

THE FLOWER PRESS



October, 2011

Message from the President

Greetings all and welcome to the 55th opening of the RGC. Fall has been creeping up on us ever so slowly. I like it that way. It gives me more time to tend to the gardens that I neglected in the heat of August and the busy days of early September. Before the cold sets in, I can consider what's really going on in the garden, and what I'd like to plan for next year. It's a bit philosophical too. A little like 'Chauncy Gardner' (in the movie 'Being There'). We're graced with this time to reflect on the year past and consider our hopes for the future.

That said, I'm looking ahead to our immediate future. We have a new home for our monthly meetings. Committees have met and made plans. We're looking forward to the bi-annual December decoration of the Parker Tavern, coincidentally on the same day as the RGC Memory Tree Celebration. We have some exciting programs lined up. Check out the Mayflower, the GCFM and RGC websites for interesting meetings, seminars, and volunteer opportunities. The RGC has two hopeful on-going projects which I'll report on in future months. For now, be curious, stay active, and get involved.

Happy gardening!
Suzanne

Letter from the Editor

IMPORTANT: The October meeting and all meetings from now on will be held at the Unitarian Universalist Church at the corner of Woburn Street and Summer Avenue. Parking is available at the church or on Summer Avenue and Temple Street. Please note that you must enter the Church Hall through the door on Summer Avenue. Do not use any other door. Meeting will begin as usual at 11:30 a.m. with a little socializing and light refreshment. Driving with a friend or two might be a good idea to eliminate a possible parking hassle.

Greetings all! Another season begins and your *Flower Press* editor hopes to bring you all the RGC news as it happens. However, she needs lots of help, and so would be very happy if you would let her know of anything interesting you would like to have included in future *Flower Press* editions. Please contact me by mail at 56 Summer Avenue, Reading or e-mail at billkilduff@verizon.net.

Adeline Kilduff

Outings

Hazelle McWilliams has set our first outing of the season for Thursday October 20th, to Fruitlands in Harvard, MA. **Fruitlands** is a Utopian agrarian commune which was established in 1840 based on Transcendentalist principles. It is now a museum. The cost is \$10.00 per person (as long as we have ten people). Lunch may be purchased in the Alcott Tea Room (which is known for their soups, salads and hearty sandwiches). This outing is mostly outdoors with no heat in the museum buildings, so people will need to dress for the weather and be prepared to walk for at

least an hour and a half to tour the area. There is a steep hill at the beginning of the walk. We will meet at Pier One parking lot to carpool at 9:00 a.m.. The Museum opens at 10:00 a.m.

Hazelle will bring a sign up sheet to the October meeting but people may also sign up by e-mailing Hazelle their name, phone number and cell phone number. Please indicate if you are willing to drive. Guests are welcome.

Ways and Means

SAVE THE DATE!! Our major fundraiser, "Geraniums and More," will be held on May 19th. We know you want to be there, so mark your calendar now.

Potting Up Perennials

We always dig and pot up our perennials in the spring to sell at our Members' Table at the Sale. Why not do it now, in the fall, so you'll be sure to get the right plants, color and know exactly what you are digging? How can we help? Donnan has pots and our planting medium in her driveway for our use. Label now. If you need us to help dig, call Mary Ann Higgins. You can dig up the plants and repot them. Then you may either store the pots in a cool place, like the garage or a shed or "replant" the pots so they can just be pulled up in the spring. An alternative would be to label now what you want to dig in the spring.

Memory Tree

Save the date for the Memory Tree, Sunday, December 4th at 4:00p.m. in front of the library. All members are expected to sell (or purchase) three lights. The order forms will be available at our November meeting, so start thinking now about how you would like your light to be dedicated. Order forms will also be available on our website.

UMASS Extension Calendars

These calendars will be available for purchase for \$12.00 at our November meeting. Members enjoy reading the informative pages and viewing the pictures. Many give them as gifts.

We also have the following RGC items for sale:

- Nine caps at \$7.00 each
- Three shopping bags at \$4.50 each

If you'd like any of these items, please make a check out to the RGC. These will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis, so hurry. You can contact Sue Hunter at suehunter1@verizon.net or Sue will be in the kitchen at the October meeting where you can purchase these items.

Corresponding Secretary

Corresponding Secretary, Linda Aiello requests that you send her any information on members to whom she might need to send a note or a card. Linda may be reached at 781-944-8729 or swedelna@yahoo.com.

Notable Happenings for Autumn

The Arnold Arboretum website offers some very interesting programs for the coming season. You can read about these programs and register online for all of their adult programs at my.arboretum.harvard.edu or by call at 617-384-5277.

We will have printouts of offerings from various horticultural programs and events available for your perusal at the October meeting.

Ask-a-Master Gardener

Our Master Gardener offering this month comes to us from Lydia L. Silva, Certified Permaculture Designer.

Permaculture: Gardening for the Future of Food

Permaculture, also known as Ecological Culture Design, is a design process and philosophy that provides for human needs while restoring and regenerating the environment. Permaculture offers a sophisticated way of designing edible landscapes for optimal food production with minimal maintenance.

The term "Permaculture" comes from a conjunction of "permanent agriculture" and was created by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren in Australia in the 1970's. Mollison has described permaculture as "a philosophy of working with, rather than against nature; of protracted and thoughtful observation rather than protracted and thoughtless labor; and of looking at plants and animals in all their functions, rather than treating any area as a single project system."

