



# Evergreen Garden Club

## The Wild Iris

Volume 18, Issue 9 November 2005

### *A Word from the Presidents...*

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#### EGC 2005-2006 Board Members Presidents:

Jean Todd  
Meredith Bossert

#### Vice Presidents:

Kathi Grider  
Nan Spence

#### Secretary:

Chris Gray

#### Treasurer:

Priscilla Chapin

What a festive table and food we had for our October meeting. It certainly set the mood for the upcoming Halloween. Jo, those disembodied "fingers" were incredible! Thanks to all who contributed.

This fit right in with our speaker, Ann Ripley, an author of garden-themed murder mysteries, who presented a unique and very entertaining program. Judging from the response of our group, we have several budding authors among us.

Thank you to Joan Reynolds for pinch-hitting as secretary-of-the-day for Chris Gray, who is traveling.

And thank you to Trish Scott, Lori Lapp, and Karen McFarquhar who volunteered last month to head up the plant sale. This is a huge job. Please respond when they ask for help. Speaking of the plant sale, please keep it in mind as you divide your perennials this fall. Our biggest selling point is that these plants have actually grown in our area. This sale provides a great deal of the money that we donate for scholarships.

As Irma Wolf mentioned at our last meeting, some of our community gardens need more work on a regular basis, such as monthly. Please consider what you can do for our community gardens next spring and call Irma Wolf (303-670-3402) to volunteer. Thank you, Irma, for coordinating this significant community project. We know you have put in hours of work.

Jean and I are both impressed by the number of volunteers who keep this club and its many projects functioning. This kind of group culture will keep the Evergreen Garden Club contributing to the community of Evergreen for a long time to come. Hopefully, for another 40 years. Remember, your help is valuable, no matter how small or large your contribution.

All Aboard for train and garden buffs on November 8 as we embark on a journey thru some of Denver's miniature garden railways.  
Meredith

The **Wild Iris** is a free monthly publication for members of the Evergreen Garden Club.

**Meetings** are held on the second Tuesday of the month from Sept. to June at Church of the Hills, Buffalo Park Rd, Evergreen at 9:15 am. All are welcome.

For **membership** information please contact Priscilla Chapin at 303-697-4140 or Pris4430@aol.com

**Newsletter Contributions** are due by the 20th of each month to Karla Briggs at karla@tuppersteam.com

**Newsletter Editor & Website**  
Beth Feldkamp 303-679-9465  
brucebethf@yahoo.com

### *Membership Meeting - November 8, 2005*

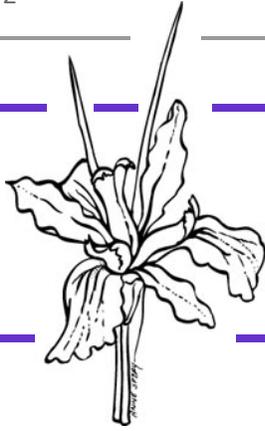
#### *All Aboard!*

Travel through miniature landscapes where parsley serves as trees and sweet alyssum becomes hedges. **Al Blount**, President of the **Denver Garden Railway Society** and Master Gardener and Society member **Nancy Ditman** will conduct us through a slide presentation of garden railways in the Denver area. Invite both garden and railroad enthusiasts to join us on board for a

fascinating journey!

See you at 9:15 am at Church of the Hills on Buffalo Park Rd. Remember to bring your plants & cuttings for the World Gardening table, and your coffee mug.

See you there!



# Garden Club News

**WELCOME!!! New Members: Dianne Bozarth, Nana Kurtz, Nickie Meinert, Karen Rawson, Rebecca Swain**

## *Minutes of the October 11, 2005 Meeting*

Co-President Jean Todd called the meeting to order at 9:35 AM. Treasurer, Priscilla Chapin reported that we had \$266.39 in checking & \$9213.74 in savings. The minutes of September's meeting were approved as printed in the Wild Iris.

Joan Reynolds (acting Secretary) announced that Sandee Ball had recently undergone surgery & that a Get Well card was on the World Gardening table for those that know her to sign.

