



Branches

Cedar Rapids Garden Club

Winter 2010

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members,

Enlightenment is all around us. Having spent the last month in Austin, Texas visiting my two sisters and going to “hot yoga” every morning for 90 minutes, you might hear a little yogi in my words. I often moan and groan during the long, cold, dark and snowy Iowa winters, but the truth is I enjoy the frozen break that it provides. I sometimes long to live in a climate where you could continuously plant and tend your garden every day of the year but in reality, I would dearly miss the change of seasons and the break from the labor of gardening.

At the conclusion of our November meeting, I looked forward to a break from meetings and minutes. Now, as the sun feels a little warmer and the birds sound a little chirpier, I am beginning to feel the optimism that the hope of spring brings. I feel privileged for the opportunity to travel with Pat to Washington DC for the NAL meetings in February. I feel renewed energy and excitement for our March meeting and look forward to seeing all of you once again and to the fun of “side by side” work on our plant sale.

On my last day in Austin, I treated myself to a massage. Sarah, my 28-year-old massage therapist began telling me her story. She and her husband were in their third year of operating an organic “heirloom” farm operation, taking their produce and eggs to the local Austin farmers markets.

PROGRAMS

March 17, 2010

9:00 am

Program: No Program

Home of Sue Winegarden

2348 Linden Dr. SE

Hostess: Katie Hill

April 21, 2010

9:00 am

Program: Kirkwood Horticulture

Speaker: Paul Saladin

Location: Kirkwood Community College

Hostess: Ellen Howrey

May 19, 2010

9:00 am

Program: Spring Planting at

Milestones and CRMA

Location: Milestones

Hostess: Lois Donovan

June 16, 2010

9:00 am

Program: Annual Meeting & luncheon

Home of Val Ortberg

Co-hostesses: Executive Committee

July 21, 2010

9:00 am

Program: “Plan Bee”

Speaker: Anne Stamats

Home of: Anne Stamats

Hostess: Pat Sedlacek

August 18, 2010

9:00 am

Program: “Arc Plasma for the environment”

Speaker: Charlie Kress

Home of Judy O’Donnell

Hostess: Melanie O’Donnell

President's Letter continued...

On learning I was from Iowa, she said excitedly that she had plans to come up to northern Iowa for a gathering at the heirloom Mecca, Seed Savers (She thought the nearest airport to Decorah was in Missouri!) She asked me what it was like to live in the epicenter of the "heirloom movement." I was stunned. I had never thought that we lived in the heart of the heirloom movement as she put it. Sometimes, it takes a moment like that for me to really appreciate the wonderful place we call home.

I hope you have all had a wonderful winter break and look forward to seeing you in March.

—Julie Taylor



EARTH DAY
April 22, 2010

PLANT SALE NEWS



Muscade de Provence Squash

Just like our gardens the plant sale continues to grow! Our committee is busy building on our past success for our May 8th sale.

- ▶ Back by popular demand, we will continue with our theme of "departments" complimented by colorful windows.
- ▶ Hospitality "plus": we will offer extra help at checkout and complimentary coffee.
- ▶ More heirloom tomatoes including award winning tomatoes from a local taste test.
- ▶ More more herbs and veggies!
- ▶ Mr. Schlicht (our local tomato expert) will be on hand to inspire and answer questions.
- ▶ We have expanded our gently used items, adding vintage finds.
- ▶ More perennials and annuals! Our local growers are geared up for a great variety of plants. Our garden club growers will offer lots of fun, hard to find plants as well. We have lavender, delphinium, foxglove that are already growing.
- ▶ We will have even more donations from our members' gardens; these have been so popular and help us set our sale apart.
- ▶ We are working with the ICNC and their Rain Barrel project. This will be a great chance for us to let the community know about our involvement at Indian Creek Nature Center.

—Val Ortberg

CRGC PLANT SALE RECIPE BOOK PREVIEW

Pumpkin Chocolate Chip Cookies

I found this recipe in the Gazette in 2005, and have made these dozens of times.

1 ½ cups whole wheat flour
1 ½ cups unbleached white flour

1 ½ tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. baking soda
¾ tsp. ground cloves
¾ tsp. ground nutmeg
½ tsp. salt
1 1/3 cup sugar
2/3 cup unsalted butter (1 stick + 2 2/3 Tbsp.)
½ cup corn oil or other flavorless oil
¼ cup molasses
1 ½ tsp. vanilla
1 cup canned or fresh purred pumpkin
2 cups dark chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350°. Stir together flour, cinnamon, baking soda, cloves, nutmeg and salt. Set aside. In large bowl, with an electric mixer at medium speed, beat together sugar and butter until fluffy. Reduce speed to low and beat in oil, molasses, vanilla and pumpkin until evenly incorporated. Beat in flour mixture and then add chocolate chips just until blended. Drop dough onto greased baking sheets, spacing about 2 inches apart.

Bake cookies for 20 to 25 minutes to get crisp and lightly browned. Cool. *Makes about 4 – dozen.*

TIP: These are great! And...pumpkin is a super food you know! So they're a healthy treat! You can take them anywhere. And...I like them better crispy!

