



The Spade & The Hoe

Volume 2 Issue 3

March 2004

March Meeting

The program for March 11th will be presented by Katie Bauer of Glenview's newest florist shop, KaBloom. She will be doing some simple floral arrangements which will then be raffled off to attendees. (Was there ever a more intriguing invitation to attend?) Her store has been open only a few weeks and is in the strip mall near Dominick's, so stop in and see her artistry! We'll be back in our regular room 102 in the Park Center for the meeting.

National Garden Week will be June 8-12, 2004. How will you be celebrating?

Catalogs

I have received two new catalogs this month: Seeds from Italy, specializing in vegetables (yummy broad beans!!) with some flowers (www.growitalian.com) and (seeds@growitalian.com) and Roots & Rhizomes, specializing in daylilies, hostas, and Siberian irises (www.rootsrhizomes.com). Check them out!

The February meeting was, according to my informants, well attended as you all worked so hard assembling those bird houses. (I didn't know that many of you are closet carpenters!) Between all the talking and laughing, a lot was accomplished.

Holly Jansen and Charles and Marina Wynn deserve a lot of thanks for their work. AND, Judy Oppgaard took all the bird houses home to paint in very clever fashion. I, for one, can hardly wait to see the results of all of your efforts! Windchimes, too, were part of the evening's assembling efforts. So, maybe we will have a few more items for sale in our street sale booth, yes?

**Good friends are like quilts.
They age with you, yet never
lose their warmth.**



Through the Garden Gate

Well, we have returned from sunny Tucson. Perfect weather for travelling. The Grand Canyon is great with snow AND no tourists. We saw a lot of wildlife and have really nice photographs as a remembrance. Arriving home, I see that the snowdrops are above the snow with their little white flowers. Also the crocus have popped out, though not yet blooming. Other perennials are growing, too, which brings us a hint of spring but we know that winter is not yet done with us! Even though the weather today was perfect for us to walk our mile, as Dan said, snow is forecast for tonight and tomorrow as well. Our friend from Magdalena, New Mexico called to say they are studying the catalogs (as I am) to choose plants for this year! I expect all of you are doing the same. How exciting to look forward to see what is new in each of our gardens this summer!

Chicago Flower & Garden Show

The 10th annual Flower & Garden Show will be held on March 13-21 at Navy Pier, from 10-8 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and from 10-6 p.m., Sunday. Admission is \$10 on weekdays & \$12 on weekends. For more information, visit www.chicagoflower.com or call 312-321-0077. Plan to attend the show with your friends for a delightful way to spend a day!

Returning Birds

Len Tralmer has spotted not only are chickadees but a nuthatch at his feeder. I have seen several chickadees at my feeders! Oh, joy! Rapture! They're back!

Looking Forward to Spring

One of the most delightfully scented spring flowers is the ever-popular lily-of-the-valley, a Victorian favorite that has never lost its appeal. Buy peach roses and carnations and a bit of baby's breath and add Virginia bluebells from your garden for a lovely early spring floral arrangement.

If anyone has an offshoot of a clivia plant to give away, I promise to give it a very good home.

'And in green underwood and cover

Blossom by blossom the spring begins.'

- A.C. Swinburne

Color Sense

Pink tulips rising from a bed of purple pansies show off both flowers to their best. Tulips also look well in a vase with lilacs, as they both bloom at the same time.

Another early spring combination is made by purple aubretia (or other low growing purple flower), yellow or white alyssum (yellow is better), blue lobelia, and violets or mauve thrift in drifts. Their combined beauty works well with large garden boulders, too.

Pots of white or yellow freesias will delicately scent a kitchen for a lovely morning treat.

'The person who has planted a garden feels that he has done something for the good of the world.'

- Charles Dudley Warner
1876

Roses

Buy roses from garden centers and discount outlets. They begin to stock them very early in the season. Or order them from a mail-order firm. You can plant the bare-root roses as soon as the soil is dry enough to work. The dormant plants will take a freeze, so there is no value in waiting. Spade the area over, mixing in organic matter. Dig the holes deep enough so the buds are at ground level. Hydrate the roots for a few hours before planting.

