

COUNCIL OF ROCKFORD GARDENERS, INC.

Organized 3/21/1980

E-Issue V 5 Issue 9

Editor: Kathy Batzkall

OCT - DEC 2020



The 4 CRG Clubs:

Plantaholics

Potpourri

Seedlings

Wildflowers

Council Motto:

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

Council Website:

councilofrockfordgardeners.org

Most 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

Gardeners are a unique and tenacious lot. We are nurturers. We stake up plants after the winds have blown. We replant after spring rains have destroyed our crops. We cover and move our plants to a sheltered area when there is a threat of frost. We keep planting and watering and fertilizing and harvesting. We try plants that are slightly outside our zone... because, maybe it will grow. Our resiliency and hope for the next growing season is one of our greatest assets.

As we approach the end of 2020, we witness COVID-19 continuing to ravage our country and our world. We will use our resiliency and hope to do our best to navigate these unprecedented times.

Happy Thanksgiving! Merry Christmas!

Happy Hanukkah! Happy Kwanzaa!

Happy New Year!

Keep playing in the dirt,

Sarah & Ann

OCT.— DEC.
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.



SEASONAL MASH-UP

A little bit for October to November...

HALLOWEEN

- The first Jack-o-Lanterns were carved from turnips.
- Finding a spider on Halloween night is considered good luck.
- The world record for the heaviest pumpkin is 2,624 pounds achieving this record in 2016.
- Pumpkins classify as a fruit, not a vegetable, because it's a product of the seed-bearing structure of flowering plants.
- The state of Illinois produces five times more pumpkins than any other state.
- Halloween was once considered a holiday for romance.



Photos by Arch Smith, who
created the "Audrey" flowers
from Nerf footballs.



SEASONAL MASH-UP CONTINUED

A little bit for December...



Cherokee Legend: Why Evergreens are Green

When all the trees on earth were newly made, the Great Spirit spoke to them. "I want you to stay awake and watch over all the earth for seven nights," he said. All the trees intended to obey.

On the first night, everyone remained awake. The second night was harder, and just before dawn the sourwoods nodded off.

On the third night the trees whispered to each other in the wind to keep themselves awake, but even so, the dogwoods dozed. On the fourth night the maples slept, on the fifth night, the beeches, and on the six night, even the oaks. After seven nights only a few stalwart trees remained awake: the pine, the spruce, the fir, the cedar, the holly and the laurel. The Great Spirit was very pleased. "You have great strength," he said, "great loyalty. You shall be for all-time the guardians of the forest. Ever since then, while other trees lose their leaves and sleep through the long, cold winter, the evergreens stay awake, keeping watch over the earth.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR POINSETTIAS LAST LONGER

*Courtesy of K&W Greenery,
Janesville, WI*



- Start with healthy plants that have full leaves, bracts and deep colors.
- Poinsettias do best when the temperature is between 65 and 75 degrees Fahrenheit. Temperatures below that or drafts from cold windows can cause leaves to drop.
- Position the plant in a room that gets indirect sunlight for at least six hours per day. If direct sunlight is unavoidable, diffuse the light with a sheer curtain.
- Poinsettias need well-drained soil. Overwatering or allowing roots to sit in wet soil can cause the leaves to fall off prematurely. Water thoroughly only when the pot looks dry. In households with temperatures around 70 degrees, the plant should be watered about once a week.
- Fertilize the plant after the blooming season with a balanced, all-purpose fertilizer.

ORNAMENTS FOR MISS CARLY'S

Miss Carly's does incredible things for the homeless community in the 815 and they always need our help and generosity to continue their mission. Now a woman from Byron named Melani is making it easy for us by selling Christmas ornaments which she makes. Buy a gift for someone...help pay for a meal for someone else.

"Empowering those in need, one meal at a time" is the motto of Miss Carly's organization. She with her family and volunteers serve meals to anyone 24/7.



