



Spring 2017 Newsletter

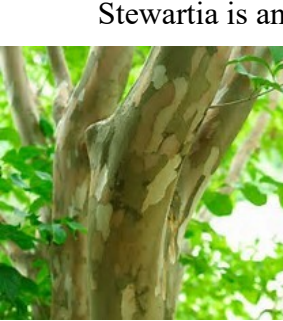
20th Anniversary Tree-Planting

By Donna Lane

To commemorate our 20th anniversary, our club proposes planting a tree in the park bordered by Chapel Street, Walpole Street, and Berwick Place. Susan Cosman, Ann Heller and Donna Lane offered to serve as the tree selection committee.

A number of beautiful trees were suggested: *Magnolia* ‘Elizabeth’; *Fagus sylvatica* ‘Pendula’ (weeping European purple beech); *Stewartia pseudocamellia* (Japanese Stewartia); *Cornus* ‘Kousa’ (Kousa Dogwood); and several Japanese maples: *Acer griseum*, *Acer palmatum* ‘Bloodgood’ and *Acer palmatum* ‘Inaba Shidare’.

And the winner is the stewartia! Several reasons led to this choice: it has four seasons of beauty; it will fit with the other trees in the park; and it is reasonably priced.



Stewartia is an excellent specimen tree. It is multi-stemmed and deciduous, with a rounded columnar form. It is prized for its stunning bark that exfoliates in strips of gray, orange

and reddish brown once the trunk has a diameter of two to three inches. Serrated foliage emerges bronzy purple in spring, matures to a dark green by summer, and turns reddish orange in the fall. In midsummer, it sports lovely white camellia-like flowers that open in random succession and are followed by pointed brown seed pods, although the pods are not that ornamental. Stewartia grows somewhat slowly, eventually reaching up to 40 feet tall and 20 feet wide. Another selling point is that it has very few insect or disease problems.



As of this writing, we have not yet received permission from the Board of Selectmen to plant the tree, but we do not anticipate any objections. When we receive approval, we will schedule a planting date and dedication ceremony. Stay tuned!



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The Philadelphia Flower Show

By Martha Emerson

For years I've been told to put the Philadelphia Flower Show on my bucket list, and then the garden gods appeared with an opportunity for Susan Cosman and me to take a bus tour there, organized by a committee of the Landscape Design Council, including a side trip to Longwood Gardens.

It's the largest flower show in the USA, has 5,000 annual volunteers, and the profits fund one of the biggest philanthropic organizations in Philadelphia. "HOLLAND, Flowering the World" was the title of this year's show which ran concurrently with the March 14th blizzard. Thirty of us strolled across the indoor bridge from the Marriott to the convention center, without coats, at 8 a.m. for a 2 hour private tour. And due to the storm, we strolled without crowds ALL day. I wish everyone could have been there.



All the works of art in this landscape were created using bicycle parts: garden gate, garden bridge, garden fountain. Look closely, the water falling from the spouts made of handlebars makes the bicycle wheels spin.

The wonderful themes of Holland were repeated through the show: tulips, canals, bicycles, wooden shoes, delft tiles, ladies of the night, and painters (Van Gogh, Mondrian, Vermeer, Rembrandt). Mondrian is interpreted in a doorway, a painting, and a landscape.

In addition to Art in Bloom, dining table florals, and jewelry created using only plant materials, the judged competitions included front doorways, apartment balconies, amazingly detailed paintings created with dried



Volunteers spent hundreds of hours gluing dried flowers to spheres, and then hundreds of spheres were hung individually from parachute cords cut at graduated lengths to create an arched ceiling.

flower petals, and miniature garden rooms. One of my favorites, and a show winner, was a miniature garden capturing together Van Gogh's two paintings, *The Café* and *Bedroom in Arles*.

Next year's show is "Wonders of Water" running March 3-11. More photos can be seen on their web site, www.theflowershow.com. The Philadelphia Downtown Marriott is at 1201 Market Street, an easy walk to everything historic.



The grand hall of the Longwood Conservatory is decorated with baskets of phalaenopsis orchids.

President's Corner Happy Hort: Transporting Horticulture

by Nancy Costa

Occasionally, members have held back on bringing a plant or specimen for the club's Horticulture Challenge because of transportation issues during extreme cold or heat. Horticulture exhibits are stress-free when we take steps to ensure the safe transport of our delicate plants or cuttings.

