

Northern Exposure



Newsletter of the New England Garden Clubs, Inc.

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

February 2021

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Happy 2021 to everyone! As we welcome the New Year, we still have a lot of issues to deal with before we return to any sense of “normalcy” in our lives. But working together, I’m convinced we’ll see the light at the proverbial end of the tunnel in 2021.

My days at the moment are filled with ZOOM meetings and forcing my many amaryllis bulbs into bloom. On the ZOOM front, I’m grateful to the Michigan Garden Clubs, Inc. for hosting free ZOOM seminars for anyone in the NGC (limit is 300 people)! They’re held every Monday at 12:30 p.m. through the middle of February. In the first session there were over 200 folks who signed up representing 41 states and 7 foreign countries! Even though I’ve held my share of ZOOM meetings, I still picked up some handy tips. You can read about the seminars in the current issue of *Keeping in Touch* which is posted on our website at www.newenglandgc.org under the PUBLICATIONS tab.

In just a few short months I’ll be turning over my job as your Region Director to another person named Suzanne. She is Suzanne McCance of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts and I know she’ll

be a wonderful leader for our region. You’ll learn more about her background and be introduced to the new Presidents of our six state federations in an upcoming newsletter. Because the previously scheduled NGC Convention in May in New Jersey was cancelled due to the continuing pandemic, Suzanne and I won’t be able to have the traditional ceremonial “turnover.” We will find a way to do our own turnover – maybe linking up halfway between our homes in Maine and Massachusetts – so I can turn over the ceremonial gavel. I’m still holding out some hope that I might be able to make it to a few events sponsored by our various state federations. That would depend on if the vaccine rollout picks up speed, and if many of our members are able to get vaccinated. When warmer

weather arrives, I know ALL of us are going to want to get outside and be able to have in-person meetings once again.

One thing I CAN announce with much enthusiasm is that our two-year Region Project, fighting food insecurity, wrapped up with some impressive results! I'm thrilled to tell you that over NINE TONS OF PRODUCE was grown and donated by our members to food banks, soup kitchens, and other organizations who serve those in desperate need of putting food on their table! That doesn't include the 1810 servings of produce that was also donated but not weighed (such as lettuce, spinach and herbs). And, more than \$13,000 was raised for things such as purchasing CSA shares to donate, or seeds, or catered meals. You can read my final report where I recognize all who contributed to the success of this project in this issue of the newsletter.

Until we see the first sign of spring, I hope everyone can get outside (get away from the TV, your ZOOM video calls and your phones), and just enjoy our winter landscape! That's what I plan to do with my snowshoes as soon as Mother Nature provides a little more snow here in Maine!

Suzanne Bushnell
Director, New England Garden Clubs, Inc.

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Garden Club Federation of Maine

Happy New Year! The New Year is always a great time to look back and reflect on the events of the previous year and determine how they might affect our strategies going forward. I suspect many of you are just as happy to see the end of 2020 as I am. Having said that, I find a number of positive things that will be helpful in the future; we are better prepared for emergency action should there be a need, we have embraced our creative instinct and come up with new, innovative and fun ways to gather safely to continue our



mission and I am sure I am not alone in feeling much more informed and educated with respect to technical and virtual electronic tools!

While 2020 was a year of challenges, I take pride in the many ways that our clubs found solutions to their tasks. During the growing season, we had a huge participation in Regional Director Suzanne Bushnell's Project of "Fighting Food Insecurity in New England," bringing fresh produce to families and communities in need! Many of our clubs helped with community efforts such as Meals on Wheels, helping individuals in their gardens, providing online help to members and making protective face masks. The holiday season looked different in many ways, but garden clubs continued to bring sunshine and smiles with beautiful wreaths and evergreen arrangements for sale as well as gifts to some house-bound seniors in their areas.

GCFM has a number of clubs offering regular online horticultural programming. One Maine club has actually published a four-booklet series as a fundraising project in their community, with topics on Perennials, Vegetables and House Plants! Community projects continued to flow in spite of the challenges, with gardens newly created, reimagined and restored. GCFM held a special, limited time offering, fundraising campaign selling beautiful hand-crafted masks and quilted trivets made by local artisans and I am pleased to announce it was very successful endeavor! The masks (two different fabrics) and trivets bear the GCFM Logo and are reusable and machine washable!

We are all facing difficult challenges as we approach the very important business of holding our annual meetings in an election year. Sitting in on the most recent ZOOM meeting with NGC, the overall consensus seems to be that we are only limited by our imagination and, of course, our technical equipment and abilities! I have called for a special ZOOM meeting with our Board of Directors at the end of January, to bring forward ideas on how we might salvage any of our planned 2021 Convention (postponed from last year) and present it as a one-day event outdoors. As we wait for vaccine availability, it is important to continue to be mindful of our precarious situation, by staying proactive and vigilant with safety precautions while we continue to conduct business and maintain projects within our communities.

I welcome the continued collaborative efforts the New England Garden Clubs are making to help pave the way for sharing ideas to better serve our memberships with educational opportunities! I am hopeful that 2021 will find all of us in much better circumstances and I believe that we can use the lessons learned over this last year to help build a stronger future.



Barbara Longstaff
President, Garden Club Federation of Maine

Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.

The RIFGC announces that Vice President Sheryl McGookin is now President-Elect. As such, Sheryl will begin to appoint chairmen for the upcoming term of office. The President-Elect appoints chairmen of standing



committees, except the Judges' Council Chairperson, and the Life Member Chairperson, who are elected by their respective groups. The Nominating Committee Chairperson for the Executive posts is the immediate Past-President Blakely Szosz. The new positions will be announced, and members installed at the Annual Meeting on April 22, 2021.

Many garden clubs planted trees in their community, and embraced my theme, "*Plant Rhode Island, Remember your Roots.*" Several clubs have graciously sent a photo and location of their tree from our Free Arbor Day Tree program. The NGC and the USDA Forest Service are proud to have formed a partnership sustaining our national and urban forests through this reforestation/forest education program. Penny Pine collections from our clubs have helped plant 500 seedlings that were planted in our National Forests. This was a new program to the RIFGC.

Our Annual Education Days 2021 has begun with a remarkably interesting PowerPoint presentation by Donald Demers, Co-owner of Buxton Hollow Farm. A Zoom meeting with a PowerPoint and presenter will begin each Wednesday in January at 10:00 a.m.

