committees, as well as new members joining committees. Introducing new people to blend with the seasoned, is a healthy mix to build a future for GCFM.

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Clubs at Work

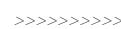
The chapters of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts have had an especially busy summer working in their communities. From the Berkshires to the Cape, catch up on the latest work of our talented and committed clubs.

Read more on page 3.



Environmental Awareness

Learn about every-day ways to lower your environmental footprint and some of the dangers of lead in your soil. There have also been two new pest alerts released from the University of Massachusetts that the garden and horticulture communities need to be looking out for.



Read more on page 10.

President's Message (cont.)

Let me start with the amazing addition to our Board being **Emily Hooper Alston**, our Editor-in-Chief of The Mayflower! I wrote about Emily in the Monday Memo back in the summer, but she deserves another mention as this is her first edition and as busy as she is, I applaud her for taking this on along with all of her other responsibilities. She works a full time job as a communications director and also maintains a consulting practice on the side. In addition to other duties beyond GCFM and the Greenleaf Garden Club of Milford, she has little ones afoot at home. I am more than ecstatic that Emily is not only sharing her talents with us but that she is willing to give us the TIME! How does she squeeze us in? I don't know, but we are very fortunate to have her. So welcome aboard, Emily! And thank you for offering to take this role. I know the expression, if you want something done, ask a busy person, and it seems in this case, it is true!

I had a very busy summer talking with many people and discovering the hidden talents of the extraordinary members we have in our organization. I am delighted to announce that we have a new Communications Secretary, **Lois Brandt**, who just accepted this role in the past month. Lois is highly qualified for this very complex role but she is up for the task. Lois is currently finishing off her term as President of the Evening Garden Club of Plymouth and working part time, but tells me she intends to retire in December.

Another surprise and high energy person came after I sent out the Monday Memo asking for rejuvenation of the Junior Gardener Program. What a fun week of phone calls that was! I received many calls and **Diana Brandt** stepped up to chair the program. She has been successfully doing junior gardening for 16 years and has many projects and programs she is willing to share with everyone interested via Zoom beginning in October. Our first Zoom webinar will be October 19th at 7 PM. I will send out the link in a Monday Memo in the next few weeks.

The Blue and Gold Star Memorial has been resurrected once again and there seems to be a renewed interest not only from our new CoChairpersons, **Joy DiMaggio** and **Lynn Noland**, but also from clubs that have participated and some that want to know how to start



engagement in this program and our website will not only showcase the existing Memorial Gardens and Markers but will also post photos of them and guidelines for new clubs wanting information about the right kind of plantings to use and the protocol required.

Membership has been exploding since June. We are up to 23 new member inquiries. It's remarkable the interest new people have had in wanting to join GCFM garden clubs. The District Directors have been wonderful and prompt in reaching out to them and suggesting the appropriate clubs nearby their hometown that fit the type of club they are looking for. I was invited to a garden club just yesterday and there was a new member sitting behind me. The president mentioned that she was one of the new inquiries to whom I had sent her via email. Another amazing thing that is happening is clubs now wanting to join our Federation. We just welcomed the **Paxton MA Garden Club** in the spring and **Chatham Garden Club** this month. Both are significantly large garden clubs. I just received 2 more garden club inquiries this week from established clubs who have a sincere interest in wanting to join and asked for the paperwork on top of 3 others that are in the works. There must be something buzzing around the state but I certainly like the sound of the tune. **Suzanne McCance** is our new Membership Chairperson and she is going to be one busy lady this year!

This is also the time of year when the Executive Board goes on the road. Each District Director hosts a large meeting for the Club Presidents and Treasurers in her district. It is a wonderful way for us to get to know more about the culture of the districts. We look forward to these every year.

Thank you for a great few months of my term. Enjoy each day!

President Marjorie Dienhart

New England Region Conference

Massachusetts will host the **New England Region Conference** in the historic town of Plymouth October 10 and 11. This is an honor for us to host; it only happens in a rotation once every 6 years. **Carol Alper** will be our guest speaker on Tuesday evening at 7 PM. Carol was the founder of Pollinator Pathways on Cape Cod, and will show us how to start a native garden. On Wednesday morning, **Bob Whitney**, an AIFD floral designer, will entertain you with his "no rules" large designs, sense of humor, practical tips on cutting, placing, spraying, watering, purchasing, and playing with flowers. We are honored to have the National Garden Club President, **Brenda Moore**, present for both days; **Sue Miner**, region director, running the meeting both days; as well as all six New England state Presidents in attendance. There will be a nice variety of high quality vendors and many raffles to win. Please consider coming to this event one or both days. You can find the registration form on our website.

www.gcfm.org/annual-meetings

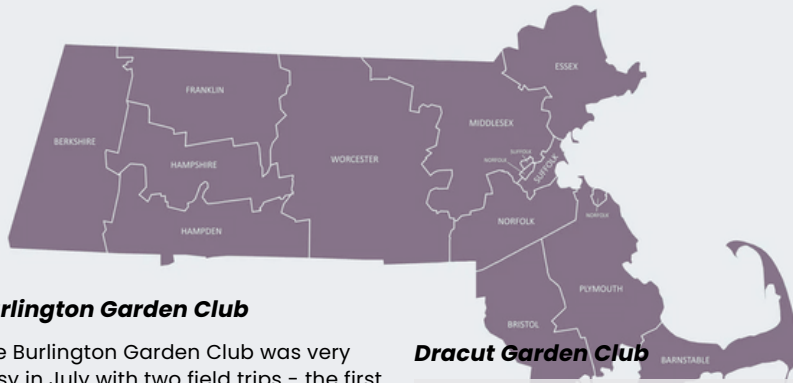
Youth Programs

Our Youth Programs Smokey the Bear and Woodsy Owl Poster contests, the Youth Sculpture and the Poetry contests are in full swing again. For a few years, we had only participated in the poetry contest.

