

Northern Exposure



Newsletter of the New England Garden Clubs, Inc.

**Connecticut – Maine – Massachusetts
New Hampshire – Rhode Island - Vermont**

November 2019

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



By the time you get this issue of our newsletter, the leaves will have already turned and many of them will be accumulating in our yards. Fall has always been a special time for me as I was born in October and enjoy the brilliant colors of the leaves against a clear blue sky. (In the photo with this column, I celebrated my birthday weekend at Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens by taking in their first-ever scarecrow festival.) Fall is also a time we take stock on what we accomplished over the summer and what we can plan for next year. But first, I look back on recent events in our Region.

It was wonderful to meet so many new people at our Region's Annual Meeting at the Woodstock Inn! Thanks go out to Susan Hinkel for coordinating this year's meeting on behalf of our hosts, the Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont. Not only was Sue the Chairman of the event, but she's now the Co-President of the Vermont Federation along with Caroline Frey. Both ladies have served multiple times in this position. Thanks also go to Registrar Pat Williams and all the other members from Vermont who provided support to the success of our event. And, congratulations to those individuals and clubs who were this year's winners of Region awards! The Woodstock Inn was a beautiful venue and those of us lucky enough to be there were treated to top notch service at one of New England's top country inns! You can read more about our meeting in another article in this issue. Also, go to our website at www.newenglandgc.org to see photos from this year's event by clicking on the PHOTO GALLERY tab.

Looking ahead, I plan to get to all six states in 2020. I've had the privilege of attending Annual Meetings in both my home state of Maine and in Massachusetts. At each event it was

encouraging to see the accomplishments of the outgoing Presidents and the goals and dreams of the incoming Presidents. I already have a few of your state events on my 2020 calendar. And I'll definitely be visiting more community gardens in 2020!

It's still not too late to send me your Region Project Donation Forms reflecting donations made of produce, fruit, herbs and more to organizations who help with feeding the less fortunate here in New England. The form is on our website: www.newenglandgc.org and click on the REGION PROJECT tab. To date, I've received several forms from members and clubs in five of our six states. The current total is more than 6,600 pounds of donated items! I've also heard from a club who donated seeds and another club who has donated money. The recipients range from soup kitchens, to food trucks who serve those in need, to Boys and Girls Clubs, to church groups and to senior centers. The variety of recipients never ceases to amaze me! In a recent article in *The Maine Sunday Telegram*, the writers note that more than five million older Americans don't have consistent access to enough food to sustain a healthy lifestyle. This is a number that has DOUBLED since 2001! And, while a lot of needed focus has been on feeding our children in the school setting, older Americans are "shrouded by isolation and a generation's pride" and don't get the food they need according to the article. We've got to do better to take care of those around us who may be too proud to ask for help.

As we end this year, I wish all of you a wonderful Fall and a blessed holiday season as we look forward to a new gardening year in 2020!

Suzanne Bushnell
Director, New England Garden Clubs, Inc.

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New Hampshire Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.

It was a lovely day in the vineyard for the 86th NHFGC Fall Meeting. This was our first time in a tented venue and the day warmed up nicely allowing the venue to lift the isenglass-like tent sides so that we truly were among the vines. We welcomed Gay Austin, NGC President, to our meeting and enjoyed hearing her comments about National's focus and programs. Our business meeting moved along quickly, the memorial service for our lost members was touching and during the afternoon activity I heard a lot of sharing and laughter. I was pleased to have John Forti of Bedrock Gardens and Brian Ferguson, winemaker, distiller and the owner of Flag Hill, as our speakers. Thank you to the District 4 clubs and their director, Susan Davis, for planning, coordinating and facilitating this successful meeting.



District 4 presidents presented the afternoon program dressed as wine stewards “pouring” out the first ice-breaking question for their table. Left to right: Wine sommeliers Susan Davis, Gary Bennett, Audrey Vargish, LEEANNE Miner, Mary Kaltenbach, Winnie Schmidt, Eunice Miller, Brenda Weber, Sue Miner, Sylvia Roberts and Alison Kennery - continued

New Hampshire – continued

This year our executive board has been focused on two goals. The first is to strengthen our relationship with our member clubs by providing resources to help all our garden clubs flourish. Second, to increase membership in the Federation. The NGC goal of a 21% increase in membership over the next 2 years equates to 180 new members in our state. We believe that these two goals align with each other – what we can do to help our current member clubs will be the same things that non-federated clubs would appreciate.

Our Federation has 17 member clubs at this time and we are aware that there are nearly another 30 additional garden clubs currently operating within the state. In order to bring some of them into our fold, we feel we need more tangible answers to the question that is invariably asked: “What’s in it for us?” We recently announced two new advantages for our current and prospective clubs during our fall meeting that hopefully will help to encourage them to join with us:

A Master Insurance Plan that allows NHFGC to offer Liability and Directors/Officers Insurance to our clubs at very reasonable rates. This was modeled after the program that the Massachusetts Federation offers. We know that some clubs may choose to participate while others may not – it is strictly their choice – however we feel that this is an economical solution to most clubs’ insurance needs.