Thank you to members Vera Bowen, Sue Redden and Adelaide Clifford for their exceptional work on updating the RIFGC Policies and Procedures. It is a very important 27-page document.



Members of Perennial Planters Garden Club planted our Prairifire CrabApple Tree, given to us by the RIFGC, at India Point Park between the playground and the waterfront!

Nancy Compton, President

Barrington Garden Club had an unexpected gift from the Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs last week. We received a new tree, *Nyssa Sylvatica* (Green Gables), as a gift. It has been planted in Police Cove Park. We hope we can identify our new tree with a plaque recognizing RIFGC gift to BGC and Town of Barrington, RI.

Nina Kurtz, President



On December 2nd, Edgewood Garden Club had their most innovative member program to date with Paul Nunes instructing a group of 20 in a virtual wreath-making class. The session included step-by-step instructions on using a variety of additional greens such as boxwood, incense cedar, holly, white pine, and blueberry juniper to enhance the plain balsam wreath.



Jackie Rizzi, President



Deborah Ort
President, Rhode Island
Federation of Garden Clubs

New Hampshire Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.

We have begun a new year but we continue to social distance and mask up as we wait our turn to be vaccinated. I continue to be encouraged by the many ways our clubs have found to continue functioning with some even safely meeting in person out of doors. By utilizing the technology of Zoom and other platforms, many of us have been able to actually see each other, to enjoy presentations and to conduct our club business. Some of our clubs are even creating their own in-house programs as well as sharing presentations with others.



Even with the cold November weather, Littleton Garden Club enjoyed a field trip to Bretzfelder Park in Bethlehem, NH. This property is owned and managed by the Society for the Protection of NH Forests. The manager of this property and The Rocks, Nigel Manley, lead a trail walk through the park for club members. Seeing a porcupine den and a Champion Tree were unexpected treats.

Our clubs were still able to decorate their respective towns for the holidays by devising safe ways to meet prior to the holidays. They created wreaths and swags for their town buildings, wrapped lengths of ribbon around pillars, lampposts and gazebos, adorned town monuments and urns with fresh greens and native berries, etc. And in many cases added lighting for a beautiful night time effect.

While some clubs cancelled their annual holiday fundraisers, many were able to modify their plans to include COVID safety measures. These fundraisers included sales and delivery or pick-up of do-it-yourself Wreath Decorating Kits, holiday wreaths and greens, poinsettias and crafted items. In most cases "Drive-Up" delivery of these pre-purchased items was incorporated.

Garden Therapy is still going strong within our clubs even though many senior facilities are not allowing visitors. The Atkinson Garden Club created 120 bouquets to accompany holiday meals being distributed to town seniors for the holidays; Littleton modified their holiday project with their local senior living home to include small, pre-made arrangements to be placed on each resident's holiday dinner tray; and Goffstown continues with their project to make monthly birthday arrangements for those at a local Nursing Home.

We were pleased to learn that a NH club received one of the 2021 NGC Plant America Community Project Grants of \$1000. Epping Garden Club, our smallest club with only 8 members, received the grant for a children's educational garden to be developed and installed behind their town library. This project includes gardens for pollinators, vegetables and herbs.

The decision was made to postpone until 2022 the upcoming Tri State Symposium to be held in Manchester, NH in order to ensure the safety of all participants. This was a difficult decision; however, after polling the expected participants, it was felt that the cost of putting on a symposium in these still uncertain times would not be a good financial decision. Dates and details are being set for 2022.

We do, however, have two clubs planning to hold flower shows in the fall of 2021. The Atkinson Garden Club had their "Mayflower" Standard Flower Show planned for August 2020 but postponed it a year in light of the pandemic. Even though the theme was chosen to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Mayflower arrival, they decided to keep the colonial theme. New London Garden Club is planning a flower show with the mindset that any plans can be used at another time if safety issues do not allow for the show this year.

I was honored to perform my second virtual installation of officers via Zoom on January 1st for the Ashland Garden Club – what a lovely way to start the new year! It was nice to still make the change of administration a special event for the club and its members.

The Sandown Garden Club established a community Monarch Garden several years ago. This winter they are sponsoring a second collection of plastic film in order to receive another Trex bench for placement in the Monarch Garden.

The NHFGC Annual Meeting and Installation was planned for the end of May. However, our board is looking at alternative dates, venues and potential platforms for this important business meeting, awards presentation and installation ceremony. Plans are currently up in the air while we investigate alternatives such as outdoor venues, holding a remote or hybrid meeting using Zoom or an in-person event at a later date—stay tuned!

We all look forward to when we can again gather in person later this year and celebrate our common goals as garden club members. May 2021 be a great year for clubs and members alike.

Susan Miner
President, New Hampshire Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc.
NH Plants for Wildlife

Past-President Winnie Schmidt, special guest NH Federation of Garden Club President Sue Miner, incoming President Elinor Terrell and outgoing President Jackie Rzasa who served 2 1/2 years and is being presented with her "Thank You" gift from the members of the Manchester Garden Club in an outdoor celebration.



Nigel Manley explaining the history of this champion tree at Bretzfelder Park in Bethlehem, NH.

Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont

Suddenly things look brighter. . . suddenly a great weight has been lifted. . . and 2021 begins to unwind before us. With this feeling of positivity we think that all things may be possible this year. It's a wonderful feeling that Covid may be tamped down and we'll be able to see each other in person very soon. Meanwhile our clubs continue to meet, although mostly virtually, and we're working on completing our goals that we set almost two years ago. It's hard to believe that this 2019-2021 term is coming to a close and many of the projects, meetings, etc we had planned have been put on the back burner for now. With the advancement of ZOOM and other conferencing programs we've progressed in a new way. Our thanks go out to the Michigan Garden Clubs for presenting "Lunch and Learn," a voluntary series of classes whose objective is to spread the many facets of ZOOM. We are pleased to see that so many NEGC members are taking part in this program, and we're hopeful that these classes will benefit all our clubs in the future. Who would have thought such a process would be needed over a year ago!?

