



# MAYFLOWER

Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts Newsletter



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

## The President's Message



The holiday season has been busy and festive for all us with Garden Club greens sales, holiday luncheons,

decorating for Garden Club civic programs - plus our plans with family and friends. Sometimes it's hard to just sit back and enjoy each and every moment, when it can feel overwhelming. I don't know how each of us did it but we did.

Now that we are over the holidays we can look forward to checking out seed calendars, garden nursery

### AMERICA



*As we enter America's semi-quincentennial year, GCFM will feature your patriotic-themed gardening efforts*

trips for new plants and working in our gardens. I don't know about each of you but this is the time of year I keep watching the weather each day to see if I can do anything in my garden even when I know for a fact the ground is a solid frozen tundra.

We are four months into our Garden Club year and we begin the process

of setting up our programs, workshops and classes. As Garden Club members, we are versatile and can use the next few months to get our club programs in order for the upcoming year, and start our To-Do List for our personal gardens, get excited that we can start marking our calendars for upcoming Plant Sales. All this in the comfort of our homes and not outside in the fright cold.

Keep your spirits up! Spring is on its way, and warmer weather will come soon enough.

*Kim Edwards  
GCFM President  
"It Takes a Village"*



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## GARDEN CLUBS AT WORK



We ended our year with the usual merry-making at our Holiday Greens Workshop, and the creation of over 25 wreaths, swags, baskets, etc. for placement at various locations at town locations in Boxford.



*Holiday Greens Workshop*

### BURLINGTON

Burlington Garden Club donated to the Burlington Science Center supporting their efforts educating K-5 in gardening and conservation. Members made holiday soap dispensers for homebound seniors through Meals on Wheels and helped plant 150 daffodils as part of the Town Beautification Plan.



*Burlington Garden Club members planting daffodils*

For programs "Herbs for Winter Health" demonstrated making cold/flu remedies from our pantries; Mount Auburn Cemetery's speaker presented a virtual tour of

its landscapes and history; members decoupaged terracotta pots; and created holiday centerpieces.



*Burlington Garden Club members selling honey*

The Club had very successful fundraisers selling local honey, homemade wreaths and decorative arrangements.

### DANVERS

The holiday season officially kicked off last weekend when Danvers Garden Club hosted its highly anticipated Balsam & Bows Fair with a Bake Sale & Raffle on Saturday, December 6th, from 9-2. This beloved event offered a one-stop-shop for both your festive decorating and your holiday treat planning. Many thanks to our members and to Kay Maurice for all their hard work to make it a huge success.



*A centerpiece design by the Danvers Garden Club*

### BOXFORD

The Boxford Village Garden Club launched its new website in September, and inducted seven new members in the Fall. We had several workshops, including a "Cement Leaf Workshop" where members learned how to make a large bowl with the impression of a leaf in cement.



*Cement Leaf Workshop*

BVGC had the usual civic beautification area clean-up days, with the addition of one at the Center at 10 Elm – a location that we plan to take on next year.



*Clean-up at the Center at 10 Elm*



## Clubs at Work, Cont'd



### FALMOUTH

December is always a busy month for the Falmouth Garden Club (FGC). The members spend many hours preparing wreaths, swags, gnomes, painted wine glasses, and beautiful cards. The Museum on the Green gift shop is brought to life in a festive manner. The holiday fund raiser contributes its money to the scholarship fund for the Falmouth Garden Club. And the new year begins in a glorious manner with the Holiday Luncheon for all of the members.



*Members of Falmouth Garden Club decorating wreaths to be sold at their holiday market.*

### FRAMINGHAM

The last few months have been eventful! The Framingham Garden Club happily welcomed five new members. Our Senior Class committee already has led four design classes, engaging 58 seniors so far, with another class planned in mid-December for another 16 seniors. One FGC member leads each class while 3-4 other members assist the seniors. A very popular class taught the seniors to decoupage white ceramic pumpkins with fall



*Senior Class decoupageing pumpkins*

designs.

The Beautification Committee completed their annual fall clean-up of three city parks. Members decorate a large urn outside the History Center seasonally. They recently turned over the fall décor to a lovely winter mix of greenery and comple-



*Cushing Park Beautification Group*

mentary accents.