If you would like to purchase an ornament, send an email to: misscarlysornaments@gmail.com and include how many ornaments you would like to order. Melani will then respond with price and delivery details. Ornament prices are: 1 for \$6, 2 or more \$5. Shipping or door pick up available.

At this publishing date ornaments are also being sold at Village Green in Rockford.

Miss Carly's is located at 1125 5th Avenue, Rockford, IL 61104. website is <https://www.misscarlys.org>

Miss Carly's Inc is a 501-c3 nonprofit.

In Memoriam



JoAnn A. Betts, 83, passed away on September 22, 2020. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the family to establish at a later date.

To send online condolences, please visit www.fitzgeraldfh.com

"JoAnn was a Past President of Council and when she took over in charge of the Garden Walk, she basically organized it all by herself and just recruited us for assistance on the preparation and on the day of the walk. At the end of the day when all items were returned to her, she hosted a big party at her home with snacks and drinks for everyone involved.

She had a beautiful garden, which she loved, on the creek behind Alpine Park." —*Mary Pinter*

"JoAnn was always a willing, qualified volunteer and leader for the Council of Rockford Gardeners. She was an avid gardener who had an amazing back yard with a creek running through it that she made to look like a scene from Anderson Gardens. JoAnn was council president as well as a club president for Wildflowers. She was one of the organizers for the Council's free garden walk.

She was greatly missed when she moved to Arkansas. A great gardener, great leader, great friend! Rest In Peace, JoAnn."

—*Linda McIntyre*



KLEHM ARBORETUM & BOTANIC GARDEN

Learn how to create your very own Evergreen Door Swag with Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden this December with an at-home DIY activity (available in the Online Resources section of our website beginning Monday, November 30th).

<https://klehm-arboretum-botanic-garden.square.site/product/diy-evergreen-door-sweg-bundle/217?fbclid=IwAR1TB6GMbqBgxTnvewqhaBX5a49UHRMiiEPLXyqEqkKv1qnRWLclKIEVw>

Evergreen Door Swag Bundles include fresh evergreens, bow, pinecones, and hardgoods for putting your swag together.

See website for pickup and payment instructions.



The colors of **Kwanzaa** are a reflection of the *Pan-African* movement representing "unity" for peoples of African descent worldwide: **Black** for the people, **red** for the noble blood that unites all people of African ancestry, and **green** for the rich land of Africa.

HORTICULTURE HAPPENINGS

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

White House Gardens Throughout the Years

With this year being an election year, I thought it would be interesting to feature some tidbits of the White House gardens and how they as changed throughout the years with each administration adding their own touches.

In 1792, George Washington established the first presidential garden in Mount Vernon, setting aside 85 acres for vegetable gardens, meadows, and hayfields. Washington planted so many roses that it took 12 days each June to pick the petals, so his wife, Martha, could make rosewater.

President Thomas Jefferson, who moved into the newly completed White House in 1801, began a complete re-design of the garden and had hundreds of seedling trees planted.

President James Monroe increased the tree planting and hired Charles Bizet who is considered to have been the first White House gardener.

President John Adams, an avid gardener, was the first president to develop the flower gardens that Jefferson had laid out, and began to plant ornamental trees, fruit trees, herbs, and vegetables.

The tradition of planting commemorative trees began in 1876 with President Hayes.

Under President Woodrow Wilson, during World War I, a herd of twenty Hampshire sheep kept the White House lawn closely shorn while much of the nation's workforce was off at war. Ninety-eight pounds of wool—a commodity in high demand—was shorn from that flock and auctioned to benefit the American Red Cross.

More recently, when the Kennedys asked Bunny Mellon to redesign the East Garden, she came up with a design inspired by a whimsical scene in

Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* in which Alice and the Queen of Hearts play croquet in a rose garden using live flamingos for mallets.