Plant Dealer’s License - Last year NHFGC was made aware of the NH State Law requiring all businesses, clubs and individuals that sell rooted plants to obtain an annual Plant Dealer’s License in order to do so. I met in August with an official from the NH Department of Agriculture’s Division of Plant Industry and they have agreed to treat the NHFGC garden clubs as they do NH chain stores, i.e., Home Depot, Lowes, etc. in that the Federation will be authorized to submit the required information to the State each year for all our clubs. We will then send each club their individual licenses and any pertinent correspondence. Our member clubs will no longer need to interact directly with the State of New Hampshire in order to be in compliance with this requirement and law. In November we will be sending out a simple survey to our clubs to determine which clubs will need to submit the \$25 annual fee which applies only if they sell over \$3,000 in rooted plant material each year.

We then created a new membership brochure for the Federation. It highlights the current and ongoing benefits enjoyed by garden clubs through their membership in the Federation and National Garden Clubs, Inc. in addition to these new advantages. The brochure also serves as a reminder of all the programs, grants and benefits available to our member clubs. - continued

New Hampshire – continued

We are currently working with several clubs – some new to NHFGC and some former member clubs – in regard to joining or rejoining NHFGC. We are also helping a new club get started. We are receiving positive feedback and hope to be able to add a few new clubs to our roster soon for the benefit of our entire organization. We would be delighted to work with any club or potential club who is considering joining or rejoining NHFGC.

New Hampshire Plants for Wildlife

Susan Miner
NHFGC President

Theme: Plant Rhode Island – Remember Your Roots

I chose this theme because I am a huge advocate of clean air, water and helping to reduce global warming. One way to protect and clean our environment is to plant trees. We know that trees produce oxygen and improve air quality. They also protect and purify our water sources and cool the earth with their shade. The infestation of gypsy moth caterpillars, from 2015 to 2017 ravaged forests in Rhode Island --destroying over 300,000 trees in Rhode Island alone. In my first six months as President, we have arranged for two Habitat for Humanity plantings in Rhode Island. The plantings will help to beautify the landscape with native and pollinator friendly bushes, plants and a Tree.

RIFGC's Elizabeth McCaffrey Arbor Day Award (originated 2004) has an award of \$25.00 to the member club presenting the most outstanding Arbor Day program. In April, the RIFGC will be giving away FREE- 5-6-foot trees to individual clubs in time for Arbor Day 2020. It is our goal to have each member garden club plant a tree in RI. During my presidency, this year and next, the Arbor Day Award will be increased to \$50.00.

We have introduced the Penny Pine Program. The NGC partnered with the USDA Forest Service for reforestation and forest education programs. We asked our clubs to have a collection jar at their meetings to collect "pennies" or other change. It is a huge success. For each \$68.00 collected, tree seedlings for ten acres will be purchased. Approximately 200 tree seedlings per acre.

In July, we hold a fundraiser at the Newport Polo, host of the Newport International Polo Series, the home of America's first polo club, est. in 1876, offering public exhibition matches. Local civic and charitable non-profits fill the polo grounds with several thousand supporters for Newport Polo's annual All Charity Day. Proceeds from the ticket sales, plus raffles, silent auctions and other game-day fundraising brought in close to \$1,000 as our summer fundraiser. We offer our clubs the opportunity to attend the polo match, bring tables of their

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Rhode Island – continued

own food and drink, pets, free parking close by and bring chairs to sit right up front to watch the match for a cost of \$20 per person.

We also provide a Free Education Day. There are separate workshops conducted by experts in gardening, conservation and floral design. This year will be another very informative day with several speakers and floral designers chaired by Vera Bowen.

I would be remiss if I did not give praise to Vera Bowen, past NEGC Director, past RIFGC president, co-founder and president of Garden Time. In the latest *The National Gardener* is a 6-page article titled "Maximum Impact." Teaching gardening to the incarcerated in RI, fosters a chance to grow.

Deb Ort, President
Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs

Plant Massachusetts with Native Shrubs and Trees **President's Project: The Native Plant Challenge**

Our Mission:

- ❖ Support a more diverse habitat for native wildlife by promoting the uses of native plants on residential and civic properties.
- ❖ Encourage gardeners to work with nature, not against it.
- ❖ Educate garden club members and the public about the important role that native plants play in our ecosystem.

How to Accept the Challenge:

- ❖ Add native perennials, shrubs and trees to your own garden and landscape.
- ❖ Design a new native plant garden with your club or supplement an existing garden with 50% or more natives.
- ❖ Collaborate with other garden clubs in your district to create or update a garden with native plants.
- ❖ Dedicate a Native Plant Ambassador within your club or district to make recommendations, track your native gardens and help you complete the challenge! Our native flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*) supports 117 species of moths and butterflies, while the non-native Kousa dogwood hosts only 6 species of insect herbivores. Native columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) blooms before the non-native one, attracts hummingbirds and has great resistance to leaf miner, unlike other columbine species and hybrids.

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Massachusetts - continued

How to Complete the Challenge:

- ❖ Plant kits and education from the Native Plant Trust - NPT will supply native plants kits for specific sites: sun, shade, wetland, etc. NPT will also offer an online course: Designing with Native Plants. Both will be available at a special reduced price through 2021.
- ❖ Join Grow Native Massachusetts, attend free lectures by experts in the field and discover assorted resources.
- ❖ Watch the GCFM website for info about classes and workshops.
- ❖ Find native perennials, shrubs or trees at our recommended nurseries or ask your favorite nursery to provide a wider selection of native plants.
- ❖ Track and submit the species and number of natives you plant from now until May 2021. There will be awards for all native gardens planted, from simple containers to large scale civic projects.
- ❖ Remember, any size or type of garden WILL make a difference!

Bonnie Rosenthal

President, Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts

Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut, Inc.