We Vermonters have been very careful following the Covid-19 rules over the last 10+ months. As a result Vermont has, if not the lowest Covid cases in the country, then next to the lowest. We are proud of that, but it's been hard work. Memories of having a Christmas tea on-line where each member could share a favorite Christmas tradition and show off her Christmas decorations, making wonderful Christmas arrangements for those not able to make their own and leaving them on doorsteps, making and selling Christmas wreaths, garlands and ornaments to our community by a virtual auction, and decorating our downtowns with beautiful wreaths and arrangements with another member while social distancing. . . these memories will be with us for a long time.

We are very proud of our FGCV members who have figured out how to carry on using new mechanisms while maintaining our Federation purposes of stimulating horticultural interest individually and with our community neighbors. We are looking forward to gathering in person in the near future. . . if we continue to follow the rules!

Sue Hinkel and Caroline Frey
Co-Presidents, Federated Garden Clubs of Vermont

Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut, Inc.

2020 is in the history book and we're all thankful for that. It's a year that will be remembered by all who lived through it and those who are going to study it long after we're gone. There are many lessons to be learned going forward. One of them being continually reminded throughout 2020 is that you can't keep gardeners down. Much as we do year in and year out, we keep coming back. This relentless passion



for all things gardening kept a bright light shining as we were forced to quarantine and connect with one another only from a distance.

It would have been easy to pack up our bags and shutdown. That's not what we do as gardeners. Across Connecticut, garden clubs were creative and found ways to move ahead and remain connected and committed to serving their communities. Many clubs continued their civic projects and pivoted to conducting meetings online. The use of Zoom technology exploded. All of these efforts provide a solid foundation for the future as clubs use these practices to stay engaged.

Nowhere was this more apparent than with The Federation's statewide events. This past September we conducted a virtual Environmental School. Many hours planning assured a successful event. While there was trepidation, there was also a sense of excitement and anticipation. We collaborated with National Garden Clubs as Connecticut's Environmental School was a beta test for conducting an online school. Environmental School came off flawlessly. Attendance was at capacity with a mix of students from Connecticut and outside the state. We learned that the online platform appealed to many.

There was much disappointment when the postponement was announced for the "not to be missed" Annual Awards Meeting in October. The decision was made to pivot to a webinar. The undertaking was considerable – determining how to present the awards, choosing a technology platform and condensing a usually three-hour plus long meeting into a workable 90-minute format to eliminate screen fatigue. The result was beyond our expectations. Over 370 members tuned in. Award recipients were able to be individually recognized. Many clubs scheduled watch parties, all while practicing pandemic guidelines. The celebration of the Awards presentations carried on.

Clubs all across Connecticut, from the shoreline to the Berkshire Hills, are adapting and continuing to thrive. At the start of the new club year, many clubs switched to meeting outside during the warmer months of September and October. Planning is starting in earnest for plant sales/may markets and garden tours held in May and June. We are planning a virtual idea exchange forum for clubs to share best practices and ideas. Much of the income derived from these events was lost in 2020. However, many clubs were creative and carried on in spite of the pandemic. Technology is helping to ensure that clubs continue to stay engaged with their members.

The necessity to cancel The Federation's 2021 Connecticut Flower Show at the Convention Center in Hartford was extremely disappointing. For many, the show served as inspiration to become excited about an upcoming gardening year. Our participation included committees planning for the show a year in advance, exhibiting designs, horticulture, photography, educational exhibits, volunteering and renewing lifelong friendships. For many, the dates of the Connecticut Flower Show are circled on the calendar as a must-attend event. It made the winter go by far faster. As a result, I believe it means that the 2022 show is going to be that much better.

One thing that the COVID-19 pandemic has proven is that gardeners in Connecticut and across the New England region are a resilient group. Year in and year out, we're always faced with problems and adversity in our gardens. Nothing goes according to plan. Our weather is like a box of chocolates – you never know what you'll get. We

adapt, course correct and move on – a metaphor for the 2020 year we've faced. We relentlessly pursue our passion. It is what gardeners do and what we'll continue to do in 2021. COVID-19 might have knocked us down, but we're up off the ground and far stronger for it. 2020 was a year when we all grew together. 2021 is when we'll reap the benefits of the resiliency we demonstrated this past year.

Arlene Field

President, The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut, Inc.

Success for New England Garden Clubs Victory Garden Project!

Fighting food insecurity has been in the forefront of your Region Director's theme, *Planting the New England Victory Garden*. As we wrap up our two-year Project of donating fresh produce to organizations fighting food insecurity, I'm thrilled to pass on the results of our own fight to help those less fortunate than ourselves. I also want to express my sincere thanks to ALL of you who took part in the Project! And a special thanks goes to those clubs who worked with children for the past two growing seasons who grew food to donate to local organizations. You've provided a valuable service to show our children what it means to serve others! Additionally, I have sent an award application to the National Garden Clubs (NGC) for our Region to compete with the other seven Regions from across the country, for the *Award of Excellence for Regions*. The award application gave me an opportunity to highlight what our NEGC members have accomplished over the past two growing seasons to fight food insecurity.

With the donation forms (and a few emails) sent to me and tabulated to date, the six garden club federations across New England donated more than NINE TONS of produce or a total of 18,332 POUNDS! In addition, some members chose to report their donations in "servings" that could be consumed. This tended to refer to lightweight vegetables such as lettuce, spinach and herbs. In this category, our total donated was an additional 1810 SERVINGS. In the category of cash donated to buy things such as CSA shares, seeds to be planted, and catered meals, the total was \$13,461. And finally, we had a garden club who reported food donated from a food bank, where several members volunteered. They distributed over SIX TONS of food. Some of the food in that total was produce grown by members. In terms of which state federation reported the most donations of fresh produce and cash, the Garden Club Federation of Maine was on top with members donating 6,097 pounds of freshly grown produce and fruit, 10 additional individual servings (of greens), and \$6,711 in cash donations.

I'm sure there were many of you who grew fruit and vegetables and gave them to local charities, but never filled out a donation form. Thank you to those members as well! Who were our recipients? Everyone from seniors, to the families of youth groups, to the Correctional facilities in RI, to everyday people who just needed help with feeding their families during these tough times. If you watch the news on TV, you can't help but feel the pain of those individuals, families, and many of our elderly neighbors who don't have enough to eat. As an interesting side note, the leading organization

which serves a network of more than 200 food banks in the US (*Feeding America*), keeps track of the percentage of the population in each state who are considered “food insecure.” Based on recent figures, in New England the totals are striking: Maine (12.7%); Connecticut (11.9%); Rhode Island (11.4%); Vermont (11.3%) New Hampshire (9.3%); and Massachusetts (8.9%). As you can see, we still have a LOT of work to do. I hope that ALL of you will continue the fight to defeat hunger in our communities. You’ll see in this newsletter another article where I list of all those who took up the call in our Region and the organizations that were the recipients of their generosity.

