

# COUNCIL OF ROCKFORD GARDENERS, INC.

Organized 3/21/1980

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Editor: Kathy Batzkall



MAY 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](http://councilofrockfordgardeners.org)

## Email editor:

[CRGnews815@gmail.com](mailto: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

It's interesting how gardening brings people together. In Rockford it is very apparent with several garden clubs (4 very special ones come to mind), and with many public gardens, community vegetable gardens and so much more. If we think about it, probably some of our closest friendships started as gardening acquaintances. I never really thought about it before, but it's the same in other parts of the world too.

As Charlie and I spent time visiting his family in the Philippines, I noticed how gardening is as important in their culture as it is in our own. It seems like everyone there in the Philippines has some sort of a garden which they really take pride in. You have to be careful admiring a certain plant, because if you do you'll likely be going home with one all for yourself.

As we walked around admiring our tropical garden in the Philippines we remember where each plant came from: Charlie's aunt, his late father, a friend of his sister's or a neighbor all creating great memories. Even as I look throughout our very own home garden, I can reminisce on who shared what plant with us. I have plants from my grandmother, mother, aunts, cousins, neighbors and of course from many of my garden club friends! All again, cherished memories! Ironically, just the other day we were walking our dogs when a young neighbor boy came running off his family's front porch to greet us. His mother wanted us to see some of the plants we gave her last year thriving in their yard. It gives us all great pride sharing and passing on the love of gardening and those happy memories, while creating new gardening friends..

Walking through our own gardens is like opening up a scrapbook full of so many great memories. This summer the Council of Rockford Gardeners has a several opportunities to create some new garden memories. CRG will be hosting a booth at Klehm Garden Fair and also hosting our Annual Free Garden Walk: both great ways to create more garden memories and potentially sharing memories with someone new.

In closing, please remember, "*In the garden of memory, in the palace of dreams... that is where you and I shall meet.*"

- The Mad Hatter from Alice in Wonderland

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SUBMIT questions or  
comments to:

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



## GARDEN CLUB OF ILLINOIS AWARDS

At the State Convention last month, The Garden Clubs of Illinois presented two awards to The Council of Rockford Gardeners, Inc. CRG was recognized for hosting the best Garden Walk in the State of Illinois and received a cash prize. This award can be attributed to the work of President Arch Smith, who has organized the Garden Walk for the past several years.

In addition, CRG received a First Place Certificate of Merit for District and Club Publications (3-12 pages). This reflects the creativity, skills and efforts of our talented newsletter editor, Kathy Batzkall.

- Submitted by Susan Schumacher



## VOLUNTEER AT FOOD PANTRY

Susan Schmitz requests garden club members to volunteer at the Rock River Valley Food Pantry. Two volunteers are needed each week beginning July 12th from 1:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. to assist clients choosing garden vegetables grown at the Pantry location. Contact Susan at [gardnscout@yahoo.com](mailto:gardnscout@yahoo.com).

## PLANT A ROW FOR THE HUNGRY

Watch for more information soon, but as you plan your home garden now perhaps you would consider Plant a Row for the Hungry. The program encourages home gardeners to donate extra produce to those less fortunate. In Winnebago County, this program is led by Illinois Extension Master Gardener volunteers, with support from the U of I Extension. Plant a Row (PAR) provides a much needed outlet for vegetable gardeners to donate their over-abundance of produce, which helps to meet the increasing demands on local food pantries. All fresh produce brought in by local gardeners is donated to local food pantries. Last year, thousands of pounds of fresh produce was donated to pantries in Winnebago County.

# GARDEN CLUB NEWS AND ADVENTURES

The POTPOURRI Garden Club toured The Greater Rockford Airport in April



WILDFLOWERS went to Nicholas Conservatory in April for a presentation on the butterflies.



Jan Person is delighted with her new friend!



# VOLUNTEER DAYS AT KLEHM ARBORETUM

**MaryAnn Miller got a crew together to spread mulch at the Klehm hosta garden.**



**The Seedlings Garden Club helped to clean up the Wildflower Trail for spring walks.**



# OUR FIRST “PARKS”

By Yvette DeWisleare,

University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener, Winnebago County

The sun was warm on my face as we drove to the cemetery just before Memorial Day, and the car was loaded with bright red geraniums, ivy, and white petunias from the old greenhouse on Fairdale Road, and a bucket with small trowel, garden gloves, a rug for kneeling, and a big watering can. Grandma packed a picnic basket with a blanket and a big green thermos of coffee. It was going to be a long day. She held a fresh flag on her lap and stroked it lovingly with her long fingers as tears rolled down her cheeks. She turned her head to look out the window, so I didn't see her crying. She planted the urns on Grandpa and Uncle Bud's grave with so much love. Uncle Bud had given "the last full measure of devotion" to our nation serving in Viet Nam. He (and Grandpa) died the year I was born.

