

COUNCIL OF ROCKFORD GARDENERS, INC.

Organized 3/21/1980

E-Issue V 5 Issue 5

Editor: Kathy Batzkall

JUNE 2020

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

Canceled: Meetings thru July; Garden Walk

Please check with your
garden club on status of
individual club activities.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

Co-Presidents: Ann Somers & Sarah Britton

Gardening remains in the top ten most popular hobbies in the USA. We hear there has been an uptick in gardening interest this spring. Whether the current interest is in beautifying your space or growing food or trying your hand at nurturing doesn't matter. What matters is that we, as seasoned gardeners, share our knowledge with others. There is a bit of trial and error in gardening but the errors can be lessened with advice from someone who has been there. If you have a garden tip or question, please send it to Kathy at crgnews815@gmail.com. The tip or question will be added to our next newsletter.

After decades of gardening... Ken Druse, the 'guru of natural gardening' was laughing that he now gardens with a shoehorn where he used to use a spade. Can you relate? So many options and so little space! We have members who haven't met a hosta that didn't need to come home with them. Wildflowers are popular with our bunch. Plants that attract pollinators... birds, bees or other insects are included in many 'needed' plant lists. Whatever your preference, go ahead and purchase. There is always room for more!

Keep playing in the dirt,

Sarah & Ann

JUNE
2020

In This Issue:

P1
*Club Information;
President's Pen*

P2
Garden Tips

P3
*In Memoriam -
Peggy Pogue;
Poem*

P4
*Get to know the
Wildflower Club*

P5
*Horticulture
Happenings*

P6
*CRG Council Report;
Miscellaneous*

P7
*The Masked Selfie
Challenge*

P8
*Walkabouts;
'Dead Plant' Poem*

SUBMIT questions or
comments to:

CRGnews815@gmail.com

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

CRG



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.

Thank you, Joan and Elaine! Your names will be added to the drawing!

Prevent squirrel's from digging up newly planted tulip bulbs. Guaranteed!

Dig hole depth according to directions on package. Place bulb in hole. Cover bulb half way with soil. Stretch steel wool very, very thin over hole. Lastly, cover with soil, leveling with the ground.

When the little creatures start to dig, the steel wool strands stick to claws. Not liking that, they stop their digging.

Living across from Rock Cut State Park for 34 years I was able to save the newly planted bulbs from the little robbers!
- Submitted by Joan Tilson

Roses go crazy over bananas!

Old banana peels work great for growing fabulous flowers and veggies. Save the peels until they're crisp and crumbly, cut them into small pieces and bury them a few inches in the soil around your rose bush.

Try some Jello for more lush leaves

Grab a box of flavored jello and sprinkle it over your seeds when you plant them! Any flavor will do, as long as it had sugar in it. You'll encourage helpful bacteria while adding growth enhancing nitrogen.

- Submitted by Elaine Parrovecchio



A FAREWELL TO PEGGY POGUE



Peggy Charlene (Parker) Pogue (91) of Rockford, died Friday, May 29, 2020, in her home surrounded by her family. She was born December 23, 1928, in Esmond, IL; the daughter of Howard C. and B. Bernadine (Bishop) Parker. Peggy was raised on the family farm outside of Esmond, IL. A graduate of

Stillman Valley High School class of 1946. She married Lloyd L. Pogue on Feb. 27, 1948, in Holcomb, IL. She was a resident of Rockford over 50 years and Rochelle for 20 years. Peggy was a beautician for over 30 years in the Rockford/Rochelle area retiring in 1994. She had a shop in her home for a few years and then was the hairdresser in area nursing homes. Her greatest passion was flower gardening. She missed her calling as a landscape/garden designer. On any given day, if the weather was sunny or gloomy, you could always find her puttering in one of her many perennial flower beds. She was an active member of Council of Rockford Gardeners (Wildflower Club, Blackhawk Garden Club and Morning Glory Club) for many years. Enjoying monthly trips to gardens and nurseries and lunches/dinners with the club members.

