



# Springfield Garden Club

## The Iris Pedlar

October 2023

"Rooted in the past and still growing"

[www.springfieldgardenclubMA.org](http://www.springfieldgardenclubMA.org)  
[www.facebook.com/SpringfieldMAGardenClub](https://www.facebook.com/SpringfieldMAGardenClub)

### A Note from the President-Janine Boland

Greetings Fellow Gardeners

And we shift again...from hot and wet summer bloom tending, to cool and crisp garden clean-up. How lucky are we? As our gardens require less of our attention the activities of this beloved club community step in to keep our minds expanding and our creativity flowing. Flower Distribution brings together more than twenty-five members to create and distribute mugs of floral cheer to ten local nursing homes.

We have two wonderful programs in October including a special Zoom event. The November program will bring us native seeds and December will help us expand our understanding of sustainably.

There are still lots of opportunities to get involved. Yuletide at Storowton, monthly meetings, and Floral Design workshops are all occasions to gather in community, celebrate our talents and share beauty. Please see the details of upcoming events below and mark your calendars so you don't miss a thing!

As we move indoors, I want to encourage each of you to make an effort to connect with your inner artist. Pick up a few flowers when you are doing your weekly shopping, pop some oasis into a cute mug or pretty pot and make yourself a happy arrangement. No rules. No judging. Just an expression of your artistry for you to enjoy or to share with a friend. Perhaps you might even be willing to share a photo that I can post on our website.

Wishing you good health and happiness until we meet again.  
Janine Boland, President



### Welcome to New Members

Officially welcomed to the Springfield Garden Club at our September meeting were:

Patrick Alderson

Alyce Goodrow

Susan Megas

Filomena Russo

Dan Sheehy

Please be sure to introduce yourselves and give them a warm welcome!



## **Floral Design Group**

*Submitted by Suzanne Reed*

Our first Floral Design program of our program year will be held on Thursday, November 16th at 9:30 a.m-1:00 p.m. at the Shea Building in Forest Park.

This is a chance to be creative, learn about floral design and its many aspects and have an enjoyable morning “playing “with flowers.

Because space is limited, and supplies must be pre-ordered, we require pre - registration and pre- payment for materials as well.

We will have a sign up at our next monthly meeting on Friday October 20th. We will have space for 15 pre-paid members to join us. We anticipate at this time that the price will be \$20. It can be paid either by cash or check.

We will be creating a festive Thanksgiving centerpiece for your table or side board

If you have any questions, please contact either Suzanne Reed or Jamie Risley Hall.

We look forward to creating lovely floral designs to enjoy for your holiday celebration!

*Suzanne Reed and Jamie Risley Hall , Floral design group coordinators*



***Vicki Deal's entry table design for our September meeting***

## **Flower Distribution**

*Submitted by Lorie Dixon & Wanda Roberge, Flower Distribution Chairs*

Flower Distribution is coming up fast - Tuesday, October 3rd and Wednesday, October 4th. Please come help out, even if you weren't able to sign up at the meeting last week.

Once a year, we create about 150 small flower arrangements in mugs and distribute them to 10 area nursing homes. This is a chance to bring some joy to our neighbors in area nursing homes, as well as some of our members who are less able to attend meetings regularly.

Please take a look around your garden for any greens or flowers that are still looking good that you might bring to add to the arrangements. If you are coming, don't forget your clippers, gloves and turntable and/or small riser if you have one.

We thank the many members who have already signed up to help on Tuesday and/or Wednesday, as well as those who signed up to make deliveries, and who have volunteered for clean up afterwards. This could not happen without your hard work and dedication

Tuesday, October 3rd starting at 9:00 a.m. we will be preparing the oasis, the mugs for our designs, and the plant materials. We will begin to “green up” the mugs. Wednesday, October 4th we will add the flowers to our designs, add a little note from the Garden Club, box up the designs, and deliver the designs.

Please call or email Wanda ([wrestate@comcast.net](mailto:wrestate@comcast.net) ) or Lorie ([jlgled4@comcast.net](mailto:jlgled4@comcast.net) ) if you have any questions.

