The Garden Club of Newtown

Member of National Garden Clubs, Inc. and The Federated Garden Clubs of CT, Inc.

Fall 2026 Newsletter

Fall Edition: Sept/Oct/Nov







Song for Autumn

Don't you imagine the leaves dream now
how comfortable it will be to touch
the earth instead of the
nothingness of the air and the endless
freshets of wind? And don't you think
the trees, especially those with
mossy hollows, are beginning to look for

the birds that will come — six, a dozen — to sleep
inside their bodies? And don't you hear
the goldenrod whispering goodbye,
the everlasting being crowned with the first
tuffets of snow? The pond
stiffens and the white field over which
the fox runs so quickly brings out
its long blue shadows. The wind wags
its many tails. And in the evening
the piled firewood shifts a little,
longing to be on its way.

MARY OLIVER

Mary Oliver
American Poet
1935-2019
(Submitted by Louise Zierzow)

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Thank You to all the contributors to this edition of our Newsletter.

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President's Message

Dear Club Members,

It has been a glorious autumn with so many delightful days of sunshine and magnificent foliage. The Victory Garden is resting until next spring (thank you Jeannette and Louise), our Club year officially started again in September, and we have already enjoyed two educational programs at the September and October Club meetings (thank you Mary and Paula). September and October have passed, Halloween, too, and Daylight Savings Time has ended.

Please take a moment to reflect on the accomplishments of our Club. At the recent FGCCT Annual Award Luncheon the Club and members were recognized with four different awards related to our May In Bloom Flower Show. Also, we continued to plant daffodils in Ram Pasture and were happy to welcome Maureen Crick Owen of the Newtown Cemetery Association to the first of the three planting sessions.

We are entering one of the busiest times of our Club year. **It is only 35 days to the Dec. 5 Greens & Gift Sale!** There are many activities required to support this critical fund-raising event so please volunteer your creativity, assistance, and support to another successful Greens & Gift Sale. Full details follow in this Newsletter. Every skill level is most welcome! Six years ago when I first joined the Club I had no experience with making a wreath or boxwood and now I look forward to participating each year and learning something new.

Thank you to all our members who have contributed both items and time to support our Online Auction. As we discussed at the October General Meeting the Online Auction will be available to the public for online bidding from Nov. 20 to Dec. 5, 12:00 pm to coincide with the end of the Greens & Gift Sale. All Online Auction items will be on view at the Dec. 5 Greens & Gift Sale; Winners will be able to pick up their items on the same day between 1:00—2:00 pm.

Thank you, All, for your continuous support of all the Club's activities. Your input and feedback are always welcome so please feel free to contact me with your recommendations.

COUNTING DOWN TO THE GREENS & GIFT SALE!

Hope Sim

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Upcoming Events

Tuesday, Nov. 10, 2026
10:00—2:00 pm
Greens & Gift Sale Workshop
Home of Vicki Boccuzzi, 57 Queen St. Newtown

This is the time to make items that help to make the Greens & Gift Sale such a success. Lots of FUN!

Tuesday, Nov. 17, 2026, CH Booth Library
Board Meeting: 10:00 am
Club Meeting: 12:00 noon
Program: 1:00—2:00 pm

Seasonal Centerpiece: "Make & Take" Workshop with presentation and instruction from Peggy Townsend. **Material Fee: $15. Pre-registration and pre-payment required. Please contact Peggy Townsend to register and pay.**

Thursday, Dec. 3 and Friday, Dec. 4, 2026
9:00—2:00 pm, Newtown Congregational Church
Greens & Gift Sale Workshops

Club members of all skill levels create decorations for the Greens & Gift Sale.
Thursday we focus on boxwood trees, centerpieces, kissing balls, and specialty items. This is a fun and productive workshop focusing on one-of-a-kind items.
Friday we decorate pre-made wreaths with fresh greens collected by our members, add bows, pinecones, and ornaments. We also price all items, add fairly lights to centerpieces, and prep the hall for the next day.

Saturday, Dec. 5, 2026
Greens & Gift Sale and Online Auction, Newtown Congregational Church
9:00—12:00 pm, Auction Winners collect their items between 1:00—2:00 pm

Welcome family, friends, and neighbors to support our annual sale. Plan to join us as many hands are needed with setup, sales, transport of supplies and cleanup. All Club members are encouraged to attend and support this important annual fund raiser.

Tues, Jan. 26 2027
Board Meeting: 10:00—11:30 am at the CH Booth Library
Brief Club Meeting and Annual Holiday Luncheon
The Ranch, 160 South Main St, Newtown
12:00—2:00 pm

Oct Event Recap

FGCCT Annual Awards Luncheon: Oct. 21, 2026

On October 21, ten members of the Garden Club of Newtown attended the Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut (FGCCT) 97th annual Awards Meeting at the Aqua Turf Club in Plantsville.



