



The Monthly AGC 'Dirt'

October 2023

September 30th Acton-Boxborough Farmers Market Oktoberfest has been postponed to October 14th weather permitting. DON'T FORGET!

The market is held on the Elm Street Playground

The club will sell daffodil bulbs and get the word out about our wonderful club and what we do for the community.

October 3rd Monthly Meeting, Room 204 of Town Hall

9 AM Social Time

9:30 AM Recognizing Acton's Looking Good Winners

The winners are:

Best Retail Plaza - Roche Bros/TJ Maxx Best

Stand Along Business - Acton Funeral Home

Best Use of Small Space - Ernie's Auto Body Shop

Best New Garden - Tavenier Place

Continued Excellence - West Acton Village

Best Use of Container Gardens - Anita's Shoe Boutique

9:45 AM Business Meeting

10:30 AM Program: *Our Changing Climate & Horticultural Impacts with Dave Epstein*, Meteorologist and Horticulturalist. Dave Epstein looks at climates and the impact to plants. He has been a forecaster for 3 decades and a lifelong gardener. Dave Epstein looks at climates and the impact to plants both close to home and further afield.

This program is supported in part by the Nancy Kingman Memorial Fund.

Dave Epstein has been one of New England's most trusted meteorologists for decades.

Epstein, a biology major who now lives in Natick, Mass., has been explaining the weather to TV viewers, radio listeners, and newspaper readers across New England for a long time. Along the way, he has become one of the region's favorite and most trusted forecasters because of his straightforward, uncomplicated approach to informing people what is happening in the skies and why—and how it will impact their day.

Dave's work can be found with Boston.com, BostonGlobe.com, WBUR.com, and Growingwisdom.com, his videoblog for home gardeners. He provides daily weather updates and weekly higher-level conversations, talking all things weather and plants.

This program will be available to members in person or over zoom.

The program is open to the public in person only.

Zoom info: (not to be published publicly)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81378724275?pwd=bWpUMXRqQmZuSEIUREdzS3FOUjUrZz09>

Passcode: 739789

Dave answers gardening questions on WGBH. Check out <https://www.wgbh.org/series/ask-dave-epstein> for more of his questions and answers.

October 10th 9 AM Horticulture Study Group will meet at **Judy Rice's house, 6 Berry Lane**
Connie Mashock will inform the group about horticulture in Costa Rica

Sign up for October Floral Design!

October 17th Floral Design Study Group will meet at **St. Matthew's Church** on Central Street at 9 AM.
Thelma Shoneman and Cathy Fochtman will conduct the workshop on ***"It's a Small World" – Petite Creative Line Design with a fall theme.***

Container and plant material will be provided for the cost is \$25. Bring your floral shears, wire cutters and your toolbox.

Signup clipboard will be available at the October General Meeting. Bring a check or cash to cover supplies or sign up by emailing Cathy Fochtman, lcfochtman@gmail.com. Mail your check for \$25 payable to "Acton Garden Club", memo, "Floral Design", to Cathy, 18 Wright Terrace, Acton

October 31st 9 AM Board Meeting at **Maura Sharp's house, 2 Phlox Lane.** (How appropriate she lives on a street named after a flower!)



These lovely ladies are our past presidents who were honored at the September 12th meeting.

Left to right: Peggy Garrison, Susanne Fuller, Pat Kosicki, Anne Sterling, Fran Portante and Maura Sharp.

Membership

The Club is excited to welcome a new member to the Acton Garden Club.

Cheryl Roberts has just moved to the area. She would like to help in the Wildflower Garden, Civic Beautification, Garden Therapy and the Herb Garden. Basically, anywhere her labor is needed. The skill sets Cheryl brings to the club are in Finance and Publicity.

Please put Cheryl's info on page 83 of your yearbook.

Cheryl Roberts, 9 Barts Way, Acton, 703-862-7557, cherylglobal@gmail.com

If you have a change of address, email address or phone number, please let the membership chairman, Anne Sterling know. absterling@gmail.com

Anyone who is buying *supplies* for the club must show their copy of the club's *tax-exempt certificate* (which is supplied to Board Members) to the vendor in order for tax exemption to be honored. If you are using the very generous 10% off given by the vendors on the back of your membership card, you must show your card but it *does not entitle your purchase to be tax exempt as well without a copy of the tax-exemption certificate.*

Update on Oval Garden in front of Town Hall

Linda O'Neil and Cathy Fochtman Co-Chairs Oval Garden Committee

Cathy Fochtman and Linda O'Neil met with John Mangiaratti, Town Manager, Dean Charter, Select Board, Mark Held, Assistant Town Manager, Ryan Hunt, DPW Manager, and Qin Rui Pang, Town Engineer, to share final thoughts about the *Oval Garden* and when and how to move forward.

