

COUNCIL OF ROCKFORD GARDENERS, INC.

Organized 3/21/1980

E-Issue V 8 Issue 3
Editor: Kathy Batzkall



APRIL 2023



The 4 CRG Clubs:

Plantaholics
Potpourri
Seedlings
Wildflowers

Council Motto:

“Enjoy nature’s bounty
and beauty through work
and creativity.”

Council Website:

councilofrockfordgardeners.org

Email editor:

CRGnews815@gmail.com

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

Here we go! It's that time of year when we, as a garden related organization (CRG) start ramping up for an exciting season. This is always a special time of year. We get to see some of our snowbird garden club friends again as they start venturing back to the Prairie State, Land of Lincoln, the Corn State or our favorite, the “Garden of the West.”

Most of us have already been out touring our own personal gardens seeing what's starting to grow. Charlie and I were at a friend's house (she and her mom are joining a club) a week ago and they had pansies in bloom scattered throughout their beds that wintered over. Charlie has been out inspecting every bed reminding me exactly where he planted something last year. For me, I'm always just proud of myself remembering where the beds are let alone where a single plant might be re-growing. This time of year for a gardener is always exciting.

This year as we each plan our gardens let's all really try to be the best stewards of our environment as possible. Recently, Plantaholics had an excellent program featuring Joel Neylon with a presentation about pollinators with an emphasis on bees - an extremely informative program done in a most entertaining way. Joel was very complimentary to those who make a sincere effort in developing pollinator gardens. However, he did also caution us to be extremely careful of other practices some use in their yards that could be very detrimental to the pollinators we are trying to attract. The organization The Xerces Society (xerces.org) is a great resource for what you may want to avoid if you wish to attract pollinators to your gardens in a healthy way. A simple Google search can always help as well.

Charlie and I will be shortly off on an adventure to the Philippines to see his family and especially his 79 year old mother. It's been several years since our last trip due to travel restrictions. Although we will miss most of the April showers, we will be back in time for the May flowers. For me it is always interesting to do some gardening while we are there. My personal rule of thumb is any house plant we have here is an outdoor garden plant there. Elephant ears, banana plants, bromeliads and cordylines, all grow like weeds in the Philippines.

President's Pen continued page 2

April
2023

In This Issue:

P1
*Club Information;
President's Pen*

P2
*President's Pen con't;
Wildflower Club*

P3
Plantaholics Club

P4
Gardening Workout

P5
Twisters

P6
Earth Day

P7
*March Council
Meeting Minutes*

P8
Public Garden Events

SUBMIT questions or
comments to:

CRGnews815@gmail.com



President's Pen continued from page 1...

On our previous visit we planted several Foxtail Palms and Red Lipstick Palms. We are both excited to see how much they have matured. Charlie's sister, Chona, was infected with the gardening bug and has done an amazing job adding to the garden. She also caught the succulent bug and now they are literally everywhere!

Maybe we can all spread the gardening bug to others by inviting them to be a guest at an up coming garden club meeting. Most of us like to consider ourselves as pretty darn good gardeners who can grow most anything. Let's try growing our club numbers by planting some idea seeds in others, making them potential garden club members.

In closing, please remember,

"From little seeds grow mighty trees"

- Aeschylus

"Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant"

- Robert Louis Stevenson

Arch Smith | racs71@yahoo.com | 815-501-1640

GARDEN CLUB ADVENTURES

Wildflower Garden Club toured Rock Valley Garden Center on March 23rd.



GARDEN CLUB NEWS AND ADVENTURES

Plantaholics met on Tuesday April 4 to create some cute garden gnomes



A History of the Garden Gnome

<https://authenticprovence.com/>

Small gnome statues began appearing in Europe in the early 1600's as a sign of good luck. The garden or lawn gnomes as we know them today, appeared in Germany in the mid to late 1800's and were always made of clay. Gnomes first appeared in the gardens of England in the 1840's and from there their popularity began to take off. The mythical gnomes were thought to live underground as their name derives from a Latin word for earth dweller. They were popular in German fairy tales and were often described as old men who guarded treasure.

Originally, gnomes were thought to provide protection, especially of buried treasure and minerals in the ground. They are still used today to watch over crops and livestock, often tucked into the corners of a barn or hidden in the garden.

WHY GARDENING CAN REPLACE YOUR GYM WORKOUT

By Melanie Radzicki McManus, CNN

<https://www.cnn.com/2023/04/07/health/gardening-exercise-benefits-wellness>

A lot of people find it difficult to embrace the idea of regular exercise, even though they know it's good for their physical and mental health. Yet committing to a workout routine doesn't necessarily entail going to the gym or running around your neighborhood.