Thank You,  
Lorie Dixon & Wanda Roberge, Flower Distribution Chairs

## **Show and tell! (Horticulture Study Group)**

*Submitted by Beate Bolen*

The Horticulture Study Group met in September to share a few treats, to plan our year, welcome each other, and share favorite plants, seeds for natives harvested from our garden projects, and special tricks we have had success with in our gardening adventures.

Our next Horticulture Study Group meeting will be Monday, October 9th, at 1:00 p.m. at the Shea Building in Forest Park. We hope to tour the new Forestry Department facilities, tree nursery and greenhouses with Alex Sherman, City Forester and Garden Club member.

### **Garden Strolls**

*Submitted by Suzanne Reed*

This summer we enjoyed many garden strolls through our members' gardens.



### **Bill and Fidele Malloy**

It is a wonderful way to see each other in the summer months, enjoy the beautiful and festive garden spaces our members have created, and get to know each other too!

I want to thank those members that so graciously opened their gardens, offered us refreshments, and good company this summer. We had many new gardens and members participating. It was great!

Thank you to

- Mary Bandouveres,
- Janet Dolder
- Robert Bolduc (a friend of Helen Gallivan's)
- Claire Valenti
- Wanda Roberge
- Ralph D'amico and Bob Pellin
- Patrick Alderson

We look forward to next year's tours. Perhaps we can come and visit what's behind your "garden gate!"

### **New Kids on the Block**

*Submitted by Janet Dolder*

In 2020 the city planted a new tree in front my neighbor's house at 41 Fairfield Street. It had been years since they took the one it was replacing down. The previous tree was a large Sugar Maple. It had beautiful fall color but had become so large that it was a target for cars that sped around the curve, nicking its bark with their side mirrors, while narrowly avoiding actually crashing into it. There were few leaves left on the top branches that began to regularly break and fall, causing a hazard for pedestrians and drivers.

Somewhere in between cutting the old tree down and putting in a new one, a crew came and ground the stump, leaving a pile of chopped up wood to rot and grow a variety of interesting fungi. When the new tree was planted, they dug a hole in the debris, without adding any new soil, plopped it in the hole and wished it luck.

In its first year I encouraged my neighbors to water it regularly, which they diligently did. However, in 2021 the previous year's leaves persisted into May, causing concern that the new installation had failed. Slowly, the new leaves appeared and the old ones fell and regular parental watering continued.

Last year I decided to plant, with permission, a native groundcover of Chrysogonum around the tree to help keep its roots cool, I added compost to the perennials' root zone and watered religiously, but the plants shrank and shrank till there was little left to them in the fall and no remnants came up this spring. I believe the tree appreciated the attention though because it is doing very well, and I haven't given up on the idea of replacing the crabgrass with a prettier native ground cover.

The workers who planted the tree told my neighbors that the tree was an oak. It didn't look like any oak I had ever seen. Its leaves are lance shaped, with a serrated edge rather than the distinguishing lobes of most oaks. I set out to research its name, decided that it must be a native chinkapin oak, and thought of it as that for two years, before I got around to consulting our city forester, Alex Sherman, for a definitive identification. The tree is in fact a sawtooth oak, *Quercus acutissima*.

Sadly, it is not native, but as Alex pointed out, the city's policy is 'right tree right place', which means using a mix of native and non-native urban hardy trees.

I went back to my tree and looked more closely at its leaves and compared them with pictures of the chinkapin oak, *Quercus muehlenbergii*, in the 'Forest Trees of Massachusetts' pocket manual, that was provided to me by 'Regreen Springfield'. The sawtooth oak is aptly named, its leaves are narrower and more finely toothed than the chinkapin, and each tiny point has a little spine protruding from it. It does strongly resemble a saw blade.

I've read that the caps of the sawtooth oak's acorns are shaggy looking, but I am several years away from seeing acorns from this tree, if I ever get that opportunity. According to Doug Tallamy, oak trees can be 17 years old before they produce acorns. Also, oak trees are primarily wind pollinated by the male flowers of other trees of the same species, and while there are lots of red and white oaks around, as far as I know there are no other sawtooth oaks in the neighborhood. Maybe that's a good thing. Sawtooth oaks, in good years, known as mast years, are prolific acorn producers. I doubt that my neighbors would appreciate buckets of acorns on their front lawn and sidewalk.