Ryan and his crew will be busy for another two to three weeks doing cleanup resulting from the recent storm. But he will see to the removal of all materials and soil in the existing garden by the end of October. In the meantime, Dean was at the *Garden* on Friday, September 29th with his chain saw to clear-cut the existing scrubs from the *Garden*. Once old material is removed, it will be possible to have a clearer picture of how new plantings and the fountain will look. The HDC requested a mock-up of the fountain so that they could have input into its placement. The HDC will be notified once all vegetation has been removed from the existing garden so their recommendations for the fountain placement can be incorporated in the design.

Ryan will look into moving electricity and water lines to the garden area from the front of the Town Hall.

Help will be needed from the Club with planting and mulch spreading. Stay tuned.

A note from Alan Cushing who just completed his course requirements to be a *Master Gardener*. Congratulations!

It's surprising that with such a large club there are only a couple of us active *Master Gardeners*.

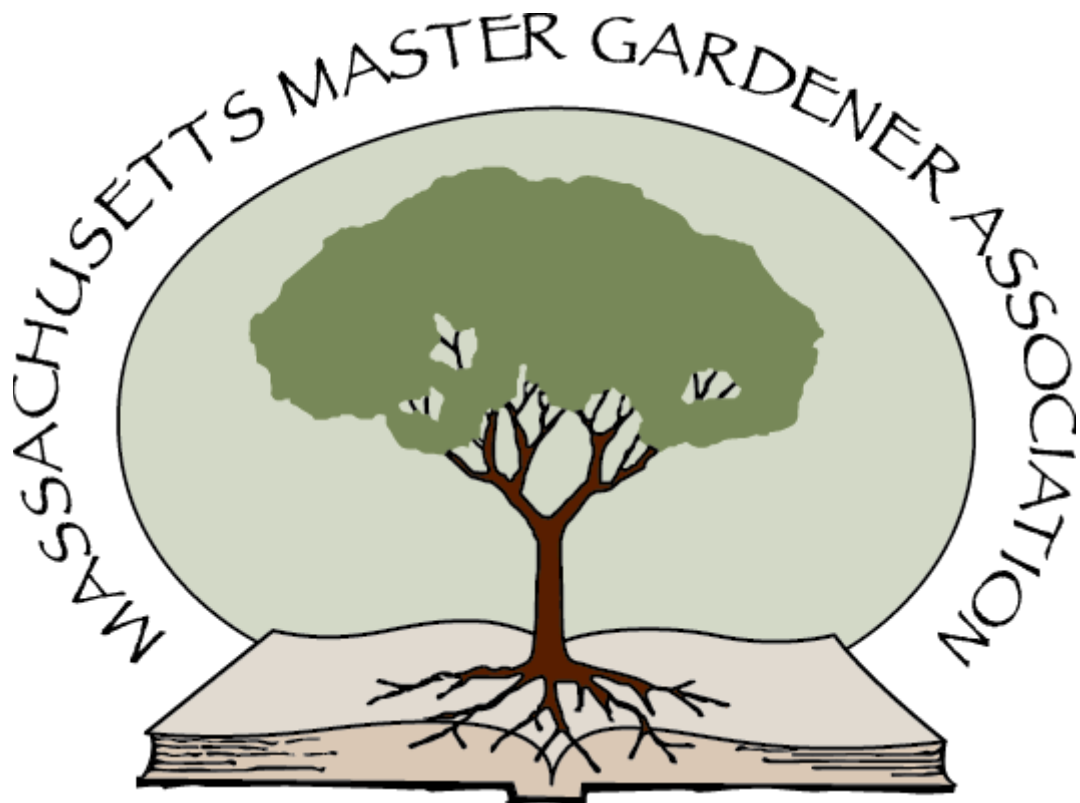
It's an opportunity for enthusiastic gardeners to learn more about their craft and also participate in helping others. I went through the class of 2021 which then was only done by Zoom after the 2020 year of cancelled classes. Once certified by the ***Massachusetts Master Gardener's Association***, a large field opens up including education, some on-line and some live, to learn more about gardening, help others to learn, and work in some historical and fabulous gardens around Boston and eastern Massachusetts.

Around Acton, there are places looking for experienced Master Gardeners. Places near Acton include Codman Estate, Orchard House, Tower Hill, and others.

Are you ready? Below is today's notice of next year's course. I am surprised that they are now advertising it because it fills up fast. My year was a small class of 30 for people from eastern Mass. although I believe now the classes hold about 50.

From: Massachusetts Master Gardener Association <thedirt@massmastergardeners.org>
Subject: The Dirt: 2024 Master Gardener Certification Program





September 20, 2023 Special Edition

2024 Massachusetts Master Gardener Certification Program Information

Beginning October 1, 2023, the MMGA will be accepting applications for the 2024 Massachusetts Master Gardener Certification Program.

The Master Gardener program grew out of extension education services offered through land grant universities in the United States. The first Master Gardener program was established in 1973, and today there are master gardener programs in all 50 states and in 8 provinces in Canada. The mission of the Master Gardener program is focused on urban and suburban gardens with emphasis on unbiased scientific horticultural practices.

