



MAYFLOWER



The Mayflower is an online newsletter, full of clickable internet links that can take you to GCFM resources

The President's Message



Happy Summer, Gardeners!

It was wonderful to have seen so many of you at the GCFM Annual meeting in early June. I want to thank you for your warm and gracious greetings as we mingled together. I am grateful for your support and encouragement as I persevere into the second year of this presidential term.

Hopefully, you are all finding yourselves with discretionary time to invest in what pleases you the most this summer season. Although business at the Federation level is much quieter during these summer months, there is still much for many of us to accomplish as we anticipate the upcoming hectic fall season.

As I am sure that most of you are aware, the Federation will be heralding its Centennial year in 2027; our Centennial Chairs are deeply involved with planning an entire year of differing programs and events to memorialize this milestone. They will be sharing updates with you in the coming months so expect to hear more as planning advances.

One of the largest projects of the summer is the creation of the GCFM Yearbook. The editor needs to have the online form completed and submitted

with your club's contact information. The form is very short and only asks for the information that is necessary for the Yearbook. The proofread and edited book needs to get to our printer at the end of August so that it is available for distribution to the club presidents at the Fall District meetings in September.

It is hard to believe that we are already into the first week of July... the glorious summer relaxation mode is going to slip by quickly so enjoy every day!

Wishing you safe journeys and sun-filled days,

Susie MacPherson
GCFM President

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Pat Fleming's blue-ribbon winning arrangement in the Sudbury 1776 Flower Show. Read about the flower show on page 14, and read an interview with Pat Fleming on page 23.

Pat Fleming
Hamilton-Wenham Garden Club
"Marching Side by Side"
Class 3 - Entry 1

Botanical Name

Cornus sericea
Hypericum androsaemon
Eryngium yuccifolium
Fuchsia

Common Name

Arctic Fire Dogwood
Hypericum berries
Sea Holly

GARDEN CLUBS AT WORK



BOXFORD: The Boxford Village Garden Club unveiled a new feature at its Earth Day celebration. Many children lined up to become the butterfly and bumblebee in the "Pollinator Planet" photo board.



Boxford's new Photo Board

The photo board was a collaborative effort by the Conservation Committee designed to bring attention to pollinators and native plants.

On Monday, May 4, members of the Boxford Village Garden Club and West Boxford Improvement Society cleaned up the two islands in West Boxford. Pictured are Suzy Arsenault, Glenn Ayer, Becky Potts, Jayne Smallman and Bev Perkins.



The BVGC was pleased to award our annual scholarship to Kalen Wright, a Masconomet graduate, who will be attending the University of Colorado Boulder to study environment science, with a focus on sustainability and community outreach. Congratulations Kalen!



Kalen Wright

EASTON

On March 12, 2026, the Easton Garden Club (EGC) held their first Art in Bloom event in partnership with Easton's Oliver Ames High School (OAHS). Fourteen advanced art students had their work interpreted in floral arrangements by our members, which were then on display at the school for several days prior to the evening of March 12th when the School Committee, teachers, parents, and the students viewed the displays. The students were very excited and all who attended gave their rave reviews!



Zoe Ginis, Cindy Lemish and Mrs. Ginis

On May 16, 2026, the EGC held our annual Spring Plant Sale; it was a great success! We had a bounty and wide variety of plants provided by members. Many members volunteered their time as well. It was a beautiful sunny day with customers arriving before the 9am start! Customers who support the event, in turn, support our community efforts. Now that's truly cultivating a community.



Virginia Harte, Cindy Lemish, Darya Cotter, Bob Cotter and Ann Trettis

FALMOUTH

Falmouth Garden Club is celebrating 95 years of helping others grow. The 2026 Floribunda Award winner is Esther Johnston. Esther is a gifted master gardener and exemplary member. Always willing to share her beautiful garden, it will be toured during the Hydrangea Festival in July 15 & 16. She was also featured in the May issue of Falmouth Living.



*Esther Johnston
FGC Floribunda Award Winner*

DANVERS

Every April the Danvers Garden Club collaborates with the town Forestry Department and a local elementary school to celebrate Arbor Day. On April 15th we bagged 300 river birch seedlings and distributed them to students to take home and plant. Then on April 17th we participated in a student centered celebration at the Smith School where 60 kindergarteners shared songs, poems



and fun facts about trees. The highlight of the day was when each student got to help plant an oriental cherry tree, something that they will always remember.



Smith School kindergartners

DENNIS

The Village Garden Club of Dennis held an event on May 6th with garden author and editor Stephen Orr. Stephen shared words and images from his new book of personal garden essays, *The Gardener's Mindset* (Clarkson Potter/Random House, April 2026). In this engaging collection, Orr reflects on a lifetime of gardening through four very different spaces he has created: a rooftop garden in New York City, a lakeside cabin garden in upstate New York, a suburban garden in Des Moines, and most recently, a sandy flower garden in Truro on Cape Cod.

Stephen currently writes for the *Provincetown Independent* and previously served as Editor-in-Chief of *Better Homes & Gardens*.

A group of 140 attended the event in Dennis Massachusetts



Attendees at Stephen Orr's lecture

The Village Garden club of Dennis held their annual plant sale on May 16th in Dennis. Our sale was larger this year and very successful aiding our mission to provide scholarships, horticulture, civic beautification and much more.



