

COUNCIL OF ROCKFORD GARDENERS, INC.

Organized 3/21/1980

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Editor: Kathy Batzkall

APRIL 2022



The 4 CRG Clubs:

Plantaholics
Potpourri
Seedlings
Wildflowers

Council Motto:

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

Council Website:

councilofrockfordgardeners.org

Club calendars are listed
on our website,
or please check with your
garden club on status of
individual club activities.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN

I know Spring is finally here! I saw my first crocus flowering the other day. I always get so excited when I notice those early blooms growing in our garden. I grab my phone, take a few pictures and text them to Charlie. I always get the same polite response... "Oh, cool." Nothing more, nothing less just the exact same response every single year... "Oh, cool." Even through my excitement, I know after all these years that Charlie just isn't nearly as excited as I am. I know he's not much of a fan of growing crocus, because they come and go so quickly. However, for me it's that first sign from Mother Nature that her gift of the re-birth of Spring is finally here, once again. Of course, the next day it SNOWED, and I started to really wonder, but that's another story about living in Illinois!

On April 4th, I attended the Garden Clubs of Illinois District 1 president's meeting held at Nicholas Conservatory. There were 22 club leaders in attendance sharing thoughts, concerns and ideas. We met our new District 1 leader, Debbie Nagy from Dixon, Illinois. Ironically, she and 2 others were originally from my hometown of Polo, Illinois. The meeting was a mixture of attendees that have been involved for years, while others have been involved only a very short time. I noticed some attendees shared the same excitement in being present as I was when seeing that very first crocus of the year. While others were more like that polite... "Oh cool." Overall, it was a pretty good meeting.

I think we all need to experience that same rebirth of excitement in our own clubs. We have a great organization in the Council of Rockford Gardeners as well as in each individual club. Shouldn't we share that excitement with others? Maybe just the old "Oh cool" isn't our best approach if we want to keep our clubs growing like that crocus of early spring. My challenge to all of you is to get that excitement growing again in your personal clubs. Try something different, tour some place new, invite a friend or 2 to join, come attend a CRG Council meeting—you are all invited. Let's grow our clubs with the same excitement as we grow our gardens!

"First the howling snow woke us, then the rain came down to soak us, and now before the eye can focus... it's CROCUS." - Lilja Rogers

Arch Smith

racs71@yahoo.com or 815-501-1640

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SUBMIT questions or
comments to:

CRGnews815@gmail.com



Homegrown National Parks

As promised, Doug Tallamy and his 'Homegrown National Parks' talk is available for viewing by using this link <https://youtu.be/VBkUBDY5IN0>

Because of membership through GCI (Garden Clubs of Illinois) and NGC (National Garden Club) this program has been made free for our viewing.

Back in March, 2021, EJ Rebman and Lori Walsh first shared a story about Homegrown National Parks. Their observations included some things we can do:

Take a walkabout

Delay cleaning up your garden until it has been 55 ° for 5 days in a row.

Evaluate plantings

Take stock of how many plants we have that support pollinators.

Appreciate bees

Did you know that researchers predict that our own species would survive only another 4 years without bees?

Use natives

Plan your native plant garden.

Use no pesticides



To add to this information, Yvette DeWispeleare suggested an article by Ryan Pankau, "Spring Garden Cleanup" through the U of I Extension website <https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/garden-scoop/2021-02-26-spring-garden-cleanup>

2022 Wildflower Walkabout Series

See details here: <https://www.naturalland.org/wildflower-walkabout/>

All walks will begin at 6:00 p.m. Free Registration for all of the walks will be required this year through EventBrite. For more information, please call 815/335-2915 (Severson Dells) or 815/964-6666 (National Land Institute).

- ◆ Wednesday, April 27 – Howard D. Colman Dells Nature Preserve
- ◆ Tuesday, May 3 – Pecatonica Wetlands Forest Preserve
- ◆ Wednesday, May 11- Kinnikinnick Creek Conservation Area
- ◆ Tuesday, May 17 – Funderburg Forest Preserve
- ◆ Wednesday, May 25 – Burr Oak Valley Nature Preserve
- ◆ Tuesday, May 31 – Cedar Cliff Forest Preserve

GARDEN CLUB ACTIVITIES



Plantaholics Club met on April 5 at Nelson's Greenhouse in Loves Park for an informative and fun presentation on succulents and spring annuals by Doug Stock, owner of Nelson's. Dinner at Nunzio's followed the presentation.



