

**February 23, 2009**  
**Sharon Garden Club Meeting**  
**Workshop on Topiaries**  
**“Frills and Flowers and Buttons and Bows”**

Presented by Marcia Bridgeman and Jane Vogenberg, with assistance from Kathy Hawes

Topiaries have been around for literally hundreds of years and there are all types of topiaries.

**LIVING TOPIARIES** are live plants sheared, cut and trimmed throughout their growth into all sorts of different fanciful shapes. Plants used include rosemary, ivies, boxwood, and some type of coniferous shrubs/trees.

**FLORAL TOPIARIES** include floral foam shapes or wire forms covered and decorated with mosses, fresh, dried or silk flowers, grapevine, dried plant material or whatever you choose.

Types of floral topiaries include:

1. Dome
2. Standard
3. Globe

Today we are going to learn how to make the first two types of floral topiaries.

### **DOME TOPIARY**

**Materials:**

Small waterproof pot

1/3 block oasis

5 stems of chrysanthemums

2 glue dots

3' length of ribbon

xx number of buttons (optional)

xx number of wired picks

- ❖ Take wet block of oasis and place into pot, remove, turn over and place other end into pot and push down. This will give you a somewhat rounded top on the oasis. **(THIS HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE FOR YOU!!)** You want about 1/2" of oasis showing over the top rim of the pot.
- ❖ Take your flowers - LOOK at them – there are some that are larger, some more open, some different shapes, shades, etc. Break apart each stem of mums, leaving at most 5-6" of stem on each flower. Make a diagonal cut on the bottom of the stem, this allows for maximum water to be drawn up into the flower.
- ❖ Using one of the larger blooms, place this in the center of the oasis sticking up about 3-4" – don't try to be too precise – do what looks good and seems right to your eye.
- ❖ Fill in with your larger flowers to form a framework in an X shape – the flowers towards the bottom will need shorter stems so you can create a dome, rounded shape. Then fill in with the rest of your flowers, so that no oasis is showing.
- ❖ LOOK at your design, decided which is the front and which is the back.
- ❖ At the top rim of the pot, in the back, place a glue dot. Fold your ribbon in half. Attached the center of the ribbon to the dot.
- ❖ Place a glue dot in the front. Bring both ends of the ribbon to the front. Knot the ribbon and press into glue dot, then double knot to secure.
- ❖ Make a simple bow. Chevron or angle the ends of the ribbon to even them out.
- ❖ Optional – wire buttons and place throughout your design.
- ❖ Take home and enjoy!! Remember to water when you get home and daily afterwards.

## STANDARD TOPIARY

### Materials:

|                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Small waterproof pot | 3' length of ribbon |
| 1/3 block oasis      | 4' length of ribbon |
| 5 stems alstromeria  | 1 wired wooden pick |
| floral tape          | moss                |

- ❖ Put wet oasis in pot. Trim so that oasis is level with top rim of container. **(THIS HAS BEEN DONE FOR YOU!!!)**
- ❖ LOOK at your flowers – pick out the four best, most opened stems (they will open more during the week). Thin off bottom leaves – don't take them all off, you can trim more later if need be.
- ❖ Hold one stem in your hand; add the other three stems around this in a slightly lower position.
- ❖ Floral tape sticks to itself, stretch it out slightly before wrapping around the stems. Tape the stems together about 3" from the where the flower laterals start to branch out.
- ❖ Cut the bunched stems at an angle – total length about 16-18". Measure by putting your elbow on the table and your hand straight up. The flower bunch should not be any taller than your middle finger. Again, don't try to be too precise – you are supposed to be having fun!
- ❖ Firmly put the stems into the oasis, carefully push down at least 2" into the oasis. WATCH OUT, water may come out of the bottom of the pot as you push the stems into the oasis.
- ❖ Take the 3' piece of ribbon, beginning about two to three inches from where the stems are set into the oasis; and begin to wrap the stems.
- ❖ Cross and twist the ribbon as it passes over the front. (SEE LARGE EXAMPLE ON POLE)
- ❖ Continue wrapping up stems of the flowers, covering the taped section.
- ❖ End with a double knot in the front, then chevron or angle the ribbon ends to even them out.
- ❖ Make a BOW. Take the 4' length of ribbon, leave about a 2.5" tail, make one loop about 2" in length, twist ribbon and make a second loop opposite the first loop. Continue until you have eight loops and a second tail. If it doesn't come out good the first time, try again (and again.....)
- ❖ Wrap wire pick firmly around center of bow, so that the wooden pick is touching the ribbon. Wrap excess wire around the wooden pick. Finish ends of tails to match ribbon ends on stem.
- ❖ Take last stem of alstromeria, cut off each individual bud at an angle. Carefully place buds around the base of wrapped stems.
- ❖ Cover top of oasis with moss. Mist to make it more manageable for placement.
- ❖ Add your bow and be delighted with your beautiful design!
- ❖ Remember to water when you get home and daily afterwards.

Other ideas:

**Dome topiary** – use dried pine cones, flowers, plant material – spray painted gold for the holidays. Use any fresh flower or combination of flowers with a compact head (i.e. branches would not work).

**Standard topiary** – use roses, sunflowers, or any flower with a long stem. NOTE: Tulips or other flowers with 'fleshy stems' will not work well. You can use tulips at the base. A nice additions would be ivy wrapped around stems in place of the ribbon.