

Council of Rockford Gardeners, Inc.

Organized 3/21/1980

E-Issue V3 Issue 2
Editor: Shirley Wiklund

CRG Clubs:

No. IL Daffodil Society
Plantaholics
Potpourri
Seedlings
Wildflowers

Council Motto:

"Enjoy nature's bounty and
beauty through work and
creativity."

Council Website:

<http://councilofrockfordgardeners.org/>

Upcoming Meetings:

Plantaholics

4/3/18

Petals & Pickins

Potpourri

3/13/18

Paint Bricks with Lynn
@ Sherry's home

Seedlings

3/19/18

Pepper Creek
Succulent Demonstration

Wildflowers

3/22/18

Merlin's Greenhouse &
Flowers in Oregon
Lunch @ Hector's Cocina



March 2018



From the President's Pen

Co-Presidents: Ann Somers & Sarah Britton

Temperatures climb into the 50's, the sun shines brightly, the winter aconite is visible and blooming, the crocus, daffodils and tulips were pushing through the soil, you go to sleep and dream of spring. This is it! Spring is here! In your dreams you smell the soil, you feel the dirt under your fingernails, you see the renewal, the rebirth, the regrowth that takes place every spring. ...And then you awaken to snow! Such is spring! It is given and taken away with what seems a never-ending tug of war. Never fear. Spring will arrive. In its own time!

Sherry Seaver has our Spring Luncheon and Fundraiser well in hand. Please consider attending on April 25. All proceeds benefit our Scholarship Fund. Horticulture scholarships are another fine tradition of the Council of Rockford Gardeners. 32 recipients and approximately \$25,000 have been awarded in the 38 years of CRG existence. Be proud!

Keep playing in the dirt,

Sarah & Ann



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SUBMIT questions or
comments to:
CRGnews4u@gmail.com

REMEMBER to keep your
e-mail address current
with your individual club
and the Council.



Council of Rockford Gardeners Spring Luncheon & Scholarship Fundraiser

Wednesday, April 25, 2018

Mauh-Nau-Tee-See Country Club
5151 Guilford Rd, Rockford, IL 61107

Social Hour: 11:00 a.m.

Lunch: 12:00 p.m.

Program: 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: Robb Firch, owner at Meridian Nursery

"Garden Gab with Robb"

Menu Selections:

Honey Roasted Pecan Chicken Salad

Mixed greens tossed with honey-roasted pecans, grilled chicken, mandarin oranges, cucumbers, tomatoes, feta cheese, with a berry vinaigrette dressing

Ginger Teriyaki Salmon

Atlantic salmon grilled and served with a ginger teriyaki glaze

Chicken Monterey

Breast of chicken stuffed with Monterey cheese and prosciutto ham wrapped in a pastry and topped with sage sauce

Roasted Vegetable Lasagna

Layers of pasta, cheese & roasted vegetables baked in a white garlic cream sauce & served with a meatless marinara

All entrées include house salad, rolls, coffee & tea

Apple Pie

Early bird price, \$40, before April 20, after \$45

Proceeds Benefit Council of Rockford Gardeners Scholarship Fund

Please return completed form with check payable to CRG:

Ann Somers 5412 Gingeridge Ln, Rockford, IL 61114

Questions... annsomers@comcast.net

Name _____

Phone _____

Menu Choice _____

Check # _____

Seating for this luncheon is on a first come basis. There is no assigned seating.

Great Opportunity to Share Your Garden

Want to show your garden to friends of the Rockford Symphony Orchestra?

RSO is looking for a garden to be the setting for an invitation-only fundraiser this summer.

A date has not yet been chosen, but hopefully one of the first 3 weekends in June, depending on the owner of the garden.

The event will be approximately 2 hours long, with 50-70 attendees, who would come and go.

The RSO would set it up and serve appetizers and wine, and also have live string music.

The gardener would be asked to talk about their garden and give tours.

