



# The Spade & The Hoe

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## **The May Meeting**

will be a field trip to Northwind Perennial Gardens in Burlington, WI. This will include a conducted tour of the beds and the old dairy with plenty of time for purchasing plants.

Lunch will be in the historic tavern in Burlington.

Meet at Gloria's for car-pooling at 9:15 a.m.

We'll return home mid-afternoon. Let Gloria know if you plan to come. 480-0848, 2435 Saranac Ct. (Lake to Landwehr, right to Indian Trails, left to Saranac Ln., right to Saranac Ct.) See you there!

## **The Flower Family Album - Native Phloxes**

Its members include cup-and-saucer-vine (cobaea), garden phlox (paniculata), Jacob's Ladder (Greek valerian, polemonium); prairie phlox (pilosa), a roadside favorite, and wild sweet William (divaricata), a woodland plant can be grown in the garden. Rock gardens depend upon the moss phlox for six weeks of white, lavender, purple or pink flowers. The rest of the year the foliage remains mossy and tidy.

-The Flower Family Album  
By Helen Field Fischer and

**The April meeting** was a presentation by Joanne Icenogle of Plum Grove Gardens on dried flowers. There were many questions from the audience who expressed great interest in the subject. Afterwards, Ms. Icenogle sold some of the arrangements that she brought with her.

## **Garden Walk and Plant Sale**

Holly and Dolores reported that two gardens will be open this June: Pamela Frank's and Esther Behnke's. They need one more garden; come on, it's fun! She also needs hosts/hostesses for each one. Brigitte Steinforth has volunteered to be a hostess at one of the gardens. Please pot up your excess plants early so they have time to settle in. Houseplants can be potted up in an old teapot, a chipped teacup, a basket, or any other cute item. Be sure to label everything! Popsicle sticks or plastic knives work nicely. Also, garden décor in good condition will sell, too. Call Holly to volunteer or to let her know what you'll be bringing: 729-7729. This may be your last chance to be in a garden walk.

*Through the Garden Gate*  
Every time I planted tulips in the backyard, those pesky animals ate the bulbs! Last fall I planted them in the front beds and I finally have blooming tulips! And my African violet is still alive. I'm on a roll. We have had such a lovely spring. Magnolias were able to keep their blossoms for a long time, and the redbuds, crabapples and flowering pears are so pretty. My Virginia bluebells made a nice display. It took a month but the back garden is all cleaned up. There's not too much cleaning to do in the front beds but I intend to expand them, so there is that to do. Plus, spring always gets those juices flowing, you know, and we are in the midst of a lot of re-decorating throughout the house. No room is safe. Something is being changed in every room, it seems. Dan is slowly finding his way around the house. Isn't it nice that energizes us so much? Re-paint this! Move that! Put this here! Re-decorating is such fun. And we do the same thing with our gardens when we move that plant here and this one there and that one over there. Spring is here!



## The Flower Family— Borage

This family is easily recognized because its flower stems resemble question marks. Almost all plants have blue flowers. Its members include bugloss, a tall-bristly-leaved and stemmed forget-me-not, and comfrey. Others are heliotrope, Virginia bluebells, forget-me-nots (*brunnera macrophylla*), and forget-me-nots (*myosotis*). Heliotrope has a subtle fragrance and is a popular bedding plant; bluebells are one of our loveliest early spring flowers with their cerulean blue bells. Their smooth, pale leaves die down and disappear during summer while their fleshy roots remain dormant. The best time to transplant them is in the autumn. Puccoon (*lithospermum*) is a prairie native with orange flowers and its roots give off an orange stain that was used as war paint by Indians. Hound's Tongue (*cynoglossum*) is an annual that self seeds. Forget-me-nots grow wild along every stream in Europe and are found even on mountain tops.

"Might I," quavered Mary, "might I have a bit of earth?"...  
"Earth!" he repeated. "What do you mean?"  
"To plant seeds in — to make things grow—to see them come alive," Mary faltered...  
"You can have as much earth as you want," he said. "You remind me of someone else who loved the earth and things that grow. When you see a bit of earth you want," with something like a smile, "take it, child, and make it come alive."