Village Garden Club of Dennis Plant Sale

GROTON

The Groton Garden Club installed a granite bench in the garden maintained by the club at Prescott Common. This Common honors Groton born Colonel William Prescott who led the militia during the Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775. He famously gave the order "Do not fire until you see the whites of their eyes." The bench is a gift from the Groton Garden Club to commemorate the 250th Anniversary of the founding of the USA. This year a special red, white, and blue flower garden was planted and highlighted with a 250th Anniversary banner. Visitors to the gardens may now use the bench for a pleasant place to rest and admire the gardens.



Commemorative granite bench

LEXINGTON

Wilda Ward, a beloved member of the Lexington Field and Garden Club, turned 100 this year. The LexArts held a new show, "Art of Life, Art for Life," from May 30 to July 3, 2026, with pieces submitted by local artists celebrating Wilda and her zest for life.



Wilda Ward

Visitors stopped by the Lexington Field & Garden Club booth to inquire about help with plants, membership, garden tour, and plant sale.





LEXINGTON, Cont'd

May 2026 -Lexington Field & Garden Club celebrated their 150th birthday with a hands on pruning demonstration by Christie Dustman followed by a members luncheon. A town wide celebration will be held later in November 2026.



150th Birthday Cake



Patriots Day Parade

Another beautiful Arbor Day Celebration was held at Tower Park on Friday, April 24! This event is hosted by the Lexington Field & Garden Club, with tree planting and support provided by the Lexington Department of Public Works. This ceremony is held yearly to honor LFGC members that have passed away in the last year.

All guests were invited to take home a tree saplings donated by the Lexington DPW in honor of Arbor Day.



David Hathaway and Bill Mix

NORFOLK

On June 3rd the Garden Club of Norfolk held our year-end meeting and installation of officers. Our club's founder, Helena Drolette, shown far left, was the emcee of this event.



Pictured left to right: Launa Allen, Co-President, Stephanie Hamel, Co-President, Amy Ricci, Corresponding Secretary, Jill Kennedy, Membership, Laurel Stoddard, Treasurer, and Susan McCarthy, Recording Secretary.

The Garden Club of Norfolk received 2 National, 1 New England, and 1 Garden Club Federation of MA awards, the Patricia Dennett Grant (Conservation & Environmental), at the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts Annual Meeting, held on Thursday, June 4, 2026, in Milford, MA.



Pictured left to right: Launa Allen, Co-President, Stephanie Hamel, Co-President, Emily Nicodemus, Awards Chair.

NORTHBOROUGH

Spring seemed closer with Betsy Szymczak's "A Begonia for Any Season" presentation in March. Club member Francesca Bombara taught an Ikebana workshop in the Moribana style where all three fully bloomed flowers must be the same. Over 30 artistic arrangements were made. Hunter Blanchard from NatureWorks Landscape presented "Plant Empathy" and Nature's Rainbow about the sexual nature of plants. Three grants were awarded to middle and elementary schools to support school garden clubs, entrance gardens, tools, supplies, and summer reading. NGC is proud to promote teamwork and hands-on learning for our students.



Dale S. digging for our plant sale

PEPPERELL

Two years ago Pepperell applied for a grant (2024) to create a Liberty Tea Garden steps away from where the tea in Pepperell was burned in 1773.

This June we celebrated the Tea Garden with a Liberty Tea Garden Party which included equal numbers (11) of ladies from the Pepperell Garden Club and the Prudence Wright Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). The "Chapter House" was turned into an elegant 1700's dining room with the fresh steeped Native Bee balm leaves (Oswego Tea) being everyone's favorite compared to the other herbs. In addition



to admiring the Tea Garden, we enjoyed learning about artifacts housed in the Chapter House as well as where Col. Prescott and the men of Bunker Hill were honored and where Col. Prescott and Prudence Wright were buried in the old cemetery. What a fabulous time working and celebrating together!



READING

The Reading Garden Club held its annual plant sale on May 16. Club members divided and dug up perennials from their own gardens for our always popular Members' Plants sale area. From a local greenhouse we ordered and sold annuals, vegetables and hanging baskets. A bake sale was held with delicious goodies baked by our own members. It was a lovely sunny day and a successful event enjoyed by many in the community.



*Johnny O'Neal, Carol Perletz
& Mary Ann Higgins, club president*

TEWKSBURY

The Tewksbury Garden Club has been busy. Both of our Garden Therapy groups were active. Another group of Club members began working at the greenhouse at Tewksbury Hospital. We grew tomatoes, green beans, cucumbers, herbs and annual flowers for our Plant Sale. We also grew annuals for our Civic Gardening Group's town plantings.



Greenhouse crew transplanting

The greenhouse is too hot to use during the summer, so we started a new project outdoors at the Hospital – two pumpkin patches. We'll let you know if we're able to grow a giant pumpkin! The plants from the greenhouse helped us make our annual Plant Sale an extraordinary event.

Customers lined up early and bought enthusiastically. Scott Shugrue constructed bluebird houses which sold out in two hours. Pat Donovan, brought his locally famous dahlia bulbs. Members brought lots of indoor and outdoor plants. We are grateful for the support from our community.



Plant Sale Crew 2026

We touched the community with our Arbor Day program for the Town's third graders. There was a poster competition themed on trees, of course. Each classroom received a nature book to donate to their library, and all students received a white spruce (a native tree, naturally). Amelia Schartel worked with a young Girl Scout Troop and taught them how to support pollinators. Susan Young is helping two Girl Scouts get their Silver Award as they create a pollinator garden on middle school property.

The highlight of these last few busy months was our Art in Bloom program. Members created artistic interpretations of Town items including students' works of art, a quilter's comforter, residents' artwork, and library books and DVDs. The event was held at the Library and was very well-attended by complimentary viewers.