This year our new Chairperson, **Nancy Martin**, has stepped up and decided to bring back all four programs and make them come alive again.

www.gcfm.org/youth-contests

Clubs At Work



Burlington Garden Club

The Burlington Garden Club was very busy in July with two field trips - the first to the Lowell Cemetery noted for its architecture, monuments, and famous people buried there and the second, a walk of The District, a section of Burlington, with many businesses and restaurants, to see their rain gardens, native plants and pollinators. In August, there was the fourth annual garden party to meet new members, catch up with old friends and hear about upcoming events. Over the summer, some members have been helping at the community garden growing fresh vegetables for the local food pantry and others have been taking care of the planters on the Common.



September starts off with the yearly Library display where the club features past and upcoming activities and civic beautification projects and ends with a presentation and mini plant sale on perennials. Our fall fundraiser for the yearly scholarship includes over 27 raffle baskets made by members and many gift certificates to local restaurants.



Dracut Garden Club

The Dracut Garden Club presented a Blue Hydrangea and memorial plaque to the family of a beloved deceased's club member, Martha A. Patch. Present were, first photo, (l-r) her daughter, Jessica Carville-Whittingham, Mary Ellen McCarthy, her sister, Pam Fitzgerald, club president and several club members. The hydrangea was planted in the Children's Memorial Garden of the Parker Memorial Library in Dracut. Reception followed in the Gazebo on the library grounds.



July's "Picnic at the Park" club meeting took place at Beaverbrook Farm in Dracut, a lovely park with walking trails and home of Dracut's Community Garden.



Plans are in the works for Dracut's September Old Home Day. The Club will be selling tulip and daffodil bulbs as well as offering a Mum plant and scratch ticket raffle item. A booth titled, "Ask a Gardener," will be available to answer any gardening questions.

Driftwood Garden Club of Marblehead

Summer is the time members of the Driftwood Garden Club of Marblehead roll up their sleeves and get their hands dirty. While the Abbot Public Library on Pleasant Street is under renovation, Driftwood members are sprucing up the library's temporary home at the former Eveleth School at Brook Road.



They have also have taken on courtyard garden work in Farrell Court, a Marblehead Housing Authority site.



Shoutout to Lisa Biggio, Civic Beautification Chair, along with Beth Manusco and Heather Martin, members of the Civic Beautification Committee, for keeping DGC teams on task. Many hands make light work, and our members are smiling while they work together!

Falmouth Garden Club

A rededication ceremony for the Blue Star By-Way Memorial Garden was held Wednesday, August 23 at the historical Museums on the Green located on Katherine Lee Bates Road. Falmouth Garden Club members spent months redesigning the garden and moving the plot to a more prominent location along the roadside. The ceremony was a wonderful gathering of veterans, members of the select board, representatives from the Museums on the Green, military personnel from Joint Base Cape Cod, and local musicians.

Clubs At Work



Attending the rededication ceremony for the Blue Star ByWay Memorial garden are (L to R) FGC Co-President Colleen Giacomozzi, SE District Director, Donna Garrabrant, GCFM President, Marjorie Dienhart, and FGC Co-President Rosanne Milli.



Blue Star By-Way memorial garden at Katherine Lee Bates Rd. in Falmouth.

Over a dozen floral designers from the Falmouth Garden Club participated in an interpretive art show in conjunction with the Falmouth Art Association titled, Petals and Palettes. Previous to the exhibit, Floral Design chair, Mary Lane, gave a workshop titled, "Exploring How to Interpret Art through Flowers." The newly established Crafty Gardeners Committee is sponsoring a hands-on workshop for participants to create fabric pumpkins. Keeping with the pumpkin theme, the committee coordinated another workshop to create succulent pumpkins to enjoy in fall.



There are many other activities planned for the fall including a walk of Waquoit Bay Estuary (Conservation Committee), plant swap (Horticulture Committee), creating fall themed favors to enhance the Meals on Wheels program, and more pumpkin themed arrangements with the JR/Sr. Gardeners program.

In addition to the many activities offered by the Falmouth Garden Club, members learned about Pollinator Gardening with Gary Bowden at the August monthly meeting. As a result of this presentation, the club has enrolled some of the gardens they maintain in the community to be part of the Cape Cod Pollinator Pathway and is encouraging individual members and the community of Falmouth to do so as well. The fall line-up of speakers include "Gardening is Murder" by author Neal Sanders and Jana Milbocker with "Magic in the Winter Garden" in October. Information regarding specific dates and times of meetings can be found on our website at falmouthgardenclub.org.