Memorials may be made to the family to be established at a later date. Arrangements by Fitzgerald Funeral Home & Crematory. To share a memory or condolence, visit www.fitzgeraldfh.com.

To plant a beautiful memorial tree in memory of Peggy Charlene (Parker) Pogue, please visit our Tribute Store.

Memories of Peggy, my friend

Submitted by Anita Wetzberger

In the early 1990's my son had a carpool friend in the Maywood Manor subdivision, and I would make a point to drive by the blue house on the large corner lot with all the beautiful flowering shrubs and flowers. One day that subdivision was having garage sales and I stopped at that house hoping there would be flowers for sale. The man in the drive said "oh there's none in the sale, but Peggy is out back, go around the house" And thus began my wonderful friendship with Peggy Pogue. Every visit was a delight of unusual flowers and Peggy was so generous with sharing her gardening wisdom and perennials, because "they do better if they get divided"

We traveled to many nurseries with friends Carol Roser and Joyce Lillie and she got me started in the Wildflowers Garden Club. She always said yes when I would find a garden walk to go on from Madison to Rochelle and Lake Geneva to Woodstock. Her garden was on the Garden Glory walk as well as the Council walks both summer and spring and many others in between. I never went to a nursery with Peggy that she didn't find something to bring home.

Peggy passed away at age 91 on Friday May 29 in that blue house, surrounded by all those flowers with her hundreds of daffodil and tulips finishing up and her fabulous tree peonies, iris, fritillaria and lilacs taking over the show. Thank you for helping our lives bloom Peggy!



As we are distressed and saddened by all that is facing us as a nation, we look for something to lift our spirits and give us comfort. My hope is that the language of the flowers will speak to each of us and lift us up.
From Benjamin Britten's "Rejoice in the Lamb," based on poems which Christopher Smart wrote about 250 years ago:

For the flowers are great blessings.
For the flowers have their angels,
Even the words of God's creation.
For the flower glorifies God



And the root parries the adversary.
For there is a language of flowers.
For the flowers are peculiarly
The poetry of Christ.

- Submitted by Ginny Hatwich

GET TO KNOW THE WILDFLOWER GARDEN CLUB

The Wildflower Garden Club was organized on June 25, 1981 by five energetic gardeners. It was agreed that they would meet the fourth Thursday of the month at 12:30 pm. The club was organized for the sole purpose of identifying and studying wildflowers. The meeting consisted mainly of nature walks through woods and prairies. Often they brought along a sack lunch or planned a picnic. By August of 1981 the membership had doubled and Wildflower Garden Club was welcomed by the Council of Rockford Gardeners, becoming the sixth member of the Council. During the winter months programs consisted of slide presentations and speakers.

Wildflower Garden Club has evolved a bit over the years. We still meet the 4th Thursday of the month, but now we meet in the morning. Our membership has continued to grow, we currently have 48 members. We have expanded our purpose to learn about a wide variety of plants, still including wildflowers. Our schedule for the year includes trips to local gardens and greenhouses all over Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin and our meetings always include lunch.

In January we celebrate the founding of our club with a birthday party at a local restaurant, with birthday cake, games and prizes. In July we have a member garden walk, touring four or more member gardens. We have a wide assortment of gardeners in our club: Master Gardeners, a hosta specialist, gardeners with very large gardens, condo gardeners, new gardeners and many others. We enjoy sharing ideas, and learning new tactics to use in our personal garden.



In August we have our annual potluck at the Lillie Farm. Along with wonderful food we have a plant exchange.

Wildflower Gardeners like to support local civic gardens and agencies with their donations. Our members are a very giving group. Many members volunteer their gardening skills at churches, public spaces and local gardens.

We enjoy being a part of the Council of Rockford Gardeners, helping with the Garden Walk, Holiday Luncheon, Spring Luncheon and the scholarship program. Wildflower Garden Club is a large group of friends who support each other, learn from each other and love to play in the dirt.



