

The Trowel



June 2024
Volume 12, Issue 2

BLOOMINGDALE GARDEN CLUB NEWSLETTER

Greetings from our **President**



*"Friends are the
flowers in the
garden of life."*



Hello Friends,

I am gratified to write this letter on a rainy Saturday afternoon, as yesterday I finished planting the last of my purchases from our plant sale and other annuals I received from friends. There is nothing better than rain water to get things growing! One of the most wonderful things about gardening is the optimism and excitement it provides us of beauty to come. I find sheer delight in the way a seedling matures and blossoms. Now, if I could just find a way to stop the rabbits from feasting on my little beauties!

I am still grinning over the success of our flower and plant sale. A profit of just shy of \$8,000 is amazing! It is so heartwarming to know what a great impact this event has on the community beyond the

donations we distribute. We have so many repeat customers who support us and tell us how much they look forward to our sale each year; it is fun to assist new gardeners decide what to grow; and I love being able to "hang out" with members working the sale and get to know each other better.

I am looking forward to our field trips and pot luck gathering this summer. A little different programming than past years will give us the opportunity to view beautiful gardens and socialize together to share stories and gardening successes and failures. Looking forward to seeing you all at these outings.

Happy Gardening!

Cheryl Svee



Esther Ahlrich's Cookie Recipe

Provided by Georgette West

Esther won a ribbon at the DuPage County Fair as a child in the 4 H Club. Georgette shared these with us at our plant sale this year!



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State Fair Sugar Cookies

- 1 cup butter
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup Mazola Oil
- 4 cups flour
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 cup confectioners sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 tsp. cream of tartar



Cream together butter, Mazola oil, granulated sugar and confectioners' sugar.
 Add and blend vanilla. Sift and add flour, baking soda, salt, and cream of tartar.
 Chill dough and make teaspoon sized ball. Press down lightly with glass dipped in sugar.
 Bake 13 to 14 minutes at 350 degrees. Makes 7 to 8 dozen cookies.

We're Showing Off!
You're Invited to
Bloomington Park District
Community and Giving Gardens
OPEN HOUSE
Thursday, July 11th • 6:30 to 8:30 PM
 259 Springfield Dr, Bloomington, IL 60108
Gardeners will be explaining the methods/techniques they are employing in their organically grown gardens. Come and see the Bloomington Garden Club's Plot-to-Plate Garden and the gardens of over thirty other gardeners.

The Bloomington Garden club was formed to encourage the advancement of gardening, development of home grounds, and civic beautification. To stimulate interest, knowledge and love of gardening among amateurs. To aid in the protection of native trees, flowers and birds. To further the extermination of noxious weeds and to cooperate with other organizations in the beautification of the community.

Remembering Hector Rivera



Joyce Basil

I clearly remember the first meeting that Hector attended at the Club. He entered the church from the front door and quietly sat at the end table. We were still meeting in the foyer at the time and most everyone else was

chatting and/or snacking. I went over to welcome him and wondered if he had come because of the speaker or had a special interest. He was just so charming—he smiled and said that he was just interested in gardening. Hector sat down at a table with Jamie and joined the club that evening. Everyone just loved this little man with the huge smile.

And then came Covid! And the world stopped. For most clubs no meetings were held but a few of us decided that we needed company and friends and so we met outside under the trees at the church. Hector was there with about twelve or so

of us and we decided to just tell about our gardens and what was happening in our now limited world.

This may have been the most wonderful meeting any of us has ever experienced—Hector regaled us about his garden which he confessed was mostly weeds! We all laughed so much!

In the years that followed Hector became our “go to” guy—he was always there to help and always with the wonderful positive attitude and big smile. We will all miss him so much! Having said all this, I do want to talk to Offie and tell her that while we truly love Hector, we love you too and want you to know that each and every one of us hopes you will remain a member and keep participating with us.

Hector will be so missed by all of us at everything we do. He was always there.



Joyce created a beautiful arrangement from the club for Hector's Memorial.