*Interpretation of student artwork
by Paula Kalin*

WEST NEWBURY

The West Newbury Garden Club has enjoyed the fruits of our labors over the winter months on two very important projects. The first, our annual plant sale, held on May 16, was an unqualified success with almost all of the plants sold. The preparation for the plant sale provides an opportunity for members to



work together in small groups to dig and pot plants from our own gardens and those of friends and neighbors who invite us to divide the plants in their gardens. What may look like work is actually a social event and an enjoyable way to get



West Newbury Plant Sale

to know other members of the club. The day of the sale is a whirlwind of activity with shoppers lined up ready to take advantage of the beautiful locally grown plants.

The proceeds of the plant sale are earmarked for scholarships for students from the Pentucket Regional School District who are pursuing higher education in fields related to the environment. This year we were able to fund two \$4000 scholarships.



90th Celebration of the West Newbury Garden Club

The second project was the celebration of the 90th anniversary of the founding of the West Newbury Garden Club. A talented and enthusiastic committee planned and executed a lovely soiree at a local restaurant overlooking the Merrimack River.

An outdoor deck was the perfect place to enjoy a beautiful late spring day, delicious food and beverages, and great company. Indoors we enjoyed a continuous show of archival and recent photos of 90 years of Garden Club activities.



Blue Star & Gold Star Families Memorial Marker Program

Looking for a great 250th celebration gift to your town and club?

Why not a Blue Star memorial plaque or highway marker? These plaques and highway signs are a good way to honor all who have served in the armed forces.

For help and more information contact:

Joy DiMaggio at GCFMbluestar@gmail.com



Blue Star Memorial Marker in Sudbury

Paxton Garden Club's Amazing Endeavor – Part II

“Because we needed a shed, we’re building a community garden instead!”



This project is a lot like the fox-trot, “two steps forward and one step back”.

Our Community Garden Subcommittee has been diligently meeting every month to build the budget (boy things are expenses!), line up in-kind and discounted support, obtain letters of support from stakeholders, apply for grants, visit other community garden spaces for ideas, design (and redesign) our plot plan with the engineer. Oh and host three farmers markets as a fundraiser (through vendor fees). Grand ideas come with a grand cost to say the least.



Subcommittee mapping

Our original plan this Spring was to fully prep the land (removing lots of brush & invasives and leveling); Only to discover there is a 6' side drain pipe running from the state highway (Rt 122) right down through the project site and beyond. SURPRISE! Thankfully we can side step to the left, avoiding the pipe and still have room for all our ideas. After that



Land clearing



discovery, Paxton was the epicenter of a straight-line wind event (or microburst depending on who you talk to) on June 18th further delayed the land prep because our generous in-kind supporters had to pivot for paying clients (rightfully so).



At the same time, we have been applying for grants and learning all the ins and outs of running farmers markets. That hard work is paying off. We are thrilled to share that Fidelity Bank has donated \$10,000 towards our Greenhouse purchase (only \$27,000 more to go lol), bringing our total cash donations to \$17,550! Plus we have 15 vendors lined up for our July 9th Farmers Market, 15 for the August 13th event and 12 for Sept. 10th.

www.paxtongardenclub.com/our-fundraisers/farmers-markets

We are eternally thankful to the handful of local businesses, town government leaders and community members who are just as committed as we are to build this.

www.paxtongardenclub.com/about-usjoin/community-garden



Fidelity Bank event

Despite Summer flying by, we are still on track for growing in 2027. Stay tuned for more updates this fall.

Submitted by
Robin Tasca, PMAGC President

GCFM 99th ANNUAL MEETING – JUNE 4th DOUBLETREE MILFORD

In the early morning of June 4th at the DoubleTree in Milford, vendors set up their wares, coffee and muffins were set out, and finishing touches were put on the ballroom as the GCFM committee members prepared for over 200 attendees to check in at the credentials table. After a busy hour of chatting and greeting friends, everyone got to their seats and the meeting began promptly at 9:00.



Credentials table open for business

New GCFM President, Susie MacPherson, led the meeting with reports and introductions. After a touching Memorial Presentation, NGC President Donna Donnelley gave an entertaining speech.



Linda Thomson-Clem, Susie MacPherson, and Donna Donnelly

The second half of the morning brought a spotlight on 13 garden clubs that had been selected to give a short presentation on their special projects. Each had five minutes to present their slides, and answer questions from the audience. It was extremely well received. You can find slides from the presentations [HERE](#).



Susie MacPherson addresses the crowd

After lunch the awards were given, including scholarships and special tributes. Find a complete list [HERE](#).



Juju Lem-Pang and Carol Shapanka of Sudbury Garden Club



Groton Garden Club: Barbara Seeber-Wagner, Dominique Wyatt and Priscilla Williams hold the Mitzi Belitsky Award

The awards led to a greatly anticipated event, the “Judges Challenge”. Lisa Pattinson, Nancy Costa and Shannon Fitzpatrick who were all given the same flowers and staging armature, came back with different arrangements and explained their processes to the audience. It was a great educational experience.



Judges Challenge

Awards winners were given the opportunity to have their photographs taken with the President, holding the silver trophy representative of their award if applicable.

It was a great day, and even the vendors looked happy at the end.



ANDOVER GARDEN CLUB: Former GCFM President Leslie Frost; Co-chairs of Garden Therapy Mary Ann Marshall and Maria Shapiro, Becci Backman and Kay Hussainee

A Few of our Vendors...