Please respond by March 20, 2018 to Kathy Batzkall by email: katbat2009@gmail.com or by phone: 815-765-0439.

Ulysses Vallejo

To acquaint all members with information and an update about one of Council's December 2017 Scholarship recipients, Ulysses Vallejo. He has proposed a project for Rockford East High School to expand the Horticulture program they offer and to increase opportunities for students who are interested in Horticulture or related fields. He is leading a five-year project/plan to work with community members, students, administration and alumni of both East High and Kishwaukee College. The first phase is the installation of a native prairie on campus. The Prairie Project has been funded by the Ford Foundation grant and is going toward the purchase of plant material from Midwest Groundcovers, who are also donating native prairie seeds. He is actively working and is excited to pursue this project for the students and the community. Our Council has agreed to make a \$100. donation for him to continue his endeavors.

CRG Needs You!

For almost 30 years the Council of Rockford Gardeners has offered our FREE Garden Walk. What a gift that has been to our community! We want to continue that tradition.

In order to do that, we need someone to chair the garden walk committee for 2019.

Current and past garden walk committee members are more than willing and able to help guide and assist.

Please contact Ann at annsomers@comcast.net or 815 505-0805 if interested.

Garden Walk

Garden Gab

Question for March 2018...

What annuals are recommended for an aroma in the garden?

Submitted by Mary Pinter
rrn2002@comcast.net



Fragrant Flowers

Send your comments/suggestions to crgnews4u@gmail.com to be included in the April E-News.

Horticulture Happenings

Hellebores

Gina Ross, University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener, Winnebago County

With Easter around the corner, I thought this would be a good time to highlight Hellebores. The Hellebore is a member of the Ranunculaceae (Buttercup) family and gets its common name, Lenten Rose, because it blooms during Lent.

When you need a showy winter interest plant, Hellebores are a perfect choice. It's a low maintenance, deer tolerant plant with a height and spread of about 1 to 1-1/2 feet and grows in shade or part shade. A true joy in the garden, having a bloom time ranging from February through April and it flowers before the snow melts.

Like many plants from the buttercup family, hellebores contain protoanemonin (a toxin found in all members of the buttercup family) in amounts that vary according by species. The roots of all helleborus are strongly emetic (causes vomiting) and potentially fatal. The buttercup family includes: columbine, anemone, clematis, meadow rue and larkspur. Many of these can be found in our gardens.

Hellebores grow easily in organically rich, well-drained alkaline soils. Although the foliage is evergreen, it may get winter burn in extremely harsh winters. Cut back flowering stems after bloom to promote new foliage growth. Established plants that become congested may be divided in late summer to early fall.

The most popular, *Helleborus orientalis*, offers a variety of hybrids that bloom in wide-ranging colors. The Christmas rose (*H. niger*) is a favorite because its pure white flowers often turn deep pink throughout winter. In summer, after the blooms fade, hellebores provide a pleasant dense green backdrop for blooming perennials. To increase your crop of these winter favorites, allow the plant to drop their seeds and germinate. Some varieties within this genus will need a few growing seasons before their first bloom.

Hellebores range from garnet to ruby, lilac to lavender, and to the purest white. Once the flowers begin to fade, the petals become chartreuse and lime green, lasting for months on their stems and for days in arrangements.

Lenten Roses are perfect under deciduous trees and shrubs and tucked into garden beds that don't receive much light often naturalizing in the garden.



