



The Hidden Gem

May, 2024

Town & Country Garden Club of Libertyville celebrates 72 years of serving the greater Libertyville area with civic plantings, scholarship awards, local charitable donations and our Hidden Gems Garden Walk.

And now the fun begins! We've begun refreshing and re-imagining our gardens. Many of you have already been out preparing your beds, waiting for the magic day to start planting. One of my favorite flowers is zinnias, I think they are the perfect flower for the garden. But I don't like to wait for them to grow from seed outside so I start them inside with a grow light. And, yes, sometimes I am a little too enthusiastic about how many I can plant in the garden and end up with a bit of surplus! But that's a good problem to have.

Congratulations to Mary Gay Kay for being selected as an honoree for the 2024 Senior Citizen Hall of Fame by the Senior Council of Libertyville. Her many volunteer commitments demonstrate her dedication to the community - through the garden club, she established the Stephanie Green Memorial Scholarship for horticulture students, and in PEO she has advanced the futures of many young women with educational support. Her garden club commitment resulted in a more beautiful Libertyville and a deep, collaborative relationship with Civic Associations. Thank you, Mary Gay.

Sally Steele, President, TCGC

Gardens are not made by singing 'Oh, how beautiful,' and sitting in the shade. - Rudyard Kipling

- THIS MONTH:**
- GCI State convention
 - Jumping worms
 - Perennial of the month: Lungwort
 - Native of the month: Prairie Smoke
 - Hidden Gems Garden Walk
 - Upcoming events



Editors:
Ann Baker
Laura Edwards
Janet Lichtenberger

News and Notes

GCI State Convention, Springfield

Sally Steele, Club President, and Ann Baker, past President, participated in the GCI Meeting on April 22 and were thrilled that our club was recognized for ten awards. We were honored to be named as the GCI Garden Club of the year for medium sized clubs. Here's the rundown:

- Myrtle R. Walgreen Memorial Award 2nd Place: For the Butterfly Garden in memory of members who have passed away.
- Planting for Pollinators 1st Place: For the Butterfly Garden.
- Garden Walk 1st Place: Recognizes clubs conducting Garden Walks that support the objectives of GCI and NGC and that are open to the public.
- GCI "Garden Club of the Year" Medium: Demonstrates a broad range of club activities, District IX and GCI engagement, and overall, a well-rounded club.
- Certificate of Merit for Club Publication 1st Place: For our Hidden Gems Newsletter.
- Certificate of Merit for Social Media 2nd Place: For our Facebook page.
- Certificate of Merit for Digital Media: For the "Our Garden" photo slideshow.
- Club Achievement Gold Seal: Represents a club's activities in a variety of categories such as membership, flower show participation, civic projects and GCI donations among others.
- Club Horticulture Silver Seal: Represents a club's activities across a variety of activities specific to horticulture.
- NGC National Garden Clubs, Inc Entry: This is a certificate given to clubs in recognition of awards submitted which meet the requirements for an NGC award. Clubs do not directly submit to NGC; the GCI Awards Chairman determines which clubs are submitted to NGC for this award.

We should all be very proud of the performance of our club and the recognition at the state level and national level. This speaks to our engagement and involvement in the club collectively and individually.



Jumping Worms

by Laura Edwards, Master Gardener

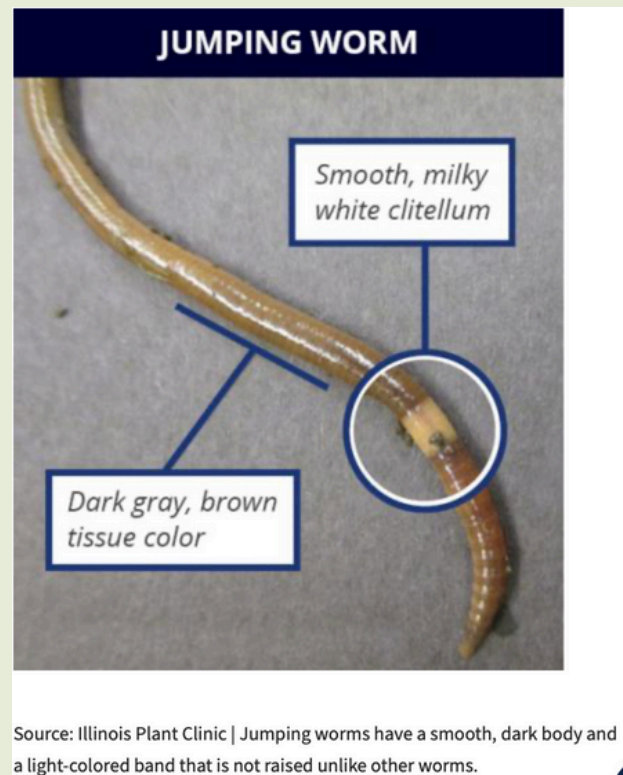
Spring is here, time to return to digging in the dirt in our gardens! Something to be on the lookout for are jumping worms. Jumping worms are an invasive species of earthworms that were first discovered in Illinois in 2015 and are found here in Lake County.

