

Charity Chatter

By Lisa DuFault

Spring is the time for new growth, and flowers are a great symbol of that, so let's focus on the Mountain Garden Club, which was established in 1973 and is a member of the New Hampshire Federation of Garden Clubs and of the National Garden Clubs, Inc. The Mountain Garden Club is committed to promoting horticultural education, civic beautification, and conservation in the Mount Washington Valley. Their vision is a community where the Club is recognized as the organization in the Mount Washington Valley for "all things green" and also as an organization that works well with other non-profits.

Every year, the Mountain Garden Club adopts a number of locations around the Valley that could benefit from the experience of members. The summer program includes beautification of roadside public properties in Bartlett, Jackson, Conway, North Conway, Eaton and Freedom. Winter projects include Holiday wreaths for public buildings throughout the

entire Valley. All year long they present plants and flowers to new organizations to brighten up their spaces.

The club holds several annual sales where the proceeds are donated to Cancer Awareness, specifically Jen's Friends, whose mission is to help MWV cancer patients and their families. The Club works with local nursing homes in Garden Therapy; currently with the Merriman House at Memorial Hospital. The Club is also in its sixth year volunteering with Mount Washington Valley Habitat for Humanity, landscaping the new homes, and planting trees along Robert Morrell Drive. In addition to the landscaping, members have conducted several classes on plant maintenance for the residents. The Environmental Projects committee's first project was to design a rain garden at Children Unlimited. The garden is an educational tool for the children as well as serving an environmental purpose. New projects underway for 2013 include the restoration of the historic Mineral Springs located at Kennett High School and the creation of an "outdoor reading room

area" at the North Conway Library. This project will celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Library and the 40th anniversary of the Mountain Garden Club. Mountain Garden Club also participates in the National Garden Clubs program with the US Forestry Service's "Smokey Bear / Woodsy Owl" poster contest. The event focuses on fire and conservation awareness for school children in grades one through five.

The Mountain Garden Club organizes special trips to museums, garden centers, public gardens and plant and is actively involved in the local "Art In Bloom" show each summer. They also host two "Lunch and Learn" programs during the year, with guest speakers who are known for their gardening expertise.

The annual Flower/Home Garden Show raffles support the Scholarship Fund. The Winter Boutique supports projects and activities and also funds the Holiday decorations, which are created and donated to dress up public buildings throughout Mount Washington Valley. Garden Club members cultivate special plants from their gardens

to be sold at the plant sale the first week in June. They also hold a spring bulb sale each fall. Proceeds support the Scholarship Fund and Civic Improvement Projects. During the December Holiday Boutique, members design arrangements and gift items to sell, with proceeds supporting club projects. The club sponsors at least one design class as part of its monthly program series for members who would like to learn more about floral arranging. There are also two major floral design show events each year. The first is our display booth at the Home, Garden and Flower Show in May; the second is Art in Bloom in June. Members have an opportunity to learn from seasoned designers for both of these events.

The Mountain Garden Club created a scholarship program in hopes of encouraging post-secondary education in plant science disciplines including horticulture, agriculture, forestry, environmental science, land management and other related fields of study. The scholarship program was named in memory of lifetime member Alice T. Madden, who was a strong advocate of assisting the youth of the Mount Washington Valley in pursuing a higher education in any of the "green" fields of study. The Club is pleased to announce that for the academic year 2013-2014, they will offer four \$1,500 one-year scholar-

ships, available to high school graduates and post-secondary students who are residents of Mount Washington Valley, New Hampshire. Any graduating high school senior who plans to enroll in a plant related program, or a post-secondary student, pursuing a degree in such a program, who lives in the Mount Washington Valley, is welcome to apply for the scholarship. Financial need, academic achievement and interest in the stated field of study will be some of the criteria used to determine the awarding of these scholarships.

For additional information about the Mountain Garden Club and its numerous projects, visit: www.mountaingradenclub.org.

Mount Washington Valley Promotions is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to assist other non-profits in promoting their events and fund-raising activities. This is accomplished via an online calendar of events, a printed newsletter, a twice-monthly newspaper column in the Mountain Ear, a weekly television program, a Facebook page, email distribution and a website (www.valleypromotions.net). All Mount Washington Valley (& vicinity) non-profit groups are invited to join and submit their information to share. The calendar is updated constantly with incoming information. To learn more, contact Lisa DuFault at 374-6241, or email valleypromotions@gmail.com.



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Members of the Mountain Garden Club poses with Smokey Bear, Woodsy Owl and National Foresters prior to announcing award winners at the annual Poster Contest.



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Mountain Garden Club members DD Warren (left) and Gerrie Beck (right) prepare a potted plant to be presented to Visiting Nurse Home Care and Hospice of Carroll County.

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