If needed, wrap plants thoroughly with newspaper or paper bags. In severe cold, cover the basket or box with paper or a bag. Small potted plants are easy to move if you pack them tightly into a laundry basket and then secure the

And Now a Message from our Plant Sale Chairs

by Laura Lee and Lisa Oberly

Our annual Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, May 13th from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Hawes Pool Park in Norwood. Each member should contribute at least eight plants, and of course the more unusual the plant the higher we can price it! Plants must be brought to Hawes Pool on Thursday, May 11th from 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. or on Friday, May 12th from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Sooner the better! On sale day, don't forget to wear your apron -- they are available for \$15 if you wish to purchase one.

We will have challenges at Hawes this year with the renovation of the bath house, so a big crew for early Saturday set-up will be more important than ever! If you didn't sign up at the April meeting to volunteer, call Laura or Lisa.

A few other reminders... pre-order forms with payments are due no later than Tuesday, May 2nd, and pick-ups are Thursday, May 11th from 3 - 7 p.m. at Janet Taylor's house: 20 Audubon Road, Norwood. Don't forget to spread the word to your friends and family about pre-orders and the sale!

Looking forward to another successful and fun sale!



Nancy with her Design Division I entry, which won 2nd place! It is a Creative Hanging Design, Type II Kinetic, and the floral materials are Anthurium, curly willow, and Monstera leaf

basket with the seat belt in the back seat of the car. Use newspaper around the base to make the pots secure if it isn't possible to place the pots against one another in the basket. Or you could reuse a shipping box. Place pots in the box, making sure they fit snugly at the bottom. Postpone watering until you arrive at your destination and bring a saucer or plate to catch water through the drip hole.

In cold or hot weather, avoid letting the temperature inside your car become hazardous to your plants. Preheat or run air conditioning to moderate the car's temperature before loading plants. Most plants cannot survive in temperatures below 30 degrees or higher than 100 degrees Fahrenheit for more than an hour, particularly if they are not wrapped. Avoid putting plants in the trunk of your car, since heat, cold and lack of fresh air can damage the plant. Horticulture specimens travel well when people are mindful of the challenges of transporting plants in cars.

Barbara Bilotta

February 21, 1938 – December 26, 2016

Barbara Bilotta was a longtime member of our club who loved family, cooking and gardening. She was always first in line to help someone in need. She especially enjoyed helping with Garden Therapy at the Ellis and the interaction with the elders there. She worked on many cleanup and planting details at Guild Square, Hawes Pool Park and the Fred Holland Day House.

Barbara was a very active person. She played golf and tennis, and was a longtime member of the Norwood Italian Lodge. Her favorite place to be was with family on Cape Cod, among her beloved hydrangeas and tiger lilies. She fought a valiant battle with cancer for far too many years. She is survived by her husband Frank, 5 children, 13 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren. Her energy, smiles, generous spirit and sunny personality are sorely missed by all.



Dear Friends at Norwood Evening Garden Club,

I don't think words can express my (and I speak for my brothers also) appreciation of all you've done over the years for our Dad, Allen Baker. I know everything you did meant so much to him. I'm thinking of the rides he received to your monthly meetings, the help you provided after he broke his hip in 2009, the many cards and visits he received at the Ellis and your thoughtful, yearly birthday parties held for him. And I can't forget the quilt that many of you worked on and presented to him. Living so far away it was a comfort to me that my Dad had such a faithful group of friends that kept him in the loop and loved and cared for him so much.

Thanks also for your generous gift in memory of our Dad to the Massachusetts Master Gardener Association Allen Baker Memorial Scholarship Fund. We appreciate your thoughtful gift. Sue Pearson sent me a copy of your latest yearbook, and I so appreciate it being dedicated to my Dad.

My Dad really enjoyed your group and I know his involvement with you and your involvement with him brought him much happiness through the years. Thanks again for everything!

Fondly,
Cindy Harriman on behalf of myself and my brothers

What Is Your All-time Favorite Garden Tool?

When our members responded to this question, there were hardly any duplicate answers. Following are the items we can't do without in the garden!