Jumping worms were named after their distinctive movement through the soil. Unlike common earthworms, the jumping worm “jumps” when disturbed. They also have distinctive physical characteristics which include a smooth dark body and a light colored band that is not raised. They are found from June until the first freeze. Dispose of them in the garbage.

Jumping worms are found in the top 3-4 inches of the mulch or leaf litter. They are found in gardens, wooded areas and lawns. Jumping worms cause damage to the roots in gardens and lawns. Chris Evans from Illinois extension describes jumping worms as being voracious eaters who destroy the soil quality. As they feed, their castings cause the soil to clump and resemble coffee grounds. These changes in the soil occur after infestation. The microscopic eggs of the worm can survive our winters.

So how do we control jumping worms? Jumping worms are spread by human movement of soil, mulch and plants. Evans suggests avoiding the spread by using heat treated compost or mulch in your gardens. Also, avoid sharing perennials from your garden with your neighbors. Proper cleaning of your garden tools is also important. Purchasing plants from garden centers is safe.

While enjoying your Spring gardening, keep an eye out for changes in your soil characteristics and jumping worms. Feel free to reach out to the Lake County Extension Master Gardener office with questions and concerns. You can submit photos or call the office for information.



For More Information:
Master Gardener Helpline

Illinois Extension - UIUC:
Jumping Worms News Release

Mother's Day Garden Gifts

Mother's Day is May 12, a lovely day when we honor the mothers and mother-figures in our lives. As gardeners, we thought we'd share some of favorite garden-themed gifts to show Mom your appreciation.



Annuals for containers and hanging baskets are a top choice. Make sure the plants chosen match the conditions in Mom's garden - need for sun or shade, final size, water needs.

Indoor plants, perennials, vegetable or annual seeds, dahlia or other summer bulbs are also great options. Again, it's important to know the destination garden = is there room for the plant? What are the conditions?

Tools and garden helpers, like kneelers, hats, and gloves are also great choices. Gardeners often misplace their trowels or wear through gloves, so extras are appreciated. Our local gardening stores have plenty of unique gardening items for special gifts. We tend to love the birds and bees visiting our flowers, so birdhouses, feeders, and birdbaths are top options as well.



Finally, what about a great gardening experience?

Mother's Day Special

Give her the gift of time, sharing a memorable day

Hidden Gems Garden Walk

June 29th, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Tour five exceptional gardens.

Artists at each site. Proceeds to civic plantings and charities.

Receive a gift certificate for purchased Mother's Day tickets with a packet of milkweed seeds.

USPS delivery; order by 5/8 for on-time delivery

Sponsored by the Town & Country Garden Club of Libertyville

For more information and link to ticket sales:

www.towncountrygardenclub.com/gardenwalk



Perennial of the Month: Lungwort

Looking for a special specimen for the shade garden? Consider lungwort, a beautiful spring bloomer with lovely foliage throughout the temperate months. Lungwort is a low-growing plant with fuzzy green speckled leaves, with early spring flowers that are bell- or funnel-shaped with five petals, usually starting out pinkish in color then maturing to a violet blue. Flower color varies by species and cultivar.