Suzanne Bushnell
Director, New England Garden Clubs, Inc.

Youth Gardeners from the
Wilton Garden Club's (CT)
Green Teens Program (photo
courtesy of the Wilton Garden
Club)



Trex Recycling Program – “Bags to Benches”

For the third time, the Sandown Garden Club is participating in a recycling program sponsored by Trex Company, Inc. Trex is a major manufacturer of wood-alternative decking, railings and other outdoor items made from recycled materials. By collecting plastic bags and film, the Sandown Garden Club has been able to earn high-performance composite benches for its Monarch Waystation and Pollinator Garden located on the grounds of Town Hall in the center of Sandown, New Hampshire. Although all the information is available on the company’s website, this will give an overview of the program.

In their words: “When you donate your unwanted plastic materials to Trex, not only are you helping to keep thousands of pounds of waste out of landfills, you are also helping us to continue to create beautiful and environmentally responsible outdoor

products. And as an additional incentive, communities and schools that enroll in our recycling programs are eligible for high performance, low maintenance awards and prizes.”

Recycle any of the following materials to help protect the environment:



grocery bags, bread bags, case overwrap, dry cleaning bags, newspaper sleeves, ice bags, wood pellet bags, Ziploc and other resealable bags, bubble wrap, salt bags and cereal bags. All materials must be clean, dry and free of food residue.

Trex is proud to sponsor local recycling programs in schools and communities throughout the country. If your team can collect more than 500 pounds of plastic refuse in a six-month span (about 40,500 plastic bags), Trex will donate a high-performance composite bench to your school or community (garden club). Choose a six-month collection window. Trex will provide promotional materials and recycling bins. A volunteer must weigh and report the collected materials every month before delivering to one of the participating drop-off retailer locations. All locations in each state are listed on the Trex website. For example, in New Hampshire, these collection sites include many of the following locations: DeMoulas Market Basket, Hannaford, Kohl's, Price Chopper, Shaw's, Stop & Shop, Target, Whole Foods. Similar locations are found in neighboring states. Some stores may have temporarily suspended their collection due to COVID-19. Please confirm with your local stores.

Contact Stephanie Hicks, Materials Resource Coordinator, for more information. By email: recycle@trex.com By telephone: 540-542-6494 On the web: fill out the form and submit

Audrey Vargish
Sandown Garden Club, NHFGC

The Latest National Garden Club News

With only three months remaining in the term of NGC President Gay Austin, final plans are being made for the turnover to a new slate of officers led by NGC President-elect Mary Warshauer of New Jersey. Mary recently announced to her incoming Board of Directors the plans for her new theme: *PLANT AMERICA – PLAY OUTDOORS*. She hopes her theme will encourage all aspects of gardening and horticulture, including water and conservation issues. There will be many opportunities for members to share their knowledge and talents in various community projects and continue to work with our youth. Mary also announced that *PLANT AMERICA* grants will continue through her term (2021-2023).

Congratulations to Linda Jean Smith of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts for spotlighting some of our New England garden clubs in the most recent issue of THE NATIONAL GARDENER (Winter 2021 issue). She was asked to write an article on what clubs in our Region were doing to navigate the many trials of operating during the continuing pandemic. If you get THE NATIONAL GARDENER, you'll find her article, entitled "*Shifting Strategies*" on pages 23 to 25.

And speaking of THE NATIONAL GARDENER, only one more issue (Spring 2021) will be printed and mailed to subscribers. Because of rising costs, the NGC Board of Directors made the difficult decision to go to an online version later this year. More details will be released in the near future on how to register to receive the new online edition.

Suzanne Bushnell
Director, New England Garden Clubs, Inc.

Native Plant Trust Update

It is not only rising sea levels and the flooding of our coastlines that concerns us in New England. How will native plants be affected by rising temperatures and changing precipitation? Can they and the critters that depend upon them in their current habitats survive? Can they migrate or adapt?

What we are doing: Native Plant Trust

(<http://www.nativeplanttrust.org/conservation/rare-and-endangered/>), is identifying resilient sites to provide land trusts with a framework for protecting plant diversity, banking seeds of rare plants, studying plant genetics, and more. Several of Native Plant Trust's core initiatives support the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, which is part of the United Nations' Convention on Biological Diversity.

The organization's magazine, Native Plant News (<http://www.nativeplanttrust.org/about/ourmagazine/>), recently covered a two-year collaboration with The Nature Conservancy's Eastern science division. The report on conserving plant diversity under climate change:

- analyzes the distribution of habitats and rare plants on the New England landscape.
- uses two international targets to assess progress toward protecting plant diversity.
- identifies how much of each kind of habitat needs protection, and where.
- includes interactive maps enabling users to see resilient sites and what needs protecting in the region, down to specific parcels.

Land protection is one strategy for conserving habitats and the species that depend upon them. Efforts to protect corridors are particularly important. One example is The Nature Conservancy's "Connect the Coast" initiative in New Hampshire (<https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/newhampshire/stories-in-new-hampshire/connecting-wildlife-habitat/>).

Part of saving plant diversity is to focus on the region's rare and endangered plants, which the Trust has done for nearly 30 years. In recent years, it has ramped up its collection of seeds from the 389 globally and regionally rare New England species.

The Seed Ark program is collecting and banking seeds and tissue from at least two-thirds of the 3,300 populations of these plants, to preserve genetic diversity and to monitor each species' ability to adapt. The Seed Ark is about halfway to its goal, with seeds of 92% of the 309 species collected from about 47% of the populations. Collecting and preserving tissue from the 80 species (such as orchids) whose seeds cannot be dried and frozen is the next step.

To date, Native Plant Trust has raised about half the funding needed to fill the Seed Ark, with another \$2.5 million needed. A donor has pledged \$500,000 to match gifts to endow Seed Ark.