Back Row R to L: Sandy Stromberg, Louise Zierzow, Hope Sim, Joan Alexander
Front Row R to L: Sue Greco, Peggy Jepsen, Peggy Townsend, Paula Toi
Absent from Photo but Attending: Marcia Cavanaugh, Jane Sharpe

There were more than 320 garden club attendees from all over the state. Clubs large and small were represented. In addition to the announcement of many awards, there were garden-related vendors, raffles and a delicious dinner.

On each of the dozens of dining tables were floral centerpieces, featuring bright orange pumpkins. Peggy Townend, Joan Alexander, Sue Greco and Jane Sharpe each created unique centerpieces, to be raffled off at the end of the luncheon.






The Garden Club of Newtown was recognized by the FGCCT with four awards related to the successful "May In Bloom" Flower Show in May 2026 at the Newtown Community Center.

Flower Show Award: The Mary Loncin Flower Show Award for the top evaluated Standard Flower Show with the highest score from June 1, 2025 through May 31, 2026
Awarded to The Garden Club of Newtown, accepted by Paula Toi and Sue Greco

Flower Show Award Citation: Design
Awarded to The Garden Club of Newtown, accepted by Paula Toi

Flower Show Award Citation: Education
Award to The Garden Club of Newtown, accepted by Peggy Jepsen

Special Award: Club Certificate of Appreciation Award
Award to Peggy Townsend




Peggy Townsend and Paula Toi with Nan Merolla, President FGCCT

Ram Pasture Daffodil Planting: Oct. 24, 29 and 30, 2026

On Saturday, October 24th, Peggy Jepsen and Kimberly Neuenschwander began planting yellow “Dutch Master" Daffodils at the Ram Pasture. 200 bulbs planted, 300 to go before the ground freezes!

Maureen Crick Owen, representing the Newtown Cemetery Association, stopped by briefly to express her appreciation. She reminded us of the thousands of cheerful, yellow Daffodils down the street at the Newtown Cemetery, planted by Scudder Smith years ago.

Second planting and third planting sessions were completed on Oct. 29 and Oct. 30 with the able assistance of Joyce DeWolfe, Vicki and John Boccuzzi, Hope Sim, Peggy Jepsen and Kimberly Neuenschwander. Hurrah! All 500 bulbs are in their new home in Ram Pasture!

By Spring, our Garden Club will have planted more than 1,000 daffodils along the stream, visible from the street ...wait for it, wait for it....in mid-April 2027!











Greens & Gift Sale Update

Count down to the annual Greens & Gift Sale!
Only 35 days until Dec. 5!

Your help is needed on any of the following tasks and workshops.

Bow making

- We will need a minimum of 45 bows for this year's wreaths.
- Please contact Peggy Townsend and Hope Sim if you would like to make bows prior to the Dec. 3 and Dec. 4 workshops.
- Club will supply the bow makers and the ribbon.

Attending our three Workshops on Nov 10, Dec. 3 and Dec. 4

- These are not only our important working sessions, but they are great fun, too! All skills levels are most welcome.
- Refer to page 4 of this Newsletter for workshop details, dates, times and locations.

Cutting Greens: Starting Nov. 27 to Dec. 3

- Cut greens are needed for our Dec. 3 and Dec. 4 workshops. We will need as many greens as possible to ensure sufficient supply for the wreaths, centerpieces, kissing balls, and boxwood trees that will be assembled at both Dec. 3 and Dec. 4 workshops.
- Please plan to bring your cut greens (including boxwood, holly, pine, andromeda, cedar, etc.) to the two workshops.
- If you require assistance to cut greens please contact Peggy Townsend, Joan Alexander and Hope Sim.

Working at the Greens & Gift Sale, Dec. 5,, 9:00—12:00 pm

- Please sign up for a shift(s) on the actual sale day. We will need as many hands as possible to assist our customers with their selections and checking out customers.
- We will also need assistance to man the Online Auction tables and assist customers with any questions about the auction items.

Raffle at the Greens & Gift Sale

- We will continue to offer a Raffle on the day of the Greens & Gift Sale.
- Paula Toi and Mary Thomas are leading this effort. Please contact them directly if you have a raffle item or can help with this annual Greens & Gift Sale activity.