22 Wildflower members enjoyed Vicki Hubbard's talk about succulents at Pepper Creek on March 24th. Members then went on to Lunch at Garrett's.



Wildflower Club also enjoyed an outing to see the orchids at Nicholas Conservatory on February 24th.



GROWING TOGETHER

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

The Civilian Conservation Corps

In his inaugural address President Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "Our greatest primary task is to put people to work." With unemployment as high as 25%, millions of people were without work. On March 31, 1933, FDR signed the Federal Unemployment Relief Act, which recruited unmarried young men to join what would become known as the Civilian Conservation Corps or CCC.

The US Army mobilized more than 300,000 enrollees and put them to work in an efficient manner. It was the most rapid peacetime mobilization in American history. Enrollees then worked under the US Forest Service, the National Park Service, and the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture.

The Corps was open to healthy, unmarried, unemployed male U.S. citizens between the ages of 18-26. Women were prohibited and blacks were segregated. Despite an amendment outlawing racial discrimination, the US Supreme Court didn't think of "Segregation" as "Discrimination." Minimum enlistment was 6 months, although many reenlisted after their first term to a maximum of 18 months. "Enrollees" were paid \$30 per month and were required to send \$25 home to their families. They received food, two standard uniforms, medical care, and shelter (usually living in wooden cabins), and were supplemented with educational and vocational programs after regular working hours.

Reforestation was a major undertaking of the CCC, and the group was nicknamed the "**Tree Army**." This helped to combat rampant soil erosion that contributed to disasters like the Dust Bowl, and they thinned dead trees from forests while planting, restoring overcrowded forests. **The CCC planted 3.5 billion trees** to serve as windbreaks and soil anchors.

Soil conservation and preservation of farmland was crucial. They trained farmers in modern soil conservation for healthier land and bigger yields. Terracing hilly land to create fields with less water runoff was one of the most effective tools they had. **The CCC built more than 30,000 miles of terraces** and workers learned skills they could use in future careers.

The CCC created 711 State Parks

While there were several state parks prior to 1933, there were many states without a single park: Mississippi, New Mexico, South Carolina, West Virginia, and Virginia to name a few. Over 2 million CCC workers worked on new State and National parks and made existing ones more accessible by cutting trails, building

campsites and cabins and paving roads. In all, there were a total of 194 CCC work camps in 94 National Parks and 697 camps in 881 State and Local parks throughout the US. Two very well-known parks built almost entirely by CCC labor were the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in North Carolina and Tennessee, and the 600-acre Big Bend National Park, Texas. (*History.com*)

Over nine years the CCC was operational, the annual acreage of U.S. forests lost to fire sunk to its lowest point ever, even though a record number of forest fires were reported. **The total number of hours logged by CCC firefighters from 1933 to 1942 was the equivalent of 6.5 million days.**

They patrolled on foot, by plane, truck and even canoe. When a fire broke out, they attacked with everything they had— axes, hoes, shovels, saws and even bulldozers! Tragically, 47 CCC firefighters lost their lives.

Crucial to fighting fires, **the CCC built more than 3,000 fire lookout towers**, including the Stone Masonry Mount Diablo lookout tower outside of San Francisco, giving impressive views



A Poster promoting the CCC

The CCC *continued from page 4...*

of the Cascades and Sierra Nevada Mountain Ranges. These were critical to spotting small fires before they grew into forest-gutting blazes. The CCC also thinned timber and dead logs from fire-prone areas and cut preventative fire breaks to slow the progress of potentially disastrous blazes. The largest of these was a 600-mile “scar” separating the dry brushland from the timber rich forests known as the Ponderosa Way in Northern California.

They also oversaw the construction of collection ponds and large water storage basins to have a ready water supply for battling future wildfires.

