



NAPERVILLE COMMUNITY GARDENERS

February 2013

Purpose: To nurture the gardening interests of its members and the community through educational programs and community projects

Next Meeting
Monday
February 4, 2012
7 p.m.
Knox Presbyterian Church

Speaker: Karla Marino

Topic: Residential Landscape Design:
Focus on Public Areas

Karla Marino has been an independent landscape design consultant since 2008 with Zone 5 Horticulture, her company. Working for Hinsdale Nurseries, from 2005 until 2008, she was the maintenance manager for over 100 homes in the Hinsdale/Oak Brook/Western Springs/Burr Ridge area and from 2000 until 2004, a landscape designer/salesperson. She credits this variety of experience with giving her a sensitivity to clients' expectations, helping them to identify and achieve their goals.

Karla regularly attends garden symposia, lectures, and garden walks; she also offers plant sales as her garden continues to expand. Karla has an Associate of Science degree in Horticulture from the College of Dupage and is a member of the Midwest Ecological Landscape Alliance (MELA).

It's not too early to think about the PLANT SALE—SATURDAY, MAY 11.

From the President

Thanks to those who attended the January meeting and to the four new members for joining the club. We heard some great tips on garden design from Master Gardener Carol Shelby and saw some of her beautifully executed garden plots.

With the start of the new year, dues are due. They are still \$20 per year, and Tom Campbell will accept cash and checks at the February meeting.

On January 9 I attended the 2013 DuPage Environmental Summit, "Living with Wildlife." In this newsletter I have included some of the highlights from this useful conference. This was an event well worth attending, and I will keep you informed about future meetings sponsored by the Conservation Foundation.

Jan Gricus

Welcome, New Members

Joining the club in January are

Benjamin Calvert III

John Cressman

John Valle

Pam Valle

We welcome you to the club and look forward to sharing with you the pleasures of gardening.



MINUTES FROM OPEN EXEC COMMITTEE (EC) MTNG—

Attendees were Pres. Jan Gricus, VP Mark Mayszak, Sec'y Vicky Polito, Past Pres. Betty Ference. Absent was Treasurer Tom Campbell. Sitting in were Eleanor Holt, JoAnn Monge, Ron Ory, various others.

EC agreed Vicky should have minutes from committee meeting of Fall 2012 typed up and submitted at Feb 2013 meeting.

Tom sent word that he would submit budget at Feb meeting and that all program chairs can anticipate budgets similar to those of 2012. He confirmed that he paid \$74 to renew NCG PO Box for 2013.

EC decided that the general solicitation for a hospice donation will not be revolving and was a one-time event as a memorial for Ben Calvert in 2012.

Mark asked if there was more we could do for publicity, such as post flyers in libraries, etc. Vicky is current Publicity Chair and handles email/web submission publicity to about two dozen media outlets and doubted the leg-work would be worth it, but she will keep eyes open for more opportunities. Mark would like to show off our rare status as an evening mtng and Betty thinks that publicity is at a solid high and working well. Vicky will try to push the evening mtng aspect more across current roster of outlets.

Jan will start sending an email to the full membership about a week prior to each meeting as a reminder.

Eleanor agreed to send the Harvest Banquet 2012 survey out via email once more.

2013 Membership dues are due now. Club will be reminded during reg mtng and in Feb. Betty will collect any dues submitted to-night and pass them to Tom, who will hand out receipts in Feb.

MINUTES FOR REGULATION OPEN MEETING—

Jan called meeting to order about 7pm. There were approximately 23 attendees including four new members.

Jan welcomed and thanked all and asked for patience as NCG begins a new meeting format. All are welcome to the Exec Committee's (EC's) to be held from 6:30p-7p each month, immediately followed by a stream-lined regular club meeting slated for 7p-7:15p (only issues that require membership discussion or voting, etc. will fill this meeting—the EC will deal with more mundane business that members and guests may not want to sit through). Any member is welcome to either or both of these meetings. Club's "social time" will be from 7:15p-7:30p, and programs will begin at 7:30p with goal of getting members on their way back home by 8:30p.