The clean up of the Club's gardens was then discussed. Peggy & Dale Fetchenhier reported that the Dam garden had received weekly care until mid-July, when their efforts moved to the new Garden at their Church. Peggy thanked Karla Briggs for the flattering article in the Wild Iris & commented that Tupper & Karla had worked a great deal on the Lutheran Church garden as well. Peggy commented that the elk had become troublesome in the past few weeks, eating one of the Ginella Maples, the roses, and several other things. Peggy felt there had been an adequate number of volunteers to help on clean up day; she & Dale will return to add netting & compost to the roses & other final chores. Dale reported that they will announce in May what day of the week volunteers can plan to help throughout the summer at this garden.

Louise Mounsey reported that there was not enough help at the Post Office. Louise needs more help. The elk had been eating a great deal & she had gotten a former member to help her on clean up day, but felt that it still wasn't adequate. 'Long, skinny' did not get completed, but she said that "mahonia" looked fantastic. Karla reported that the oval garden was doing great, despite some neglect & lack of water throughout the summer. She attributed this to the super-amended soil. She plans to bring in more compost this fall.

Tricia Scott reported that the Evergreen Metro planters had been weeded well and that more plants were needed to add to the one bed that had flooded. The volunteers that worked there went to the Post Office following completion of their garden.

Jeri Dufford announced that the Library garden was looking good. She felt that the letter from the Library complaining about adequate upkeep was undeserved. She volunteers at the Library weekly & brought her tools with her, only to discover that it was already weeded. Evidently, there is a Master Gardener that works at the Library as well and this kind person took it upon herself to neaten the garden up. This created a misunderstanding that the Garden Club was not doing its job. Ken has talked to the Library and is working out the problem. Also, brochures are in the works for this garden, with the Library agreeing to pay a portion of the costs for printing. Jeri will find out more about the actual number regarding the brochures and report back.

Nan Spence reported that the herb garden at Hiwan Homestead was spruced up & that the flower garden had grown a good many dandelions since the last major cleanup prior to the Arts Festival. Irma Wolf reported that she had drafted extra help for the traffic circle and that it still needs additional work. She explained the difficulty in getting water to the site, but commented that it is doing well even with very limited watering.

*(Continued on pg. 3)*

*(Continued from Minutes pg. 2)*

The proposed budget for 2005-2006 was discussed. Questions regarding the cost of brochures for the Library arose and it was decided to table the approval of the budget until we had some firm numbers from the Library about how much their brochures would cost and how much they intend to pay for.

Nan Spence reported that Indian Hills Nursery (one of our Business Sponsors) is having a sale on Aspens & Shrubs & Bushes. She also reported that Evergreen Garden Center would soon be starting classes.

Joan Reynolds reported that Evergreen Trout Unlimited is hosting an evening with John Fielder on Nov. 12 at the Evergreen Methodist Church. She had some tickets at \$10.00 each with her if anyone was interested.

Irma Wolf reported that she had drafted extra help for the traffic circle and that it still needs additional work. She explained the difficulty in getting water to the site, but commented that it is doing well even with very limited watering.

Nan reported that next month we will take a garden 'trip' via a power point presentation, visiting Railroad Gardens. She also said that more information regarding transportation for the December trip to the Denver Botanical Gardens will be available.

Jean asked if anyone had a shredder to shred old Garden Club Membership Booklets. Several volunteers stepped up.

Tricia Scott told us that she would be ordering EGC work shirts and asked that anyone interested contact her with their order. Door prizes were drawn including 2 hardback books donated by our speaker, Ann Ripley.

