



Lexington Field & Garden Club

144 Years of Making Lexington More Beautiful

Member of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts

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email: LFGC024@gmail.com

Dear Friends of Lexington Field and Garden Club,

On this very cold day in the middle of winter, my thoughts and dreams wander to the spring and the amazing revelations that will occur soon. I am enjoying the birds outside while I wait for my hellebores to bloom. And regarding spring, I want to mention that we are offering **Grants for Gardeners** again, a great opportunity to further our mission of beautification, education and service. The application deadline is February 15. I encourage you to apply for a grant that will provide enjoyment for you, enhance our club, and benefit Lexington. Read **Marilyn Rudick's** article on the next page and click on the links for more information.



Many activities have been happening during this “quiet and reflective” period. We are planning an Arbor Day Observance on Friday, April 29, at 11 AM and hope you will attend to honor and commemorate members we’ve lost in the past several years. We have also been planning spring clean-up days in April for the traffic islands and historic and municipal sites. Please watch for notices and contact **Judy Minardi** if you are interested in helping out. The Membership Committee is also planning an outdoor garden brunch in late April/early May for newcomers.

And last, but definitely not least, plans are already underway for our annual, wonderful, Plant Sale to be held on Saturday, May 21, with a volunteer team supporting Chair **Sirinya Matchacheep**. Educational and fun potting opportunities will be in May. Think of plants in your garden you may want to share and donate. Please hold onto those round or square, green and black 6 to 8 inch pots and trays that you can donate as well.

We have some exciting “big club” programs to share with you and hope that many of you enjoyed the last presentation on Reducing Invasive Plants with Trevor Smith. Our next program on February 9 at 10 AM will be presented by our wonderful **Maureen Bovet** on *Boston Parks and Gardens*. I hope to see you on Zoom for this presentation.



I very much look forward to when we can see each other in person, and hopefully, that will happen with warmer days in the spring.

With great affection,

Marlene Stone

Co-President



Grants for Gardeners

Marilyn Goske Rudick



The Lexington Field and Garden Club is calling for its members to get their creative side ramped up for the spring! The Financial Advisory Working Group, along with the Financial Advisory Council, is announcing the spring grant cycle for the **Grants for Gardeners** program.

Do you have a great idea for a speaker or an innovative program that you believe could be added to the already wonderful list of LFGC speakers or activities? Is there a small plot of land in town that has been neglected and could be turned into a little gem, for all the town to enjoy? Do you have another idea percolating in your mind as you look outside at the snowy landscape? If so, then please consider applying for a grant that could fund this initiative.

Throughout its long history of “beautification, service, and friendship” the Lexington Field and Garden Club has worked hard to be fiscally responsible through the leadership of past Presidents, Treasurers, and Officers of the Club. It is because of this, as well as the generous volunteer work of so many for fundraising and “boots on the ground” labor, that we can have a grant program. The idea was hatched in 2019 and the original committee put in long hours considering ways to enact the program that would be fair and transparent. The result is the **Grants for Gardeners** program that gave out its first awards this fall. After awarding three grants, we are now able to accept applications that will be due February 15, 2022. Please note that the website application form must be used for your project or idea to be considered. [Click here to download the website application form.](#) Also note that if the project involves a location or plot of land, that a map and photos should be included. More details are available on the website, [click here to learn about the grant program.](#)

We acknowledge the work of the original committee: **Marilyn Rudick, Bridget Galdes, Kris Alaerts** (Chair), **Ruthanne Igoe, Miranda Cohen, Betsy Pollack, Ann Webster** and newer members **Marlene Stone, Susan Cass, Linda Walsh, Donna Smatlak, Jan Avallone, and Jeremy Singh.**

If you have questions, please contact the grant administrator, **Marilyn Goske Rudick.**



Looking Ahead

The LFGC Executive Board Meeting on March 2, 9:00 AM, will be open to all members. A Zoom invitation will be emailed prior to the meeting.



Monday Evening Group Happenings

The Monday Evening Group spent a recent afternoon at Wilson Farm creating lovely floral arrangements and picking up some helpful tips from a Wilson Farm floral designer. A fun time was had by all!



Backyard Birding

While we have been hunkering down at home the last two years, many of us have found that birding is fun. Longtime backyard bird watchers have been filling their feeders more regularly, while some people are buying their first feeder. And now we have begun to realize that we can plant to attract our favorite birds. In fact, this May one of our newer members, **Jillian Tung**, a Master Gardener, will discuss the best design ideas, plants, and practices to turn your garden into a bird's paradise on the Cary Gardening Series.

