

COUNCIL OF ROCKFORD GARDENERS, INC.

Organized 3/21/1980

E-Issue V 5 Issue 7

Editor: Kathy Batzkall

AUGUST 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

Meetings canceled until further notice.

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

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

Co-Presidents: Ann Somers & Sarah Britton

16-year-old Emily said, "this year there is a lot of uncertainty due to our current world situation, but the good news is that we are using this time to recognize the beauty of small moments. The buds on a tree symbolize our hope for better times ahead." Let's spend some time fully appreciating what our gardens give to us.

Local sweet corn is in good supply, the tomatoes are ripe, cucumbers are the perfect size... those three items, freshly picked, are the taste of summer in the Midwest. Our flowers are the most colorful now... annuals and perennials are flourishing. A treat for our eyes and a treat to the pollinators who are doing some feasting of their own.

Get out there and use all 5 senses to enjoy your garden and its bounty! See the colors... can you count 40 shades of green? Listen to the birds and bees... how many decibels are produced by a wren? Taste the tomato warm from the sun. Feel the texture of Lambs Ear or take off your shoes and walk in the grass. Sniff the air... freshly mown grass and old-fashioned tea roses are favorite scents. It is all out there waiting for you to enjoy!

Keep playing in the dirt,

Sarah & Ann

AUGUST
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 for Pepper Creek.

Drawing will take place in December, and winner will be announced in the January Newsletter.

Thank you, Gina and Susan. Your names will be added to the drawing!

Garden tips:

One of the best things to use as a weed blocker is cardboard, and it's free.

- Gina Ross

To clean/sterilize a glass vase, drop a denture cleaner tablet into a vase full of water and let it soak. Then rinse out the vase and it is ready to use again!

- Susan Schmitz

The first known garden catalog appeared over 400 years ago at the 1612 Frankfurt Fair with the distribution of the bulb catalog, *Florilegium Amplissimum et Selectissimum*, by Dutch grower Emmanuel Sweerts.

The catalog contained 560 hand-tinted images of flowering bulbs, giving gardeners a glimpse of possibilities for their own gardens.

Many of the illustrations originated in botanical publications—for identifying plants and noting their medicinal uses—but this new publication distributed to fair-goers was a first to present bulbs for sale.

<https://empressofdirt.net/seed-catalog-history/>



DR. PHIL O'DENDRON'S HORTICULTURE HINTS AND HUMOR

Staff writer, Dr. Phil O'Dendron, PHD

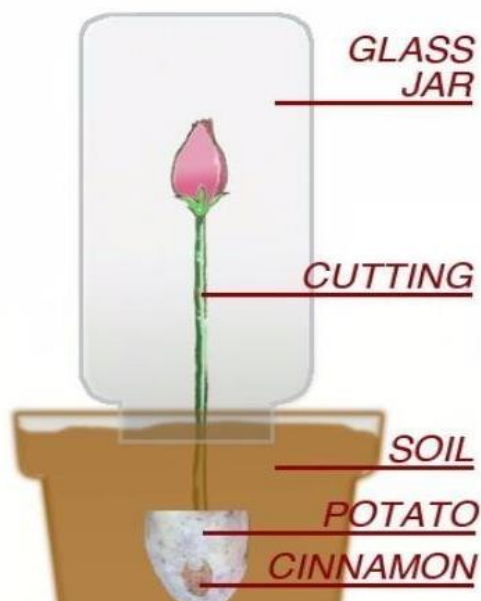
Aspirin can work wonders in your garden or on your houseplants if you use it in the water (1 aspirin per gallon) used to water your plants. It seems the acetylsalicylic acid stimulates the plant's immune system to fight damage caused by pests, diseases and physical damage. The use of Aspirin water raises the possibility of protecting plants from fungal, bacterial and viral infections by activating a plant's natural defenses.

I **HERB** YOU WERE SICK



Propagate cuttings using potatoes and cinnamon:

The potato provides moisture consistently allowing roots to grow in an ideal environment. When the potato eventually rots, it acts as a fertilizer. The cinnamon acts as a bacterial agent preventing root rot.



How to Tell What's Eating Your Garden Plants:

<https://www.treehugger.com/how-tell-whats-eating-your-garden-plants-4864215>



GET TO KNOW PEARL FRYAR

From https://www.nola.com/entertainment_life/home_garden/article_35037f49-0509-58e9-af6a-922dcfb3e9ec.html

by Karen Taylor Gist, and <https://www.facebook.com/pearlfryar/>

Special thanks to Potpourri member, Dawn Urban, for sharing her DVD, "A Man Called Pearl" with me.

Pearl Fryar says he doesn't know much about horticulture. In fact, he says he doesn't want to.