Pam's Pashminas



Sunny Window



Paper Bloom Workshops



Sewing Seeds for Hope

NEW GCFM POSITION AVAILABLE

Office Administrator Position

The Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, Inc. is looking for a part-time office administrator, to be based in the Waltham office.

Full details of the position are available on the GCFM website, on the **About Us** page ([CLICK HERE](#)). Please click this link to access the information: 

Please share this opportunity with your garden club members, as we would be delighted to hire someone with knowledge of garden clubs and GCFM.

To apply for this position, send a cover letter and resume to: Linda Thomson-Clem at

ljthomson1@verizon.net.

GCFM YEARBOOK ENTRY FORM

This is the time of year when we ask you to submit your Club data for the GCFM Yearbook. The questions are limited, and we know you will find this request easy to complete. This information is required from every Club, as your District Directors require current contact data to keep in touch with every one of the Clubs in their District.

**Thank you for your timely
attention to this request.
The deadline is July 15.**

[2026 / 2027 Yearbook Info Entry
for Club Officers](#) 

Behind the Scenes at the GCFM Annual Meeting...

Photos of participants from a workshop lead by Joan Marie Driscoll, Cranberry District Director.



NEW ENGLAND GARDEN CLUBS ANNUAL MEETING

Tuesday, Wednesday, October 13-14, 2026

Killington Grand Hotel Resort, Killington, VT

REGISTRATION OPEN

The New England Garden Clubs Annual Meeting is being held at the Killington Grand Hotel Resort, hosted by the Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont. The meeting will feature educational breakout sessions, an NEGC Award Showcase, marketplace vendors, innovative exhibits, raffles, speakers (including the NGC President) and much more.

[Mail-in Registration Form](#)



[KILLINGTON GRAND HOTEL GROUP LODGING LINK](#)

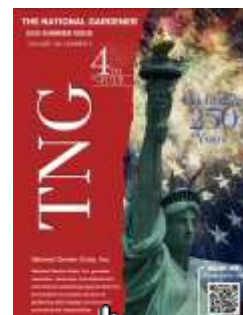


NEW ENGLAND CAMERA CLUB

Click on this [LINK](#) to open the latest newsletter from the New England Camera Club!



Read the Summer Issue of The National Gardener by clicking here!



EDUCATION



GC FM LANDSCAPE DESIGN SCHOOL COURSE 1, Series 18 – October 28-30, 2026

NEW!

No refunds after October 15

The Course is held for three consecutive mornings which seems to be the most convenient timing for attendees. Each day will feature 3-4 topics presented by professionals in the landscape design field for one hour. A topic presentation is approximately 50 minutes in length allowing for ten minutes of questions.

Susie MacPherson, rmacpham@me.com



JUDGES COUNCIL SYMPOSIUM November 3-4, 2026

No refunds after October 15

All are welcome to attend, but only those who are members of National Garden Clubs, Inc. and are taking the full course with examination are eligible for credit. In order to obtain credit, attendees must be present for all lectures and obtain passing grades for all Point Score exams in Design and Horticulture.

Ruth Gorman, ruth.gorman3@gmail.com



Seeking Local Chairs To Help With Organizing Both Garden And Environmental Schools!

We are hoping to connect with interested individuals or garden clubs who might be willing to help organize and continue the current Gardening School series or begin a new Environmental School series.

This is a wonderful opportunity to help provide comprehensive educational opportunities to GCFM and other NGC members. The organizational process for these courses is straight forward and not challenging and can easily be managed by two people. Local chairs will have complete support in engaging speakers, organizing paperwork and completion of all filing of paperwork to NGC at the Courses' completion.

For more complete description of the process and/or to answer any questions, please contact Jill Malcolm for Garden School (jillyjill07@comcast.net) or Susie MacPherson for Environmental School (rmacphame@me.com)



ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

with Maria Bartlett

LEAVE GRASS CLIPPINGS ON YOUR LAWN -- Free fertilizer!!

Mowing can be a tedious task, but one way to make it a bit easier is to LEAVE THE CLIPPINGS on your lawn!! It not only saves time but if done correctly, it can improve the health of your yard. Grass clippings act as a fertilizer and return nitrogen to the ground which promotes grass growth. Proper mulching of the clippings with sharp mower blades helps to retain moisture, reduce weeds and helps lawns survive dry periods. And, it saves money.... you don't need to buy as much expensive fertilizers!



It's important to do it correctly, though, or you might harm your lawn. *"If your lawn is kept at a reasonable height, grass clippings act as a natural source of nutrients, particularly nitrogen, which is one of the key elements lawns need to remain healthy and green,"* says David Hunt, a lawn care expert at D&R Landscaping & Excavation. *"As the clippings break down, they organic matter to the soil, improving its structure and feeding beneficial microbes. Over time, this natural recycling process helps build healthier turf, reduces the need for supplemental fertilizer, and supports overall lawn health,"* he says. Over time, cutting grass results in nutrient loss that can affect its root strength. Grass clippings reverse that process by acting as a fast-decomposing source of organic matter that provides nutrients to the soil. As they break down, they not only release nitrogen into the soil, but also small



amounts of phosphorus, potassium, and other micronutrients. Clippings are broken down by microorganisms, like bacteria and fungi, that feed the soil microbiome and help cycle nutrients efficiently into the soil. It makes soil particles more stable, improving aeration,

drainage, and root penetration. "A light layer of mulched grass clippings can help insulate the soil surface, reducing water loss and helping the lawn retain moisture longer," Hunt states, creating a better environment for grass roots and a thicker turf. A thicker turf helps to suppress light weed growth.

