

Northern Exposure



Newsletter of the New England Garden Clubs, Inc.

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

February 2020

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



As the old saying goes – “*it’s time to ring out the old and ring in the new*” as we usher in 2020! And while people think of winter as the “slow” time in the gardening world, for me it’s a chance to reflect on what worked in the past, and what needs work as we enter the new year AND the new decade.

I’ve been encouraged with how many clubs have embraced the Region Project – fighting food insecurity. I’ve now received donation forms from ALL six state federations! In this issue of our newsletter, you’ll see how much food has been donated to organizations that help to feed the hungry. You’ll also read about the work done by a couple of our clubs that I’ve chosen to highlight in this issue. As we approach the growing season, I hope to learn from many more of you as to what

you’re growing and donating to the needy in your communities.

And while this isn’t exactly the “growing season,” I know that some of our states plan to participate in local flower shows in late winter and early spring, such as those in Boston (Massachusetts), Portland (Maine), and Hartford (Connecticut). If your state is having a flower show and you plan to participate in it, we’d love to hear about it!

The National Garden Club’s (NGC) Winter Executive Committee Meeting will have taken place by the time you receive this issue (it is January 27th to the 29th). I’ll be passing on anything I learn while I’m in St. Louis that might pertain to our states. And speaking of the NGC -- in case you haven’t seen the latest issue of the NGC publication *KEEPING IN TOUCH*, you can view it on our NEGC website (www.newenglandgc.org) under the PUBLICATIONS tab. That’s also where you’ll find prior issues of our own newsletter *NORTHERN EXPOSURE*. *KEEPING IN TOUCH* has several interesting articles so I hope you’ll take the time to read it yourself. The NGC will be launching a new website later this year. With this new site an added feature will be found – the beginning of an ongoing garden blog. Each of the Region Directors, along with some members from the NGC Board of Directors, have been asked to contribute an article for the blog. Watch for the new NGC website coming soon.

In this issue of *NORTHERN EXPOSURE*, I've also written an article about plans we have for a workshop or two at the 2020 New England Garden Clubs' Annual Meeting this October 13th and 14th. The Garden Club Federation of Maine will be hosting it in Wells, Maine. A survey was distributed at the 2019 Annual Meeting in Woodstock, Vermont asking the opinion of attendees as to possible workshop topics. Careful thought will be given to your survey answers when we determine which workshops will fit into our meeting plans.

Another event I want to promote is our upcoming Northern New England Tri-State Symposium (August 10th to the 12th) in Manchester, NH. Under the leadership of Michelle Mensinger from the New Hampshire Federation of Garden Clubs, the Judges Councils of New Hampshire, Vermont and Maine are working together to put this Symposium on. You don't have to be a flower show judge to attend! Everyone is welcome, so watch for more details.

This year I hope to meet many more of you at your events. I have a few already on my calendar and hope to add more events soon. Thank you to those who have sent me an issue of your newsletter. It's always a treat to see what clubs around the Region are doing! And finally, I'd like to thank those of you who reached out to me after my major surgery in November. I am truly blessed to have recovered fairly quickly and to know that so many people were concerned about my health. Thank you for all your kind wishes. Let's hope for good health and successful gardening in 2020!

Suzanne Bushnell
Director, New England Garden Clubs, Inc.



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The Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.

I love how winter provides opportunities to move through natural spaces in unique and different ways compared to the same landscape during the growing seasons. Freezing temperatures mean you can literally walk on water. Tromp off into woods somewhere and enjoy the fact that there are no bugs. I love the snow and cross-country skiing. It is so peaceful.

On October 28 and 29, I attended the New England Garden Club Annual Meeting in Woodstock, VT. Each New England State President was allowed three minutes to talk about their state. It was very hard to get all that we do in Rhode Island expressed in three minutes. I spoke quickly telling of Rhode Island's great clubs, speakers, community plantings, our 90th Anniversary in 2020, in as much as my time allowed.

I have been very lucky to have such wonderful Committees and Chairmen that I have been working with during my first nine months. Thank you all so much. Vera Bowen arranged for a wonderful, well attended Education Day at the Roger Williams Casino. John Campanini of the Rhode Island Tree Council gave an informative talk on invasive pests spreading throughout the mid-Atlantic. A potential introduction into Rhode Island poses a significant threat to RI's agriculture, landscape and nursery industry. In nine months, we have had monthly meetings with refreshments prepared by volunteering garden clubs. A round table discussion on membership was informative. Polo was again enjoyed; Penny Pines was established; Habitat for Humanity had a planting in Bristol; the Design Study Group offered four design classes, and our Holiday Luncheon at the Sakonnet Point Club was well attended.

These are a few of my favorite things from 2019.

We look forward to the 2020 RIFGC Flower Show; the Life Member Group Luncheon, the Annual Meeting, Awards Luncheon and our 90th Year Anniversary

A president is only as successful as the members who work together for the good of all members.

Sincerely,
Deb Ort, President

PLANT RHODE ISLAND, Remember Your Roots

New England Garden Clubs

February 2



New Hampshire Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.

Now that all the 2019 fall and holiday meetings, events and projects are over, our NHFGC clubs are busy planning for 2020.