Fryar's 3-acre yard is full of his whimsical topiaries, many of them full-size trees. He set out to make the garden, which is open to the public, different from anything that had been done before.

Fryar who has the zeal of a preacher once he hits his stride, explained that he's more artist than gardener, using plants the way others might use paints.

"If I'd had horticultural knowledge, I never would have done it," he said of his park-like yard that was a corn field when he bought it in 1984. "Everyone who comes through and knows about horticulture says I shouldn't be able to do that."

His topiaries are abstract artworks full of interacting shapes and angles and unexpected geometry. They are dream-like and whimsical, yet their medium -- smartly pruned plants -- gives them an ordered feel, too.

If he's more artist than gardener, he's also as much activist as artist. His real message is one of empowerment.

Fryar works with young people and uses his garden to teach them about creativity and finding their own paths in the world; that hard work can overcome obstacles and that everyone has innate talents.

"We should give scholarships to 'C' students," he said, because all can't be gifted in academics or athletics.

"These students don't have the money to develop their

talent. Success isn't determined by SAT scores. Success is determined by work.

"Curb crime and poverty by reaching out to 'C' students. When I talk about what I accomplish by using throw-away plants and against the odds, everyone has obstacles, some type of problem, and the people who succeed can negotiate the obstacles and move on. The system is set up for failure; there's no safety net for kids."

As an African-American man who reached adulthood in the South before the Civil Rights era, he said, he knows

something about overcoming obstacles.

Pearl Fryar began the garden using only salvaged seedlings from a local nursery.

"It might take three to five years to complete a piece. Large ones could take five to seven years. If you want a creation that's 10 feet tall, you start (pruning it) from day one," he added.

"I don't want any horticultural knowledge ... because the knowledge would hinder me. The size they would

get didn't matter," he explained. "They're going to do what I want them to. Some of them should be 50 feet tall, but they're 10 to 12 feet tall.

"Do what it takes to make you happy, because in the final analysis, it's not about money. When you do what you enjoy, it makes you a better person. You end up sharing."

Pearl Fryar lives in Bishopville, South Carolina. He was born to a sharecropper family in 1940, and worked as an engineer at a can factory in Bishopville until his retirement in 2006.

*"I am a man named Pearl,
and this is my garden."*



HORTICULTURE HAPPENINGS

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

Courgette – Zucchini – Zucchini

It is August and there is an abundance of zucchini in the garden. Zucchini is a prolific and very versatile vegetable. You can cook with it or it can be disguised in baked goodies. Like all squash, Zucchini, originated in the Americas, specifically Mesoamerica. Zucchini became popular in Northern Italy in 19th century.

Rich in nutrients, zucchini contains vitamins, minerals, and is high in vitamin A. It contains both soluble and insoluble fiber, promoting healthy digestion.

Zucchini, also called courgette, is a summer squash. Along with other squashes and pumpkins, the zucchini belongs to the genus *Curcubita*. Botanically zucchini is a fruit. A type of botanical berry called a “pepo” is the swollen ovary of the zucchini flower.

Zucchini is usually served cooked. It can be steamed, boiled, grilled, stuffed and baked, barbecued or fried. It can also be eaten raw, sliced, or shredded, in a cold salad. It can be cut with a spiralizer and used as a low carb substitute for pasta.

Zucchini is also used in baking.

Zucchini is used around the world in many dishes. In France, zucchini is the main ingredient in ratatouille. In Mexico, the flower is often cooked in soups or used as a filling for quesadillas. In Greece, zucchini is usually fried or stewed with other fruits. Italians serve zucchini a variety of ways, baked or fried with onions, eggplant and tomatoes.

