



# Lexington Field & Garden Club

144 Years of Making Lexington More Beautiful

Member of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts

Volume 11 Issue 5 • January 2021

email: LFGC024@gmail.com

Co-President's Letter

To everything (Turn, Turn, Turn)

There is a season (Turn, Turn, Turn)

And a time to every purpose under heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, a time to reap that which is planted;

A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;

A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

A time to gain that which is to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

A time of love, and a time of hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

Does anyone remember this song? It was titled 'Turn, Turn, Turn' and was recorded by many artists, but the most popular version was recorded in 1965 by The Byrds. It is thought that the plea for peace in the last verse struck a nerve with the public as the Vietnam War escalated.

The word 'season' always intrigued me in this song. To me, 'season' literally meant a certain time of the year — spring, summer, autumn and winter. Here however, it refers to a time for action — to be born, and to die, to plant and reap and so on. We have just gone through the Holiday Season. It was a time to be merry and celebrate with family and friends. Or, perhaps this year, a time to refrain from celebrating with family and friends.

Growing up on the small island of Malta, in a very warm climate, I did not experience distinct seasons at all. For me there was a long summer and a relatively short mild winter. I do not have much recollection of spring, perhaps because my head was down studying for exams at that time of the year, or because winter morphed into warm days by February. Deciduous trees were few and far between, and the knowledge of the leaves falling with the subsequent raking and cleaning up was only garnered from books and not a reality. As I left the island and took up abode in northern countries, I started experiencing distinct seasons. I remember waking up to my first snow fall. It fell so silently. I remember wondering why I did not hear it fall? The first time I saw a huge maple tree which had turned a bright golden yellow, I had to stop the car, get out and walk to the tree where I stood, bathed in filtered yellow light.

As gardeners we are very much in tune with what the seasons do to our gardens and what, in turn, we must do to them so that they flourish. In late winter, we wait expectantly for the earth to warm up and watch for those first bulbs to pop out of the earth. Then different flowers, as if on cue, bloom at specific times in a predetermined order. We plant our vegetables by Memorial Day to avoid a late frost. In the fall we look at the late bloomers with nostalgia, knowing that there will not be any flowers till next spring. And when the flowers fade and die, we plant bulbs so we have something to look forward to in the spring. Then we put our garden to 'bed'.

Winter is here and it seems there is not much to do in the cold snowy garden. Ah, but there is! Now is the time to plan our next garden project — pull out those catalogs, draw a plan, order those plants, start those seedlings growing! Seasons come and go. The end of the pandemic is in sight. Winter will be over and before we know it, we will be enjoying our gardens once again with family and friends. Perhaps we can add a verse or two to the song.

‘A time to isolate and a time to congregate

A time to dream up a garden and a time to make the dream come true’.

Happy New Year!

**Bridget Galdes**

Co-President



## A Special Thank You

The Lexington Field and Garden Club has so many talented and generous members. I'd like to thank a few of the people who keep us going...

A very big thank you to **Christina Gamota** and **Regina Sutton** who worked tirelessly with others to create a bevy of beautiful gifts we all had the opportunity to purchase to raise money for the Club. The gifts were special, creative and so lovely. Regina and Christina cataloged and photographed their wares so that we could all see the options and provided an easy way for us to buy and pick up our purchases. Everything was done with their well-known grace and class! Due to the pandemic, the Club has lost many opportunities for fundraising but thanks to these two wonderful women, as well as all of you made the items and those who made purchases, our coffers filled a bit before the end of the year. Thank you very much.

How sad were we all not to be able to enjoy the Holiday Greens Party this year? But thanks to the resourcefulness of our VP/Programs Director, **Marilyn Ryniewicz**, we were able to have a fun meeting with the talented **Meade Fasciano** and **Georgia Glick** who each demonstrated ways to create beautiful holiday decorations. I know we were all inspired! In addition we were treated to fantastic holiday music by our own **Donna** and **David Moulthrop**. Thank you all for providing us with seasonal cheer and merriment!

**Ashley Rooney** continues to plan programs with the library that educate all of us as well as the greater community. I know that we have welcomed new members who joined LFGC as a result of watching these videos. They will be continuing through 2021!

Our Co-President, **Bridget Galdes**, has been a saint when it comes to setting up, managing and problem solving issues for our zoom meetings. And she does it all with a wonderful sense of humor and grace!