I am sitting down writing and realize that the final major event in Connecticut in 2019, the 90th Annual Awards Meeting, is upon us. It's the third statewide event of the year, following the Annual Meeting in the spring and the highly successful Club President's Day held last month. The amount of time and effort that Board Members put against these events is extraordinary and helps to exceed the expectations of club members who attend.

The Awards Meeting on October 30th brings the anticipation of the awards and the acknowledgement of the accomplishments of clubs and their members. There's always excitement in the air. This year, a Tablesapes event has been added to heighten the value and thrill of attending. Under the leadership of Judges Council Chairman Trish Manfredi, ten clubs are creating tablesapes based around the theme of "A Literary Lunch with a Connecticut Author." Among the authors/books chosen include *Sex and the City* by Candace Bushnell, *The Gardener's Palette* by Sydney Eddison, Maurice Sandal's classic *Where the Wild*
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Connecticut - continued

Things Are, and seven more equally fun selections. Meeting attendees have the opportunity to weigh in to vote for their favorites. A fun twist to a popular event.

Over 60 club presidents and representatives attended Club President's Day in late September. "How We Can Help You Thrive" was the theme of the meeting with an overarching goal of motivating clubs to use The Federation more often and to their greater advantage.

Several board members presented content on their respective areas of expertise. FGCCT Treasurer Shirley Hall gave an in-depth talk on the ins and outs of club finances. Shelley Hedberg, Website Chairman, provided a step-by-step video walkthrough of our user-friendly website. An informative discussion centered on NGC, NEGC and their respective websites, as well as the grant opportunities provided by both NGC and the FGCCT. A question and answer session provided more insight. Attendees came away more informed about all that is available from The Federation to help their clubs thrive going forward.

The Federation has received a great deal of positive press in *The National Gardener*. Written by three members of the Landscape Design Council, "Insights into Landscape Design Exhibits" was published this summer. This fall, an article detailing the Daytime Gardeners of North Haven's involvement with Brownie Girl Scouts was featured.

Led by Tours Chairman Kathy Lindroth, three wonderful tours took place this year. The first was a tour to Arkansas, visiting P. Allen Smith's Moss Mountain Farm, the Clinton Presidential Library, the Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and much more. Center stage in September were two separate Swallows Migration Tours on the Connecticut River to see the remarkable gathering of migrating swallows at sunset. Next week, Kathy is leading a group on a 10-day tour of Japan to visit many gardens.

A Blue Star By-Way marker will be dedicated on Veteran's Day. This is thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Shippan Point Garden Club and The Stamford Garden Club. This brings the total of Blue Star markers in Connecticut to 17.

Our schools continue to be well received, with Gardening and Flower Show Schools taking place this fall. After a lapse of several years, we're thrilled to be reinstating Environmental School with Sharon Bender, a newly accredited NGC Four Star member, serving as chairman. Dates for 2020 are yet to be scheduled.

The ever popular Beyond Beginning creative floral design workshops continue to be extremely well received with many sessions held across the State.

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Connecticut - continued

Under the leadership of Cathy Ritch, the former Connecticut Flower Show Chairman, the workshops have had a tremendous impact. Many attendees took their hands-on experience and put it into practice by exhibiting at the Connecticut Flower Show at the Connecticut Convention Center. Many of these club members would have never considered entering before having attended Beyond Beginning workshops.

As I travel across the State, the response to my President's Project, "Out with Invasives. In with Natives," has been tremendous. Many clubs are actively looking for ways to implement programs and projects that align with the theme. The only way we eradicate the spread of invasives is by banding together.

I've had the privilege of taking part in meetings with many clubs the past several months. Enjoying their programs and meeting all the club members is something about my presidency that I enjoy the most. Hearing what clubs need and the challenges that they face helps me be a better leader. I learn as much from them as they do from me about the Federation, NEGC and NGC. These connections help all of us grow and thrive.

Arlene Field
President, The Federated Garden Clubs of
Connecticut, Inc.
afield2@earthlink.net



Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont, Inc.

[editor's note: Vermont has co-presidents for 2019-2021]



The Vermont Federated Garden Clubs are busy moving into our fall schedules, attending our FGCV Fall Meeting and starting to put our gardens to bed. As with most of the rest of New England, we had a late start on the growing season, lots of rain and a very slow beginning to the changing colors of our foliage. We note that the colors are a little duller with barely any red maples. However, the Leaf Peepers all think the colors are wonderful! And that's what's important.

Our FGCV Fall Meeting was held early in October at the Scott Farm, an heirloom apple orchard, near Brattleboro,
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Vermont – continued

Vermont. Our program was presented by Zeke Goodband, a modern-day Johnny Appleseed as well as a nationally renowned orchardist, who sports a wispy beard reaching almost to his waist! He enlightened us with the history of the orchard and its ecologically-grown fruits, especially its 120 varieties of heirloom apples grown there. Following each explanation, we had a tasting of that variety of apple.

After our meeting, members were able to tour the grounds where we took in one of FGCV's two 2018 Plant America winning garden projects awarded to the Brattleboro Floral Arts and Garden Club.



to see lots of NEGC members there!

Susan Hinkel
Co-President, FGCV



Then we
toured

projects in the Stone Trust, a training and certifying center where wallers can learn how to build dry stone walls. The examples were breath-taking!

