

COUNCIL OF ROCKFORD GARDENERS, INC.

Organized 3/21/1980

E-Issue V 8 Issue 7
Editor: Kathy Batzkall

SEPTEMBER 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

A big thanks to Jim and Donna Bielfuss for hosting CRG's Fall Frolic event. We had an amazing venue and great food. About 85 guests attended, plus two party crashers, but that's a story for another time. Even the weather was on our side, right up until the end, but that certainly didn't put a damper on the fun. Also, thank you to Mary Jo and Steve Hall for arranging the venue and to the Program Committee for all of their efforts.

If you haven't noticed, CRG is experiencing a growth spurt! While most organizations are losing membership, CRG is gaining. We are around 130 members with 17 new members recently. The Council wishes to welcome all of our new members and looks forward to even more joining in on all of the excitement.

It has been discussed that we go back to each of our four clubs taking a turn at hosting the Gathering of Clubs/Fall Frolic on a rotating basis. We will go in alphabetical order with Plantaholics hosting next year's event. Cindy Rittenhouse, a Plantaholic member, will be chairing the 2024 Fall Frolic event with my assistance. Plans are already underway.

The Council welcomes two new members for the Horticulture Chair. Pat Bellezza and Pat Wengrow will be sharing that vacant position. Another change on the horizon is the March installation of officers luncheon that will now include our scholarship presentation. This event, as well as all Council meetings are open to our entire membership. All are encouraged to attend and encouraged to think about becoming a more active part of the Council too. Elaine Parrovecchio, our CRG Awards Chair will be assisting with this event. A congratulations is in order to Elaine and Harry on their recent engagement. We are all extremely happy for the two of you.

Finally, look for information to come on CRG's new incentive called CRG's Plant a Seed.

In closing, please remember, "A garden requires patient labor and attention. Plants do not grow merely to satisfy ambitions or to fulfill good intentions. They thrive because someone expended effort on them." - Liberty Hyde Bailey

Arch Smith: racs71@yahoo.com, 815-501-1640

CRG FALL FROLIC AT THE GRANGETTE

September
2023

In This Issue:

P1
*Club Information;
President's Pen*

P2
Fall Frolic

P3
CRG/ Club Activities

P4
*Garden Hacks;
Welcome New
Members*

P5
Garden Memories

P6
Garden Memories

P7
Equinox; Potpourri

P 8
*September Council
Meeting Minutes*

P 9
Public Garden Events

SUBMIT questions or
comments to:

CRGnews815@gmail.com



All CRG members were invited to an evening of food, fun and a tour of this amazing barn on Tuesday, September 12th. Jim and Donna Bielfuss were our very talented and gracious hosts.



Photos by Cindy Rittenhouse

CRG GARDEN CLUB ACTIVITIES

The CRG Program Committee presented **Jeff and Diane Behr** a Garden Walk stone and a pair of ceramic gardening bears as a gift of our appreciation for hosting our private Gathering of Clubs garden tour in July.



The **Wildflower Club** toured **Dick Behr's** garden in July.



The **Wildflower Club** enjoyed an August potluck at **Joyce Lillie's "Folly House."**



"**Plantaholics** Barnstormer Distillery Tour Event in August was a lot of fun. We learned all about using farm grown ingredients to make delicious spirits, and had some delicious food too! Thank you to **Addie and Tim Ford** for being such gracious hosts!"

- Cindy Rittenhouse

GREAT GARDEN HACKS AND WHACKS

Welcome to Pat Belezza, Wildflower member and our new Horticulture writer.

I am getting older, weaker, and lazier, so I am developing short cuts to moving and dividing large, heavy perennials. In my yard that is usually hostas.

So instead of digging a huge, heavy plant, take a sharp, serrated knife or small hand saw and carefully cut between the eyes clear down through the tough core. Cut the large plant into several pieces through the middle, being sure to make the pieces large enough to have good roots. Plan to leave the largest piece in place. Next, take a sharp, long bladed shovel (like the "Ace of Spades" and dig around the circumference of the plant except for the large section that you plan to leave in place. Carefully lift out the pieces you plan to remove and replant them elsewhere. Fill in the dirt around the piece you left in place and water everything well. Cut back all the foliage one-third.