In preparation for our largest fundraiser, Ruth Evans led a workshop on creating long and low holiday centerpieces. The workshop was so popular, it required two

sessions. This provided a valuable opportunity for members to learn or refresh their skills in crafting these popular table designs. Most recently, FGC ran a successful "Greens Sale." Our members hand-crafted 350 nature-based centerpieces and floral arrangements, door swags, outdoor baskets, and wreaths. This year's Greens Sale netted more than \$9,000, with proceeds mainly supporting the scholarship fund. In 2024, FGC granted \$8,000 in scholarships.



*Andi Saari working on a centerpiece*

### GROTON

The Groton Garden Club installed a Blue Star Memorial Garden at Sawyer Common on Veterans Day on November 11th, 2011 at 11 AM and continues to maintain the garden year round.



*Groton's Blue Star Memorial*



## Clubs at Work, Cont'd



Left to Right - Lynne Kavanagh, Jude Sawyer, Penny Hommeyer

The simple garden includes a stone with a plaque, small shrubs, a conifer, iris, sedums, asters, daylilies and spring bulbs. In December, green wreaths with red bows were placed at all 10 War memorials on Sawyer Common.

### HULL GARDEN CLUB

Hull Garden Club members working on town landmarks to ready them for fall and winter.



L-R: Cat Bryant, Faye Baglione, Maria Gianquitto, Nancy Deforest-Courier.

### NAUSET

Nauset Garden Club Fall garden therapy project at the Latham School was a big hit!



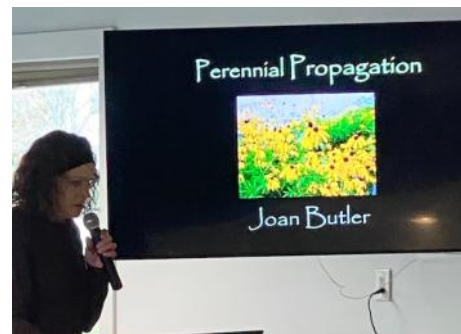
Janet Lascher, Beth Bradanini, Bev Tenhor, Carol Zenke, Tina Williamson

The Nauset Garden Club is pleased to share that this year's recipient of the Nauset Garden Club Award in the amount of \$2000 is Maria Sanchez Roa. She is in her junior year at the University of Massachusetts majoring in environmental science. Maria was the recipient of Nauset Garden Club Award last year.



The University of Massachusetts said that the Nauset Garden Club has offered not only financial assistance but also a powerful message of encouragement—one that inspires

its students to strive, achieve, and believe in their potential. For that, the University extends its deepest thanks.



Joan Butler shared different propagation skills including growing from seed, cuttings and divisions of a wide range of perennials in the combination lecture and demonstration.

The Nauset Garden Club wreath sale was a great success



Julie Mackie, Nancy Jones, Pru Montgomery

### NORTHBOROUGH GARDEN CLUB

Continuing to celebrate our 100th anniversary, 100 bulbs were planted by club members this fall at the Northborough Free Library, Senior Center, VFW and Historical Society. This spring our town will be bursting with yellow daffodils.

Our fall meeting presentations included the story of the American Chestnut Tree, devastated by blight and the efforts for its restoration, and how to "Leave the Dead Stuff" every fall which provides shelter and food for wildlife. To start the holiday season, the club had a wreath



## Clubs at Work, Cont'd



decorating party where we shared decorations and bow making expertise.



*Northborough Garden Club bulb planting volunteers*

### NORFOLK

"Garden Club of Norfolk members had a wonderful time decorating our Vanderwolf Pine tree on Town Hill.

Club members created the stars, cranberry strings, and bells that adorn the tree, all of which were made from recycled and natural materials. Thank you to our members for the vision to decorate our tree this way.



*Norfolk Garden Club 40th Anniversary Dinner*

The Garden Club of Norfolk celebrated its 40th anniversary this December. Current club members gathered with our founding President, Helena Drolette, and many of our past Presidents and members, to cele-

brate this milestone together over a holiday dinner with guest speaker, Betsy Szymczak, presenting "Holiday Decorations at the White House". Club members gathered at the Norfolk Grange, decorated beautifully for the holidays, and enjoyed the wonderful camaraderie of many generations of its members coming together.