Irvin Williams, head gardener during the first Bush administration, created inventive ways of keeping pests from entering the garden: Fertilizer laced with Louisiana hot sauce discouraged moles and voles, and baskets of Georgia peanuts were strapped to tree trunks to distract squirrels from digging up tulip bulbs.

President Clinton had a small vegetable garden on the White House roof during his administration and put in a jogging path on the lawn instead of a garden.

During the Obama administration, White House carpenter Charlie Brandt installed the first White House beehives on record. The colonies—which are strapped down to withstand turbulence from Marine One—produced 140 pounds of honey in their first year. Michelle Obama was deeply involved in

vegetable gardening and promoted its health benefits to help children and families lead healthier lives.

Melania Trump unveiled the renovated The Rose Garden in a month-long project that gave way to white and pastel roses and paved walkways.

The Rose Garden throughout the years <http://www.whitehousemuseum.org/grounds/rose-garden.htm>

The Rose Garden Today after most recent renovation <https://digg.com/2020/melania-trump-white-house-rose-garden-before-and-after>



“Wildflowers are the stuff of my heart!”

— Lady Bird Johnson

OCTOBER 5, 2020 COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

The Council of Rockford Gardeners meeting was held on Monday, October 5, 2020 on the tennis courts across from President Ann Somers' home.



TREASURER'S REPORT

Beginning balance \$3,950.95
Receipts:00
Disbursements:00
Ending Balance as of Oct. 5, 2020 \$3,950.95

Submitted by Mary Ann Miller, Treasurer

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Programs – No report.

Publicity – No report.

Awards - Elaine Parrovecchio reported that she will be contacting Kishwaukee College and have a report in November. We will be giving one \$2,000 scholarship.

Civic and Conservation – Ann Somers reported that Diane Donze has not yet been notified of dates for the Habitat for Humanity dedications.

Garden Walk – No report.

Horticulture – Ann Somers thanked Gina Ross for writing the articles for the newsletter.

Hospitality – Mary Pinter had no report. Ann Somers said that the Council cannot meet inside during the winter months.

Newsletter – Kathy Batzkall and Ann Somers reported that the next newsletter will combine October, November and December.

Parliamentarian – Mary Pinter reported that we are following the rules.

Sunshine – Ann reported that Peg Goral sent a sympathy card to Joanne Betts' family. If we know of someone needing some cheer, let Peg know.

Ways & Means – Lynne Franzene-Lynde questioned whether her duties included anything besides the luncheon and also requested that she have a co-chairperson.

Website – Kathy Batzkall reported that she will “take down” the Daffodils page on the website, since they are no longer an active club.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS—No unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS—Ann Somers said that our biggest issues are the safety of club meetings and coming up with ideas for the club meetings. She suggested checking the webinars offered by Klehm and Morton Arboretum.

Outdoor winter activities could include such activities as the Nicholas Conservatory Christmas lights, or walking the paths at Klehm which are regularly cleared of snow and ice.

Other suggestions are welcomed. Please share with clubs.

Arch Smith asked about being a member of the Garden Club of Illinois, and Ann reported that she again requested the list of benefits of belonging to their club. Arch said that he doesn't think it is beneficial to us.

Respectfully submitted Jan Duncan, Secretary

WORD OF THE DAY

Ruderal: native, annual self-sowing plants

No matter what term you use to refer to self-sowers—pioneers, self-seeders, ruderals, or volunteers—these plants celebrate abundance. They cast thousands of themselves into our gardens (sometimes from a single plant!) and stake their claim to our soil where they will return for many years to come.

WINTER ACTIVITIES

Online Gardening Class

- EJ Rebman

I am currently watching a 24-class series through Great Courses Plus which presents a "series of college-level audio and video courses" on hundreds of topics. I have one "in the wings on botany" but the one I am currently watching is "The Science of Gardening" presented with Linda Chalker-Scott who wrote "How Plants Work" and "The Informed Gardener".

This class is interesting and I've learned so much at the same time enjoying what I'm watching. When you buy a course, it is downloaded on your device so you can watch at your own speed and can revisit each class as many times as you wish.