Another Fantastic Flower & Plant Sale!



Linda Kunesh



A lot has already been said about our wonderful 2024 Flower & Plant Sale at meetings and in our minutes. Here is a quick recap!

Outstanding Publicity! Thanks to Jamie, Akhila, Cathy G., Jennifer, & Henia for managing the many outlets that advertised our annual Sale.

60 Pre-Sale Customers: Purchased more than \$9,800 in flowers PLUS an additional “whopping” \$3,304 when they came to pick up their orders on Friday morning!



Member Involvement: 35 members & friends contributed their time and/or food over the week. Again we were thrilled to have Roberta DiBasilio and Georgette West organize our hanging baskets. Bonuses: Roberta JOINED the Garden Club along with Joe & Lori Potts, Bloomingdale Park District, & Veronica Martinez. WELCOME!

Bloomingdale Park District: For the 10th year, Bloomingdale Park District provided us with an

exceptional venue to host our Sale, and continued to support our sale with a tremendous pre-sale order of more than \$1,500 in annuals and perennials to beautify the parks! Joe Potts, Mesha Hadzik, Mary Ricciardi, and Sally Johnson: Thank YOU!

Flower & Plant Selection: Included tried and true varieties and some new ones! Many of us were thrilled with the “new” Coleus Premium Sun Coral Candy!

Trip to Sunrise:

On Monday, May 6th, 15 club members and friends traveled to Sunrise to pull/pick our order of flats; geraniums; 4”, 6”, and one gallon specialty annuals & tropicals; vegetables & herbs; accent plants; and wave petunias. We also pulled 65 perennials for the Park District. Sunrise pulled 240 beautiful hanging baskets per our requests. In total, we purchased \$11,749 in plants from Sunrise.



Thanks are extended to Henia, Jennifer, Gail B., Jeff, Cheryl, Cathy G., Kim K., Dawn, Gail S., Barb U., Linda K., along with Jeff’s sister, Barb, and Master Gardener Julie and her sister & brother-in-law for their help!



Tables: Tables were delivered by Unique Party Rental on Tuesday, May 7 and set up by Park District staff & club members. Thank you, everyone!

Clesen Plants: Nearly \$4,300 in plants were delivered by Clesen Wholesale on Thursday. Again, they were exceptional!



Perennials brought in \$1,288! A special thank you to Joyce, Jennifer, & Carole, and all who contributed perennials from their gardens!

The Raffles and Sale of Gently-used Tools, Books, Magazines, & Miscellaneous Garden-Related Items netted a profit of \$487! Thank you goes out to Kathryn, Maureen, and Jeff for all their great efforts managing the table! A special thank you goes to Jeff for making the precious Fairy Garden. Thanks to Gail S. for the firepit starters and muscari bulbs.

Unexpected Contributions: The Village of Bloomingdale donated MANY large house plants from Stratford Square Mall since it was closing.

The Park District donated many beautiful shrubs. Together, these unexpected plants & shrubs yielded \$720! (Thanks to those who helped the Village and Park District staff dig up and pot the houseplants!)



We were delighted again to receive a visit from Bill and Bill, (AKA William Shatner & William Shakespear) the two adorable goats owned by Pat and Gary Kosmach. They were enjoyed by children and adults alike.



'Jack Be Little' Miniature Pumpkins: were given to any kids who were at the sale. We encouraged them to take photos of their harvests and to share with us next year.

And drum roll please...

Final Profit was \$7,999.52: the most our club has ever generated!



Left-over Plant Contributions: At the end of the sale, only \$335 in plants were left over. Distribution included hanging baskets to Cornerstone Church for ladies unable to attend Mother's Day services, non-profit Mercy World Wide to beautify their three group homes in DuPage county, as a "thank you" to Mesha and Mary at the Park District for all their help and support, and less than \$180 worth of left-over plants went to club members.