*Shown in photo: Susan Asensio, Michele Drolette, Stephanie Hamel, Leslie Lincoln, Marianne Mitchell, Laurel Stoddard, Rick Tedoldi, Janet Turner, and Mike Kennelly.*

### STONEHAM

The Stoneham Garden Club hosted a tour of the historic Whip Hill Manor in August as part of Celebration of Stoneham's 300th Anniversary. The Tour also included the walled garden which is maintained by the Stoneham Garden Club. The day was a success thanks to the members who gave their all to provide an amazing informative program of the history of Whip Hill. In preparation, members did a thorough cleaning of the Manor and decorated with fresh flowers and house plants.



*Whip Hill Tour Team*

The Club awarded a Scholarship to Grace Brogan. Grace was the Stoneham Green Club President last year. She will be studying Environmental Studies and Community Engagement at Trinity College. In September, Peter Coppola from the Burlington Garden Club gave a very lively presentation on "Putting Your Garden to Rest."



*Peter Coppola and Rosalie*

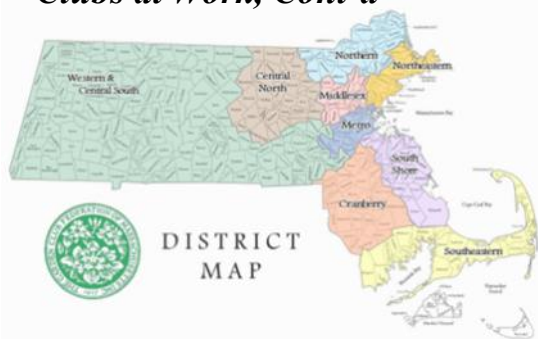
At the November meeting, Neil Sanders gave a wonderful presentation "Gardening is Painless and Other Lies We Tell Ourselves." At that meeting, the Garden Club members had a huge collection for the local food pantry.



*Food Pantry Donations*



## Clubs at Work, Cont'd



The Stoneham Garden Club donated a tree to Mass Horticultural Society for the 2025 Festival of Trees. Our Nature Inspired Butterfly tree included Handmade glass butterflies, handmade the origami butterflies and put together framed real butterflies and milk weed flowers that also were given out as gifts. Many hands and a lot of talent went into this project.

### WEST NEWBURY

The West Newbury Garden Club hosted its third "Art in the Garden Tour" on June 14<sup>th</sup>. The tour included six beautiful gardens in West Newbury and Merrimac, MA. Each garden was uniquely designed, reflecting the artistic personality of its host. The theme of this year's tour was Gardens as



Art and visitors were encouraged to view the gardens themselves as works of art. Plein air artists and musicians performed at each garden.



Stoneham Garden Club - Tree donated to  
Mass Horticultural Society



West Newbury Garden Club wreath making

An added treat was provided by the owners of a historic home in Merrimac surrounded by period gardens. The house was originally built in 1710 in Concord, MA, by Peregrine White, Jr., the son of the first English child born on the Mayflower. It was moved to Merrimac and beautifully restored by the current owners.

The event was a huge success because each garden was so distinctive and carefully curated by its owner.

## 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](mailto:GCFMbluestar@gmail.com)



Blue Star Memorial Marker in Sudbury



# DEADLINES/REMINDERS

## JAN 10 - YOUTH CONTEST DEADLINES

Deadline for [Youth Poetry](#), [Smokey Bear and Woodsey Owl](#) and [Sculpture](#) submissions. Contact Mary Bandouveres at [GCFMyouthcontests@gmail.com](mailto:GCFMyouthcontests@gmail.com).

**POETRY**



**SCULPTURE**



## FEB 1 - NGC SCHOLARSHIPS

The National Garden Club has \$4,000 available in scholarship money. [Click here for form](#).  
Contact Lyn Hoyt for questions. [lynbhoyt@gmail.com](mailto:lynbhoyt@gmail.com)



## MAR 1 - NGC AMES TOOL GRANT

Deadline for submissions for the Ames Tool Grant. [Click here](#)



## MAR 10 - MAYFLOWER WINTER ISSUE DEADLINE

**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 (describe what is going on in the photograph).

**EMAIL:** Send your story to [GCFMmayflower@gmail.com](mailto:GCFMmayflower@gmail.com)



## APR 1 - GCFM SCHOLARSHIPS

Eleven (11) GCFM scholarships are available to high school seniors or graduate college students studying in Horticulture, Floriculture, Landscape Design, Conservation, Forestry, City Planning, Land management, Botany, Biology and allied subjects.

