

# COUNCIL OF ROCKFORD GARDENERS, INC.

Organized 3/21/1980

## The 4 CRG Clubs:

Plantaholics  
Potpourri  
Seedlings  
Wildflowers

## Council Motto:

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

## Council Website:

[councilofrockfordgardeners.org](http://councilofrockfordgardeners.org)

Club calendars listed  
on website,

or please check with your  
garden club on status of  
individual club activities.



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Editor: Kathy Batzkall

MARCH 2022



## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

As seasons change we meet many new challenges and thoughts about what the future may bring. The change of season is somewhat like the changes The Council of Rockford Gardeners face. Change can be both an exciting time, as well as a time of anticipation of what is next to come.

Now that the season is changing for CRG, we owe much gratitude for a job well done by all the dedicated leadership of the past. Most recently, that of our Co-Presidents, Ann Somers and Sarah Britton as they step aside after their 6 year tenure. They faced many challenges, some like never before and hopefully never again, but always in a most professional way and looking out for the best interest of each of our Clubs. Much gratitude goes out to both Ann and Sarah.

As I continue the legacy of those before, I'm optimistically looking forward to what the future brings to CRG. Hopefully lots of familiar faces, plus new ones will bring forth many fresh ideas (which are always welcome). We are so very fortunate as an organization, to have such a solid foundation to build upon. Again, that is a testament to those who have served in leadership roles in the past. The future looks bright, as our next season approaches. Spring, especially for gardeners is an exciting time of change and hopefully that carries forward with the CRG and each individual club.

The Council of Rockford Gardeners have been planning several new things. First, Lynne Franzene, chair of "Ways & Means" has been working diligently with her committee on plans for a CRG "Spring Plant Sale and Boutique" fundraising event. Next, in lieu of a CRG Holiday Luncheon, there are plans underway to do a CRG "Fall Frolic" as our scholarship fundraising and presentation event. Hopefully, several other new ideas can be shared over the months to come. Anyone wishing to contribute ideas, express concerns, make suggestions or volunteer to participate further with the Council's endeavors, please contact me directly.

In closing, please remember:

***Seasons change, leaves let go, roots deepen and the plants grow.***

Arch Smith

[racs71@yahoo.com](mailto:racs71@yahoo.com) or 815-501-1640

# In Remembrance of Joan Tilson

**MARCH  
2022**

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SUBMIT questions or  
comments to:

[CRGnews815@gmail.com](mailto:CRGnews815@gmail.com)



Joan M. Tilson, 87, of Rockford, passed away peacefully on Friday, February 4, 2022.

Joan was a long-time member of the Potpourri Club, having served in several officer positions of the club.

Liz Hill, a very good friend of Joan's shared:

"Joan was a kind, warm, caring and generous woman, as well as a dear friend.

I first met her through our membership in the Perry Department of the Rockford Woman's Club. She introduced me to the Potpourri Garden Club. She loved to garden, was very knowledgeable about gardening and was especially fond of wild-flowers and hostas, which she generously shared with others.

Our husbands met originally through their membership in Rockford Rotary Club. We enjoyed many social occasions with them. Joan lost her husband in May of 2016, and I lost my husband in September of 2016. I think we spent these recent years enjoying our friendship as well as looking out for each other. She will be missed."

MaryAnn Miller shared these remembrances:

"Joan got me into garden club when I went to parttime work. She was always willing to help her friends when they needed it. When Bob, her husband, had a stroke she kept him at home, arranged for caregivers 3 times a day, and she got out very little. Her kids and grandkids were very important to her.

What a peaceful way to get to heaven! As always I am sure all of her golden retrievers welcomed her. I miss her."

Ann Somers has very fond memories:

"Joan had presence. Soft spoken and kind and gentle and strong and fierce when necessary. She loved nature and being in nature. With her Eagle Scout boys and husband, she spent time camping (she had a 4 night limit) and exploring all nature provides. She *knew* Rock Cut State Park.

In the spring she'd be at the nurseries buying plants for her containers. Her advise and lesson was to purchase only what you could manage to plant that day.

She'd text every fall with a list of plants looking for a winter home. Some were hers and some were from neighbors. Everyone in her neighborhood knew who was the plant lover.