Baking with zucchini

<https://www.mybakingaddiction.com/10-zucchini-desserts/>

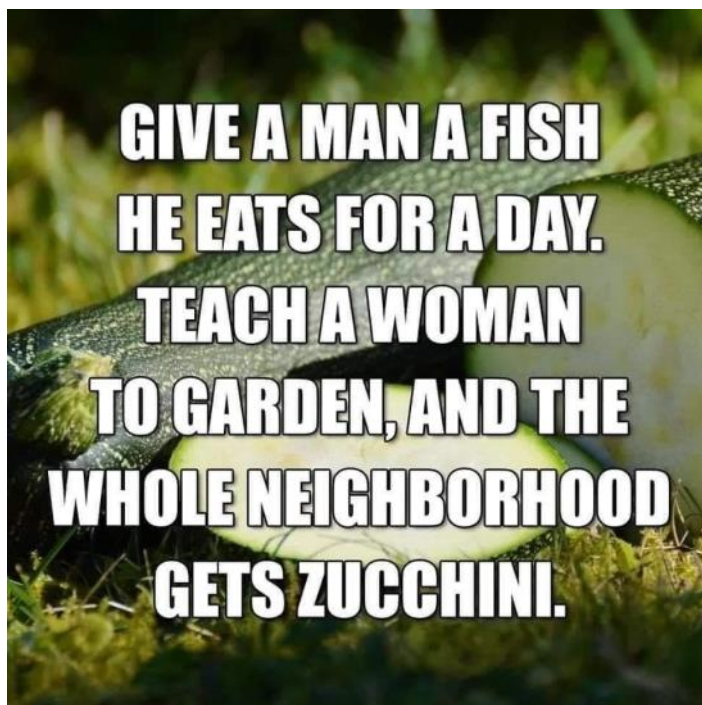
Cooking with zucchini

<https://damndelicious.net/2015/07/04/10-easy-and-healthy-zucchini-recipes/>

Zoodle recipes <https://parade.com/1055483/pipandebby/best-zoodles-recipes/>

How to grow and plant zucchini vertically:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-aRlIDhhY>



Curcubita pepo flower

lemon zucchini bread



zucchini boats

VIRTUAL COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

Council meetings are canceled till further notice. No reports.

“Hello, my name is Susan!”



I am Black Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*)
I love disturbed sites, I have no rhizomes.
I colonize by seed and I can be weedy. I
produce several stems that emerge from
a crown and taproot. My leaves are hairy.



I am Brown Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia triloba*)
I am a short-lived bushy perennial. I form
a mat with a profuse bloom of smaller
flowers. My leaves are three-lobed at
the base. My petals are the most obtuse.



I am Black Eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia fuldiga*)
I am an upright, rhizomatous, clump-forming
plant. You can divide me in spring and put
my flowers in a vase. If you buy a Black Eyed
Susan in a nursery; that is probably me!



I am Sweet Black-Eyed Susan
(*Rudbeckia subtomentosa*)
Did we ever meet? I am a long-lived
perennial and I smell like anise.
My leaves are toothed and gray-green.

HEALTHY  YARDS

SEND
SOME
SUNSHINE



The Council of
Rockford
Gardeners has
a “Sunshine”
Committee to
send cards to
members who
are ill or who
have lost some-
one dear.
Please contact
Peg Goral to
have a card
sent.

Email:
jignmag@
comcast.net

or phone:
815-877-1045.

KITCHEN COUNTER COMPOSTING

How to EASILY collect kitchen scraps for compost

<http://www.fleamarketgardening.org/>

Composting can be done on a small scale right on your kitchen counter where it's handy to toss eggshells and veggie trimmings.

Compostables are organic materials that will naturally decompose quickly and can be used for enhancing and conditioning soil. These materials include fruit and vegetable scraps, eggshells, coffee grounds and teabags.

Collecting and storing compostables on the kitchen counter may not sound like the most desirable way to go, but for the gardener the motivation is there to way a convenient way to keep them handy. Commercial compost buckets of stainless steel are expensive, so why not try one of these ideas?

Ice buckets are one great idea of an attractive sealed container and can usually be found at thrift stores.

Two pound plastic coffee cans containers are tightly sealed, have a hand hold and are washable.

<u>Do place the following in your compost container:</u>	<u>Do not place the following in compost container:</u>
Cardboard rolls	Plastic
Clean paper	Fats, grease, lard, or oils
Coffee grounds and filters	Styrofoam
Cotton rags	Dairy products
Dryer and vacuum cleaner lint	Diapers
Eggshells	Meat or fish bones and scraps
Fruits and vegetable trimmings	Pet waste/litter
Hair and fur	Dirt, sod, rock
Houseplants	Metals
Nut shells	
Shredded newspaper	
Tea bags	
Wool rags	

Larger versions would be kitty litter or laundry soap containers.

Reusable plastic containers can always be used or even Rachel Ray's method of collecting scraps in a bowl can be done if your compost pile is nearby to your kitchen door.

When your kitchen counter compost can is full, toss the contents into the compost pile and cover with clippings

to prevent odors. Turn the entire pile once every month or so. Sprinkle with a hose for a few minutes to keep the pile moist as a wrung out kitchen sponge. That will keep it 'cooking.' Once you discover the lovely dark and rich compost forming at the bottom, you'll be sold on composting! Compost piles should be at least 3' high.

18 Things You Should Never Compost:

Dairy Products

They leave a nasty smell that will attract critters and pests. Also, it will cause bacteria to grow in your bin.

Cooking Oil

It has chemical contents that might upset the balance of nutrients in the compost. Also, it might attract pests and critters to your compost.

Bread & Pasta

Bread and pasta seem harmless, but they can attract unwanted pests to your compost.

