



Lexington Field & Garden Club

144 Years of Making Lexington More Beautiful

Member of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts

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Co-President's Letter

Happy Spring Everyone!

I feel like there's a light at the end of the proverbial tunnel! The weather is warmer and the days are longer. Flowers are beginning to make an appearance and people are getting vaccinated! All wonderful things...we may even be able to meet in person soon! This is a very busy time of year for LFGC. Membership renewals are due April 15th (please renew if you haven't already!) and people are hard at work on May's on-line Plant Sale. Programs for next year's big club and sub-groups are being finalized. A new slate for the Executive Board is being announced in this newsletter. Civic Gardening groups are cleaning up and beautifying Lexington's public spaces. The 2021-2022 Yearbook preparations are underway and special events are being planned for the fall season. We still are attending all our programs, meetings and Zoom chats! And let's not forget what we love doing the most...getting outside and gardening!



As we venture out and start to have things return to some sort of normal, please think about ways you can get more involved with the Club. There are many committees that need new members and volunteers are always welcomed for special events. There's a great article in this issue detailing all the things Civic Gardening is up to...new gardens are being installed, invasives are being eradicated from historic town properties, and preparations to take a part of the town tree farm for LFGC use are being planned. Most importantly, we have a real need for island/public space stewards and volunteers. This is such an important mission for our Club and those who have been doing this work for the past many, many years really need help.

I am so grateful for all the members who stepped up during this COVID crisis and kept the LFGC going. So much work was done behind the scenes to keep programs on

schedule, to create new opportunities for learning and getting to know one another, and to continue our commitment to keep Lexington's public spaces beautiful. Committees have met tirelessly, keeping up their regular responsibilities but also coming up with and then executing new ideas and projects. We've been incorporating things learned about planting native and pollinator-friendly gardens into our work as a Club. We are reaching out and collaborating with like-minded groups in town, such as Lexington Living Landscapes. But we need help to keep this momentum going and the Club thriving. It's an exciting time and I hope you will seriously consider getting involved. You will not be sorry!

Thank you and stay well,

Ruthanne Igoe

Co-President



April Calendar

LFGC Meeting

Wednesday, April 14 • Growing Iris, Daylilies and Hostas with Suzanne Mahler

Sub Groups

Monday Evening Group • **April 26** • Book Talk – *Beautiful Madness*

Morning Study Group • **April 13** • Gardens of New Zealand

Garden Party • **On hiatus** until meeting outside can commence

Wednesday Workshop • **April 21** • Nurturing the Liberated Landscape (film) — Garden Federation of Massachusetts

All members are invited to join us via Zoom for this film at 10:00 followed by a discussion.

Thursday Evening Group • **April 14** • Joint meeting with Main Club



Lexington Field and Garden Club Meeting Minutes

March 10, 2021 • Via Zoom

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

There were 64 people present.

Announcements

- Membership dues deadline is April 15th.
- The Town Celebrations Committee is sponsoring a Decorate Your Door contest from March 15th – April 5th. Judges will be **Molly Nye** and **Ashley Rooney**; there will be a prize for the winner in each precinct and a grand prize.
- The 2021 LFGC Plant Sale will be online during the week of May 22nd. Information to follow in the newsletter.

Marilyn Ryniewicz introduced Louisa Kasdon, the founder of Let's Talk About Food. Her presentation focused on food choices and actions taken to improve our food system. She introduced Jane Hirschi, founder of CltySprouts. This is a school garden-based learning program in the Cambridge, MA Public Schools. Questions followed.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Halverson

Recording Secretary

Video Recordings of Monthly LFGC Club Programs

Anne Lee, with help from her 20 year-old son Aidan, has very kindly uploaded recordings of our monthly LFGC meetings on the LFGC website for all to peruse. Many thanks to Anne and Aidan for their time, talent, patience and dedication. This is behind-the-scenes work, but without their effort we would not have these recordings available on our website.

Go to [LexGardenClub.org](https://www.lexgardenclub.org) to find the recordings.



Important Membership Reminder

Please renew by April 15th to remain a part of this enriching Club with its many benefits. Renewing by April 15th allows you to be included in the 2021–2022 Yearbook, continue to be on the mailing list, and have easy access to our programs and activities. Use this link: <https://www.lexgardenclub.org/renewing-members.html>. You can also go to the Renewing Members page of the LFGC website, or check your emails for information on how to renew.

Thank you for your continued support!

Susan Cass and **Marlene Stone**

Membership Co-Chairs

“In the spring, I have counted 136 different kinds of weather
inside of 24 hours.”

— Mark Twain





April 14th Election of LFGC Officers

On April 14, the Lexington Field and Garden Club will elect new or, in some cases, continuing Officers. The slate of Officers is as follows.

