

A POSY PICKER'S PAPER

New Meadows Garden Club

Topsfield, Massachusetts

May 17th through June 30, 2022



Just for fun!

See this month's Green Thumb Corner and you too can become a container gardening expert!

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

June 15

► Remember to renew your club membership with Shirley Holt by June 15th!

July 9

The Salem Garden Club presents "A Stroll Through the Gardens of Salem" Garden Tour from 10 am to 4 pm. Tickets are \$22.00 and are available through the following link: <https://www.salemgardenclub.com/coming-soon>

NOTES



► A reminder from Treasurer, Shirley Holt! The club's fiscal year will close on June 30th and she is now looking for any receipts members may have, which are eligible for reimbursement by the club. Shirley needs these very soon, so she can close her books at the end of our garden club year! So please get them to her as soon as possible.

Community Projects Update

As you know, a very important part of our civic work in our club's hometown of Topsfield is the planting and maintenance of the flagpole garden at the Pine Grove Cemetery, the maintenance and care of two traffic islands located at the intersection of Prospect Street and River Road and at the intersection of Route 97 and Linebrook Road, and the maintenance of the Anne Mahen Memorial Garden at the Parson Capen House. We consistently receive compliments on the beauty of these gardens from passers-by, which is always nice to hear. In addition, the funds that we earned from our very successful Mother's Day Teacup Sale again this year will make it possible for the club to purchase plants and mulch for these spaces. Many thanks to Jane Cullinan, Sandy Whelan and husband Steve, and Nancy Emmons who just yesterday planted the cemetery garden and urns in preparation for Memorial Day. Hopefully, some of you will be able to help spread mulch in the island gardens. And, last but certainly not least, we will need volunteers to oversee these four public spaces over the summer. Please be on the lookout for a request for help with these chores very soon.

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



Help Wanted! Our club needs a generous member who would be willing to serve as Membership Chair going forward. What does the task entail, you ask? Collection of dues and updating and maintenance of our club's membership list is what's needed. If you are interested or have any questions about this position, please contact Sandy Whelan or Jane Cullinan! Many thanks for considering this request!

...Bits and pieces...

*There is no gardening without humility. Nature is constantly sending even its oldest scholars to the bottom of the class for some egregious blunder.
...Alfred Austin...*

Planting the Pine Grove Cemetery Garden



Nancy Emmons busy at work!



The glorious completed garden!



The mighty crew. Thanks also to helper and photographer, Steve Whelan!

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



Mother's Day Teacup Sale

The workshop!



Donna Ryan busy at work!



*Our fearless leader,
Mary Connor.*



*Rita Galvin and Sandy Whelan
finishing up their designs.*

The sale!



Oh, what to choose???



*Linda Mann back from
Florida and on duty!.*



*Claudette Poor arrives
with her designs.*



Table duty for Donna Ryan and Sandy Whelan!

...Green Thumb follows...

Green Thumb Corner

Last month we talked a bit about growing vegetables in containers, specifically yummy tomatoes. This month, I thought we'd chat a little about growing flowers in containers. Containers are great because you can garden in whatever space you have, even if it is just a balcony, and you can keep your plants out of harm's way, especially if you live in the middle of the woods constantly trying to outsmart the local wildlife like I do! Another plus for container




gardening is the ability to rotate your containers so that all sides can benefit from some beautiful sunshine or move containers altogether to places around your yard, thus providing the proper conditions for the plants as the sun changes positions during our growing season.

So, let's get started. You can't garden in containers without containers. What to choose? The reality is that almost anything can serve as a container for plants... bathtubs, buckets, wagons, even old shoes. Of primary importance is drainage...be sure that there are drainage holes to allow excess water to drain out. One of the most common containers are clay pots, either unglazed or glazed. Unglazed pots tend to dry out quickly, especially if they are small, while glazed pots are better at retaining water. Both are breakable, and may crack if frozen. Wooden pots, like whiskey barrels or window boxes, acquire character as they age, but they do decay. Metal pots also acquire character with age, but may rust or dent, and may also cause the soil to overheat, which may damage the roots of your plants. Plastic pots range in prices and can be very pretty when they are designed to resemble natural materials. They are more lightweight than the previously mentioned options, and do not weather quite as much. I prefer good quality plastic pots for my container plants, but have had a few large ones that I left outside filled with soil crack in winter. I no longer leave the pots outside during the cold winter months. Instead, I move them into the garage.

Once you have decided on the type of container you will use, how about the size? If you plan to plant annual flowers, which have small, compact root systems, a smaller container will do if you make sure to provide adequate water and fertilizer. But, remember, any container smaller than 8 inches will dry out very quickly!

If you've decided to plant perennials, a tree or a shrub in a container, your considerations will be different because these plants will remain in your container for more than a growing season and may need to withstand winter conditions. For these types of container plants, you will need to be generous when choosing the size, keeping in mind the mature size of the plant that will live there. Also providing winter protection will definitely be a consideration. I prefer to move these types of container plants into my garage for the winter, rather than trying to provide enough protection to prevent the plant's roots from freezing solid, or from thawing and freezing, which can cause heaving.

