



The Green Thumb:

Omaha Council of Garden Clubs Newsletter

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March 2018

OCGC Meeting Scheduled

The next OCGC meeting will be held Tuesday, April 10 at the Extension. A “Social Hour” begins at 6:30 PM, with the speaker’s presentation at 7. Because of several weather-related cancellations in January, Bob Hendricks’ presentation was rescheduled for the April meeting. Hendricks is the Horticulture Program Coordinator for the Statewide Arboretum. He will speak on “Gardening With Native Plants”. His subject includes grasses and a mix of wildflowers that bloom from spring until fall including some woodland natives and those for rain gardens and wet areas. Please come and enjoy the opportunity to get acquainted with people from other garden clubs and share information about your club. We would love to see 2 representatives from each club..

Thank You

Many thanks to those who took time to work at the February Home & Garden Show. A few volunteers experienced family emergencies making it impossible for them to carry out their planned schedule. We certainly understand this, and hope that nothing too serious developed.

A number of clubs brought fliers to hand-out at the show. I will bring any left-overs to the April meeting. If you need them before that, please contact me

at ocgcsecretary@cox.net. I will arrange for you to get them.

Fairy Garden

A fairy garden is a collection of miniature plants and accessories designed to be something that would attract fairies. Visitors to the OCGC booth at the Home Show were invited to register to win the charming fairy garden pictured below. The garden was created and donated by OCGC Past-president, Sue Adkins. Thank you, Sue!. The garden attracted quite a bit of attention. The winner was very excited when we called her to tell her she had won.



By coincidence, an article in the World Herald the weekend of the show reported a recent upsurge in the popularity of terrariums (a close cousin to a fairy garden).

A Small Group Can Do Big Things

The small community of Humboldt, NE (population around 900) has created a

simply beautiful “Cancer Survivors Garden”. The garden was the brainchild of Jan Wilhelm, and was quickly supported by the local garden club.

The garden definitely accomplished its stated goal – to create a place of serenity for those fighting cancer or mourning the loss of a loved one to this disease. Many businesses as well as individuals have contributed to the project. This garden (really a whole park) is more than just a few flowers stuck in the ground. There are multiple well -coordinated flower bed, a pergola, statues and a fountain. Memorial bricks were sold as part of a fund raiser, and they create walkways throughout the gardens.

Humboldt is approximately 85 miles south of Omaha. It is well worth the easy 1 ½ hour drive. Head south on US 75 to Ne 4. Humboldt is approximately 6m miles west of US 75. While there, you might enjoy a picnic lunch. There are several picnic tables and a small barbeque grill. Or drive a couple miles to the 6 Mile Café – an old fashioned family café with good food and reasonable prices.



Greater Omaha Iris Society

The Greater Omaha Iris Society was founded in 1950. The club describes itself as a fun-loving group of gardeners with a special appreciation of all things iris. They meet at noon on the 2nd Saturday of the month during the growing season. The meeting place is the South Omaha Public Library at 2808 “Q” Street (Within the Metro Community College Campus.)

In the 1970’s, the Iris Society built the Sass Memorial Iris Garden at Mahoney State Park. This lovely collection of more than 120 iris varieties and 20 Sass peonies is a tribute to the pioneering hybridizing work of Hans, Jacob & Henry Sass. The Society continues to maintain the garden. A State Park Entrance Permit is required to enter the gardens.

The Society participates in a May Flower Show at St Andrew’s Episcopal Church (84th & Pacific), and also holds an annual rhizome sale there in July.

For more details about the club visit the website www.greateromahairissociety.org or follow them on Facebook.



The site before creation of the Cancer Survivors Gardens

Photos below show some of the new beds



An Invitation from the Hosta Society

Every year Shady Choice Hosta Society has a plant sale. It is currently held in the Mangelsen's parking lot (near 84th & Center) for approximately 4 hours. If your club would like to partner with them in the sale, please contact Gary Hicks at gh90258@windstream.net.

Tulip Trivia

- * The name "tulip" comes from a Persian word meaning turban.
- * Tulips originated in central Asia and brought east by the Turks. They were introduced into Europe in the mid 16th century.
- * Tulips belong to the same family as lilies and onions.
- * The tulip petal is edible. In fact, during world war II, many people in the Netherlands were forced to eat tulip petals when no other food was available.
- * Tulips need a prolonged period of cold to stimulate flowering.
- * The average lifespan of a tulip blossom is 3-7 days.
- * Symbolism connected to various tulip colors: Red – true love ; White – says I'm sorry; Purple–royalty; A gift of a multi-colored tulip bouquet is said to compliment the recipient's eyes.

River City Cactus & Succulent Society

In August of 1980, 16 curious people decided to start a cactus & succulent

society. Officers were elected and an application was sent to CA for acceptance in the Cactus & Succulent Society of America. The club motto was "We all stick together-Not a spineless one in the bunch". The first meetings were held in homes of the members with everyone joining in tours to greenhouses, nurseries, and individual gardens.

The Club has had 32 show and sale events which are open to the public. Vendors are brought in with hundreds of sale plants and a judged show of the member's prized plants is on display.

We attend regional and national conferences on alternating years, where clubs from all the states participate. We publish a monthly newsletter, which goes to the membership, with program details for the up-coming meeting. A subscription to the national CSSA magazine shows us new plant offerings and all the other clubs information. In June 2018, the Mid States conference will be held in St Louis, MO.

River City C & S meets the first Sunday of each month (excluding January) at 1:30 p m at the Papillion Library or where ever an event is scheduled.. Fun things we do - -Succulent specialists give programs, videos of succulent tours to foreign countries, Q & A, raffles, tours, always snacks, white elephant auction, joint meeting with Iowa and Kansas City Clubs annually. Additional information is available on Facebook.

What Time is It?

Just a reminder – daylight savings time starts March 11.

Only 19 Days til the First Day of Spring

However, if you are just itching to get outside and get your hands dirty – remember that the average date of the last frost in Omaha is May 11.

Garden Gems

Have you seen all of these lovely gardens? They are all open to the public without charge.

Mount Vernon Gardens – 5725 S 14th Street - a half-scale layout of George Washington's Virginia estate

Elmwood Park Grotto - 808 S 60th Street – a lovely collection of perennials and a natural spring . The spring was a public water source in the 1890's.

Victorian Garden at General Crook House – 30th & Fort - While you are there, visit a wide variety of ornamental trees and perennial beds on the Ft Omaha Metro Community College campus

Memorial Park Rose Garden - 6005 Underwood (north of the Memorial colonnade)– planted to enhance the Memorial dedicated to the men and women serving our country in the military

OPPD Arboretum – 108th & Blondo –201 shrub varieties and more than 208 different tree species

Hanscom Park – 32nd & Woolworth- the park dates back to the 1880's. The greenhouse here provides the annuals used throughout Omaha city parks.

Prayer Garden at St Robert Bellarmine Church – 120th & Pacific

Forest Lawn Memorial Park - 7909 Mormon Bridge Rd – Although officially a cemetery founded in 1885, it is designed like a park

Heron Haven – 11809 Old Maple Rd – a spring-fed wetland sanctuary.

The gardens at Joslyn Castle – 3902 Davenport – home to 2 champion trees (a gingko and a pin oak)

Veterans Park (formerly Triangle Park) – Monroe & Halleck Streets (Papillion) – dedicated to current and past veterans of the military

OCGC Directory Reminder

As indicated in an earlier email – we can only consider publishing an OCGC Directory if 80% (22) of the clubs are interested and forward the necessary information by March 15. As of the publication of this newsletter, only 7 clubs have responded.