All members reminded to pay 2013 dues of \$20. Betty collecting for Tom in his absence this month, receipts to follow in Feb.

Motion to approve Oct 2012 meeting minutes made and passed.

Carolyn Finzer passed around for signatures a well-wishes card for Ollie Burrows and members were encouraged to reach out to him individually as he recuperates from recent illness.

Position of Harvest Banquet Chairperson still open. Mary passed around printed copies of the 2012 banquet survey to be completed and deposited in a specific collection bag by mtng's end.

Ron Ory's idea for a sensory garden at the garden plots restated and native garden is doing well. Any member who wishes to help tend our garden plots may now join in (no longer restricted to Master Gardeners), so feel free to help water, etc. The 2012 total donation of produce to Loaves & Fishes, from the general plot and end of season gleaning, was nearly 4,000 lbs.

Bob Elvert is heading up the plant sale (even as he begins the Master Gardener program) slated for Saturday, May 11th.

Mini-Show: none, but a demo of milk-jug gardening offered up by Marty Kraus—Jan reminds members to check www.wintersowing.org as a great resource for this. Raffle of a mini-pie press/maker was won by Carol Dugan.

Jan noted the "10th Annual DuPage Environmental Summit" taking place on 1/9, but Bob Elvert tells us it's all full up!

Meeting adjourned at 7:20p for snack and social break, followed by a program on "Garden Design" by Carol Shelby.

Submitted by

Vicky Polito, Secretary

LIVING WITH WILDLIFE IN THE SUBURBS

Notes from the 2013 DuPage Environmental Summit held on January 9, 2013, at Benedictine University— by Jan Gricus

“Birds, Bees and Butterflies: Native Landscaping and Attracting Beneficial Wildlife to Your Yard” by Jim Kleinwachter from The Conservation Foundation. Plants are not just decoration. They are the ONLY thing that converts light to food and not all plants are created equal. Native plants build healthy soil and feed pollinators. Grass is nonproductive and costs 27 billion dollars annually in the U.S. with nothing in return. Lots of what we grow are not native: hosta, daylily, spirea, barberry, sedum and turf grass all come from other countries. You should landscape as if your life depends on it, because it does. Plants need pollinators to produce food. Birds, bees, butterflies, etc. are pollinators. Pollinators eat bugs, lots of them, and native plants attract lots of bugs. It's the circle of life in action. Cultivars of natives, dubbed “nativars”, may be beneficial or not, depending on what it was bred for and what was bred out. But even those are better than a plant from Japan. If you have shade, look for sedges and ginger which like shady conditions. If you would like suggestions for your yard, contact Jim at The Conservation Foundation and he will visit your yard and he will be happy to make suggestions.

www.theconservationfoundation.org

“Living with 'Nuisance' Wildlife by Stephanie Touzalio from Willowbrook Wildlife Center. Wildlife needs food, water, space and shelter and look for all of those to make their homes. If you feed one animal, such as birds, other animals will come. If you provide water for birds in winter, you will attract other animals as well. Animals have adapted to needing smaller areas to make homes than before. They make do with what's available. Shelter is provided for them by trees, chimneys, decks, brush piles, etc. Before freaking out, determine what really is a nuisance. Is a skunk walking through your yard in the middle of the night really a problem? It's OK to leave the night to the night creatures if they are not causing problems. Humane deterrents for nesting animals under your deck are: ammonia-soaked rags or toilet paper tubes placed in those areas; liberally applied black pepper and hot sauce because mammals do not like these on their paws; blinking lights and ribbon blowing in the wind may deter some critters some of the time. Use these deterrents when the animal is trying to sleep, usually during the day. When the critter leaves, find out how it gained access and seal off the area. Hardware cloth is good to use for this. For raccoons raiding garbage cans, keep the cans inside if you can, or pour some ammonia inside the can if left out or black pepper on top. Prevention is best, cap the chimney, dryer vents, window wells. Seal up and clean up. Call Willowbrook Wildlife Center at 630-942-6200 if you see an injured animal. Go to their website for additional information at www.willowbrookwildlife.org