Application forms are available on the GCFM website. [Application form](#)

Contact Lyn Hoyt if you have questions. [lynbhoyt@gmail.com](mailto:lynbhoyt@gmail.com)





# EDUCATION



## THE FUTURE OF BEECH TREES - WITH DR. BETH BRANTLEY, JANUARY 14, 2026

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER - JANUARY 12**

Learn about key threats to beech trees, including phytophthora, beech bark disease, wood decay pathogens, foliar-feeding arthropods and beech leaf disease with Dr. Beth Brantley, research scientist with Bartlett Tree Research Laboratories



**FREE WEBINAR For GCFM Members**  
**The Future of Beech Trees**  
**With Dr. Beth Brantley**  
**JANUARY 14, 2026 7:00 PM EST**

This presentation covers key threats to beech trees, including phytophthora, beech bark disease, wood decay pathogens, foliar-feeding arthropods, and beech leaf disease. It will outline the history, life cycle, and symptoms of the nematode causing beech leaf disease, its effects on tree health, current management strategies, recent research, and potential replacement species.

**Dr. Beth Brantley**  
 Dr. Beth Brantley is a Research Scientist with the Bartlett Tree Research Laboratories, conducting research in arboriculture and providing diagnostic support and public outreach. Her background and interests include plant pathology, forestry, silviculture and tree risk assessment. Beth is currently involved in research with beech leaf disease, red pine scale treatments, and hornbeam diseases. She works closely with Bartlett Tree Experts offices in the northeast and is based in New Hampshire. Beth taught forestry, plant biology and related courses at Penn State Mont Alto for more than 20 years before joining Bartlett in 2019. She is an ISA Board Certified Master Arborist, an ISA Certified Forester and an ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualification Instructor.

**Register Now**

## FUNDAMENTALS OF FLORAL DESIGN I - MAR 10 (FUNDAMENTALS OF FLORAL DESIGN II - JUNE 3)

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER - MARCH 8**

\$25 per class or \$40 for both classes; checks made out to GCFM

Registration: Send to Pat Fleming

143 Cherry St, Wenham, MA 01984

[fleming.3patricia@gmail.com](mailto:fleming.3patricia@gmail.com)



**FUNDamentals of Floral Design**

**FUNDamentals I.**  
**Tuesday, March 10, 2026**  
 Topsfield Fairgrounds  
 Coolidge Hall, 207 Boston St.  
 Topsfield, MA 01983

**FUNDamentals II.**  
**June 3, 2026**  
 Topsfield Fairgrounds  
 Coolidge Hall, 207 Boston St.  
 Topsfield, MA 01983

**Register**

**Flyer**

## GCFM GARDENING SCHOOL COURSE IV - April 9-11, 2026

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER - APRIL 1**

Plant Classification and Nomenclature, Outdoor Identification of Plants, Specialized Garden Styles, Techniques of Growing Woody Ornamentals, Pruning Techniques



**National Garden Clubs**  
**Gardening Study School**  
**Series 12 Course 4,**

**Zoom virtual offering only**  
 April 9, 10, & 11, 2026

**Sponsored by**  
**The Garden Club Federation**  
**Of Massachusetts, Inc.**  
**Kim Edwards, President**

**GCFM is a member of**  
**National Garden Clubs, Inc.**  
**and New England Garden Clubs, Inc.**





# ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

with Maria Bartlett

## Managing Your Lawn Service



Many of you hire a lawn service to take care of your yard. Often, such services offer standard programs that include Weed & Feed herbicides, multiple chemical fertilizer applications, as well as preventative chemical grub insecticides.

The combination of these products results in a monoculture lawn that is devoid of healthy microbial activity. In addition, these chemicals harm bees, other pollinators, and other beneficial insects and birds via drift and/or direct contact as they forage around the yard.