Attracting songbirds to the garden means creating a solidly packed, multi-layer landscape that has a variety of plants to supply structure and food throughout the year. Think horizontally, vertically, and seasonally so your garden encompasses a range of plants: trees, bushes, annuals, perennials, herbs, vegetables, and grasses. The seed heads of many ornamental grasses and perennials attract, feed, and supply cover for birds. Evergreen junipers and yews offer winter cover; berry-producing species such as dogwood and holly provide food at different times in the season.

The more natives you plant, the more insects you attract, and more varieties of songbirds will visit. Add a birdbath in an open area to attract even more birds.

Avoid Herbicides and Pesticides

Any of these substances can be deadly to birds and other wildlife. Rather, rely on biological controls for insect pests. For instance, don't kill ladybugs, praying mantis, hoverfly, lacewings, honeybees, and dragonflies. On the other hand, you can get rid of slugs, Japanese beetles, cabbageworms, and squash bugs.

And remember, "you can't garden and worry at the same time!"



The New Year in Your Garden

E. Ashley Rooney

Thanks to the pandemic, many more people have begun to garden, to feed the birds, and to enjoy being outdoors. The chairman of W. Atlee Burpee Co. states that, "in 2020 seed and plant sales increased more than 60% — a first in their company's 145-year history" (WSJ,01/04/2022). A National Gardening Association survey points out that more than 50% of us are spending an extra two hours a day outside compared to pre-Covid times.

Now that Americans have discovered a green world in their backyards, they will be looking for ways to capitalize on this – whether it be working at home from an "outside office" or trying new plant varieties. Here are some of the hot new trends for the upcoming year.

Creating Living Space Outside

The pandemic isolation has left us needing that sense of community. Porches, patios, terraces, etc. have become gathering spots. Dress them up with comfortable furniture, potted plants, fire-pits, and some lighting. You'll gain living space and have less grass to cut. But first you must decide how the area will be used.

If the terrace is a place for alfresco dining, you'll need a table and chairs — a very different

arrangement than space for sunbathing where chaises and low tables may be more appropriate. Try to create a sense of enclosure for protection from too much sun and from curious neighbors. You can screen areas using tall shrubs or hanging plants to give you that feeling of intimacy. A seating area beneath a tree or tall plantings around the perimeter can help define the space and provide some shade.

Lighting can also provide a significant boost to nighttime ambience. Some methods of adding light are simpler than others. You don't need to hire an electrician if you use lanterns with candles, plug-in string lights, or portable LED-based candles.

Now that so many people are hybrid workers, the garden office can be a prime location in which to work from home. Many self-employed people find that they need to break away from the distractions and the hubbub of the domestic environment. A stroll down the garden path can help keep home and work lives separate. An outdoor workspace, whether it's on a balcony, on a porch, in a yard, can enlarge your living and working space. Yes, you may need bug protection, sunscreen, and a fan, but that sunlight and fresh air can certainly elevate your spirits.



Growing Your Own Food

Although farmers' markets can provide fresh, locally grown food, growing your own sun-warmed, vine-ripened cherry tomatoes, for example, is an unforgettable and delicious experience. For some gardeners, eating what you sow isn't a new concept. They've been doing it for years. But many new gardeners are just discovering that growing your own produce is a simple solution to numerous health, environmental, and economic problems. Whether you are growing just a few herbs or have a large vegetable garden, it is beneficial to your health and to the environment.

When you grow your own food, your diet is packed with vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. The physical activity required in gardening helps to improve cardiac health and immune system response, decrease heart rate and stress, improve fine and gross motor skills, flexibility, and body strength. No need to go to the gym if you are gardening. You are also getting Vitamin D. By spending a few dollars in the spring, you will produce pounds of produce in summer.

Go for Color

Each year, the Pantone color experts carefully select a hue to represent the color for the year.



This year it is a dynamic shade of periwinkle called **Very Peri**, a vibrant purple. So this year, go for more daring plant colors such as reds, oranges and purples, with crocosmia, salvia, and canna set to prove popular in 2022. The color trend is also reflected in new releases from growers such as Cercis Canadensis 'Eternal Flame' and echinacea 'SunMagic' series. Try **ninebark** (Zones 2-8), which provides interest all year with its peely bark. The dark leaves of 'Summer Wine[®]' contrast with its white flowers.



Membership Corner

LFGC Helped this New Member Discover and Control her Garden

Kim Nudi

We moved into our new Lexington home during the summer of 2020. It's a beautiful property with a large backyard and extensive gardens, hidden from the road, my very own "secret garden", with one very major difference. My new gardens were a massively overgrown mess, full of unidentifiable plants, all vying to take over the world. While avoiding the contractors who were working in our home (thanks, Covid), I began trying to root out the Virginia creeper and a few other undesirables I could identify. As I surfed the internet, I stumbled upon the virtual garden club lectures sponsored by the Cary Library and began attending them to learn a bit about gardening in New England. When **Ashley Rooney** asked for "problem garden" photos in return for an heirloom rose bush, I promptly submitted my backyard "problem," though I unfortunately was not the winner. At that time, I considered myself an advanced beginner gardener, but having never lived in New England before, there were many plants I was wholly unfamiliar with. I was in way over my head.