The Massachusetts Master Gardener organization (MMGA) became an independent organization in 2008 and has grown to have more than 500 active

volunteers that work in more than 46 gardens throughout eastern and central Massachusetts. Our mission is to act as a resource for our communities through direct service in historic and food pantry gardens, by giving lectures, and supporting outreach projects in schools and non-profit organizations. To support this mission, we train our volunteers in best practices horticultural methods through a lecture series, and an internship program that is supported by Certified Master Gardeners.

If you are interested in becoming a Certified Master Gardener, please read below and apply on October 1st. Class size is limited.

Become a Certified Master Gardener

- **STEP 1: Submit Application**
- **STEP 2: Attend Lecture Series.** Successfully complete the Master Gardener course, a comprehensive 16-week lecture series held on Tuesdays, January 9 - April 30, 2024, 8:45 am-Noon ET. Lectures consist of 12 virtual and 4 in-person sessions covering 11 gardening/horticultural topics.
- **STEP 3: Complete Internship.** Volunteer 60 hours as an intern, applying the concepts you learned in class in a variety of supervised roles from May 1 - November 30, 2024.

2024 Massachusetts Master Gardener Certification Program

Tuesdays, 8:45 AM - 12 Noon
Classes January 9 - April 30, 2024
Internship May 1 - November 30, 2024

[LEARN MORE](#)

Questions?

To learn more about the program requirements, please visit our [website](#). If you have questions, contact mgcleader@massmastergardeners.org

We look forward to welcoming you to the 2024 Massachusetts Master Gardener Certification Program.

The Massachusetts Master Gardener Association is an independent non-profit organization whose mission is to share research-based horticultural knowledge and experience with the public. We meet that goal through Master Gardener Certification, outreach, education, volunteering, and public gardening programs for the advancement of best practices in sustainable, regenerative horticulture.

Craft Group

A group of AGC members has formed a **Craft Group (not affiliated with the AGC)** and you are invited to join them. They hope to meet monthly for crafting sessions led by our members. They met this month to share ideas and showcase their skills. The **first hands on meeting, Jewelry Making**, is scheduled for **October 24th 9:30 AM at Susanne Fuller's house**. Contact **Jodi MacDonald**, jodihomemaker@yahoo.com, if you would like to attend or to learn more. You don't need to already be crafty to participate. This is an opportunity to teach, learn and socialize. *And of course, there will be snacks!*

Janet Irons will lead the group in a **jewelry making session**. The majority of supplies will be provided by Janet and Sandra Mika, but if you have items in need of repair/refurbishing, beads, fittings, old costume jewelry to rework, etc. please plan to bring them. The group will send out a follow-up email with suggested items to bring if you have them.

The crafters have also penciled in their **November plans: Rock wrapping and painting 101** on **November 14th**. The group is waiting for their *lead crafter, Dia*, to confirm that the date works with her November travel plans.

Please RSVP to Jodi if you plan to attend either session or if you have any questions or suggestions.

In the meantime, you can practice some retail therapy: Concord Piecemakers, a local quilt guild, is holding a Fabric, Yarn and Notions sale on **Saturday October 21st from 9 AM until 2 PM at St. Matthews Church**. You will find lots of quilting fabric, patterns and books, yarn, thread, scissors and knitting needles. Everything you could imagine that might be in a quilter's stash (except maybe rocks or pine needles, but probably heavy-duty thread to build a basket!).

"Here's to thee, old apple-tree"!

Residents of all ages are invited to submit a baked apple pie to our **second Friends of the Acton Libraries APPLE PIE CONTEST**. 😊

Prizes for winner of best under-15 baker, and best adult baker. Pies must be delivered to the library on **SATURDAY, October 28th by 2pm for judging**.

All are welcome and invited on Sunday Oct 29th at 3pm to enjoy the pies and more.

Easy!

So that the judges can compare apples to apples (so to speak) there are a few guidelines. BUT there are 20 places only... so read the guidelines below then register your name as interested 😊

Guidelines:

- Pies are to be **homemade including crust**.
- Filling is to be just apples and spices (no other fruits).
- Your recipe should be submitted to including the type of apple(s) used.
- Pies should be in a 9-inch pie plate/pan. Non-edible materials/decoration not permitted.
- Contestants should pre-register online here <https://forms.gle/5Frn4mrAz7PTCYEc8>

Again, **pies should be brought to the library on Saturday Oct 28th by 2pm for judging**. Thanks! We **announce the winners at 3pm Sunday October 29th** back at the library at a public celebration - to eat all the pies!

Public Welcome! **Calling all pie lovers** - support your neighbors and friends by eating all the pies... 😊 plus donuts and cider after we announce the winners at **3pm Sunday October 29th!**

Thank you to our head judge **Joan Milnes** from the Acton Women's Club food columnist, and previously pie judge at the Topsfield Fair!

Here is the Facebook link with all the info too <https://www.facebook.com/events/1523266685078843>