

A POSY PICKER'S PAPER

New Meadows Garden Club
Topsfield, Massachusetts
November—December 2021



Holiday season gardening tips and a Gardener's Christmas poem waiting in this month's Green Thumb!

"To appreciate the beauty of a snowflake, it is necessary to stand out in the cold."

...Aristotle

November 27



Our club will decorate the outside of the Topsfield Town Library for the holidays at 12 pm. Cut greens from your gardens are needed to dress up the urns and extra hands would be great for decorating the urns and the outside railings of the building. Please mark your calendars and come by for any time that you can spare from your busy holiday schedules!

P.S. Many thanks to Linda Mann for providing new perky bows for our Library window wreaths. She is surely a bow making expert!

December 6



Our Garden Therapy Committee will hold a Boxwood Tree Workshop for members of the Topsfield Council On Aging at the Trinity Church Meeting Hall, Topsfield at 10:30 am. We need all the help we can get to prepare for the workshop and also to help the participants make their trees! Helpers are requested to arrive at 9:30 am for set-up prior to the workshop. Please bring newspapers to cover tables, and clippers! The cost is \$10 for those who will be making trees! Please let Mary Connor know whether you will be able to lend a hand at the workshop!

**Many thanks to members who have volunteered to prepare ornaments for the trees!*

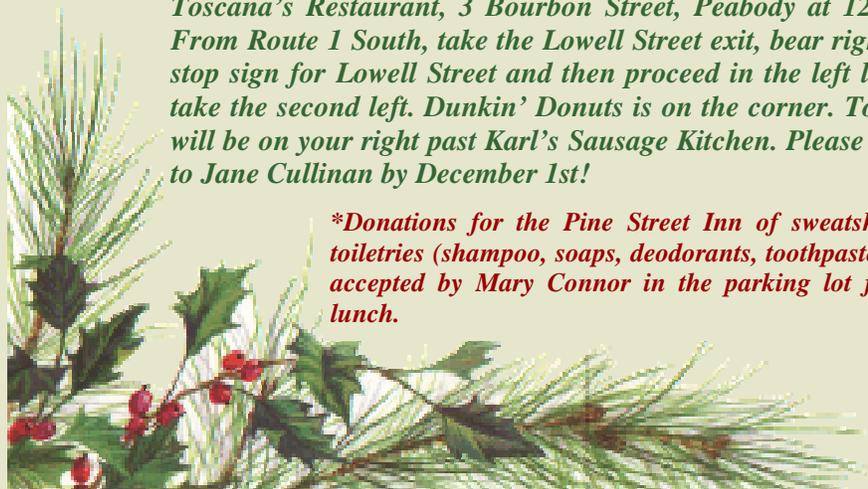
December 7



Your Yankee Swap should be a wrapped small sized \$10—\$15 gift!

*Our annual **Holiday Luncheon and Yankee Swap** will be held at Toscana's Restaurant, 3 Bourbon Street, Peabody at 12:15 pm. From Route 1 South, take the Lowell Street exit, bear right at the stop sign for Lowell Street and then proceed in the left lane and take the second left. Dunkin' Donuts is on the corner. Toscana's will be on your right past Karl's Sausage Kitchen. Please respond to Jane Cullinan by December 1st!*

**Donations for the Pine Street Inn of sweatshirts and toiletries (shampoo, soaps, deodorants, toothpaste) will be accepted by Mary Connor in the parking lot following lunch.*



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

NOTES



We were so very sad to hear about the recent passing of our Honorary Member, Sandy Duffy. For those in the club who knew her, I am sure you would agree that she was a “hot ticket!” There was never a dull moment when Sandy was around. I can remember my feeling of awe as I watched her installed as the

president of our club in 1974. She seemed so young to be taking on the job. And a super president she was! What some of you might not know is that Sandy was quite the flower designer then, and entered and won awards in many standard flower shows around the state. But what really distinguished her in our club and with the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts was the Garden Therapy work she did for many years with the elderly citizens, pretty much ladies, at Little Brook Village in Topsfield. Every month, Sandy came up with a unique craft project for them to do. All the participants had to do was come and Sandy had everything at the ready. She “grumbled” every time the club wished to reimburse her for her expenses! Each year, also at her own expense, she hosted a luncheon in her home for all the “crafters” she worked with at Little Brook, which was an event they all looked forward to. There were tables set up all throughout her house to accommodate the crowd! Sandy was honored for her many years of dedication to this program by the Federation and it was so very well deserved. I do wish that all of you who didn’t know her had the opportunity. She was one of a kind and a member at the very heart of our club. She will certainly be missed. ♥ LM

...Bits and pieces...