The 37th annual NH Farm, Forest and Garden Expo, NH's Greatest Winter Fair, will be held Friday and Saturday, February 14 and 15 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Manchester (formerly the Radisson Hotel). The event, which is open to the public, features a trade-show with over 100 exhibitors, free educational workshops, demonstrations and farm animals; and Smokey Bear always makes the rounds at the show! This year the Expo was expanded from "Farm and Forest" to include "Garden" and we are very interested to see the new vendors and programs featured for gardening. NHFGC members will again help "man" the booth for the New Hampshire Governor's Lilac and Wildflower Commission at the Expo. The Federation has a special relationship with the Lilac Commission as our state presidents are automatically asked to serve as a member of the Commission's board when they assume office. The Commission continually provides lilacs (our state flower) to our clubs, upon request, for use in their public plantings. The Commission is also responsible for seeding the medians and roadsides of New Hampshire highways with wildflowers, creating a wonderful pollinator corridor and beautiful scenery for our state.

In April NHFGC representatives will be attending the annual convention of the Granite State Future Farmers of America (FFA). The New Hampshire Federation of Garden Clubs recognizes a high school senior as recommended by their FFA advisor for outstanding work in a horticulture class with the Helen A. and Ernest S. Colprit Memorial Award each year. The award is given for the purpose of encouraging FFA members' interest in horticulture and the beauty of nature. It is so refreshing to be among these future leaders when we attend the convention each year and we also always enjoy the wonderful displays of their projects and accomplishments which include a floral design competition.



Joyce Kimball (left) and Susan Miner at the 2019 NH Farm and Forest Expo.

The Annual Meeting for the Federation will be at the Manchester Country Club on May 20th. The clubs of District 2 (Bow, Goffstown, Hooksett and Manchester) have been meeting to plan the details. We are looking forward to welcoming NEGC Director Suzanne Bushnell

from Maine as one of our special guests and we plan to try a new method of presenting awards to make this important part of our meeting more interesting and engaging for all members.



December NHFGC Board Meeting and Luncheon held at the home of President, Susan Miner. Clockwise from left: Susan Davis (District 4 Director), Dian Mathews (District 3 Director), Ron Trexler (Asst Treasurer), Winnie Schmidt (2nd VP), Blanche Garone (Parliamentarian), Susan Miner (President), Joyce Kimball (Immediate Past President), Pat Mulone (Corresponding Secretary), Elinor Terrell (Awards Chair) and Lolly Fleming (Recording Secretary). The photo was taken by Bev Gamlin, District 2 Director.



Tour of Bedrock Gardens following the NHFGC 2019 Fall Meeting
L-R: SEATED – Gay Austin and Susan Miner STANDING: Brenda Weber, Elinor Terrell, Winnie Schmidt, Janet Snowdon, Eunice Miller, John Forti (Executive Director of Bedrock Gardens), Bev Gamlin, Janis Kuch, Ron Trexler, Joyce Kimball, Alison and Jerry Kennery.

Bedrock Gardens in Lee, NH, is an emerging public garden (formerly a private garden) that combines rare botanical collections and sculptural elements within its curated garden rooms and numerous flora and fauna habitats. The garden was temporarily closed in 2019 while they were creating amenities for the public's use and constructed a larger parking lot. The garden will re-open as a public oasis for horticulture, art and inspiration this year. As a treat for our current member clubs and to reach out to non-federated clubs in New Hampshire, the NHFGC Executive Board is planning to hold an open house there in June or July where we will have exhibits featuring the benefits of being a member of NHFGC and NGC and lots more.

Susan Miner
NHFGC President

Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont, Inc.

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

A new decade portends changes for all of us, but especially for gardeners who will be in the forefront helping to decrease the speed of global warming. The Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont plan to jump on the newest NGC effort toward this: "Plant America with Trees; Each ONE Plant ONE." Each of our clubs is handling this in its own way across the state. However, my club, The Garden Club of Manchester, has a unique opportunity to participate in this initiative.

2020 marks the 100th anniversary of GCM, and we're going all out to show our town what we're all about! We had already planned on planting several trees in our area that would have signs attached saying "these trees were planted in honor of the GCM's 100 years of service." But now, with this new NGC project placed in our hands, our plan is to plant a tree for every one of our members! We're working with the town officials and community members, as well as the parks and recreation fellows who help us with our composting, among other things. Thus, we hope to maintain our great connection between the town and the club while we join this NGC project to fight climate change.

Jan DeSarno, a member of the Burlington Garden Club, received the prestigious 2019 Frederick H. Tuttle Award from the South Burlington Rotary Club for her many contributions to the South Burlington community. Kevin Dorn, South Burlington City Manager wrote: "Jan's community service leaves a mark of volunteerism that is unprecedented. Her exceptional passion for connecting residents with the beauty of nature has encouraged an entire community to engage in exploration, play and enjoyment at the Vermont Garden Park in South Burlington. Jan's contributions have established the park as a sanctuary for garden and flower beauty; story times; learn and grow children's programs; children and volunteers planting and raising vegetables for the food shelf." Jan has been managing these gardens for almost 30 years since she was awarded a Petal Grant from NGC. This is an award duly deserved and the FGCV members are proud of Jan's extensive work and love of the Vermont Garden Park.