Gardening is a great example of a popular hobby that's accessible and can also be used as a workout.

Working in your garden or yard is a source of moderate to vigorous physical activity in younger adults, while providing low to moderate physical activity in older adults, research has shown. The pastime is also a muscle-strengthening activity, according to the US Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, and one of the physical activities with the lowest injury rates.

Chronic stress can affect your health. One activity can help

More good news: Puttering in your garden just two hours a week could help boost your mood, while the communal gardening that's proliferating in communities and schools provides social benefits that can alleviate stress and help combat isolation and even dementia, according to studies.

With all these benefits, gardening for fitness will be a trend this year, predicts Rishi Mandal, San Francisco-based cofounder and CEO of the fitness coaching app Future. "Our clients at Future have already been asking their coaches to add gardening and landscaping activities into their routines," Mandal said, "because it's easy to access, fits into their lifestyle and offers meditative benefits."

This demand fits with the overall interest he's seeing among clients for less intensive fitness routines that are accessible and mesh with an on-the-go lifestyle.

Why gardening is exercise

Gardening engages all the major muscle groups, such as the arms, legs, shoulders, back and abdomen, Mandal said. The activity also improves mobility, helps build endurance, and is a comparable workout to walking or Pilates.



All the necessary digging, planting, mowing, raking and weeding torches calories, too. A 154-pound person burns an average of 330 calories per hour through gardening, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Such activity is similar to what that same person would burn playing golf or dancing.

Start with a warm-up

Christine Zellers, an assistant professor of family and community health sciences at Rutgers University says warm up beforehand, doing various stretches.

"Even though gardening may not appear strenuous, using the body in new ways can make you stiff if you don't work up to the movement and prepare by limbering up a little," said Zellers, who teaches at the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Cape May County in New Jersey.

What you should know about the most underrated form of exercise

In addition to stretching, going for a short walk before you begin gardening can also serve as a warm-up. While working in your garden or yard, it's important to bend at the knees to lift heavy objects, she said, and pace yourself if you're new.

Just as a new runner would slowly build up miles before tackling a marathon, new gardeners should start with short sessions, gradually increasing the time and intensity spent in their gardens.

Build muscle strength and burn calories

Once you've got some experience working in your garden or yard, you can ramp things up for more of a challenge. If you've purchased a flat of flowers, bring them to the backyard one at a time. When it's time to mow the lawn, increase the pace of your mowing or switch to a push mower. For some strength training, fill two large watering cans, then carry them around your yard to water the plants.

"Gardening can provide a sense of accomplishment and reward, in addition to movement, by doing something with your hands that is fulfilling, like feeding your family or making your yard look wonderful," Zellers said.

TWISTERS

By Yvette DeWisleare,

University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener, Winnebago County

In the aftermath of the most horrific day of my life, a team of people clad in [orange shirts](#), yielding rakes, shovels, chain saws, and a bobcat, took on an overwhelming task that touched my heart and did what seemed impossible; Samaritan's Purse removed all debris remaining from the shredded structure that was once a dwelling and garage, twisted trees, shrubs and then continued to help me remove mom's plants so I could re-home them. They offered support to our tiny community, coming in like a much-needed rainbow after the storm. Literally putting their loving arms around my family and picking us up when we'd lost everything but hope. There's always hope.

Property damage- injuries- loss of life. These are our main concerns during tornado season in Illinois, which is April1-June 30. Tornadoes are nothing to fool with. When a **Tornado WATCH** is issued, it means conditions are favorable and you should stay tuned to a weather radio or your local news for further instructions, if a **Tornado WARNING** is issued- This means a tornado has been reported by spotters or indicated by radar and there is a serious threat to life and property to those in the path of the tornado. **A tornado warning indicates that you should ACT NOW** to find safe shelter! (Please don't go outside and try to video the storm.) The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Severe Storms Laboratory (NSSL) has a [FAQ page](#).

Occurring in every state in the U.S with records kept since 1950, there are more than a thousand tornadoes every year. The US ranks highest of any country for twisters, ranking second is Canada followed by the UK. The area between NE France, Germany and Poland is considered Europe's "Tornado Alley," although tornadoes are somewhat rare.

The tornado in Belvidere last week damaging the Apollo Theater rated an EF-1 on the [Enhanced Fujita Scale](#) while the one from 1967 (also Belvidere), and Fairdale in 2015 were both EF-4; My thoughts and prayers are with the families affected. There were 12 tornadoes confirmed that night in Illinois, and our season is just beginning...

Tornadoes impact our environment by contaminating drinking water with the effects from floodwaters that have overflowed with human sewage, livestock waste, chemicals, and debris. Homes and trees are shredded

beyond recognition and automobiles and farm machinery become missiles. We had a friend who lost livestock with his barn. Recent studies show those areas will now be open to more invasive species of plant life as well.