At present our minds are still on the 2019 NEGC Annual Meeting, which the Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont hosted at the lovely Woodstock Inn. It was wonderful



Vermont Co-Presidents Caroline Frey and Susan Hinkel

Garden Club Federation of Maine

Autumn is upon us and while Mother Nature is slowing down and making preparations for the winter months that lie ahead, so too are we. We have finished the majority of our GCFM "business" for the year winding up with our GCFM Annual Fall Conference, which brought two wonderful speakers! Leading off our programming was Jeff O'Donal, past president of Maine



Landscape and Nursery Assoc., Ornamental Horticulture Council of Maine and a recipient of Independent Lifetime Achievement Award for Horticulture, presenting a program on Barth Daylilies! Our second speaker for the event was Kevin Leavitt, owner of Farmer Kev's Organics, LLC., has a B.S. in Sustainable Agriculture and Economics, with a very interesting program entitled "Meatless Mondays." Kevin has taken CSAs to a new level by delivering the organic produce to his members.

While GCFM is not currently offering a Landscape Design School, we have reignited the interest in the Landscape Design Council which is led by Harriet Robinson, GCFM Landscape Design School Director and the Federation's First Vice President. We are hopeful that we will once again be in a position to offer another course in Landscape Design School and are contemplating reopening an Environmental School.

As we move into 2020, there is a great deal of excitement and activity as we plan events and programs celebrating Maine's Bicentennial! There have been discussions about what kind of project all of our clubs might do together "state-wide." I am especially interested in the newest planting program being presented by NGC, "Each One Plant One," which invites every member, not just each club, but every single club member to plant a native tree in their respective communities. This, of course, works in concert with the NGC "Plant America" theme, but also pays homage to the sustainability efforts we all share here in the State of Maine with our own theme of "Planting Today for America's Tomorrow!"

All of our clubs are working together throughout the state, to see that sustainability isn't just a word or a sound bite. Clubs are bringing information and education to their members and communities on all aspects of our environmental issues and achievements. I am thrilled – continued

Maine – continued

by the response to NEGC Director Suzanne Bushnell's theme of "Planting the New England Victory Garden" program, as ***POUNDS*** of food that have been grown, harvested and donated by members and clubs to various charitable organizations in the New England area is amazing!

I am excited and encouraged by the many reports on the increase of Monarchs in our area, this was the first year I experienced not only an incredible number of them "visiting" my garden, but also "emerging" from it! I can't wait to see what next year will bring!
Happy Harvesting!

Barbara Longstaff
President, Garden Club Federation of Maine

Something for Everyone at Farm-to-Table Dinner

One hundred people gathered at the Farm to Table Dinner on Arrowdale Road in North Haven to not only enjoy the 4 course dinner, but to also tour the Brockett's Farm Museum filled with antique farm tools, the Christa Jo Glass Studio with beautiful fused glass and stained glass gifts and Walt Brockett's fully equipped woodworking shop tucked away in the hay mow of the old barn. If that was not sufficient, dinner guests could also see the visiting animals, including mammoth donkeys, llamas, goats, and sheep, which were brought in from Guilford by Kim Brockett Cappelli, her husband Mike and son Drew. A display of tractors, dating from 1950 up to the current time, and historical farm photos, provided additional farm atmosphere just beyond the dinner tent.



The beautiful and very appropriate setting for this dinner is the property of Sue Brockett Lorusso and her husband, Jim Lorusso. The large open field offered plenty of space for the tent and guests enjoyed seeing the antique corn crib, flower filled wagon and gorgeous gardens in the area. This land is part of the old Arrowdale Farm which was a very productive dairy farm for generations of Brockett's. – continued

Farm-to-Table Dinner – continued

The dinner was prepared by Stellato's Deli and Catering, led by Steven Stellato, and assisted by Tim Carr and Jill DeChello, editor of The North Haven Magazine. Frankie Muzio, owner of Frankie's Organic Fruits and Vegetables Market on Hartford Turnpike, donated many boxes of organic vegetables and fruits. Frank Bumstead, also from Hartford Turnpike, donated grass-fed local beef, and Liuzzi Gourmet Food Market on State Street in North Haven, donated the chicken. Recipes used local raw honey from Ray Sola's honey bees, and guests took home a filled honey bear container to enjoy. All of these generous donations are greatly appreciated and made the event possible and very successful.

The Daytime Gardeners of North Haven contributed country casual flower bouquets in Mason jars decorated with raffia. The gardeners used flowers from their own gardens and gathered at the home of Brenda Howlett to create the colorful centerpieces. The gardeners also shared patio pots from their homes to decorate the tent areas.

The proceeds from the dinner will benefit the renovation work being done by the North Haven



Historical Society to upgrade the exhibits and displays and to continue preserving important memorabilia. The Daytime Gardeners will also receive some proceeds that will help fund their community projects with gardens and educational activities for youth and adults. Frankie Muzio presented a discussion and slide show for the Daytime Gardeners on September 24 about gardening with praying mantis and other tips for success with organic gardening. This is one of several educational meetings that are scheduled and open to the public.

Sally Brockett
President, Daytime Gardeners
Of North Haven (CT)

Community Gardens of Scarborough

The town of Scarborough, Maine, has two very different Community Gardens, but each strives to help their less fortunate neighbors.

Six years ago, the members of St. Nicholas Episcopal Church decided to start a Community Garden to grow fresh vegetables for the local food pantry. They enlisted several community groups to help with this project, including the Scarborough Garden Club.

The church donated the land, fencing and installed a sprinkler system and formed a committee to plan the crops and volunteers to help with planting and harvesting. A local nonprofit, *Project Grace*, helped with getting grants to fund the rest of the project. This was a different model for a community garden since all the volunteers from the planters to the harvesters would never taste the fruits of their labor but instead were rewarded with the joy of offering healthy produce to those unable to afford it.



