Greenfield Garden Club Newsletter

October 2016 Vol. 24, No. 6

Nancy Winter, Antarctic Explorer, Tells All

Club member Nancy Winter took a trip of a lifetime last February/March to the Antarctic continent, and has over 600 photos to prove it! On Thursday night, October 20, at 6:00 pm, we will all gather together in the Community Room of Greenfield Savings Bank, located at 282 Avenue A in Turners Falls, to hear of her exploits. I believe that this might be the culmination of a desire of hers to visit all of the continents.

Antarctica, the southernmost continent and site of the South Pole, is a virtually uninhabited, ice-covered landmass. Most cruises (well, visitors must brave rough sea crossings aboard ice-strengthened vessels) visit the Antarctic Peninsula, which stretches towards South America. It's known for the Lemaire Channel and Paradise Harbor, striking, iceburg-flanked passageways, and Port Lockroy, a former British research station turned museum. The peninsula's isolated terrain also shelters rich wildlife, including many penguins.

Antarctica is a land of extremes: it is the coldest and driest continent on Earth and has the highest average elevation. It is the fifth largest and southernmost continent. The breath-taking, frozen scenery is broken only by a handful of scientific bases and a "permanent" population of a few thousand scientists. Antarctica is notable for being the only continent with no significant plant life and no native land mammals, reptiles or amphibians. However, its shoreline serves as a nesting ground for many species of migratory birds and penguins, and the Southern Ocean is home to many fish and marine mammals. Antarctica is a desert, with all of its moisture tied up in frigid seawater and the huge sheets, shelves, and packs of ice which cover nearly all of the continent and stretch out into the surrounding waters. *(Wikitravel.org)*

A Penguin in the Antarctic

For most people, reading about Antarctica is the only affordable means of experiencing the continent, but we have a special opportunity to hear about it firsthand on October 20th. This event is free and open to the public. Please come and bring a friend!

A Few Things to Start in the Fall

Use a mulching mower to shred your leaves in place, and fertilize your lawn naturally. Or, using your brawn or a mower with bagger, rake/suck up all those leaves and start a leaves-only compost heap. Shredded leaves are much better than whole leaves. Add some finished compost to the pile and plenty of coffee grounds for nitrogen. This will get the microbes really cooking. Cook for up to 9 months. Don't be tempted to leave whole leaves in your gardens. This just encourages moles, voles, and mold, and smothers early bulbs. Shred your leaves, and if you don't compost them, you can return them to your beds and rest easy knowing they will decompose quickly and feed your plants.

Improve your veggie garden's soil health now for next year's growing season. Remove spent vegetable matter to the compost heap. Use a broadfork to loosen soil and add up to 3 inches of finished compost to your beds. Shredded leaves aged for a year make a fine dressing. Consider using cover crops over the winter, and turn them under the following spring. Keep notes on what worked well for you this past year, and start planning next year's garden. Make sure you plant your garlic this fall, rotating the beds. Fall is also a great time to get your soil tested. You'll get it back in plenty of time to decide what, if anything, you need to add. You also want the soil ph level somewhere between 6.5 and 7. Build and maintain healthy garden soil this fall!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Garden Club programs are generally the third Thursday of each month.

***Sat/Sun Oct 8/9**: 10 – 5 daily - Berkshire Botanical Garden Harvest Festival*

Thursday, October 20: 6:00 pm: Monthly Meeting

Friday, October 28, 6:00 pm: Steering Committee Meeting with Potluck, 40 High St, Greenfield. Send items for the agenda to: greenfieldgardenclub@yahoo.com

Saturday, October 29: 2:00 – 9:00pm – Franklin County Pumpkinfest

Thursday, November 17: 5:30 pm Wreath-Making, Chapley Gardens

Sunday, December 4: 4:30pm – 7:30 pm Annual Holiday Party

President's Report

from Laura Schlaikjer

The rain seems to be returning, but we still need more! It does not look like the drought will dampen the fall foliage display, which is creeping in daily. The cooler weather will be welcome after that oppressively hot summer! In case you missed us at the Franklin County Fair, we kept up with tradition and won a blue ribbon for our labyrinth and garden display. We also spruced up the walls this year with a light blue mottled spray as the stark white walls were pretty uninspiring. We also replaced the light bulbs to better illuminate the booth. Send us an email if an idea for a future booth springs to mind – it's never too early to start planning!

I was just musing that it would be fun to take more field trips next year, when a brochure from First Choice Tours arrived in my mailbox. They have a bus tour that I think would be outstanding – let me know if you agree. It's a group tour to the New York Botanical Gardens featuring the work of Dale Chihuly, the first time in ten years that his work has been featured in a major exhibition. I myself am ready to buy a ticket, having seen videos of his glass installations in other botanical gardens. Perhaps I can get the Western MA Master Gardeners to be a co-sponsor. First Choice Tours is also offering trips to the Boston Flower Show as well as other destinations. So put on your traveling shoes and get ready to take a ride with us next year!

Martha Stiles' Apple Cake from 1995 Newsletter

1 and ¾ cup sugar
3 eggs
2 cups flour
1 tsp salt
½ cup nuts
¾ cup oil
1 tsp vanilla
1 tsp cinnamon
2 cups peeled, sliced apples

In a large bowl, combine sugar, oil, eggs, and vanilla. Beat Well. Add dry ingredients and beat well. Batter will be thick. Fold in apples and nuts. Place in a 9x13x2 greased pan. (An 11 3/4 x 7 ½ pan also works well.) Bake 40 – 45 minutes at 350 degrees.
Sprinkle on top an additional mixture of sugar and cinnamon.

