

The Perennial



2015-2016
Issue 9: May

Website:
ArlingtonGarden.org

This is the last edition of the Perennial for this year. We'll be back in September and you'll find us on the Website then. Please see the article below for more information.

Upcoming Programs:

Evening Program – May 26 – 7:00 pm
Senior Center, Mural Room, Ground Floor

**Pruning for the Home Gardener – Jen Kettell,
Certified Arborist** - Learn how to properly prune
your shrubs to keep them healthy and beautiful.
We'll learn about pruning tools and head outside to
prune some real shrubs. Bring pruners!



*Annual End of the Year Celebration
Tuesday, June 21 – 6:00 pm
Town Hall*

*Join us for this catered dinner event when we can share some
stories, review the year, and mingle, celebrate and socialize with
each other.*



Our New and Improved Website – Sally Naish

It's official! The new website is up and running. The URL is arlingtongarden.org. Click the link to visit and explore the site. You'll find lots of information there, including details of upcoming programs, and member resources, such as the discount nurseries. Browse the site and let Sally know if you encounter any problems. In future, we will be posting the Perennial on the website and emailing you the link for it.

One tip: If you search for Arlington Garden Club MA, the new site may not be included in the search results, depending on your browser. (Chrome: listed 8th; Internet Explorer: not listed in first 3 pages!) We hope to improve this and you can help. The more you use the site, the more likely the search engines will find it.

Happy browsing!

Garden Therapy - Ginger Tower and Irene MacKinnon

The last meeting was held on May 2. The project used donated fabric eyeglass cases enhanced with a flower, stickers of birds and tissues. Everyone really liked them. Lily Heckard is leaving the Committee and moving to New Jersey to be near her sons. The group will miss Lily and her piano playing very much.

Pennies for Pines – Nancie Richardson

Our Pennies for Pines Drive is complete. Thanks to all who brought your pennies (and got grandkids involved) to help the National Forest Service plant trees in damaged areas due to fire or natural catastrophe. We raised \$ 60.55 - which weighed 31.7 pounds! That's a lot of coin. Great job everyone.

Evening Tour of Town Hall Gardens - Wednesday June 28th - 6:30 pm

The Garden Club, Master Gardeners and Friends of Town Hall Gardens have been working regularly to restore the beauty of our Town Hall Gardens designed by the famous Olmsted Brothers in the 1930's. Several people have expressed interest in touring the gardens, and Patsy Kraemer will conduct a tour — no pruners needed! — for everyone who would like to attend.

Meet near the fountain at the center of the garden.

Environmental Corner – Mary Stack

Most gardeners apply some type of mulch in the spring. It provides several benefits besides making gardens look neat and tidy. It helps soil absorb and retain water. As the mulch decomposes it adds nutrients to the soil. By filtering sunlight, it helps regulate soil temperature.

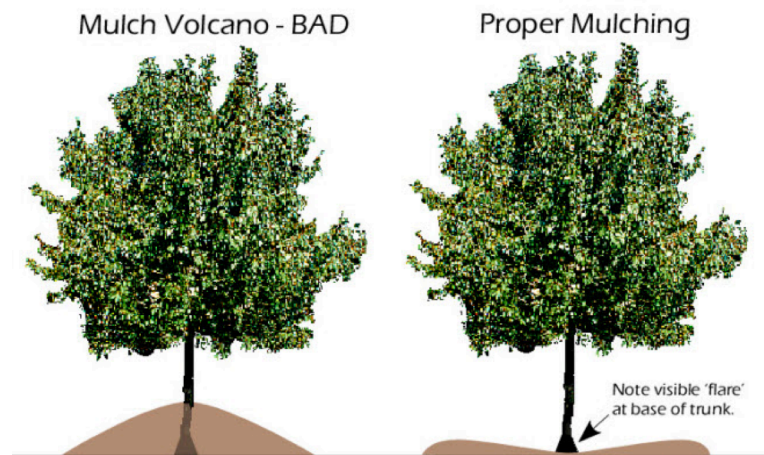
Since organic mulch can take up nitrogen as it decomposes, you should add a layer of compost before spreading. To be effective, use at least two or more inches when applying it for the first time. You don't need to use that much mulch every year. As the mulch decays over the years, break up clumps of compacted mulch and add only an inch or so every year or two.