Garden Club of the Back Bay

Our fiscal year begins July 1 and with that a change of leadership. Maureen O'Hara begins her second year as Co-President and welcomes Maura Harty as her new Co-President. Maureen will also be the club's Membership Chair, Facebook and X (formerly Twitter) account manager. Tracey Cannistraro, Co-President for three years, will be moving to Communications and Nominating Chair as well as Website Manager. Tracey, along with some professional help and club members, created a new club website and changed the formatting of the clubs newsletter to allow monthly publications. Check out our new

colorful, Back Bay centric site here, <https://gardenclubbackbay.org/>. Bonnie Theise, our Communications Chair, is stepping off after a 2 year commitment to our club. She did a wonderful job creating quarterly newsletters and publishing our events. We thank Gudi Seward for her Community Outreach Chair commitment and welcome Patti Quinn who will step into that role, joining Janet Dracksdorf as returning Community Outreach Co-Chair. Diane Gipson is our new PopUp Chair, creating fun spur of the moment activities and tours. Thank you to our outgoing Members at Large who have completed their term, Wendy Oleksiak, Kim Buttolph and Martha McAllister. We welcome new Members at Large, Elizabeth Angelino, Wendy DeLorey, and Jane Grady. Our club has been busy this summer with many projects. Our Community Outreach team worked with Hale House in Boston and their residents to spruce up their lower garden. This project was led by the GCFM's Annie Hollingsworth and a team of volunteers to create raised beds with flowers donated by Perennial Gardens.



Our Border Brigade has been busy working with the Friends of the Public Garden, pruning, weeding, planting and more. We meet monthly with a group of our members to help maintain the gardens.



Clubs At Work



Tree fences in the Back Bay protect street trees and add beauty to the neighborhood. Currently our club has sponsors for eleven new tree fences and is working with Wovensteel on this project. The installation of 10 new fences is complete and we are now seeking sponsorships for the next batch of tree fences. In addition, nearly all of the repairs of the designated tree fences have been completed in the past few weeks. We have Sponsors for the painting of eight tree fences which will begin in September by Field's Painting. Thank you to our members who have generously sponsored this club initiative. If you wish to sponsor a new tree fence or support the painting of an existing tree fence by making a donation to the club, please send an email to anneswanson02116@gmail.com. The cost of a 4'x6' tree fence is \$2,500. Please spread the word to your friends and neighbors!

Anne Swanson is coordinating the Tree Fence Project with members Wendy Oleksiak, Mindelynn Young Godbout, Elizabeth Angelino, Kim Buttolph, Jody Weisman, and Kathy Droesch. Thank you for your hard work on this community beautification plan.

We have a robust program calendar, led by our Co-Chairs Jackie Blombach and Christine Hirshland. We begin in September with a Harbor walk led by Michael Manning, Chair of the Friends of the Boston HarborWalk. In October, at the Chilton Club, we will enjoy an Art In Bloom slide presentation by the MFA.



Greenleaf Garden Club of Milford

The Greenleaf Garden Club Junior Gardener Program began in 1977 when a garden club member, a first-grade teacher, obtained the permission of the Milford School Department to start the monthly after-school club for third graders. It began with nine students who received parental permission to take part, and the cost was \$5 per child. The children named the program "Green Thumbs."

Over the years, the program evolved with the guidance of garden club Committee Chairs and volunteers. In 2013 the Junior Gardener Program received an Award of Merit. Also in that year, the program won a GCFM award and in 2014, the program won third place for an educational display at the Tower Hill Botanical Gardens Flower Show.



GGC Junior Gardeners in 2014

When the coronavirus closed schools, the Junior Gardeners migrated to the Milford Youth Center, where the program was conducted via Zoom. Our then Chair developed programs, brought in materials and the Youth Center Staff ran the programs. When the pandemic was over, the program remained at the Milford Youth Center.

A new addition to the Junior Gardener Program took place this summer at the Milford Youth Center Summer Camp. The center asked if Greenleaf Garden Club would like to offer a weekly gardening program to the campers, we agreed, and the program took place for 5 Friday mornings in July and August. Since the after-school Junior Gardener program had already planted three raised bed vegetable gardens on the sunny side of the building in May, the pole beans, peppers, squash, cucumbers, and tomato plants were up and growing. Member Annette Packard had donated heirloom tomato seedlings from her garden and by July they were well over 6 feet tall, with major fruit production.

Our first Friday, the kids planted a 12-pot sensory garden, with plants honoring the senses of taste, sight, smell, sound and touch. Member Nancy Wojick provided terra cotta pots for the plants, and the center purchased a potting bench to house them outside.



Next, we made pickles with the cukes grown in the garden. After refrigerating for a week, the pickles were divided and the campers took them home.

The third week, Elaine McNanna brought her dried flower art skills to camp, and the kids created bookmarks and flower baskets to take home. The fourth week, the kids learned about butterflies, and crafted butterflies and caterpillars from pipe cleaners. The fifth week, they created culinary herb bouquets and learned to identify the herbs by smell. In between, the kids harvested tomatoes, salad greens, and radishes. GGC volunteers involved were Elaine McNanna, Patsy Timmons, and Phyllis Foley.

It was an extremely successful program, and taught them about raising vegetables, exploring nature, using natural materials to produce art, and protecting our environment.

Clubs At Work



Holliston Garden Club

The Holliston Garden Club kicked off their 90th Anniversary with a Garden Tour on Saturday, June 3, 2023. Eight gardens were showcased and thanks to our members, friends, and Garden Club affiliates we had an amazing turnout on a cold wet Spring day. This year the Club solicited sponsors from local businesses which allowed us to raise additional funds alongside the proceeds from ticket sales. We had a wonderful array of gardens ranging from public spaces that were designed and maintained by the Club at the Holliston Library to small cottage gardens that were designed to bloom continuously throughout the summer.



Additional gardens had water features, while others showcased landscapes that attracted hummingbirds and bluebirds via shrubs and trees and fauna.

As a Club we are looking forward to celebrating our 90th anniversary with a host of activities ranging from a Backyard Tea Party that will mimic the original tea party from 1933 when Mary Wells brought together a group of garden enthusiasts to form the first meeting of the Holliston Garden Club.



