



# The Hidden Gem

July/August, 2023

## Town & Country Garden Club of Libertyville

**celebrates 71 years of serving the greater Libertyville area with civic plantings, scholarship awards, local charitable donations and our Hidden Gems Garden Walk.**

### THIS MONTH:

- Iris Info
- Civic Activities
- Hidden Gems Report
- Tick Talk
- Upcoming Events

Our tour of Mettawa Manor - the home and gardens of Donna LaPietra and Bill Kurtis - was an experience of a gardener's lifetime. We are so grateful for the gorgeous gardens and warm, welcoming hosts. Their commitment to returning large acreage to native prairie is phenomenal.

Check out our civic plantings at the train station, Cook Mansion, the Civic Center and Library - the containers are filling in and out quite nicely. The Butterfly Garden in front of the Civic Center is flourishing.

In July, Veronica Porter described how best to use our garden and organic farmer's market produce to create a delicious, nutritious salad.

Our Hidden Gems Garden Walk was a great success, funding scholarships, plantings, and other charitable initiatives. A beautiful day - we thank our gracious host gardens - a true gift to share their spaces and knowledge. Our patrons and hardworking members enjoyed a special day. See you all June 29, 2024.

Ann Baker, Editor

*What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have never been discovered - Ralph Waldo Emerson*



# News and Notes

## Save the Date

Our Memorial Butterfly Garden outside of the Civic Center received its official North American Butterfly Association Certification! Signs will soon be posted in the garden. We have our first blooms with the hardy and beautiful Echinacea starting off - here a butterfly enjoys a delicious lunch in the sunshine.

Our Butterfly Garden Dedication will be August 19th at 10 a.m. We hope you can be there as we honor those who nurtured nature and our hearts and talk about the importance of butterfly gardens.



## CIVIC PLANTINGS

Our container gardens outside of the Civic Center, Library, Cook Mansion, and Train Station are looking great this summer. Check them out!



# July Tips

## Bearded Iris Care

by Risé Barkhoff, Master Gardener

Your bearded iris bloomed, but now what? How do you care for your plants?

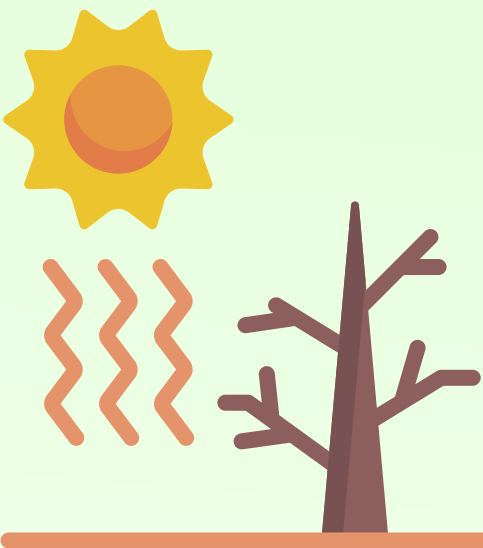
After iris bloom is a good time to fertilize with a low nitrogen fertilizer, using one either specifically for iris or bone meal or superphosphates. Just sprinkle it around the rhizomes (not on them) and water in.

The second chore is to cut off the spent flower stalks. Any scissor or hand pruner will do. Just lop them off toward the base of the plant and throw the stalks into the compost pile. You do this to make the plants look neat again and to save the plant energy better put into growing new rhizomes.

Then as summer progresses, watch for fungal leaf spot that appears as yellow brown spots on the leaves. This disease is common, especially if the iris are wet a lot as in rainy years or from overhead watering. Remember, iris like it hot and dry. So keep them weed free (so the leaves can dry) and don't crowd them with other plants. You can control the spots by cutting off the diseased parts, trying to leave as much leaf as possible. Diseased or not, in the fall cut the leaves down to the rhizomes.

For more tips on growing bearded iris (and some gorgeous iris for sale!), go to [Schreiner's Iris Gardens](#)





# Drought Conditions

Despite recent rains, our area is in a four to five inch rain deficit. Vegetable and flower gardens will need one inch of water/week to continue to flourish. Place an opened clean tuna can in the area while sprinkling to assess the water output.

Christopher Enroth of the Illinois Extension explains that drought damage can sneak up on homeowners and damage trees and shrubs.

Christopher warns that 50 year old trees cannot be replaced. Many homeowners don't think to water their mature trees, believing they have deep roots. Most tree roots are in the top 18 inches of the soil.

He advises prioritizing:

- Recent transplants
- Specimens that have suffered stress or damage in recent years
- Trees or shrubs whose planting location restricts root expansion
- Plantings grown near heat-reflective surfaces
- Plants that are already indicating stress (yellowing foliage, wilting, scorch, leaf drop, dieback)

A general rule is to water slowly and deeply allowing the soil to dry out between watering. Do not fertilize during drought conditions, as this encourages growth which requires more water.

**ATTENTION  
PLEASE**

The Lake County Illinois Health Department announced that mosquitoes tested in Vernon Hills have tested positive for **West Nile virus**.