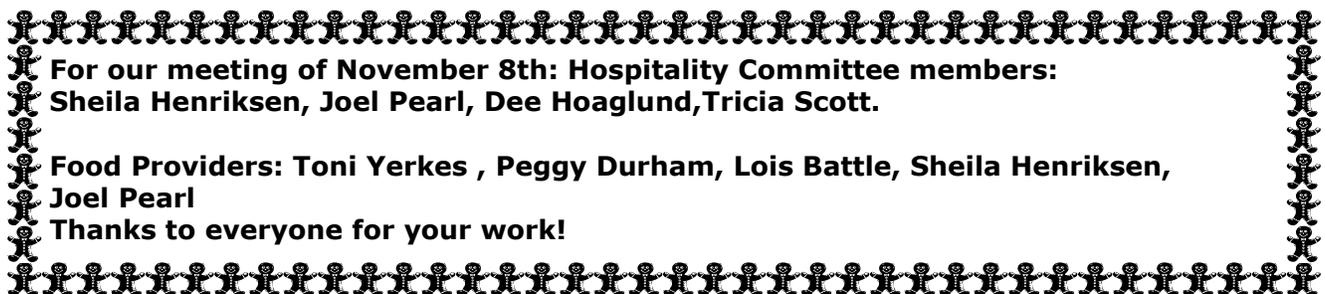
We took a break for snacks & enjoyed the lovely decorations that the hospitality committee had provided to move us into the fall season mood.

Next, our speaker, Ann Ripley was introduced. She is the author of 9 published garden mystery books. She regaled us with fascinating stories about her methods of researching her books and was a delight to everyone. We were all laughing as she entertained us and graciously took many questions from the membership. One quote that summed up her fun loving and spirited attitude was, 'Once you write in fiction, eccentricity is more accepted.' Her books in order of publication are: *Mulch, Death of a Garden Pest, Death of a Political Plant, Garden Tour Affair, The Perennial Killer, Harvest of a Murder, The Christmas Garden Affair, Death of the Spring Plant Sale, and Summer Garden Murder.* Ann has one more book ready for print that will be released next year. She had a great time researching it in Hawaii.

The members thoroughly enjoyed her anecdotes and after her presentation, she had many books for sale, at a discount price that were quickly all purchased.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Reynolds





*By Julaine Kennedy*

## Over The Garden Fence

### ***The Tale of Two Peaches***

Many of you have heard about our peach tree. This misfit has had its greatest year ever. This is a case of the wrong plant, in the wrong place and the efforts of the gardener and the tree to overcome plant problems.

We inherited the peach tree along with some apple trees when we purchased our current home in 1991. It was not a priority to find an Evergreen home with fruit trees. For a couple of seasons we didn't pay much attention to them. It was the single paned windows, an old furnace and water heater that got our attention. I remember fondly my first spring on Ponderosa Drive. EGC paid me a surprise visit. I was overwhelmed by their generosity and interest in nurturing me along with compost and member's pass-along plants.



We loved the lay of the land and the abundant sunshine. Rhubarb and strawberries grew near the driveway, and lilac bushes and conifers peppered the one-acre site. Efforts by former owners to preserve the meadow as well as to create purposeful urban garden space and a functional outdoor living area fit with our lifestyle. There was minimal critter damage to plant material back then. A few branches would be indiscriminately pruned over the winter. Beginning in the spring and late into fall the meadow treated us with an abundance indigenous plant material. There always was color and interest. The fruit trees got watered a bit more even though they were way out in the NW

corner of our lot.

When time permitted Bob began to take out bridge timbers and build terraced rock walls around the brick patio. His eye was on those fruit trees as he created the new gardens. Getting water to them was a real effort. They all survived their first transplant into the top terrace and we believed we had saved them for posterity. The next spring we missed one of several feathermeal + Bobbex applications. I imagined the critters watching from behind the neighbor's bushes. "Ah ha, Free Food Tonight at the Kennedy's." They ate branches and some cases chomped off the top 2/3rds of a tree over the course of 3 years.

Looking back over the last nine years it was difficult to choose between garden preservation and our love of seeing beautiful wild creatures in our neighborhood. Keep in mind that it wasn't just the fruit trees that were damaged. It was all those lost tulip blooms, dozens of early flowering perennials and bushes that we never saw their Spring Show. We are very pleased that we agreed to install the deer fence in 2003. The beauty of the present gardens inside the fence and the remaining natural meadow is worth it.