Final Thanks: To EVERYONE who contributed, especially those on the Flower & Plant Sale Committee for all their many, many hours and efforts. We could never do this sale without them. They contributed a great deal, and we want to especially acknowledge Henia, Cathy, & Cheryl for all the EXTRA time and effort they personally provided.

The Committee will “debrief” the Sale in June to discuss successes and challenges and make recommendations for next year! If you would like to contribute your thoughts, please contact any of them.

Thank you everyone!

Your 2024 Flower and Plant Sale Committee

Joyce Basel, Gail Berry, Jeff Dengler, Cathy Gall, Linda Kunesh, Jennifer Moore, Ofelia Rivera, Henia Sullivan, and Cheryl Svee



Pots Needed

Don't throw away those empty pots from the nursery. We can use 6", 1-gallon, and larger pots to use next year to pot up perennials. Please be sure they are clean. You can put them between the sheds at the Maintenance Building. One of the Committee members will get them into the shed for storage.



2024 Plant Sale Financial Report



Cheryl Svee

Income:

Pre-orders (60 sales)	9,871.40
Collected Days of Sale/Deposited	16,084.33
	25,955.73

Expenses:

Sunrise Invoice	11,748.87
Clesen Invoice	4,296.50
Table Rental	621.43
Misc. Expenses (potting soil, tablecloths & clips, pencils, delivery men tips, BPD staff gifts)	464.41
Master Gardener Help Desk	125.00
	17,956.21

NET/PROFIT **7,999.52**

Leftovers Donated:

Cornerstone Church	81.00
Kids Above All	42.78
BPD Staff	32.40
BGC Members	179.12
TOTAL	335.30

Other Notes and Fun Facts:

Received **\$58** in donations!
47 people asked to be added to our mailing list!

Other Sales:

Perennials	1,288.00	
Raffle Pots	163.87	(\$230 minus 66.13 cost of plants/soil/pots)
Misc, tools, books, magazines	324.00	(All items were donated)
Houseplants	420.00	
Privet Shrubs	300.00	

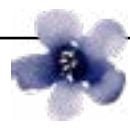
Collected: **2,495.87**

Donation: (As voted at January Meeting)

DuPage Care Center 799.40

Transfer: Plot-to-Plate 17.92

TOTAL **817.32**





Pam Snoek won the shade basket raffle; Pat P. was the winner of the Sunflower pot; and Cathy Gall won the fairy garden that Jeff created. We also had a couple of very well dressed goats, Bill and Bill, visit us at the Plant Sale!



Garden Club Potluck Picnic

Debbie Matuszak

Our July event will be on Tuesday, July 16 at Springfield Park, located at 269 Springfield Drive. This beautiful park has 40 acres, which includes 20-acres of wetlands and a one-mile walking path and bridge.

We will meet at the picnic pavilion from 4:00 pm to 8:00 pm for a potluck picnic. We can go on a nature walk and tour our club's community garden. Everyone please bring a dish. We will have a food / drink sign up sheet at the May meeting (May 21). No alcohol is permitted in the park.



At our May 21st meeting, Who's Who of Owls & Raptors, speaker Mark Sprayer displayed 4 owls so everyone could take photos and see them up close.

Plot-to-Plate Garden 2024



Gail Sanders

The vegetable transplants and seeds are in and things planted earlier in the season have come up. Using money from a grant from the Village of Bloomingdale we have purchased new supports for the cucumbers / peas, longer poles for the pole beans and fencing and posts to try to keep the rabbits from eating these plantings when they come up. By the time you read this we will have mulched our garden to keep down the weeds and retain moisture in the soil. The use of the inground bottle watering system has been expanded from just the tomatoes to the peppers and tomatillos. We hope this will ensure adequate watering of these plants.