Male oak flowers are arranged in long catkins that catch the wind that spreads the pollen. Female flowers form individually or in small groups on tiny twigs at the base of leaf clusters. One of wonderful things about having a newly planted oak tree, of eye level height, as a neighbor is having the opportunity to catch a glimpse of a rarely seen female oak flower. It was already September and I have no idea how old the flower I



*Sawtooth Oak*

found was. The leaves at the tip of its branch had failed to open, making it possible to take a close up-photo. It

looks like it's on its way to becoming an acorn with what appears to be petals developing into the scales of the acorn's cap. Tiny nascent acorns that have not been pollinated are aborted and drop to the ground early in the maturation process. (See picture).

There are two other recently planted street trees in front of 14 Fairfield Street that I've been watching grow, while out for walks, for the last couple of years. Alex Sherman tells me they are 'First Blush' ornamental cherries (*Prunus 'JFS-KW14' PP24248*). It is a selection from the J.F. Schmidt nursery in Oregon, that has double pink, fragrant flowers and a relatively narrow crown making it suitable for tree belts. Once again they are not native. So far I haven't seen any flowers, but I love the cherry trees growing in the downtown, Mattoon Street area, and these cherry trees should be a wonderful addition to our street scape, once they begin to bloom. I'll have to remind you all to come and visit them, hopefully next spring.

Among the native species that the City of Springfield is planting as street trees are serviceberries, American Elms and American Basswood. According to Alex, "diversity is key!"

If you live in Springfield and would like a tree planted on your tree belt, call 311, give the operator your information and it will be passed on to the appropriate department. Be prepared to be patient.

Janet Dolder, Horticulture Education Chair

## ***Upcoming Calendar***

### **OCTOBER 2023**

**October 2 GCFM FUNDamentals – (formerly Back to Basics)** flower design workshop - Plymouth Library, 132 South Street, Plymouth MA Information at <https://www.gcfm.org>

**October 3-4 Flower Distribution – Tuesday and Wednesday, 9:00 am – 2:00 pm** John J. Shea Bright Nights Building, Forest Park, Springfield, MA 01108; *Wanda Roberge, Lorie Dixon, Chairs*

**October 9 - Horticulture Study Group – Monday, 1:00 pm** John J. Shea Bright Nights Building, Forest Park, Springfield, MA 01108 Program TBD

**October 10-11 – NE Regional (NEGC) Annual Meeting–  
Tuesday – Wednesday** 1620 Hotel, Plymouth, MA

[https://www.gcfm.org/files/ugd/cbe110\\_089bbb05db8a4417bc305684140067e3.pdf](https://www.gcfm.org/files/ugd/cbe110_089bbb05db8a4417bc305684140067e3.pdf)

**October 11 - Board Meeting – Wednesday, 9:30 am**

John J. Shea Bright Nights Building, Forest Park, Springfield, MA 01108 Host: Suzanne Reed Refreshments: Annmarie Shaer, Claire Valenti Minutes: TBD

**October 20 - Monthly Program – Friday, 11:30 am  
BRINGING HOME THE BEAUTY: NATIVE PLANTS IN OUR  
GARDENS -Presented by Uli Lorimer, Native Plant Trust  
Director**

As Director of The Native Plant Trust since March of 2019, Uli has advocated tirelessly for the use of native plants in public and private gardens.. With his **Northeast Native Plant Primer** as a starting point, he will show us how we can bring the beauty of native plants into our own gardens. Light luncheon, including gluten free options, sweets, coffee, and tea will be served. Directions to the Carriage house at: [www.barneycarriagehouse.com](http://www.barneycarriagehouse.com). In-person raffle for members and guests. Guests are welcome - Guest fee is \$5.00

**October 25 - SPECIAL ZOOM EVENING PROGRAM–  
Wednesday, 7:00 pm THE UNEXPECTED HOUSEPLANT -  
Presented by Tovah Martin**

Houseplants may have fallen out of favor with many gardeners. With her book of the same title as a starting point, horticulturist, photographer, author, and lecturer Tovah Martin will encourage us to “dust off our houseplants and update their image.” An email will go out to our members to attend this program on Zoom. SAVE THE DATE!