Different types of mulch can be used for specific purposes.

Leaf mold, which is simply partially decomposed leaves, is the preferred organic mulch. It adds nutrients, increases water retention and encourages the growth of beneficial insects and bacteria. Compost can also be used as mulch by spreading two or more inches on top of beds. A thick application will suppress weeds and add nutrients to the soil.

Wood chips are best used around trees and shrubs. Two to three inches, spread three to four feet around is

recommended. Many landscapers pile mulch around and up tree trunks. This is known as the "volcano". This practice can damage the bark and invite disease and pests. Instead form a low crater around the tree. Keep mulch at least 6 inches from the trunk.



Bark mulch is useful for perennial and annual beds. It is not recommended for vegetables. Keep the mulch 1 to 2 inches away from plant stems. Most bark mulches are dyed, but the dyes (iron oxide for red and carbon black for black) are considered nontoxic.

Open Tree Map

Recently, the town DPW signed up for a 6 month trial of a crowd sourced public tree inventory program called 'open tree map'. When complete, the online program will allow anyone at the click of a button to find - for example - all Beech trees in Arlington over 30 inch diameter and in good health, or to locate every public Elm tree in town.

Open Tree Map can also show the total ecological benefits of our urban forest including storm water filtered, air quality improvement, carbon dioxide removal, and town wide energy savings. The Tree Committee is seeking volunteers and will provide a free training program and basic tree identification class run by Mollie Freilicher, an expert from the Mass DOR. If you would like to participate in the mapping of Arlington's public tree inventory please join tree committee volunteers for a training on Thursday May 19. It will take place at 4pm in the 2nd floor conference room of the Town Hall annex. Space is limited so please let John Ellis (see below) know if you are interested, so he can save you a spot.

You can still be involved with the inventory even if you can't make it to the training. You'll just need to download a smartphone app and be added to "opentreemap." With questions about the project or to join the listserv of the Friends of Arlington Trees contact John Ellis john@opticsforhire.com.

Civic Development – Jane Foley

Broadway Plaza is still in need of volunteers for this summer. Janet Pagliuca is still looking for someone to water the planters. This pays \$10.00 an hour.

The Town Hall Gardens are definitely showing the benefit of all the hard work Garden Club members have put into pruning, pulling invasives and transplanting.

This year the Beautification Committee is printing bookmarks with photographs of gardens and flowers, the Garden Club logo and information about the work done in town by the Garden Club.

Two islands are still available for adoption: one near Rte. 2 and the other near Venner Rd. An island with a red maple, inside the main entrance of the cemetery, needs help with design and plantings. Watering would be easy as there is water nearby. The island in front of the senior center is also still under consideration.

Health Benefits of Gardening: Excerpts from an article published by Michigan State University:

“Nature has long been known for its relaxing qualities, as a place for humans to find tranquility and healing. Gardening in particular is associated with mental clarity and feelings of reward, and it has many physical benefits as well.”

“According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), moderate-intensity level activity for 2.5 hours each week can reduce the risk for obesity, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, heart disease, stroke, depression, colon cancer and premature death. The CDC considers gardening a moderate-intensity level activity, and can help you to achieve that 2.5 hour goal each week. Additionally, those that choose gardening as their moderate-intensity exercise are more likely to exercise 40-50 minutes longer on average than those that choose activities like walking or biking.”

I suspect most of us knew this already but isn't it nice to have it confirmed! JDF



*Have a wonderful summer...happy gardening!
See you in September*