As I'm watching I take notes and when I want to flag something just jot down the minutes so I can revisit. There may be a way to flag it but I haven't looked into that.

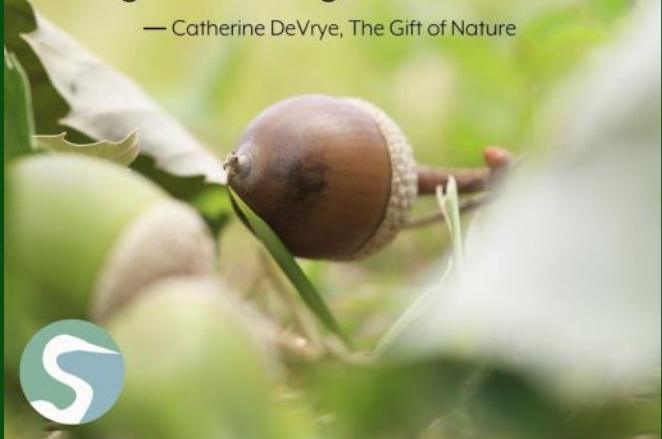
If you are interested in one of these courses or would like to just go through their catalogue visit: <https://www.thegreatcoursesplus.com/> or just Google Great Courses Plus.

What a great way this is to take our minds off of the current state of affairs or enjoy when stuck inside during the cold months to prepare for next spring.

EJ Rebman - feel free to text or call me if you have any questions. 815-494-6986 or email: namberej@gmail.com

"Like tiny seeds with potent power to push through tough ground and become mighty trees, we hold innate reserves of unimaginable strength. We are resilient."

— Catherine DeVrye, The Gift of Nature



NICHOLAS CONSERVATORY

All Aglow Light Show

November 27, 2020—Jan 6, 2021, dusk to dawn



ROTARY GARDENS

Holiday Light Show

November 27, 2020— Early January, 2021, Thursdays through Sundays; 4:30-8:30 pm. Note: Christmas and New Year's weeks have different schedules. <https://www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org/>



THE LANDSCAPE CONNECTION

Winter Porch Pots workshop

November 21, 25, 27; December 5

Call 815-874-8733 or sign up online:

<https://www.thelandscapeconnection.net/calendar-of-events>



ROCKFORD SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Vivaldi's "Fall and Winter" online via YouTube

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Akyfghs62mg&feature=youtu.be&utm_source=news-letter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Vivaldi%20video%20performance&utm_campaign=Subscriber



See free webinar

WINTER AND CHRISTMAS AT CASTLE HOWARD

December 11, 1 p.m.

One of England's finest country houses. Sign up here:

https://hubs.americanancestors.org/winter-castle-howard?fbclid=IwAR09izUA4hQz04HPFKirHGWlwqAUPPBTI7EeLtqu4UOJx_7Fk-goQwo2Yv8

Potpourri Club Outing to Severson Dells

Nine members met at Severson Dells and had a wonderful nature-folklore tour. We were so fortunate to have a fabulous tour guide that was perfect for our noisy, inquisitive group. Ellen, the environmental specialist, lead us, pointing out elderberry and nettle plants, also sharing interesting folklore about both. We talked about the Pine Siskin, the North American migratory bird in the finch family. We studied the great Bur Oaks and even learned how to make a whistle out of the acorn cap. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h6z3s2mhlKo>

The oak barrels are used to store whiskey and also gives it a slight vanilla flavor; interesting!

I bet you didn't know that Milkweed fluff was used in life preservers back in the 30's!



It was great to be outdoors and admire the beauty of nature.

Photos and story by Diane Donze

Plantaholics Club Outing to Anderson Japanese Gardens



Ginny Hatwich, a Plantaholics member as well as an AJG docent, lead the group on a tour through Anderson Gardens.

A perfect fall day!



Photos by Linda Baker