However, thick clumps of wet grass can trap moisture and lead to fungal growth and pest activity. Plus, heavy visible clippings can make your yard look poorly maintained. So, if the grass is overgrown or wet from rain, clippings should be removed. They can be composted with some left over fall leaves in your bin or compost area. Also, if your lawn has a lot of seeding weeds (such as dandelions), it's also best to bag the clippings for that short time period in the spring. Then, do not compost these clippings because the weed seeds will survive to grow again in unwanted areas!

Floral News

“1776 Flower Show” Sudbury, April 16-17

The 1776 Flower Show was the inaugural flower show by the Thursday Garden Club of Sudbury held in honor of the country's 250th anniversary, and the club's 75th anniversary. Chaired by GCFM Board Member Joy DiMaggio, it began with a dedication to the Patriots who began the Revolutionary War. The Sudbury Militia joined the garden club as they placed daffodils at the 1776 cemetery site.



The show opened with an extensive horticulture section, including a delightful comparison of 1776 to 2026 horticulture.



1776 vs. 2026 Apples

The Youth Division displayed a treasure trove of creativity, where ages 5-11 had the opportunity to decorate a tri-corner hat.



Cynthia Chapra, Weston Garden Club
Blue Ribbon, Design of Excellence
“Muskets at the Ready”



Valerie Howes, Holliston Garden Club
Blue Ribbon, “A Tisket A Tasket,
A Pretty Spring Basket”



LuBeth Kuemmerle, Hamilton-Wenham GC
Blue Ribbon, Special Award
“One if by Land, Two if by Sea”



Shannon Fitzpatrick, Framingham GC
Blue Ribbon, “A Light to Guide You Home”



Betsy Szymcsk, Framingham / Natick GC
Blue Ribbon, “Ready for a Day in the Fields”



Eileen Fialkow, Framingham GC
Blue Ribbon, “1776 Patriotic Brooch”



Floral News

“1776 Flower Show” Sudbury, April 16-17



*Yoko Kojima, Weston Garden Club
Blue Ribbon, “The Fairies All Around You”*



*Pat Fleming, Hamilton-Wenham GC
Blue Ribbon, “Marching Side by Side”*



*Ruth Evans, Framingham Garden Club
Blue Ribbon, Tri-Color Award
“Dinner With John and Abigail Adams”*

There were 38 design entries and 27 Patriotic 3-corner hats to dazzle the audience of over 235 people. Designers came from all over the state of Massachusetts. The SGC gifted a Shade Pollinator Garden to the Town of Sudbury on Memorial Day to honor the Town's 250th Anniversary.

“Art in Bloom” Tewksbury, April 25 & 26

Art in Bloom at the Tewksbury Garden Club is quite an experience. This year there were 26 arrangements that interpreted many different types of art, including book covers, children's paintings and statuary, plus a quilt and the town seal.

The event was co-chaired by Marie Luciano and Jennifer Balch-Kenney, and has been held at the Tewksbury Public Library (one of the club's beautification sites) for the past several years. This year the club received a grant from the Mass Cultural Council after giving a presentation to petition for funds through their local cultural council.

“The kids are so excited to see their work interpreted”, said club president Susan Young, “sometimes they even dance in the aisles. Their parents are beaming.”

It is a feel-good event highly anticipated by the town, and sure to enthrall every visitor.



*Art by Daphne Tambi
Interpreted by Joan Hoeckele*



*Town seal provided by
Tewksbury Historical Society
Interpreted by Kari Mackey*

Floral News

“Art in Bloom”
Tewksbury, April 25 & 26



Art by Joelle Jolviat
Interpreted by Laetitia Won



Art by Maja Hajduk
Interpreted by Krista Zabka



Art by Thomas Trowbridge
Interpreted by Carole Bonfanti



Art by Abbigail Madrinan
Interpreted by Trish Briggs



Art by Vivian Rowe
Interpreted by Cheryl Petrola



Art by Arianna Paralle
Interpreted by Luann O'Keefe



Art by Cam Michallyszyn
Interpreted by Library Staff
See closeup ->



Art by Eleanor Denault
Interpreted by Susan Young

Floral News

“Boston MFA Art in Bloom” 50 Years, May 1-3

Some highlights from the show

“Celebrating 50 Years of Art in Bloom

A groundbreaking festival of art and flowers since 1976.

“Art in Bloom was founded as a partnership between the MFA’s Membership Department and the Ladies Committee volunteers (later known as the MFA Associates) to “encourage attendance and membership and raise funds on a modest scale.” In its inaugural year, the volunteer Flower Committee created floral arrangements in the Rotunda to complement 16 paintings. Within just a few years, the event blossomed into a Museum-wide celebration, featuring dozens of arrangements designed by local garden clubs and placed throughout the galleries.”

-- from the MFA brochure



Dr. Roxanne Mihal and Anne Finley

HULL GARDEN CLUB: The first weekend in May, the HGC was again asked to present an exhibit at the Boston Museum of Fine Art’s annual Art in Bloom. This year’s designers are Anne Finley (R) and Dr Roxanne Mihal. This was the 50th anniversary of Art in Bloom. What started with 6 garden clubs and a host of volunteers has now expanded to 50 garden clubs and is the museums largest public exhibit. The Hull Garden Club members were honored to be welcomed back and arranged their interpretation of a Roman seated Muse marble statue estimated to be over 2000 years old.