Additional events are designing and planting a new garden for Town Hall, planting ninety-nine spring bulbs at the Holliston Library and Blair Square, bringing back our November Open Meeting entitled "Century of Flowers" with Stacy Alleva Lee, Teacup Valentine's Day Arrangements for Senior Citizen's, Art in Bloom, and a Rail Trail StoryBoard Book featuring Vegetables. As we bring these ideas to fruition we will reach out to Club Presidents with information on how your club can join us at some of these events.

Hull Garden Club

The Hull Garden Club has preliminary plans for a Hull Public Library Memorial Garden. The concept for this space is to have a small garden where citizens may come to enjoy the lawn, water views, a concert or a quiet place to take their library book. For the HGC it would be a place to sit and remember all the ladies who founded our club and who have kept it going for over 50 years. It is a place to remember all the contributions the Club has made to the town through those beginning years. We have cleaned out the beds and side yard, and will continue to work through the summer.



Two of the main islands The Hull Garden Club maintains were reworked this year with a nautical theme. Kudos to our beautification team for their incredible transformation. We are a coastal community and these islands showcase our nautical influence.



Clubs At Work



Maria Gianquitto, Susan Aguilar, Marge Sullivan, Sylvia Goodman, & HGC President Betsy Russo

At Hull's annual Christmas in July fair, the Hull Garden Club had a booth and raised money to further their civic and educational initiatives. All items for sale were donated by members and everyone had a great time meeting people and discussing Garden Club current and future beautification projects in Hull.



A rededication ceremony was held at Hull Cemetery for Hull's first loss of WWI, Oscar Smith Mitchell. For the August 5th ceremony, American Legion (named after this veteran) asked the Hull Garden Club to create and present a wreath for the family who came from far and wide to witness. This beautiful wreath was created by HGC member Lynne Furze.

Garden Club of Hyannis

The Garden Club of Hyannis held an NGC Small Standard Flower Show at the Annual Meeting, June 13, 2023.



The show, "Remembering...Honoring" paid homage to three members who recently passed. There were four classes, but the first 3 were in honor of the members.



*Class 1 Elizabeth Katchpole - Elegant Functional Table for Two
1st Place Lynette Helms*



Class 3 Sharon Thebaud - All Foliage Design, 1st Nancy Walsh

Class 1 was for Elizabeth Katchpole; Class 2 was for Karen Knaub and Class 3 was for Sharon Thebaud. Judges gave comments orally to the membership. Everyone enjoyed and learned about designing and exhibiting horticulture.



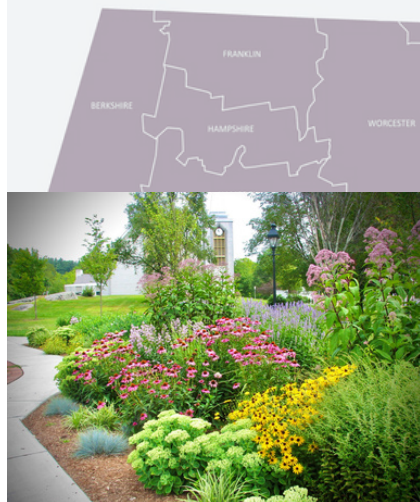
Class 2 Karen Knaub - A Creative Design, 1st & Best in Show, Dolores Ahern

Ipswich Garden Club

The Ipswich Garden Club Butterfly Meadow's spring and summer blooms this year. All flowers are butterfly and pollinator magnets. The IGC Butterfly Meadow is across from the town library and many people enjoy looking at the seasonal blooms from the benches.



Clubs At Work



Allium, Indigo, Poppies bring color in the Spring. Coneflower, Giant Hyssop, Butterfly Weed, Coreopsis, Penstemon, Black-eyed Susan, and Obedient Plant bloom attract pollinators as well as residents on the benches in the summer.

Laurelwood Garden Club



During the summer months the Garden Club maintained a floral garden in a half-ton cast iron horse trough located at Renaissance Park, Main St., Fitchburg and held its third "Picnic in the Park" on Thursday, July 20, 2023. The theme was an "Unbirthday Party" everyone brought a birthday gift and as each month was called and if you had a birthday we picked our birthday gift. Two ladies had the same month and date – so it came down to the time being born (age was not a factor) who was the first to select her gift. We had a trivia game, cornhole game, Picnic hat contest with Pizza and Ice Cream and a birthday cake. We launched our new Apron fundraiser.



This civic beautification project was made possible by a grant from the Fitchburg Cultural Council a local agency which is supported by the Mass. Cultural Council, a state agency. This floral garden was created in 2015 in memory of a past member Julia Casey.

Milton Garden Club



On June 4th, The Milton Garden Club hosted a floral design class at Spalding Garden. Guests from across New England gathered to learn more about eco-friendly design practices using seasonal flowers and greenery foraged in the garden. Museum of Fine Arts floral designer Thu-Hãng Trần gave live demonstrations using bicycles to create gorgeous arrangements that highlighted cycling as an eco-friendly mode of transportation.



Floral designer Georgia Lee gathered on-site peonies, mountain laurel, garden roses, azaleas and boxwood greens to create dramatic large-scale arrangements which guests took home.



The class and floral demonstration were part of the Garden Conservancy's national Open Days program. Designed in 1924 by renowned landscape architect Fletcher Steele, Spalding Garden is poised to celebrate its centennial. The garden was awarded a preservation grant from the town of Milton's new CPC Fund. Restoration work will begin this summer.