Photograph of several Burlington GC members at a floral arranging workshop before the holidays.



Members of the Garden Club of Manchester enjoy their Annual Christmas Tea in December!



Middlebury Garden Club

members and nursing care residents working together.

Members of the Middlebury GC donate fresh flowers and work with residents at the Helen Porter Healthcare and Rehab. They make enough small arrangements to deliver to all residents. Larger arrangements are created for the reception areas to delight visitors and staff. As you can see the FGCV members have their fingers in many pies!

Sue Hinkel, FGCV Co-President





The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut, Inc.

From the barren trees to frozen ponds, winter is everywhere you look in Connecticut. The season has settled in for what is affectionately known as a long winter's nap. In my opinion, it's the longest three months of the year. In Connecticut, spring is coming early this year – with or without the groundhog's help. Yes, we're a little warmer than our northern neighbors, but this year we're springing ahead – literally and figuratively.

"Spring into Connecticut," the Connecticut Flower Show opens at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford on Thursday, February 20th, and runs through Sunday, February 23rd. The committee has been active for many months putting plans in place for our best show ever with outstanding horticulture, floral designs, artistic crafts, photography, educational exhibits and seminars. It's a "not-to-be-missed" event. Make plans to come. The designs are certain to blow you away. It's a way to immerse yourself in spring – a month early!

The level of design acumen among our members continues to evolve based upon the learning that comes out of Flower Show School and the ever popular Beyond Beginning design workshops offered around the state.

Our NGC schools start back up in earnest. Landscape Design School, Course 2, is scheduled for March 24-26. Environmental School, Course 3, will run in September and Flower Show School, Course 1, will be offered in October. Students who have attended these schools remark that they find them to be beneficial, enlightening – and fun.

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. Course 3, is scheduled for September 22-24, 2020.

Each January, The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut solicits donations from member clubs to fund Scholarships, World Gardening and Garden Therapy programs. The amount of scholarships and grants are awarded entirely based upon the funds received in response to our appeal.

National Garden Clubs, Inc. has partnered with Global Partners/Running Waters, a nonprofit organization, to raise awareness and contribute funds to this organization. Currently over 1 billion people (that's billion with a "B") around the world get their water from rivers, ponds or other sources subject to contamination. Rural villagers, mostly women, spend hours walking miles every day to fill jugs with water that may be contaminated. Their time and efforts could be better spent planting food and raising animals. Working with residents of small villages on safe water projects deepens a sense of partnership and often goes beyond a focus on water to the other necessities of food, health care and education.

At our November Board Meeting, Peggy Lajoie, Chairman of World Gardening, requested that the Board approve a donation of \$1,000 be sent to Global Partners/Running Waters to increase safe potable water in rural Latin America.

Coming off a highly successful trip to Japan under the leadership of Tours Chair Kathy Lindroth, our next trip is focused around Historic Virginia Garden Week – April 20th to 26th. This 6-day statewide event in Virginia provides visitors a unique opportunity to see remarkable gardens at the peak of Virginia's springtime color, as well as beautiful houses sparkling with over 2,300 flower arrangements created by Virginia Federation of Garden Club members.

In June, a trip is planned to the Brandywine Valley where we'll tour private gardens, Longwood Gardens and Winterthur Museum and Gardens. The area is sometimes referred to as America's Gardening Capital as it features one of the largest concentrations of the finest public and private gardens in the world.

As I traveled across the state to meet with many clubs during their fall meetings and special luncheons, serious momentum is being gained in supporting my "Out with Invasives. In with Natives" theme. Many clubs are actively looking for ways to educate their communities on the need to eradicate invasive species that are literally choking out native plants. Other clubs are partnering with community groups to make this happen in the spring and summer by adopting areas to bring back to their native habitat.

Engaging with clubs is the most fulfilling part of my Presidency. I learn so much about the wants and needs of individual clubs and better understand how The Federation can help them thrive and prosper. They are always so happy to know the President has made time to visit with them. They get so much out of it as do I. I leave these club meetings and events feeling good about how together we're helping to make a difference in our clubs and communities. Gardening truly creates a bond of friendship that lasts forever.

Arlene Field
President, The Federated Garden
Clubs of Connecticut, Inc.
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Please join us as we "Spring into Connecticut," at the Connecticut Flower Show at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford February 20 through February 23. Standard Flower Show, February 20-23, 2020.

Garden Club Federation of Maine

We are still knee deep in winter, but we gardeners are already thinking "spring!" The Garden Club Federation of Maine has a number of projects and events quickly approaching. Winding up 2019 was the annual Blaine House Holiday Social at the Governor's Mansion in Augusta, Maine. The Governor's Mansion is decorated for the holiday season by the Kennebec Valley Garden Club and it was spectacular! The theme was "Women in Maine's History," bringing in fabulous exhibits, among which was a tribute to the suffragettes movement that resulted in the ratification of the Women's Right to Vote in Maine, this milestone celebrated its Centennial in 2019! While at the Blaine House, I had the honor and great pleasure to meet and speak briefly with Governor Janet Mills, who seemed to be just as awestruck with the efforts of the Kennebec Valley Garden Clubs' creativity for this beautiful annual event as the rest of us! There was also a brief presentation by GCFM Past President Susan Xirinachs, of



GCFM President Barbara Longstaff
with Maine Governor Janet Mills
at the Blaine House in Augusta

four lovely Christmas Ornaments, donated to GCFM from Susan's Family for the purpose of presenting them at this event to the Blaine House. Director Leslie Oster, on behalf of Governor Mills and the Blaine House, accepted the Ornaments.