Conservationists want species thriving in the landscape. To that end, Native Plant Trust uses its seed bank to restore and stabilize rare plants in the wild. For example:

Native Plant Trust is working with state and federal agencies to augment populations of Jesup's milk-vetch (*Astragalus robbinsii* var. *jesupii*), a plant that exists nowhere else in the world but three sites along the Connecticut River in New Hampshire and Vermont that are scoured by ice flows every year.

Next year, Native Plant Trust will complete a five-year project with the National Park Service to restore the vegetation on the summit of Cadillac Mountain in Acadia National Park, Maine. Seed was collected from the mountain, sprouted using experimental techniques and replanted in protected nooks and crannies off tourist pathways. The restoration also provides a baseline for study. Native Plant Trust is not alone in working with the Park Service. The Garden Club of Mount Desert, for one, has been monitoring native plants in Acadia, removing invasive plants, and sponsored the publication of the Plants of Acadia National Parks.

After Hurricane Sandy, Native Plant Trust collaborated with the Bureau of Land Management's "Seeds of Success initiative working with North Carolina Botanic Garden and MidAtlantic Regional Seed Bank to provide locally sourced, genetically appropriate plants for restoration projects from Maine to Virginia, including 14 in New England.

What you can do? Native Plant Trust suggests:

Plant native species

- Plant native plants in your garden, to replace your lawn or even on the roof of your shed.
- Source your seeds and native plants from growers whose inventory has not been treated with systemic pesticides
- Grow plants that assist our pollinators throughout the growing season.
- Advocate for planting native plants/pollinator gardens in your town's public spaces.
- Advocate for state & national legislation to reduce the use of pesticides
- Advocate for state and federal protection for endangered plants and their pollinators.
- Advocate for control of invasive species
- Advocate for state and federal environmental protection legislation
- Join local groups working to control invasive plants in your area.
- Become informed: Take classes, attend webinars, follow the issues, and read!
- Participate in field studies, monitor invasive plants in your neighborhood,
- Learn your pollinators, and the beneficial insects that control your plant pests.

Volunteer with Native Plant Trust and other organizations to protect habitats where the most vulnerable native plants, their pollinators and other native wildlife are found.

Share your knowledge, your contacts, your photographs, and your voice

Support programs such as Native Plant Trust's Seed Ark to protect vulnerable habitats throughout New England.

Arabella Dane

Board Member Native Plant Trust

With thanks to the staff of Native Plant Trust for their help with this article.

The Daytime Gardeners of North Haven

The Daytime Gardeners of North Haven (Connecticut) set up their holiday tree for North Haven's first Winter Wonderland, organized by Jill DeChello, event planner and editor of the North Haven Magazine. The Winter Wonderland was sponsored by many town businesses and organizations and held at The Landing of North Haven.

Club members designed the tree using natural materials accented with bright red ribbons. The color theme was white and red, on the green background of the white fir tree. Dried hydrangeas, sprayed white, and dried sedum blossoms sprayed silver, were used for decorations.

Club members worked cooperatively, though most preparations were done by individuals at their homes. Some members contributed the dried blossoms, some painted the blossoms and others cut ribbons and wires needed for the day of set-up. A small group gathered at The Landing to help with set-up and decorating.

The home-grown white fir was contributed by members Walt and Sally Brockett. White fir trees, also called Concolor firs, are excellent Christmas trees because they hold their needles much longer than many other types. The needles are longer, have a blue-green silvery color, and have a pleasant citrus aroma.



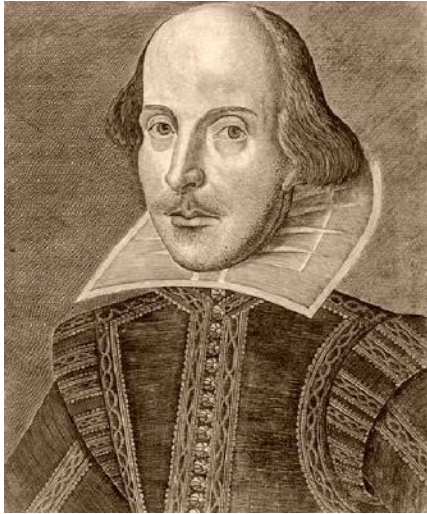
Left to Right: Irene Cown, Barbara Feinberg, Walt Brockett, Sally Brockett, Brenda Howlett, Mary Ellen Proto. Linda Brown in back.

Daytime Gardeners of North Haven is a member of the Federated Garden Clubs of CT, Inc., New England Garden Clubs and National Garden Clubs, Inc. New members are always welcome. For information on our activities and membership, call Daytime Gardeners at (203) 239-1557, and be sure to visit us on Facebook!

Sally Brockett
President, Daytime Gardeners of North Haven

Shakespeare's Head Garden, Providence, Rhode Island

Just steps from downtown Providence lies a green oasis, a Colonial revival-style garden behind the building known as "Shakespeare's Head." Its name recalls the Colonial era, when the building served as John Carter's press, bookshop and Post Office, as well as his family's home on the second floor. Carter, who published the city's first newspaper, *The Providence Gazette*, was named



Postmaster of Providence by none other than Benjamin Franklin, who had mentored him in Philadelphia and assigned him to this position in 1767.

To advertise his literary endeavors, Carter hung a sign bearing Shakespeare's likeness on a pole outside the building, and in time the building became known as Shakespeare's Head.

In 1938 the Rhode Island Federation of Garden Clubs began an association with Shakespeare's head that lasted for 46 years. Following the devastating hurricane of 1938, a restoration of the house revealed the existence of a garden pattern behind the building. James Graham, a landscape designer who later taught at the Rhode Island School of Design, created a small Colonial Revival garden on this spot, and used boxwood to mimic the original pattern. At that time, this project was dear to the heart of then RIFGC president, Mrs. Francis E. Bates and, through her efforts, was maintained by club members through the years.

In 1996, local landscape architect Lala Searle replanted the garden more faithful to a colonial style, replacing many plants with truly colonial ones such as baptisia, columbine, bee balm, foxgloves and monkshood. Hellebore, iris, ferns and shrubs such as lilacs, hydrangea and Rose of Sharon, along with specimen trees, have since been added. The garden is enclosed by stone walls and terraces, with brick pathways. A long peony border and the garden's roses would make a visit in June most rewarding.



Today, the building serves as the office of the Providence Preservation Society.

Sandi Tinyk
NEGC Public/Historic Gardens Chairperson



Thank You to Those Who Made Our Region Project A Big Success!