These lawns are generally not drought tolerant and require the constant addition of water. Although the monoculture lawn may seem appealing, it is costly financially, and environmentally. And there is evidence that these chemicals have negative health consequences, too: for example, there is a higher incidence of Parkinson's Disease among those living within a mile of a golf course where excessive amounts of these products are used.

What can a homeowner do?

- Ask your service to do a soil test (or do it yourself via UMass) and only fertilize if the test shows a need. Overuse of chemical fertilizers results in chemical runoff and the development of thatch.
- Refuse routine applications of chemical products.
- If the soil test shows the need, request organic fertilizers such as Espoma. Offer to purchase it if necessary for them to spread for you.
- Offer to purchase the organic grub-Gone® product for them to spread only if you actually have grub damage. This grubGone® brand is an



effective organic Bt treatment that only attacks grubs and does no harm to anything else.

- Specify mowing 3½" high and leaving the clippings rather than bagging them. The cut clippings are "free" nitrogen for the soil.
- For fall lawn care, request aeration of your lawn, which is great to help counteract compaction and get needed oxygen into the soil. Then ask if they will broadcast ¼" of organic compost (Good Earth is one brand) from a wheelbarrow with a shovel, not a spreader. Then, request overseeding with a grass seed containing tall fescue for its deep roots to help with drought tolerance.
- Beware if the service tells you a chemical application is safe. EPA prohibits manufacturers from making pesticide safety claims.
- Beware of "greenwashing." Services using words such as "natural" and "green" may not be!! Ask to see the products they are using.
- Remember: you are the customer!! If the service is not willing to work with your requests, find a service that will do so.

You may end up with a few weeds in your lawn, but the fall program mentioned here will keep them under control.

Here are links for more information:

- [GCFM Organic Lawn Webinar](#)
- [GCFM Organic Lawn Care Information Sheet](#)
- [University of Massachusetts Soil Testing Lab](#)





# Floral News

## "Let's Party" - October 10-11, 2025

Submitted by Beate Bolen and Suzanne Reed, Springfield Garden Club



The Springfield Garden Club hosted 'Let's Party', an NGC Horticulture Specialty Show at the historic Monkey House in Forest Park, Springfield, MA, on Friday, October 10th, and Saturday, October 11th, 2025

Preparations began on Wednesday, as a multitude of hardworking volunteers transformed the venue, setting up tables and signage. The Monkey House buzzed with activity Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning as members from both the Springfield Garden Club and a few other clubs entered their horticulture specimens.



We were delighted by the enthusiasm of our club members. In addition to the many that volunteered their time, energy and talent to help with preparations, over 40% of our membership contributed to



the impressive total of 344 individual horticulture specimens entered.

The overwhelming variety was particularly gratifying given the challenging weather conditions this summer and fall. Eighteen NGC accredited judges from Massachusetts and neighboring states—Connecticut, New York, and Vermont—evaluated the entries.

The event also proudly featured three educational exhibits expressing the 'Pollinator Fiesta' theme, alongside a special, non-judged educational display of botanical arts, which showcased creative bracelets, pins, and tiaras.

The historic Monkey House proved to be the perfect setting; its impressive atmosphere captivated all who attended. We are proud to report that the show was a resounding success, earning a high overall evaluation score from an evaluation team of three judges.

This high score allows the Springfield Garden Club to apply for prestigious awards at the state, regional, and national levels. The collective efforts of all members and friends truly resulted in a spectacular event

The following members were awarded special awards. We are incredibly proud of their accomplishments and encourage everyone to share their con-

gratulations and well wishes when you see them next.



Award of Horticultural Excellence and Section D Award of Merit – Janine Bolland

Section A Award of Merit – Bobbie Pitkin

Section B Award of Merit – Dan Sheehy

Section C -Collector's Showcase Award – Sherry Williams

Section E - Elfin Award – Vana Nespor

Section F Grower's Choice Award – Janet Dolder

Section G Award of Merit – Mary Bando-veres

Section H Award of Merit – Beate Bolen

Section I – Arboreal Award – Bob Able

Section J – Grower's Choice Award – Janet Dolder





## Floral News

**TRANSPARENCY DESIGN, OCTOBER 28, 2025:** This event featured Flower Show Judge Ruth Evans. Ruth explained the characteristics of transparency design and illustrated her lecture showing multiple flower arrangements as examples. Then she led 38 workshop participants through the steps to create a transparency design using limonium, kale, and lisianthus.