She rocked a sequined ball cap like no other! She was wearing it the first time I met her. The cap, her smile and genuine interest and curiosity made me want to get to know her."





# GARDEN CLUB ACTIVITIES

## Potpourri Club met at Rock Valley Garden Center in March.

Courtesy photos.



What a beautiful, sunshiny day we had for Potpourri Garden Club to visit Rock Valley Garden Center. One of the co-owners, Cathy Ott, gave us a grand tour. We all learned something new from this information meeting. Did you know they use beet juice, an eco-friendly alternative for melting the ice and clearing the walkways? Now when you see that pretty pink stuff you'll know what it is. Beet Juice!



We were all given a complimentary cute, little, pansy that are grown at RVGC specifically to withstand cold weather and will survive in temps as cold as 20 degrees. It was wonderful to see 19 members and 1 guest join the tour. After the tour we had time to shop and then lunch at Tavern on Clark.

- Diane Donze



### Our 2021 Scholarship Winner

Elaine Parrovecchio presented the scholarship check to Abigail D'Agostin. Congrats to Abby!

## GARDEN CLUB MEETINGS

**PLANTAHOLICS** – EJ Rebman reported that Plantaholics went to Pepper Creek March 8, and Vicky talked about house plants. Arch Smith is trying to work out the April Plantaholics meeting with the 'rock lady' for a lecture on rocks, and he reported that she may donate some rocks to our plant sale.

**POTPOURRI** – Susan Schmitz reported that February's meeting was canceled. March 8th, Potpourri went to Rock Valley Greenhouse for a tour of the greenhouse and then to lunch at Tavern on Clark.

**SEEDLINGS** – Susan Schumacher reported that in February Seedlings had a video on Elevated Garden Earth Boxes via Zoom. On March 20th at 2:00 P.M. Seedlings will have a work day in the Wildflower Garden with Anita Johnson. Anita is requesting wildflowers, especially bluebells. Anita said to wear old clothes and to bring rakes, spades, or trowels. Everyone is welcome.

**WILDFLOWERS** – Jan Duncan reported that in February Wildflower members had a docent-led tour of the Nicholas Conservatory. Our very informative docent was Wally Rebman, EJ's husband. We then went to lunch at the Olympic. On March 24th, Wildflowers will go to Pepper Creek for a talk on succulents and new plants.

## A taste of Spring

Beautiful video of flowers opening.

Shared by Mary Kay Morrison, Seedlings

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjCzPp-MK48>

# GROWING TOGETHER

By Yvette DeWispeleare, University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener, Winnebago County

## *Growing Peace*

***The blooming cherry tree is the most ideally, wonderfully beautiful tree that nature has to show, and its short-lived glory makes the enjoyment keener and more poignant."***

***- Eliza Scidmore***

Washington DC's renowned National Cherry Blossom Festival grew from a simple ceremony witnessed by just a few people with little fanfare or photographers. First Lady Helen Herron Taft and the Viscountess Chinda, wife of the Japanese Ambassador, planted two Yoshino cherry trees on the northern bank of the Tidal Basin on March 27, 1912.

Having advocated to plant cherry trees in Washington, DC for almost a quarter of a century, Socialite Eliza Scidmore outlined a plan to plant Japanese cherry trees on the barren parkland along the Potomac River, and she shared the plan to First Lady Helen Taft, who quickly accepted the idea, and the Japanese Consul of New York suggested the City of Tokyo make a gift of the trees. Quickly, the First Lady agreed to accept a gift of 2,000 cherry trees as "a symbol of International Friendship between the two countries."

Unfortunately, an inspection team from the Department of Agriculture found the newly gifted trees were infested with insects and were severely diseased. To protect our American growers, they concluded that the trees must be destroyed. Therefore, President Taft granted consent to destroy most of the trees by burning. A newspaper article in the Evening Star mentioned "about a dozen" of the "buggiest trees" were saved for further study, and "planted out in the experimental plot with an expert entomologist armed with a dark lantern, and a butterfly net, cyanide bottle and other lethal weapons placed on guard over the trees, to see what sort of bugs develop."