This same basic procedure works for large grasses. After several years, the middle dies out and the clump needs division. Using a chain saw with a dull blade, (no use wasting a new blade), cut the top off the grass down to about 8 inches. Using the chain saw, cut the clump into wedges like a pie, cutting

clear down through the core to the roots. Using a long-bladed shovel, lift the pieces out, leaving one in place. Cut off the dead tip of each pie section and



replant. Water everything well. Grasses are best divided very early spring after they have started growing out of dormancy or early fall, giving them at least 6-8 weeks to root in before the ground freezes.

My first preference before any digging and dividing is judicious "whacking." I love large hostas in the landscape, but eventually they overshadow their neighbors. So instead of constantly moving and dividing, I take scissors and cut off leaves around

the edges of the offending hosta until it is the size I need to uncover its neighbors. This method works with most perennials and I use it viciously on my bleeding hearts in the spring after they have finished blooming. Smaller perennials only need a snip here and there to keep things tidy. It helps keep my overgrown yard from becoming a complete jungle. Try it, hope it helps.

Welcome New Members

The **Wildflower** club has welcomed two new members:

Kaye Hughes and Kim Didier

Potpourri welcomed Cathy Stewart

Plantaholics takes the cake for 14 new members!!

**Colleen Blanchard
Pam and Mike Carr
Halina Degenhardt
Jamie and Maura Flanary
Dee Frederickson**

**Maureen Kwiatkowski
Marianne Mentzer
Margie Peloquin
Judy and Steve Penticoff
Leila Sequin
Becky Thalhofer**



FAVORITE GARDEN MEMORIES



"Every year in August we celebrate Corn-fest. All the kids come over, grandkids pick and shuck the corn, and we have steak and corn, nothing else. Here's a photo from quite a few years ago. This is our favorite garden memory." —Joan Pfeifer

Thanks to all gardeners who contributed to this topic!!



"This was a fun day with my boys building me a garden wall. It really made a huge difference in the way my backyard looks and my garden too, of course."
- Carol Dohm



I think my favourite memory this year was randomly scattering some sunflower seeds under my front South facing window late May, and eight weeks later they were to my gutters.
- Carole-Anne Stewart



I am a tree lover. Some of the flowering spring trees in my yard.
- Sue McMillin



My stand out memory is when we built our pond in 1998. Our son's friend was in school to be an architect and said he would love to design one for us. I was visualizing a very small frog pond but he was on a different wave length. The drawing looked great and we agreed. to proceed. A month later 38 tons of huge stones were delivered in the back yard. We learned to drive a skid loader to sculpt the general shape and hand shovel to shape the tiers. It was one of the best things we ever did and we don't regret a day. - EJ Rebman

MORE FAVORITE GARDEN MEMORIES



We have a garden path in the woods for each of our 12 grandchildren. When working in each bed I remember the blessings of each of them in our lives.

My five year old grandson and I have planted zinnia seeds at his house the past two summers. He's always excited when one flower is taller than he is. But this year one of the blossoms is taller than grandma!! He'll never forget that!!
- Rosanne Southwood

Cindy Rittenhouse's niece, Sofia, enjoying a tomato from Cindy's garden and - a few years later - playing hide and seek through the flowers at a greenhouse.



Each summer I would travel by myself in the Greyhound bus to my grandparent's home and helped them pick (and eat) their fresh veggies.
- Kathy Batzkall



My garden memory is my mother's two Honeysuckle that we dug up from her garden and brought to our own garden after her passing. Pictured behind Charlie and me is one of her Honeysuckles now covered with Sweet Autumn Clematis for the fall. We also have my grandmother's Bee Balm plants throughout our garden.
- Arch Smith

CELEBRATING THE EQUINOX

By Yvette DeWisleare,

Guest writer, University of Illinois Extension Master Gardener, Winnebago County

As I sat on the patio yesterday with my autumn “baby,” I watched the sun glistening in her hair and I could smell the leaves changing as the cool breeze wafted through the air.... It transported me to the crisp fall mornings when I took her to the park in her pram just after she was born, laying her in the sunny grass while the dog chased a ball. It’s funny how scent and memory weave everything together. Fast forward to her primary years, and that same smell reminds me we were running circles to dance recitals, soccer, and football games.



day equipment, farmers no longer need the light of the moon. Please remember farm safety when driving on rural roads.