Co-Presidents	Ruthanne Igoe Marlene Stone
Vice-President	Marilyn Ryngiewicz
Recording Secretary	Jane Halverson
Corresponding Secretary	Georgia Glick
Membership Co-Chair	Jackie Potdevin

At the April 14th meeting, members will be introduced to these nominees. Members will be “unmuted” so that they may voice a “Yea” or “Nay” vote for the slate of Officers.

Other Officers not on the slate are **Miranda Cohen**, Treasurer, and **Susan Cass**, Membership Co-Chair, who have one more year in their terms.

The LFGC Nominating Committee worked hard to complete the full slate of Officers and thanks those members who are new or are continuing in their Officer roles. Nominating Committee members in 2020-21 include **Jan Avallone**, Chairperson, **Jane Fanburg**, **Terry Hale**, **Gail Harris**, **Betsy Hansen**, **Judy Minardi**, **Ethel Olin**, **Bridget Galdes**, and **Ruthanne Igoe**.



Morning Study Group Donates \$1,000 to Buckman Tavern Garden

Morning Study Group members have voted unanimously to donate \$1,000 to help complete the restoration of the Webster Herb Garden at the Buckman Tavern. **Helen Noyes Webster** was a leader in establishing MSG and became a nationally recognized expert on the uses of herbs. The restored garden will also honor **Mary Milligan**, another former MSG member. She lived in Lexington on Woburn Street for many years and also was active in the Herb Society of America.

The primary use of the gift is to purchase permanent labels for the herbs in the garden, and to print brochures for visitors. The current restoration project was started in 2018 by **Elaine and Guy Doran**, both Garden Club members, and Carla Fortmann of the Lexington Historical Society.



Information from the Civic Gardening Chairs

Summary of on-going LFGC civic gardening projects

Workdays The care of the 25 islands and other public spaces around Town has been the most important work of civic gardening. To support the folks who do the majority of the work, we schedule one-time workdays to help with spring cleanup activities. We have started scheduling these workdays. Please consider joining us for one of these events.

DAR Island We are collaborating with DAR and DPW in the restoration of the large island at Reed and Bedford Streets. This May, we are planting LFGC's first pollinator garden.

DAR will assume maintenance of the area.

Boulder Garden DPW has suggested installation of a focal point around the boulder at Hastings Park. Lexington Living Landscapes will work with Civic Gardening on the planning and installation of another pollinator garden at this location.

Munroe Tavern property In collaboration with Lexington Historical Society, we are completing an invasives removal project. The project to eradicate the large field of lesser celandine in the wetlands area, extending into the native plant garden, will start in April. Restoration of the area with native plants is also planned.

Hancock-Clarke property In another collaborative project with Lexington Historical Society, we have initiated removal of a large stand of Japanese knotweed. Hopefully, you are all familiar with this most persistent and aggressive invasive and plan to join in this effort, as able. On-going work will continue for several seasons

Tree Farm The town has made an area of our tree farm available for LFGC use. In collaboration with the Conservation Stewards, we will help with the initial clearing of the area of brush and prepare planting beds for a native plant nursery and a permanent holding area for the LFGC plant sale.

Recent Civic Gardening Survey This survey was designed to identify a larger workforce among LFGC members for the many projects currently in the works. Many thanks to all those that responded. We'll be in touch!

As you can see, we're a busy group always looking for new workers. If you would like to be involved in any of the above projects, please be sure to contact Karen Boudreau, or Meg Himmel.



Decorate Your Door for Patriots' Day!



The Town Celebrations Committee is running an exciting contest with great prizes! Registrations begin on March 15. The decorations should be completed by April 5. The judges (**Molly Nye** and **Ashley Rooney**) will pick a winner for each precinct who will win \$75 in gift certificates to local businesses. The best door wins \$200 in gift certificates!



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 at least 24 hours beforehand so you receive the program link. You can register for individual programs by clicking on the Cary Library calendar, <https://www.caryllibrary.org/calendar/program-calendar>.



Think Spring with a Garden Tour

Thursday, April 15, 7 PM • Enjoy a garden tour in all its beauty and be inspired by a wealth of horticultural delights with **Janet Erickson** and **Ashley Rooney**. They will take you on a tour of mature gardens with lovely water features, garden ornaments, and incredible flowers – right here in Lexington. These images will certainly motivate you to get out in the spring air.

Sow What? Starting Your Vegetable Garden from Seed

Tuesday, April 27, 7PM • Do you struggle to raise seeds successfully? Are you a beginner gardener? Mary Rose Scozzafava, a veteran home gardener and board member of Lexington Community Farm, and **Ashley Rooney** will share tips on how to start your vegetable garden from seed and how to avoid common mistakes when starting seeds.



Some Dazzling Annuals

E. Ashley Rooney

I believe in perennials, but we need a few dazzling annuals to fill the void when the perennial has finished blooming or when we have a young bed with newly planted perennials. Annuals encourage us to experiment, help define the garden, and bring new bursts of color.