The Kennebec Valley Garden Club will also be presenting "Art In Bloom" on March 15th. Also in March, GCFM participates in the annual Maine Flower Show, held in Portland, Maine. We always have an information booth set up with all kinds of material to share with attendees. One of our members has developed a software link that people can go to online that lists all of our clubs: people can easily locate a club near where they live.

GCFM is continuing with its Floral Design Workshops, sponsored by our Judges Council. These workshops are held the first Wednesday of the month at St. Mary's Church in Falmouth, Maine. Each class brings new designers and subject matter. The current session has two more workshops -- March 4th with "Assemblage Design," a three-dimensional abstract design, and April 1st, "Low Profile Design," a three-dimensional design incorporating three or more design techniques. Another series of workshops will follow in May.

GCFM will be hosting its 89th Annual Convention "Gardens at First Light" on June 15 -17 at the Atlantic Oceanside Hotel and Event Center in Bar Harbor. We will be featuring two fabulous keynote speakers. The first is the well-known Roger Swain, horticulturalist and one

host of the PBS Show "The Victory Garden." Swain will talk about "How Gardens Make Good Neighbors." Our second guest speaker is slated as part of the Business Luncheon. Rodney Eason, CEO of the Mount Desert Land & Garden Preserve, will provide an overview on the Preserve, which is sited on the southern edge of Mount Desert Island and bordered by Acadia National Park, spanning nearly 1,400 acres.

We continue to promote various celebrations throughout the state to honor Maine's Bicentennial. Many of our clubs are planning creative planting projects in their communities to join in the celebrations, while at the same time promoting the NGC "Plant America Theme" and that of GCFM, "Planting Today for America's Tomorrow."

Barbara Longstaff
President, Garden Club Federation of Maine

Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts

Do you remember the last time you experienced an aha! moment? A time when suddenly something made perfect sense to you and it changed the way you viewed the world as a result? I experienced such a moment five years ago during a Landscape Design School lecture given by Claudia Thompson, founder of Grow Native Massachusetts. Claudia's lecture portrayed the remarkable discovery she made in her small garden in Cambridge when she introduced an emphasis on native plants. The variety and number of bird visits increased dramatically. The birds were there in part because they were finding nutrient packed sources of food in the berries and seeds on her Amelanchier and Eastern Red Cedar trees. By leaving the seed heads on her Echinacea and berries on her Viburnums she provided important fuel for winter migration. By allowing the leaf litter to remain in a section of her garden she was helping the native ground dwelling bees and moths overwinter safely. And, by leaving a "snag" dead tree standing she provided a nesting place for a family of downy woodpeckers to raise their young.

Seeing Claudia's photos of those woodpeckers and the remarkable variety of birds in her little garden cemented my aha! moment. I understood that birds, bees, butterflies and other native insects rely on our native plants to provide their most important food sources, shelter and nesting places. And even more importantly, I realized that I could do this too! I could improve the biodiversity of my own garden space and support ecological processes by planting natives and altering some of my own gardening practices. As I left LDS that day, I made a promise to myself that I would begin a redesign of my garden with the eventual goal of 50% native trees, shrubs and perennials.

Five years later, I have accomplished that with trees and shrubs alone. They have added tremendous beauty and increased wildlife to my garden in all four seasons. I hope you discover your own aha! moment in a garden sometime soon and that you will join my President's Project, The Native Plant Challenge. I encourage every GCFM member to find a garden space, from large civic gardens to small back-step containers, and incorporate 50% native plant material into the design. All of these gardens will be eligible to join the Challenge. A NPC Ambassador from each of our Districts will help keep track of participating gardens. At the end of two years we will celebrate all of the native plant gardens that have been created in Massachusetts and the tremendous ecological value that they will bring to our natural world.

Every Garden Matters -- Every Landscape Counts. This is the tag line of Grow Native Massachusetts and this is their message: because so much land has been developed and subdivided into ever smaller parcels, what each of us does at home and in our local communities is critically important.

It is exciting, rewarding and fun to recreate healthy ecosystems.

1. Plant with an emphasis on native plants.
2. Remove invasive plants and dispose of them so they cannot spread further.
3. Garden for beauty and biodiversity by reducing lawn area; use organic fertilizers in small amounts and stay away from pesticides.

To learn more and find a comprehensive list of trees, shrubs and perennials native to New England visit: grownativemass.org or nativeplanttrust.org

Bonnie Rosenthal

Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts, Inc.

gcfm.org, 973.557.6186 (cell & text)

Ask me about the Native Plant Challenge!