GCFM Judges Council



The Country Garden Club of Weston

Floral News



Weston Garden Club



Debbie Kraft and Laurie Bogosian

BETH SHALOM GARDEN CLUB: We were immediately struck by the beauty of the woman's dress and by its gorgeous textures and materials. Our container was provided by a friend. It dramatically reflects the dress with its colors, the height, and (most of all) the holes.

The colors and the textures of this object inspired our selection of floral material. We have incorporated several different blush-colored flowers to create depth and echo the black tips seen on the dress with dark-colored plant material. We aimed to create a well-defined line in acknowledgment of the length of the garment, set off with a mass of plants to reflect the body, and we included more wispy flowers to reflect the feathers of the dress.

Beth Shalom Garden Club has always been focused on floral design, so Art in Bloom is a natural fit. The club has participated since the event began. We consider it an honor to be involved with this wonderful event. We would like to dedicate this arrangement to our mothers for inviting us to a garden club meeting more than 20 years ago. Since then, we have been hooked and have had the opportunity to participate in this wonderful event numerous times.



The Garden Club of Hingham



The Weston Garden Club Evening Group



Winchester Garden Club

Floral News

CHESTNUT HILL GARDEN CLUB:

When we opened our folder revealing which art object we were assigned our first impression was “OMG, we got Degas’ *“Little Fourteen-Year-Old Dancer!”* We both have studied Art History and got chills realizing we were trusted with creating a living work of art to sit next to this iconic sculpture from Degas. We were taken by the youth of the dancer and the movement suggested by her stance. We wanted the floral materials to convey her adolescence and energy, while also choosing flowers which mimicked the softness of the satin ribbon in her hair and the rough but airy nature of the gauze tutu. The vessel selection was also a huge part of the design process.

Ultimately we chose a rough textured amphora shape vessel which really complimented the bronze of the work and sturdy enough to hold our massive floral design. The placement of the Degas statue in the museum is quite prominent and we wanted our florals to be just as impressive and eye catching. It was an amazing, exhausting and very rewarding endeavor. We were so thrilled to represent Chestnut Hill Garden Club at the 2026 MFA Art in Bloom and honored to have a floral work sit next to Degas’ venerable bronze *Little Fourteen-Year-Old Dancer*.

Designers Jennifer Figge and Sarah Winchester



Chestnut Hill Garden Club



Spade and Trowel Garden Club of Andover

SPADE AND TROWEL GARDEN CLUB OF ANDOVER:

We felt privileged and excited to be assigned Monet’s spectacular “La Japonaise”. The colors, the playfulness, the story! Monet’s wife, Camilla, was flirty, coquettish, and fun as she sported her blond wig and rich red kimono. Finding the perfect shapely, and feminine container at Home Goods was a coup we never saw coming.

After a rich coat of red paint and gold trim on the vessel, our gloriosa lilies, freesia, callas, anthurium, and dendrobium orchids came to life naturally and played with the rhythm of the painting. The floral design spoke for itself. We were given a beautiful opportunity from the MFA and we had a LOT of fun interpreting this art!

Arrangers: Melanie Muggia and Kim Glesmann

Floral News

“Arts and Crafts”

Acton, June 11-13

The “Arts and Crafts” Flower Show was the brainchild of Acton Garden Club member Cathy Fochtman. Accredited as a flower school judge only a year and a half ago, Cathy lives in a home filled with décor inspired by Stickley furniture and William Morris. The “arts and crafts” design movement has been a passion of hers for a long time. Inspired by the nature motifs, simple lines and fine workmanship of this trend in Americana, Cathy decided to pattern Acton’s first flower show since 2018 after this theme.

With Acton’s legendary emeritus Thelma Shoneman giving constant guidance and inspiration, Cathy and crew set out to create this amazing NGC standard flower show. They displayed these amazing designs at the Acton Memorial Library for three days.

Cathy and the Acton Garden Club have plans for another flower show in 2028.



Arts and Crafts in America Table



*Maureen Christmas
Blue Ribbon, “Gamble House”*



*Jodi Macdonald
Blue Ribbon, “Tiara”*



William Morris Education Table



*Karin Victor
Blue Ribbon, “Brooch”*



*Heather Makris
Blue Ribbon, “Fallingwater”*



*Judy Shuppert
Blue Ribbon, “Decorated Light
Switch Cover”*

Floral News

“Arts and Crafts” Acton, June 11-13



Susanne Fuller
Blue Ribbon, “Mission Furniture”



Maureen Christmas
Blue Ribbon, “The Craftsman Bungalow”



Catherine Fochtman; Blue Ribbon, “Taliesin”

“My Grandmother’s Garden”

A therapeutic horticulture category where citizens over 60 were asked to decorate a watering can with flowers and foliage that were reminiscent of their childhood.





“A Tiny Nation Blooms” Framingham, June 12-21

A Tiny Nation Blooms, a 1776 inspired flower show, was chaired by Jill Malcolm with Lisa Pattinson as Advisor. It was open to all NGC judges and flower show students. The entire show was Petite designs, which is defined by NGC as a design of 12” or less. The designers were given a frame of reference (i.e. a defined space) ranging from 6” x 9” all the way to 13” x 13”.

Of the 48 designs in the show, 16 were completed by students/student judges, one by an emeritus judge and the remainder by other accredited judges. The furthest entry was submitted by a judge in Florida. In addition to the 48 designs, there were two outstanding educational exhibits.

