

This is 'Great Group' for Boxford seniors

Submitted by the Boxford Village Garden Club

The maintenance of town gardens and the arranging of holiday decorations are not the only contributions that Boxford Village Garden Club (BVGC) members make to the community. They also offer a special craft program for women over 80.

The BVGC's Garden Therapy Great Group, which was started several years ago, offers women over the age of 80 a monthly opportunity to socialize while they create small floral arrangements or seasonal crafts in the community room at Four Mile Village.

"I love being around that older

generation," said Susan Arsenault, a member of the Garden Therapy Committee. "The ladies have a lot of very interesting stories to tell. They don't dwell on the past, but are always willing to share a story of how things were done in their day."

Last month, the group was treated to an old-fashioned English tea, sponsored by the BVGC, said Lois Bell, who heads up the Garden Therapy Program and is assisted by her committee of five.

Meetings of the Great Group are advertised in the monthly Council on Aging newsletters.

"If it's a holiday month, such

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The Boxford Village Garden Club served up a proper English tea to its Garden Therapy Great Group members recently at a welcome-back event. [COURTESY PHOTO]

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as fall, we do a Halloween theme," said Bell.

The October activity will feature a small jelly jar full of candy corn that will be decorated with ribbon and stickers.

In February, the Great Group ladies will create live flower arrangements within a tea cup and saucer base, said Bell, who noted that small carnations and babies breath will be among the flowers chosen for the project.

Longtime BVGC member Doffy Falk said, "They get to take something home, and if they have trouble putting it together, we have helpers. They're all pretty clever!"

She said the women have so much fun socializing during the refreshment hour that, "We can't get them to leave."

The recent tea party featured a variety of English teas served in bone china tea cups by BVGC members, who also made cucumber sandwiches, scones and short breads for the party, which marked the end of summer and return to the monthly Great Group programs.

"They are so lovely to work with, and they like getting out of the house and talking with their friends," observed Bell. "They get as much joy out of it as we do."

Members of this year's Garden Therapy Great Group Committee include Chairman Bell, Susan Arsenault, Doffy Falk, Mary Lynn Lovejoy, Mary Anne Nay, Diane Stern and Sandra Pinkham.

"I think the ladies appreciate our efforts with the Great Group because although they



To kick off the Fall 2018 Great Group program, members were asked to bring photos of themselves when they were much younger, and then they tried to match the photos with the members. [COURTESY PHOTO]

all have family visits, their families don't sit down and do crafts with them," Arsenault said. "Many times the ladies will give what they make to one of their grandkids."