It's a toss-up for me. The first thing that comes to mind is my scuffle hoe (a.k.a. stirrup hoe). It makes short order of weeds between my rows of dahlias. But then I thought about what I use most and what I would miss most if I didn't have it, and the winner is my small stainless steel fork with its plastic handle (purchased at Ocean State about 10 years ago). Its size and heft are perfect for me. *Donna Lane*



I have two favorite garden tools: my long handle pruner so I don't have to bend or get my arms scratched up and my hand hatchet which I use when I want to plant

under trees where there are lots of roots to cut through. Nell Rose Maresco

My go-to tool is the Ratchet-Cut Hand Pruner. It is so easy to cut branches up to 3/4" in diameter. The handle is comfortable and light, and a few pumps allow me to cut branches easily. I also enjoy the Ratchet-Cut Mini Lopper by the same company: Florian Ratchet-Cut Pruning Tools - made in the USA and bought at the Boston Flower Show. *Nancy Costa*

I love my salt marsh hay for weed control.
Laura Lee



My favorite "tool" used to be my Brother P Touch. I used the tapes to identify the variety of Hosta and the date I purchased it. I put the tapes on plastic tent stakes, and they have lasted over 15 years in the garden!

Now my favorite tool is the kneeler/seal which helps me get my old bones up off the ground! *Susan Pearson*

No favorite tool, but what I can't do without is my 4-legged companion! Lisa Oberly (referring to her Golden Retriever, Kinsey)

I couldn't live without my watering can, nor could my house plants that I dote over! *Janice Mullen*

Cape Cod weeder. It can slice off roots (when it is sharp), dig out others, get between cracks in the bricks on the terrace/path etc., to get those stubborn upstarts, rough up soil and do all sorts of things for which I am sure it was not intended.



Penni Jenkins

My favorite tool is my wagon-seat which is probably over 20 years old. It's a seat with wheels that has a storage compartment that holds most of my small tools, gloves, markers, and anything small enough to fit inside. *Anne Heller*

My little folding saw. Mary Ellen Heike

One of my favorite tools is the multi-purpose Cobrahead Weeder. It's a great hand weeder for getting down deep under the weeds to help pry up the entire root. I also use it while planting to help loosen the roots of a new tree or shrub. And lastly, it's invaluable when planting containers. It works as a "skinny hand" to put the plants in place without damaging the ones already there, especially when planting young annuals or other tender plants that tend to snap easily. It can only be purchased online, and I think it costs around \$30 these days. *Lois Walsh*

My gloves. They have plastic over the palm and finger tips but breathe on the back of my hand. They can do spring clean-up much more quickly and gently than any hand claw or rake, and they work around the emerging growth without injury. They separate the soft black soil without harm to the earthworms. They keep me connected to nature, the earth and even keep my nail beds clean. Emmy Behlau

Say good bye to weeds, especially those growing up through the walkway. Keep a pair of small needle-nose pliers with your garden tools. Using the pliers, grab the weed a little below the soil line and simply twist it and the roots around the pliers. The leverage makes this task easy and saves your fingers. *Lorraine Devine*

Member Spotlight: Meet Laura Lee

by Lorraine Devine



One of our newer members, Laura Lee is a life-long resident of Norwood where she and her husband, Rob, are raising their two children: 9-year old Braden and 11-year old Abbie.

Laura joined our club in 2014. She enjoys all forms of gardening, and she and her children tend their backyard vegetable garden which includes carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes and potatoes. This year, she plans to include snap peas. As her husband and son are gluten-intolerant, eating ‘off-the-vine’ veggies encourages healthier eating habits. Braden and Abbie have fun digging, planting, picking and eating their home-grown vegetables. The garden is a place where her family comes together.

Laura has always been civic-minded, and she believes in giving back to the community. When she isn't working as an occupational therapist at an outpatient clinic in Dedham, or taking care of her home and family, she coaches floor hockey at the Norwood Civic Center.

Always looking to learn, Laura enjoys Donna Lane's "Addicted Gardener" articles in the local paper. As a member of NEGC, she looks forward to expanding her gardening skills and continuing to give back to her community. Since joining, she has become an integral part of our club. She and Lisa Oberly are Co-Chairs of our only fund-raiser, the Annual Plant Sale. She is also a member of the Civic Beautification Committee for Hawes Pool Park (where she was a life guard in her teen years) and represents our club at Norwood Day. And she does it all with a smile! We are lucky to have you, Laura.

Field Trip! – Part II: Green Animals Topiary Garden

On a beautiful day last June, after a visit to Blithewold Mansion and a clam shack lunch, nine of us continued on to the delightful Green Animals Topiary Garden in Portsmouth, RI. Overlooking Narragansett Bay, this small country estate was purchased in 1877 by Thomas E. Brayton, treasurer of the Union Cotton Manufacturing Company in Fall River, MA. The property consisted of 7 acres of land, a white clapboard farmhouse, pasture, farm outbuildings and a vegetable garden. In 1940, Thomas' daughter, Alice, inherited the estate and made it her permanent residence. While well-known for her wit, her scholarly writing and civic activities, Alice was best known as a horticulturist.