This is one of the (many!) reasons I love this Club. People are willing to step up and help out in ways that keep us a dynamic and vital group, even during trying times. Thank you everyone!

**Ruthanne Igoe**

Co-President



## Nature's Best Hope

### A Cary Library online talk by Doug Tallamy

Thursday, January 28, 7 pm



Recent headlines about global insect declines and three billion fewer birds in North America are a bleak reality check about how ineffective our current landscape designs have been at sustaining the plants and animals that sustain us. Such losses are not an option if we wish to continue our current standard of living on Planet Earth. The good news is that none of this is inevitable. Professor Doug Tallamy will discuss simple steps that each of us can — and must — take to reverse declining biodiversity and will explain why we, ourselves, are nature's best hope.

Doug Tallamy is a professor in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, where he has authored 103 research publications and has taught insect related courses for 40 years. Chief among his research goals is to better understand the many ways insects interact with plants and how such interactions determine the diversity of animal communities. His book *Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens* was published by Timber Press in 2007 and was awarded the 2008 Silver Medal by the Garden Writers' Association. *The Living Landscape*, co-authored with Rick Darke, was published in 2014. Doug's new book *Nature's Best Hope* released by Timber Press in February 2020, is a New York Times Best Seller. Among his awards are the Garden Club of America Margaret Douglas Medal for Conservation and the Tom Dodd, Jr. Award of Excellence, the 2018 AHS B.Y. Morrison Communication Award and the 2019 Cynthia Westcott Scientific Writing Award.

Co-sponsored by the Cary Library Foundation and by Lexington Living Landscapes, a partnership of Sustainable Lexington, the Lexington Field and Garden Club, Lexington Global Warming Action Coalition, and Citizens for Lexington Conservation to promote sustainable landscaping in Lexington. Learn more at [www.lexingtonlivinglandscapes.org](http://www.lexingtonlivinglandscapes.org).

Register for the webinar by going to the Cary Library program calendar (<https://www.carylibrary.org/calendar/program-calendar>) and clicking on the title of the program on the 28th. Professor Tallamy is an excellent speaker. Please mark your calendar and join us!



## Late Winter and Spring Virtual Garden Happenings

Lexington's Cary Library and LFGC are pleased to present year-round talks on a variety of topics. A reservation is required so you receive the program link. You can register for individual programs by clicking on the Cary Library calendar.

**Mon Jan 11, 7 PM** Planning for the spring time with **Guy Doran** and **Ashley Rooney**. Getting started with the garden catalogs, learning what the new introductions are all about, and answering all those questions.

## First Snow

By Mary Oliver



The snow  
began here  
this morning and all day  
continued, its white  
rhetoric everywhere  
calling us back to why, how,  
whence such beauty and what  
the meaning; such  
an oracular fever! Flowing  
past windows, an energy it seemed  
would never ebb, never settle  
less than lovely! And only now,  
deep into night,  
it has finally ended.

The silence  
is immense,  
and the heavens still hold  
a million candles; nowhere  
the familiar things:  
stars, the moon,  
the darkness we expect  
and nightly turn from. Trees  
glitter like castles  
of ribbons, the broad fields  
smolder with light, a passing  
creekbed lies  
heaped with shining hills;  
and though the questions  
that have assailed us all day  
remain – not a single  
answer has been found –  
walking out now  
into the silence and the light  
under the trees,  
and through the fields,  
feels like one.





## Civic Gardening – Summer Street Traffic Island

**Shelly Henderson**

The LFGC maintains a large number of traffic islands. This adds significantly to the beauty of our community. One of these is the Summer Street traffic island which, as I understood it, was rescued by **Kate Gill**, a former president of LFGC. Helping Kate was my first introduction to LFGC upon moving to Lexington nine years ago. It is a large island with no water source other than rainfall. A fumosa tree was planted that had reached twenty feet in height but died off two winters ago. The dead trunk was cut down last year and the stump has generated new shoots which may or may not survive the winter.

It is always great fun to watch how people respond to the island. Frequently people honk and thank us and tell us how much they are inspired by seeing the island en route to school or work each day. One day a passerby was so in awe of the fumosa tree that he stopped to photograph it.

Kate was really proud when she got funding from the club for two native nine bark bushes which barely made it through the first summer. One was run over by a truck and survived. Both are finally gaining some gusto and size. We think of **Linda Walsh** in May when the gorgeous oriental poppies bloom that originally came from her garden.

