

Buds & Blossoms

President's Message

A few years ago, I was given a small plaque that has been on display in my family room ever since. It says "No two days are ever the same in one garden". We all know how true that it is, but the weather events of the last week of October make that an understatement. A wide spread and heavy snow storm caused enormous damage to all our gardens, especially the ornamental trees, and caused probably about half of our members to lose electric power for multiple days as enormous tree branches came down under the weight of snow on all their leaves that had not yet fallen.

And a week later, we are having a picture perfect warm day with a cloudless blue sky! Gotta love that!

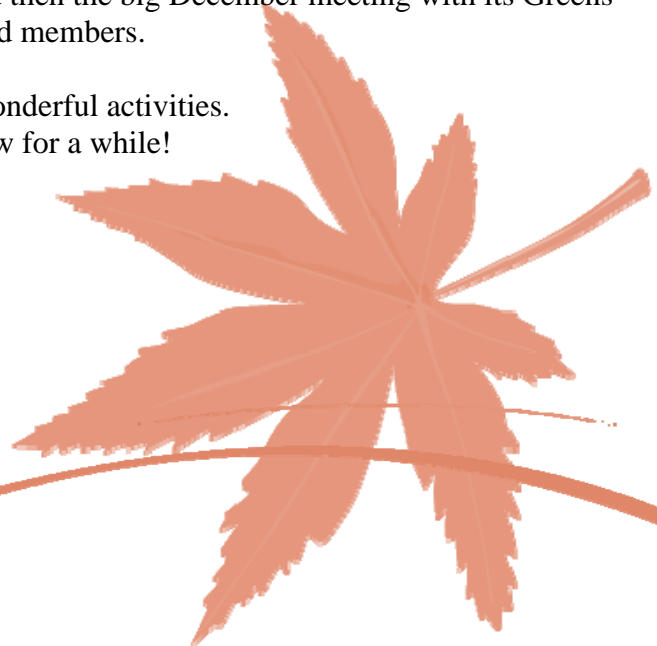
Despite all the impact of weather, we still held our regular meeting as scheduled, on November 1, and we had a good turn out despite the cold showers and no hair dryers for many who attended. What a sturdy bunch our members are! Thankfully, the meeting room was toasty warm.

And a busy bunch, too. Recently, we had members attending Flower Show School, and Landscape Design School, Design Workshop, and Designing Principles. Thelma Shoneman organized the enormous Symposium connected to the New England Region conference of the NGC, Inc., which Maureen Christmas and Laura Lindop attended. Joan Gardner won a ribbon at the Topsfield fair for her floral design. Several of us attended the Federation fall conference at which we won an award for our web site, and Maureen Christmas won an award for her outstanding design at Tower Hill. At a Federation District meeting, Pat Kosicki and I learned that the Acton Garden Club has won more awards than any other in the state over the last ten years. A group led by Thelma Shoneman is creating a mannequin for Holly Days at Tower Hill starting November 25. Whew! No wonder our nickname is the Action Garden Club!

And we have so much more to look forward to. We have Horticulture Study and Floral Design meetings coming up in November and then the big December meeting with its Greens Workshop and lunch provided by the Board members.

I look forward to seeing you at all these wonderful activities. Let's just hope we don't see any more snow for a while!

Suzanne



Conservation and Environmental Education

Submitted by Judy Dembsey, Chairperson

HOW TO AVOID A DOG BITE

The Humane Society of the United States suggests the following tips to stay safe around dogs:

- Never approach a strange dog, especially one who's tied or confined behind a fence or in a car.
- Don't pet a dog—even your own—without letting him see and sniff you first.
- Never turn your back to a dog and run away. A dog's natural instinct will be to chase and catch you.
- Don't disturb a dog while he's/she's sleeping, eating, chewing on a toy, or caring for puppies.
- Be cautious around strange dogs. Always assume that a dog who doesn't know you may see you as an intruder or as a threat.

When teaching children how to be safe, make sure they learn not to chase or tease dogs they don't know and to avoid dogs they don't know. They should also never try to take toys or food away from a dog, including their own.

If you are approached by a dog who may attack you, follow these steps:

- Never scream and run.
- Remain motionless, hands at your sides, and avoid eye contact with the dog. Once the dog loses interest in you, slowly back away until he is out of sight.
- If the dog does attack, "feed" him your jacket, purse, bicycle, or anything that you can put between yourself and the dog.

If you fall or are knocked to the ground, curl into a ball with your hands over your ears and remain motionless. Try not to scream or roll around.

WHAT TO DO IF BITTEN

- Immediately wash the wound thoroughly with soap and warm water
- Contact your physician for additional care and advice.