## 2025 DESIGNING WORKSHOPS

**OCTOBER DESIGN WORKSHOP**

GCFM and Designing Workshop Present  
Flower Show Judge  
**RUTH EVANS**  
Tuesday, October 28, 2025  
10:00 - 11:30 AM

Saint Susanna's Parish  
262 Needham Street, Dedham, MA

Ruth will teach us about transparency design. Class includes a lecture, demonstration, and the opportunity to apply what you've learned as you create an arrangement to take home.

- All levels of experience in floral arranging are welcome
- Bring your floral snips or scissors
- Attendees do not have to belong to a GCFM garden club
- Bring a friend with you for a most enjoyable morning
- \$35.00, credit cards only

To register for the class please click this link. Deadline to register is October 15!

**REGISTER NOW**

Please email [margo\\_via@verizon.net](mailto:margo_via@verizon.net) or call Margo Via at 781-235-2573 if you have any questions.

**Future Design Workshop!**  
Monday, December 2, 2025

Watch the [www.gcfm.org](http://www.gcfm.org) website for more information on Design Workshop programs.



**UNDERWATER DESIGN, DECEMBER 1, 2025:** This event featured Flower Show Judge Judy Morgan, assisted by Nancy Costa, who gave a design workshop on underwater arrangements.

**DECEMBER DESIGN WORKSHOP**

GCFM and Designing Workshop Present  
Flower Show Judge  
**JUDY MORGAN**  
Monday, December 1, 2025  
10:00 - 11:30 AM

Saint Patrick's Parish Hall  
82 High Street, Wrentham, MA

Judy will teach us about underwater design. Class includes a lecture, demonstration, and the opportunity to apply what you've learned as you create an arrangement to take home.

- All levels of experience in floral arranging are welcome
- Bring your floral snips or scissors
- Attendees do not have to belong to a GCFM garden club
- Bring a friend with you for a most enjoyable morning
- \$37.00, credit cards only

To register for the class please click this link:

**REGISTER NOW**

Please email [nancy\\_via@verizon.net](mailto:nancy_via@verizon.net) or call Margo Via at 781-235-2573 if you have any questions.





# Her Shirley Farm Landscape Project, Part Fifteen - Juliet Silveri

## Five Year Review

It is the end of five seasons of this landscape project, which I started in March 2021. In this installment I present before and after pictures to show my progress in creating a country landscape.

Let's start with the front walk area. Here it is when I moved in. It was bare, with no gardens or shrubbery at all:



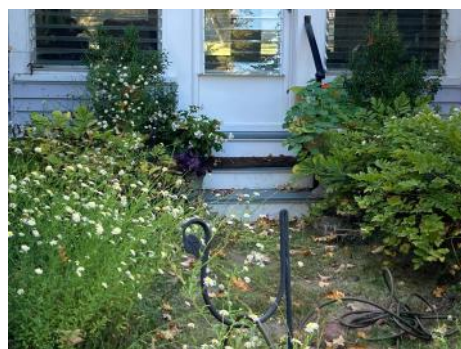
The front porch area in April 2021, before creation of the small woodland garden

And here it was below, in 2024. We brought in dirt mixed with compost, two highbush blueberry shrubs, two *ilex glabra* 'gem box,' three *ilex glabra* 'strong box,' a lot of *kalimeris* asters in white, and several *actea racemosa*s. In the spring sweet woodruff (*galium odoratum*) as a ground cover and *tulipa sylvestris* have made this area enchanting.

It was meant to be a small woodland garden that is attractive in all seasons. In the winter the evergreens and the red highbush blueberry stems stand out against the snow.



The front porch garden in the spring, with *tulipa sylvestris* and sweet woodruff (*galium odoratum*)



The front porch garden in summer/fall, with *kalimeris* asters and *actea racemosa*, and two *ilex glabra* 'gem box'



The backyard landscape in summer of 2021, before the gardens, sugar maples, and wildlife hedge were created and planted

And now the back yard—here it is, open and bare, five years ago, note the line of invasives along the woods on the right edge. (I had mown paths in the grass as an experiment):

And here is this area now in the spring, with two new gardens and the three Juneberry trees blooming.