The rain has helped with the watering of the garden, but we know we can't count on that all summer. WE NEED YOUR HELP with watering and some weeding. We ask you to come and water three times in the week you sign up for. It may be less if we get adequate rain or more if it is extremely hot and windy. If you work with a partner, it should take an hour to 90 minutes each time you come. You set your time schedule with your partner. There were some people who signed up at the May meeting but there are still many slots to fill. A copy of the sign up is shown below. If you can help with any of the openings, please call or email me with the date(s) you are willing to help. Thank you for your willingness to be a part of this project. Remember that all the food harvested from this garden goes to a local food pantry to help those who cannot afford the fresh organic produce we provide. In these economic times our donations become even more important. Thank you.

Gail Sanders, Plot-to-Plate Committee
 sandersgvjp@comcast.net
 630 690-9468 or 630 699-3326



Plot-to-Plate Garden Watering & Weeding 2024

June 2 – 8	PTP Committee	PTP Committee
June 9 – 15	Joyce Basel	Joe Boccuzzi
June 16 – 22	Jennifer Moore	Jennifer Moore
June 23 – 29	Dawn LaVeau Orr	
June 30 – July 6		
July 7 – 13	Barb Underdown	
July 14 – 20		
July 21 – 27		
July 28 – Aug 3	Mike McElroy	
August 4 – 10	Jeff Dengler	
August 11 – 17	Jennifer Moore	Jennifer Moore
August 18 – 24	Jean Kurzynski	Carol Lockerbie
August 25 – 31	Mike McElroy	
September 1 – 7		
September 8 – 14	Roberta DiBasilio	
September 15 – 21	Joe Boccuzzi	Joyce Basel
September 22 – 28		
Sept 29 – Oct 5		
October 6 – 12		
October 13 – 19		
Oct 20 Clean up	PTP Committee	PTP Committee

Continue to save plastic quart “strawberry” and pint “blueberry/ cherry tomato” containers with lids attached. We will use them when making donations to the food pantry. You can bring them to any meeting but please do not just drop them off in the shed. We share that space and things can get messy very quickly when people just drop things off.

Dawn LaVeau



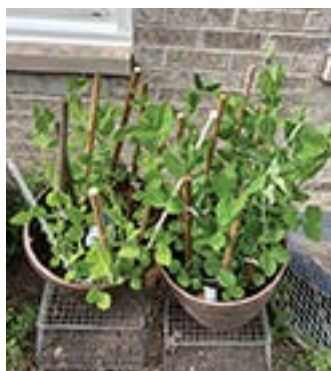
Japanese Itoh Peony; Lily of the Valley; Pulmonaria Raspberry Splash; and Common Purple Lilac.

Joyce Basel



Some years ago Linda Kunesh shared some plants from her garden with me amongst which was a small piece of lamium. I realize that for some this is rather a weed and a bit invasive, but I am so delighted with the way it has covered around the bushes and—to my surprise—I find that I have two different colors. The other images are of my beautiful Rex begonias that I bought from the plant sale four years ago and have successfully wintered them indoors each year.

Laurie Dring & Linda Steck



Laurie is growing an urban garden with Peas and Romain lettuce. She used a blanket rack to hang her lettuce plants.

Linda planted daffodils this past fall, shown with a Virginia Bluebell.

Leafy, Bitter Greens



By Dr. Steven Grundy
Submitted by Laurie Dring

We're talking about leafy bitter greens like kale, Swiss chard, and collard greens. The dark green bitterness in these vegetables contains amazing levels of polyphenols, which, as you know, give you long-lasting energy, improve your digestion and metabolism, and keep you healthy as you age. Even better, they're packed with fiber to fill you up fast and they even help curb hunger.

I love the taste of bitter greens, but a lot of people struggle with the sharp flavor. I want to share a simple guide to make even the most bitter greens more palatable—even exciting!

Here are four of the most common types of polyphenol-packed bitter greens and a quick recipe for each that makes them taste great!

Kale

Possibly the most common of the bitter greens, kale is fairly mild in flavor, and it's delicious both raw or cooked. Just make sure to remove the fibrous stems before cooking!



