

# COUNCIL OF ROCKFORD GARDENERS, INC.

Organized 3/21/1980

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Editor: Karla Hardman

DECEMBER 2024



## 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

Christmas season is full of traditions, like putting up a decorated tree, hanging outdoor Christmas lights, preparing lots of seasonal foods and getting a poinsettia or two. Those are just a few traditions shared by most families this time of year.

My family shared in those traditions as well with the exception of one. There was never ever a poinsettia in our home. We did have some artificial ones, but never a live poinsettia. Why? My oldest sister, Ginger is highly allergic to them. Her eyes would start pouring with tears and she would sneeze uncomfortably.

Growing up, I remember taking my turn sitting in the never used church balcony with my sister and her box of Kleenex. The view was amazing looking down at the sea of red poinsettias covering the entire altar. I remember straining to hear the service over the constant sneezes of my big sister. She was miserable, but a real trooper as she still insisted on always attending.

Years later when my grandmother passed away just before Christmas, someone had sent to her funeral the largest poinsettia I had ever seen. My father kept that poinsettia in his downtown office for 10 or 15 years. It literally grew to the size of a small tree and always bloomed around Christmas. Everyone admired it for years; maybe my sister Ginger not so much

CRG has some traditions as well. The Garden Walk, luncheons, scholarships, gathering of clubs events, etc. **One tradition is coming up on Wed. Dec 11th from 5-8:30 pm which is our SPIRITS AND SPARKLE CHRISTMAS EVENT.**

This year, in CRG tradition, new member Michelle Cox has been gracious enough to host all CRG members and guests at The Landscape Connection. This will be a real treat for those who have not had the opportunity to visit Michelle's garden center over the Christmas season. The Christmas spirit covers every inch of the store. The main greenhouse has been turned into a winter wonderland with an outdoor lighted Christmas Walk, a true winter wonderland! Oh, and yes there should be lots of poinsettias too!

Arch Smith: [racs71@yahoo.com](mailto:racs71@yahoo.com), 815-501-1640

# SPIRITS AND SPARKLE PREVIEW

DECEMBER  
2024

The Landscape Connection will be awaiting you on Wednesday, December 11  
as The Council of Rockford Gardeners ushers in a Christmas celebration.

*Please see page 3 for details...*

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



*You're Invited!*

Members and Guests

*Spirits  
and  
Sparkles*



**Council of Rockford Gardeners  
Christmas Party**

**Wednesday, December 11th  
5:30 to 8 pm**

***Raffles ★ Prizes ★ Activities***

**Please bring dish to share and  
DONATIONS of hats, gloves, socks, etc.**

**RSVP to Cindy  
815-977-2090**

**Hosted at The Landscape Connection  
4472 South Mulford Road, Rockford**

*Kathy Batzkall*

# SPIRITS AND SPARKLE PREVIEW CONTINUED



# Tree Extinction— A Global Crisis

**Pat Belezza, Wildflower member and Horticulture Co-chair**

According to recent scientific studies roughly half of all tree species globally are threatened with extinction. Currently the estimate includes 17,500 tree species; over 100 species are already extinct. Scientists report that more tree species are threatened than the number of threatened birds, animals, reptiles and amphibians put together. It is estimated that at least 15.3 billion trees are being destroyed every year.

Trees are of critical importance to humanity, animal life and the planet. Trees provide a habitat for about half of the world's terrestrial plant and animal species. They store about 50 percent of the world's terrestrial carbon and make a significant contribution to climate regulation by carbon uptake, soil formation, erosion control and the cycling of nutrients and water. Old growth forests (15- 800 years old) sequester about 10 percent of global carbon storage and can continue to accumulate carbon for centuries. Forests contain

about 80 percent of amphibian species, 75 percent of bird species and 68 percent of mammal species. Most of the world's invertebrate species (maybe as many as 10 million species) are found in forests as well as soil bacteria, fungi and nematodes. Trees provide a huge economic contribution to the global economy, an estimated \$1.3 trillion is provided to the world economy yearly. Many experts believe this figure is much higher.