Astronomically, the Equinox arrives annually on the 23rd of September, this year at 1:39 CDT. It’s one of two days of the year the sun is at the zenith. Equinox days are also known as “days of equalness,” in which there are twelve hours of dark and light. This also happens during the Vernal Equinox on the 21st of March. Moonrise, just after sunset during this time of year gives abundant evening light, extends daylight allowing farmers to bring in the harvest. Native Americans used this practice giving us the name, “Harvest Moon.” With modern

This is the time to glorify Autumn! As a family, we celebrated our autumn baby with friends as the kids’ picked vegetables from the garden and cooked it over the campfire followed with home-made marshmallows and hot chocolate. They camped in the back yard someplace under the stars with spooky stories, popcorn and always apple pie. I can still hear the giggles and smell the leaves rustling under my feet walking from the house to the fire...

I hope you have amazing traditions... if not, it’s never too late to start! Try taking a cleansing walk in the woods. Have a campfire or light a candle and make a list of why you’re thankful. Let go of negativity as you prepare for winter. Enjoy the bounty of the harvest. Give to those less fortunate. The best viewing of the Harvest Moon will be at 4:57 am on the 29th of September. Walk outside to enjoy the moonrise and take in a little morning air.



Potpourri enjoyed an evening concert at Anderson Japanese Garden.

SEPTEMBER 11, 2023 COUNCIL MEETING REPORT

Balance as of July 1, 2023	\$8,470.47
Receipts: Plantaholics—2 new members	30.00
J. Carlson Growers – contribution	200.00
.....	<u>230.00</u>
.....	\$8,700.47
Disbursements: Sarah Britton – District I gift	75.48
District I – 2 new members	12.00
Mary Stanton – garden stones	<u>240.00</u>
.....	327.48
Ending Balance as of July 31, 2023	\$8,372.99

Balance as of August 1, 2023	\$8,372.99
Receipts: New members	<u>240.00</u>
.....	\$8,612.99
Disbursements: Secretary of State (dues)	10.00
Mary Stanton – garden stones	<u>90.00</u>
Ending Balance as of August 31, 2023	\$8,512.99

TREASURER'S REPORT

Submitted by **Mary Ann Miller**, Treasurer

Committee Reports

Awards – Elaine Parrovecchio reported that she will contact Kishwaukee College in October. Elaine asked what we were going to do to honor the scholarship recipient. She wants it to be special, and the student could bring a guest to the event. A discussion was held about a luncheon, but members suggested we find another way to honor the recipient. Perhaps the Program Committee could help think of an alternative. We have \$2,000 set aside for a scholarship this year.

Civic and Conservation – Diane Donze reported that she is so frustrated with Habitat for Humanity because no one responds to her emails. She has no dates for the dedications, but she said that she will keep trying to reach them.

Programs – Arch Smith reported that 80 plus people will be attending our Fall Frolic September 12. A Christmas party is being planned and Marlene has again offered her Sedona property. The committee is thinking we may need to find a larger location since our numbers are increasing. Arch has also lined up a special members' garden tour of the Jamie and Maura Flanary garden next June.

Publicity – Susan Schumacher reported that at present we have 374 members on our Facebook page. After some attempts by people to advertise on our page, she recently changed the settings to require administrative approval of posts. There has been some discussion at the state level about consent to publish photographs. If clubs have any type of membership form, they may wish to include language to this effect on it and make note of those who do not consent: "Photos taken at garden club events may be published to our website, social media, or other material. Do you consent for images and/or videos of you to be used for publicity and or promotional purposes?" Yes or No?

Garden Walk – Arch Smith reported that he has six gardens lined up, and a 7th garden, Woman's Space, wants to be on the Garden Walk again. The Garden Walk will be on Wednesday, July 10, 2024.

Horticulture – Pat Bellezza had no report.

Hospitality – Alice Moczynski reported that our next meeting will be on Monday, October 2, at Mary's Market.

Newsletter – Kathy Batzkall reported that the deadline for sending any photos or stories to her is Friday.

Parliamentarian – Sarah Britton was not in attendance as she broke her ankle and foot.

Sunshine – Cindy Rittenhouse reported that she sent a "thank you" card to the Naperville Garden Club for the award and acknowledgement; sympathy cards to Joyce Graczyk and Jan Person for the loss of their husbands; and a "thinking of you" card to Cheryl Walker for her fall earlier this summer.