New tree grafts were taken in December of 1910 from a famous collection along the bank of the Arakawa River and grafted onto specially selected understock produced in Itami City. On Valentine's Day of 1912, 3,020 cherry trees from twelve varieties were shipped from Yokohama to

Seattle, WA, where they were transferred by insulated freight cars to Washington, D.C.

The two original Yoshino cherry trees still stand, and near the bases of the trees is a large bronze plaque which commemorates the occasion. The remaining gifted trees were planted along the tidal basin and on the White House grounds; 100 of those trees remain.

In 1952, The National Park Service shipped budwood from descendants of those same trees back to Tokyo. These efforts to help restore the original grove from their descendant trees as part of the cycle of giving and friendship symbolized by the blooming cherry trees. There are now more than 3750 trees in Washington, D.C. and several grafts and young trees have been sent back to Japan over the years.

A 300-year-old Japanese Stone Lantern was presented to the City of Washington D.C. as a "rededication of friendship between nations" on the 100th anniversary of the first Treaty of Peace, Amity and Commerce between the United States and Japan which was signed at Yokohama on March 31, 1854. The Lantern is one of a pair, the other stands in Ueno Park in Tokyo, Japan. It is made of granite, is eight feet high, and weighs approximately two tons. The National Cherry Blossom Festival is officially opened by the lighting of the lantern each year.

Eliza Skidmore's tombstone in a Yokohama cemetery reads: "A woman who loved Japanese cherry blossoms rests in peace here." Planted there also is a Japanese Cherry Tree.

"Hanami" is the traditional Japanese custom of welcoming spring and enjoying the beauty of blossoming flowers, while "Sakura" is the Japanese term for flowering cherry blossom trees.

- (National Park Service).



# Forcing Spring Flowering Branches

By Yvette DeWispelaere

University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener, Winnebago County

- ☞ Force spring buds after eight (8) weeks of temps below 40°.
- ☞ Use a sharp pruner and cut branches at least 12" long. Look for branches with flower bud growth which is larger than leaf bud growth. Avoid shoots from the bottom (sucker growth) or fast-growing shoots (water sprouts) that come straight up from the top.
- ☞ Forsythia, red maple, crabapple, pussy willow, redbud, flowering dogwood, cherry and serviceberry are all plants that will bloom from cuttings.
- ☞ Cut a cross shaped slit in the bottom of the branch.
- ☞ Plunge in a bucket of water and change the water frequently. Mist the branches daily. If possible, soak overnight in a tub.
- ☞ Branches force easier if cut on a sunny afternoon when temps are above freezing.
- ☞ Keep in indirect light at about 60-65°.
- ☞ Warm temperatures and brighter light cause flowers to fall off.

## — LOCAL NEWS —

### FOREST PRESERVES OF WINNEBAGO COUNTY CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

Hononegah Forest Preserve is the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County's oldest preserve and one of its most popular. This year the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County celebrates 100 years.

Samantha Crooks, communications coordinator for the Forest Preserves, joined Steve Summers on *This Week in the Stateline* to talk about some of the ways the organization will celebrate its first century. Listen to the interview here: <https://www.rockrivercurrent.com/episode/forest-preserves-of-winnebago-county-celebrates-100-years/>

She has challenged people to explore all 44 of the forest preserves this year in honor of the 100th anniversary.

The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County were created by a public vote in November 1922. It was the third forest preserve designation to be created in the state. The preserves now encompasses 11,500 acres of woods, wetlands, rivers, prairies and ponds in Winnebago County.

### BELL BOWL PRAIRIE

The construction is delayed through June 1 at Bell Bowl Prairie.

You can do your part by donating to National Land Institute or contacting the decision makers to ask them to collaborate with the sustainable design team: <https://www.naturalland.org/bell-bowl-prairie-contacts/>



COUNCIL OF ROCKFORD GARDENERS

# Spring Plant Sale AND Garden Boutique



**Mark your calendars!!**

**Sale is Friday and Saturday, May 27-28, 2022**

**Open to the public!**

As you are waking up your garden this spring and find that you have extra plants or extra garden items that you will no longer use, please consider bringing them to the Council of Rockford Gardeners' Spring Plant Sale and Garden Boutique.