Nauset Garden Club

The Pollinator Pathway Cape Cod was awarded special recognition by the Association to Preserve Cape Cod at their Fifty Fifth Annual Meeting on August 27th. PPCC was recognized for the work we have done to educate the public on the benefits of planting native plants, reducing lawns, limiting use of chemicals, and leaving the leaves. Carol Alper and Gary Bowden accepted the award. The Nauset Garden Club was noted as being a driving force behind this effort. This is the effort of many people, and we are making a difference.

Clubs At Work



The Honorable Kim Driscoll, Lt. Governor of the Commonwealth was the guest speaker.

We are pleased to share that this year's recipient of the Nauset Garden Club Award in the amount of \$2000 is Mackenzie "Kenzie" Velardo, a student from East Falmouth. She is in her senior year at the University of Massachusetts.

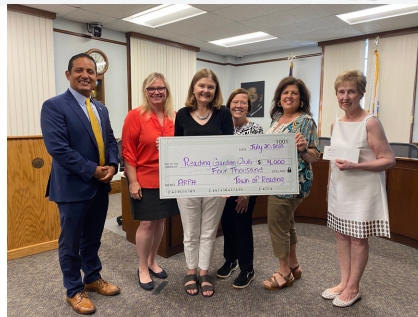
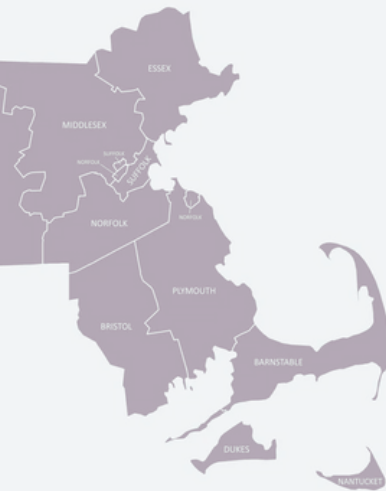
Here is the short bio as she submitted to the school.

"My friends and family call me Kenzie. I am a Natural Resource Conservation major with a concentration in Wildlife Ecology and Conservation. I am in my senior year and expect to graduate in Fall of 2023. I have always strived to do my best work to get good grades. I have also been a TA for Lena Fletcher for her Sustainable Solutions class, which I have enjoyed. In addition to being a full-time student, I also work on the weekends. I am putting myself through college, so I work while in school to be able to afford my bills."

The University of Massachusetts noted that Kenzie truly represents the values and passion set forth by NGC award. They are very grateful for the Club's unwavering support of their students!

Reading Garden Club

The Reading Garden Club was pleased to accept a check from the town of Reading ARPA funds in July. This money will be used for Civic Beautification at the town hall gardens, the Veterans Memorial, and the train depot gardens.



Shown in the photo are: Fidel Maltez, town manager; Jayne Wellman; Nancy Reid, president of RGC; Jean Stewart, RGC; Marianne Downing; Kathleen Moynihan, treasurer of RGC.

Southbridge Garden Club

The Southbridge Garden Club had a busy spring, beginning with a "Dig and Divide Perennials" program with Suzanne Mahler in April. In May, Heather Brunelle, owner of Bee Present Lavender Farm, demonstrated how to make beautiful arrangements with dried flowers.



The club awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to Tantasqua High School-graduate Rance Kenji B. Jumawan. He plans to pursue studies in climate mitigation and carbon removal at Assumption University.

West Newbury Garden Club

It was rainy! It was humid! In spite of the weather, West Newbury Garden Club members were able to enjoy visits to four members' gardens. Each garden introduced members to a different environment: a native transformation, a dappled woodland garden showcasing hosta, nepeta, and other hardy perennials; a butterfly garden featuring milkweed and butterfly bushes; and a woodland clearing planted with native and ornamental shrubs. Our summer garden visits keep our members engaged and offer the opportunity to share ideas as we learn from each other.



The Pollinator Pathway Cape Cod was awarded a special recognition by the Association to Preserve Cape Cod at their 55th Annual Meeting on August 27. PPCC was recognized for our work to share the benefits of planting native plants, reducing lawns, limiting use of chemicals, and leaving the leaves. Carol Alper and Gary Bowden accepted the award. The NGC was noted as a driver behind this effort. With the help of many people, we are making a difference.



Environmental Awareness

Have You Considered Ways to Address Climate Change in Your Own Life?

By Maria Barlett

This summer brought an unprecedented combination of deadly heat waves across the world, wild fires in Canada, devastating tornadoes in the Midwest, and flooding in many areas. If you haven't already been convinced of climate change, now might be the time to take notice and commit to actively addressing it in your own situation. Visit <https://www.nwf.org/AllAccess> to watch the Climate Check program. What can we all do?

1. Electrify Everything!

To reduce/eliminate dependence on the fossil fuels that are causing climate change electrifying is the answer (especially as the power grid becomes increasingly generated by "green" sources). What does this mean for you? Install an induction cooktop when it is time to replace your regular or gas range. When you need a new furnace and/or AC units, have heat pumps installed that both heat and cool. Replace an old gas or electric hot water heater with a heat pump water heater. Rebates and tax credits are available for these items. Plan now before you need to make the change so you are ready when the old equipment quits.

2. Generate your own power

Install solar panels on your roof. And, add a long-term storage battery for the excess power to use when the local power goes out due to weather issues.

3. Purchase an Electric Vehicle.

This is one of the most effective ways to reduce your green house gas emissions. If you buy certain American vehicles, there are generous rebates available.

Charging spots are becoming more available and mileage on a charge is expanding rapidly.