Our most prolific vegetation is California poppy and butter-and-eggs (*Linaria vulgaris*) wildflowers which take over every year regardless of how much we weed them back. Both are beautiful in their own right. Second most prolific is Sheffield chrysanthemum which provides lush green foliage until October when it bursts forth with profuse pink daisies with yellow centers just as everything else is dying back. In addition, we enjoy peonies, lilies, irises, tulips, daffodils, allium, grape hyacinth, catmint, rose of sharon, hydrangeas, sedum and milkweed. Except for dead of winter, there is not a season when the island is not in bloom! Special accolades go out to **Meg Himmel** and **Karen Boudreau** for rallying support for the last several years to help with spring and fall clean up. Recently it has been a joy to have **Sara Moorman** as a new neighbor making major contributions!



*Summer ST Traffic Island - Fall 2020.*



*Summer St. Traffic Island – Spring 2018  
Cecile Platek, Donna Dennison,  
Karen Boudreau, Joan Stoner*

## Do You Ignore Your Houseplants?

### E. Ashley Rooney

If you do, that's good because many houseplants prefer to be ignored!

The first rule in taking care of plants is to prevent overwatering. Plants die from overwatering, which many of us do in the winter. If the plant roots are in water-logged soil, they can't breathe. If a plant is overwatered, it generally has yellow or brown limp leaves rather than dry, crispy leaves (which are actually a sign of too little water). Wilting leaves usually mean that root rot has set in, and the roots can no longer absorb water.

Your goal is to provide your plants with enough water to keep the soil moist but not soggy (succulents, however, require periodic soaking). Pour water slowly into the potting soil until it trickles out from the drainage holes in the bottom of the pot. Most plants only need to be watered once or twice a week, and less during the winter months. An easy way to check if your plant needs a drink is to stick your finger two inches deep into the soil. If it feels dry, then it's most likely time to water.



*An early promise of spring  
from Joan Howard.*

Most houseplants thrive in temperatures between 65 and 75 degrees during the day and about 10 degrees cooler at night. In general, houseplants require a level of humidity similar to that of their natural growing conditions. Air plants require misting with a spray bottle.

All plants need light for photosynthesis, but they have different light requirements. Desert cacti and other succulents like direct sunlight, but most houseplants (e.g., orchis, pothos, peace lilies) want indirect light. Plants that survive in especially shady, low-light conditions can grow in north and east-facing windows.

A high-quality potting soil will help plant roots grow by providing the ideal balance of nutrition, aeration, and water absorption. Whenever possible, you should choose a potting soil specific to your houseplant. For example, orchids and bromeliads require fast-draining soil, but succulents grow best in porous, sandy soils.

To achieve sustained, healthy indoor plant growth, regularly replenish the nutrients in the potting soil. In general, fertilize your houseplants once a month when they're growing or flowering. During the winter, you can stop your fertilizer regimen.

When choosing a pot, make sure to consider its material, size, and drainage capability. Be sure that it has a drainage hole. Use a pot that's not more than a few inches wider in diameter than your plant's root mass. Once the plant outgrows its home, you can transplant it or divide it and give the other half to a friend.



## A Note from Christina Gamota and Regina Sutton

Dear Members of LFGC and Friends,

Thank you for your support, participation and monetary donations.

The Holiday Boutique of 2020 has been a success. We were able to raise over \$800 which will be used for Community projects. We personally enjoyed the two workshops that we had in our home, Christmas Trees topiary and Pomander. It was fun, meeting some new members and seeing old friends. We also want to thank those who contributed hand-knitted items, aromatic balsam pillows, and unique jewelry to our holiday boutique. Thank you also to members who purchased our boutique items. We hope you enjoy them as much as we did making them.

Fondly,

**Christina and Regina**



## January Jollies

What did the Dalmation say after lunch?

That hit the spot!

Why did the can crusher quit his job?

Because it was soda pressing!

What do you get when you cross an elephant with a fish?

Swimming trunks.

How does the moon cut his hair?

Eclipse it.



## Christmas Tree Alternative

**Georgia Glick**

Arrrggh!! The Christmas tree! What a lot of work! What a mess!! Dry needles all over the floor!!! The kids don't come to our house anymore. We go to their place. But, I do like our ornaments: all the petit point ones my mother made; our three generations of baby spoons, odd-ball things from trips . . . but I don't want a fake tree. So I came up with something else.



