# COUNCIL OF ROCKFORD GARDENERS, INC.

#### Organized 3/21/1980

### The 5 CRG Clubs:

Northern IL Daffodil Society Plantaholics Potpourri Seedlings Wildflowers

### **Council Motto:**

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

**Council Website:** councilofrockfordgardeners.org

## **Upcoming Meetings:**

(Per website, check with club to verify)

Plantaholics April 7 Pepper Creek

Potpourri March 10 Tour Rockford Water Reclamation Plant

Seedlings March 16 Flower Arranging

Wildflower March 26 Nicholas Conservatory



E-Issue V 5 Issue 2 Editor: Kathy Batzkall

MARCH, 2020



## **FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN** Co-Presidents: Ann Somers & Sarah Britton

Happy 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday CRG! Ginny Loesch and friends in Good Earth, Hoe Hummers and Potpourri Garden Clubs founded the Council of Rockford Gardeners on March 21, 1980.

We'll be celebrating this milestone at the Council of Rockford Gardeners Spring Luncheon & Scholarship Fundraiser on Wednesday, April 29 at Forest Hills Country Club. Each club and Council will design and implement a 'Tablescape.' Individuals and/or small groups are welcome to participate also. Rumblings of ideas and designs are being bantered about and excitement is building. This will be a fun day! The invitation and additional information can be found in this newsletter and on our website councilofrockfordgardeners.org

We welcome Mary Ann Miller as our new CRG Treasurer. We thank Becki Dennis who served in that capacity for the last 4 years. Other officers are Jan Duncan-Secretary, Deb Bieschke-First Vice-President (Programs), Sarah Britton and Ann Somers-Co-Presidents. Our Standing Committees are led by: Awards-Elaine Parrovechio, Civic & Conservation-Diane Donze, Garden Walk-Arch Smith, Horticulture-Gina Ross, Hospitality-Mary Pinter, Newsletter-Kathy Batzkall, Parliamentarian-Mary Pinter, Sunshine-Peg Goral, Ways & Means-Lynne Franzene-Lynde and Website-Kathy Batzkall.

We will navigate 2020 with appreciation of our past and excitement about our future!

Keep playing in the dirt,

Sarah & Ann

~ Save the Date ~ 2020 Gathering of Clubs: Thursday, June 11, 4-6 p.m.

# MARCH 2020

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SUBMIT questions or comments to:

#### CRGnews815@gmail.com

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





#### You could win \$\$\$\$ by sending us your garden tips

Submit a garden tip to **CRGnews815@gmail.com**. Your name will be included in a drawing for a \$25 gift card to Pepper Creek. Drawing will take place at the December CRG Luncheon and Scholarship Fundraiser.



## GARDEN Q & A

As a 'sidebar' to Ann Somers question in January's newsletter about starting hickory seedlings from nuts, Jane Gallick of Potpourri Garden Club sent this offer to readers:

We have about 13 Shagbark Hickory trees in our front yard. The squirrels do not get all the nuts and we have trees popping up here and there. They have a very deep tap root so they are hard to transplant, but any of our members would be welcome to try to dig them up in the spring around the 1st of May as we will be in FL till then. Just email me and I will let you know when you could come by. Perhaps there will be a few nuts available as well. Contact her at jgallick@creeknine.com.



## FREE SEEDS TO CRG MEMBERS

Patrice Vecchio offers to any CRG members **FREE** vegetable and flower seeds (packed for 2019)

Patrice was the decorating chair for her church's Winter Salad Luncheon called "Bloom Where You Are Planted," and she purchased seeds as a giveaway to each participant, but the order was mistakenly doubled. So, if anyone would like to get some free seeds, please call her at 815-621-7374 or email her: patricevec@comcast.net.

## WORDS OF THE DAY

#### Strange Collective Animal Names:

A 'parliament' of owls, a 'cauldron' of bats, a 'tower' of giraffes,

a 'prickle' of porcupines, a 'murder' of crows, an 'exaltation' of larks.