She unpacked the picnic basket, and we had a nice lunch near the car. During my grandmother's childhood, she said her family often had Sunday picnics in the cemetery and spent hours visiting. Popularity of cemetery picnics lost favor sometime around the 1920's or so, and I recently visited a cemetery where, to my surprise, there was a "no picnicking" rule posted.

Cemeteries serve two purposes, according to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources: the burial of the dead, and a place where the living communicate with the dead. Ignoring cemeteries allows them to deteriorate. Markers often become damaged or destroyed and we lose so much information about the past and ourselves. Vandalism decreases when adults teach their children to respect cemeteries and take pride in their family history.

As early as the 7th century, the only entity "allowed" to bury the dead has been "The Church." Burial grounds quickly became overcrowded, and there was fear of disease, such as cholera, dysentery, and the yellow fever outbreaks. Flooding was a problem. Soon graveyards were moved away from cities. When Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts opened in 1831, it was the first consecrated rural burial ground in America. It shifted attitude toward death away from fear and terror leaned into romantic ideals of peaceful rest and natural beauty, thus began the "Rural" Cemetery Movement in 1831, followed by Laurel Hill, (Philadelphia); Greenwood, (N.Y.); and Lowell, (MA). Following the design of European Cemeteries, they provided an oasis to

visitors and mourners alike. These cemeteries were the introduction to our modern-day parks.

Far away from rural America, the Urban Park Movement started with Fredrick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux with plans for New York's Central Park in 1858, "to bring back a bit of nature." The large city parks provided active recreation within an urban setting, eventually spreading to every major city in the US. National Parks were then set aside in 1863.

Here's a list of "[10 garden cemeteries around the country that are worth exploring.](#)"



Greve Cemetery, Hoffman Estates, IL



Woodland Cemetery, Dayton, OH



Rock Island Arsenal National Cemetery.

# Bell Bowl Prairie Sad News

Jerry Paulson, Rock River Valley Wild Ones President

[https://www.wildonesrrvc.org/2023/4\\_April/WildOnesNL\\_\\_20April\\_23\\_Web.pdf](https://www.wildonesrrvc.org/2023/4_April/WildOnesNL__20April_23_Web.pdf)

At 6:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 9th a bulldozer started stripping off the topsoil of a swath of the ancient Bell Bowl Prairie located at the Greater Rockford Airport. A handful of dedicated defenders of the prairie held vigil all night to witness the death of this precious natural area.

Our chapter of Wild Ones provided financial support for the lawsuit filed by the Natural Land Institute to stop the destruction of the prairie and the loss of important habitat for the federally endangered Rusty-Patched Bumblebee (*Bombus affinis*). Efforts are now underway to protect the small remnant of the prairie still there and to recover sod and roots of the plants from the stripped topsoil to transplant to a nearby forest preserve.

You can do your part to replace the pollinator habitat that was lost by planting native wildflowers, grasses, sedges, and shrubs in your own yard. Heather Holm, pollinator conservationist, award-winning author of books about pollinators, and an advocate for natural landscaping for insects, says that one of the most important things to do to help bees, wasps and other pollinators is to plant native, re-

gionally appropriate bee host plants in your garden, and to keep your garden pesticide-free.

<https://storymaps.com/stories/077ba6d0a1744781b97b5a57acd5f19b>.

These include early blooming shrubs like willows, New Jersey tea, and wild plum, early blooming wildflowers like Golden Alexander, then black-eyed Susan, sunflowers, asters, and goldenrods that provide a source of pollen later in the growing season.



Do your part to protect the Rusty-Patched Bumblebee and plant native bee host plants.

Most of these species of native plants and shrubs are available at the **Native Plant Sale**.

**Public sale: May 12, 3:00-7:00 pm and May 13, 9:00 am-2:00 pm**

Pickup location: Paulson Farm, 4601 Paulson Road, Caledonia, IL

Questions? Contact plant sale coordinators:

Jane Evans: 815-494-7731 and

Janet Giesen: [janetgiesen@gmail.com](mailto:janetgiesen@gmail.com) or 815-762-5912

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## Why Plant Native Plant Species?