Observing 325 Years in Cheshire

Our Town of Cheshire is currently observing the 325th Anniversary of its first settlement. Several organizations in town are participating in the celebration, such as the Cheshire Historical Society at its December Holiday Open House. Both garden clubs in Cheshire were involved with decorating the inside of the Society's home, the Hitchcock-Phillips House, as well as the Colonial Garden in the courtyard, to interpret the time around 1930 when the house was a dormitory for the students at Cheshire Academy.



Floral designs by Suburban Garden Club members Tony Poitras and Ginni Donovan featuring "Putz" houses and metal pieces from an Erector set

The Cheshire Garden Club's crucible in the Colonial Garden

Observing the 50th Anniversary of the Beauty Spot of the Month

The Cheshire Garden Club's Beauty Spot of the Month was started fifty years ago by recognizing both residential and public front yard gardens with the Beauty Spot of the Month from April through October. A photo of the winners in their garden, accompanied by an article, has been published in the local Cheshire Herald since its inception. The culmination each year occurs in October with the Annual Landscaping Award – the Beauty Spot of the Year.



The 50th Anniversary of the Beauty Spot of the Year was observed at the hillside gardens of David and Janet Andrews on Payne Drive.



Club President Ophelia Frazier presented the traveling silver bowl to David while Civics and Parks Chairman Inge Venus presented the engraved marble plaque to Janet (in the hat), with sponsor Jim Mertz joining in the celebration.

65 Years of the Annual Holiday Door Decorating Contest

Once a year between Thanksgiving and mid-December, the Cheshire Garden Club conducts its Annual Holiday Door Decorating Contest. Now in its 65th year, residents may enter one of five categories: Front Door; Entire Front Yard; Youth Motif; Vintage Home; and Public/Business. Judging took place just before Christmas and the winners' photos with a brief caption were submitted and then published as a full spread in *The Cheshire Herald* on December 26th. Two of the five winners:

Youth Motif



New England Garden Clubs

Front Door



February 2020



The Cheshire Garden Club was organized on June 17, 1920 by founder Lucy Evans. Our 2019/2020 club year will feature many programs in observation of this milestone. Our yearbook contained a 100-year historical overview featuring highlights for each decade as well as a pictorial display for all ten decades. A huge celebration is planned for June 2020 in observance of our 100th Anniversary.

Our 39th Annual Holiday Luncheon at Aqua Turf in December featured a noted floral designer whose exquisite floral masterpieces were projected onto two screens.

39th Annual Connecticut Flower & Garden Show

This year, the Chairman for this annual event held every February at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford is Ginni Donovan, a member of both the Cheshire Garden Club and the Suburban Garden Club of Cheshire. A recipient of many blue ribbons in Design, Artistic Crafts and Horticulture, Ginni has also received a number of National awards.

See you next Summer.
Inge Venus
Former Cheshire Garden
President and former
FGCCT President



2019 CT Flower Show "April in Paris"
Botanical Arts Division, Artistic Crafts
Section, Class 1 "Comme Toujours,
Marie Antoinette" jewelry: Blue Ribbon
and NGC Rosette for Ginni Donovan.

Possible Workshops at Next Region Annual Meeting

At last year's NEGC Annual Meeting in Woodstock, VT, a survey was distributed to see if there was interest in having a workshop or two at the upcoming 2020 NEGC Annual Meeting in Wells, Maine, on October 13th and 14th. A range of topics were offered in the survey and

attendees at the Vermont meeting were asked to choose what interested them from those listed. There was also space for suggestions. The topics under consideration were:

- *Increasing club visibility using Social Media or other tools*
- *Creating partnerships with other organizations that benefit your club/state*
- *Tips for increasing membership*
- *Tips in applying for Plant America grants*
- *Ways to increase interest in flower shows*
- *Tips for a successful website*
- *Unique program ideas*

Other ideas that were offered by attendees included:

- *A photography workshop*
- *Recreating connections between clubs and federations in the tech age*
- *Relevance of garden clubs in today's world*
- *Round table discussion to address issues (ex., water quantity and quality; climate change; dealing with invasive plants and insects)*
- *Taking leadership positions*
- *A particular speaker was offered as a possibility (John Bunker speaking on heritage apples)*

As you can see, there are a wide variety of topics! And while all of them are important, we will have a limited amount of time to schedule one or two. In the meantime, we'd like to go ahead and pass on some ideas or "news you can use" on one of these topics – ***creating partnerships***.

Has there been a time when you heard about a speaker but knew that your club (or your Federation) would not be able to afford this person? Did you ever think to try to partner with another organization to see if you could share costs? In these days of shrinking memberships and tight budgets, it takes some "creative thinking outside the box" to accomplish some goals that might seem out of reach. How about contacting organizations that might have similar interests to see if they would consider sharing the costs of a speaker? Here are some examples from my own experience as a former Federation president.

In 2016 we were interested in booking Tovah Martin, a noted garden author and speaker, to be our Convention keynote speaker. Tovah lives in Vermont, which was quite a drive from Bar Harbor, Maine, the site of our June Convention. So, I reached out to the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens – knowing that they book well-known speakers for their annual June Symposium – hoping they'd be interested in booking Tovah as well, and we could share costs. It worked and we split the costs down the middle for Tovah's travel while both organizations paid her individual event speaking fee. For the 2017 Convention we decided to have noted landscape architect Thomas Rainer, who lived in Washington D.C., appear as our keynote speaker. Again, we brainstormed who might want to partner with us to cover his travel costs. This time we partnered with the Maine Audubon Society. They too needed a speaker for one of their big evening events and were more than happy to find a partner to

share costs! Since both of our events were within a day or two of each other, it made the partnership work.