## MARCH GARDEN CHORES

From Morton Arboretum:

- Wait until new growth is established before removing winter protection. Mulch protects plants from late spring freezes.
- Begin general clean up. Rake the lawn to remove leaves, twigs, and debris.
- Check for winter snow and salt damage. Prune dead tips and broken branches.
- Cut ornamental grasses back to a few inches before new growth begins.
- Prevent soil compaction. Avoid walking across saturated lawns and garden beds.
- Remove tree wraps applied last fall.
- Before buds break, but when temperatures remain above 40°F, spray trees with dormant oil for overwintering insects and scale. Read label directions.
- Prepare new planting beds if soil is dry. Work organic matter and compost into the soil before planting.
- Fertilize trees and shrubs before new growth appears. A soil test will indicate a nutrient deficiency. Follow recommendations for fertilizer and pH adjustments.
- Prune summer-flowering shrubs before new growth begins in spring. Abelia, butterfly bush, panicle hydrangea, beautyberry, and snowberry.

If someone collects a lot of plants,

Does it make them a hoarderculturist?



#### **Potpourri January Meeting**

Potpourri's January 14th"Game Show" meeting was held at Arch Smith's most interesting home. Members brought delicious homemade salads, breads, and desserts. After lunch we headed to the game room where Arch presented slides of trivia questiona with cute cartoons on the big screen. He had spent hours putting together an educational, fun, trivia, "critter-related" game. We all learned a lot and had a 'very serious' competition. We enjoyed lots of laughs and interesting info. He was our very own Alex Trebeck!

## WARM SPELLS DON'T MEAN IT'S TIME TO GARDEN

Tiny green sprouts emerging from soil.

These strings of warm days are usually followed by the return of colder weather.

Early spring in Chicago often brings spells of warm weather. But that doesn't mean it's time to start gardening, says Doris Taylor, Plant Clinic manager at The Morton Arboretum.

These strings of warm days are usually followed by the return of colder weather. Hard freezes are common in March, and the average date of the last frost date in the Chicago area is not until May 15.

A layer of mulch around trees and shrubs and in garden beds helps keep the soil cold during warm spells, so plants don't come out of dormancy too early. Although we welcome the sight of early sprouts, and even flowers, they can be damaged by a hard freeze.

Working in the garden at this time can damage the soil structure, Taylor says. Even if the soil is thawed at the surface, it probably still is frozen farther down. That prevents the soil from draining and keeps it wet.

When you walk on wet soil, your weight can pack the soil down so air and water can't flow through it. That's bad news for plants' roots. Digging too early also can compact the soil.

There are some tasks you can do now in the garden, if you are careful not to walk on the soil, she says. Work when the ground is frozen, or make sure you stand on garden paths or stepping stones to distribute your weight.

Cover vulnerable sprouts. When below-freezing weather is predicted, cover the sprouts of spring bulbs and perennials with a lightweight mulch such as leaves.

Check for frost heave. Perennials, especially those planted within the last year or two, may be thrust out of the soil by the freeze-thaw cycles of late winter. Gently press the plants' crowns back into the soil.

Cut back ornamental grasses. It's best to get this done before the new growth starts.

## Council of Rockford Gardeners Spring Luncheon & Scholarship Fundraiser

Wednesday, April 29, 2020 Forest Hills Country Club 5135 Forest Hills Road, Rockford

## Happy 40th Birthday, CRG!

## Creative Tablescaping

Social Hour: 11:00 am | Lunch: 12:00 pm | Program 1:00 p.m.

### **Menu Selections:**

## Salted Caramel Apple Salad with Chicken

Romaine lettuce blend, celery, red onion, candied walnuts, blue cheese crumbles, julienne sliced apples and dried cranberried with salted caramel vinaigrette

### **Roast Loin of Pork Chasseur**

Rosemary and garlic roasted Canadian trimmed loin of pork with a rustic savory hunters' sauce (pearl onion, shallot, carrot and celery with sage and rosemary in a port wine brown sauce)

## Butternut Squash Ravioli

Dressed with fresh slice of roma tomato, sage & basil chiffonade, garlic butter sauce

### Dessert

CRG Celebratory Cupcake

All entrées include house salad, rolls, coffee & tea

Early bird price \$40 before April 24, after \$45

### Proceeds Benefit Council of Rockford Gardeners Scholarship Fund

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Phone

Menu Choice\_\_\_\_

Check#\_\_\_\_

I would like to be seated with (tables of 8)

I am unable to attend the luncheon but would like to make a donation to the CRG Scholarship Fund.