The Council of Rockford Gardeners (all clubs) will be having a Spring Plant Sale and Garden Boutique, **May 27-28 at the tennis court at 5400 Gingeridge Lane, Rockford. Proceeds from this sale will be used for our scholarship fund.** We need the support of all garden club members to make this a success. The sale will be open to the public, too, so tell your friends and share the sale information whenever and wherever you can.

If you have plants like Canna, start a few bulbs in early spring. Perennials, succulents and houseplants can be divided for the sale also.

This will be a huge undertaking and a lot of fun for our clubs. We will need lots of volunteers!

**Club member volunteer work schedule:**

May 25 3-6pm: Drop off of plants and Boutique items, weather permitting)  
May 26 set up for sale 8 - ?  
May 27 Sale 8-5  
May 28 Sale 8-3  
May 28 3-? Clean up

**Here are some suggestions for the sale:**

- . Plants, plants, and more plants
- . Seeds, pots, plant stands, garden art
- . Garden related fabric, linens, jewelry, framed art
- . Greeting and note cards
- . Anything bird related: bird houses, feeders, birdbaths etc.
- . Vintage and new garden tools
- . Gardening books and magazines
- . Spring and summer decor, wreaths
- . Garden related glassware, mugs, plates, serving dishes
- . Garden T-shirts, jackets, hats, gloves, boots

Garden items do not need to be new, but must be clean and in good sellable condition. If you go to garage sales, Salvation Army, Good Will or estate sales, keep an eye out for items to include in our Boutique. If you do garden crafts, make extra!

There are many other details for the sale that we will send out to each club, such as how to mark your plants, pricing, workers needed, tables and canopies, wagons, etc.

**We are hoping everyone will help  
to make this a success!**

**If you have any questions, ideas, or want to volunteer now,  
call or email Lynne at 815-985-2454 or ljlynde@aol.com.**

**Please support the sale in any way you can, so we can continue  
to assist horticulture students with scholarships!**



# MARCH 7, 2022 COUNCIL MEETING REPORT



## TREASURER'S REPORT - Submitted by **Mary Ann Miller**, Treasurer

Balance as of January 1, 2022.....\$5,238.03  
Receipts: (No Show Luncheon donations)..... 140.00  
Disbursements: (Scholarship to A. D'Agostin ) ..... 1,000.00  
Ending Balance as of March 2, 2022.....\$4,378.03

**Programs** – **Arch Smith** reported that the only program on the schedule is one for the fall – a gathering of clubs. Lori Walsh came up with the name “Fall Frolic”. Arch said that this is just an idea right now, and that the event can be hosted at his home. The date is Saturday, October 1st from 6-8pm.

**Publicity** – **Susan Schumacher** reported that we have 74 members on Facebook. It is open to the public. She said that she did post our scholarship winner but has not done a news release about her winning. She said that we will do a presentation at the Fall Frolic.

**Awards** – No report.

**Civic and Conservation** – **Diane Donze** reported that we will continue our partnership with Habitat for Humanity. They are working on 4 planned homes. CRG donates 4 planters for the homes, but she has not had any word on when the homes will be completed.

**Garden Walk** – **Arch Smith** reported that the Garden Walk will be held on July 6th, the Wednesday after the 4th of July. Half the garden owners have confirmed. He also has a couple of back-up gardens; total 8 gardens.

**Horticulture** – **Yvette DeWispelaere** reported that she has 2 stories this month, and has several done for future newsletters.

**Hospitality** – No report.

**Newsletter** – **Kathy Batzkall** would like articles to her by the Friday after each Council meeting in order to have our newsletter completed and sent out within a week after the meeting.

**Parliamentarian** – **Sarah Britton** reported that “all is swell”.

**Sunshine** – **Cindy Rittenhouse** has returned from vacation. In her absence, **EJ Rebman** sent out several cards to members. Please notify Cindy Rittenhouse regarding any cards to be sent.

**Ways & Means** – **Lynne Franzene-Lynde** reported that there is a lot going on for the plant sale. There has been one meeting with those who volunteered to work on the sale, and it went very well. Kathy Batzkall will put

the regular announcement about the plant sale in the newsletter but will add a few things such as the address of the plant sale - 5400 Gingeridge at the tennis court, and request for canopies, etc. for the sale.