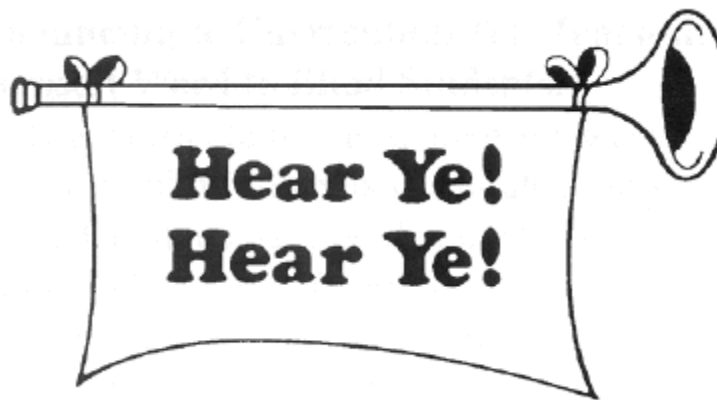
What other groups might have similar interests as your club? Besides large botanical gardens, how about nursery groups, landscape architect companies, land trusts, historical societies, museums that might have gardens, your local library, your Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary or local business associations? Stop and think about groups who bring in speakers. Maybe it could even be a community such as some of our assisted living centers who offer educational enrichment programs for their residents. You are only limited by your imagination as to who you could ask!



Are you interested in partnering with another organization on a project? This is an easy one – start with your town, a local church, schools, a senior citizens center. Have you ever thought of contacting your local Realtor's association? They reached out to me to talk about doing a landscape-related community service project in our state capitol. I was able to match them to one of our local garden clubs, and the two groups made the project happen. They might also be a good contact in finding out the names of new people who've moved to your town who might be interested in learning more about gardening. If I leave you with one thought it's this – look at every group you know as a possible partner and don't be afraid to think outside of the box in coming up with new ideas for partnering with someone. You'll be glad you did!!

Suzanne Bushnell
Director, New England Garden Clubs

National Garden Club to Invite Two Clubs from EACH Region to the Milwaukee Convention in May



Applauded!

Your Name Needs To Be In Lights!

You Need To Be

There Are Awards You Need To Win!

We Need To Know Who You Are!

WANTED

**Clubs that have a positive membership gain. We need to know what you're doing
RIGHT!**

We want to celebrate you. We want to share your success.

PLEASE CONTACT YOUR MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE IMMEDIATELY!

NGCMemberships@gmail.com

907-456-3066

The National Garden Club plans to invite two clubs from EACH region to the Milwaukee Convention in May. In order to be eligible to participate in what will be a special Membership Workshop, the chosen clubs must have **GAINED members in the most recent year!** Be sure to let your state federation president know if your club has gained members.

We're Gaining Pounds with the Region Project!

While many people have a New Year's resolution of losing pounds, your Region wants to **GAIN** pounds – food pounds, that is, that are donated to local food banks, schools and any other organization that helps feed the hungry in New England. I'm pleased to report that **ALL SIX** New England State Garden Club Federations have had clubs report their donations of fresh fruit, vegetables, herbs and, even, flowers to raise the spirits of those needing a helping hand.

To date, we've had a total of 6,724 pounds of fresh food from local gardens donated by our clubs. That's more than **THREE TONS OF FOOD!!** This does NOT count the clubs that have reported their donations by the total number of **SERVINGS** provided with their donations. It's not too late to provide your information if you donated fresh food from your own garden or from a community-based garden in 2019. This can be anything from a church garden to a senior center garden to any other community garden. We know that some gardens were producing well into November with things like winter squash, beets, carrots and other vegetables that last right up through the first frost! You can find the Region Project Donation Form on our website at www.newenglandgc.org and click on the tab for the **REGION PROJECT**.

To see what two clubs in our Region are doing about food insecurity, be sure to read the articles in this issue about the Burlington Garden Club (VT) and their "Growing Young

Gardeners" project, and the Litchfield Garden Club (CT) and their efforts to feed the hungry at the Food Pantry at St. Michael's Church.

Growing Young Gardeners to Help Feed the Hungry

Thanks to Jan DeSarno of the Burlington Garden Club (Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont), we've been able to learn how her Club works with youngsters in their community to grow food for a local organization. About four years ago the Club began a project called "Growing Young Gardeners" which works with about six to ten children who meet every Thursday in the summer to work in the garden and learn more about gardening. Jan tells us that her own grandson, Daniel (in the photos) is one of the eager children who participates!