Elizabeth Richter at St. Nicholas Episcopal Church Garden

Roger Doiron, who helped plan the White House Vegetable Garden with First Lady Michelle Obama, was in charge along with Elizabeth Richter, President of the Scarborough Garden Club, with the initial planting plan. Since the produce would be delivered to the food pantry twice a week, careful consideration was given to what vegetables would provide the most bountiful harvest. Harvesting had to be done on Tuesday and Thursday early morning as there was not enough refrigerator space to keep the harvest fresh.

The first year was trial and error, knowing what to plant and when to replant some crops and figuring out what people who came to the pantry needed and wanted. My favorite story is of an elderly widower who visited the pantry one morning in August as the green bean harvest was exploding. The pantry volunteer suggested he take some beans and watched as he barely took a handful not wanting to deprive other clients of this tasty treat. She approached him with a brown paper bag full of beans and insisted there was plenty to go around. On his next visit the following month he told her this was the first time in many years he had eaten fresh beans as they are too expensive for his meager budget and he enjoyed eating them every day for a week. This is the story that motivates me when I am tired and really don't want to thin another row of carrots or replant lettuce. – continued

Community Gardens of Scarborough – continued

As the years have gone by the crop choices have changed to include what are luxuries for many clients of the pantry. Many of these things we take for granted such as fresh herbs and hot peppers are a tasty treat. We also started giving out recipes on how to cook kale and swiss chard and what to do with cilantro besides salsa.

The garden raises about 1500 pounds of fresh organic produce every year and our crops include beets, broccoli, cucumbers, carrots, eggplant, green beans, garlic, kale, lettuces, peas, a variety of peppers, radishes, swiss chard, tomatoes and many herbs. We do not grow squash as they take up too much space and get messy and moldy as we learned from experience. This garden symbolizes community to me, and I have been very proud of all the time and effort all the volunteers have given to help their neighbors.



Numerous raised beds make up the Hillcrest Community Garden

The second garden is part of a senior housing community. Hillcrest is an age-restricted community which had a garden space for residents, but it was in disrepair with poor soil,



Director Suzanne Bushnell visiting the gardens this summer

broken down fencing and not very inviting. The director of *Project Grace* approached the owners of the property to ask for help in improving this space. The Defosse family agreed to fund improvements including a new fence. After meeting with the residents about their garden wants and needs, they decided that a portion of the garden would be donated to the food pantry. So once again we had neighbors helping neighbors in their town. The garden was up and running in four weeks. A new fence was built, many yards of compost was tilled to improve the

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Community Gardens of Scarborough – continued

soil, plots were laid out and assigned to the gardeners, paths were covered with wood chips to keep down the weeds and an area filled with perennials and a bench to sit and enjoy the tranquility of the garden. For those unable to handle a large garden plot, barrels were set up where they could plant some herbs or a few tomatoes and not need to bend or stoop. These plots have served the community well, and gardeners weed and water the plots of those unable to care for them when necessary. And true to their word, the pantry has benefited from donations of fresh produce.

Elizabeth Richter
Scarborough (Maine) Garden Club

Information from the St. Louis NGC Fall Board Meeting

Your Region Director and five of the six state federation presidents were in attendance at the recent National Garden Clubs, Inc. (NGC) Fall Board of Directors Meeting in St. Louis. The full Board meets twice a year – once every Fall and then again at the NGC's Annual Convention – next year in Milwaukee, WI. Some interesting things came out of these meetings that members might want to be aware of.

We hope many of our New England clubs have applied for Plant America grants since this time around, you may have a good chance to win one. At the time of the St. Louis meeting, only 13 applications from ALL OVER the country had been submitted! Since the NGC has allocated \$50,000 for this year's awards, more clubs will be eligible for financial assistance with qualifying projects. The deadline to apply was October 15th. Good luck to those New England clubs who've applied. Also, we learned that just because you might not have won in the past, that doesn't mean you can't apply again. Don't give up – keep trying!

"Members Matter Most" is one of the new mottos from the NGC. President Gay Austin has set an ambitious goal of increasing the NGC membership numbers by 21% by 2021! Each state federation is going to have to work extra hard to bring in new members! As a way of supporting the states, the Membership Committee of the NGC is making available a new brochure that talks about the advantages of joining a garden club. They've also come up with a "Wanted Poster" entitled "Garden Club Members Wanted." It's bright and colorful and can be personalized to be used by any club. If you're interested in getting copies of these documents, contact NGC Membership Chairman Becky Hassebroek at NGCMemberships@gmail.com. Becky also has a list of 100 Ways to Recruit New Members which I'm sure she'd also make available to you. – continued

NGC Fall Board Meeting – continued

Climate change is an issue that can't be ignored and the NGC is doing something about bringing it to national attention. A new initiative called "Each One Plant One" aims to encourage all garden club members to plant at least one new tree, whether it be in your own yard or in a public setting. The NGC hopes to get national recognition for this initiative which aims to offset the devastating effects of so many natural disasters that have occurred across the country. NGC also has plans to offer monetary awards to states who excel in this endeavor. Watch for more information to be released soon.

Finally, on the website and social media side of things, the NGC will be launching their new and improved website sometime in February. In the meantime, you can still go to the current website at www.gardenclub.org to find information and forms. The NGC hopes you'll submit photos of your activities to them so they can be posted on their Facebook page and on Instagram. For more information on how to do this, contact NGC Website Chairman Phyllis White at gardens@bresnan.net.