Recipe: Slice kale leaves thinly and add to a bowl. Add a generous pour of extra virgin olive oil and a pinch of sea salt, and rub the salt/oil mixture into the leaves, massaging thoroughly. Finish the salad with a splash of lemon juice, red wine vinegar and, chopped avocado.

TIP: Greens grow in sandy soil, so be sure to double-rinse your greens in cool, flowing water to get that grit out.

Swiss Chard

Chard tastes like a cross between kale and cabbage. It can be eaten raw, but it's best when cooked. Eat the stems for extra fiber and crunch—they're delicious!

Recipe: Thinly slice leaves and stems and set aside. Heat olive oil and garlic in a large saucepan. Cook



until garlic is fragrant. Add chopped pecans and toast, then add chard and cook until wilted. Finish with a splash of balsamic vinegar.

Tip: If these greens are too bitter, make sure to add plenty of healthy fat, like extra virgin olive oil. It really cuts the bitterness and tastes great!

Mustard Greens

This southern staple is curly leafed and has a peppery bite. Eat them cooked, and make sure to remove the stems first.



Recipe: Tear leaves into bite-sized pieces, removing stems. Add to a large pot with sliced onions, red wine vinegar, chicken stock, and sliced garlic. Cook covered for 1 to 2 hours over low heat until tender.

TIP: Another great way to add flavor and cut bitterness is with something acidic, like vinegar or even a squeeze of lemon juice!

Collard Greens

If you've ever spent time in the South, you've had collard greens, but you can actually eat them raw, and they're a lot more nutritious this way.

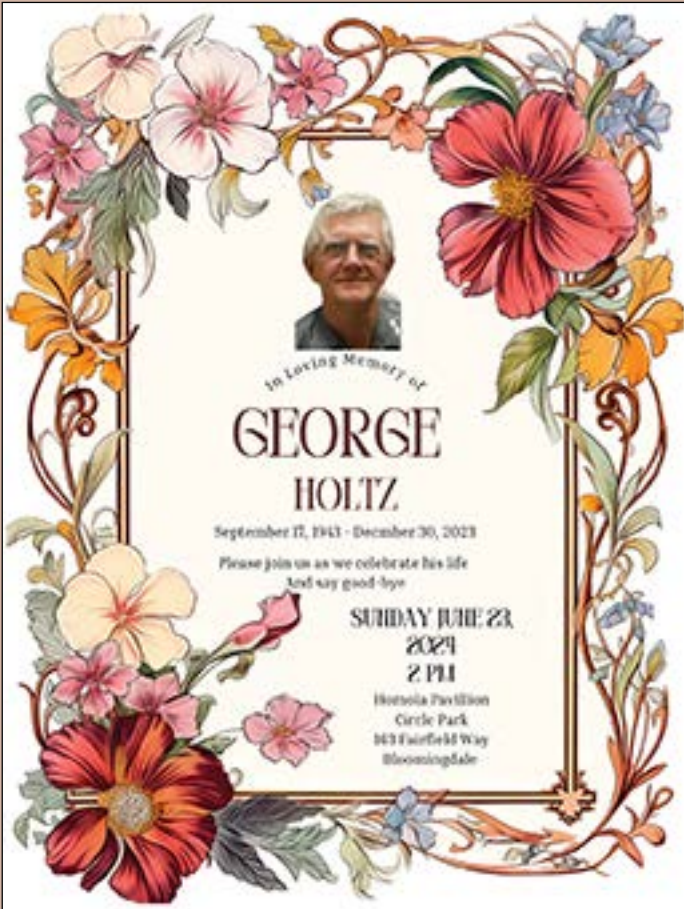


Since the leaves are so broad, these relatively mild greens actually make great wraps—instead of tortillas. Just make sure to remove the tough stems if you're eating them raw.

Recipe: Trim stem off leaves, and place in bowl of warm water with lemon juice. Let soak for 10 minutes, then dry and slice down the center stem to make leaves easy to wrap.

Fill with avocado, the protein of your choice, pickled onions, and a drizzle of lime juice, and wrap like a burrito.