Wreath frames: I wired together a small, a medium and a larger metal wreath frame to form a three-tiered structure. We hang it from a hook in our dining room ceiling. Each frame can hold 12 to 20 ornaments for us to admire. In early December, our "wreath tree" goes up in five to ten minutes. At season's end, I put a clean plastic trash bag over it and hang the tree in the basement for another year. Done!



## What We're Watching...

**Betsy Pollack**

I'm not so much a TV watcher, more of a listener, because I'm always multitasking when I sit down to watch. During the pandemic, I've spent even more time on the couch, and a few things have caught my attention enough to put down my project. At the beginning of COVID, we binged on the first 3 seasons of "The Crown" (Netflix). It's been interesting to learn more about Queen Elizabeth's life and her reign. I had only superficial awareness of most of the history depicted. It's the latest season, Season 4, that has really grabbed me with the entrance of Diana onto the scene. We were the same age, so I was fascinated by Diana's story in real time as it unfolded in the 1980s. Not really the "happily ever after" expected at the start. All the seasons are worth watching, but I especially enjoyed the most recent one.

"The Undoing" (HBO) with Nicole Kidman and Hugh Grant was especially gripping. Used to binging on shows, it was torture to wait for each new episode to be released. In this drama about a wealthy couple in Manhattan, the husband is accused of killing the mother of a student at their son's school. He, of course, denies it. Full of twists and turns, you won't know the outcome until the very end.

Finally, "The Queen's Gambit" (Netflix), about a female chess prodigy in the 1960's has been my favorite. The story unfolds starting with the main character's experiences in an orphanage; her discovery of chess fuels her search for acceptance, validation, and love. You don't need to be a fan of chess to enjoy this one.



## Ashley Rooney

“A French Village”, is an acclaimed drama about the German occupation of France during World War II and its effects on the inhabitants of a small village in the Jura. In June 1940, the village of Villeneuve awakes to the arrival of the German army, and the next four years of occupation have a shattering effect on the lives of all its inhabitants. The directors confront us with the challenges, dilemmas, and contradictory demands and situations of a community controlled by a military power. There’s the French cop who obeys every command involving the rounding up of Jews for execution and deportation until he falls for a Jewish woman. There’s the doctor who is unwillingly thrust into the position of town mayor with his scruples compromised one by one. There are the resistance fighters, the collaborators, and the usual adultery. There are a few stereotypes (except for the SS), the rest are just normal human beings trying to adapt to an almost unbearable situation. We are delighted that there are seven seasons to keep us engaged during this winter. The acting is excellent; it is not always easy to watch, but we go to bed asking what we would have done in that particular situation. Watch it on Amazon Prime, in French with English subtitles.

## Ruthanne Igoe

I have fallen in love with the BBB/PBS series, now shown on Netflix, “Call the Midwife”. It takes place in East London during the late 1950’s and 1960’s. A group of midwives live at a convent with a community of nuns who all tend to the local residents through their midwifery and family-care mission. It’s a moving, humorous and poignant look at the struggles, prejudices and care-taking practices of the time. Storylines that resonate with current issues of today are addressed in thoughtful and hopeful ways. I highly recommend this series. It’s uplifting and a joy to watch.

## And What We’re Reading...

### Debbie Fortin

As part of a book club I recently read *An Indigenous People’s History of the United States* by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz. I often enjoy historic fiction, but seldom read straight history books. However, I could not put this book down. I highly recommend this new well-documented look at our founders and their intentions as seen through the eyes of native people. In war and conquest who are the heroes and who are the brutes? This book is a reminder that history is told by the victors and we need to offer more than one point when teaching history to our children to reveal truths and to develop critical thinking and perspective taking. I believe *An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States* should be required reading in high school U.S. history.

I’m so glad I happened upon the novel, *The Book Women of Troublesome Creek* by Kim Michele Richardson. It tells the story through the first person voice of a WPA funded pack-horse librarian in Kentucky coal country. In spite of her poverty and a genetic condition that caused others to shun her she is delightfully thoughtful about what reading material to bring to her neighbors and really makes a difference in their lives. I was sometimes overcome by the extreme starvation, poverty and danger in this community. This book made me wonder about the definition of race, how power and education affect the ongoing battle for woman’s rights and the use of minority people in medical research. I would strongly recommend this novel.



# For Our Veterans

Morning Study Group collected 160 pairs of cotton socks and over 50 calendars for the Bedford VA Hospital.