We have listed all those clubs and individual members from across the New England Region who helped to make the 2019-2021 Region Project – *Fighting Food Insecurity* – a big success! Only those clubs and individuals who sent in a donation form or a newsletter article are listed. (NOTE: If you didn't send in a form and still made a donation, please let Region Director Suzanne Bushnell know at sembushnell@comcast.net.) We will recognize any latecomers in our May newsletter.

States are listed alphabetically with the total amount donated per state federation. The amounts you see represent fresh produce grown and donated. Some reported by pounds, some reported by servings. Because of the pandemic and the inability of some clubs to donate fresh produce, some decided to donate cash instead to be used for a variety of uses. One club reported not only fresh produce donated, but also all other types of food given away at a food bank. If a club submitted a form and a reporting member was listed on the form, that person's name is also shown. For those forms with no reporting name listed, then only the club name is shown. If an individual submitted a form on their own behalf, we've listed the name(s) and the club affiliation. You'll also see the organizations who were the recipients of the donations as well.

Thirty-nine organizations were recipients of our donations along with numerous families who received donated produce outside the umbrella of a food-related organization.



CONNECTICUT -- (2,425 lbs. fresh produce, \$6,150 cash raised, 6 tons additional food distributed)

- **Middletown Garden Club** (fresh produce) – Amazing Grace Food Pantry, Middletown
- **Wilton Garden Club** (fresh produce), reported by **Pam Nobumoto on behalf of Club volunteers working with the Green Teens Youth Gardeners** – Wilton Food Pantry, Wilton
- **Litchfield Garden Club** (fresh produce and other food items), reported by **Polly Brooks on behalf of Club volunteers** – The Food Pantry at St. Michaels Church, Litchfield
- **Shippan Point Garden Club** (cash donations by Club members for catered meals), reported by **Nolini Barretto** – Stamford Hospital and St. Camillus Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, Stamford

MAINE -- (6,235 lbs. fresh produce, \$4,711 cash donated, 10 servings additional produce)

- **Harpswell Garden Club** (fresh produce and meals), donated by **Suzanne and Bill Bushnell, Pat Laz, Les Klein, Peg Newberg on behalf of the Harpswell Community Garden, Becky Gallery for her Three Sisters Garden, and numerous members who volunteer for Harpswell Aging at Home** – Midcoast Hunger Prevention, Brunswick and Harpswell Aging at Home, Harpswell
- **Scarborough Garden Club** (fresh produce and cut flowers), **donated by Bill and Beverly Thombs, and Elizabeth Richter for Hillcrest Retirement Community Garden and Project Grace Garden at St. Nicholas Episcopal Church** – Scarborough Food Pantry and the Black Point Congregational Church, Scarborough
- **Bloomfield Garden Club** (fresh produce), donated by **Wilma Sherman and Marjorie Coburn-Black** – Canaan Food Cupboard and the Skowhegan Community Food Cupboard, Skowhegan, and to several individual families and elderly neighbors with limited incomes
- **Brewer Garden and Bird Club** (fresh produce), donated by **Carol Smith** – OHI Food Pantry, Brewer
- **St. Mary's Garden Club** (fresh produce), donated by **Marianne Dodge** – Falmouth Food Pantry, Falmouth
- **Foothills Garden Club** (fresh peaches and apples), donated by **Judy and Russ Florenz** – Growing Gardens for Healthy Communities, South Paris
- **Boothbay Region Garden Club** (fresh produce), donated by **Linda Redman and master gardener friends at Brae Maples Farm** – St. Barnard's, Rockland and Hospitality House, Rockport
- **Bucksport Garden Club** (fresh produce and cash on behalf of Club members) – Community Concerns, Bucksport
- **Ellsworth Garden Club** (fresh produce), donated by **Monica Moeller, Denis Bouffard, Marc Rich, Bob Pepler, Janice Janes, Jay Barnes, and Gale Caddoo** – given to a local food pantry and a local church providing free meals
- **Bath Garden Club** (cash donations on behalf of Club and individual members), reported by **Pam LeJeunesse** – Bath Area Food Bank, Bath
- **Longfellow Garden Club** (cash donation on behalf of Club members), reported by **Karen Rea** – Preble Street Resource Center and Good Shepherd Food Bank, Portland
- **Bar Harbor Garden Club** (cash donations for CSA shares and for Beech Buck cards from Beech Hill Farm on behalf of Club members), reported by **Jane Sanderson, and Phyllis and Larry Mobraaten** (fresh produce) – Westside Food Pantry and Bar Harbor Food Pantry, Bar Harbor



- **Carrie Draper, Tujunga, CA** (cash donation) – friend of Region Director Suzanne Bushnell with donation going to Midcoast Hunger Prevention, Brunswick

MASSACHUSETTS -- (1,800 lbs. fresh produce)

- **Betty and Neal Sanders on behalf of the Medfield Community Garden** (fresh produce) – Medfield Food Cupboard, Medfield, and to Wellesley College students from inner city Houston (TX) with no access to the school cafeteria and to many foreign students at Wellesley College and Babson College (Boston) who were stranded in the US because of the pandemic also with no access to school cafeterias

NEW HAMPSHIRE -- (1,215 lbs. fresh produce, \$400 cash donated)

- **Atkinson Garden Club** (fresh produce), donated by **Susan Miner** – Salem Food Pantry at the Triumphant Cross Lutheran Church, Salem
- **New London Garden Club** (cash donation on behalf of Club members) – Kearsarge Food Pantry, New London
- **Derry Garden Club** (fresh produce and fruit), reported by **Blanch Garone and Jackie Dempsey on behalf of the Club's youth garden project** – Boys and Girls Club of Greater Derry



RHODE ISLAND -- (4,140 lbs. fresh produce, \$200 cash donated, 1,800 servings)

- **Sogkonate Garden Club** (fresh produce), donated by **Rikky and Roger Laberge** – Little Compton Food Bank, Little Compton; East Bay Community Action Program, Tiverton; Citizens for Citizens, Inc., Fall River (MA); and **Dick and Marty Fisher** -- Wilbur & McMahn School (help children grow seeds, transplant seedlings, water and transplant them), Little Compton; Little Compton Senior Lunch Program at Little Compton Community Center (and for home delivery to seniors not able to attend)
- **Quononoquott Garden Club** (cash donation for plants and seeds on behalf of Club members) – Jamestown Community Farm, Jamestown
- **Vera Bowen and volunteers** (fresh produce) on behalf of the ***Garden Time*** Project at the Rhode Island Correctional Facilities