Experts say planting hedges or building fences can greatly reduce wind damage to plants from heavy storms. Staking tall plants and using trellises will reduce breakage, tarps or hoop tunnels will keep the rain from hammering the leaves while a good layer of mulch will keep the rain from washing away or compacting your soil. But - on a personal note- nothing will help your garden if a tornado wants to come for it... having been through cleanup myself. As my cousin, a block away from my mom's house said, "it really does sound like a train."



Odd Tornado Facts:

- The most violent tornadoes are born out of supercell thunderstorms.
- Some tornadoes have subvortices rotating inside them.
- Tornadoes can stay on the ground for seconds to hours.
- Tornadoes in the northern hemisphere usually spin counterclockwise.
- One tornado lifted corn stalks, which then became encased in ice and fell to the ground as "corn hail."
- The strongest recorded tornado was 318 mph in Oklahoma.



Link for Samaritan's Purse - <https://www.samaritanspurse.org/our-ministry/nam/>



How to Celebrate Earth Day

April 22, 2023

<https://www.almanac.com/content/earth-day-date-activities-history>

What Is Earth Day?

Ever wonder how Earth Day began? The first Earth Day was held on April 22, 1970, when San Francisco activist John McConnell and Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson separately asked Americans to join in a grassroots demonstration. Dealing with dangerously serious issues concerning toxic drinking water, air pollution, and the effects of pesticides, an impressive 20 million Americans—10% of the population—ventured outdoors and protested together. Today, not only is Earth Day meant to increase awareness of environmental problems, but it is also becoming a popular time for many communities to gather together to clean up litter, plant trees, or simply reflect on the beauty of nature.

10 Earth Day Activities and Ideas

1. Support Our Pollinators!

Bring native bees and other pollinating creatures to your garden. One way to do this is by selecting the right plants.

2. Clean Up Plastic in Your Neighborhood or Local Park

One of the best ways to connect with the Earth is through cleanups. Go on a walk with a trash bag and help to clean up any plastic that you find.

3. Swap Out Your Kitchen and Household Products!

One popular line of kitchen and household products at Walmart and other stores is called “If You Care.” Everything’s biodegradable and does not use chemicals or plastic. Think 100% recycled aluminum foil, chemical-free parchment paper for baking, compostable bags made with potato starch, and even vegetable-based inks for their packaging.

4. Plant a Tree!

Did you know that planting one oak tree brings in more insect and bird species than an entire yard of plants?

5. Use Wildflowers and Native Plants

Wildflowers and indigenous species are not only beautiful but also attract native and beneficial insects that improve both pest control and pollination—meaning bigger flowers and better harvests. Try to simply add a couple of native plants to your garden each year, and you’ll be amazed at the difference—they’ll bring in pollinators as well as birds!

6. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle in the Garden

Reuse, recycle, or return old plastic pots and trays. See six ways to reuse pots and containers and how to repurpose common household items to use in the garden—and save money!

7. Stop Pesticides and Chemicals in the Garden

You don’t need chemicals to get rid of pesky garden pests: Companion planting, natural remedies, and attracting predators to your garden can save you money and also save your plants. Learn how to control pests in the organic garden.

8. Conserve Water!

Harvest your rainwater from a roof, gutters, and sky with a rain barrel.

9. Think About Your Diet

About one-third of the food that we produce every year goes to waste annually!

10. Get Kids Involved

Pass down a love of nature and plants to kids.



MARCH 6, 2023 COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

TREASURER'S REPORT

Submitted by Mary Ann Miller, Treasurer



Balance as of March 1, 2023\$10,198.47
Receipts: dues from clubs1,620.00
Disbursements:
Scholarship award to Abby D'Agostin (\$1,000.00)
Ending Balance as of March 29, 2023..... \$10,818.47

Committee Reports

Awards – Elaine Parrovecchio had no report.

Civic and Conservation – Diane Donze reported that she had an update from Habitat for Humanity. Three homes are being dedicated in May, if all goes well. The homes look like they are ready to go. A motion was made by Lori Walsh, seconded by Mary Ann Miller, and passed to pay up to \$75 for a pot and watering can for each Habitat for Humanity house being dedicated.

Programs – Arch Smith reported that they are still working on the Behr Garden private tours for either June or July.

Publicity – Susan Schumacher sent her report regarding Social Media. There are 162 members on the Facebook page. She reminded us that anyone can post on the page (subject to administrative approval). It is open to the public, and it is a good place to highlight your club's activities.

Garden Walk – Arch Smith reported that he has six gardens lined up for the July 5th Garden Walk. There is a possibility of a 7th garden: one of the churches.