“Research on Coyotes: Learn the Facts and Dispel the Myths” by Chris Anchor from Cook County Forest Preserve District. Cook County has a 14-year study and have discovered that coyotes are everywhere!! They are identified by their tails which hang down below their backs. They are trapped, tagged and monitored. When caught in the city and suburbs, they find rotten teeth indicating coyotes are eating human food: high carbs, no brushing. This is not seen in rural coyotes. Coyotes test their limits around humans. Each encounter teaches them something new, but attacks on humans are rare. Should you encounter one, be confident and bold. Make loud noises and make yourself look larger by raising your hands above your head or flaring your jacket wide open to let the coyote know you are 'top dog'. Do not turn your back and run. If you leave the area, do so calmly, facing the coyote as you leave. Coyotes are always looking for food. Do not encourage them by feeding them. Do not allow spills to accumulate below bird feeds. Keep grills clean; keep pet food and garbage cans indoors. Walk your dog on a leash and never leave it unattended in your yard. For general information on coyotes, visit www.dupageforest.org. Click on “Conservation” and “Managing Natural Resources”.

“Rare and Threatened Wildlife Species and their Management” by John Oldenburg, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County. 25,443 acres or 12% of DuPage land area is forest preserve. A “rare” and “threatened” designation is considered a failure because a diverse wildlife is an indicator of ecological health. Destruction and threats to habitat threatens and stresses biological diversity. Wetlands have been the most affected and most in need of restoration. Springbrook Prairie is a good example of prairie restoration. It is high priority for the Forest Preserve District to improve wetlands, grasslands, savannas, forests and woodlands. Woodlands are especially threatened by invasive species such as buckthorn, honeysuckle and garlic mustard. The areas they have worked on are already showing signs of rare and threatened plants. Seeds for these native plants are in the soil, just waiting for the right conditions to sprout and grow.

“Urban Wetlands and Wildlife Habitats” by Kurt Dreisilker, Morton Arboretum. Seven million acres of land in Illinois have been drained since 1818 by installing drain tiles. After careful research, drain tiles have been removed at appropriate sites at the Arboretum and wetlands have redeveloped, followed by native vegetation, followed by spring peepers, turtles, etc. Vegetation, invertebrates, amphibians and mammals have instinctively found their way back to the wetlands once they were re-established. Wetlands are important because 46 out of 59 mammal species depend on wetlands for their existence. Meadow Lake has been designed to slope gently into the water to attract lots of wetland wildlife. It is managed by a controlled burn. Install a rain garden at home to attract and sustain some wetland-loving species. Be a wetlands advocate, talk to your neighbors about rain gardens, volunteer at the Arboretum.

“The Return of Large Predators to our Region” by Jack MacRae, Willowbrook Wildlife Center.

The trend is that large predators have wandered back into Northern Illinois. The 'Food Web' consists of prey and predators and the environment is healthier when both are around. The gray wolf, black bear and mountain lion were last seen regularly in Illinois in the 1800's. The gray wolf comes down from Wisconsin and there have been 10 sightings since 2002, the closest being in 2010 in Big Rock, in Kane County. Two people were arrested in 2011 from Jo Daviess County because they each shot a gray wolf thinking it was a coyote. They were used as an example that hunters really should know what they are shooting, not just guessing. Black bears are in some zoos and nature centers and have been known to escape. Northern Wisconsin has bears. They are even in the Kenosha/Racine area. There have been six sightings in Illinois since 2008. The closest one was in September 2012, 10 miles south of the Wisconsin border. Mountain Lions can be 8 feet long, nose to tail, and weigh 140 pounds. They come from South Dakota. Missouri has a lot of them. The first time in over 100 years, one was spotted in southern Illinois in 2004. The 2008 mountain lion found roaming around Chicago's Roscoe Village came from the Black Hills. It was destroyed but local animal control is now better equipped to capture rather than kill such an animal. Closest sighting was along the Fox River in Kendall County last year. ***Chicago Wilderness Magazine*** always has interesting articles on this topic.

Thanks to JoAnn Monge and Randy Scheib for the delicious treats which we enjoyed at the January meeting. (I promise that in February we will have decaf!)

Cricket Cressman, Chairman, Refreshments