They urge residents to Practice the “4 Ds of Defense” to protect yourself and your family from mosquitoes:

- **Drain:** Drain standing water from items around your home, yard, and business.
- **Defend:** When outdoors, use an insect repellent.
- **Dawn and Dusk:** Protect yourself all day and night, and wear repellent outdoors during these prime times for mosquito activity.
- **Dress:** Wear long sleeves, pants, and closed toe shoes when outdoors to cover your skin.

# The Healthy Gardener: Tick Prevention

Summer is here, and we gardeners are busy in our beds weeding, pruning, and harvesting. Because our area is wooded and active with wildlife like deer, ticks and tick-borne disease is a concern. Shady areas with dense foliage are more likely to harbor ticks. This [University of Illinois Extension](#) graphic details tick prevention and removal tips if you find a tick during a post-gardening body scan.



## How to Prevent Tick Bites

- Use insect repellent.
- Wear light-colored clothing with long sleeves and pants.
- Wear long hair in a ponytail or cover with hat.
- Avoid deer trails and tall grass.
- Check clothing and shower as soon as possible.

**If you find a tick attached to you:**

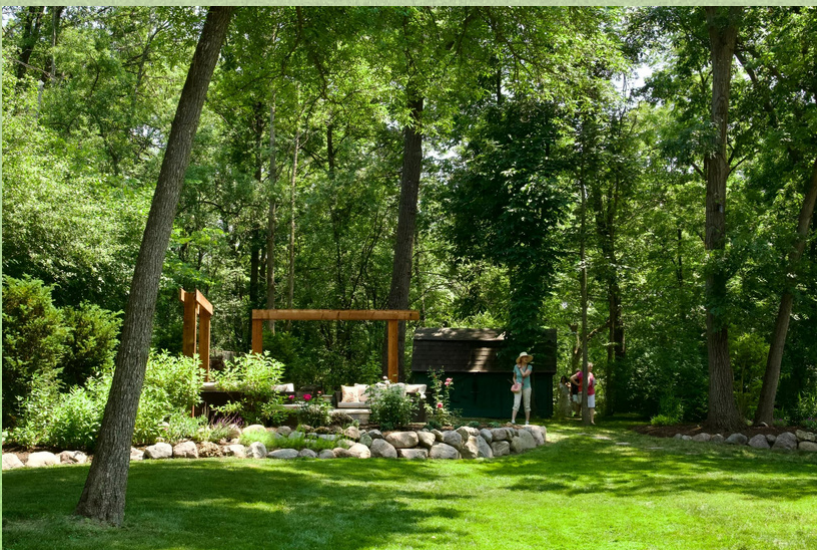
- Take a picture and identify species of tick.
- Use tweezers and grasp tick close to the skin.
- Do not use matches.
- Wash the area with disinfectant.
- Watch for rash, fever, or flu-like symptoms.
- See a doctor if you have any symptoms following a bite.

# Hidden Gems Garden Walk

The Hidden Gems Garden Walk chairpersons, Ann Baker and Julie Eberspacher are grateful for our successful 2023 walk. First and foremost, thanks to our five homeowners who worked tirelessly to prepare their gardens for our patrons. They were magnificent! Thanks to the artists who agreed to share their work as an inaugural addition to our walk. Thank you to Chrissoulas restaurant for their sampling at the Love's home - our regrets that their supplies ran out before the afternoon patrons could enjoy.

Thank you to the Garden Walk Team: Mary Gay Kay (tickets and printing); Amanda Kay (graphic design); Sally Steele (publicity); Paula Lubenow (publicity); Liz Leonard (Farmer's Market and Online ticket coordination).

And a big thank you to our members, who purchased and sold tickets, distributed posters, staffed the Farmer's Market, and encouraged friends and acquaintances to attend.



# Upcoming Events

## *A Walk in "The Shire"*

July 22, 2023

10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Rain or Shine

No Refunds

Tour Spectacular Gardens in the Lincolnshire Area

Including the Renowned MacLean Garden in Mettawa

Advance Purchase Tickets will be \$15; \$20 day of Garden Walk

Proceeds Help to Fund Roberti Community House, Vernon Township Food Pantry & Garden, Community Plantings, Center for Enriched Living Preservation Foundation, Lake County Forest Preserves, and Many Others

ALL TICKETS, ADVANCE & DAY OF PURCHASE, MUST BE PICKED UP AT  
49 OXFORD DRIVE IN LINCOLNSHIRE AT SPRING LAKE PARK

Please Begin Walk at This Site! Other Sites Will Not Have Available  
Online-Pickup Tickets or Ticket-Holder Lists

Cold Water Will Be Available for Attendees

For More Information About Advance Ticket Purchases Please Visit  
Our Website: <https://LincolnshireGardenClub.com>



## Lake County Forest Preserves Concerts in the Park

Live outdoor musical  
performances begin at 7:30 pm  
every Tuesday through August 22  
at Independence Grove in  
Libertyville.