Please return completed form with check payable to CRG to:

Ann Somers 5412 Gingeridge Ln Rockford, IL 61114

## HORTICULTURE HAPPENINGS

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

#### Famous Women who shaped the Great Outdoors

Since March is Women's History Month, I thought I would give you a glimpse of some of the women who reshaped the landscape of the great outdoors before we had Greta Thunberg, the Swedish <u>environmental activist</u>.

**Clare Marie Hodges** In 1918, Hodges was hired as the first female ranger for the National Park Service, serving at Yosemite National Park. She first visited Yosemite at 14, riding four days on horseback to reach the valley. She couldn't stay away, returning to teach at the Yosemite Valley School in 1916. She was still teaching near the end of World War I, when finding men to fill jobs at home was challenging. Clare saw her chance. According to NPS, she approached the park superintendent and said, "Probably, you'll laugh at me, but I want to be a ranger." He accepted her, and the rest is history. She spent the summer as a mounted ranger, patrolling the valley and remote areas of Yosemite. She also took gate receipts from Tuolumne Meadows to park headquarters. This assignment required an overnight ride on horseback.



**Clare Maire Hodges** 





Emma Gatewood

Margaret "Mardy" Murie

**Emma "Grandma" Gatewood** One day in 1955, Gatewood told her family she was going for a walk. At the age of 67, she was planning to hike the entire 2,190 miles of the Appalachian Trail alone and become the first woman to accomplish the feat. She hiked the trail in sneakers with an Army blanket, raincoat and plastic shower curtain in a home-made denim bag. She gained national attention during her hike, appearing in Sports Illustrated and on the "Today" show. She hiked the AT again in 1957. In 1964, hiking in sections, she became the 1<sup>st</sup> person to complete the trail 3 times. In a 95 day period in 1959, she completed the 2000 miles between Independence, MO and Portland, OR. She also participated in the establishment of the Buckeye Trail in Ohio, leaving a 1440 mile legacy.

**Margaret "Mardy" Murie**, is known as the grandmother of the conservation movement. She was born in 1902 and raised in the Alaskan wilderness. When she started college (later becoming the first woman to graduate from the University of Alaska), she met a scientist named Olaus Murie. They married on the banks of the Yukon River, solidifying their love of the wilderness. After they wed, they studied caribou on a 500-mile expedition traveling by steamship and dogsled. The couple then began conservation work, writing articles, giving lectures and fighting for legislation to protect wilderness areas. In 1956, they studied wildlife in the Upper Sheenjek Valley, Alaska, and used their research to convince President Eisenhower to create the country's only conserved place that encompasses an entire Arctic ecosystem: the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Olaus died in 1963 and Mardy took over his conservation work. For decades, government agencies and conservation groups relied on her. But her biggest moment came in 1975 when she joined a task force that traveled to Alaska to find land to be protected from economic development. She testified before Congress, which pushed President Carter to sign the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act into law—preserving 157,000,000 acres of land and tripling the size of the wilderness system at the time. Although she died in 2003, her work continues on in the (nonprofit) Murie Center.

"The environment, after all, is where we all meet, where we all have a mutual interest. It is one thing that all of us share. It is not only a mirror of ourselves, but a focusing lens on what we can become." — Lady Bird Johnson

## MARCH 2, 2020 COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Balance as of December 31, 2019 ...... \$2,910.89

#### Receipts:

35.00	
40.00	
600.00	
375.00	
\$3,921.45	

#### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Programs – Ann Somers** reported that reservations will be accepted for the April 29th Spring Luncheon at Forest Hills Country Club. Deb Bieschke reported that all plans are complete for the luncheon. New this year will be tablescaping designs by each club, and any member who would like to try it by her/himself.