Enter **Nancy Trautman** and **Ashley Rooney**, who reached out to me and subsequently organized a LFGC home visit to help me play "Is this a weed or not?". They even brought a previous owner of the gardens, and introduced me to **Chris Kochanski**, who has been vital to my garden restoration effort. Chris and I got to work pulling up swallow-wort vine, bittersweet, bishop's weed, wild grape, garlic mustard, privet, horsetail, multiflora rose, tall jerusalem artichoke, goldenrod, a running campanula and more Virginia creeper. Hidden beneath that tangled mess were some beautiful peonies, several varieties of hosta, lungwort, tall phlox, monarda, sedum, camassia and many solomon's seal and tawny daylilies. We then began the job of pruning the leggy and shapeless shrubs and splitting and relocating hostas, daylilies, irises, and limiting the sprawling beds a bit. Finally, we could begin the fun part, adding a peegee hydrangea tree as well as endless summer

hydrangeas, azaleas, colorful heucheras, smokebush and some evergreen shrubs to provide some foliage variety. We also added lupine, hardy hibiscus, asters, echinacea and black-eyed susans for some color. I was able to harvest vinca from a neighbor and transplant it to provide more ground cover. We planted 300 bulbs across a variety of species this fall and have plans for 2 Japanese maples and some red twig dogwood to be added this spring. While the work is nowhere near complete, after 1.5 summers, I can now look at my garden and feel a sense of joy as opposed to a sense of overwhelming stress. I am so excited for the next growing season to see how "our garden grows," Thanks to the Lexington Field and Garden Club for providing a valuable resource and friendly assistance to a new neighbor. Special thanks to **Chris Kochanski** for her guidance and mentorship in my gardening journey.

February Funnies



Rosie and Sadie wish you
a Happy Valentine's Day!

What did the scientist say to her Valentine?

I think of you periodically!

Where do all the hamburgers
take their dates for Valentine's
Day?

To the Meat Ball.

Why are artichokes so
beloved?

They are known
for their hearts!

I once fell in love with someone who
only knew 4 vowels.

They didn't know I existed!



Lexington Field and Garden Club Meeting Minutes

January 12, 2022

Via Zoom

Co-President, **Ruthanne Igoe**, called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

Announcements

- Ruthanne gave a tribute in memory of **Mary Nokes**.
- **Grants for Gardeners** applications are due by February 15; information is on the LFGC website.
- In partnership with Lexington Living Landscapes, Rebecca McMakin will give a virtual talk entitled *The Language of Flowers* at Cary Memorial Library on Wednesday, January 26, at 7:00 PM. Registration is required.

Marilyn Ryniewicz, Program Chair, introduced landscape designer Trevor Smith. His most informative presentation focused on the methods to reduce invasive plants and recover healthy plants. Questions followed.

There were 77 attendees.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Halverson

Recording Secretary

Happy Valentine's Day!!!



A Note from Kassie Kattwinkel about January's Program

I enjoyed today's program so much! It was a real educational treat! Please thank **Marilyn Ryngiewicz** and her committee for finding Trevor Smith and asking him to share his experience and advice about how to reduce invasives, pesky plants, and weeds.

I particularly enjoyed Trevor's talk because for 30 years in Falmouth, we battled every vine and weed that he mentioned. Bittersweet and buckthorn were our annual challenges! Garlic mustard and poison ivy loved our property.

Brick walks: One year I tried to kill weeds in our brick walkway with vinegar...now I know why that didn't work. Another year, I pulled the same weeds and ruined the sandy foundation of the walkway so much that it had to be repaired! Boy, would I have loved the chance to go after those pesky weeds with that flame thrower Trevor recommended!

Landscape crews: We live in a condominium now and teams of workers with trucks and machines do all the yard work. They have never heard a lecture by Trevor. I think it's time to limit leaf blowers! Our fall cleanup is so aggressive that not a trace of organic debris remains after the blowers finish their work. Bye, bye nutrients. Bye, bye winter blanket for insects, seeds, and roots.

And in the springtime, along come trucks filled with yards and yards of mulch and fertilizer galore to replace the organic matter they blew away 5 months earlier. It's a cycle. It's our challenge.

Hooray for Garden Clubs and the good work they try to do!

Kassie Kattwinkel



"The most noteworthy thing about gardeners is that they are always optimistic, always enterprising, and never satisfied. They always look forward to doing something better than they have ever done before."

Vita Sackville-West