The patio gardens continued to evolve with Bob's rockwork. With progress came the need for more plants to relocate; often healed in for a season or two in a temporary plot. The apple trees died but the peach pushed a bit of lopsided unnatural growth each season. One industrious summer Bob built flagstone steps and the peach had to be relocated. It was a gamble, hot weather and the tree was leafed out. We slipped it into the new hole, roots looked healthy and we watered in with a kelp solution for several weeks.

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*(Continued from pg. 4 Over the Garden Fence)*

By summer's end, it was still 'with us'. I loved those flagstone steps that carried us to the top of the garden. "Bob, do you think you could continue across the gardens with a path?" "Well, we will need to relocate The Peach Tree." We were sure we heard the tree's leaves shudder!!! That became its second move in four months.

Maintenance for that tree really became a priority from that time forward. Each spring at the right time the tree got a pruning. We were much more vigilant about the plant food nutrients and water requirements.

The spring of 2004 was early in terms warm weather and we witnessed the first blooms. Weather conditions didn't cooperate beyond the heat that produced the blooms in April. Can you imagine our surprise in June to find a couple of small peaches growing? Daily reports on their progress became a ritual for us. Then one day late in August Bob left me a note that the peaches were gone... something/one had taken them!! It was devastating!!! We knew those two peaches were never going to mature and ripen that season, but to be plucked off was a great disappointment

Immediately, hope for next year's crop began growing. Our wish to harvest mature fruit was intense. Keep doing all the right things was our game plan. Seasonal watering, fertilization and spring pruning were all we could do. Weather is always tricky but spring came late enough to allow for another good bloom. When major weather changes were in the forecast, we foliar sprayed the tree with kelp water but didn't expect much fruiting because of several cold nights during May.

By mid June we had over 22 peaches hanging on for the big harvest. For us it seemed that the daily peach report was more important than national news. Even the August heat and mild evening temperatures favored a successful harvest. Can you imagine seeing your own peaches with the first blush of maturity? We could see it from the dining room table. Gosh, it was wonderful to have such a small treasure as peach blush bring joy to me in the heightened awareness of our nation's problems.

From that point on it was a waiting game to see if the weather would hold out to allow natural ripening. The watch of the peaches became more important. Nightly raccoon visits became an issue, but we felt the riper fruit was out of their reach. We were down to about 15 good peaches. Daytime and nighttime temperatures were crucial. Just a few more days would probably improve the juicy sweet taste.

The second week into October Bob and I sat at the dining room table enjoying coffee and discussing the morning news. I looked out the window, sun shining on the gardens. The cosmos' fuchsia brilliance caught my eye. I glanced up at the peach tree. The blush was gone. The two prized peaches were gone. THEY had mastered their challenge!! All that was left was the pits. "It's the pits!" Boy that phrase has real meaning to us now. The remaining edible peaches were delicious. I licked slurpy sweet juice from my hands and arms not wanting to miss one scent and taste. It was worth all the time and energy.

It is a new season for the peach tree. We are ready. Mountain gardening brings with it the highs and lows, but also the challenge that some of us love to experience. Sometime it works, sometimes it doesn't. "Maybe it's sweet rewards or maybe next time".

P.S. On the night of October 20<sup>th</sup> two females and one young bull elk closely challenged the deer fence perimeter and found their way under a small weak spot in our construction. It's Fall you know, their time to beef up for the winter. They enjoyed the last remnants of fresh and tender branches, leaves and flowers through out the east gardens. They were surprised to find Bob furiously waving them toward an exit and left far to many droppings and trampled plants. Challenge can build persistence and excellence.

We are Ready!

## HORTICULTURE

### AUTUMN IN THE COLORADO GARDEN

*By Nan Spence Evergreen Garden Club*

Autumn is glorious yet bittersweet in the Colorado garden. The intense summer heat is past; the air is cooler and crisp. Planting beds, mature and mellow, are now set against a brilliant backdrop of golden aspen. Native shrubs in autumn hues mingle with evergreens against the deep blue sky. Despite this time of breathtaking beauty, we know that the growing season is coming to an end and that months will pass before a new one begins.