- Frances Hodgson Burnett  
*The Secret Garden*

## Tipsy Tulips

William Miller, director of Cornell University's Flower Bulb Research Program reported that giving some plants diluted (4%-6%) whiskey, gin, vodka, or tequila stunts the growth of the plant's leaves and stems but doesn't affect the blossoms. This may be useful with paperwhite narcissus and other daffodils. His paperwhites were stunted by 30%-50%, but the flowers were as large, fragrant and long-lasting as usual.

## Wanted:

I am looking for some old-fashioned rhubarb plants with large green stalks and large leaved stalks. The red stalk ones are the newer variety. If you have any to spare, and to share, I'd be happy to dig them out for you. Please call me.

Thank you.

Pam Frank

## In May, remember to:

- celebrate May Day by potting up plants and cuttings for our June Plant Sale ;
- make sure soil is turned and compost mixed in for active nutrients before planting;
- start to harden off young transplants before planting outdoors;
- review your garden plan to include companion plantings;
- set aside plenty of time to accomplish your list;
- get children involved in the planting; it should be a family affair;
- begin to deadhead the plants that have finished blooming;
- apply pre-emergence crabgrass killer in early May;
- begin using a mild fertilizer with each watering for house plants and for potted plants outdoors;

- Growing and Using Herbs in the Midwest, by Rosemary Divoock, herbier



**Guest Columnist—  
Pamela Frank**

I love peonies. My mother had a lot of peonies, mostly light pink and some red and white. I also have a lot of peonies. When I moved to Glenview in 2003, I tried to take as many as I could from the old garden. The peonies were very hard to dig out, some had been growing for 22 years and they had their roots to China! I took the special ones, including 2 tree peonies, a dark purple red and a yellow with red touches. I planted them in my Glenview yard in July. Bad idea but I had no choice. I watched them, watered them, and hoped they would make it. I think they all did. There were peonies here already, not loved or taken care of as the former owners weren't gardeners. I moved some of the existing peonies and bought many more. I now have 40 peonies. I have 10 tree peonies and 1 fern leaf. I love peonies.

On the 1st Monday in April I acquired 5 more peonies from my daughter's yard. I don't know what color they are. I dug them out, along with tulips that she relocated. I took the peonies home and planted them in my front yard. I love peonies!

**Reminder:**

Dorothy Barz has volunteered to be the guest columnist for June. Who will be the July guest columnist? Everyone will take a turn.

**Statistics**

In December 2005, we had 340 hits on our website. The most were on Mondays at 10 A.M., and from the United Kingdom, Greece, Taiwan and Russia. In January 2006, we had 406 hits. The most were on Mondays at 7 P.M. and from the United Kingdom, Greece, Mexico and Poland. In February, we had 428 hits. The most were on Fridays at 9 A.M. and from the United Kingdom, Greece, Denmark and Taiwan. And in March, we had 346 hits. The most were on Saturdays at noon and from the United Kingdom, Greece and Taiwan.

**Spice-rack Remedies**

According to *Better Homes & Gardens*, you can ease cold symptoms, fix hot flashes, and prevent other ailments by utilizing your spices.

**Cayenne:** interferes with pain transmission. Make a paste with a few drops of water and a tsp. of cayenne. Dip a Q-tip into the paste and dab on your tooth (not the gum).

**Cinnamon:** eases diarrhea and dries up the sniffles. Make a tea with 1 tsp. cinnamon and 1 cup boiling water. Steep 15 minutes, strain and drink.

**Ginger:** relieves morning sickness and is as effective as OTCs for motion sickness and most any upset stomachs. Make a tea with 1 tsp. of powder and 1 cup boiling water. Steep 10 minutes, strain and drink.

**Sage:** reduce hot flashes and night sweats by drinking a cup of sage tea 3 times a day: add 3/4 tsp. sage to 1 cup boiling water. Steep 10 minutes, strain and drink.

**Thyme:** rich in germ-killing compounds, thyme has a long history as an expectorant and antiseptic. For an effective cough remedy, add 1 tsp. dried thyme to 1 cup boiling water. Steep 10 minutes, strain and drink. For sore throats, brew 2 tsps. thyme in 1 cup boiling water for 10 minutes. Gargle, then spit.

**What's Blooming Table**

Many thanks to Nancy Spears for sharing with us at the April meeting her ranunculus and to Gloria for pachysandra.

**Questions, comments,  
payment of dues?**

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