



# Greenfield Garden Club Newsletter

December 2022

Vol. 30, No. 12

## Year-end Holidays are in Full Swing!

### December Holiday Potluck

*with finger food appetizers*

Friday, December 9, 2022

5-8 pm at the home of Becky George

61 Madison Cir, Greenfield, MA

Feel free to join the optional Yankee Swap

*If you are looking to carpool, let us know when you RSVP and we can set you up!*

We are asking people to bring a finger-food style appetizer to the party. We are doing this in order to make sure we have enough savory food to nibble on, and the club will be providing the sweets and the drinks. You don't have to get fancy, unless you want to! Since it's such a fun part of our festivities, we are going to offer the Yankee Swap to those who would like to participate. We will try to start the swap at about 6pm. To participate, please bring a wrapped gift – garden-themed is always appreciated – in the \$15 to \$20 range. For those who need inspiration, my favorite shop to explore is Innovintage Place on Hope Street in the old F. W. Webb plumbing building. You are sure to find an appropriate gift there. The selection changes all the time. Again, please respond directly to Becky on or before 12/5 if possible. She will reach out to those who RSVP with arrival, parking, and any necessary covid information. We will also stay in close touch should the weather start to look questionable. We look forward to a fun evening together!

Welcome to the most festive event of the year for the club – the Holiday Party/Potluck. We are encouraging folks to RSVP early (on or before 12/5) so Becky can have a good sense of how many people to expect and be able to plan accordingly. **RSVP** to her directly at: 413-441-6164 or [beckygeorge1962@gmail.com](mailto:beckygeorge1962@gmail.com). Please let her know the best way to contact you in case we have changes to the event (include your email and phone info).

## December President's Report ~ Laura Schlaikjer



The last month of the year is on our doorstep, and hopefully all of our gardens have been put to bed. I know I was grateful for the extra days of warmer than normal weather to accomplish all my fall tasks. My garlic is in, extra bulbs have been planted, and the last of the kale, bok choy, parsley and rutabagas have been harvested from the garden. Since we do not have a wreath-making event this year, several alternatives have been included in this newsletter. If you'd like to buy a pre-made plain wreath to decorate, they have some at Rock Ridge farmstand at the corner of routes 10 and 63 in Northfield, but they are going fast at just \$10 apiece. They will have trees there shortly as well. We are looking forward to seeing members at our festive Holiday Potluck/Party, and having fun with our Yankee Swap. It's possible that next year, if we need to move the wreath-making to the first week of December, we might move the holiday party into the New Year, and perhaps push the annual meeting to February. What are your thoughts/preferences? Email the club with your ideas. ~ Cheers! *Laura*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec 9, 5-8pm (Fri) – Holiday Potluck/Yankee Swap

Dec 17, 10 am-1 pm – Winter Farmer's Market 16 Court Sq

Dec 21, 4:48pm – Winter Solstice: the first day of winter.

Steering committee – no meeting in December.

*What good is the warmth of Summer without the cold of winter to give it sweetness. ~ John Steinbeck*

### Making a Holiday Boxwood Tree



I'm not sure how many of you remember the fun the club used to have when we made boxwood trees instead of wreaths some years. It's easy to do on your own, you just need a container, a block of florist foam, a supply of boxwood, and ornaments. Soak your boxwood in a bucket for an hour or so. Soak the florist foam. Insert the florist foam into your (leakproof) container and secure with



florist tape if necessary. Shave it to a general pyramid shape. Insert box tips (6-8" long) into the foam at the top and base to set the parameters of your tree. Continue to place box tips into the foam, trimming as necessary to fashion a tree that follows the pyramidal shape of your foam. The upper tips should be inserted so that they gradually slant upwards to cover and fill in the tree at the top. Turn the tree as you work, making sure that you cover the foam base completely. You are aiming to have a cone-shaped tree at the end. Be careful not to insert and remove tips too often or the foam will degrade. Since the tips are not strong enough to hold ornaments, attach them to picks with the wire on one end of the pick and then insert them where you please on the "tree." Make sure you keep the container full of water, and place your tree out of drafts and direct sunlight for best results. If the tree dries out it will become brittle and lose its luster, but it will still hold its color and remain attractive for several weeks. You can find these directions on the web here: [How to Make a Boxwood Tree for Christmas \(karengardentips.com\)](http://www.karengardentips.com)



Don't forget to check out Margaret Roach's excellent **Monthly Garden**

**Chores** on her website:

<https://awaytogarden.com/category/chores-by-month/>

### Making a Pinecone Swag



Laura of the very popular [Garden Answer](#) fame has a great video tutorial on YouTube, showing us how to easily create a beautiful pinecone swag for your holiday décor. Click [here](#) to view the tutorial and start looking for cones, greens, and ribbon!