4. Eat more of a vegetarian diet.

Less meat, cheese, more beans and lentils.

Those are the changes that will make the most difference. There are other ways to help, too.

1. Waste less food.

Watch [Cooking with Scraps](#) with cookbook author Lindsay-Jean Hard at for some fun tips.

2. **Compost**, either in your own yard or as part of a community program.

3. Garden sustainably.

Avoid chemical fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides; plant native pollinators; reduce your lawn; leave leaves in your yard; water judiciously.

4. Reduce/reuse rather than recycle

Did you know that only 9% of plastics are actually recycled? So, it is better to avoid them as much as possible in the first place. Use stainless steel water bottles rather than plastic single use water. Repair household items rather than replacing them. Fast fashion is a huge burden on the environment: buy less, keep longer, search in consignment stores. Find a new home for items no longer needed in your household rather than throwing in the trash.

Become an environmental activist.

Pay attention to legislative issues, and vote responsibly with climate change issues in mind. What our elected officials support makes a huge difference, at the local, state, and federal levels!

If you are interested in environmental issues and would like to join the EA Committee, please send me an email at maria_bartlett@verizon.net or call me to discuss at 978-590-0547. I would love to hear from you!

Pest Alert

Box Tree Moth

The box tree moth has been detected for the first time in Massachusetts in communities on Cape Cod (Barnstable County) as of 2023. Thus far, the established populations of box tree moth in MA are in landscape plantings that are two or more years of age.

It is a non-native insect that originated in the temperate and subtropical regions of Asia. It was found to be invasive in Europe in 2007 and has since spread to western Asia, northern Africa, and Canada (2018). In the US, it has been detected previously in New York (2021), Michigan (2022), and Ohio (2023).



Elm Zigzag Saw Fly

This is a non-native insect that originated in eastern Asia, and is now invasive in Europe (2003) and North America. In 2023, the elm zigzag sawfly was detected in a small, forested area of Berkshire and Hampden Counties in Massachusetts.



It is important that if you suspect you have found this insect in Massachusetts, you report it to MDAR at <https://massnrc.org/pests/report.aspx>.



Environmental Awareness

Be A Better Gardener: "Dr. Dirt" and the Dangers of Lead in Soil

By Thomas Christopher

We've all heard the news about lead in the drinking water in older cities such as Flint, Michigan, and the harm it has caused the local population. Did you know, though, that there's a real chance you too have been exposed, perhaps in your own backyard? When I spoke to Clay Robinson recently, a soil scientist and former university professor who also has been very busy educating school students under the moniker of "Dr. Dirt," he informed me that there is a low level of lead in almost all soils. The level depends on what he calls the "parent materials," the rocks and minerals from which the soil was formed. Generally, though, the natural quantity of lead is very low, between 10 to 50 ppm (parts per million), which is harmless to human health.

However, in many cases, human activity has left it significantly, sometimes dangerously, higher. This is especially a concern in older communities. That beautiful, vintage home, for example, was quite likely covered with lead-based paints. Lead wasn't banned from paint until 1978, and the older the home, the greater the risk. Whereas just 24% of homes built between 1960 and 1970 include some lead-based paint, that figure is 87% for those built before 1940. Over time that paint has flaked off or washed as dust, ending up in the soil around the foundation.

Another common source of lead pollution was auto exhaust during the leaded gas era, which ended only in 1976. These toxic fumes deposited lead in the soil next to roads, which leaves

older neighborhoods, especially those near busy highways, especially at risk.

Another lesser-known source of lead contamination is lead arsenate, which was a popular insecticide in apple orchards from the late 19th century up through the late 1950s. Homes built on the sites of former orchards are thus also at risk.

A problem with lead, Robinson told me, is that it does not biodegrade or leach out of the soil and can persist for centuries. That's why lead leaked into household water supplies from the solder used in plumbing systems installed as late as the 1980s also poses a risk. Although the concentration of lead from such water systems is relatively low, when sprinkled over the yard to water the lawn, it can eventually accumulate to significant levels. Lead-contaminated soil is especially dangerous to children because in part because of their size – the dose that might not harm a 200 lb. adult is much more concentrated in a 20 lb. child. In addition, lead has a particularly harmful impact on their developing brains and nervous systems, can stunt their growth, and cause problems in speech and learning.

Recommendations vary from state to state, but the Environmental Protection Agency has warned parents not to let their children play on bare soils with lead concentrations of 400 ppm or higher. Owners of older homes are well-advised to contact local health authorities for help with testing their soil, which is a straightforward and inexpensive process.

One way of coping with lead-contaminated soil is, according to Dr. Robinson, appropriate gardening practices. If your soil proves to be in the dangerous range, 400 ppm or higher,

make sure to cover all areas of bare soil, either with a couple of inches of mulch or some perennial ground cover such as turf. Locate children's play areas and vegetable gardens away from the foundations of the house or the road's edge, areas where lead levels are likely to be higher. If the lead contamination exceeds 400 ppm where you want to grow vegetables, install raised beds filled with clean soil.

Mixing compost into the soil also has a beneficial effect, as it will dilute the soil, reducing the concentration of lead. Compost also typically contains compounds that bond with any lead found in the soil, making it less available for uptake by plant roots. Fruit harvested from trees or bushes or even tomato vines is unlikely to contain significant amounts of lead. Root crops such as potatoes or radishes are more problematic, as are low-growing leafy vegetables such as lettuces which are likely to come into the kitchen with soil on them.