A native plant species is one that occurs naturally in a particular region, ecosystem, and/or habitat. They evolved over thousands of years to survive in our weather extremes and local soils, in harmony with other native flora and fauna. Once established, native species require only occasional maintenance—no fertilizers, no pesticides or herbicides, and minimal watering (after they have become established). The native birds, butterflies, bees, and mammals that evolved with native plants depend on them for food and shelter. Native plants also serve as host plants for new generations of beneficial butterflies and insects. Nonnative plants usually do not meet these needs. Even cultivars of native plants, which are bred to please humans, often lose their ability to sustain wildlife; the resulting decrease in genetic diversity impairs their ability to adapt for future survival. The Wild Ones sale is ideal for those new to landscaping with native plants as well as experienced native plant gardeners. Most of the species offered are easy to grow and will provide years of beauty while helping the environment. We recommend incorporating natives into your existing flower beds—mixed right in with other perennials. Or, create new beds of native plant species for a greater environmental impact.

# MAY 1, 2023 COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

**Balance as of April 1, 2023** ..... \$10,818.47  
**Receipts: None** .....00.00  
**Disbursements:**  
Garden Clubs of Illinois – dues..... (673.00)  
Severson Dells – donation ..... (500.00)  
**Total disbursements**..... **(\$1,173.00)**  
**Ending Balance as of April 30, 2023** ..... \$ 9,645.47

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Submitted by Mary Ann Miller, Treasurer



## Committee Reports

**Awards – Elaine Parrovecchio** had no report.

**Civic and Conservation – Diane Donze** reported that she received a newsletter from Habitat for Humanity, and they are working on homes, and may have a house ready in May. She will make up a pot or purchase a pot – and a watering can. Last month Council authorized her to spend up to \$75 for the pot and watering can for each Habitat for Humanity house dedicated.

Susan Schmitz reported that all club members can volunteer at the Rock River Valley Food Pantry. She needs two volunteers each week beginning July 12th from 1:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.

**Programs – Arch Smith** reported that Dr. Behr had called him and is excited about having our clubs come for a private garden walk at his home. It will probably be sometime in July, and there will be a morning session and an evening session.

**Publicity – Susan Schumacher** submitted a report about two awards from Garden Clubs of Illinois. (See page 2 of this newsletter)

**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.

We will also need garden reps for the gardens. The reps will be responsible for filling in the volunteer times at the gardens. Reps can contact Cindy Rittenhouse if they need volunteers.

Two of the gardens are in Cherry Valley. One is the hosta garden of Pam and Mike Carr and the second is

Carole Anne Stewart's garden. Others on the Garden Walk this year are Ginny and Wayne Hatwich, Bev and Ken Larson, and Judy and Steve Penticoff.

**Horticulture –** No report.

**Hospitality – Alice Moczynski** reported that she will email the location of the next meeting.

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

**Parliamentarian – Sarah Britton** reported that everything is fine.

**Sunshine – Arch Smith** reported that Cindy Rittenhouse sent a get-well card to Joyce Graczyk's husband, Greg. Let Cindy know if a card should be sent to a member.

**Ways & Means – Lynne Franzene-Lynde** said that she hopes the money from the plant sale lasts a while since she doesn't think she could do another.

It was suggested that we could do a fundraiser on a smaller scale.

**Website – Kathy Batzkall** reported that there is no news regarding the website.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None

**Next meeting will take place June 5, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.**  
**Location will be emailed by Alice Moczynski.**

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

### Plant Sale Fundraiser 2023

Virtual shopping: April 7th – May 8th

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

### 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/>

### Big Bugs: The Pollinators

June 10th to September 10th, 2023.

10 larger-than-life sculptures made of reclaimed forest wood and other natural materials. This one-of-a-kind exhibit is included with daily admission to Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden.



## ANDERSON JAPANESE GARDENS

318 Spring Creek Road

Rockford, Illinois 61107

<https://andersongardens.org/>

### Introduction to Ikebana

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

Thursday, June 15th | 2:00 PM | Visitors Center Gallery

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



## NATURE AT THE CONFLUENCE

306 Dickop Street,

South Beloit, IL,

<https://natureattheconfluence.com/>

### Monarch Monitoring Meet Up

Become a community scientist by joining our staff in monitoring our monarch population. Drop in on Tuesdays at 4:00pm for a walk through a prairie where we practice protocol from the Monarch Larvae Monitoring Program. All ages welcome, no prior experience necessary. This series is free and there is no registration.

## 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.