Lungwort likes mild temperatures, controlled water (not too dry, not too wet), and at least partial shade. Heavy fertilization can depress bloom production. Hardy in Zones 2-8, these plants work well with other shade plants and add brightness to dark corners of the garden. '



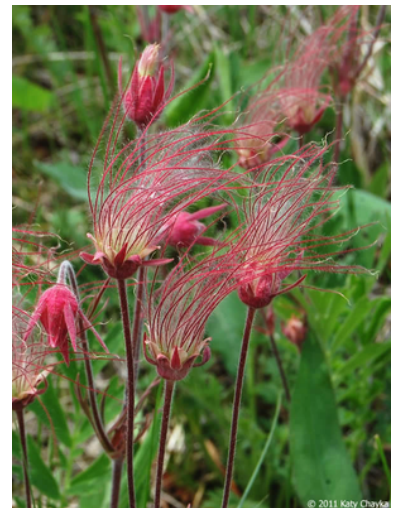
It has a moderate growth rate and the rhizomatous roots will spread gradually to colonize a shady area.

'Raspberry Splash' is a great variety with clusters of raspberry pink and soft lavender flowers, with dark green leaves speckled with silver.

For more information:
[Lungwort, Missouri Botanical Garden](#)

Native of the Month: Prairie Smoke

Prairie Smoke, or *Geum Triflorum* is an early spring-blooming perennial. It is widespread in colder and drier climates of western North America. Prairie Smoke is a low growing perennial with fern-like foliage. Its blooms are pink on upright reddish stems. After blooming, the flowers turn to a seed head that has a smoke-like appearance. Prairie smoke has many uses in the garden – as a low groundcover, rock garden, meadow, or beds and borders. Prairie Smoke is a low maintenance plant. It needs moisture when first planted, but once established it is drought tolerant. Seedheads may be dried upside down and used in dried floral arrangements.



For more information:
[Prairie Smoke, Plant finder, Missouri Botanical Garden](#)

Hidden Gems Garden Walk

The Town & Country Garden Club of Libertyville is excited to announce the 12th annual Hidden Gems Garden Walk, scheduled for June 29, 2024, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. This highly anticipated event will feature five exceptional local gardens, each uniquely curated by their proud owners and showcasing a diverse array of flora and fauna.

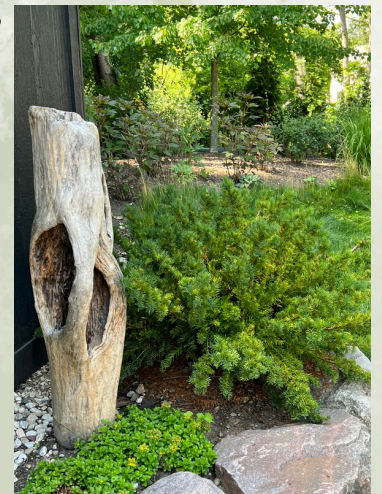
Co-chair Ann Baker is particularly pleased with this year's selection of homes. "We've had requests for homes featuring native plants, so we made sure to include gardens that incorporate native species in their landscapes," she explains. Native plants are well-suited to local climate conditions, requiring less maintenance and providing valuable habitat for wildlife. Additionally, two of our gardens feature expansive swathes of no-mow grass, a visually striking and environmentally-friendly choice, conserving water and reducing chemical usage.

Vegetable gardening was another popular request from patrons, and one garden on the tour stands out for its extensive vegetable garden and resident chickens. Visitors can marvel at raised beds of vibrant produce growing near clucking hens, showcasing the joys and rewards of homegrown food production.

"Our home selection includes small and large lots, cozy retreats, and beautifully designed spaces for outdoor entertaining," Ms. Baker adds. "Attendees will gain plenty of ideas and inspiration from the variety in this year's gardens." In addition, following last year's successful debut, artists will once again be present at each home site. These include unique wood sculptures and bowls, upcycled home and garden decor, exquisite colored pencil fine art, and intricate illustrated nature drawings.

Participants in the Hidden Gems Garden Walk will travel between homes by car for a convenient and leisurely experience. Tickets for the event can be purchased online, at all the June Thursdays Farmers' Market, or at the Libertyville Village Hall. Please note that ticket sales are capped this year to ensure the best possible experience for all attendees; be sure to check the event website and Facebook page for updates on availability. The event will take place rain or shine - dress for the weather and bring water.

Proceeds from the Hidden Gems Garden Walk go towards scholarships, civic plantings, and local charities, making this a truly enriching and impactful event for the Libertyville community. Don't miss your chance to explore these hidden treasures and be inspired by the creative and beautiful gardens.