A Winter's Bouquet



Chartreuse Envy

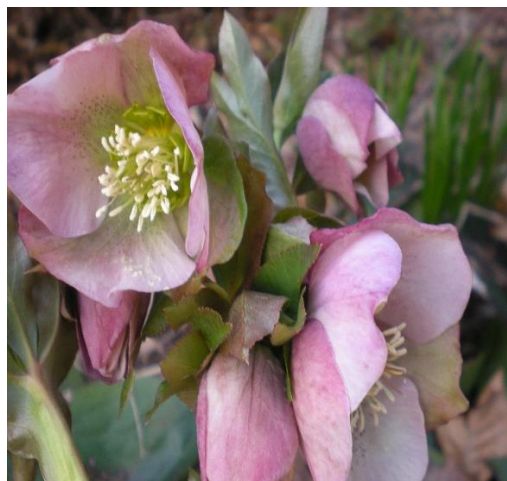


Photo taken from my garden

Rockford Rocks Sculpture
A periodic column highlighting public sculptures in our city
Lori Walsh

Spring is tempting us with occasional days of blue skies and relatively warm temperatures. These glorious peeks into the new season are interspersed with chilly and gray days. Such is life in the northern climes. However, these cool days provide us with an opportunity to travel to the tropics – on the cheap.

Along with outstanding tropical foliage, the Nicholas Conservatory features three Murano glass (aka Venetian glass) sculptures. As you enter the conservatory you will be greeted by “Generale,” a whimsical and vibrant figure by Silvio Vigliaturo. Vigliaturo’s work is held in collections around the world and he was chosen as the sole artistic testimonial at the Turin Olympics in 2006.



Continuing around the conservatory path, you’ll come across “King and Queen” by artist Cristoph Kiefhaber. These two Murano glass figures regally look over the infinity pool and the lagoon. Their intense colors, reflective quality, and array of patterns render them a focal point. Kiefhaber, a native Austrian, began his career as an accountant before he left the corporate world to pursue his dreamlike art that has been favorably compared to Miro and Picasso.



While you are in the Nicholas Conservatory you may also notice other works of art. These include a mural that visually describes the history of the Rock River valley; an artist-designed terrazzo mosaic floor (look for the circle of pearls that represents the conservatory); and hand-wrought iron gates enclosing the gift shop.

“Love Thy Neighbor: Companion Planting”

By: Yvette DeWispelaere
University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener

Recently I heard someone say, “Remember when you used to be able to just walk to the garden and grab a big Beefsteak tomato and eat it right off the vine? Now there are so many pesticides, you just wouldn’t do that anymore!” It made me cringe. I wanted to jump over the table and tell him, “Tomatoes love basil! Plant them with asparagus! Plant them with roses and you won’t have black spot on your roses!”

My husband grabbed my arm and said, “Vet, leave it alone.” This just tugged at my heart. I remember sitting in the garden with my grandmother. I especially loved summer when the red currants were heavy on the bushes. They were warm and tart and exploded in my mouth. She made them into prize-winning jelly. Oh how I miss her garden.

During the 1600’s the Pilgrims were met by the Wampanoag tribe who helped them survive by planting what we call today the “Three Sister’s Garden,” or Corn, Beans and Squash. Love thy Neighbor. Native Americans taught the early settlers how to survive using Companion Planting. With this planting method, beans fed nitrogen to the corn. The soil was able to regenerate and thus produced higher yields. I suppose the fish they tossed in the mound, as fertilizer didn’t hurt either. Intercropping corn with sunflowers increases yields of both crops. Brassicas under corn and sunflowers provide a nice shade for these cool loving vegetables. All beans love corn. Cucurbits love to roam about in the understory.

There are some things just that go together, like peanut butter and jelly. Some plants will increase harvests or soil conditions, and others will draw harmful insects away from your vegetables. Aphids feast on nasturtiums and planting them around an apple tree will lure the wooly aphid. Planting alliums protect against apple scab.

Sometimes you’ve just got to take one for the team. Catnip seems to be everyone’s enemy, except for cats and Strawberries. It keeps away ants, fleas, aphids, flea beetles, Colorado beetles, darling beetles Japanese beetles, squash bugs and weevils. Let it flower and the bees will thank you. Basil deters Tomato Hornworm and improves the flavor of tomatoes. Plant both alongside asparagus and the root secretions from the asparagus will kill the trichodorus nematode that attacks tomato roots. Sow radishes with carrots, you can harvest radishes while the carrots are still growing. This is a great chart on Companion Planting: <http://www.agriculture.vsu.edu/files/docs/cooperative-extension/companion-planting-in-gardening.pdf>

I love planting edible flowers with my vegetables, or vegetables among my flowers. When we moved to Rockford from the farm, I planted tomatoes in my roses and peppers with my herbs and the rest of the flowers along the front and side of the house. My neighbor was less than thrilled. I baked a pound cake and took it to her. Love thy neighbor.