The gardens in spring of 2024

The two perennial gardens were planned and designed in every way—their shape, the paths, the layout, and the shrubs and trees inside them.



The bird/winter garden in summer/fall of 2025

These gardens were intended to be private outdoor rooms, which they are starting to resemble as the perennials grow up, although the hedges that will form a wall around the outside, the *ilex crenata* "green lustre" and *ilex crenata* 'hoogendorn,' have both been slow to grow these last three seasons.



## Her Shirley Farm, Cont'd



The upper perennial garden in summer/fall of 2025

And to the right of the backyard gardens, here is the allée of Green Mountain sugar maples I planted four years ago:



Allée of Green Mountain sugar maples after four seasons

I staked and straightened them in various iterations, and watered them a lot the first year only. Some are still staked after four seasons—now all are straight.

And here is the patio area, roped off by the designer in 2022, before it was built:



The measured-out area before it was a patio

And here it is now, luminous and gray with the bluestone and *ilex crenata* 'hoogendorn' surrounding it:



The bluestone patio with the two gardens in the background

The creation of these different spaces has been overwhelmingly successful, and I am not done creating landscapes! Join



## Is Your Club Into Conservation? Get Noticed!

There is a new feature on the Environmental Awareness page for clubs who do conservation work - like Harwich. Just send in a picture of your club at work with a paragraph or two, and your hard work will be posted on the GCFM website in our new **"Spotlight on Garden Club Conservation Efforts"**.

Join clubs like Harwich and send in your stories and photographs of environmental projects such as efforts to eliminate invasive plants and preserve native species. Does your club have programs to educate members and/or the public about pollinators, and organic ways to treat pests? Do you bare-root your plants before potting them up for your yearly Plant Sale? Do you work with a seed library? Are you planting trees on Arbor Day? We want to hear about it! Send in your information to [gcfmwebmaster@gmail.com](mailto:gcfmwebmaster@gmail.com).



## Book Review - by Pat Nemeth



**David Mizejewski: Attracting Birds, Butterflies and Other Backyard Wildlife**  
National Wildlife Federation, 2018



is to have a beautiful yard, that supports wildlife, and is a delight for you and your loved ones.

There are chapters devoted to the four basic requirements for wildlife: food, water, cover and places to raise their young. Each chapter has lists of native plants and fun projects you can do as a family. I

*"We need to reconnect our cities, towns, and neighborhoods back into the ecosystem they were once a part of."*

*~ David Mizejewski*

loved the project of using a cookie cutter, with day old bread and chunky peanut butter to make outdoor treats.

The book is illustrated with beautiful photos of plants to use and those to avoid, along with what plants attract what type of wildlife. There is a lovely project on how to plant a butterfly garden with a dozen practical tips. There are projects on building: nesting boxes, brush pile shelters, rain gardens and water features.

The book closes by discussing how to sustain your native plant wildlife garden. Organic gardening practices are reviewed, such as

composting and conserving water. And when you are all done, you can have your garden certi-



To learn more, go to [www.nwf.org](http://www.nwf.org)

fied by the National Wildlife Federation. Posting the Certified Wildlife Habitat sign celebrates your work and helps spread the message.

This is a book to read again and again. I give this book 5 Stars and highly recommend it to you.

*Pat Nemeth*  
*Aptucxet Garden Club of Bourne*



By now we all know about native plants and invasive non-native species. We know about butterfly attractors and the wildflowers of the Cape. We know not to use pesticides; and we even know it is good leave our yards a little messy when the leaves fall. But if you want to be a Steward of the Earth and have a wildlife friendly yard, then this book is for you.