In the U.S. about 135 species face extinction yet only eight have federal protection. Invasive insects and diseases are the number one killers of our trees. Human caused climate change is the second threat, followed by commercial agriculture and animal pasture. Unfortunately many more trees face extinction than have been identified by science based groups. Even species that have already been identified take years to be listed as threatened by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Greenwald's 2019 study found that the FWS took an average of 12.1 years to list a species. Already extinct: Valley Hawthorn, Fecund Hawthorn, Late Leaf Oak. Endangered: American Chestnut, Ash, Florida Yew, Sequoia (Coast Redwood), Fraser Fir, Maple Leaf Oak, Long Leaf Pine, Florida Torrey, Virginia Round Leaf Birch.

More action needs to be taken on both the local and national level. Locally, garden clubs, botanic gardens, conservation groups, universities and local governments need to get involved. Healthy forests need to be protected from development and destruction. Declining forests need to be restored by native plantings including diverse and rare species. The public needs to be educated on the importance of our forests and their preservation. Nationally we need to urge our legislators to restore decimated forests, legislate protections from over logging, industrial pollution and urban sprawl. Our climate is changing and threatens all living things on our planet along with our air and water. We need to take our heads out of the sand and act.

# DECEMBER 2, 2024 COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance as of November 1, 2024 .....	\$6,513.80
Receipts: None .....	<u>0.00</u>
	\$6,513.80
Disbursements:	
Cindy Rittenhouse – stamps .....	14.60
Karla Hardman - District I raffle gift .....	<u>52.66</u>
<b>Ending Balance as of November 30, 2024</b> .....	<b>\$6,461.14</b>
Submitted by <b>Mary Ann Miller</b> , Treasurer	



## Committee Reports

**Awards - Elaine Parrovecchio** - No report. Arch gave Elaine the name of the Horticulture student from Freeport who is working at Klehm. His name is Maison Sinkiawic.

**Civic Conservation - Diane Donze** - No report.

**Programs - Arch Smith** reported that the Programs Committee had a meeting on Saturday for the Christmas Party. The Rockford Rescue Mission was chosen to receive our donations. **Maura** read a list of their urgent needs which was included in a recent email to all members.

CRG gathering “Spirits and Sparkle” will be held at the Landscape Connection on Wednesday, December 11, from 5:30 P.M. – 8:00 P.M. Michelle will have tables set up both upstairs and downstairs. Members can each bring a guest.

**Publicity - Arch** reported that **Susan Schumacher** texted him to remind him about the Valentine centerpieces for River Bluff Nursing Home. We will be making arrangements again for the tables and said that it won't cost more than \$50. She saved the items from last year. Susan will set up a time.

**Horticulture - Pat Bellezza** had no report.

**Hospitality - Bev Larson** reported that she will wait to hear from Arch before making reservations for January here at Mary's Market. Arch may have his CRG Council Christmas lunch/meeting at his house in January.

**Newsletter - Arch Smith** reported that **Kathy Batzkall** needs all information by Friday.

(katbat2009@gmail.com) or CRG News (crgnews815@gmail.com)

**Parliamentarian - Sarah Britton** reported that all is well.

**Garden Walk – Arch Smith** reported that he has five gardens for sure for the 2025 Garden Walk, and he is working on a sixth. They are spread out across the city.

**Sunshine - Cindy Rittenhouse - Arch Smith** reported that Cindy sent a get well card to Karla Hardman for her hip surgery and a get well card to Stan Goral for his leg surgery. Please call or text Cindy (815) 977-2090 if a card should be sent to a member. Arch reported that his stepfather Frank printed 60 cards for Cindy to use.

**Ways & Means - Lynne Franzene** - No report.

**Website – Arch Smith** reported that **Kathy Batzkall** will do the website till the end of December. Andrew Quintanilla will take over the website in January.

## UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A motion was made by Maura Flanary, and seconded by Bev Larson, to spend \$50 on floral arrangements for the tables at River Bluff Nursing Home. (This was discussed under “Publicity” at the November meeting but postponed for a vote because there were so few board members in attendance in November.)

## NEW BUSINESS

None

*Respectfully submitted,  
Jan Duncan, Secretary*

***Our next meeting will be held on Monday, January 7, 2025, at Mary's Market or at Arch Smith's home - the time and place to be determined.***

***Board members should notify Arch by January 1st as to whether or not they will continue their positions. He will try to find a replacement for any vacant position.***

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THESE GARDEN EVENTS

## NICHOLAS CONSERVATORY

1354 N. 2nd Street, Rockford, IL  
<https://nicholasconservatory.com/>

### All Aglow Holiday Display

Now - January 6, 2025

Lights are on dusk to dawn. This is a FREE event for the public, but donations are appreciated

### Sinnissippi Station

Now - January 26, 2025

A variety of trains and trolleys run down, around, and above you—all in the lush, tropical setting of the Nicholas Conservatory. Regular admission fee.