– Mari Phelan

GREAT NEWS!

A new recipe book, “*C.R. Garden Club Goes Al Fresco*,” will be offered for purchase at this years’ plant sale.

Since the first book was such a resounding success, members voted to create a new 2010 version. The theme this year is food for picnics, patios, camping and all sorts of outdoor dining.

Due to the overwhelming demand for the book last year, the committee undertook a second printing to accommodate all those who were unable to obtain a copy on the day of the sale.

In order to have enough copies this year, members are encouraged to place their orders early. To reserve your copy/copies, please call Joanne Ribble at 366-5136.

Remember, they make wonderful Mother’s Day, birthday, hostess etc. gifts so don’t lose out. Place your orders now!

SAVE THE DATE!

CRGC PLANT SALE
SATURDAY, MAY 8, 2010



GARDEN CLUB MEMBERS READY THE CEDAR RAPIDS MUSEUM OF ART ATRIUM FOR EASTER

For many people one of the highlights of visiting the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art (besides the art, of course) is entering through the atrium. It is one of the only places in Cedar Rapids where one can see tropical plants all year round and, after a winter such as this past one, it is a particularly welcome sight.

Charles Moore was the architect chosen to do the addition to the Carnegie Library so that the museum could not only move into this vacated space, but expand its facility as well. When CRGC learned that Moore envisioned an entry filled with light and masses of green plants, our group rose to the occasion. Members voted to do a fundraiser for the project and would not only buy the plants, but would help with the design and maintenance as well

Thus it came about that in June 1988 "A Walk on Rosedale Road" took place. Visits were made to the homes and gardens of some of those living along the road and "sweets" were available under the tent in the yard of one of the participants. Here one could sit at tables of four to six and recoup and rehash some of the highlights of the day.

Needless to say, this event was wildly successful and enabled us to purchase some very large palm trees and other unusual plants not often seen in our area. Since then, while there have been adjustments to the kinds of plants and experiments done to determine the correct humidity for the area, the garden has thrived.

Thanks to Peggy Meek and Carolyn Davis our maintenance problem was also solved.

CRGC members, Carolyn Davis and Peggy Meek care for the winter garden at the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art throughout the year.



-Photos by Don Ribble

CRMA Atrium continued...

Every Tuesday between 9:00 and 10:00, A.M, they can be found deadheading plants, checking the amount of water they've received and looking for any disease or abnormalities in the plants. They then confer with Carlis Faurot, (the museum Facilities Manager, and if special care is needed, a plan of action is formulated right then and there. As the "Old Guard" begins to wind down, a new group is springing up and Pat Sedlacek and Mary Keane are now "on call" for these volunteer mornings.

For CRGC's efforts in this area the Museum of Art staff and Board of Directors nominated us for the Governor's Award for Volunteerism. At our November 2008 meeting Peggy Meek and Carolyn Davis accepted the award on the club's behalf when it was presented by Museum Board President Bill Stamats.

This ongoing project has contributed much to our community and the ladies involved deserve a special vote of thanks. We hope that "garden clubbers" continue to be involved for many years to come.

—Joanne Ribble



Gail Nau and Pat Sedlacek with Shirley Meunice at the 2009 GCA Horticulture Conference.

2009 GCA SHIRLEY MEUNICE ANNUAL HORTICULTURE CONFERENCE

For three days in September 2009, Pat Sedlacek and I, along with hundreds of GCA members gathered in Chicago for the annual Shirley Meunice Horticulture Conference (named after a very special member from California who still attends the conferences.)

The speakers' list was varied and impressive, covering a variety of topics including the concept of native plantings as a way of stabilizing ecosystems, water conservation at home and advocacy for the creation of more green spaces, not only for the animals but for the well-being of humanity.

This year's keynote speaker was internationally recognized author, noted gardener and photographer, Ken Druse. As the founder of the natural gardening movement, Mr. Druse advocates the use native plant material to best establish natural plant ecosystems in our backyards. His book, "The Natural Habitat Garden" features garden habitats such as grasslands, wetlands, drylands, and woodlands. He discusses plant selection and propagation, how to site the garden, and plant care. Other books authored by Druse include, "The Natural Shade Garden", "Planthropology", "Making more Plants", and "Ken Druse: The Passion for Gardening".

Ken devoted his conference address however to a very different topic. He spoke passionately about the disservice we have inflicted on this generation of children by allowing them to be closeted with TV and video games, and have done little to encourage them to explore their backyards.

In addition to the speakers, we attended special break-out sessions on everything from growing organically to bonsai, from gardening for the disabled to global plant databases. We also toured two remarkable gardens: the Chicago Botanic Garden and the Lurie Garden in Millennium Park.

—Gail Nau

THE BOOK CORNER

The Sand County Almanac

By: Aldo Leopold



In this issue we want to discuss "A Sand County Almanac" by Aldo Leopold. It is a collection of essays written by a most remarkable man. Leopold, born in 1887, was a native of Burlington, Iowa. He was educated at Lawrenceville School and Yale University and, after graduating, joined the United States Forest Service. In this capacity he worked in the Southwest until returning to the Midwest and living in Madison, Wisconsin.