#### Officers 2022:

**President/Newsletter/FB/Website:**

Laura Schlaikjer

**Vice President:**

Marsha Stone

**Treasurer:**

Becky George

**Recording Secretary:**

Annette Kilminster

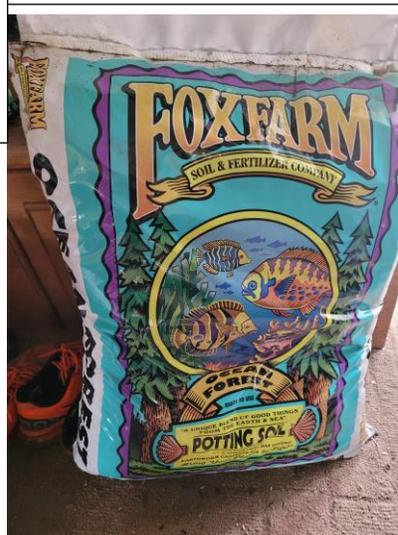
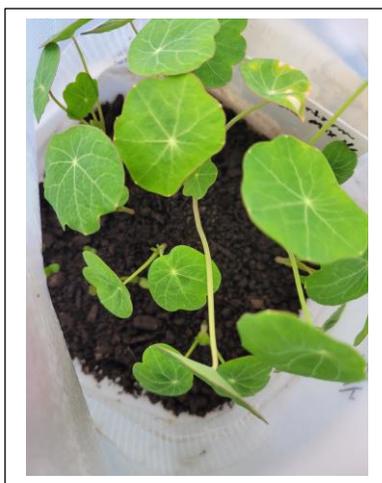
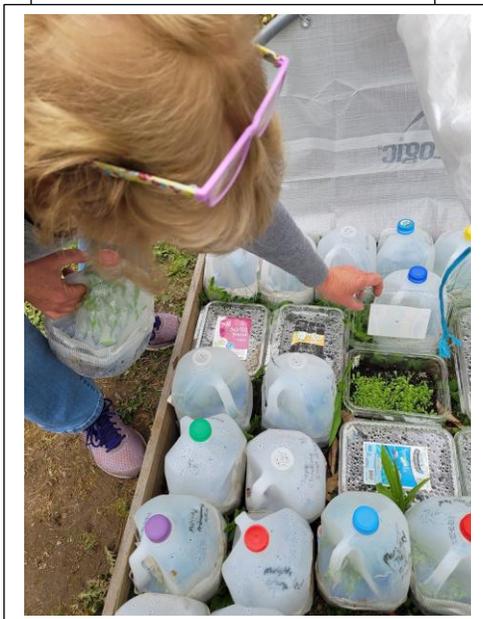
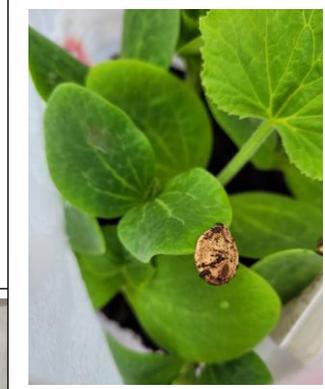
**Corresponding Secretary:**

Eva Carrier

**At Large Member/s:**

Nicki Shipman, and maybe you?

Photos related to the Winter Sowing event at Gill Town Hall with club member, Pamela Lester. Pamela is always looking for “new” methods in gardening, and it was great to have her share her growing enthusiasm for sowing seeds in plastic containers in Feb/March. Start saving your opaque plastic milk jugs and tops as well as your large, lidded salad containers for your spring sowing!



Pam's favorite potting soil



How to ...

## Enjoy your poinsettia all year long!

Surprise: Poinsettias can flourish long after you've put away your Christmas decorations!



**WINTER CARE:**

1. Place in indirect sunlight. Poinsettias don't like drafts or high heat, so avoid furnace vents and fireplaces. Water daily.
2. Once foliage starts to fade, place in a cool, sunny spot. Reduce watering to once a week to allow plant to rest and recuperate, says botanist Alan Stevens at Kansas State University.

**SPRING CARE:**

1. Stimulate new growth in early April by cutting back the stems to five to eight inches from the soil. Water when the soil feels dry.
2. Once new growth appears, set in a bright, cool spot and water daily.

**SUMMER CARE:**

1. Transfer poinsettia to a large pot in a sunny location or plant directly in your garden.
2. Trim plant into a compact, round shape and feed it an all-purpose houseplant fertilizer every two to three weeks.