Jane, Steve and the grandkids!

Great news that our community gardens around town have been put to bed for the winter. Once again, Scott Hayes has been a great help in cutting down our plantings, and many thanks to Jane Cullinan, Sandy Whelan, her husband Steve and their two grandchildren too for raking up and carting away all the cut plant material. What would we do without them?



Scott Hayes at work!

...Green Thumb Corner follows...

Green Thumb Corner

Have you started your holiday shopping yet??? Time is running out, especially this year! Perhaps new garden tools are just the thing for someone on your list. Here are a few buying tips:

~Purchase the best tools you can afford. Good tools, if taken care of, will last forever. Tools that are used often should be made from durable materials such as stainless steel and carbon steel if the tool has blades.

~The weight of the tools is important. The tool you purchase should be heavy enough to last, but not so heavy that it is hard to use.

~The right tool has a good grip...it should be non-slip and pliable. Non-slip handles help to hang on to the tool...no need to waste energy keeping it in one's hand! A pliable and soft grip will be kind to the joints and help prevent cramping.

~And, the longer the handles, the easier to garden. Long handles save on bending and overextending while working in the garden! Long handles also add some leverage if it is needed.

I'm sure your local garden center would be delighted to provide guidance as well.



Many of us purchase Poinsettia plants at this time of year, and here are a few tips to help your plants last longer:

~When choosing your plant, look for bright bracts (the showy colored leaves) and healthy, un-wilted foliage. The true flower in the center of these colorful bracts should be tightly clustered and just starting to shed

pollen. Be sure to provide some protection for your plant when you transport it home, especially if it is freezing outside!

~Place your little darling in a brightly lit location that is away from cold drafts and heat sources.

~The color will last longer if the plant is kept in high humidity (tough here) and temperatures between 60 and 70 degrees.

~If the pot is covered with foil, be sure to put a drainage hole in the foil. Empty any water that drains from the pot into the saucer below. Standing water is no-no!



...And a few more quick tips for the season:

~ Cold temperatures are here to stay for a while, and when the temperatures fluctuate between freezing and thawing, any planting pots you might still have outdoors that contain moist soil may crack or break. The solution is to remove

the soil from the pots and move them to a sheltered area for the winter.

~And, by all means, when storing your garden hoses for the winter, take care to drain them first and be careful not to kink them. Kinks become a weak point which can crack in the future. It is best to store your hoses on reels or just coil them loosely on the floor.



...more follows...



A GARDENER'S CHRISTMAS

'Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the yard, the branches were bare and the ground frozen hard;

The roses were dormant and mulched all around to protect them from damage if frost heaves the ground;

The perennials were nestled all snug in their beds, while visions of fertilizer danced in their heads;

The newly planted shrubs had been soaked by a hose to settle their roots for a long winter's doze;

And out on the lawn The new fallen snow protected the roots of the grasses below;

When, what to my wondering eyes should appear, but a Prius full of gifts of gardening gear;

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

I've brought new seeds and light systems, too, give them a try and see how they do.

To eliminate weeding, I brought bags of mulch to attract the pollinators, I have flowers for best results.

To add to your joy, I've plenty of herbs and ornamental grasses for your curb planting.

For seed planting days, I've a trowel and dibble. And a roll of wire mesh, if the rabbits should nibble.

I have the latest books plus some gadgets you'll love; plant stakes and frames, and water-proof gloves.

Here are sharp shears and a new compost pit and, for pH detecting, a soil testing kit.

With these colorful flagstones, lay a new garden path. For the view from your window, a bird feeder and bath.

And last but not least, some well-rotted manure. A green garden year-round, these gifts will ensure."

Then, jolly St. Nick having emptied his load, started his Prius and took to the road.

And I heard him exclaim through the motor's quiet hum, "Merry Christmas to all, and to all a green thumb!"

...author unknown...

HEARTFELT WISHES TO ALL FOR A BEAUTIFUL AND VERY SPECIAL HOLIDAY SEASON!