Suzanne Bushnell
Director, New England Garden Clubs, Inc.



Some of the New England contingent attending the NGC's Fall Board Meeting in St. Louis

A Visit to the Missouri Botanical Garden

One of the great pleasures of attending a Convention or even a Board Meeting hosted by the National Garden Clubs (NGC) is having the opportunity to take in the sites at the meeting's locale. Such was the case for your Director and my good friend Jane Waugh of the Connecticut Federation of Garden Clubs. Both of us needed to get to St. Louis for the NGC's Fall Board Meeting in September. I was attending my first NGC Board Meeting as the Region Director and member of the Scholarship Committee. Jane was attending as a member of the NGC's Website Committee and one of two New England representatives to the NGC's



Nominating Committee. We had actually been to St. Louis when we served together as State Presidents (2015-2017). But we'd never had the chance to spend any time exploring the Missouri Botanical Garden. This time, we were determined to make special time to get to the Garden.

Founded in 1859, the Garden is a 79-acre oasis in the city of St. Louis, and is one of the oldest botanical gardens in the country. Its Herbarium holds more than 6.6 million specimens making it second only to the New York Botanical Garden. It's also one of the few gardens in America to achieve National Historic Landmark status. Besides being an incredible tourist destination, it's also well known as one of the world's top botanical research and conservation institutions.

The morning we visited was unseasonably warm with the temperature hovering above 90 degrees with moderate humidity. Luckily, the gardens have more than 4800 trees which beckoned us to take cover in the shade. Our first stop was the *Climatron*, the world's first geodesic dome greenhouse (see it in the background behind us in our photo in front of the reflecting pool). It's filled with plants that you'd find in a tropical rain forest. Some of these plants were specimens we'd never seen before (see if you can identify the plant in the photo accompanying this article).



Other areas of interest were the Gladney Rose Garden where Dale Chihuly glass sculptures
- continued

Missouri Botanical Garden - continued

that reflect the sun adorn the gates. The massive Japanese Garden covers 14 acres and is one of the largest Japanese strolling gardens in North America. One small garden of particular "curiosity" was called *The Stumpery*. Apparently, the trend of using the stumps of fallen trees to create an unusual garden display has been popular in Great Britain for quite some time. The Missouri Botanical Garden has adopted this trend and created their own stumpery. From the Victorian Garden to the English Woodland Garden, there is something for everyone to enjoy at the Garden. And to top off your visit, the Sassafras Café in the Visitor Center serves up a great selection of food to satisfy your appetite. One other thing of note – if you belong to another botanical garden with reciprocal visiting privileges, you can save a fair amount on your admission to this Garden. Just remember to bring your botanical garden membership card with you to get the discount! And by the way, the answer to the question posed as to the name of the plant is the Pelican Flower (*aristolochia gigantea*) found in Central and South America!



Gladney Rose Garden with Chihuly Sculptures



Japanese Garden

Suzanne Bushnell
Director, New England Garden Clubs



Boxwood Garden

Status of Native Plant Trust's Seed Ark Initiative ¹

Native Plant Trust (formerly New England Wild Flower Society) initiated the Seed Ark to save the imperiled plants of New England. A fifth of the region's native plants are on the brink of being lost and banking their seeds is critical to preserving genetic diversity and reintroducing or augmenting populations of the plants in the wild. The goal is collecting from most of the 3,300 populations of the 388 globally and regionally rare plants of New England by 2020, a target date set by the United Nations' Convention on Biological Diversity in its Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. Once collected, the seeds are preserved in a climate-controlled environment, with the goal of keeping viable seed in perpetuity to grow and reintroduce into suitable habitat.

The cost of this campaign is 5 million dollars. They are halfway to goal and need to get there within the year. We can help by contributing to the Seed Ark program, by becoming members of Native Plant Trust, and by volunteering.

So why are these plants so rare, and so important? These plants are rare in part because of habitat loss, global warming/climate change and new pathogens, pests and diseases. They may be what are called narrow habitat specialists – living only in an extremely small range. When they disappear, there will be co-extinction of other species that depend upon them as host plants.

The habitats most at risk are: Alpine and Sub-alpine, mixed northern hardwood forests, rivers and streams, sandplain grasslands and heathlands, and estuarine marshes.

Examples of pest problems you may be aware of: pests such as the Emerald Ash borer are eliminating our ash trees. It is anticipated that 20 native moths and other pollinators that depend upon the ash tree will in all likelihood go extinct unless they can adapt to an alternative host plant.

There are tales of success where our native plants help other endangered non-plant species survive. For example, on the coastal dunes of Cape Cod, native seaside goldenrod *Solidago sempervirens* is being reintroduced, as it is the preferred cover plant for the endangered roseate tern when they nest in the dunes.

The endangered Karner Blue butterfly (state butterfly of NH) is totally dependent upon its host – continued



¹ Report compiled from NPT documents and other references

Native Plant Trust's Seed Ark Initiative – continued

plant, the *Lupinus perennis*. NH is protecting the habitat for this butterfly in the Concord Airport area, and is reintroducing both the plant and the butterfly to this habitat.