She gave the estate its name because of the profusion of “green animals” – more than 80 pieces of topiary depicting animals and birds including a boar, camel, donkey, elephant, giraffe, horse and rider, lion, ostrich, reindeer, rooster, swan, unicorn and a family of bears! Shaped from California privet and yew, some of the animals were receiving haircuts as we walked through the garden, reminding us of the tremendous commitment involved in keeping this historic gem in tip-top shape.

Other areas of interest on the property include a vegetable garden featuring original scarecrows from the 1940s, a dahlia garden, an uncommon Hardy Orange tree and figs(!) – surviving in the sheltered microclimate of a west-facing slope.

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The farmhouse is open to visitors and offers the original Victorian furnishings, a collection of antique toys and a row of rockers on the porch for taking in the sweeping view to the bay. When Alice passed away in 1972, she left Green Animals to The Preservation Society of Newport County. Green Animals remains today one of the finest topiary gardens in the country. For more information, visit www.newportmansions.org/explore/green-animals-topiary-garden



*Back: Nancy Costa, Lorraine Devine
Front: Tracy Firth, Susan Masterson, Susan Cosman*

Garden Chores: mid-April to early-May

by Donna Lane

Here are my suggestions for what to do this month and next, after you clean up what you didn't get to in the fall.

1. Clean up any twigs and branches that came down during the high winds this past month.
2. Gently remove matted leaves to uncover early spring blooms. Even if you can't clean up the whole bed, trim back the old leaves of epimediums and hellebores and cut back ornamental grasses.
3. If you haven't already, start your seeds. Make a chart of what to sow and when – indoors and out. Stick to your schedule! Peas can be planted now. Lettuce, arugula, broccoli, beets, kale, collards, carrots, Swiss chard and dill can be planted outside at the end of April. Eggplants, peppers and tomatoes should be sown indoors about mid-April so they are ready to plant out in early June.
4. Screen compost from your pile to top-dress beds as you clean them. Start a new pile with the debris you are cleaning up now.
5. Order your mulch now for bulk delivery. (I recommend leaf-mold mulch.) It will save money in the long run and you'll be using local stuff versus bagged, trucked materials.
6. If you put up bird houses, make sure to clean them of old nests. And set out your hummingbird feeders. They return to Massachusetts in mid April.
7. If you have not done a soil test for a few years or you think your soil is lacking, get a routine soil analysis. Go to <http://ag.umass.edu/services/soil-plant-nutrient-testing-laboratory/ordering-information-forms> for forms and information.

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8. Prepare new beds by smothering weeds and grass with corrugated cardboard or thick layers of newspaper. Top with compost.
9. Early April is a good time to prune summer flowering shrubs such as big leaf hydrangea, panicle hydrangea, butterfly bush, clethra, sweetspire and spiraea, since these shrubs form their flower buds on the current season's stem growth.
10. If you didn't service your lawn mower in the fall, have it serviced and sharpened now. And, if you actually like your lawn, rake it with a leaf rake to remove dead grass and other debris.
11. Monitor your trees for winter moth caterpillars. They have started to hatch. Go to <http://ag.umass.edu/landscape/fact-sheet/winter-moth-identification-management> for a fact sheet on managing winter moth.
12. Divide herbaceous perennials. Keep the divisions moist and shaded while you prepare a new site for replanting, or pot them up for our Plant Sale!
13. Prepare your garden soil for planting. Don't work the soil when wet.
14. Take care of your critter problems now, before you begin planting in earnest! If you have a

deer or rabbit problem, spray your susceptible plants with Liquid Fence as soon as they emerge (ornamentals only). See photo below of the five lovelies in my back yard on April 4th.

And if you are already seeing woodchucks – which I have for the past several weeks – set up your Hav-A-Hart trap and rid yourself of the pests now. They are greedy buggers and will eat you out of house and home in very short order. And please remember! In Massachusetts, it is against the law to transport these critters to other locations. While not my favorite thing to do, I have tried to teach these critters how to swim for years. You may wish to do the same.

If you don't like that technique, here's one suggested by Hudson Valley Seed Company that might be more palatable: Woodchucks and rabbits are den-dwelling critters that often find ways of making home right inside your garden fence, giving them direct access to your delectable spring plants. A tall fence won't keep these critters out; they are both skilled at entering from underneath fence lines and chewing through them to get in. Try creating a *critter fence*: Use 4' high chicken wire or hardware cloth, set up so it is 3' tall and pinned to the ground so that 1 foot of it runs along the ground, so they can't dig under it. Keeping garden edges and borders clear of debris and shrubs also pushes their habitats back and makes the path to your garden more exposed, keeping them away.