Last year we planted **celosia** with its flashy, uniquely-shaped flowers resembling something that Dr. Seuss might have drawn. Celosia provides bright yellow, warm orange, scarlet red, and deep burgundy purple accents in a variety of shapes. The bees and other pollinators love them, making weeding on warm, sunny days rather hazardous!

Annuals, like perennials, can make bold statements. Last June we planted **Love-lies-bleeding** and watched it grow and grow, dazzling us with its showy red tassels cascading from the tips of its branches. “**Cut and Come Again**” zinnias, although not unusual, crawl up the side of our house on the driveway side. By October, the eight original plants had made a 6 x 8 ft wall of color.

Other annuals such as **Nicotiana** will spread out, increasing their ability to fill the space. These long-blooming, attractive plants with trumpet-shaped flowers in shades of green, white, red, and pastels blend in well. The best one is **Nicotiana Sylvestris** with its oversize leaves and dangling clusters of white scented flowers. A bonus offered by the **Nicotiana** plants is that rabbits don't eat them.

Some annuals can bring the disparate parts of the garden together. **Ammi majus** resemble a refined version of Queen Anne's lace. Its pristine white flowers borne on slender branches mingle gracefully with other flowers in the garden. The feathery foliage acts as a great filler in the garden or the vase. In the fall, the birds feed on its dried flower heads.

Attractive to bees, birds, and butterflies, **cosmos** adds swaying charm to beds and borders. If you plant spider plants and cosmos together, you can have a tall blooming wall in shades of pink, white, and lavender. **Cleome** flowers from June to frost, growing 3 to 6 feet tall. It attracts butterflies and hummingbirds, and birds will visit the ripe seed heads in late summer and autumn. Use cleome in the background of beds and borders, butterfly and cottage gardens, containers, or massed in clusters for bold color.



Celosia



Tithonia rotundifolia
Mexican Sunflower

Tithonia rotundifolia, or Mexican sunflower, is one of the most “active” pollinator plants I have grown in my garden. The butterflies far prefer this plant. My two plants grew 10 feet tall and 6 feet wide.

Here in New England, people often have lovely spring gardens of daffodils and tulips, but nothing in August or September. Although we grow many perennials that produce beautiful blooms, the late summer showstoppers are the annuals or tubers. Those gorgeous dinner plate dahlias can really fill the gaps. The Farmer's Almanac says, “Picking a favorite **dahlia** is like going through a button box. As well as coming in a rainbow of colors, dahlia flowers can range in size from petite 2-inch lollipop-style pompoms to giant 15-inch dinner plate blooms. Most varieties grow 4 to 5 feet tall.” And they bloom until frost.



Pink Canna

Colorful cannas have ruffled spikes in reds, oranges, yellows, and pinks tapering to refined buds. They have immense, often-veined, paddle-shaped leaves and flashy blooms that stand tall on their stems. From mid-summer to late September, they keep pumping out their flamboyant blooms. While many flowers can't take the heat of late July and early August, cannas thrive.

(Editorial note: we will have both dahlias and cannas in the virtual plant sale)

For edible autumn color, consider planting swiss chard, *Beta vulgaris*, with its glossy green leaves and stems of gold, white, and magenta. Or you could plant ornamental kale, which ranges from purple and green with pink centers.

In other words, marigolds and pansies are great, but try something new. It will bring you great joy — even more so if it attracts the pollinators.



Swiss chard



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME!!!

Please renew by April 15th!

This is more important than your taxes...

And certainly a more fun thing to do!

Visit the website and renew today!



Please renew your membership!!!

Dear Lexington Field and Garden Club Members,

The Membership Committee is sponsoring several one hour zoom “Question and Answer” sessions this spring, open to all current members of the LFGC. These sessions will be informal, fun, and led by some of our more experienced gardeners. It will be an opportunity to learn something new, share experiences, meet new people, and have a good time!

We want members to have the opportunity to ask whatever gardening questions they might have, especially as we prepare to get outside in our gardens. If you’d like to submit a question ahead of time, please email in advance to **Marlene Stone**. There will also be an opportunity to spontaneously ask questions during the zoom “Chat”. Our moderator, **Jim Poage**, will be managing the questions.



tulips and daffodills

The zoom sessions are scheduled on the following dates and invites will be sent out closer to the event times:

Tuesday, March 30 at 7:00 pm with **Meg Himmel** and **Bridget Galdes**

Thursday, April 8 at 7:00 PM with **Chris Kochanski** and **Linda Walsh**

Thursday, April 22 at 7:00 PM with **Terry Hale** and **Ashley Rooney**

We look forward to connecting with you at one of these informative sessions!

Marlene Stone and **Susan Cass**

Membership Committee Co-Chairs



“Evening with Experts” at Grow Native Massachusetts is back!