For more information about the Seed Ark, visit Native Plant Trust's web site:
<http://www.nativeplanttrust.org/conservation/rare-and-endangered/>

Arabella Dane
NEGC FS Photography and Photographer

NGC President Gay Austin Attends NHFGC Fall Meeting

Gay Austin joined NHFGC members and guests for the New Hampshire Federation's 86th Fall Meeting held in Lee, NH on September 25th. The venue was the Flag Hill Distillery & Winery and the meeting was held in a large white tent located adjacent to the winery's beautiful vineyard, gardens and orchards on a lovely fall day.

Mid-day, when it had warmed up, the proprietor was able to fold up the sides of the tent, visually placing attendees within the vineyard itself. For further information:

www.flaghill.com

During the extended break for social time and the luncheon that followed the business meeting, attendees were free to roam the premises and visit the wine and spirits store for tastings, etc. In the afternoon, John Forti, Executive Director of Bedrock Gardens in Lee addressed the group, letting them know what they can all expect to experience within the gardens when it re-opens in 2020. The once privately-owned and operated sculpture garden is currently closed as it undergoes the construction of a parking lot and visitor amenities in preparation for its new status as a public garden. For additional information: www.bedrockgardens.org NOTE: Bedrock Gardens is "An Oasis of Horticulture, Art and Inspiration" and should not be missed!

Meeting attendees were then treated to an informative talk about wine making by Brian Ferguson, the owner of Flag Hill and its distiller/winemaker. Brian's presentation concentrated on the sustainability of Flag Hill's methodology in regard to growing its own - continued



NHFGC Fall Meeting - continued

crops that are later utilized in making all the spirits they sell as well as general information about the vineyards and their wine making process. Flag Hill has received international awards for some of their spirits and they are also noted for their wines.

The afternoon held a previously undisclosed "activity" related to the meeting's theme "NHFGC Heard It Through the Grapevine" that was conducted by Second Vice President Winnie Schmidt. It was an excellent exercise that included having members temporarily relocate to tables other than their own to discuss topics selected from a "bundle of grapes" placed at each table by the meeting organizers. It was great fun as well as a learning experience with many gardening and garden club-related ideas and opinions being exchanged and people getting to know each other better as a result. All agreed that this was a great group discussion. The

meeting was hosted by the District IV garden clubs of Atkinson, Derry, Epping, Fremont, Sandown and Windham. Susan Davis of the Derry Garden Club is the current District IV Director. NHFGC, Inc. President Susan Miner of the Atkinson Garden Club presided over the meeting. Special guests were Barbara Longstaff, President of the Garden Club Federation of Maine and National Garden Clubs, Inc. President Gay Austin of McComb, Mississippi.



NHFGC President Susan Miner and NGC President Gay Austin.

Joyce Kimball
NHFGC Publicity Chairman

New England Tri-State Symposium 2020

The states of Vermont, Maine and New Hampshire are collaborating together, pooling our limited Judges Councils, to enable us to host a Tri-State Symposium on August 10 – 12, 2020, at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel in Manchester, New Hampshire.

Design instructor, Mary Huntoon, floral designer and highly respected instructor, from Massachusetts, will teach Angular Design and Abstract Creative Design, as well as the Allied subject "The Latest Updates in the Handbook." We hope, she will clear up some of the questions that many of us have on these new updates. We are so excited to have Mary present our design instruction and allied topic.

Horticulture instructor, Darlene Newell, from West Virginia, will educate us on hostas and how to exhibit this shade tolerant plant. Darlene will also lecture on Collections and Displays and how to stage them in a Flower Show. Darlene is a wonderful instructor and we are so pleased that we were able to engage her. Darlene will also present an Allied subject on Horticulture Botanical Arts.

Symposiums are not just for Flower Show Judges, but a great opportunity for any garden club member to expand their knowledge on horticulture and design, as well as meet new friends.

Michelle Mensinger
Symposium Chairman



National Garden Clubs, Inc. Youth Contest Dates 2020

Posters

Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl

Local club's youth chair submits entries to state youth chair date decided by the state

Local state youth chair submits entries to NEGC youth contest chair by 2/24/20

Regional sends to NGC 3/16/20

Poetry

2019-2020 Theme: "*Adventures in the Garden*"

Local club's youth chair submits entries to state youth contest chair by 1/24/20

State youth chair submits entries to NEGC youth contest chair 2/1/20 – continued

Youth Contest Dates 2020 - continued

Regional sends to NGC 3/1/20

Youth Sculpture

Local club's youth chair submits entries to state youth chair date decided by the state
State youth chair submits entries to NEGC youth contest chair by 2/1/20

Regional sends to NGC 3/1/20

High School Essay

2019-2020

Theme "*Challenges in Preserving our Natural Habitats*"

Due date to state may vary recommend 1/1/20.

Due date to send to NEGC youth contest chair 2/3/20

Regional sends to NGC 3/1/20

Deb Ort

NEGC Youth Contest Chairman

67 Maple Avenue

Little Compton, RI 02837-1717

Promisek at Three Rivers Farm



Promisek at Three Rivers Farm

694 Skyline Ridge Road

Bridgewater, CT 06752 | 860.350.8226

Open Garden Days: Connecticut Garden Day, the last Sunday in June, 12-4 pm. Visits may be arranged at other times by appointment.

www.promisek.org.

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Promisek at Three Rivers Farm - continued

A hidden treasure, where the Housatonic and Shepaug Rivers meet, Promisek is a formal stonewalled garden designed by noted landscape architect Beatrix Farrand (1872-1957) in 1921 and brought back to life in 1992. The stone walkways make browsing through the garden, a beautiful mixture of perennials and annuals, very easy. Be sure to go through the gate in the back to see the teardrop shaped pool, amphitheater, and pergola that were once used in the 1930s.