The first step in creating a permaculture garden would include a detailed site observation of landform, micro-climates, existing vegetation and wildlife, hydrogeology, soil chemistry, and patterns of use. A complementary arrangement of mostly perennial edible plants would be installed based on site and climate compatibility as well as the client's preferences. Animals are often used to cycle nutrients through the system, and chickens, rabbits and worm bins are often incorporated into designs.

An example of permaculture in practice is an Edible Forest Garden. In this type of design, fruit and nut trees are used along with a shade tolerant understory of fruiting shrubs and perennial leafy greens. The forest garden will also include nitrogen-fixing soil building plants, medicinal herbs, nectary flowers, and plants to be cut and used as mulch. These plants form mutually supportive interactions that increase resilience in the system, and make less work for the gardener overall.

For more information: <http://www.edibleforestgardens.com>.

Gaia's Garden, A Guide to Home Scale Permaculture by Toby Hemenway.

Monthly Food Pantry Donations Continue

With the Holiday Season approaching, and of course all through the year, the Food Pantry always needs our help. Please bring one or two items or a cash donation to the meeting. Check expiration dates on all products. Paper products, soaps and anything else that is taxed cannot be bought with food stamps, so these items are always most needed.

Need your leaves raked?



The Reading Memorial High School Varsity Swim Team is now scheduling their 2nd Annual Leaf Raking Fund Raiser. If you have leaves that need raking, you can't find a better or more deserving crew of young people. To schedule a time for the team to come to your home and rake leaves please contact Conner Daly and Parker Trangot at rmhsswim@gmail.com. ***Sue Hunter tells us they're reasonable and they do good work. They not only do the raking, but they also take the leaves away.***

Civic Beautification

The Civic Beautification Committee has planned a Fall Clean-up at the Depot for Saturday, October 29th at 9:00 a.m. All are welcome to participate. Ring gloves, pruners, rake, etc. The Committee will also be Dressing Town

Hall and the Library with Winter Greens on Sunday, November 20th. If you are willing to share evergreen boughs, cones, pods, things with winter interest, please contact Donnan Barnes at 781-944-7121 or barnescwds@aol.com.

Membership

RGC welcomes the following new members: Sally Nitzsche, and MaryGail Knowles, and rejoining, Devik Lansing, Jeanette Corbett and Corri Ogburn. Our wonderful Hospitality Chairman for so many years past, Rosemarie Rose, has resigned to move to warmer climes. She will be very much missed. For all who would like to keep in touch with Rosemarie, here's her address: 2923 Trellis Green, Cary NC 27518

Press and Historian Committee

Press and Historian is still searching for someone to take over this important job. We know there's someone out there who can really fill the bill. Please consider this important spot and let Suzanne McCance or Evie Pyle know if you'd be able to do it. Keep in mind that this can be done by more than one person. A description of the job follows.

Press and Historian (all year)

- Writes articles and photo captions and takes photos to publicize RGC events and activities
- Sends articles, photos, and captions to local papers (*Chronicle* and *Advocate*) and newsletters (e.g., *In Brief*, *Your Community Connection*), RCTV, Reading Patch, GCFM *Mayflower*, RGC Web site and Flower Press as appropriate
- In accordance with GCFM guidelines, collects and prepares print-media news items for inclusion in RGC Press Book and submits it for GCFM award
- Attends RGC Board meetings

Note: This does not have to be a one-person position! Share the fun with one or two others!

Membership

October 13: Carol Stocker, "Invaders at the Garden Gate"

What is an invasive plant? Don't sweat the small stuff, advises Carol. Learn instead to recognize those super weeds that go from one to one million almost overnight if left unchecked.

A longtime *Boston Globe* garden writer, Carol, is a three-time winner of the Garden Writer's Association award for the best newspaper garden column in America. She has also been named one of the "50 most influential people in the New England Green Industry" by *People, Places, and Plants* magazine.

November 17: Kathy D'Angelo, Thanksgiving Centerpiece Workshop

Just in time for this festive holiday, create your own attractive table centerpiece under Kathy's expert guidance!

Note: Cost is \$5; please sign up/pay (cash) at October meeting or contact Evie Pyle.

Interior plantscaper Kathy D'Angelo has been an RGC member for more than thirty years, is a former RGC President, and has had her own business. Her stunning floral arrangements have graced many an RGC meeting table!

Yearbook Changes

Audrey Thompson, new address: 53 Cedar Street, No. 3317, Woburn, MA 01801, telephone 781-933-3277

Nancy Schena, 87 Hopkins Street, Reading, 781-944-5302, schena2@hotmail.com

Add: Lansing, Devik – 220 Woburn Street Reading, 781-944-2395 devik1@verizon.net

Remove: Abeyta, Amy

September Meditation



I do not know if the seasons remember their history or if the days and nights by which we count time remember their own passing.

I do not know if the oak tree remembers its planting or if the pine remembers its slow climb toward sun and stars.

I do not know if the squirrel remembers last fall's gathering or if the Blue jay remembers the meaning of snow.

I do not know if the air remembers September or if the night remembers the moon.

I do not know if the earth remembers the flowers from last spring or if the evergreen remembers that it shall stay so.

Perhaps that is the reason for our births -- to be the memory for creation.

Perhaps salvation is something very different than anyone ever expected.

Perhaps this will be the only question we will have to answer:

"What can you tell me about September?"

~ Burton D. Carley ~