**Publicity – Arch Smith** reported that he has four rounds of publicity that he will send out. Ann will email other groups.

Awards – Elaine Parrovechio had no report.

**Civic and Conservation** – **Diane Donze** reported that we will do one spring planter for Habitat for Humanity. The rest of the planters will be done in the fall.

**Garden Walk – Arch Smith** reported that he has 8 gardens for the Garden Walk and has all the reps for the gardens. He has prepared the folders for the reps. Benson Stone will donate the stones again this year, and Deb will again do the engraving. Instead of a Garden Walk tri-fold brochure, Kathy Batzkall will do a

flyer. The garden owners are working on descriptions of their gardens.

**Horticulture** – **Ann Somers** reported that Gina Ross will continue to write the articles for the newsletter.

**Hospitality – Mary Pinter** reported that that the first Monday in April we will go back to Mary's Market on State Street at 9:00 A.M.

**Newsletter – Kathy Batzkall** reported that the newsletter will be completed with the minutes of the meeting and the luncheon flyer.

**Parliamentarian – Mary Pinter** reported that everything is status quo.

Sunshine – Peg Goral will send a card to EJ Rebman.

Ways & Means – Lynne Franzen-Lynde had nothing to report.

Website – Kathy Batzkall will check with the webmaster about this year's statement.

Remember to check our council website for club meetings and membership updates. To get the password for the "Members Only" page, consult with your club president.

HTTP://COUNCILOFROCKFORDGARDENERS.ORG/

## GARDEN CLUB NEWS

## Shirley Freund, one of Potpourri Club's founders



Shirley Freund returned to her heavenly home on Monday, January 27th, 2020, after a long battle with cancer. She always had a beautiful smile and remained upbeat through her illness. Her devotion to her family and her firm belief in God supported her in her struggle and ultimately gave her peace.

Shirley was born in

Woodstock, IL, and she was raised in McHenry, IL, the oldest of six brothers and sisters. She married Melvin J. Freund on October 1, 1960. They had five children, and they are proud grandparents to nine beautiful grandchildren. They spent their winters in Sun City West, Arizona.

She was an active gardener, and she contributed much time and effort during her 40+ years of membership to the Potpourri Garden Club and the Northern Illinois Daffodil Society. She loved daffodils and wildflowers such as Jack in the Pulpit, and often went for wildflower hikes at Rock Cut with her friend, Joan Tilson.

Shirley was also a golfer and enjoyed playing pickleball. She enjoyed/battled with technology, and most importantly she enjoyed family and friends.

A Catholic Mass and burial will take place at a later date in Illinois.

In lieu of flowers, since Shirley loved gardening, the family asks that you plant a flower in your garden in her memory.

Preferred memorials may be made as gifts in Shirley's memory to St. Jude Children's Hospital

#### Get to know the Plantaholics

As part of the Council of Rockford Gardeners 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebration, we will be highlighting and learning about each of our member clubs. This month Plantaholics is in the spotlight.

Plantaholics was established in June 2006 by Michelle Lyons and Maria Diemer and we have been growing and going strong since then. Our mission statement: Plantaholics goal is to promote the love of gardening, serve our community through beautification efforts and to enhance our lives. As a club, we will strive to showcase local establishments at each meeting. Our meetings will be informal and not include a business meeting. This statement has proven to be a worthy guide for the last 14 years.

Our current 38 members include several who have been a part of Plantaholics since the early days. Mary Wulff, who is responsible for our name, Lynne Franzene-Lynde, Diane Dailing, Joyce Graczyk, Judy Johnson, Linda McIntyre-Price, Mary Ann Miller, Mary Pinter, Cindy Piper, Cindy Rittenhouse, Gina Ross and Irene Vella continue to add their special talents and garden knowledge. Their commitment to the club spurs us on.

