



The Spade & The Hoe

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April 2010

From the Desk of Judy Oppegard

Welcome spring! Winter was especially brutal this year. I only went out when I absolutely had to and I still slipped on the ice twice! I ached all over for days afterward. This Easter will be the first time in 15 years I won't have a crowd to entertain. Just plan to enjoy dinner with my daughters and one guest. No spring break trips to the tropics either as we're (college tuition) broke! Such is life! Now the sun has been shining and the snow has melted, snowed again and melted again. My crocus have bloomed and the daffodils are ready to. I have made some progress in the yard on the warmer days. I tossed a lot of winter covering mulch in the compost bins and brought out the yard ornaments from the shed. Most of them are gifts from my well-meaning family and friends who know I love gardening. But if I get one more thing out there I can turn the place into a mini golf park! Bill has done a lot of raking and prepped the pond. Things are looking better out there every day as spring is finally here. I was happy to hear that we will be getting new garbage bins soon. It will help make recycling easier. Our house in MG has had them for years and they are so convenient. Progress has always been slower in Glenview for some unknown reason. Cable TV, high speed Internet, emailing the postal and library newsletters came years later than MG. At the next club meeting we'll talk more about wildlife habitat (continued in next column)

April Program

On Tuesday, April 13th, we will meet at the police station at 7pm for a program by Dan Dinelli who will speak on design concepts, garden tips, and a potpourri on gardening. Mr. Dinelli is a master gardener.

Flowers leave some of their fragrance in the hand that bestowed them.

- Chinese Proverb

March Program

Wayne Regowski displayed examples of invasive species which grow in our gardens and in the Grove. The door prize drawings followed. Thanks to Dan Behnke for providing the books for prizes, to Rosette Swanson for the St. Paddy treats, to John Martin for drinks, and to Judy for the shamrock decorations.

Judy, con't.
gardening, particularly composting. Even if you have a lawn service, there are still lots of garden and household food scraps for the compost bin. It will turn into wonderful soil for your grateful flowers! Master gardener Dan Dinelli can answer questions on the subject at our next club meeting on April 13th. He calls his program a pot pourri on gardening that will include garden tips and design concepts. Don't miss his informative power point presentation. Also gifts will be given to our new club members since 2009. See you there.

Through the Garden Gate

Those few days of 60' weather were real teasers, weren't they? I think we all ran out to our gardens to check things out. Snowdrops, Virginia Bluebells, daffodils blooming, and at the botanic garden, a large bed of winter aconites. It's always at this time of year that we really yearn for gardening weather. Enough with the winter! Give us spring!

I've been busy starting seeds indoors. I use the paper pots that I make with the Paper Pot form. Easy to use, lasts forever, costs nothing to make 10, 100, or 1000 pots from yesterday's newspaper. Best of all, the whole thing goes into the ground as the paper composts. I received a Gro-Lite for my birthday and I'm making good use of it. It's fun to see the little seedlings pop their heads above the potting soil, and to see them grow straight.

As our gardens begin to grow, get out there and cut back the sedum and grasses and other things you left up for winter interest. If you wait too long, the new growth will be injured while you try to get rid of the old growth.

Esther

Website Statistics

Last month we had 1,368 people looking at our website and requesting 427 pages. To date, we have had over 4,200 requests for information.

*The flowers take the tears
of weeping night,
And give them to the sun for
the day's delight.*
- Joseph F. Cotter, Sr.

Root Crops

Root crops are popular with home gardeners because they're versatile, delicious, and perfect for canning or freezing. You have never tasted a more delicious beet, radish, turnip, or carrot than one just pulled from your garden. The flavor is so different and sweet. Plus, they contain numerous vitamins and nutrients and can be cooked or eaten raw.

Direct sow your root crops in early spring or late summer. They're cool-weather crops, preferring temperatures of 70-ish in order to germinate. Cultivate deeply before sowing. Harvest beets in 40 - 50 days. Beets and radishes germinate in about 10 days. Carrots take longer, from 2 to 3 weeks. Mulch around the tops of the roots to eliminate 'green shoulders'.



*In my garden, after a rainfall, you
can faintly, yes, hear the breaking
of new blooms.*

- Truman Capote

Root Crops, con't

Thin out seedlings in order to allow the stronger ones to grow. The thinned-out ones can be used as greens. Keep weeds out with mulch and by hoeing, but be careful not to damage the seedlings. Most root crops prefer loose soils.

Fertilize beets when the plants are 3-4" tall. Keep them well watered. The greens are best if picked when they're about 4-6" tall. Leave at least an inch of foliage on the beet root when you harvest. This will prevent bleeding during cooking. Beet roots and greens will keep for 2-3 weeks after they have matured, and the roots will keep for up to a month in cold storage with high humidity.