May 25th will be the date to drop off all plants and boutique items. All items should be garden related.

May 26th will be the set up date (so will need long tables, wagons) and plants will then be priced. Each club president should ask club members to help for the set up, for the sale, and for cleanup.

May 27th and 28th are the sale dates. Runners will also be needed to help deliver plants to people's cars. After 3:00 P.M on May 28th we will need help to clean up.

Lynne also talked about members agreeing to have their unsold items donated to Goodwill, etc.

Lynne then questioned whether or not we should have a time for CRG members to come and shop – such as a preview day and maybe charge \$5 (suggested by Mary Ann Miller). After much discussion regarding a preview or pre-sale day, a motion was made, seconded, and passed that we *not* have a pre-sale for members.

**Website** – **Kathy Batzkall** reported that all is ok.

## NEW BUSINESS

- Debbie Nagy from Rock River Garden Club is the new Director of GCI District 1.
- The Garden Clubs of Illinois is “looking into streaming live or recording for availability later, the presentation of Trent Ford, Illinois State Climatologist at the state conference being held in April.”
- The Garden Clubs of Illinois is planning a Flower Show School for October 3-4 in South Barrington. If anyone is interested, please contact Ann Somers at [annsomers@comcast.net](mailto:annsomers@comcast.net) by March 25th.

**Next meeting will be on Monday, April 4, at 9:30 A.M. at Mary's Market on State Street.**

***All garden club members are encouraged to attend.***



# MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE GARDEN EVENTS

## KLEHM ABORETUM & BOTANIC GARDEN

### Living Succulent Wreath Workshop

Saturday, March 19 | 10 AM - 12 PM | \$90 per person  
| Visitor's Center Gallery

Come out to Klehm to learn about succulents and create your own one-of-a-kind succulent wreath! Director of Education & Programming, Sam Burbach, will teach you about growing and propagating succulents and walk you through the steps to create a living succulent wreath. All plants and supplies will be provided to create a 12-inch wreath.

Please note that final product will vary from photo. Succulents will take time to root into the wreath, but the wreath should be ready to hang in 6-8 weeks – just in time for warmer weather!

Due to the supplies required for this class, no refunds will be made within 72 hours prior to the class date. Cancellations requested prior to 72 hours before the class date will be issued in the form of a credit on file (to be used for future programs).

Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden, 2715 S. Main St, Rockford, IL 61102

[www.klehm.org](http://www.klehm.org) | 815-965-8146 | [info@klehm.org](mailto:info@klehm.org)

Register online: <https://klehm.org/>



## SEVERSON DELLS

### Full Moon Walk

Saturday, April 16 | 7:00 -8:30 PM

Celebrate the brilliant Full Moon at Severson Dells with a walk through the woodland and prairie while we enjoy the emergence of nocturnal wildlife. **Registration is required by April 14.** <https://www.seversondells.com/events/full-moon-hike-april-2022>

Members/\$3, General Admission/\$5

Severson Dells Nature Center: 8786 Montague Road, Rockford.



## HOO HAVEN

### ITEMS NEEDED

Hoo Haven depends on contributions from the public. If you can help out, here are some needed items:

- Extra Large puppy pads (ducks and geese)
- Dried Bugs for Reptiles (Chewy.com)
- Eggs
- Gold fish for pond, 3 dozen (Wayne's Feed)
- Rugs with rubber backing. When fawns come in floor is too slippery.
- Dry cat food for foxes and more

If you would like to donate directly to Hoo Haven, a 501c3 tax deductible donation, see the website <https://hoohaven.org>.

You can also help by shopping at Schnucks and using your Schnucks card; tell them you designate their gift to go to Hoo Haven.

## SEND SOME SUNSHINE

The Council of Rockford Gardeners has a "Sunshine" Committee to send cards to members who are ill or who have lost someone dear.

Please contact Cindy Rittenhouse to have a card sent.  
Email: [cdy1ritt@gmail.com](mailto:cdy1ritt@gmail.com) or phone: 815-540-5876.