And finally, **the CCC Launched the American Ski Industry**. Thanks to the forward-thinking of one forestry official in Vermont who attended forestry school in Sweden who was put in charge of 25 hardy CCC workers, America got its first downhill ski run. Over the

next few years, the CCC workers cut trails in New England: Stowe, Wildcat, Cannon, and Thunderbolt. Out West they also cut the first ski runs in Sun Valley, Idaho and America’s been enjoying downhill from there!

On a personal note: Someone very dear to me, my husband’s grandpa, Sam Diana, enlisted with the CCC on July 23, 1934, and was honorably discharged on October 15, 1935, serving at Camp Salt Creek (Western Springs, IL). <https://patch.com/illinois/westernsprings/camp-salt-creek-a-piece-of-western-springs-history> He was an avid gardener with a kind and gentle soul.



*Grandpa Sam (right)
Circa 1935*

A FEW FACTS ABOUT HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Our clubs have donated many planted pots to new Habitat for Humanity homeowners, and some CRG members have asked how Habitat for Humanity works for new home buyers.

That’s a great question. In a nutshell, Habitat is an affordable homeownership program. What that means is that they work with low-income families who wish to purchase their own home, but who financially would not qualify for a home loan from the bank to do so. To qualify for the Habitat for Humanity program, they must: 1) be low-income but demonstrate financial readiness to repay an affordable mortgage; they must fall between 30% and 80% of the area median income. 2) have a demonstrated need for safe housing, as determined through a home visit and 3) be willing to partner with Habitat for Humanity on the process (by volunteering and taking classes).

Habitat sells the houses for appraised value so that they don’t impact the market, but the loan is different from a bank loan in a number of ways to make it affordable to the borrower:

- The buyer helps build the house instead of paying a cash down payment. They then work with third parties (like the Federal Home Loan Bank) to secure down payment grants (gifts) for the home buyer so that they have, on average, an 80% loan to value ratio or less when they close.
- The loan is 0% interest
- The mortgage payment is calculated to make sure it is affordable to the buyer (taking no more than 30%)

Council of Rockford Gardeners has partnered with Habitat, donating a welcome planter for each new homeowner. We hope to continue this going forward in 2022. Our generous members donated 4 planters in 2021 and previous years. A special thanks to the most recent donor members, Jan Duncan, Barb Jensen, Susan Buzzard, MaryAnn Miller, Lynne F. Lynde, and Sherry Seaver for their contributions in providing these lovely planters. If you want to become more involved with this organization you may reach out to Caitlyn.

- Civic & Conservation Chair-Diane Donze



COUNCIL OF ROCKFORD GARDENERS

Spring Plant Sale AND Garden Boutique



**Mark your calendars!!
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!

We need members, husbands, friends to help:

- 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:

- . Great plants from our members' gardens
- . 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.

Let's 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!**



APRIL 5, 2022 COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

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

Balance as of March 1, 2022.....	\$4,378.03
Receipts: (Club dues)	1,440.00
Disbursements: (Pepper Creek gifts)	225.00
Ending Balance as of April 5, 2022.....	\$5,593.03

Arch Smith reported that at the District 1 spring meeting held April 4 at Nicholas Conservatory there were 22 people in attendance. They are going to update the Bylaws, and they decided to give each club \$500 to help when they hold a district meeting. Debbie Nagy of Dixon is the new District 1 Director.

Publicity – No report.

Awards – **Elaine Parrovecchio** reported that we will acknowledge the 2 scholarship winners (2020 and 2021) at our Fall Frolic on Saturday, October 1.

Civic and Conservation – No report.

Garden Walk – **Arch Smith** reported that 3-4 people have committed to participate in the Walk but others are unsure at this time; Arch will follow up. Council does not have insurance for the garden walk. In the past, if there was a problem, the homeowner's insurance would take care of it.

Horticulture – **Yvette DeWispelaere** reported that everything is fine. Several Board members complimented her on the articles she has written.

Hospitality – **Mary Pinter** reported that she will make reservations here at Mary's Market for our meetings at 9:30 A.M. on May 2, June 6, and July 11.

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 – **Arch Smith** reported for **Cindy Rittenhouse** who sent a sympathy card to Cheryl Walker on March 16, for the death of her sister. Let Cindy Rittenhouse know if she should send any cards.