If soil tests reveal the presence of lead in your soil, contact the local health authorities for their recommendations. To hear the rest of my conversation with Dr. Clay Robinson, and for more information about gardening on soils contaminated with lead, log onto the Berkshire Botanical Garden's "Growing Greener" podcast at <https://www.berkshirebotanical.org/>.



FUNDamentals of Floral Design

Fifty-two GCFM members attended 'FUNDamentals of Floral Design' at the Marshfield Fairgrounds. Ginger King, NGC Flower Show Judge, demonstrated the mechanics of creating traditional and creative designs emphasizing the Principles and Elements of Design.

See 'Events' on gcfm.org for the flyer to register for the Monday, October 2 demonstration, first of three new demonstrations in Plymouth! Up next: GCFM's FUNDamentals of Floral Design at Plymouth Library, Fehlow Meeting Room, 132 South St., Plymouth, MA, 10:30 AM.

We are excited for three new presenters – all flower show judges, to teach you, while having FUN! Formerly named "Back to Basics," the demonstrations have a new name and new location!



Please print and return the bottom portion of [this flyer](#) with a \$60 check for series of 3 demos, or \$25 per single class, payable to GCFM, Inc.

- Monday, October 2, 2023
10:30 AM -12:30 PM
- Wednesday, April 17, 2024
10:30 AM -12:30 PM
- Wednesday, June 26, 2024
10:30 AM -12:30 PM

Contact us with any questions.
Nancy Costa, Co-chair
nancycosta71@gmail.com
Judy Morgan, Co-chair
judjon121@comcast.net



Marshfield Flower Fair

The Marshfield Fair was held on August 18-22, 2023. The Flower Show at the Fair was entitled "Hobbies & Pastimes" and held in the Fair's Agricultural Hall. Only one entry day was held this year due to the lack of entries. The general chairman was Judy Morgan.

The results of the fair are as follows:

Class 1: Sewing – Creative Design

1. Ruth Evans, Framingham GC
2. Thu-Hang Tran Vu, Framingham GC
3. Mary Lane, East Bridgewater GC
4. HM: Heidi Harrington, Community GC of Duxbury

Class 2: Dancing – Multi-rhythmic Design

1. Anna Elwell Reardon, GC of Hingham & Cohasset GC
2. Marcia Consors, Falmouth GC
3. Mariette Wooden, Community GC of Duxbury
4. HM: Lisa Pattinson, Community GC of Duxbury

Class 3: Puzzles – Angular Design

1. Joan Butler, Holliston GC
2. Ruth Gorman, Hingham GC
3. Vana Hesper, Hingham GC
4. HM Nancy Martin, Framingham GC

Class 4: Swimming – Cascade Design

1. Ginger King, Scituate GC & Cohasset GC – Tricolor winner
2. Fleur Hynes, Winchester Home & GC
3. Shannon Fitzpatrick, Framingham GC
4. HM Jean Nolan Dobachsky, Evening GC of Plymouth

Class 5: Yoga – Curve/Hogarth Design

1. Margo Yie, Beth Shalom GC Needham
2. Abby Ann Lavoie, Arrangers of Marblehead & Winter GC
3. Colleen Costa, Plymouth GC & Hingham GC
4. HM Marilyn Maclellan, Scituate GC



Left: Section B, Class 5 Caladium, Ruth Gorman, Hingham GC, Blue, Award of Merit & Horticultural Excellence

Above: Class 3: Puzzles/Angular Design, Joan Butler, Holliston GC, Blue, Designer's Choice & Award of Design Excellence

Below: Class 4: Swimming/Cascade Design, Ginger King, Scituate GC & Cohasset GC, Blue & Tricolor



Chatham Garden Club will celebrate its 55th Anniversary at the September 19th general meeting with a luncheon for members and honor all past presidents.

December 2nd brings back our "Festival of Trees" to the Atwood House (Chatham Historical Society). Members decorate trees to auction or sell to raise funds for the Club.

Want More Events?

Visit
www.gcfm.org/upcoming-events



Her Shirley Farm Landscape Project Part Six

By Juliet Silveri

As the sky darkened on the longest day of the year, a crescent moon and a bright star next to it hung in the sky with me as I sat on my patio. A lone bat flittered in circles through the sky near the barn, hunting insects. Perhaps now I will look for the bat on every summer solstice, as Daisy Buchanan looked for nightingales. Soon enchanting fireflies will come, if I create a small meadow habitat for them to linger in, and they will throw small sparkles of light into the dark.



My two main gardens are established, with hedges installed around them now. My long-awaited perennial garden is planted, and thrived fabulously with all the rain we had this summer. In the pictures you can see the bird garden in the foreground and the perennial garden in the background, and you can see the path connecting the two gardens. I set up a network of soaker hoses to keep the *ilex crenata* hedges

watered, and got lucky with all the rain. They are still small in the pictures, but will grow to around four feet high and wide, and will fill in and make low walls for my private garden rooms.



There is a sitting area at the back of my upper garden that now has two chairs and a small table, and there must be scented plants close by. I planted Casa Blanca lilies behind the chairs, and was going to have a *lonicera* 'harlequin' growing up on a trellis, but I tried instead a 'Betty Corning' clematis, which bloomed fabulously but had no perceptible scent. In the pictures, the twilight glow is coming to life, with a *salix* "iceberg alley," a small river of lambs' ears, some "Denim and Lace" *perovskia*, and a *miscanthus* 'Morning Light' behind. These will become a river



of silvery gray luminosity.