Horticulture – No report.

Hospitality – Alice Moczynski said that our next meeting will be on May 1, 2023, at 9:30 A.M. at Mary's Market on State St.

Newsletter – Kathy Batzkall would like articles and photos to her by the Friday after each Council meeting.

Parliamentarian – No report.

Sunshine – Arch Smith reported that Cindy Rittenhouse sent him the following report: sympathy

card to Anita Wetzberger for the death of her father; get-well card to Yvette DeWispelaere for her shoulder surgery; get-well card to Sharon Bramel for her open-heart surgery.

Ways & Means – Lynne Franzene-Lynde had no report.

Website – Kathy Batzkall reported that she would like each club to look at their respective pages to see if all info is correct.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Arch Smith again asked for suggestions for donating some of the money from our CRG account. Suggestions included Klehm Arboretum's Hosta Garden and the Vi Bates Wildflower Garden. Mary Ann Miller will check to see how much mulch she needs for the Hosta Garden but didn't think it would cost more than \$500. A motion was made by Mary Ann Miller, seconded by Alice Moczynski, and passed to donate \$200 to the Vi Bates Wildflower Garden.

Lori Walsh suggested Severson Dells receive some of our money since they are in a precarious financial position. She said that is where our young people are being trained. It is the only environmental education program in our area. A motion was made by Lori Walsh, seconded by Sherry Seaver, and passed to donate \$500 to Severson Dells.

NEW BUSINESS: Susah Schmitz requested that Arch put the Rock River Valley Panty Garden work schedule on the agenda for our May meeting.

Next meeting will take place May 1, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. at Mary's Market, State St.

All garden club members are encouraged to attend.

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

Plant Sale Fundraiser 2023

Virtual shopping: April 7th – May 8th

Plant pick up and in-person shopping: May 12th – May 13th.

Vi Bates Woodland and Wildflower Garden Tour

Saturday, April 22, 1:00pm – 2:00pm

Meet in Visitors Center Gallery

Cost: Free with Klehm admission (and free for members!)

Earth Day Tranquility Walk

Saturday, April 22, 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Meeting location: Clarcor Pavilion

\$4/Klehm Members, \$8/Seniors (62+), \$10/General Admission

Home Composting Workshop

Friday, May 12th, 10:00am – 11:00am

Clarcor Pavilion Classroom; Cost: FREE!

Garden Fair Weekend 2023

Saturday, June 3 | 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Sunday, June 4 | 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

\$8 Presale, \$10 Gate Admission

FREE for Klehm members and children 12 & under

<https://klehm.org/garden-fair-weekend/>

NICHOLAS CONSERVATORY

1354 N. 2nd Street, Rockford, IL

<https://nicholasconservatory.com/>

SECRET LIFE OF BUTTERFLIES

MARCH 17 - JUNE 4, 2023

Join us to explore the wild, wonderful, and often strange world of butterflies and moths! See the whole lepidoptera lifecycle in action as caterpillars munch on leaves, butterflies emerge from their chrysalis, and moths from their cocoons.

Advanced ticketing is highly recommended. Check status before heading out - Bus tour groups are scheduled during the day and walk-ins may be limited.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION

Spring Gardening Series

All classes will be held at Illinois Extension - Winnebago County, 1040 N Second Street, Rockford (815) 986-4357

VERMICOMPOSTING (composting with worms)

6:00 to 7:30 p.m. - Tuesday, April 11

go.illinois.edu/Vermicomposting2023

Constance McCarthy, Illinois Extension Master Gardener

SPRING INVASIVE AND NUISANCE PLANTS

6:00 to 7:30 p.m. - Thursday, April 20

go.illinois.edu/Invasives2023

Jay Solomon, Illinois Extension Natural Resources, Environment & Energy Educator

ATTRACTING BIRDS TO YOUR GARDEN

6:00 to 7:30 p.m. - Tuesday, April 25

go.illinois.edu/Birds2023

Stacey Clark, Illinois Extension Master Naturalist

NATIVE PLANTS AND PERENNIALS

6:00 to 7:30 p.m. - Wednesday, May 10

go.illinois.edu/NativePlantsandPerennials

Julie Thomas, Illinois Extension Master Gardener

ANDERSON JAPANESE GARDENS

318 Spring Creek Road

Rockford, Illinois 61107

<https://andersongardens.org/>

Introduction to Ikebana

Thursday, May 4th | 2:00 PM | Visitors Center Gallery

Tuesday, May, 23rd | 5:30 PM | Visitors Center Gallery

Cost: \$40 Members | \$45 Non-Members per class. Includes flower materials. Space is limited and registration is required.