Ways & Means – **Lynne Franzene-Lynde** reported that for the plant sale (May 27th and 28th) The committee will price the plants using a stick. Mini blind pieces will be used to mark the plant descriptions.

EJ Rebman reported that we will need our members to fill 80 time slots, so all members should participate – or members will need to sign up for double shifts. Lynne plans to go to each club's meeting to give members more information.

Plants and other items are to be dropped off on Wednesday May 25th between 3-5 P.M. We need tents, tables, card tables, wagons, etc. People will help unload and bring items up to the tennis court.

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

NEW BUSINESS

Our next meeting will be held on Monday, May 2, 2022, at 9:30 A.M. at Mary's Market on State Street.

All garden club members are encouraged to attend.

PRESIDENTS' REPORTS

PLANTAHOLICS – **Arch Smith** reported that Plantaholics would be going to Nelson's Flowers for a tour on April 5 and then on to Nunzio's for dinner. In May, **Yvette DeWispelaere** has planned a walk in Kirkland to see spring ephemerals. She is also checking on a location for dinner afterwards.

POTPOURRI – **Mary Ann Miller** reported that Potpourri will be going to Rock Valley Greenhouse to make a kokedama on April 12. It was reported that Rock Valley Greenhouse is very ecology minded and "green".

SEEDLINGS – **Lynne Franzene-Lynde** reported that on March 20th Seedlings did cleanup in the Wildflower Garden.

WILDFLOWERS – **Jan Duncan** reported that on March 24th Wildflowers went to Pepper Creek, and Vicki Hubbard talked about succulents and new plants. On April 28th Wildflowers will go to Meridian Nursery where Robb will show many of the new plants. Lunch location to be determined.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE GARDEN EVENTS

KLEHM ABORETUM & BOTANIC GARDEN

2715 S. Main St, Rockford, IL

www.klehm.org | 815-965-8146 | info@klehm.org

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

Easter Floral Centerpiece Workshop

Thursday, April 14 | 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

\$57 Klehm Member, \$60 General Public

Preregistration required by Monday, April 11.

Join Sam Burbach, Director of Education & Programming at Klehm, to learn some of the basics of floral design and put together a spring centerpiece with gorgeous fresh flowers. All supplies will be provided.

Arbor Day Celebration

Friday, April 29 | 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM | **Free**

Drive-thru tree giveaway! Free admission. Free guided walking tour at 10:00 AM. Space is limited, so pre-registration is requested to reserve your space. If any openings remain, walk-ins will be permitted on a first-come-first serve basis.

Vi Bates Woodland Wildflower Garden Tour at 11:30 AM. Preregistration not required.

Birds in the Garden:

Creating & Enjoying a Bird Oasis

Monday, May 9 | 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

FREE (Pre-registration is recommended)

This presentation features Pam Karlson's photos from the Chicago bird garden she created, illustrating how it's possible to attract over 100 bird species. Tips include landscape enhancements, practices and plant selection, with an emphasis on native plants.

NICHOLAS CONSERVATORY

1354 N. 2nd Street, Rockford, IL

The Secret Life of Butterflies exhibit

March 12-May 29. Pre-purchase tickets online to avoid disappointment at the door. <https://nicholasconservatory.com/tickets>

SEVERSON DELLS

8786 Montague Road, Rockford IL

Full Moon Hike

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

Celebrate the brilliant Full Moon with a walk through the woodland and prairie. **Registration is required by April 14.** <https://www.seversondells.com/events/full-moon-hike-april-2022>. Members/\$3, Non members \$5.

Pollinator Palooza

Saturday, April 23 | 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Learn how to support native pollinators and design a pollinator garden. **Free event! No registration necessary.**

NATURE AT THE CONFLUENCE

306 Dickop Street, South Beloit, IL

2022 Earth Day Walkabout

April 23 | 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm

Guided 2-mile hike on beautiful river bottomland which is being restored. *Check for registration openings:* <https://natureattheconfluence.com/events/>

WILD ONES

2022 Annual Native Plant Sale

Orders due April 22. Download brochure:

<http://wildonesrrvc.org/2022/February/2022-plant-sale-brochure.pdf>

**Remember to
check our website:**

www.councilofrockfordgardeners.org

- Events
- Membership directory
- History
- Latest CRG news