VERMONT -- (2,317 lbs. fresh produce)

- **Garden Club of Manchester** (fresh produce), donated by **Susan and Don Hinkel** – Manchester Food Bank, Manchester and by **Becky Burke on behalf**

of the Hildene Plant a Row Garden – Manchester Community Food Cupboard, Manchester Center

- **Rutland Garden Club** (fresh pears), donated by **Veronica Barnard** – Rutland Open Door Mission, Rutland
- **Burlington Garden Club** (fresh produce), reported by **Jan DeSarno on behalf of Club volunteers working with the Growing Young Gardeners Junior Gardening Group** – Common Roots Food Shelf at the Wheeler House, South Burlington

Suzanne Bushnell
Director, New England Garden Clubs

Northern New England Tri-State Symposium Postponed

The Northern New England Tri-State Symposium is postponed until August 2022. The date and time will be announced as soon as possible. With the extension that NGC has given us, our Flower Show Judges will have more time to hold Flower Shows, to exhibit and to judge, gaining the credits that they will require. It is hoped that most of us will have had the vaccine to prevent COVID. I KNOW that we will have a great Symposium in 2022!

Hugs and good health to all
Michelle Mensinger
Symposium Chairperson

Green Teens Youth Gardening Wilton Garden Club, Wilton, CT

Spring 2021 will mark the seventh season of the "Green Teens" Youth Gardening program. Green Teens is an after-school program designed for middle school children in 5th-9th grade. The Wilton Garden Club's Youth Gardening Committee, Pam Nobumoto and Laurie Musilli, lead this program. This educational gardening program is proud to have been the recipient of the National Garden Club's Youth Horticulture Award and the Certificate of Appreciation for Youth Environmental Education. The New England Garden Clubs awarded the Green Teens Program the National Gardening Association Award. Green Teens has won several Federated Garden Club of Connecticut Awards including the CT Tribute Award, Club Certificate of Achievement, Youth Award of Excellence and is a four-time winner of the Luckner Youth Award.





The Green Teens Youth Gardening program takes place at the Trackside Teen Center in the heart of Wilton. Students can be dropped off or take buses directly from school to Trackside where the WGC members greet the young gardeners. This program begins the first week in May and runs every Wednesday for six weeks until mid-June. The program continues after school gets out for the summer. Youth Gardeners and their families meet on Mondays and Tuesdays during our summer maintenance program. Once school begins again in the fall, we return to

meeting on Wednesdays after school until we need to winterize the garden, which is usually around the beginning of November. Typically, we have around twenty-five youth gardeners that participated in the program.

The goals of the program are to get more young people involved with creating and maintaining organic vegetable gardens, to teach youth about the importance of healthy foods, engage them in sustainability and pollination while learning how to give back to the community. All of the produce that the Youth Gardeners plant in the spring is tended, harvested, washed and donated each week during the growing season to the Wilton Food Pantry. In many instances, our delivery is the only fresh produce in the refrigerator. We typically donate over two hundred pounds of fresh, organic produce to the food pantry every year. Whereas, in 2015 when our program began, the program produced just thirty pounds.



Our youth participate in hands-on activities in all aspects of the garden: designing garden beds, planting methods (direct sow, plugs, transplants, companion planting), proper pruning and maintenance, irrigation (watering needs, usage and conservation strategies), identification of invasive versus beneficial plants and insects, benefits and importance of using native plants, harvesting, and learning how to incorporate the produce they grow into a healthy daily diet. Along the exterior of the youth garden, there are many pollinator friendly plants. In an attempt to protect those plants, we sought out and received a donation of over eight hundred bricks, which the youth will use to construct a low flowerbed wall. WGC members encourage the youth gardeners to try new things in their garden. They had a successful first attempt at constructing a hoop garden using a hula-hoop and bird netting. This year, they will try to grow vegetables and herbs in a vertical garden using wooden pallets.

In addition to Garden Club members, local horticultural specialists are invited to be guest speakers and hands-on helpers who direct a portion of a weekly session. The Director of Agriculture, and an organic farmer at the local Ambler Farm, teaches crop rotation, soil amendment and identifying healthy plants. A Wilton High School Organic Greenhouse Advisor, Biology and AP Environmental Science teacher talks to the children about trellising, beneficial insects, the 3 P's (prepare, plant and protect), sustainability and irrigation concepts for conservation. A local artist led a garden art session where the children painted cinder blocks with colorful pictures of flowers, various designs, printed designs and their names. These cinder blocks were used as a barrier for a new pumpkin patch in our garden. All of our guest speakers are generous volunteers in our community and are great role models for our youth. Having them assist with the program not only provides helping hands and varied speakers, but also many positive connections between curious youth gardeners and knowledgeable professionals in town.

A favorite part of the youth garden is floral arranging. In a typical year, our youth make floral arrangements that they hand deliver to the Senior Center in Wilton. Our garden has a wide variety of wildflowers,



perennials, pollinator friendly plants and flowering herbs. Garden Club members work with the youth gardeners to properly cut and arrange flowers in Mason jars. These freshly picked flowers are donated each week for the enjoyment of the elderly folks in the Senior Center. They are quite enamored with our bright-eyed kids coming in with the assorted flowers grown and tended by them in our garden at Trackage. We know

they are much appreciated as they dress up their tables all week.

This year during our garden winterization, the children were actively involved with the collection of seeds from the garden. Some seeds will be germinated in our Garden Club's greenhouse to be used in specific civic gardens around



town. Under the guidance of WGC Conservation Co-chairs, other seeds were collected and will be planted in new and current areas in town along the Pollinator Pathway, an initiative spearheaded by the Wilton Garden Club's Conservation Committee to establish pollinator-friendly habitats and food sources along two continuous corridors in Wilton and neighboring towns. Our goal is to use this activity to teach the youth gardeners about the importance of conservation, pollinators, beneficial insects, natural pesticides, native plants, succession planting, pesticide usage and what we can all do to help. Last year, the youth gardeners planted a small area of pollinator friendly plants along the outer edge of the Trackside property. This year, we will watch those native plants grow stronger, as we add more plants to our own little Pollinator Garden.