There is much to do in the flower garden in fall. Transplanting, planting, cleaning out old beds, preparing spring beds, pruning and providing protection against the coming cold months are just a few of the tasks gardeners can perform at this time of year. What you actually do and what you put off until spring, is determined by your particular garden, your gardening style and how much time and enthusiasm you have left at this time of year.

#### ADD FALL INTEREST

Autumn is the time to take a critical look at your garden and to take action to assure that it will continue to look good for the remainder of the season and into the next growing season. Many local gardens are quite beautiful in late June or early July, but appear dull and faded once late August and September arrive. If this is true for your garden, it is not too late to add some fall pizzazz. Set out ice pansies, ornamental kale and cabbages, asters and hardy mums - either directly in flowerbeds or into container gardens to replace spent annuals. Watch the thermometer. We often have a brief cold spell at this time of year followed by many weeks of warm weather. You can extend the growing season of your new plants and other autumn bloomers much longer if you provide protection during these brief cold periods. Place gardening sheets over beds and plant in lightweight containers or in planters with wheels so that you can easily move your plants inside until the warm autumn weather returns.

#### FALL PLANTING

Autumn is a great time for planting. The soil is still warm from the hot summer sun. This enables the roots of perennials that are planted now to continue to grow until the soil temperature reaches approximately 40°F thus gaining a head start on the next growing season. (This being said, there are some plants that should not be planted in our area in autumn because they need the long hot days of summer to establish. These include agastaches, many types of salvia, some penstemons and some aster varieties). An application of a mild granular fertilizer or compost to both new fall plantings and existing plants will allow the nutrients to sink down into the soil during the months ahead and be available for the plants to take up in early spring.

Whether you plant now or wait until spring, plan to use more late-season bloomers such as coneflower, coreopsis, gaillardia, aster, rubeckia and buddleia. Consider adding native shrubs in and around the outer edges of your existing gardens. Rocky mountain maple, curl-leaf mountain mahogany, rabbit bush, red twig dogwood, golden currant and rocky mountain thimbleberry are among the many natives that will provide great texture in the spring and summer and add stunning color in the fall. If you haven't already done so, add our native aspen to your landscape. Hard to establish in Colorado gardens at lower elevations, aspen, if provided with supplemental water during the first few growing seasons, will thrive in most Evergreen area gardens. Each autumn you will be rewarded, in brilliant gold, many times over for your efforts.

#### PLANTING BULBS

After the soil temperature drops to 60°F, plant bulbs for next spring and summer bloom. Try thinking beyond tulips (a preferred delicacy for deer and elk) and daffodils. Think galanthus, Siberian squill, chionodoxa, and fritillaria - all beautiful small bulbs that planted in abundance give a wildflower look to your Colorado garden. All are deer resistant, although some small rodents such as voles may find them tasty. To prevent bulbs from being eaten, plant them in groups enclosed in hardware cloth baskets that can be purchased commercially or make your own enclosures out of chicken wire. This does not protect the plant once it emerges however. Although there are commercial or homemade rodent deterrents you can try, I find that the only sure way I can achieve abundant sweeps of color in my spring bulb beds is by over planting. Bulbs (especially the small "wildflower" types) should be planted in the hundreds to look their best, especially the smaller wildflower varieties. Bulb fertilizer should be placed in each planting hole and added to the existing bulb beds at this time.

*(Continued on pg. 7)*

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*(Continued from Horticulture pg.6)*

#### MULCHING, WATERING AND SOWING SEEDS

New perennials and bulbs should be mulched with a thin layer of organic material at the time of planting. After the first few inches of soil are frozen, usually sometime in December, a thicker layer of mulch should be put down throughout your garden. The additional mulch will serve to protect the plants against frost heaving. This extra layer of mulch needs to be removed in the spring in order allow the sun to warm the plants and to allow for the air circulation necessary for healthy new growth.

Fall is the season to slack off on watering, but not completely. Turf grass, shrubs and trees, especially young plants and those with shallow root systems, need to receive water throughout the winter. Lack of winter moisture is the demise of many trees and shrubs in our area. Monitor weather conditions and water during extended dry periods of approximately one month without snow cover. Water when the air temperature is above freezing and early in the day so that the water will have time to soak in before possible nighttime freezing.