HORTICULTURE HAPPENINGS

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



Summer and Strawberries



Wild strawberries have been enjoyed by people around the world since ancient times. By the 1300's, the strawberry was being cultivated in Europe by the French, who had begun transplanting the wood strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*) from the wilderness to the garden. In the 1600's, the Virginia strawberry (*Fragaria virginiana*) of North America reached Europe. The spread of this new, relatively hardy species was very gradual, but by the end of the 1700's and early 1800's it was becoming popular in England. By that time, English gardeners were working to raise new varieties from seed, and they increased the number of varieties from three to nearly thirty. Today we have over 100 species and subspecies of strawberries. What would summer be without strawberries?

Three types of strawberries (All require full sun.)

- **June-bearing varieties** bear all their fruit at once, usually over a period of three weeks. Day-length sensitive, these varieties produce buds in the autumn, flowers, and fruits the following June with runners during the long days of summer. Although called "June-bearing" or "June-bearers," these strawberries will bear earlier than June in warmer climates.
- **Everbearing varieties** produce a big crop in spring, produce lightly in the summer, and then bear another crop in late summer/fall. These varieties form buds during the long days of summer and the short days of autumn. The summer-formed buds flower and fruit in autumn, and the autumn-formed buds fruit the following spring.
- **Day-Neutral** varieties produce fruit continuously through the season until the first frost: Insensitive to day length, these varieties produce buds, fruits, and runners continuously if temperature remains between 35° and 85°F (1° to 30°C). Production is less than that of June-bearers.

Look for disease-resistant plants. Strawberry plants require 6-10 hours a day of direct sunlight, so choose your planting site accordingly.

Soil considerations

- Strawberries are tolerant of different soil types, although they prefer loam. Ideally, begin working in aged manure or compost a couple months before planting. If you have clay soil, generally mix in 4 inches or more of compost, and rake the clay soil into raised mounds to further improve drainage. If your

soil is sandy, simply cultivate to remove weeds, and mix in a 1-inch layer of rich compost or rotted manure.

- Soil pH should be between 5.5 and 7. If necessary, amend your soil in advance of planting. If your soil is naturally alkaline, consider half barrels or other large containers filled with compost-enriched potting soil for your strawberry planting.

Site selection

- The planting site must be well-drained. Raised beds are a particularly good option for strawberry plants.
- Practice crop rotation for the most success. Do not plant in a site that recently had strawberries, tomatoes, peppers, or eggplant.
- When planting in the ground, provide adequate space for sprawling. Set plants out 20 inches apart to leave room for runners and leave 4 feet between rows. Strawberries are sprawling plants. Seedlings will send out runners, or 'daughter' plants, which in turn will send out their own runners.
- Roots should not be longer than 8 inches when plants are set out. Trim them if necessary.
- Make planting holes deep and wide enough to accommodate the entire root system without bending it. However, don't plant too deep! The roots should be covered, but the crown should be right at the soil surface. It is very important that you do NOT bury the crown (central growing bud) of the plant or it could rot! The leaves, flowers, and fruit must be exposed to light and fresh air.
- Water plants well at the time of planting.

Strawberries can adapt to a wide variety of containers, from 6- to 8-inch pots for individual plants to larger planters. They also grow in hanging baskets and window boxes. For more on using containers, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQJL9h9R0Cc>. It is also possible to grow strawberries from last year's runners.

Enjoying your strawberry crop

Strawberry recipes ideas <https://www.delish.com/cooking/g906/strawberry-desserts-round-up/>

Strawberry drink recipes <https://www.thespruceeats.com/strawberry-cocktail-recipes-4145036>

VIRTUAL COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

- * Council meetings are canceled through July, thus no reports.
- * Garden Walk 2020 is canceled.
- * Klehm Garden Fair now scheduled for September 26-27



Garden Fair at Klehm

New Dates!

Saturday, September 26 | 9 AM – 5 PM and Sunday, September 27 | 9 AM – 4 PM

Council of Rockford Gardeners will have a tent and tables. We'll be running video of garden walks.

This is dependent on the pandemic.

COPING WITH COVID 19

This April in New York City, spring felt different: there was still beauty under the shadow of the virus.