Grow Native of Massachusetts recently announced its “Evening with Experts” presentations for spring 2021. Many of you have enjoyed these lectures over the years. The lectures for this spring are:

March 31, 7:00 – 8:30 PM: “Managing an Urban Landscape for Biodiversity” by Rebecca McMackin, Director of Horticulture, Brooklyn Bridge Park. Online via Zoom, (sorry for the late notification).

April 28, 7:00 – 8:30 PM: “New Naturalism: Lessons from Wild Plant Communities” by Kelly D. Norris, Author of *New Naturalism: Designing and Planting a Resilient, Ecologically Vibrant Home Garden*. Online via Zoom.

May 26, 7:00 – 8:30 PM: “Cultivating Wildlife Conservation with Native Plants” by Desiree Narango, David H. Smith Conservation Research Fellow, University of Massachusetts Amherst. Online via Zoom.

Further information along with registration is available at <https://www.grownativemass.org/Our-Programs/evenings-experts>. This website also has recordings of some past presentations in this series that you will enjoy.



Pollinator Plant Kits for Sale!!!

In addition to our LFGC plant sale, you will also have a chance to buy kits of beautiful pollinator-friendly native plants this spring. Lexington Living Landscapes, which our Club is part of, is collaborating with the Lexington Conservation Office to bring us this opportunity. The kits will include four plant species selected based on bloom time and their attractiveness to pollinators. They are: **Zizia aurea (golden Alexanders)**, **Monarda fistulosa (wild bergamot)**, **Pycnanthemum tenuifolium (narrow-leaved mountain-mint)**, and **Solidago caesia (blue-stemmed goldenrod)**. The plants are grown at a certified organic native perennial farm in New Hampshire and come in quart size bio-degradable pots. You can purchase a kit of 12 plants (three plants of each species) for \$60, which is a highly discounted price. While planting in groups of three is recommended, you can also buy a set of 4 individual plants (one plant per species) for \$22. The sale opens online in early April 2021 and kits will become available for pick-up towards the end of May. Anyone hoping to buy a kit should set up a MyRec account first. <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/recreation-community-programs/pages/myreccom>. For any questions, please feel free to contact us at lexlivingland@gmail.com or acarr@lexingtonma.gov.



What we're watching....

Corinne Steigerwald

I am recommending several lovely videos by Jerri Landers of Hopalong Hollow on YouTube. Jerri takes you through her garden in different seasons with starting seeds, planting, harvesting and flower arranging. The stage is her land in Tennessee along with her chickens, peacocks and pet donkeys. She shares presentations of the writings of Tasha Tudor, Beatrix Potter and Dickens. She often begins chapters with seasonal things to bake or cook followed by a tea party with the foods she has just prepared served on a beautifully arranged table with bits of china she has collected over the years. Her guests are the needle-felted creatures (birds, rabbits) she has made. If you enjoyed Tasha Tudor in the past you will find some happiness here. Favorites are the Christmas and harvest videos.

This one has an amazing collection of acorn delights. The Christmas ones are still my favorites!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4uwfvEW6S1o>

Sara Moorman

- 1) Netflix has a show called *Big Flower Fight* that is a British reality show about floral sculpture design: <https://www.netflix.com/title/81046153>
- 2) There's a BBC show with the UK's Monty Don called *Big Dreams, Small Spaces*. It's about giving families garden makeovers! It used to be on Netflix but I think they've taken it off, and now it's available only on Amazon Prime. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b071c28x>
- 3) There's a podcast called *In Defense of Plants*: <https://www.indefenseofplants.com/podcast>

(This one is more educational and less entertainment than the two TV shows!) It's by a young PhD in plant ecology, Matt Candeias. He is especially interested in native plants, conservation, and habitat preservation, and he does a lot of great interviews with experts.



Pat Jensen shares this gem from the *GCFM Mayflower* 2003 newsletter.

The Garden



For the Garden of Your Daily Living

Plant three rows of peas...

Peace of mind

Peace of heart

Peace of Soul

Plant four rows of squash...

Squash gossip

Squash indifference

Squash grumbling

Squash selfishness

Plant four rows of lettuce...

Lettuce be faithful

Lettuce be kind

Lettuce be patient

Lettuce really love one another

No garden is without turnips...

Turnip for meetings

Turnip for service

Turnip to help one another

To conclude, our garden must have thyme...

Thyme for each other

Thyme for family

Thyme for friends

Water freely with patience and cultivate with love.

There is much fruit in your garden because you reap what you sow.



April Absurdities

What animal is always at a baseball game?

A bat.

Which crime fighter likes April the best?

Robin.

What did the tree say when
April began?

What a re-leaf.

A couple of pranksters broke into the police station and stole all the lavatory equipment.

A spokesperson was quoted as saying, "We have absolutely nothing to go on."