Centered on the 300-acre Three Rivers Farm, Promisek is a Catholic educational and environmental organization dedicated to facilitating the emergence of an authentic lay spirituality in dialogue with other faiths. Farrand designed the garden for Dr. Frederick Peterson, a noted New York neurologist. By the time Promisek purchased the property in 1978, the walled garden had been overtaken by decades of overgrowth, but the hardscape remained. Promisek members cleared the brush to reveal flagstone pathways and stone around the garden. A local resident and garden historian researched and rediscovered Farrand's garden plan, bringing the garden back to life. Today, a team of garden volunteers maintains the garden, making every effort to stick to the original plan. The beds along the stone-walled perimeter contain perennials in pink, purple, white and blue, with a few surprises like a maroon dahlia. The inside beds feature roses in pinks and reds edged with a lacy fringe of fragrant annuals.



Promisek is just one of the 15 outstanding historic gardens which comprise Connecticut Historic Gardens, formed in 2004 to improve marketing and promotion of their historic sites. (For further information: www.cthistoricgardens.org.)

Sandi Tinyk
NEGC Historic and Public Gardens Chairman



Wrap-up of Third NEGC Annual Meeting

Attendees at this year's Annual Meeting in Woodstock, VT were treated to quite an event at the beautiful Woodstock Inn. Our first evening featured a Reception for new Director



Suzanne Bushnell followed by a wonderful dinner created by the outstanding culinary staff at the Inn. (Photo above shows Suzanne, second from right, with all the Presidents of the New England state federations.) At most of our previous meetings, the first evening usually features a speaker. But this time, Suzanne decided to present the Awards in the evening, freeing up more time the second day with the intention of getting people on the road home a little earlier.

All six New England states shared in the awards with the final presentation made to our



NEGC Member Award of Honor recipient Annette Jarvis of the Portsmouth Garden Club, Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs. (See Annette on left with Rhode Island President Deb Ort on the right.) After the awards were presented, a special presentation was made to Meeting Chairman Sue Hinkel by Suzanne to recognize all the work Sue had devoted to planning the Annual Meeting. She was also the recipient of a certificate from the NGC for the contribution made in her honor by the six New England state federations in the form of a grant to the *Plant America* fund. Meeting –continued

Third NEGC Annual Meeting - continued

Vice Chairman Rosann Sexton also received a certificate thanking her for her assistance in putting the Annual Meeting together. And to top off the evening, a special tango dance exhibition was presented by Ronnie and Hugh Schoelzel of Connecticut! The Schoelzels have made several trips to Argentina and fell in love with the tango. It was a wonderful end to the evening to see them dance!

The next day was the Annual Business Meeting followed by a presentation by accomplished stone mason Jamie Masefield. His PowerPoint presentation set forth how he approaches building dry stone walls and some of the outstanding stone structures he's built. Our final event was a delicious buffet luncheon followed by the ever-popular "opportunity drawings" and this time, a special silent auction. The auction featured floral design containers that had belonged to the late Frankie Gibson of the Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont. *(Editor's Note: To see more photos from this year's Annual Meeting, go to www.newenglandgdc.org and click on the GALLERY OF PHOTOS tab. Then click on the dropdown menu to 2019 NEGC Annual Meeting.)*

Looking for a Winter Field Trip?

We know many garden clubs take a summer field trip in place of a monthly meeting. But have you thought of taking a field trip in the "offseason"? How about getting a group together



and taking a trip to Boston to the Harvard Museum of Natural History to see the newest additions to the internationally acclaimed Ware Collection of Blaschka Glass Models of Plants (popularly known as *The Glass Flowers*)! A special new exhibit opened in August called "*Fruits in Decay*." On display for the first time in nearly two decades, the models capture, with

astounding realism, the intricacies and strange beauty of fruits in various stages of decay.

For those of you not familiar with *The Glass Flowers*, the collection is one of Harvard's most famous treasures with more than 4300 models representing 780 plant – continued

Looking for a Winter Field Trip? – cont.

species. They were created by the father/son team of Leopold and Rudolf Blaschka who were famous Czech glass artists. They worked for more than five decades to design the entire glass flower collection which was created specifically to be donated to Harvard University. For more information on the collection, times you can visit, and how to get tickets, you can go online to www.hmn.harvard.edu or call 617-495-3045. If you plan to take a group, ask them for the group ticket price. The new exhibit will only be on display until March 1, 2020.



Glass pear showing decay – part of *The Glass Flowers Exhibit*

NEGC Calendar

Deadline for the February 2020 issue of Northern Exposure is January 24 – please e-mail articles or questions to editor Nancy Atwell at atwelln@aol.com

[Editor's note: for additional dates, please check the New England Garden Clubs web site: www.newenglandgc.org and click on My Calendar]

Landscape Design School

March 24 – 26, 2020 – Landscape Design School Course II will be held in Connecticut.

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Calendar - continued

Symposium

August 10-12, 2020 - The "Northern New England Tri-State Symposium" will be hosted in New Hampshire at the Doubletree Hotel by Hilton in Manchester, NH. The states of Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire have joined to organize this symposium. Details and registration information will be available on the NGC website after all topics are confirmed. Design Instructor and Allied subject: August 10-11, 2020, Mary Huntoon of Massachusetts. Horticulture Instructor and Allied subject: August 12, 2020. Darlene Newell of West Virginia.