...more Green Thumb follows...



Window boxes are fun too. They can add attractive color and texture to your deck and porch railings and your window sashes. Choose containers that fit the space and décor and are at least eight inches wide and deep. Again, it is very important to have drainage holes, and if you are using one below a window, for best presentation, make sure your box is a few inches smaller than the width of your window. Window boxes do require frequent watering, sometimes every day when it is really warm, so be on your toes with these!

*So, what plants should you choose for your container? Containers overflowing with one type of plant can certainly be spectacular. But why not live on the wild side and combine different types of plants in your container? Just make sure that the plants you choose have similar growing requirements, most importantly similar light and moisture preferences. If you are interested in plants that bloom seasonally, you can plant cool-season plants in your container in spring and fall, and plants that love the heat in summer. And, if you would like to add lots of drama and intrigue, I'm sure that many of you have heard the expression "Thrillers, Fillers and Spillers" in reference to container gardening. ► Thrillers are big, attention-getting, movie-star plants. They are usually tall, upright plants, and they should be the first ones to choose for your container. There should be something truly outstanding about them, and they should last all season. Good candidates for your Thriller would be *Cannas* or some *Purple Fountain Grass*. ► Fillers are more finely textured and mounding plants that will surround and weave through your Thriller. Fillers add mass to your container and can hide the stems or stalks of your Thriller. *Coleus* and *Begonias* make very good Fillers. And lastly, there are the Spillers. ► The job of Spillers is to cascade over the side of your container as their branches tumble toward the ground. Be sure to plant Spillers close to the edge of your container so they can do their job. Good Spillers are *Sweet Potato Vine*, *Nasturtiums* and *Bacopas*. For window boxes, it is also good to mix trailing, upright and fluffy type plants for the greatest appeal. Be sure to use plants with a variety of different sized leaves as well.*

What about color? That's totally up to you. If you are in a tranquil frame of mind, choose pastels like soft pink, lavender or pale yellow. These containers are better viewed up close, and do seem to get washed out in very bright sunlight. For a little more excitement, you can choose invigorating colors like sunny yellows, reds and oranges. These containers are good viewed from a distance and show up well in bright sunlight. Remember that you can also use pastels to tone down a container whose color is out of control, or use a more vivid colored plant to liven up a container planted with pastels. For window boxes, colors should complement where the box will be placed. Be sure to test your color scheme at your garden center by mixing and arranging the potted plants before you make your purchase!

Last but not least, in addition to watering, fertilizing your babies with a water-soluble flowering plant fertilizer according to the package directions will be on your schedule. Oh, and don't forget to trim dead flowers and generally primp your container and boxes often! They'll thank you for it.

The chart on the following page tells you all you need to know in your search for the



Thrillers, Fillers & Spillers

Thrillers

Abutilon
Angelonia
Cannas
Celosia
Dracaena
Erysimum
Gaura Pink Fountain
Geraniums
Grasses

Lantana
Nicotiana
Papyrus
Pentas
Plumbago
Purple Fountain Grass
Sun Coleus
Umbrella Plant



Caladium
Coleus
Cordyline
Dracaena
Fuchsia
Graptophyllum
Impatiens
New Guinea Impatiens



Fillers

Ageratum
Alternanthera
Angelonia
Copperleaf
Cosmos
Cuphea
Dusty Miller
Eucalyptus
Gazania
Geraniums
Gerbera Daisy
Gomphrena
Helichrysum Icicles

Joseph's Coat
Magilla Perilla
Melampodium
Nemesia
Nierembergia
Osteospermum
Pentas
Petunia
Plumbago
Salvia
Sun Coleus
Vinca
Zinnia

Bacopa
Begonias
Boston Fern
Browallia
Caladium
Coleus
Diacia
Dragonwing Begonia
Dusty Miller
Heliotrope
Hypoestes
Impatiens
Iresine

Nemesia
New Guinea Impatiens
Oxalis
Pansy
Rex Begonias
Salvia
Torenia

Spillers

Asparagus Fern
Bacopa
Brachycome
Calibrachoa
Chenille
Diascia
Evovulus
Fiber Optic Grass
Helichrysum
Ivy Geranium
Lantana
Lotus
Lysimachia
Niremburgia

Plectranthus
Portulaca
Purple Heart
Scaevola
Solanum
Supercascade Petunia
Sweet Potato Vine
Thyme, Doone Valley
Trailing Petunia
Trailing Vinca
Variegated Bskt Grass
Verbena
Vinca Minor

Asparagus Fern
Bolivian Jew
Creeping Wire Vine
Diachondra Silver Falls
Dragonwing Begonia
Helichrysum Licorice Vine
Ivy Geranium
Ivy, Variegated & Green
Lamium Beacon Silver
Lobelia
Purple Heart
Tahitian Bridal Veil
Wave Torenia
Vinca Vine

www.skh.com

☀ *Happy container garden in the glorious months ahead
and happy summer to all.* ☀