- Month-by-Month Gardening in Illinois

In March, remember to:

- ✓ a good indicator for removal of winter protection for your plants is the flowering of forsythia bushes - when they are in full bloom, it is time to uncover roses;
- ✓ as soon as plants begin to grow, fertilize them with Peters, Rapid-Gro or Miracle Gro;
- ✓ winter annuals and perennial weeds are starting to grow now; pull them out before they get a good start;
- ✓ if you have a deer/rabbit problem, apply a repellent concocted of a bottle of Tabasco in a gallon of water, with a little soap so it sticks to the plants;
- ✓ as soon as hybrid tea roses begin to grow, the winter die-back will be apparent, so prune out the damaged stems to a point just above a healthy outward-facing bud; remove all weak pencil-thin stems to leave just 2-3 healthy canes;
- ✓ remove only broken or winter-damaged canes from bush roses and other hardy types;
- ✓ cut back hard on the kinds of clematis that flower on new wood only, to develop vigorous new growth for prolific blooms. Jackman and Viticella clematis varieties bloom on new wood.
- ✓ and remember, the spring vernal equinox is Saturday, March 20th!

Street Sale Planning Ahead

Now is the time to begin taking cuttings from your houseplants and rooting them in water or in a perlite compound. Then we will have plenty of houseplants to offer for sale. Last year, one of the most asked questions was if we had any potted houseplants for sale. And unfortunately, we didn't! So, get out your garden clippers, your scissors, and your sharp knives and get to work.

Ode to Pansies

Pansies! Pansies! How I love you,
pansies!
Jaunty-faced, laughing-lipped and
dewy-eyed with glee;
Would my song but blossom in little
five-leaf stanzas as delicate in
fancies as your beauty is to me!

But my eyes shall smile on you, and
my hands in-fold you,
Pet, caress, and lift you to the lips
that love you so,
That, shut ever in the years that may
mildew or mould you, my fancy shall
behold you fair as in the long ago.

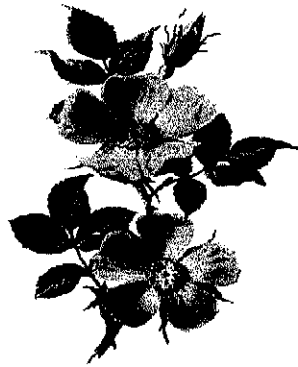
- James Whitcomb Riley

Shade Gardens

Some hints for annuals for shade gardens: begonias, browallia, cleomes, impatiens, balsams, nicotianas, salvias, sages, pansies, violas, johnny-jump-ups, ageratums, forget-me-nots, sweet alyssums, fuchsias, and thunbergias (black-eyed susan vines).

Seeds that Germinate in Cool Soil

alliums (onions, leeks), beets, Swiss chard, kale, lettuce, peas, radishes, and spinach.



The Honeyed Rain

Rain do not hurt my flowers,
but quickly spread
Your hony drops: presse not
to smell them here:
When they are ripe, their
odour will ascend
And at your lodging with
their thanks appear.

- George Herbert 1593-1633

Annuals for Fragrance

Today we have bigger and brighter annuals, but our grand-parents flower beds were sweeter smelling. Some old-fashioned varieties can still be found, including: artemisia annua (sweet Annie), centaurea moschata (sweet sultan), cosmos atrosanguineus (black cosmos), heliotropium arborescens (heliotrope), lathyrus odoratus (sweet pea), lobularia maritima (sweet alyssum), matthiola longipetala (evening stock subspecies bicornis), mirabilis jalapa (four o'clock), pelargonium graveolens (rose geranium), nicotiana glauca (flowering tobacco with white flowers), reseda odorata (mignonette), and tropaeolum majus (nasturtium).

What's Blooming Table

We look forward to seeing some of your special house plants and hearing about your favorites! Remember to bring your plants carefully wrapped in newspaper to avoid cold shock.

Questions, comments, payment of dues?

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