Can you spot the five deer in Donna's garden?

Garden Vision Epimediums, Phillipston, MA

Epimediums, commonly known as bishop's hat or barrenwort, are among the most beautiful and charming perennials in the woodland garden. Their delicate spring blooms, generally held well above the foliage, appear in sprays of small, bowl-shaped flowers, often with prominent spurs. A perfect groundcover for moist or dry dappled shade, epimediums typically produce oval, heart or shield shaped leaflets on wiry stems that give the plant a buoyant personality. Considering the fairy-like appearance of the plants, it is somewhat surprising they are extremely tough and sturdy in nature, deer resistant and free of pests, making them one of the easiest plants to grow!



Epimedium grandiflorum var. violaceum 'Bronze Maiden' is an early bloomer with deep, dark spring foliage.

We are very fortunate to have one of the leading Epimedium growers in the country right here in Massachusetts! Garden Vision Epimediums is a small, retail mail-order nursery located in rural central Massachusetts. The plants they offer represent the work of epimedium expert, Darrell Probst, through numerous collecting expeditions to China, Japan and Korea. He has also networked with many other epimedium collectors, nurserymen and experts worldwide to amass an impressive array of species and varieties. As owner Karen Perkins describes it, "A great diversity exists among epimediums, but it is not readily available to the public. We gather these rarities, determine their true identity and

propagate them for distribution. We think of ourselves as facilitators, spending a tremendous amount of time and money to acquire new plants, study, identify, test and propagate them quickly for sale to fellow collectors, propagators and gardeners. The price of a plant often represents the difficulty and cost of acquiring and/or propagating it, as much as its rarity. Many of the epimediums you see here you will not be able to find elsewhere."

As a mail order nursery, Garden Vision Epimediums is normally closed to the public. Karen does open, however, for viewing and sales on specific days during epimedium bloom! You can make your plant selections in person, as this is the best way to really see the plants in a garden setting. Karen is also available to answer questions and help with selections according to the following schedule:

April 28 & 30 (Fri. & Sun.) Featuring companion perennials and the earliest epimediums in bloom. (Closed Sat. Apr. 29)

May 5-14 Extended open days including weekdays during the peak season of epimedium bloom.

May 19 & 21 (Fri. & Sun.) Featuring the latest blooming epimediums including many Chinese species. (Closed Sat. May 20)

Open 10am-4pm —Rain or Shine!

Spend some time on this wonderful website www.epimediums.com for an idea of what's in store at the nursery as well as beautiful photos,



Browse 100s of blooming Epimediums during one of the spring Open House days

Coming Soon to a Flower Near You – Hummingbirds!

by Tracy Firth

There isn't much else in the garden that brings me as much joy as the tiny, iridescent, high speed and ever so precious hummingbird.



Growing up I never saw them, which left me believing they were either very rare or difficult to attract. What I've learned over recent summers is they are really quite easy to attract, and if they

find your garden inviting they will return year after year.

Our most common species is the Ruby Throated Hummingbird. Most winter in Mexico, Central America and on Caribbean islands and follow the development of spring flowers northward. Birds return to Massachusetts in mid to late April, and since I don't have much blooming then, I put my nectar feeder out around April 15 so they will find food and stay. They need calories! Their wings beat 52 times per second, they fly 30 to 50 mph, their heart rate is 250 beats per minute – and they weigh just 1/8 of an ounce.

There are so many choices of feeders. I chose one with a perch, and I highly recommend it. Hovering at a feeder is considerably more tiring than normal flight, so I like to give them the opportunity to take a rest. In addition to the feeder, salvia, agastache, monarda, foxglove, fuchsia, cardinal flower, phlox and columbine are a few among many plants favored by hummingbirds. They also rely on small, soft bodied insects and spiders for protein and other nutrients, so this is another great reason to avoid pesticides in the garden.

Good luck with these little beauties! I'll look forward to hearing lots of hummingbird stories next fall!

The website www.hummingbirds.net has a wonderful map that tracks spring migration. This is helpful for deciding when to put out your feeder.



Upcoming Events

20th Anniversary Tea

Sunday, May 21 at 2 p.m.
If you haven't RSVP-ed, do it now!

May 30 Meeting

Art Scarpa's Traveling Cactus & Succulent Show

Social Time at 6:30 p.m. and meeting at 7 p.m. Invite a friend to come learn about these easy to grow and fascinating plants.