Every Thursday morning Jan leads the children in planting seeds, weeding and harvesting the vegetables. This year alone, Jan reports that the children donated 500 pounds of potatoes, corn, beets, cucumbers, tomatoes, leeks, onions, beans, peppers, squash, melon, carrots and basil! The food was donated to the Common Roots Food Shelf at the Wheeler House in South Burlington, VT. Besides learning the basics of gardening, the children also are taught a different subject each week such as composting, invasives, bad bugs and pollinators. In the photos you can see the kids planting seeds in the spring and then taking a break to learn more about good gardening from illustrated books! Congratulations to the Burlington Garden Club for all they do to cultivate the gardeners of the future and to teach the children about the joy of giving to others through their donation of their own freshly grown food!



Planting the seeds
in the spring



Time for a break
and garden tips

A Community Works to Fight Food Insecurity

Polly Brooks of the Litchfield Garden Club (Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut) brings us a story of how her church, with a small congregation, decided to step up to help fight hunger in her community. Polly is one of the founders of The Food Pantry at St. Michael's Church. Along with another garden club member, who is the primary monthly organizer, volunteers from her Club, other churches in town as well as volunteers from other organizations work together to run the Food Pantry.

Polly notes that when her church first came up with the idea of the Food Pantry, 47 families with children were identified within the town of Litchfield (with a population of less than 10,000 people) as being in need of food. This didn't count the number of elderly residents, especially women, who were also in need as well. Her church decided they'd give the pantry a three-month trial. The 3rd Saturday of each month was chosen as the day the Food Pantry would be open because families receiving SNAP assistance (what we once knew as food stamps) would be running out by that time of the month. So, 2 1/2 years ago (during April school break) 15 people showed up for the opening of the Food Pantry.

Compare that to this past October 2019 when on the 3rd Saturday, 69 guests took home 2,211 pounds of food to feed 180 people! The food was meant for 69 adults, 67 seniors, and 44 children. 15 of the guests were first time visitors.

When a visitor comes to the Food Pantry, they are not handed parcels but instead, are encouraged to "shop" for what they need. They're offered fresh produce beyond just the summer months. On hand are organic onions, carrots and celery for making fresh soup stock, as well as other vegetables and fruit. And as you



might expect, during the growing months a lot of people donated the fruits and vegetables grown in their gardens. Friendship and respect are two traits also on display. As Polly noted on the Region Donation Form, “we’re neighbors feeding neighbors.” She summed up her note by saying, “The good news is the shelves are empty. The bad news is the shelves are empty. Help us refill them!” And that’s what everyone does – every month now for 2 ½ years.

Each One Plant One

For those of you who may not be aware of the new National Garden Clubs’ project – *Plant America with Trees (PAT): Each ONE Plant ONE* – we’ll give you a quick primer! NGC President Gay Austin announced, at the beginning of her administration, that she would continue with the *Plant America* theme that was adopted by her predecessor, Nancy Hargroves. The *Plant America with Trees (PAT)* project encourages EACH member of the National Garden Club – more than 165,000 – to plant a native tree each year of Gay’s two-year term.

Helping to spearhead this project is Victoria Bergesen, the Chairman of NGC’s new Climate Change Committee (victoriabergesen@gmail.com). Deforestation due to natural disasters, the urbanization of areas that were once forestland and death of trees due to insect damage or disease has taken a toll on our tree canopy across the country. Plus, exotic species of trees and plants in some areas have become invasive which then work against our native flora and fauna – destroying their habitat. And then there’s climate change. Recent reports show that the last decade was the warmest on record!

The *Each ONE Plant ONE* project is a call to action to do more than we’ve done to date. While the NGC’s long-running program *Penny Pines* has contributed to the reforestation of our national and state forests, it’s not enough. We must do more. To learn more about the proper way to plant a tree as well as what native trees might be best for your home, or, for a

community project your club may be involved with, you can contact local nurseries or your local cooperative extension service. And if you do plant a tree, Victoria would like to hear about it! You can contact her at her email address above.





Highfield Hall & Gardens

Late 19th century Highfield Hall was one of the early summer mansions to grace Cape Cod and is one of the few remaining examples of Stick-style Queen Anne architecture in the Northeast. Highfield Hall was originally surrounded by park-like gardens, carriage trails, and almost 700 acres of woodlands, while the landscape design for both estates was created by Ernest Bowditch.

Heirs to a mercantile fortune created by one of Boston's merchant princes, James Beebe, the Beebe siblings created one of the first expansive summer retreats on the Cape in 1878. When the last Beebe family member, Franklin, died in 1932, leaving no heirs, the estate was sold and used for a variety of purposes, with each subsequent owner having their own dream for the property, from a health resort hotel and theater, to a religious retreat.

In 1949, the entire Beebe estate was purchased by DeWitt TerHeun, a great patron of theatre and opera. TerHeun launched a training ground for student actors from Williams College and, later, Oberlin College. (The Theatre, today, remains the home of Falmouth's much-loved summer stock company from Oberlin College, the College Light Opera Company.) The TerHeun's remodeled Highfield Hall as their summer residence while Tanglewood was used as a dormitory for the students.

After Mr. TerHeun's death in 1962, the estate was sold and development was considered including the creation of a planned residential community with 500 residential units. With the town of Falmouth resisting development of this property for such ventures, the estate was ultimately purchased by Josephine and Josiah K Lilly III, who generously gave the nearly 400 acres of Beebe Woods to the town for permanent conservation as green space.