TIP: Raw greens are delicious—and SO full of nutrients. Consider shredding greens like a salad, using them as a wrap, or subbing them into your favorite slaw.



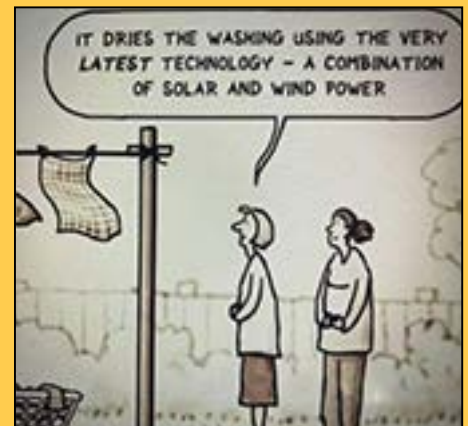
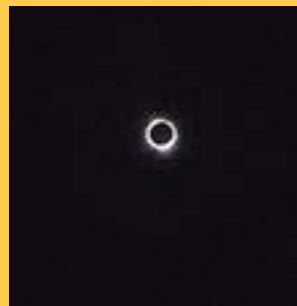
Bloomingdale Garden Club is invited to remember and celebrate the life of

George Holtz

Sunday, June 23rd
2 PM at the
Homola Pavillion
Circle Park
163 Fairfield Way
Bloomingdale



Did you see the Solar Eclipse On April 8, 2024?





2024 Club Officers and Committees

- ***President** Cheryl Svec
- ***1st Vice President** Marietta Serenda
(Membership) **Jean Kurzynski**
- ***2nd Vice President**..... Debbie Matuszak
(Programs) **Kimberly Kennedy**
- ***3rd Vice President** Linda Kunesh
(Ways and Means)
- ***Treasurer**..... Laurie Dring
- ***Publicity** Jamie Schneck
Publicity Contributors
 - Publications..... Akhila Meda
 - Proofreading Linda Kunesh
 - Photo Retouching..... Alan Schneck
 - Facebook..... Cathy Gall
 - Website & Trowel Jamie Schneck
 - Website Support Dan Vitacco
- ***Secretary**..... Joyce Basel
 - Plot-to-Plate Garden Gail Sanders
Susan Glick-Shore, Eileen Spaman, Barbara Weisenburger
 - Good Cheer Jennifer Moore
 - Hospitality..... Henrietta Sullivan
 - Memorial Garden..... Joyce Basel
 - Nursing Home Liaison..... Chris Magnatowski

**Denotes Executive Board*

Let Us Hear From You:
jschneck1233@sbcglobal.net
Phone: 630-372-6003
Posting Months:
March, June, September and December

OUR VISION

- To educate members and the community about gardening through informative and educational meetings, workshops and activities
- To develop and promote projects for civic beautification and environmental stewardship
 - To support philanthropic endeavors which aid the residents of the Bloomington community and surrounding areas
 - To provide opportunities for fellowship for those interested in gardening and environmental and civic responsibility
 - To aid in the protection of native trees, flowers and birds
 - To further the extermination of invasive and/or noxious plants

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to all persons at his or her request of application regardless of residence. Annual dues are \$25.00 for a single member and \$30.00 for a couple when paid January 1st through June 30th. (\$6.00 pays each member’s State Garden Club dues; and \$7.00 for each couple). Half year dues for new members are \$12.50 for single member, and \$15.00 per couple when paid July 1st thru December 31st.

Visitors are always welcome, but we encourage them to join the club after 3 visits in order to help out with the costs of our monthly programming.

Meeting Location:

The 3rd Tuesday of each month. Social time and announcements at 6:15 PM. Program begins at 7. We meet at:
 Cornerstone Faith Community Church
 118 S. First Street, Bloomington, IL 60108

Contact Us At:

bloomingtongardenclub@gmail.com

We’re On The Web:

bloomingtongardenclub.org