The show was held for nine days at the Framingham Public Library. The show was largely chaired by student judges with the goal of encouraging and educating them on the behind the scenes work of presenting a flower show. Each student had a mentor to guide them. It was an incredible learning experience for all involved. Here are some highlights from the show.



Cynthia Chapra, Weston Garden Club
Blue Ribbon Entry, “The Tea Party”



Deborah Kingston, Holliston Garden Club
Blue Ribbon Entry, “Faneuil Hall”



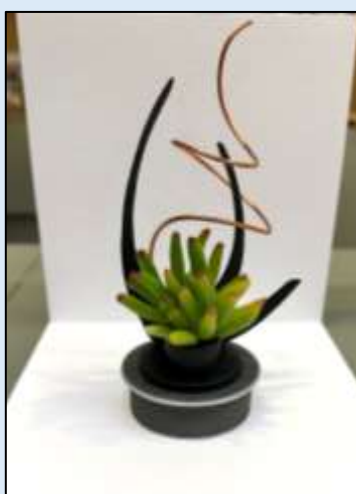
Sarah Papajohn, Comm. GC of Duxbury
Blue Ribbon Entry, “Old North Church”



Beate Bolen, Springfield Garden Club
Blue Ribbon, Tri-Color Award
Design of Excellence, “Shady Woods”



Vana Nespor, Springfield Garden Club
Blue Ribbon Entry “Colorful Trails”



Joanne Kennett, Hamilton-Wenham GC
Blue Ribbon Entry, “The Blacksmiths”



Dolores Ahern, Garden Club of Hyannis
Blue Ribbon Entry, “Carpenters”

Floral News

Meet the Artist



GETTING TO KNOW PAT FLEMING – By Karen Brockelbank

I had the honor of interviewing Pat Fleming after the holiday, and one of the first questions I wanted to ask was about her involvement with the Topsfield Fair Flower Show. But I was about to learn that there is so much more to Pat's career than simply chairing the flower show down the street from me.

Pat's love affair with flower arranging began upon her retirement as a 3rd grade teacher from the Manchester Essex Regional School District in 2014. After being a member of the Hamilton-Wenham Garden Club for nearly 40 years, she finally had time to enter their monthly floral design competitions. After that, her friend and member of the Hamilton Wenham Garden Club and NGC judge LuBeth Kuemmerle encouraged her to enter the Topsfield Fair Flower Show, where her first entry won a Blue Ribbon, the Table Artistry Award, and the Georgia McHugh Award. At that point Pat was hooked, and signed up for GCFM's Garden Study School. Next, NGC judge and member of the Hamilton Wenham Garden Club, Mary Huntoon, encouraged Pat to attend Flower Show School. Mary would become a beloved mentor to Pat.

Over the years Pat has entered many flower shows, including Newport, but her favorite venue is Tower Hill even though it's a long ride. "I like to wait in the gardens out there, the setting is lovely." She spent many hours at



LuBeth Kuemmerle, on the left, taught a class on floral design to members of garden clubs

Tower Hill for Gardening Study School which is one of the schools offered by GCFM.

Pat stepped in to chair the Topsfield Fair Flower Show about seven years ago. Her ability to think on her feet

and make quick decisions is an essential quality when organizing an event with so many moving parts. During one flower show fiasco, one designer had not arrived to place her design on the specific entry day. As



Floral News

Meet the Artist



GETTING TO KNOW PAT FLEMING- By Karen Brockelbank



FUNdamentals instructors Pat Fleming and Suzanne McCance



Garden Therapy Group at Wenham COA

rules of the show go, the class of four designs must be filled in order to be judged. Pat quickly assembled some committee members to come up with a plan. She raced home in seven minutes to collect a vessel and some flowers, and within minutes, the group had created a design! Then **they** decided whose name should be on the design and - low and behold! A second place award, and the design class was saved. Now that is dedication, ingenuity and enthusiasm!

Pat is often asked to be a flower show judge, such as the upcoming Southeast District's "Oceans Around Us" show at the Heritage Museums and Gardens in Sandwich on July 22-24. This summer, you can find an arrangement by Pat in the Marshfield Fair Flower Show, "The Roaring Twenties", August 21-25. And of course, she will chair the Topsfield Fair Flower Show along with Suzanne McCance, October 2-12. The entry dates for the Design and Horticulture Divisions are October 2 and October 7.

With her natural teaching abilities, Pat often leads GCFM floral classes, as she did over the past spring (*FUNdamentals I and II*). As part of the Garden Therapy program for the Hamilton Wenham Garden Club, she teaches hands-on design classes for a homeless women's shelter in Beverly and the Council



Floral News

Meet the Artist



GETTING TO KNOW PAT FLEMING – By Karen Brockelbank

on the Aging in Wenham, and volunteers at the Kaplan Hospice House in Danvers with her therapy dog Keeva.

Always willing to train and nurture newcomers, I asked Pat if she had any words of wisdom for aspiring designers:

"I would say, find a mentor. It's very hard to just jump into this and not have a knowledge base. It could be a mentor from your club, or it might be from another club. Then you don't feel so alone."



Pat Fleming and her therapy dog Keeva

Her Shirley Farm Landscape Project, Part Seventeen - Juliet Silveri

Ground Covers Replace Poison Ivy, Growing Pastoral Grass, and the Gardens Grow Up

I am consulting with landscape designers about plans for a small pond and a large winding path leaving the upper perennial garden, down to a destination in back. I am also planning a small greenhouse. But before those adventures enter full swing in a couple of months:



Backwoods area after Poison Ivy removal

Let's explore the mundane chore of eradicating poison ivy in the back woody area in order to plant ground covers and ferns. I had someone pull up the poison ivy by the roots. Just spraying and cutting back the poison ivy would not have rid this area of it, nor would solarizing it with black plastic or mounding it with cardboard with mulch on top, although these methods would have slowed its growth.