Report the bite to your local animal care and control agency. Tell the animal control official everything you know about the dog, including his owner's name and address. If the dog is a stray, tell the animal control official what the dog looks like, where you saw him, whether you've seen him before, and in which direction he went.



Horticulture Study Group Announcements

Submitted by Mike Svoboda, Horticulture Chair

HORTICULTURE STUDY GROUP MEETINGS

November 8 – Tour of the new Tower Hill facilities.
Carpool from Acton Center Fire Station @ 9:15



December – No Horticulture Study Group meeting this month

January 10 – Annual Planning Meeting and Gardening Book/Magazine Swap
Share your ideas for next year's program.

February 14 – Blueberry Connection

March 13 - Strategies to Ease Garden Maintenance as We Age

Horticulture Study Group is open to all Garden Club members. Come join us to learn new gardening techniques.

Membership

Submitted by Joan Gardner, Co-Chair

The New Member Luncheon on November 1st welcomed new members: Ruth Schemel, Susan Zuckerman, Anne Sterling, and Jill Groener. Dorothy Marquis-Omer was not able to attend. The luncheon was held at Susan Harrigan's home with assistance from Susanne Fuller and Joan Gardner. Certain board members attended to help the new members understand member responsibilities during a club year. Please welcome our new members. Ruth Schemel jumped right in selling daffodil bulbs in the rain at Oktoberfest and then at the October meeting. Anne Sterling introduced the speaker at the October meeting and wait until you see the shoes Jill Groener created for our Club's lady at Tower Hill's Holly Days.

Publicity

Submitted by Susan Harrigan, Chair

A "cut & paste" workshop was held at my house and it was a lot of fun. It was an easy way to play catch-up since I stepped in as Publicity Chair in August and anyone who has previously had the job knows about the mysterious press book and what needs to be done. The publications have been very kind and seem to be printing just about all they receive. So if you have an article written about something that the Club is involved in, please forward it to me and I'll do my best to get it in print. Environmental issues and Lyme disease seem to be of the most interest right now.

Acton's Looking Good Award Winners

Submitted by Linda Chance, Chairperson

Every summer the Acton Garden Club conducts the "Acton's Looking Good Awards" in order to reward Acton businesses whose landscapes enhances the town's beauty; and to encourage more businesses to improve their landscapes.

This year's committee consisted of Claudette Duhamel, Fran Hearn, and Linda Chance, Chairperson. They "cruised" around town in Linda's convertible twice, in late spring and late summer. The winners were:

Row one: Best Small Space-Julie's Place, Best Cottage Garden-The Greenhouse Design Center, Best Landscaped Intersections-Pro Tech and Sunoco (Rt. 27 at Rts. 111 and 2A)

Row two: Continued Excellence-Nashoba Placement, Best Landscaped Business-McDonald's, Creative Design-Bursaw Oil and Gas

Row three: Unique Culinary Garden-Sprigs, Best Garden Center-Cucurbit Farm



Sign-Up for Community Service Committees Begins in February

Submitted by Pat Kosicki, Vice-President



As the Community Service Committees are readying the gardens and containers for the long non-growing season, exciting things have taken place within two of these groups. New hose fittings have been installed on Daffodil Run which will make watering much easier next spring (no more getting sprayed in the face when turning on the system). The Village of West Acton has taken on an updated new look thanks to the Timothy F. Harrigan Memorial and the work of its committee -- the planters look splendid.

Now it's time to think ahead a bit. The Acton Garden Club's annual sign-up for all five of our Community Service Committees will begin at our February meeting on February 7, 2012. Please remember that all ACTIVE members (those who have been an AGC member for less than 15 consecutive years) must serve on one of these committees. Associate members who wish to participate are very welcomed.

You will receive complete details in February via e-mail and Newsletter about how to sign up. No matter what committee you are currently a member of, you will still need to sign up again even if you wish to remain on your current committee. If you have a physical limitation and there is a particular committee that you wish to be on, plan to sign up early. Once a committee's sign-up sheet is full, no other members will be accepted until each committee has gotten its requested number of members. Clip boards for each of the five committees will be available for sign-up beginning with the February 7th meeting.

Our Community Service Committees are:

Garden Therapy at Emerson Hospital
Herb Garden at Acton Arboretum
Civic Beautification
Wildflower Garden at Meeting House Hill
Daffodil Run at Meeting House Hill

A description of the Community Service Activities begins on page 17 of the 2011-2012 Yearbook with more detail about the committees beginning on page 25. If you have any questions please contact me at patkosicki@verizon.net or call 978-263-2812.