Youth Gardening has a small budget provided by the Wilton Garden Club each year. We have been fortunate to receive donations such as tools and plants from garden club members, seedlings from the High School Organic Garden and from Ambler Farm (a local town farm). Sweet Peat (a local mulch supplier) donated sixteen bags of mulch, and Eco-Systems (a local irrigation company) continues to provide us with drip irrigation lines plus seasonal start-up and shut-off service of the irrigation system. This greatly helps with consistent and conservative watering schedules.

The Youth Garden at Trackside flourishes because of continued community support and donations that help us with our educational mission.

Pam Nobumoto and Laurie Musilli

The Sundial Lupine Project

At our October 2019 Bar Harbor Garden Club meeting, Michaelleen Ward and I proposed a new club project called "The Sundial Lupine Project" as a way to re-establish our club flower in Maine. This native plant (*Lupinus perennis*) is no longer found wild in the state, but has been re-introduced in the Wells area. Our hope is to increase its range in the state with the help of club members by planting seed in the fall in containers, then transplanting the new plants in the spring to pots which can then be donated to plant sales in the surrounding area. Unfortunately, the lupine that we see throughout our landscape is the non-native invasive lupine (*Lupinus polyphyllus*) and it does not serve as a host plant for the Karner Blue butterfly, which is now



Native Sundial Lupine (*Lupinus perennis*). —Photograph courtesy of Wild Seed Project, wildseedproject.net.

extinct in Maine. This little butterfly needs the native lupine on which to lay its eggs so the hatched larva can feed and grow. It will die if it feeds on the non-native lupine.

Both lupines look very similar, but there are ways to tell the two apart. The Sundial lupine only grows to about one foot tall, has 7-11 leaflets, and the leaves are about 2" long and 1/2" wide. The flower stalk, which only produces blue flowers, is under 2 ft. tall. It will not grow in moist soil, preferring dry sandy areas in sun, to part shade. The non-native lupine grows taller than one foot, has 9-17 leaflets with each leaf being 4" long and 1-2 inches wide, and produces purple, white, and pink flowers on a flower stalk over 2 ft. tall. It will grow in dry sandy soil but also tolerates moister soils. These two species do cross pollinate so it is best to keep one away from the other. Luckily, bumblebees are its pollinators and they do not travel the distance a honey bee would travel, so the chances of cross pollination are lessened. Another great way to tell the two species apart is that the native lupine had white or cream-colored seeds, while the non-native has black seeds. If there is a concern that a newly emerging lupine may have been cross pollinated, then seeds of this new plant can be checked for its seed color.

The plan for the native lupine project during summer 2020 was to hand out plants and seeds to people attending the GCFM Convention in June. As you all know, the convention was not held due to Covid-19. We needed 300 plants, but less than half of the 500 seeds planted, germinated. So, it will be helpful to have another year to try Plan-B and hope for more germination.

Another goal for the project was to have some plants to donate to local plant sales.



The Wild Gardens of Acadia weren't sure the plant sale would happen last June but did finally manage to pull their plant sale together. We donated 50 lupines, and all were sold! They were a big hit! We had an informative write up placed on an easel next to the plants to educate the public as to the importance of this native.

Last year, three supposedly sundial lupine plants were purchased at an area nursery and planted at the Blue Star Memorial Marker. Later that summer, it was discovered that they were actually the invasive lupine. They have since been removed, and replaced by three sundial lupine produced by the project. The next step is to prepare a small bed at Garland Farm to plant the remaining plants as a way of raising them for seed collection. We hope that the bed will be far enough away from a large collection of invasive lupines, located in the meadow on the

other side of the property, to prevent cross-pollination. When we do finally collect the seeds, we will be able to tell if that has happened, as the seed color will not be off-white to gray, but dark.

Jan McIntyre
Bar Harbor Garden Club Horticulture Chairperson

[This article was reprinted from the BHGC's newsletter "The Lupine Log," November 2019 and June 2020 issues.]

Landscape Design School Course 2 of 4 March 23 and 24, 2021 via Zoom

Registration and a finalized lineup will appear on The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut, Inc. website on or about February 15, 2021. There will be a maximum of 30 registrations allowed per National Garden Club guidelines, so keep your eyes open and register early at: ctgardenclubs.org

Landscape Design School was developed by National Garden Clubs, Inc. in 1958 and has been offered by The Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut, Inc. since 1978. The purpose of this four-part course of study is "to educate garden club members and the public to know good landscape architectural practice and to serve as guardians and critics of the natural and man-made landscape."

Anyone is welcome to attend who wishes to familiarize themselves with the principles and practices of landscape design as stewards of the outdoors. The curriculum is divided into four courses; one course is offered in Connecticut each year. Courses may be taken in any order.

Students are encouraged to attend all four courses; however, each course stands alone. Lectures will be presented by Landscape Architects and other professionals in the field. Students are urged to take the optional exam in order to become Landscape Design Critics. Exams are multiple choice.

Our topics and instructors for this course include a great lineup:

The Landscape Design Process	Heather Heimarck
Site Design and Landform	Heather Heimarck
Plants in the Landscape	Leslie Martino
Plant Selection	Nancy DuBrule-Clemente
Structures in the Landscape	Barbara Schaedler
Landscapes as a Learning Experience	Jeff Moran
Development of LD in Early America	Leslie Martino
Preservation of Historic Sites	Leslie Martino
Community Landscape Management	Barbara Schaedler
Invasive Plants and Native Alternatives	Peter Picone

Karin Pyskaty
Landscape School Chairperson

NEGC Calendar

Deadline for the May issue of Northern Exposure is April 23 – this issue will cover the months of May, June and July - please e-mail articles or questions to editor Nancy Atwell at atwelln@aol.com

Environmental School

September 22-23 - Environmental School 4 – Water and Related Issues, is offered by Connecticut, on Zoom. For further information Sharon Bender
slbender16@gmail.com

Regional Meeting

October 12-13 - NEGC Annual Meeting at the Village by the Sea Resort in Wells, Maine.

Landscape Design School

March 23 and 24 - Landscape Design School Course 2 of 4 is scheduled on Zoom, registration limited, February 15 +/- check web site: ctgardenclubs.org For further information Karin Pyskaty fgcctkarin@gmail.com