There are many sources for edible flowers. Here is a nice one from our local Extension office that includes recipes: <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/cfiv/downloads/63570.pdf> .

REPORTS FROM 3/5/18 COUNCIL MEETING

TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance as of December 31, 2017.....	\$2,931.56
Receipts.....	<u>1,352.00</u>
Balance.....	4,283.56
Total disbursements.....	<u>81.38</u>
Ending Balance as of February 28, 2018.....	\$4,202.18
Submitted by Becki Dennis , Treasurer	

Programs – **Sherry Seaver** reported that Ann Somers will help with the reservations. There will be open seating at the luncheon. Seating will be on a first come basis. There will be 4 menu choices: chicken salad, stuffed chicken breast, salmon, and a vegetarian dish. She is working on favors and she will talk to Robb about table decorations.

Publicity – **Arch Smith** reported that the printing is done for the bookmarks and flyers. He has contacted 4 people from the Rockford Register Star, and he has no response yet. He also contacted Northwest Quarterly. Ann reported that something needs to get to them very quickly because they are working on the spring issue.

Meghan Bowe, who writes for Chicagoland Gardening, will be contacted about an article. We will not pay for an ad in Garden Glories this year.

Awards – **Elaine Parrovecchio** reported that there is nothing to report yet on the scholarships. If the club presidents want to put out word to their members regarding nominating someone for the VIP award, she would appreciate it. She suggested that we could also give an award to a club for an increase in membership.

Civic and Conservation – **Diane Donze** had no report.

Garden Walk – **Lorraine White** reported that they have 8 gardens for the 2018 garden walk. They have received 2 descriptions from the garden owners and will contact the other garden owners to remind them about the paragraph. EJ and her committee are working on new signs.

Horticulture – **Ann** reported that **Gina Ross** will write an article for the newsletter. We should contact Gina about any ideas for an article.

Hospitality – **Mary Pinter** reported that this time she emailed a reminder about the meeting. If you don't want to be called, let her know. If you do want to be called, please give her your current phone number. Mary and Deb Bieschke will do the calling.

Mary also reported that we will meet back at Mary's Café next month.

Newsletter – **Ann Somers** reported that we should get information to **Shirley Wiklund** by Friday, if possible.

Parliamentarian – **Mary Pinter** reported that we are doing a good job.

REPORTS FROM 3/5/18 COUNCIL MEETING CONTINUED

Sunshine – **Peg Goral** reported that Esther Crandall's husband died. Peg will send a get well card to Cindy Rittenhouse.

Ways & Means – **Karin Emery** was absent, but we feel certain she is on top of the luncheon raffle.

EJ Rebman requested that if anybody had any ideas for a wooden project to let her know so Wally could built it.

Website – **Kathy Batzkall** is working on photos for the website but is having a problem. Arch Smith said that he will check with Charlie regarding Google Photos. The Spring Luncheon flyer will be added to the website soon.

Kathy requested that we check with other club members regarding any changes to their membership information.

In the spring garden

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In the spring garden
Birds sing and chatter
While flowers raise their heads
To greet the morning sun
A garden filled with colour bright
A garden which now fills with life
The bee and the butterfly hover
From flower to flower gathering nectar
Seeding the flowers blossom
Throughout the spring garden
The dew glistens upon the grass
While the wind gently rolls in the tree
All the world slowly waking
Soon to this bounty of great beauty
Every hue from natures pallet
Is here free for all to see
In the spring garden

Matthew Holloway