More recent work on the property includes a 2011 restoration of the Sunken Garden according to a design by noted landscape designer Lucinda Brockway. Based on original documents of this herbaceous garden design, Brockway created a garden



Sunken Garden

which would not only include plantings that would have been used in the original garden, but also added perennials for easier maintenance and plants with more vivid color.

Originally a cutting garden for the mansion, the West Garden contains Franklin Beebe's favorite flower, the carnation, earning the garden the nickname "Franklin's Park." Due to its mature trees, this garden now contains shade-loving plants as well as those original to the garden and planted in sunny spots.



West Garden

In 2012, Historic Highfield installed the Beech Tree Path, favored by walkers among heritage beech trees. Also on the grounds are a restored ice house, music garden, and opportunities for nature walks. Highfield is open year-round, with wide-ranging winter events which include a music series in the mansion, cooking classes and winter walks in Beebe Woods, tours throughout the year, juried art exhibitions and concerts. Guided tours are available for groups of five people or more by calling 508-495-1878 x 308 or by e-mail.

Sandi Tinyk
NEGC Historic & Public Gardens Chairman

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Adults: \$10, Seniors (65+) & Veterans: \$8



Stamford Veterans Memorial Park, November 11, 2019



Seated left to right: United States Senator Richard Blumenthal, United States Congressman Jim Himes, Stamford Mayor David Martin and Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont. Standing behind the Governor: Gold Star Mother Patricia Parry. At the podium: Jane Waugh making the dedication of the Blue Star By-Way Marker which can be seen near her left shoulder in the background.

It was a beautiful day as hundreds gathered in Stamford, CT at the new Veterans Memorial Park Amphitheater for the Veterans 11/11 Ceremony and the dedication of Phase I of the park's renovation. The 11/11 service began after the city's Memorial Day Parade as the bell in the old town hall tolled 11 times. Veterans from all branches of service, some going back as far as WWII, were in attendance as well as Gold-Star Mothers and many dignitaries. Brief talks and dedications were concluded with a ribbon-cutting by the many dignitaries in attendance. The final phases and plantings in the park are expected to be concluded by Memorial Day, 2020.



Left to right: President of The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut Arlene Field, Jane Waugh, President of The Stamford Garden Club Sharon Larsen, Stamford Garden Club member Marion Glowka and Connecticut Blue Star Chairman Krista Swanson-Fiorini.

Plans to include a Blue Star By-Way marker in the renovated park began over 6 years ago when Jane Waugh, Shippan Point Garden Club member and volunteer planter downtown under Marion Glowka (member of The Stamford Garden Club), learned of the potential for the park to be significantly improved. Jane obtained approval for inclusion of the marker and coordinated with The Stamford Garden Club to accomplish this joint effort of the two garden clubs in Stamford. The dedication ceremony included moving moments as veterans, dignitaries and Blue-Star Mothers all spoke briefly. Jane Waugh, then board member of both The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut and National Garden Clubs, spoke briefly about the history of Blue Star Memorials and how they became a project of NGC. It was a great opportunity to make state and national officials aware of this important project and the numbers of markers nationwide. She introduced garden club officials and dedicated the Blue-Star By-Way Marker which bears the names of both clubs, The Shippan Point Garden Club and The Stamford Garden Club.

Jane Waugh



Protecting our Endangered Plants

- the Native Plant Trust's Seed Ark Initiative

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 New England 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 to collect seeds 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.



American Ginseng- Panax

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. NPT is halfway to goal and needs 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.

Pests such as the Emerald Ash borer are eliminating our native Ash trees in many parts of the country.

American Ash

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, the **native seaside goldenrod *Solidago sempervirens*** is being reintroduced, as it is the preferred cover plant for the endangered roseate tern which nest in the dunes.



The endangered **Karner Blue butterfly** (state butterfly of NH) is totally dependent upon its host plant, the ***Lupinus perennis***. NH is protecting the 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

Earth Day – April 22, 2020

It's hard for all of us who fondly remember the initial Earth Day celebration to fathom, but 2020 marks the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day on April 22, 2020. Start now to plan events for your club to support this milestone event. You can make a positive impact in your community. Get other community organizations involved with you. Publicize your events within your towns and cities and on your local social and media outlets.

Arlene Field
President
The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut, Inc.



NEGC Calendar

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

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

Environmental School

September 22-24 - Environmental School, Course 3, Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, New Haven, Connecticut

Flower Show School

April 14-16 - Flower Show School Course II at the DoubleTree Hilton, Milford, MA. For registration information contact: jillyjill07@comcast.net

October 20-22 - Flower Show School, Course 1, Kellogg Environmental Center, Derby, Connecticut.

Garden Study School

April 2-3 - Garden Study School Course 3 at Tower Hill Botanical Garden. For registration information contact: jmarykay@aol.com

Landscape Design School

March 24-26 - Landscape Design School, Course 2, Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, New Haven, Connecticut.

Symposium

August 10-12 - The "Northern New England Tri-State Symposium" will be hosted in New Hampshire at the DoubleTree Hotel 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, Mary Huntoon of Massachusetts. Horticulture Instructor and Allied subject: August 12, Darlene Newell of West Virginia.