After the poison ivy removal there remains the *amelanchier canadensis*, two compact winterberry hollies ('Berry Poppins' and 'Mr. Poppins'), and a small conifer—I'm not sure which one. I planted these two years ago in the pictured area, where there is some ledge and

***Tiarella Cordifolia* with much variation in appearance, *Galium Odoratum*, and Ghost Ferns**



also a lot of rocks, which may both make the area challenging for plants to grow in. And now the usual assortment of wild asters, bittersweet, small maple and oak saplings, and other wild and invasive things are growing. I will gradually get rid of all the poison ivy and invasives and replace them with the ground covers and ferns mentioned below, with a few other shrubs that might adapt to the area's conditions.

For ground cover I am currently planting *tiarella cordifolia* (foam flower). In the picture note the variation in leaf shape and veining even though these are all the same genus and species. I believe this diversity within one species would mean more chance for immunity to pests and diseases and more general toughness and adaptability? I am also planting Sweet Woodruff (*galium odoratum*) and expecting these two ground covers to thrive in the part sun part shade area at the back. I have five ghost ferns (*athyrium* x 'Ghost') to plant in the same area, which grow to three feet tall with ghostly beauty. I will plant a mosaic of these two ground covers and see how they grow, and maybe add a third—I am currently trialing bright green *heuchera* and lambs' ears as possible third ground covers, and purple *heuchera* would be stunning but I think less tough than these other plants.

The quest for a pastoral lawn



I love the pastoral beauty of wide expanses of lawn, so I had yards of loam with compost brought in and used to replace an area with bad soil that was then reseeded. The grass is growing well as of June 10, 2026.

Inside the Bird Garden



And finally here are two views of my gardens as they grow up and slowly form private outside rooms where I have finally been spending time sitting and talking in the morning. I reserve a half hour before work and we sit and look and listen in the garden, and see things we never knew about. We saw little birds hiding in the juniper and in the witch hazel, which have both become large enough to provide safe nesting sites. If one builds a garden, one

The Witch Hazel and Juneberry trees growing up into garden walls



must make time to sit and look and listen in it, or one loses the opportunity to enjoy it in several ways. The birds, the pollinators, the sun, the shadows, the frolics, the breezes, the conversations, the leafiness, the calmness, the enthrallment. I started the creation of the gardens, and nature brought the rest.



NOURISHING YOUR GARDEN WITHIN WATER BAN RESTRICTIONS

Engineering Long-Term Watering Solutions in the Garden to Out-Wit Climate Change

Every summer the inevitable “WATER BAN” warning signs pop up all over Massachusetts like annoying rectangular birds blocking traffic. “*Yes, we know,*” I mutter to myself every time I see them. We all know that climate change is here to stay. But what our towns and cities don’t offer are any ideas to get the most out of how to water within their restrictions, conserving the most of this precious liquid as we can.

Here are some practical solutions that you may, or may not, have heard of.

MULCH:

It sounds so basic, but mulching your garden isn’t just a pretty way to block weeds. A thick layer of mulch reduces evaporation, keeps garden beds cool, prevents erosion, and enriches the soil.

ELIMINATE WEEDS:

This gardener’s task is easier with a layer of mulch on your side. Without any weeds, our plants are able to enjoy the water we supply without competing with unwanted intruders.

SOAKER-HOSE SYSTEMS:

A great way to get water right to the roots of your plants is to coil a soaker hose through them in the Spring and cover it up with mulch. This not only hides the hose for aesthetic reasons, but keeps your garden bed cool and protected.

CLAY POT OLLAS (OY-AS):

A proven drought-buster used by people in desert climates for thousands of years,

these [clay pot watering systems](#) are a super-smart way to water your garden. Retail ollas may be costly depending on the source, but they are inexpensive and [easy to make](#) yourself.

CATCH RAINWATER:

Water that falls from the sky is free. Set up a water barrel or IBC tank to [catch rainwater](#) to use for your garden. Some [decorative rain barrels](#) have planters on top, or are otherwise disguised and can become a feature in your garden.

TIMING:

Sometimes it’s difficult to get organized in the morning or go out after supper to water the garden, but your plants will thank you for it. Any watering done during the hot midday sun will evaporate quickly, with your efforts and resources wasted.

CHOOSE NATIVE PLANTS:

Because [native plants](#) are adapted to local environmental conditions, they require far less water, saving both time and money. They are survivors! Tropical species are prone to fail.

In conclusion, it might take a year or two to set up a successful watering system in your garden, and get used to new habits. Don’t be afraid to experiment with new equipment, and trade new plants for those that aren’t working out.

Do your research and find the system that works best for you.

MAYFLOWER SUBMISSIONS

DEADLINE: The next *Mayflower* Issue deadline for submissions is **September 10.**

TEXT: Please try to keep your stories 75 words or less.

PICTURES: Attach image files (usually JPG’s) to your email, do not embed them in your document.

CAPTIONS: *Please provide captions for each photo you submit.*

SEND IN YOUR NEWSWORTHY ITEMS TO
GCFMmayflower@gmail.com.



Karen Brockelbank
“Conservation is Cool!”

[my auto-fill olla watering system](#)

All photographs in this newsletter have been supplied courtesy of each Garden Club submitting the information