This is a "how to" book. The book begins by helping you assess your yard and evaluate what native plants you want to use. It discusses how to plant a mix of native plants that bloom in different seasons, some in spring, some in summer and some in fall. The goal



## A Giant Has Left Us

### A Tribute to Linda Jean Smith by Marjorie Dienhart GCFM President 2023-2025

It was a sad day in October when we learned of the passing of **Linda Jean Smith**, our cherished Federated State President (2009–2011). The news came as a shock, so sudden and unexpected. Until just a week before her passing, Linda Jean remained deeply engaged—updating policies, leading the Garden Studies School as Chairperson, contributing as an active member of our Board of Directors, and maintaining the Federation's history as our dedicated Historian. In the sixteen years since her presidency, she continued to serve tirelessly in countless roles, leaving an indelible mark on the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts (GCFM).

Linda Jean's journey with the Federation began when she accepted a role as Recording Secretary. From there, she went on to serve in nearly every capacity: Second Vice President, First Vice President, District Director, Parliamentarian, Treasurer, and longtime Editor of *The Mayflower*. Over a decade's worth of *Mayflower* issues stand as part of the legacy she leaves behind—a testament to her dedication, energy, and talent.

Beyond her work with the Federation, Linda Jean devoted her life to her two great passions: **theater and gardening**. She gave decades of service to the Chelmsford High School Drama Club, the Westford Academy Drama Club, and the Massachusetts Educational

Drama Guild, supporting theater education across the state. A member of the Open Gate Garden Club in Chelmsford since the late 1960s, she most recently served as both president and treasurer, continuing to inspire those around her with her leadership and enthusiasm.

As Historian, Linda Jean maintained the Federation's operational and historical records with precision and care. She was a true fountain of knowledge, recalling key figures, events, and milestones with ease—and often, with a humorous story or two. Her insight and memory have been invaluable to preserving our shared history.

She served not only Massachusetts but also made contributions on the national level, most recently as Garden Studies Chairperson.

Her passing leaves behind **irreplaceable shoes to fill**. Linda Jean approached every task with intelligence, humor, generosity, and grace. She was a straight shooter—a problem solver whose advice we trusted and whose technical expertise we relied on. Even as her health declined slightly in recent months, she remained an active, positive force who never complained and always delivered her best.

Linda Jean Smith's death is a tremen-

## OBITUARY



**Linda Jean Smith**  
**1944-2025**

dous loss for the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts. We can only hope she now watches over us, continuing to inspire and guide us as we carry forward the work she loved so deeply.

From our heavy hearts, we mourn her loss. She was an exceptional person—an inspirational leader, a generous colleague, and a dear friend. Her influence will live on through all who knew and worked with her. We are profoundly grateful that she was part of our lives.

[Online obituary](#)



## A Note From The Editor

While searching for photographs of GCFM's presidents I had the opportunity to look at digital copies of all the back-issues of the Mayflower in the Wal-tham office.

During this project I realized that Linda Jean Smith had been the Editor for many years, and that – astonishingly – during her administration, the Mayflower had been published five times per year. It wasn't until she became President in 2009 that she slowed down and the paper became quarterly.

As the new Editor of this decades-old publication, I had the luxury of looking

at Linda Jean's work and learning from it. I noticed that, whenever she reported on a flower show, every single winner was listed no matter how many pages it took (sometimes up to 55).

Linda Jean took great care in reporting all the details of these events, with a precision that showed her natural ability to be GCFM's Historian. She shared her wisdom with me whenever I asked, and she will be sorely missed.



Karen Brockelbank  
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## A "HOW-TO" FOR SENDING IN YOUR SUBMISSIONS

**DEADLINE:** The next *Mayflower* Issue deadline for submissions is **March 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](mailto:gcfmmayflower@gmail.com).

## GCFM HELP WANTED

### Get to Know the People in Your Village

All garden club members are invited to learn more about the GCFM Village. We have committees, schools, flower shows, FUN, and lots more to share.

There are many ways you can participate —

- be part of a committee (Awards, Scholarships, Youth activities, Yearbook, or others)
- attend a Fall Coffee Meeting and meet the Officers
- coordinate a district event for nearby clubs
- participate in a GCFM School or learn more about the Councils

Our mission is dedicated to assisting you with education and appreciation of Horticulture, Landscape and Floral Design, Gardening and Environmental Concerns.

To find out more -

- check out [www.gcfm.org](http://www.gcfm.org)
- email [gardenclubfedma@gmail.com](mailto:gardenclubfedma@gmail.com)
- call us at 781-237-0336



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