Nominating Committee

Submitted by Maureen Christmas, Chair

The Nominating Committee of Maureen Christmas, Gail Wick and Joan Yatteau put forth a slate of officers and committee chairs for the 2011-2012 Club year which you will vote on at the Annual Meeting in April.

When we contact you in the coming weeks, please consider accepting our request to serve the Club. Feel free to save us a phone call by volunteering! It takes many hands to be such a vibrant organization. Please refer to the pink forms in this newsletter for further information. (If you have an email address, the Membership Survey will be sent to you via email).

Come to the Winter Greens Workshop!

Submitted by Thelma Shoneman, Director of Floral Concerns and Pam Nelson, Floral Design Study Group

It is never too early to think about the holidays or our Annual Winter Greens Workshop. With several project options this year the Club's website has been updated with pictures of the 3 design options and an additional option for those of you that have the mechanics (ie. cage or dish) and would like just the ribbon and ornaments.

Each project is \$5.00 (including the new 4th option) and the ornament extras are \$3.00. Please contact Pam Nelson with your order, so it will be waiting for you at the meeting. If you have any project questions, please contact Thelma directly.

The workshop will be held December 6th at St. Matthew's Church. Coffee will be served at 9AM, followed by the business meeting at 9:45AM and the program at 10:30AM. A light lunch will be served at noon.

Checks are made out to the Acton Garden Club and can be sent to Pam Nelson. Bring your toolbox or pruners, and a selection of greens to use in your design. The project choices are:

- ⇒ Tree-shaped door swag (back cover)
- ⇒ Table tree (above)
- ⇒ Centerpiece (right)
- ⇒ Your own design with your own mechanics



Civic Beautification

Submitted by Jean Lane and Janet Richards, Co-Chairs

Another summer has flown by and our committee and watering crew did a wonderful job keeping the containers blooming beautifully all spring and summer. Thank you all for a job well done.

Our exciting news is that through the Timothy Harrigan Memorial Fund we have ten new planters in the West Acton area. The barrels have been removed, thanks to Dean Charter's crew. Susan Harrigan, Janet Richards and Laura Lindop picked out several shrubs of different textures, shades and sizes which have been planted. We have received many compliments on their appearance. We are awaiting the delivery of two new benches to place in West Acton.

We have had a wonderful growing season this past summer and the troughs and oval are spectacular. We haven't totally removed the summer plants as they are still colorful and healthy. The fall Mums have been added along with the Kale until we add the Winter Greens to the planters and troughs.

A special thank you to all that have planted in the wind and down-pours, cold and heat! Nothing keeps the Garden Club away!



Acton Arboretum Herb Garden

Submitted by Carole Ward and Sue Nordhausen, Co-Chairs

The Herb Garden committee has been busy putting the garden to bed for the winter, and we all agree that it has been a most productive season. We started off the year with many overgrown shrubs that were just outside the perimeter of the garden, and were not only shading the garden, but were also making it quite hidden! After trying valiantly to get them pruned back and under control, we did reach out for help. The town and the arboretum committee came to our aid with much man power and enthusiasm and over the summer managed to prune, remove, and replant quite a bit of the surrounding area. There was also an effort by all to get the stone wall back in better form. In the end, all were very happy with the results.

We also tried to add more color to the garden with appropriate annuals, as well as planting many fresh new perennials.

A highlight of the year was working with, and getting to know, such an enthusiastic and loyal group of committee members. Another high point was the end of summer Herb Garden Tea. The attendance at this was more than we ever expected and it was so nice to relax, enjoy the fruits of our labors, and reconnect with other garden club members. Happily, many members of the Arboretum committee also were able to attend.



The Timothy F. Harrigan Memorial

Submitted by Susan Harrigan

After many meetings and months of planning the long awaited event is almost here. The committee is Joan Gardner, Janet Richards, Susanne Fuller, Judy Rice, Pat Kosicki, Sue Whitcomb, Jean Lane, Maureen Christmas, Laura Lindop, Thelma Shoneman and Susan Harrigan. We ordered ten “Estate Planters” by Crescent Gardens and two 4-foot cedar benches. The town removed the existing whiskey barrels and the planting crews planted our precious dwarf Alberta spruce trees in one of the cemeteries, so they are not being wasted. As many whiskey barrels as can be salvaged will be stored in the “little red house”. We hope you agree with the changes and join us in celebrating a “new look” for West Acton Village.



Come to the Winter Greens Workshop!

December 6th at St. Matthew’s Church. It’s a fun way to create a festive arrangement. See details inside the newsletter. We hope to see you there!

