

The Perennial



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Website:
ArlingtonGarden.org

It's starting to feel like fall with cooler weather arriving but we are still well under average rainfall for the year. For tips on how to help your plants survive the winter, look for the new Garden Tips section.

Upcoming Programs:

Daytime meeting –December 9-10:30
St. John's Episcopal Church

Join in the fun as Nancie wields the gavel for a "Pound Auction" and enjoy a catered lunch. What is a Pound Auction? Members will have the chance to bid on wrapped items that weigh about one pound. These may be serious or silly but the contents will only be known when the package is opened by the winning bidder.

If you are planning on attending, please let Nancy Pike (nancypike44@verizon.com) or Carol Nahigian (781 648-6219) know right away so that they can order the appropriate amount of food.



Evening Meetings

The evening meetings will be on hiatus until March 31 when the Day and Evening Groups will have a joint evening program with nationally known garden designer, Kerry Ann Mendez. More information will follow in future issues.

Spotlight on Garden Club Activities:

Jane Foley tells us that the club's gardens and planters have been put to bed for the winter after a very productive season. Many community businesses and organizations did planters and joined the club to help beautify the town.

Under the aegis of Patsy Kraemer and with many helping hands, the gardens around the Town Hall, Library and Whittemore Robbins House are being returned to their former glory. Huge numbers of invasives have been cut and pulled and new plantings have been added. Thanks also go to the Master Gardeners and the Friends of the Robbins Town Gardens.



Wreath Making 22014

Wreath Making for the Jason Russell House: Saturday, December 5 at 10:00

Carol Nahigian is hosting a morning of wreath making for the Jason Russell House at her home, 3 Monadnock Rd. Arlington. If possible, please bring clippers, greens and items for decorating the wreaths. Materials and tools will be shared so just bring what you can. Please call Carol @ 781 648-6219 if you can join in the fun.

Garden Tips:

Continue to water your plants and trees, especially those planted in the last two years, until the first hard frost. Our area is averaging 8 inches less rain than usual and is in a moderate drought. An inch of watering each week will definitely give your plants a boost to survive the winter.

If you are planning to remove the leaves from your garden, you may want to reconsider. Leaving an inch or so of leaves to mulch your plants will help keep them protected from drying out during the winter and as the leaves break down, they will nourish the soil.

Spraying your broad leafed shrubs with an anti-desiccant may help stave off the browning we saw last year. This is caused by a lack of water and the reflection of sunlight off the snow. It is recommended that you repeat the application in mid-winter. Don't forget to use your garden club discount when shopping for gardening supplies.

Who ARE the Master Gardeners We Keep Hearing About?

From Emily Snyder, Senior Master Gardener

I first became aware of the Mass. Master Gardener training program through two Garden Club members, and I then took the course in 2013. Now our present members are asking me about the program. Since the next training program will start in April 2016 and run through October 2016, now is the time to apply. Below is some basic information about the requirements. I'm more than happy to talk about the program, which I loved, and /or you can contact the Training Course Coordinator with questions.

Massachusetts Master Gardeners become trained and certified through an intensive training program held at the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, Wellesley. The course consists of 14 classroom and lab modules, including soil science, botany, entomology, plant pathology, pruning and propagation. Spring class sessions will be held over 7 Thursdays, beginning April 7 (excluding April 21) thru May 26, from 9am-3pm. The Fall session will be held over 7 Thursdays, from 9am-3pm, beginning on September 15 thru October 27. Both sessions are required for all students.

In addition to attending classes, completing reading and homework assignments, and take-home exams, students are expected to complete a 60-hour volunteer apprenticeship (which serves as the hands-on learning segment of the course). Homework and handouts will be distributed electronically, so students are expected to have access to and be familiar with email, Internet, Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Adobe Acrobat (.pdf files), and to receive and send pictures in jpeg format.

To apply for the 2016 MGT course, an application and a \$25 non-refundable fee to the MMGA Class Registrar are due by Dec. 30. Applications sent after December 30 must include a \$25 late fee. Full tuition (\$500.00) and materials fee (\$150.00) are due upon acceptance.

For further details and the application form, go to the MMGA website: <<http://massmastergardeners.org/2016-master-gardener-training-course/>>



Invasives Corner

From Mary Stack

Large stands of purple loosestrife look beautiful beside lakes and rivers. Too bad they are so damaging to these ecosystems. They disturb water flow and crowd out native plants. Native animals are harmed by loss of food and shelter. Loosestrife was introduced as a garden plant and grown as a medicinal herb. It was also brought in by releasing ships' ballast in waterways. A mature plant can produce over two million seeds a season, so it can quickly take over large areas. Building highway by waterways has hastened its invasion. Cars blow seeds around and can carry them to new sites.

Loosestrife is a marsh plant but it can grow in any wet area. It is not very common in gardens in Arlington, but it has been found at Spy Pond and along the Mystic River. It can be removed from small plots by hand pulling in spring before flowers form. For large areas mechanical removal is expensive and ineffective. Instead, biological means of control are used.



Galerucella beetles have been approved by the USDA to control loosestrife. The beetles and their larvae eat the buds and leaves. This defoliation weakens the plant and disrupts seed production. For the past two years the New England Wild Flower Society has been raising Galerucella beetles for the Massachusetts Audubon Society. The beetles have been released by Mass Audubon to control the invasion along the Sudbury River. Although introducing the beetles won't completely eliminate loosestrife, it can reduce it by about 90%. This will allow native species to reestablish themselves.

Update on Books in Bloom

We are happy to report that the Friends of the Robbins Library and the Garden Club each received over \$1700.00 from the proceeds of this always delightful evening.