## SEVERSON DELLS NATURE CENTER

8786 Montague Road, Rockford IL  
[seversondells.com](http://seversondells.com)

### Discover the Magic of Luminaria

December 13 & 14, 5pm - 9pm. FREE!

As the sun sets, witness the magic unfold as Luminaria lights twinkle along our pathways. Live music, refreshments.

## MIDWAY VILLAGE

6799 Guilford Road, Rockford IL  
[MidwayVillage.com](http://MidwayVillage.com)

### Christmas in the Trenches

Re-enactment of the World War I Christmas Truce  
Saturday, December 14  
Adults : \$12, Child (Ages 5-12): \$10,  
Senior (Age 62+): \$11

## NATURE AT THE CONFLUENCE

306 Dickop Street, South Beloit, IL  
<https://natureattheconfluence.com/>

### Winter Solstice Rejuvenation

December 21 @ 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
\$20, tickets available online

## ANDERSON JAPANESE GARDENS

318 Spring Creek Road, Rockford  
[andersongardens.org](http://andersongardens.org)

### Illuminated

December 7 – December 15

Open Thursday – Sunday | 5:00 – 8:30 PM

Open Nightly Starting December 18 – January 5  
5:00 – 8:30 PM

Illuminated will be closed on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, and New Year's day.

Non-Member: Adult \$14 | Senior \$13 | Student & Military \$12 | Five & Under FREE

Basic Member: \$8 | Premium Member: FREE



### Coffee Shop & Fireside Music

Live music by local and Rockford Symphony Musicians  
December 11, 2024 – March 1, 2025

Wednesday through Saturday | 11:00 am to 3:00 pm

### **Anderson Japanese Gardens Visitor Center**

Light lunch options, coffees, teas, and pastries  
by Meg's Daily Grind.

Fireside views of the winter Garden  
*A free community music series.*

See [andersongardens.org](http://andersongardens.org) for music schedule.

# HELPFUL HINTS; DIGITAL GARDENING SERIES

The University of Wisconsin Extension is another good source for gardening information. See website links.

## Maintaining Your Festive Houseplants

Do you know the right way to water a holiday cactus? Or get a poinsettia to successfully rebloom? This recorded presentation offers practical tips and discusses common pitfalls to avoid for your festive plants to stay healthy and vibrant beyond the holidays. This presentation focuses on Norfolk Island Pine, holiday cactus, and poinsettia. Don't let your holiday greenery fade—set your plants up for success year-round!



<https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/maintaining-your-festive-houseplants/>



## Green Thumb Gardening 2025 Vegetable Gardening Series

The Green Thumb Gardening vegetable series will help you to keep your kitchen garden thriving! The series covers many aspects of vegetable gardening for a robust background in vegetable production. UW-Madison Extension educators and UW specialists will provide in-depth, practical information for the novice to the experienced gardener.

<https://events.humanitix.com/gt-veg-winter-2025>

All classes are Thursdays 5:30 - 7:30 pm. Register for the complete class series at a discounted price (\$110.00) or individual classes (\$12.00) according to your interests. Full descriptions for individual classes are available on the Register page. All classes are recorded except the Vegetable Disease class.

Full Vegetable Series - All classes are live; recordings are sent to registrants after the event (vegetable disease management is not recorded).

January 9 - 5:30-7:30 pm | Planning the Vegetable Garden

January 16 - 5:30-7:30 pm | Soils and Fertilizers

January 23 - 5:30-7:30 pm | Seed Starting

January 30 - 5:30-7:30 pm | Vegetable Garden Crops and Special Techniques

February 13 - 5:30-7:30 pm | Composting

February 20 - 5:30-7:30 pm | Vegetable Disease Management (this class is not recorded)

February 27 - 5:30-7:30 pm | Vegetable Insect Management

March 6 - 5:30-7:30 pm | Weed Management

March 13 - 5:30-7:30 pm | Cover Crops for the Garden

March 20 - 5:30-7:30 pm | Succession Planting, Companion Planting, and Season Extension