The normally bustling New York was quiet and empty, full of inexplicable desolation and loneliness ... until a certain morning, when you walked in a corner of Manhattan, you accidentally encountered a large bouquet of flowers, and bumped into the arms of spring's abundance ...

It turns out that the flowers are still blooming under the haze of the pandemic. It turns out that even though life is so fragile, it is still so beautiful!

In the past few months, Lewis Miller and his team from LMD (Lewis Miller Designs) have been secretly creating what they call "Flower Flash", a flower arrangement in Manhattan trash cans and street corners. "Flower Flash" aims to honor the medical staff and other first responders, to bring joy to New Yorkers who commute on a daily basis, and let in the spring of during the pandemic.

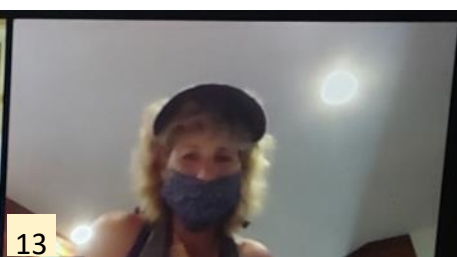
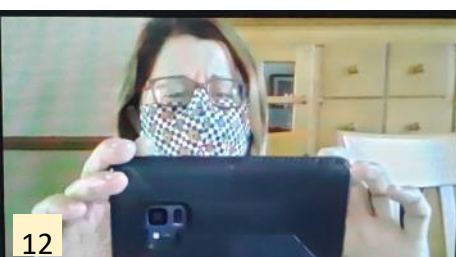
Just as Lewis said: "If you can just stop, pause and just have one second of joy....that's amazing because that's one of the things that's so lacking and is so hard."

The pandemic will pass, the flowers will be in full bloom, and the world will be better!



WHO ARE THESE MASKED GARDENERS?

See if you can guess who these CRG members are? Answers on page 8.



#11-17: Some of the Seedlings members wearing masks at their Zoom meeting June 1st.



Seedlings learned how to make chive vinegar with Susan Schumacher.

June Wildflower Walkabouts

Due to the COVID-19 Stay at Home order in Illinois through the end of May the first few walkabouts will be shared as virtual videos. To view virtual videos go to <https://www.naturalland.org/videos/>.

Wednesday, June 10- Bald Hill Prairie Preserve

With Russell Brunner, Superintendent of Land Management, and Educator Susan Kleiman. See endangered woolly milkweed, the Big Tree Champion for the State of Illinois, an Eastern cottonwood that is 28.5 feet in circumference and 122 feet tall. The preserve is also home to many nesting grassland birds. Address: 5502 North Silver Creek Road, Mt. Morris. Moderate hiking.

Tuesday, June 16- Beach Cemetery Prairie Nature Preserve:

Zach Grycan of the Natural Land Institute will be our guide for one of the best displays of flora in remnant prairies in northern Illinois. From the intersection of IL Rt 251 and Big Mound Road, drive west 2 3/4 miles. The prairie is on the north side of the road-just 1/4 mile east of White Rock Road at 11220 E Big Mound Rd., Davis Junction. Easy hiking.

Wednesday, June 24- Harlem Hills Prairie Nature Preserve:

Gary Anderson and Tyler Pelligrini of the Natural Land Institute will offer their expertise on this visit to Harlem Hills Prairie. If we hit it just right, the hills should be bright with the pink and purple of the pale purple coneflowers. Please meet on Flora Drive in Loves Park. Easy hiking.