**For Christmas blooms . . .**

Beginning in October, cover the plant with a black plastic bag at night; remove it each morning. Just after Thanksgiving, move plant to a bright spot and stop covering it at night.



**Did you know?**

Poinsettias were brought to the U.S. in the late 1800s by Joel Poinsett, the first U.S. ambassador to Mexico.

Click the photo for more care tips

Planning has started for the **Annual Meeting**, and we are eyeing Monday, 1/16 (MLK Day) as a possible date. We need volunteers to be part of the Nominating Committee. Here is the description in our club bylaws: "The **Nominating Committee** will nominate the officers for the following year and present the recommendations at the Annual Meeting. The Nominating Committee will be comprised of up to three members who shall serve a one-year term." We would be grateful if 3 volunteers would agree to serve in this capacity. We need to see if the current slate of officers will serve for another year, and if there are any vacancies, if any among the membership would like to put their hat in the ring. Please email the club with your interest: [greenfieldgardenclub@yahoo.com](mailto:greenfieldgardenclub@yahoo.com)

## DECEMBER RECIPE: NANTUCKET CRANBERRY PIE

From: Tinky Weisblat's Blog as well as her *Pudding Hollow Cookbook*

### INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups raw cranberries
- 1.5 cups sugar
- ½ cup chopped walnuts (optional but good)
- ¾ cup melted sweet butter
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon vanilla or almond extract

### DIRECTIONS:

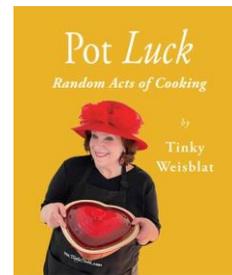
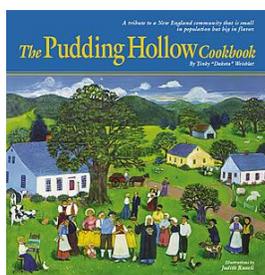
(Serves 8)

Grease a 9- or 10-inch pie plate. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.

Wash and pick over the cranberries. Put them in the bottom of the pie plate.

Sprinkle with ½ cup sugar and the walnuts. Make a batter of the remaining ingredients, first combining the butter and remaining sugar, and then adding the eggs, flour, and flavoring. Pour the batter over the cranberries. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes. Serve as is, or top with whipped cream or ice cream.

Here are Tinky's books. "Pot Luck" is her newest. Click [here](#) for info and ordering.





## SOWING CHANGE



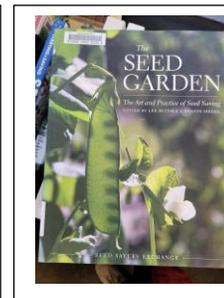
### [UMASS Aggie Seed Library](#) and Seed Ambassador Program ~ Pamela Lester

Yes, you read that correctly UMass has a seed library! In addition to seeds, the library has garden books and DVDs, as well as seed sorting and growing items for loan such as sieves and soil blockers. The resources are too numerous to fully list here. See their [website](#) for more details.

On Fri September 16<sup>th</sup> members Wayne Gelineau and Pamela Lester attended a Seed Saving Frenzy workshop. At the workshop they had hands on experience with the dry and wet methods of preparing and sorting seeds to dry for another season. They helped to process and package three different types of tomatoes, Swiss giant snow peas, giant white zinnias, a poppy mix, and pink hollyhocks. In just over 2 hours Wayne and Pamela graduated and now are Ambassadors to the seed library. The last workshop of the season was on November 11, but there will be more come spring.

Seeds at the Seed Library are FREE. Before buying new ones, check out the ever-changing inventory there. Do you have a surplus of seeds to share? Bring them to the Library and put them in envelopes for others to take. Bring as much information about the seeds as possible. See the website for a sample of the form they use. If you have a small photo of the plants in flower in peak season, bring that along too. The growing information and photos are attached to the seed packets when possible.

Pauline Borrego is the librarian who runs the programs. She is passionate about gardening and seed saving. Reach out to her with questions about the UMass Aggie Seed Library. [pborrego@library.umass.edu](mailto:pborrego@library.umass.edu)



**Are you coming to visit the Mass Aggie Seed Library for the first time from off-campus?**

**The best time to avoid the students and get free parking is after 5 pm. Paulina will not be here, but please feel free to leave her a note or suggestion. And please remember to sign the guest book!**

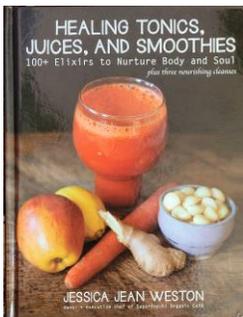
The Mass Aggie Seed Library is inside the **Science & Engineering Library** located in the **Lederle Lowrise** on the very north end of campus. Go up one flight to the main library, then once inside inside go up another level. Left out of the stairwell, and another immediate left and you will see the sign.