Spring Garden Recipe:

Asparagus Soup with Lemon and Parmesan

Copyright © Once Upon a Chef
Recipe [HERE](#)

Servings: 4-6

INGREDIENTS

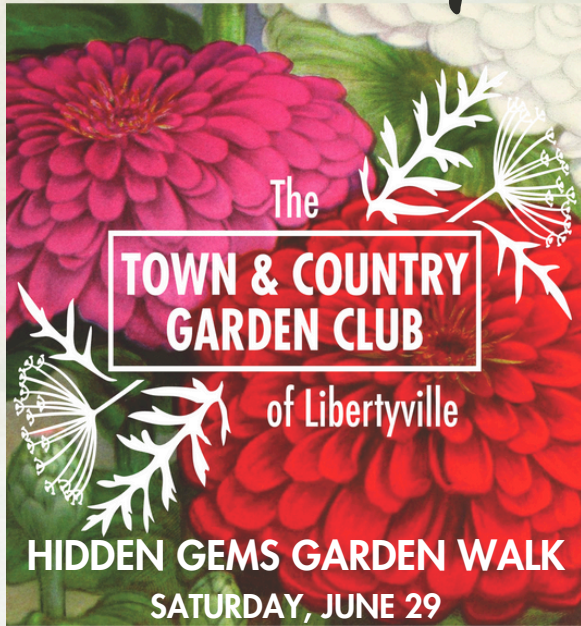
- 2 bunches asparagus (about 2¼ pounds), bottom ends trimmed
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 medium yellow onions, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
- 6 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice, from one lemon
- ½ cup shredded Parmigiano-Reggiano
- Handful fresh herbs, such as thyme, dill or basil (optional, for garnish)



Garden asparagus are poking up for spring harvest. Here's a way to enjoy this seasonal abundance!

1. Melt the butter in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onions and garlic and cook, stirring frequently, until soft and translucent, about 8 minutes.
2. Cut the tips off of one bunch of the asparagus and set aside for garnish. Cut the remaining spears into ½-inch pieces.
3. Add the chopped asparagus to the pot (minus the reserved tips), along with the chicken broth, 1 teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Bring to a boil, then cover and turn the heat down to low. Simmer for about 30 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, bring a small pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the reserved asparagus tips for a few minutes, or until tender-crisp. Drain the tips and then place them in a bowl of ice water. When cool, drain and set aside.
5. Purée the soup with an immersion blender until completely smooth.
4. Bring the soup back to a simmer and stir in the lemon juice and Parmigiano-Reggiano. Taste and adjust seasoning. To thicken the soup, allow it to simmer, uncovered, until the desired consistency is reached.
5. Ladle the soup into bowls, then top each bowl with asparagus tips, Parmigiano-Reggiano, herbs, and freshly ground black pepper.

Upcoming Events



June 29th

Five exceptional gardens

Meet the gardeners and be inspired by unique designs and specimens. Native beds, vegetable gardens, large & small lots.

Nature themed artists exhibit and sell work at each site

Tickets on sale NOW online

In person June Thursdays at Libertyville Farmers' market

University of Illinois
Extension Master Gardeners

PLANT SALE

Saturday, May 18, 2024
9 am to 2 pm

Featuring a beautiful selection of nursery grown plant varieties not readily available in garden centers. This year, we are increasing the number of plants available but **come early – these plants will go quickly!**

- Natives, New Cultivars of Perennials, Grasses, Pollinator-Friendly Plants
- Vegetables, Herbs
- Garden Treasures
- Garden Advice from Master Gardeners

All Proceeds Support Extension Projects for
Volunteers, Youth, Adults

Source for plant information: Missouri Botanic Garden Plant Finder, Chicago Botanic Garden Plant Finder, Midwest Groundcovers



**Rain or Shine
Cash, Check or Charge**

Extension Grounds:
100 South US Hwy 45
Grayslake, IL 60030
847-223-8627

The Gardeners of Central Lake County's garden club Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, May 11 from 8:30-11:00 am
Location: Crawford Warming House. 817 Lake Street.
Libertyville, IL

Offering local plants grown by seed or propagation by club members.

CASH OR CHECK. Rain or shine Club fundraiser to support our maintenance of the Libertyville Cook Park Rose Garden, free gardening programs, and community events.

Spring Compost

Giveback/Giveaway

Wednesday, May 8, 2024

11:00 am to 3:00 pm

University of Illinois Extension 100 US 45, Grayslake, IL



[Click HERE](#) for more details