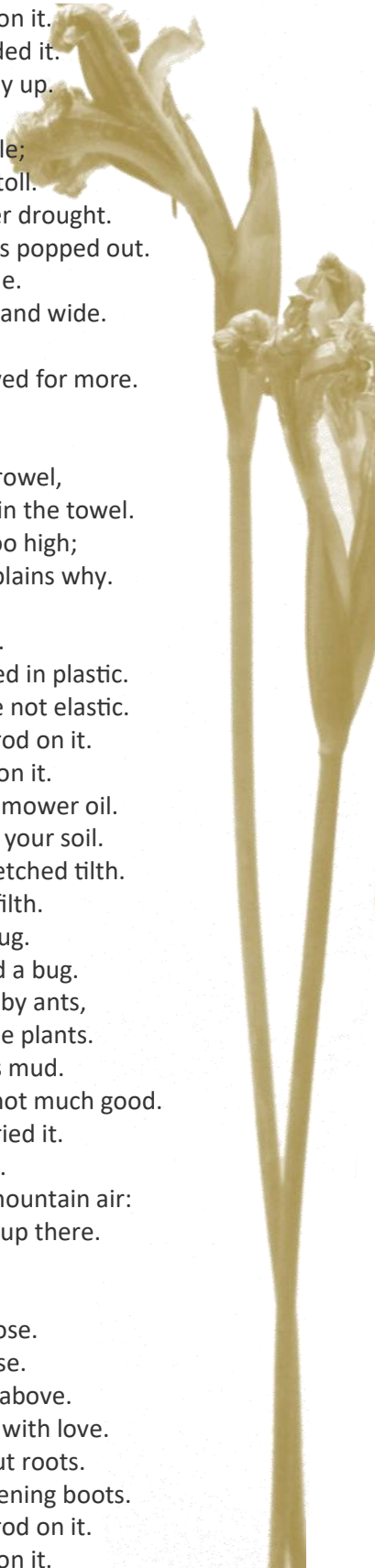
Tuesday, June 30 - Colored Sands Nature Preserve:

Lee and Lynda Johnson, long-time naturalists, will lead the group on an exploration of the sand country at Colored Sands Forest Preserve. The plant community is unique to dry sand prairies, which once dominated this area but are now very rare. Meet at the Sand Bluff Bird Observatory parking lot, at the end of Haas Road near Durand, with your wildflower book (if you'd like) and bug spray. Easy to moderate hiking.

The Masked Gardeners: 1:Diane Donze, 2:Elaine Parrovecchio, 3:El Rebman, 4:Gina Ross, 5:Mary Pinter, 6:Deb Bieschke, 7:Joyce Graczyk, 8:Joan Tilson, 9:Charlie Refol, 10:Arch Smith, 11:Fiona Fordyce, 12:Lora Prochaska, 13:Sue Buzard, 14:Lynn Franzene-Lynde, 15:Susan Schumacher, 16:Amy Seiler, 17:Kathy Crandall

WHY DID MY PLANT DIE?

By **Geoffrey B. Charlesworth**; Submitted by Lori Walsh



You walked too close. You trod on it.
You dropped a piece of sod on it.
You hoed it down. You weeded it.
You planted it the wrong way up.
You grew it in a yogurt cup
But you forgot to make a hole;
The soggy compost took its toll.
September storm. November drought.
It heaved in March, the roots popped out.
You watered it with herbicide.
You scattered bonemeal far and wide.
Attracting local omnivores,
Who ate your plant and stayed for more.
You left it baking in the sun
While you departed at a run
To find a spade, perhaps a trowel,
Meanwhile the plant threw in the towel.
You planted it with crown too high;
The soil washed off, that explains why.
Too high pH. It hated lime.
Alas it needs a gentler clime.
You left the root ball wrapped in plastic.
You broke the roots. They're not elastic.
You walked too close. You trod on it.
You dropped a piece of sod on it.
You splashed the plant with mower oil.
You should do something to your soil.
Too rich. Too poor. Such wretched tilth.
Your soil is clay. Your soil is filth.
Your plant was eaten by a slug.
The growing point contained a bug.
These aphids are controlled by ants,
Who milk the juice, it kills the plants.
In early spring your garden's mud.
You walked around! That's not much good.
With heat and light you hurried it.
You worried it. You buried it.
The poor plant missed the mountain air:
No heat, no summer muggs up there.
You overfed it 10-10-10.
Forgot to water it again.
You hit it sharply with the hose.
You used a can without a rose.
Perhaps you sprinkled from above.
You should have talked to it with love.
The nursery mailed it without roots.
You killed it with those gardening boots.
You walked too close. You trod on it.
You dropped a piece of sod on it.