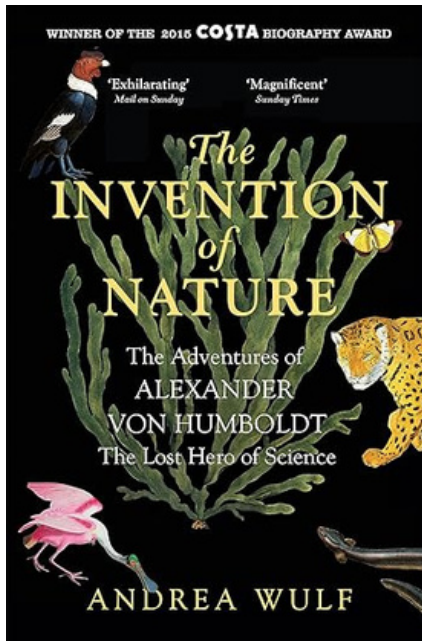
In the winter portion of the bird garden is a juniper in the background, red twig dogwoods, and an unexpected star of the season: a clump of *Agastache* "Rosie Posie," that bees and hummingbirds spend a lot of time around.

In other news:

- One of my sugar maples in the alley dropped all its leaves early, probably due to the injured area of bark that the porcupine chewed off. I expect it to come back in the spring.
- The strawberry plants in front of my house produced a good crop of flavorful berries.
- The annuals from last year's seed mix reseeded themselves and took over the garden, mostly cosmos and morning glories.
- The flowering sea kales sputtered out and died without growing, but maybe they will resurface next spring.
- The "Bluebird" delphinium bloomed twice!
- Two years ago I sprinkled seed from a friend's *asclepias* and *verbena bonariensis*. Both just started to grow this year, and have spread and bloomed wonderfully.

To start creating the left side of the exit path from the upper garden out to the wild, and to have a shade tree, I planted a 'Winter King' green hawthorn. It will shade the two chairs and table and make sitting in the upper garden more comfortable. The tree provides berries for the birds, and grows 20-30 feet tall. I am currently at work researching and acquiring many large shrubs to act as a border on the edge of my property, and to keep the invasives back. In the running are *hamamelis virginiana* (witch hazel), *Amelanchier* (shadbush), *cornus sericea* (yellow-twig dogwood), *physocarpus*, (ninebark), and *calycanthus floridus*. (Carolina sweetshrub). You will be the first to know what I choose.

So now there are bats, and families of ravens with babies have been walking the grass, eating insects, cawing overhead, and calling from tree to tree. There was an orange salamander in the grass under the faucet the other morning. One day from my patio I heard the loud beating of wings close above me. I looked up and saw a raven flying low across my yard and away; the perfect joy of being in my gardens with nature always pulsing around me. Join me, as it continues with the shrub border, the exit path, and the firefly meadow to come.



Book Review: *The Invention of Nature*

The Invention of Nature is the story of an amazing life. Alexander von Humboldt was born with money; but he died broke. One of the most famous men of his times; he is largely forgotten today. His childhood was marred by the death of loving father and a life with a cold distant mother. He never married. He traveled the world with a few male friends to explore the natural world. He was passionate about documenting everything he saw; and his books and articles were widely published.

Alexander explored the Andes, Russia, and the Americas. This book lets you walk in his shoes. Traveling 200 years was rough. You'll wonder how he did it. From hiking up the Chimborazo volcano in Ecuador without hiking boots or oxygen, to canoeing down the rapids in the Orinoco river in Venezuela. All the while lugging plant samples, journals, and precious barometers.

To many he is the true father of the environmental movement, the genius behind the concept of "Gia" and the first to forecast climate change. When many thought that nature was placed here for man to use, he had the insight and the genius to see nature as a complex and interconnected global force that does not exist for the use of humankind alone. He inspired Darwin, Thomas Jefferson, Simon Bolivar, and John Muir, just to

name a few.

Andrea Wulf spent years researching Humboldt's extraordinary life. Here is a quote from her book that speaks to our hearts.

Humboldt was driven by a sense of wonder for the natural world – a sense of wonder that might help us today realize that we will protect only what we love.

The Invention of Nature was selected by the New York Times as one of the ten best books of 2015. This riveting biography was fascinating. I give it 5 stars.

Pat Nemeth



Fun Facts

- Humboldt called coffee "concentrated sun beams."
- He authored over 36 books in his lifetime.
- Humboldt is known for his travels and natural specimen collections, as well as the location of the magnetic equator.
- It allowed him to take the most accurate readings of longitude and latitude in the Americas.
- This accuracy produced the most detailed map of North America of its time, from Mexico to Canada.

Read more about Humboldt in this [profile in Smithsonian magazine](#).

A Note from Your Editor

Thank you to everyone who has reached out with stories, contributions, and information about *The Mayflower*. I'm looking forward to working with you to help publish a newsletter that you're excited to read and share with your clubs and friends!

Last year I spent time on the GCFM website committee and saw first-hand how hard the club is working to bring information to its members. To help support that work, some of the content and features that have historically been part of the *Mayflower* are now on gcfm.org.

Please feel free to reach out to me with questions or ideas for our next newsletter--and don't forget to check the website (•_•)

Emily Alston



Enjoy the remainder of your summer. Pictured are a variety of tomatoes, cucumbers, and eggplant from our summer garden.

Want More Events?

The New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill is hosting a series of upcoming plant shows, from begonias to dahlias to ikebana.

And in honor of "spooky season" there's even a carnivorous plant event, where you can learn more about this captivating specimen. See plants large enough to swallow a mouse, and uncover the carnivorous plant native to Massachusetts. Take a plant home from the sale, if you dare.

To learn more, visit

www.nebg.org/shows/