**October 25-27 – GCFM Landscape Design School I**

Details and registration at  
<https://www.gcfm.org/education>

### **NOVEMBER 2023**

**November 8 - Board Meeting – Wednesday, 9:30 am**

John J. Shea Bright Nights Building, Forest Park, Springfield, MA 01108 Host: Judy Cmero; Refreshments: Beate Bolen, Fidele Malloy. Minutes: Helen Gallivan

**November 13 - Horticulture Study Group – Monday, 10:00 am** John J. Shea Bright Nights Building, Forest Park, Springfield, MA 01108 Pat Alderson will make a presentation about propagation and care of begonias.

**November 16 - Floral Design Study Group –Thursday 9:30-1:00pm** John J. Shea Bright Nights Building, Forest Park, Springfield, MA 01108

**November 17 - Monthly Program – Friday, 11:30 am  
GROWING NATIVES FROM SEEDS**

*presented by Alexis Doshas, Nasami Farm Nursery  
Manager*

Ever wonder why some seeds are so hard to get started? As the manager of Nasami Farm Nursery, Alexis will share her extensive experience in starting and growing native seeds and why they are so important for us to add to our gardens. She will also bring seeds to share with us! Light luncheon, including gluten free options, sweets, coffee, and tea will be served. Directions to the Carriage house at: [www.barneycarriagehouse.com](http://www.barneycarriagehouse.com). In-person raffle for members and guests. Guests are welcome - Guest fee is \$5.00

**November 28-30 “Yuletide at Storowton”- Tuesday-Thursday**

**Committee** will be meeting on site to decorate the Gilbert kitchen – *Elizabeth Tongue, Chair*

### **DECEMBER 2023**

**December 2-9 “Yuletide at Storowton Village”, Eastern States Fairground, West Springfield, 01089**

The public is invited to “Yuletide at Storowton” to view period holiday decorations created by the Springfield Garden Club and other volunteer organizations during Storowton Village’s winter holiday festival. The Springfield Garden Club will be decorating the kitchen in the Gilbert House. For hours and more information call Storowton Village at 413-205-5051 or visit [www.storowtonvillage.com](http://www.storowtonvillage.com).

**December 6 – Board Meeting – Wednesday, 9:30 am**

At the Home of Vana Nespor & Al Whitehouse  
Refreshments: Kathy McNamara, Elizabeth Tongue;  
Minutes: Beate Bolen

**December 11 – Horticulture Study Group - Monday, 11:30 am**

At the Carriage House in Forest Park - Holiday Potluck. Bring an unwrapped child’s gift and woman’s toiletries for donation to the YWCA.

**December 12 “Yuletide at Storowton”- Tuesday**

**Committee** will be taking down decorations

**December 15 – Monthly Program – Friday, 11:30 am  
DECORATING SUSTAINABLY FOR THE HOLIDAYS** *Presented by Springfield Garden Club Members*

Several of our members will demonstrate their techniques of creating decorations for the holidays using their most

sustainable designs and materials. Come be inspired! Light luncheon, including gluten free options, sweets, coffee, and tea will be served. Directions to the Carriage house at: [www.barneycarriagehouse.com](http://www.barneycarriagehouse.com). In-person raffle for members and guests. Guests are welcome - Guest fee is \$5.00



**Claire Valenti, Bob Pellin, Wanda Roberge, Janet Dolder, Margot Eckert at Bob and Ralph's Garden Stroll**

**Garden Ghosts**  
*By Kathleen M. Tenpas*

A shuffle and tap,  
leaves on the stone path,  
a twig against the bench,  
but look quickly, there,  
glimmer of a long cloth coat  
scarf pulled close  
scent of anise and camphor  
the sense of a presence,  
long accustomed

those who first dug this dirt,  
nurtured these blooms  
mingled over centuries and continents  
across a cold sea  
to this place where I  
am left a green legacy.

**Note from the Editor-**

*This newsletter would not be possible without the talent and generosity of you, our members. The articles and photos you submit are enlightening and entertaining. If you have an article or photo you'd like to share, be sure to send it to me at [beatebolen@gmail.com](mailto:beatebolen@gmail.com)*

*Beate, Bolen, Editor*