Looking Back: 1995

Richard Willard – President
Carol Ball – Vice President
Nelda Smith & Linda Tyler – Recording Secretaries
Muriel Robbins – Corresponding Secretary
Ken Doerpholz – Treasurer

Annual Meeting & Dinner held at Famous Bill's Restaurant with speaker Dr. Ed Olchowski with his presentation on Birds of the Fields and Woods and Wild Flowers, interspersed with his dry humor!

Current topics that also came up in 1995: Explore non-profit status, establish a scholarship fund for a student going into agriculture, produce a garden club brochure.

Field Trips: Boston Flower Show; Tour of Durfee Garden, UMAss/John Tristan; Tour of gardens at Daniel & Margaret Verdery, Northfield; trip to Stanley Park, Westfield.

Guest Speakers: Elsa Bakalar: Gardener as Designer; Jim Santospago of Nasami Farm: Landscaping with native Plants; Kay Higgins: Herbs.

Community Activities: Winter Carnival; Bowl for Kids' Sake; Trap Plain gardens; Library & Federal St School planting;3rd Annual Garden Tour (142 tix sold!) Franklin County Fair float and Roundhouse display; Community Meal; Farmer's Market Plant and Bake Sale; Adopt-a-Barrel Contest and Holiday Greens; Greenfield Fall Festival, The Valley Gardener continues as a radio program with Steve Malsch and live, call-in line.

Workshops: Hands-on crafts and Holiday Wreath-making with Richard Willard.

Officers 2016:

President:
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Energy Park Update

Several members of the Garden Club have been volunteering their time, energy and expertise at the Energy Park on Miles St. in Greenfield since last spring. Work slowed down over the hot, dry summer months but now that the days are cooler a regular Tuesday work crew can be found at the park. The park and gardens are always in need of maintenance and care, and many are undergoing major design changes.

Under the tutelage and experienced eyes of Greening Greenfields Nancy Hazard, volunteers are working on a 5-10 year plan to improve the landscaping options, reduce overall care and maintenance time, diversify native plantings, and educate the public about pollinators, foods and habitats. On September 27, 2016 several of us met at the Energy Park with Tom Benjamin of Wellnesscapes Landscape Design (wellnesscapes.com) for a 2 hour consultation and walk-around to get his ideas on problem areas and recommendations for native planting and garden redesigns. We all came away from that meeting energized and inspired.

One big project we are working on is to transform an overgrown garden near the entrance to the park into a native butterfly garden. Garden Club members Linda Smith and Nancy Patteson have been moving stones to create walkways, pulling weeds, mulching, planting and researching host and pollinator plants to plant this fall and next spring. They are working in collaboration with several other volunteers to merge gardens and create compatible habitats depending on sun and shade patterns. Additionally, club member Pat Leuchtman has been planting, planning and sharing her expertise on garden design as we work with the DPW and Rec Department to negotiate resources.

Any and all Garden Club members are welcome to join the Energy Park planning and work crew. We have been meeting Tuesday mornings for a few hours of work but have also been known to meet over lunch or coffee to brainstorm and plan. There is much to be done and we are excited to consider our options going into the future. Come help us transform our local urban park and gardens into a rich and valuable resource for this community.

--- Submitted by Nancy Patteson campbellpatteson@gmail.com

Bringing in the Houseplants

Repotting in the fall is OK – do it before you bring them in to keep the mess outside. Only go up about an inch in pot size. Check carefully for pests, and spray them off with a hose or treat outside before bringing your plants and the pests into the house. Keeping amaryllis? Put them to rest in a dry, dark place like a closet for a few months before bringing them back out and watering to start the new growth. Start potting up paperwhites every few weeks for a continuous winter display.

Mikes Maze 2016 Tribute to National Parks

The maze design is a unique homage to the iconic National Park posters that were produced by the WPA Federal Arts Project between 1938 & 1941.

A stunning depiction of Yellowstone's Old Faithful Geyser surges up in our 8-acre cornfield, with Teddy Roosevelt's striking profile emerging form the misty cloud. John Muir, "Grandfather of the National Parks" observes the sublime scene from below, silhouetted against his beloved pines.

Tourists visiting Mike's Maze will be delighted to find the farm transformed into a "National Park" complete with its own geyser, "Ol' Reliable!" Kids of all ages will enjoy wandering the maze on a search for wondrously life-size "wildlife" specimens while aspiring "Corn Field Naturalists" can challenge their intellect with our Ranger-in-Training game. Tourists can drop a coin in the Tower Viewer to get magnificent views of nearby Mount Sugarloaf. All profits collected from the viewer will be donated to the National Parks Conservation Association. Open Saturdays, Sundays, and Holidays 10-5. Adults $12, Students/Seniors (62) $11 Children $10 or under 4 for free.

Treasurer's Report

Balance as of August 13, 2016 ..... $6,592.87

Income $150.34
Interest, Franklin County Fair Prize

Expenses..... $0.00
All financial matters and membership dues should be directed to the club Treasurer:

Jean Wall

413-773-9069

40 High Street

Greenfield MA 01301

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.

Backyard Birds – 15 Strong Ave., Northampton
10% off regularly prices items except thistle birdseed

Baystate Perennial Farm
36 State Road (Route 5/10), Whately
10% off regular priced plants

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

Five Acre Farm – 110 Hinsdale Rd., Northfield
10% off regular priced plants

Glenbrook Gardens
56 Glenbrook Drive, Greenfield
10% off regular priced plants and products

Greenfield Farmers' Cooperative (Agway)
269 High Street, Greenfield
10% anything garden related

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

Silver Garden Daylilies – 23 Picket Lane, Greenfield
10% off daylilies

Sugarloaf Nursery – 25 Amherst Road, Sunderland
10% off regular priced plants

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

Any vendors interested in offering our gardeners a discount, please contact the Steering Committee.