Diseased Plants

If the plant you pulled out of your garden is infected, you need to dispose of it properly. Those diseases will continue to live in your compost, and if spread on your garden will contaminate the plants.

Pieces of Clothing

Cotton might be made with pesticides. Polyester won't degrade over time. Dye used to color the clothing can harm gardens.

Feces

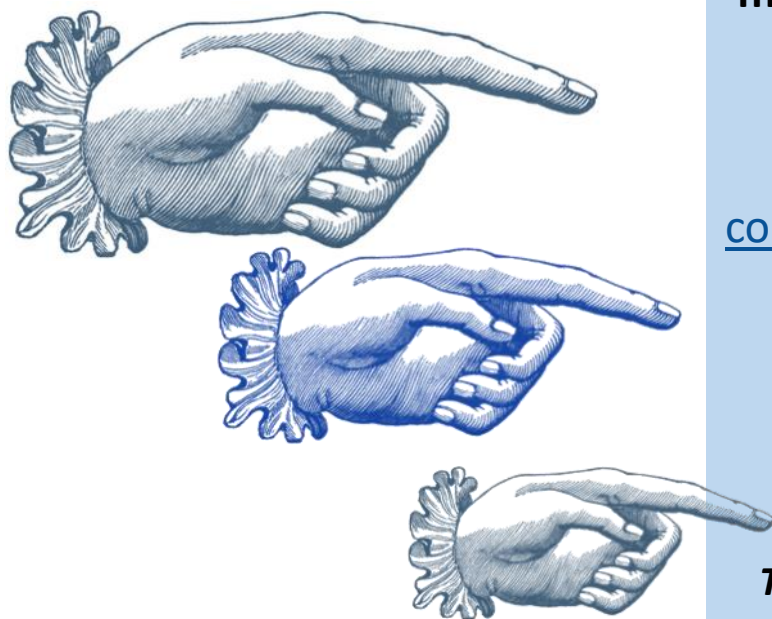
Dog and cat feces are out, but you can compost rabbit and chicken manure. Animals that consume meat might have hazardous pathogens in their feces.

Tea and Coffee Bags

You should put your coffee grounds and tea leaves into your compost pile. They're fantastic sources of nitrogen, potassium, and phosphorous. Your vegetable plants need those in the future, so add them as much as you want.

However, coffee grounds and tea leaves should only be added if they're bagless or have been removed from their bags. The bags that these products come in often contain synthetic fibers that won't break down over time. So, take them out of the bag, and you're ready to go.

Please note:



The CRG Directory with all members' contact information is available on the website member page:

[http://
councilofrockfordgardeners.org/
members-only/member-
directory/](http://councilofrockfordgardeners.org/members-only/member-directory/)

Please check with your club president for the member page password. *The rest of the website does not need a password.*

GARDENING MYTHS BUSTED

<https://empressofdirt.net/>

Are Banana Peels Good for the Garden?

I think this is how it goes: bananas are a good source of potassium, and plants need potassium, so they must do something special in the garden, right?

Spoiler alert. Yes, they are fine in the compost pile, but no, they do not have plant-growing super-powers.

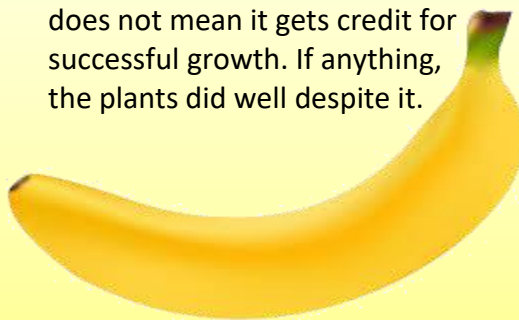
Are Epsom Salts Good for Plants?

There are so many claims about the powers of Epsom salts (magnesium sulfate). Some say they make tomatoes grow better. They make roses bloom bigger!

Plants grown with Epsom salts are taller, greener, better!

This may be the most-shared garden myth of all time.

No, just because you added Epsom salts to your soil or water does not mean it gets credit for successful growth. If anything, the plants did well despite it.



Do Eggshells Really Give Your Garden a Boost?

We humans seem to have this need to find quick fixes and clever

hacks for everything. And we're willing to believe them even if they defy logic.

There are claims that eggshells do spectacular things for the garden. Some people even put whole eggs in the hole before adding a plant. There seems to be assumptions about calcium that make us think: strong, healthy, beneficial for our bones and...plants!

But, no. It's complicated, but plants are usually not calcium deficient, and if they are, it's not because calcium is lacking in the soil but because they are unable to take it up. The idea that eggshells give an instant or special boost is just plain chicken scratch.