Radish leaves can also be harvested. They're best when young and you can cook them or add them fresh to a mixed salad.

Fertilize turnips when plants are 4" tall. Their greens are also popular and are best when young and tender. The roots should be harvested when they're about 2" across.



*Flowers are restful to look at.
They have neither emotions
nor conflicts.*

- Sigmund Freud

Garden Tips

1. When growing root crops, do not fail to thin the plants properly. This is the most common problem people have.
2. Maintain an even level of moisture to prevent the roots from splitting.
3. Forked carrots can result from stones, planting in soil that's poorly prepared or root nematodes. Be sure to dig the soil deeply and rake smoothly prior to planting.
4. Prune hybrid tea and grandiflora roses to 12".
5. Spray crabapple tree with dormant oil to prevent apple scab. Follow up with another spray every week for 3 weeks in a row.
6. Start caladiums, begonias, cannas, and elephant ears indoors in pots and place on a sunny windowsill.
7. Rake the lawn after the snow is gone to remove debris such as leaves, branches, etc. Raking aerates the soil so rain and fertilizer can penetrate..
8. Sow cool-season veggies such as lettuce, spinach, chard, kale, carrots, beets, parsnips, and turnips.

- Tips for the Lazy Gardener, by Linda Tilgner

Photos Wanted!!!!

If you have a really great photo of your garden, send it to Esther in an email, making the photo as large as you can. We will put it up on our website. The photos will be changed regularly during the year.

Results of the Program Survey

From the most wanted programs to the least interesting, the results are listed as: 20. perennials, 19. shade gardens, 15. garden design, 14. soil improvements, 14. fertilizers, 13. wildflowers, 12. ground covers, 11. herbs, 11. bulbs, 9. vegetables, 9. grasses, 9. lawns, 8. shrubs, 8. daylilies, 8. ferns, 7. annuals, 7. dahlias, 7. hostas, 7. roses, 6. houseplants, 5. tropical plants, 5. African violets, 4. peonies, 4. garden lighting, 3. irises, 2. container gardening, 2. garden equipment, 2. cacti, 2. arts and crafts projects, 2. weed control, 1. rock gardens, 1. organic gardening, 1. work spaces in the garden, 1. benches, etc.

The best place to seek God is in a garden. You can dig for him there.

- George Bernard Shaw



In April, remember to:

- Plant pansies and hardy annuals;
- Plant bare-root roses and shrubs;
- Start seeds indoors;
- Divide perennials except irises and peonies;
- Prune overgrown yews and junipers by 1/3 this spring, and another for the next two springs to have new plants;
- Cut to the ground those grasses and perennials left from last year;
- Prune lilacs after they bloom in May by cutting old stems to the ground;
- Prune roses when forsythia begin to bloom by removing dead canes, then 1/3 of the oldest canes;
- Prune out dead canes on climbers, and weak canes plus dead ones on hybrid teas;
- Prune spring-flowering shrubs after flowering;
- Prune clematis according to the guide for group A, group B, and group C types. Ville de Lyon, sweet autumn and Jackmanii are in group C; Nelly Moser, Henryi, and Ruby Glow are in group B; Superba and Tetrarose are in group A.
- Prune back butterfly bushes to 12" to stimulate new growth;
- Remember to pot up excess plants for our Garden Walk and Plant Sale;
- Apply pre-emergent crab-grass pesticides;
- By the end of the month, begin to harden off transplants but bring them in at night.

I myself am quite absorbed by the delicate yellow, delicate soft green, delicate violet of a ploughed and weeded piece of soil.

- Vincent van Gogh

What's Blooming Table

Remember to bring your blooming plant to show us.

www.glenviewgardeners.org

Judy Oppegard, President
724-2286
boppegard@yahoo.com

Pamela Frank, Vice-President
832-0630
lp2jfrank@hotmail.com

Sheldon Kimel, Treasurer
657-0772
jackishelly@sbcglobal.net

Rosette Swanson, Programs
846-8289
meaerosette1117@aol.com

Holly Jansen, Garden Walk
729-7729
hollyjj77@yahoo.com

Nancy Spears, Publicity
nancy@spears.net

Brigitte Steinforth, Circulation
724-9462

Barbara Kazanjian, Hospitality
729-2171
philipkazanjian@sbcglobal.net

Bonnie Kimoto, Historian
486-9048
bonnie.kimoto@sbcglobal.net

Esther Behnke, Newsletter Editor
498-4178
eabehnke@earthlink.net

Carole Balli, Webmaster
Carole.Balli@gmail.com

ggardeners@earthlink.net

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