Nature sows seeds in autumn and winter and so should you. Wildflower and ornamental perennial seeds can be gathered when ready and sowed now or during the winter months ahead. You can also let the seedheads remain on the plants to self-sow. Sowing seeds immediately before or after a snowfall or at both times has worked well for me. Many of my perennial gardens and all of my native wildflower areas have been started from seed sown during fall and winter months.

#### WEEDING AND FALL CLEAN UP

One last weeding will help to improve the appearance of your garden throughout the remaining months of autumn. In addition, any weed that you can eliminate now will prevent possibly hundreds of weeds from sprouting in your garden next spring.

Flower gardeners have different opinions on the subject of cutting back perennials at the end of the season. Some prefer the neatness of a bare winter landscape or believe that decaying plant material can cause mold and other fungal diseases and harbors over-wintering garden pests. Others, myself included, feel that ornamental grasses and plants with sturdy stems and seedheads provide autumn and winter interest. Silhouetted against the snow, these dead plant materials can create magnificent winterscapes. More important, however, is the fact that the seed heads of many perennials, including coneflowers and sunflowers, provide food for fall migrating and wintering birds. Not cutting back plants in the fall is also good for the health of the garden, as this foliage will provide protection against desiccation and frost heave in the coming winter months. The old growth will also serve to shelter the succulent new growth from the frenzy of early spring feeding by deer, elk and other critters. So, except for removing any plant material that appears to be diseased, I do very little fall clean up in my perennial gardens.

#### PRUNING AND PROTECTING TREES AND SHRUBS

Pruning of dormant trees and shrubs can be done at anytime when the temperature is above 0° F. This gives a long timeframe to complete any pruning tasks and also gives you a reason to be out in the garden on the many glorious winter days we experience in Evergreen. Right now, however, is the time to get out there to protect the trunks of trees against winter scald and from antler rubbing by deer and elk. Tree wrap will help with both. For trees that are not subject to winter scald, either because they are planted in a northern, sheltered location or by their light trunk color (aspen), enclosing the trunk up to about six feet in heavy plastic netting or chicken wire will prevent damage by ungulates. I also place bird netting over young shrubs from October to May when deer and elk take up residence in my gardens. Older plantings that tend to be less tasty and which are in need of pruning anyway are fair browse for the herds. I do monitor how much of each shrub has been "pruned," and add netting when I want the browsing on that particular plant to cease. (I admit I usually need to do a little additional aesthetic shaping after the hoofed garden helpers have completed their pruning!)

There are other garden chores to be accomplished during the months of autumn such as cleaning and storing garden tools and equipment, bringing in planters or décor which could be damaged by frost, draining hoses, cleaning out gutters, hardscape projects, ordering next year's plants and many more. No matter what garden tasks you decide to undertake, remember to take time to reflect on the joy and other immeasurable rewards that gardening brings to you and to dream of an even more wondrous experiences in your garden next season. Take the time, also, to observe the glorious natural environment that surrounds our Colorado gardens.

# Evergreen Garden Club

PO Box 1393

Evergreen, Colorado 80437

[www.evergreengardenclub.org](http://www.evergreengardenclub.org)



*Celebrating our  
40th Anniversary*

## Denver Botanic Gardens Schedule of Events

[www.botanicgardens.org](http://www.botanicgardens.org)

### **Artists of Colorado Exhibit**

Nov. 8, 2005, Mitchell Hall, 1-5 p.m.

Nov. 9-14, 2005, Mitchell Hall, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Contact for Show: Sandra VanDam 303-438-0441**

### **Holiday Sale**

Friday, Nov. 18, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 19, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 20, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Shoppers yearning for an alternative to the mall's usual offerings will find a cornucopia of one-of-a-kind gifts at Denver Botanic Gardens' 42nd Annual Holiday Sale. Dozens of vendors will be selling botanical artwork, jewelry, natural skincare products, home accents, clothing, handcrafted items and more!