Because our meetings are in the evening, they are convenient for those who are working outside of the home. We meet the first Tuesday of the month starting at 5:30 or 6:00. Our club is a wonderful place to learn whether you are new to gardening or have been digging in the dirt for years. Our members are knowledgeable and we value the club's opportunities to learn even more. We enjoy our 'sup & share' meetings. We learn gardening and deepen our friendships. Who knew Elaine Parrovechio disliked tall grasses? Or, that Linda Horowy felt like an imposter gardener? She isn't, by the way. Mary Pinter has been nurturing a rubber tree plant that came from her mom. It is 60 years old! Linda Baker has many houseplants that are memory plants. Houseplants are important to several members. Hazel Lindblade is one. Cathy Dow is an African violet and orchid enthusiast. Brian Molloy and Stash Goral garden with precision. Jan Duncan, our Treasurer/ Membership guru, is a hostaphile. Arch Smith and Patti Cavanagh are too. EJ Rebman, Co-President, gardens with our environment coming first. Deb Bieschke has a great eye and creates beautiful vistas. Mary Jo Hull and Deb Jurs have gardens that tell stories.

### Plantaholics

Continued from previous page ...

We have several Master Gardeners: Diane Donze, Sylvie Charest, Yvette DeWispelaere, Ginny Hatwich, Mary Ann Miller, Gina Ross, Ann Somers, Co-President, and Lori Walsh. Cheryl Walker takes garden art to a new level. Brand new members Mike Hellstrom and Carol-Anne Stewart are past and this year garden walk garden owners. We are a fun and active group with membership open to anyone interested in sharing gardening knowledge.

Together, we've visited dozens of nurseries and other garden related businesses in the Rock River Valley. We've enjoyed members' gardens, potlucks and visiting Rockford's plentiful public gardens. We laugh lots and are open and welcoming. ■

## INDOOR / OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

#### 100th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage

Midway Village March 15, 2 pm Lecture

#### **Chicago Botanic Garden Orchid Show**

**Canterbury Bus Tour** with a hot gourmet luncheon, and time for shopping in Lake Forest.

Wednesday, March 18

With more than 10,000 orchids, all blooming at once, the Orchid Show is the only show of its kind in the Chicago area! The colors are bold, the flowers elegant and bizarre, spread throughout seven rooms, making this a fascinating and interesting event. Departure at 9:00 am and arrive back in Rockford about 6:00 pm. Cost is \$95 per person; includes admission to the orchid show, luncheon and transportation.

Call Janet at 815.398.1454 or email CanterburyTours@comcast.net

### Audubon Photography Awards exhibit

Severson Dells March 7-25 https://www.seversondells.com/audubon? fbclid=lwAR3pH1WYvkziwMJtnqANe9pw8HIWZQFsW1MtN nuteW63KkgDREKWghuHIa4

### INDOOR / OUTDOOR ADVENTURES, CON'T...

### Bonsai Tree Workshop:

March 21 2-3 p.m. Rock Valley Garden Center 785 N. Bell School Road, Rockford. Participants will learn about bonsai care and various styles and pot a bonsai tree to take home. The class will include pottery, a starter bonsai, wire, mesh, bonsai soil and care instructions. Cost: \$40. For information: 815-398-1937, rockvalley@comcast.net

### **KNIB EARTH DAY 50**

April 9, 2020 Radisson Hotel & Conference Center, 5:30 - 8:00 pm Speaker: Doug Scott

#### Minks to Sinks rummage sale fundraiser

April 17, 18, 19. Times vary Midway Village, Rockford

#### Mitchell Park Domes, April Showers Spring Floral Show

April 11th – May 25th 524 S Layton Blvd, Milwaukee, WI https://milwaukeedomes.org/events-calendar

## EASY RECYCLING TIPS

IDEAS FROM KNIB (KEEP NORTHERN IL BEAUTIFUL)

- Toilet paper rolls and paper towel tubes are recyclable, but so easy to overlook!
- Remember to buy eggs in a cardboard carton instead of a polystyrene container.
- Some wrapping paper is recyclable and some is not. If it crinkles up and retains it's crinkled up state, it can be recycled. If it pops back open, then it is not! Extra pretty paper with the glitter and shimmery finishes are NOT recyclable.
- Spray paint can be put into the recycle bin
  IF there is not a hint of air pressure still in the can.