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Civic & Conservation Update

Civic gardens maintained by the Club:

- Dooryard Garden at the Matthew Curtis House (Newtown Historical Society)
- Barb's Pollinator Garden
- Blue Star Memorial
- Library Knot Garden

Matthew Curtis House Dooryard Garden

- 10/ 23 transplanting of approx. twenty plants to assist in poison ivy remediation. Transplants in place through winter at Victory Garden.
- Application for a FGCCT BEE RESILIENT Presidents Project grant is under discussion to support the rejuvenation of the Dooryard Garden.

Renaming of Barb's Trail to **Barb's Pollinator Garden** to accurately represent the plantings.

- Updated name approved by Parks & Recreation

Linda Dunn and Kimberly Neuenschwander are creating planting guides for Barb's Pollinator Garden and Blue Star Memorial with photos, plant placement, botanic and common names to assist the Committee and Club members with maintenance of these gardens.

Joyce DeWolfe and Holly Kocet are creating historical and garden descriptions of each location for use in future planting guides and website copy.

Daffodil bulb planting occurred on 10/24, 10/29 and 10/50 with new planting of 500 daffodil bulbs.

Plants for Birds

By Linda Dunn

Did you know that wherever you live, some careful plant choices can turn your garden, patio, or balcony into a more beautiful and environmentally friendly space, while helping to protect birds?

Without native plants, our birds cannot thrive.

To raise one nest of chickadee babies, parents must find up to 9,000 caterpillars to feed them. Native oak trees host caterpillars of over 550 butterfly and moth species. Non-native ginkgo trees host just 5. No caterpillars? No birds.



By choosing plants that naturally occur where you live, you will provide both resident and migratory birds with the essential insects, fruit, seeds, and shelter they need year-round - while also helping them adapt and survive in the face of weather changes.

Grow native plants to help the bird population across the country adapt and thrive, now and in the future.





Club History: A Look Back

By Joyce DeWolf, Club Historian

October 31, 2012

FGCCT honors our Club with a **Certificate of Recognition** for Supporting President's Project: "Historical Landscapes"
This certificate recognizes the Club's maintenance of the Dooryard Garden at the Matthew Curtis House.
This commitment continues today!



September 3, 2001



Our Parade



The Garden Club of Newtown wins **"Best Float"** in the Labor Day Parade!

November 30, 1962

Interclub collaboration at Fairfield Hills Hospital with patient guests

"DECORATING FOR CHRISTMAS", 1:15 PM, Cochran House, Fairfield State Hospital
Mrs. Milton Hescock, Speaker

From the Club 1962 Yearbook:

"Mrs. Hescock has an excellent background as a horticulturist and artist, with a natural ability to teach. This perfect combination has helped her to win many top awards in flower shows. Through her work in flower show schools and the symposium in New York, she has become well known as a lecturer and teacher.

Joint meeting with Danbury Garden Club and the Country Garden Club of Monroe. Patients of the Hospital will be guests. Refreshments."

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Autumn Reflections

Text and Photos by Louise Zierzow

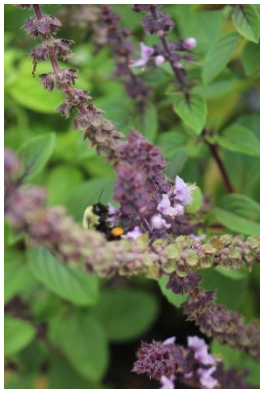
Early autumn is a time of reflection, of observation: the Victory Garden has been put to bed, seeds from prized flowers are being gathered for next year and autumn colors are spectacular. Hummingbirds have left for the season. Keep an eye out for the spectacular yellow tree at the Blue Star Memorial in the coming days.



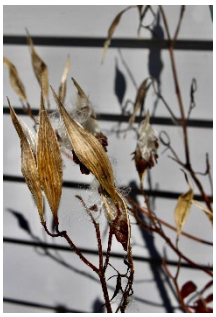
Busy Bees were feasting on late summer flowers, and now those pollinators are enjoying the last of the *Goldenrod* and the *Sweet Everlasting* flowers. **Can you match the below photos to the underlined plant common names?**

Goldenrod with bee, Sweet Everlasting, Morning Glory and Swamp Milkweed gone to seed, pollinators with Cleome and Thai Basil.













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Looking Ahead to 2027

CT Flower Show
Feb. 18—21, 2026
"Art Blooms in Connecticut
Where Creativity, Nature, and Artistry Flourish"



Future opportunities to enter in:

- Floral Design
- Botanical Design and Artistic Crafts
- Horticulture
- Photography Contest
- Club Exhibit Competition

CT Flower Show schedule is available at
https://ctgardenclubs.org/events-overview/ct-flower-show/

Once we are past the Greens & Gift Sale we will organize a committee of interested members.