Ways & Means – Lynne Franzene-Lynde reported that she is happy that we have a big balance after our plant sale, but she would have to think about doing that again. Members agreed that it was too much work for everyone. Lynne had a concern that Council is "footing the bill" for the Fall Frolic (since the sale was advertised to raise money for scholarships). A discussion was held regarding the money raised. It was explained that Council also has money that we receive from our membership dues, and that money is used for contributions to various charities, for planters for Habitat for Humanity, and to help pay for our own activities and social events. Money earmarked for scholarships is always set aside.

Lori Walsh suggested that we could put out a "jar" at each greeter table at the Garden Walk that clearly says "Scholarship Money for Horticulture Students." Arch Smith said that at the Garden Walk people have asked if they could make contributions. That would be a "no effort fundraiser". We would just need to figure out a way to keep the money secure at each garden. We will have to work on that "scholarship fund" fundraiser.

Website – Kathy Batzkall had no report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Next meeting will take place Monday, October 2, 2023 at 9:30 a.m at Mary's Market, State St., Rockford

All garden club members are encouraged to attend.

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Duncan, Secretary

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

Autumn at the Arboretum

FREE admission all weekend long!

Friday, October 6, 2023 | 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Saturday, October 7, 2023 | 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Free educational lecture and apple tasting program

Sunday, October 8, 2023 | 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Kid's games, crafts, activity stations, community partner booths, live music, food trucks and more!

Textured ART Workshop

September 30th, 2023, 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Textured ART for a dimensional take on a classic framed sign. Choose from three fall botanical-themed designs: acorn, oak leaf, or pumpkin.

\$45 includes all materials and instruction for one 14 x 14 inch sign.

Registration is required by Friday, September 29.

Apple Talk and Tasting

October 7th, 2023, 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM. Cost: FREE!

Valley Orchard is joining us at Klehm for a FREE apple talk and tasting! Learn a little about growing apples and then taste some of the unique and delicious apple varieties that you can only find at a local orchard.

ANDERSON JAPANESE GARDENS

318 Spring Creek Road, Rockford, Illinois

815-229-9390 | <https://andersongardens.org/>

MONTHLY LECTURE SERIES

Members – Free | Non-Members \$5 | Pre-Registration Required.

Elegant Beauty: Presentation of the aesthetics of Kirei Sabi

Thursday, September 21, 7:00 PM

John Powell, Garden Craftsman of Weatherford, Texas, provides Japanese-style garden design, construction, and maintenance.

What Japanese Painting Tells Us About Gardens

Thursday, October 5, 7:00 PM

Kendall Brown: This talk brings together some of his earliest interests in medieval Japanese art and his en-

during fascination with Japanese gardens in the modern world.

NICHOLAS CONSERVATORY

1354 N. 2nd Street, Rockford, IL

<https://nicholasconservatory.com/>

Cultivating Culture

Through November 5, 2023

See the conservatory through the eyes of seven local residents who represent different cultures. In the exhibition area you may follow the participants by reading more about how they relate to the plants through stories, recipes, and sounds.



Gilded Paradise Fashion Show

Saturday, September 23, 5PM-8PM; \$35

Celebrate fashion, art, and culture from around the world! Local designers collaborate to bring you the hottest fashions and invite you to celebrate beauty, style, and class in the tropical setting. Fashions by Kelvin Candie, Cleta Berryhill, Cre8tive Genius, and RKFD. Cash bar and appetizers.

NATURE AT THE CONFLUENCE

306 Dickon Street,

South Beloit, IL,

<https://natureattheconfluence.com/>

History Hike

September 24 @ 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm

Join our staff for a guided hike on our trails where you will learn about the Indigenous and industrial history of the land. Free

Photographic Phollies with Kurt Van Galder

October 1 @ 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm | \$5, preregister
Wildlife photographs that illuminate the bird world. Travel visually through Antarctica, the Galapagos Islands, and Newfoundland along the way. This presentation includes a series of short photographic vignettes.

Sunset Birding Stroll

October 3 @ 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm | \$5, preregister

End your day with a slow, calming walk as we observe and identify the many birds that call The Confluence home, including those migrating for the fall!