## Growing and Using Herbs for Health

As we enter the colder months and the flu, common cold, and covid are circulating, why not take advantage of herbs and flowers to make yourself a healing tea or broth to keep your body balanced? You might even want to add some of these plants to your garden next year to harvest and dry for your own use.

Some popular herbs to use fresh or to dry for tea: all mints, lemon balm, thyme, lemon verbena, lavender, anise hyssop, and chamomile. Herbal teas are a great way to keep yourself hydrated while aiding in things like digestion, mental clarity, and to help you sleep.

If you are looking to try and grow some herbs indoors this season, Gardener's Supply has a great article on how to grow them, and which herbs are best suited to indoor life. You can read it [here](#).



The owner of Superfresh! Organic Café in Brattleboro has written an interesting book called Healing Tonics, Juices and Smoothies. I went to the Brattleboro Food Coop where I was able to buy the dried ingredients for her Nourishing Tea that includes nettle, horsetail, oat straw and clover. I hope it tastes good, but if not, I'm sure a teaspoon of honey will help smooth it out!

She also has a tea recipe called Medicinal Mushroom. It uses Chaga and Reishi mushrooms, as well as Astragalus root. They were all out of Astragalus in VT, so I have not made this one yet. (I am looking forward to a much-expanded Green Fields Market so I can buy all my dry ingredients locally.) The author states that this makes an amazing base for soup broths, and can be used to replace the water in hot drinks or when cooking grains.

Elderberry Immune Boost. This tea uses the Medicinal Mushroom tea as part of the base, although you can also use just water. Elderberry is a very potent immune-booster, and planting a shrub if you have the room is probably a great idea. This tea uses dried elderberries, a cinnamon stick, fresh gingerroot, honey, and a cup of brandy (optional but delicious!).

Chaga Chai – this recipe adds the healing powers of Chaga to the already nourishing Chai. Chaga is a natural antibacterial, so a jar of brewed chaga tea has an extended shelf life in your fridge, should you want to make some up in advance to use in other recipes.

The book can be purchased thru the link to Amazon embedded in the photo, or you might find it locally. We bought ours at Plum.



Click the photo for UNH December Gardening Tips

## Treasurer's Report

**Balance** as of Oct 15, 2022.....\$8,298.84

**Income** .....\$0.21

*Interest \$0.21*

**Expenses** ..... \$482.10

**Balance** as of Nov 16, 2022 .....\$7,816.95

*\$150 Grant/Pleasant St Gardens; \$100 UMass Sept visit; \$232.10 Oktoberfest presentation/speakers/food*

*All financial matters and membership dues should be directed to Greenfield Garden Club:  
c/o Becky George, 61 Madison Cir  
Greenfield MA 01301 **Questions?***

[greenfieldgardenclub@yahoo.com](mailto:greenfieldgardenclub@yahoo.com)

**January NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:  
Wednesday, December 28th  
[greenfieldgardenclub@yahoo.com](mailto:greenfieldgardenclub@yahoo.com)**



Greenfield Garden Club  
PO Box 309  
Greenfield, MA 01302-0309

## MEMBER DISCOUNTS

These vendors have agreed to provide the listed discounts for members who show their membership card when making a purchase. We appreciate their support! Please respect their offers by remembering these generous discounts are for club members only and only when your card is presented.

### **Baystate Perennial Farm**

36 State Road (Route 5/10), Whately  
10% off regular priced plants with membership

### **Chapley Gardens**

397 Greenfield Road (Route 5/10), Deerfield  
10% off regular priced plants and pond supplies

### **Greenfield Farmers' Cooperative (Agway)**

269 High Street, Greenfield  
10% anything garden related

### **Silver Garden Daylilies – 23 Picket Lane, Greenfield**

10% off daylilies

*Any vendors interested in offering our club member - gardeners a discount, please contact a member of the Steering Committee – thank you!!*

### **LaSalle Florists**

23 LaSalle Drive (Route 5/10), Whately  
10% off regular priced plants

### **O'Brien Nurserymen – 40 Wells Road, Granby, CT**

10% off plants

### **Mill River Farm Market – Conway**

Road/corner 116 & Rtes 5/10. S. Deerfield  
10% off plants in Spring and Fall

### **Warm Colors Apiary**

2 South Mill River Road, South Deerfield  
10% off

### **Wilder Hill Gardens**

351 South Shirkshire Road, Conway  
10% off plants and consultations