These essays are beautifully written in a passionate style that evokes whatever aspect of the natural world he is talking about. Through his eyes, we see the wondrous things he sees and come to feel the excitement and beauty that he feels. Many of the essays are very close to being poetry, so be forewarned. They are thoughtful pieces that stay with you. One thing about the book that you should know is that you can pick it up, read one essay, and then spend several days digesting what you have read before picking it up and starting again.

Leopold is probably best known for establishing the definition of the Land Ethic.

NAL UPDATE

The National Affairs and Legislation meeting the end of February proved once again be a fascinating opportunity to hear from NAL/Conservation Committee chairs, federal agencies, environmental organizations, Members of Congress and others that spoke on legislative and environmental issues.

As you may suspect, the emotions of many were driven by the need to have the Members of Congress place the environment on a "to do" list before it becomes a "must do" list. Emotions are intense and becoming very personal. Many guest speakers made reference to the world we are leaving for our children and grandchildren due to our inability to deal with critical environmental issues.

Some of the key legislation we have been following for years is still being debated in committee. Patience I hear is a virtue. Instead of listing all of them I am going to highlight a couple that I encourage you to take note of in your daily reading. Be sure to include the NAL Congressional Updates and Current Congressional Status Charts provided on the GCA website.



CRGC members, Pat Sedlacek and Julie Taylor, with Lois Donovan's granddaughter, Kathryn Ott, in Senator Chuck Grassley's office during the NAL conference.


Book Corner continued...

Here is what he has to say on this subject: "The land ethic simply enlarges boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants and animals or collectively: the land." As "Iowa Farmer Today" says, "These words, written by Iowa native Aldo Leopold more than 60 years ago, lay the groundwork for today's land stewardship and conservation."

One can see in reading this book why Leopold is often thought of as the "Granddaddy" of writers on ecology and the environment. His untimely death at age 61 (fighting a brush fire on a neighbor's farm) came just as he was assuming a role as advisor to the United Nations on conservation. It useless to speculate, of course, but one can't help wondering if he had lived would we have awakened sooner to the importance of the environment in our world? Meanwhile, he left as his legacy this wonderful book.

Mention should be made at this time of something new that the Conservation Committee members are trying. They are reading a book on ecology every other month and will discuss it at their monthly meetings. The titles will be announced at Garden Club meetings and the gatherings are open to all who ate interested - join us.

—Joanne Ribble



Check out this great website:
www.theiowagardener.com
Devoted to gardening in Iowa
and Iowa gardeners

NAL continued...

Climate legislation in the Senate is being lead by Senator John Kerry, Lindsey Graham and Joe Lieberman (as of today.) So far, they have not come up with a comprehensive bill capable of winning 60 votes. The question now is whether they will follow the House's lead with an economy wide cap-and-trade program or if they will propose a combination of several ideas, including a carbon tax or phased-in limits for different industrial sectors. The House approved climate legislation (H.R. 2454) last June. Having the House pass the bill first was a bold move showing leadership on the issue. Now everyone waits for the Senate except EPA. EPA made a bold move announcing they would regulate greenhouse gas emissions under the Clean Air Act using scientific methods fairly applied. It is agreed by all that the best route would be comprehensive energy legislation. Some feel EPA is taking this stand to force the issue of comprehensive legislation.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) (1965) is the premier federal funding source for land conservation simplified to mean funding land purchases for parks, refuges, forests, trails, etc. on the federal and state level. It is due to expire in 2015. It has had an interesting history. The original intent was that a fund would be established to preserve and protect our land from funding provided mainly by oil and gas leases on the Outer Continental Shelf. The authorized level was to be \$900 million but only three times in history have they come close or exceeded the funding level. GCA is asking us to consider supporting full funding of LWCF by 2014, to oppose allowing LWCF to expire in 2015 and that the funds would be available each year without further appropriations. The legislative bills to follow are H.R. 3534 Consolidated Land, Energy, and Aquatic Resources Act of 2009 and S.2747 The Land and Water Conservation Authorization and Funding Act of 2009.

—Pat Sedlacek

Lisa Ott's home on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi in Dubuque



Photography by Gloria Johnson and Pat Sedlacek

CRGC MEMBER'S TRIP TO DUBUQUE AND THE NATIONAL MISSISSIPPI RIVER MUSEUM AND ACQUARIUM

Last fall, Pat Sedlacek, Mary Lou Hattery and members of the CRGC conservation committee organized a trip to the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium in Dubuque followed by a tour of the home of Lisa Ott, daughter of CRGC member, Lois Donovan.

Visitors were treated to a tour of the museum by Executive Director, Jerry Enzler, organized by Mary Lou Hattery. The focus of the tour was on water runoff and soil retention. Following, members explored the museum and had lunch in the cafeteria.

Next, it was off to the wonderful home of Lisa Ott with its breathtaking views of the Mississippi. CRGC member Shari Hoech helped with the plantings and was on hand to point out some of the highlights including the gorgeous hydrangeas.



CRGC members at the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium