



# Evergreen Garden Club

## The Wild Iris

Volume 18, Issue 13 September 2006

### *A Word from the President...*

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

Nan Spence

#### **Vice Presidents:**

Chris Gray

Sheila Henriksen

#### **Secretary:**

Kim Stark

#### **Treasurer:**

Priscilla Chapin

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 Prisc4430@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  
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Although summer is often thought of as a hiatus from the garden club, many members have been quite active in club activities these past months.

On June 3, our biennial plant sale was a huge success due to the hard work of all on the plant sale committee under the guidance of Trish Scott. On June 8-10, over two dozen members joined in to plant our new FireWise Garden. On June 13, more than thirty of us ventured up to the Betty Ford Alpine Gardens in Vail for a private tour of the gardens followed by a lovely picnic lunch where Diana Donovan treated us to a delicious rhubarb dessert made from her mother's, Louise Mounsey, famous recipe.

Our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tea took place on June 25<sup>th</sup>. Although the tea was held to honor past Presidents, it had a profound effect on your current President. Meeting the former Presidents was both inspirational and emotional. On the drive home I made a strong commitment - witnessed by the woman and child who are exquisitely portrayed on our President's Statue - that I was going to work hard in tribute to those who held this office before me.

Our club activities did not end in June. Many members worked throughout the summer, not only in the FireWise Garden, but in the other gardens as well. As a result, our community garden program continues to grow as a source of pride for our club and our community.

On August 5<sup>th</sup>, we participated in the Mountain Heritage Festival. Summer weekends are precious, so I really appreciated that six members volunteered to represent our club in this new community event. Also in August, the Garden Tour Committee logged many miles on mountain

### *September 12, 2006 Wildflowers, wildflowers, wildflowers!*

Come hear Irene Shonle, Director of CSU Cooperative Extension in Gilpin County, tell us how to collect and sow wildflower seeds. Irene has her own garden at 9,300 ft. Here is a gardener who knows and understands the problems of high altitude gardening.

The meeting begins at 9:30 am at the Fire & Rescue Station in Bergen Park. Remember to bring your plants, cuttings, pots, etc. for the World Gardening Table...and your coffee mug. See you there!

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# Garden Club News

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*Welcome new members!!!!*

Kathy Anderson, Cheryl Touryan, Nina Moran and Mona Bedell

*(Continued from President's message pg. 1)*

Roads, or as Irma put it, "Mr. Toad's Wild Ride" ). The eighteen gardens we visited were varied and beautiful. The selection committee was discerning and discriminating. (And great fun to be with.) I think you will love the gardens we selected.

As the summer wore down, on August 22, a small group of us enjoyed an outing to Nancy Dittman's garden in Littleton. After getting to know each other a bit better over an al fresco lunch, we headed off to Hudson Gardens. The sun was wicked, but the blossoms were breathtaking, so we did not mind getting a bit wilted.

I regret that I do not have enough space to individually thank each of you who were involved in these activities or who were working on other garden club activities throughout the summer. Please know that your efforts are appreciated by me, as well as all in our organization. It has become apparent to me in my very short time as President, that our club's longevity and success is due to the extraordinary dedication and hard work of its individual members.

Thank you to all. I am proud to be your new president. And I am looking forward to the year ahead.  
Nan Spence



Nan Spence, Liz Hamilton, and Irma Wolf at the Heritage Festival.

## **Volunteers Needed For Sept. 16 FireWise Garden Display**

On September 16, we will be part of Evergreen Fire Rescue's annual Fire Safety Day.

We will be assisting our new meeting room host in the display of the new FireWise Garden at the front entry to the Training and Administration Building. Although the new garden will not be dedicated next spring, we will have FireWise garden and landscape literature to pass out along with information about the Evergreen Garden Club and our community garden projects.

We need volunteers for assist with this display. We anticipate that we will need three shifts of two people each. If you would like to take part, please contact Nan Spence at 303 674-4595 or [nmspence@att.net](mailto:nmspence@att.net) to sign up or for more information.



Two years ago I received this plant as a gift, but there was no tag. The person who gave it to me didn't know either. I have wondered about it ever since.....fortunately when I was at Jan Shoonveld's house, lo and behold she had one like it! It's a Streptocarpus. I still had trouble finding information about it, but apparently belongs to the African Violet family. I'm so thrilled to finally know!

Thanks Jan!!

Beth

If you have any mysterious plants, or other plant questions, please send them to the Wild Iris and maybe the club can solve the mystery!!



This following photo was taken at the Brenneman's Produce. Vicky Brenneman had just sliced open a tomato and what she discovered is recorded here. Vicky, realizing what it looked like, stopped slicing and saved it for all to see. Now, admit it -- isn't this nice to see something simple like this to uplift our lives and make us smile? Surely beats the heck out of some of those other "images" that make the news.



## Over The Garden Fence

*By Karla Briggs*

We have had many requests for a reprint of Karla's 40th Anniversary Party Speech. It bears repeating!! Many thanks Karla, our garden hats are off to you!!!

Welcome to Evergreen Garden Club's 40th anniversary. I am Karla Briggs.

In the early 1940's when Irving Antweiler brought his Iowa bride, Gertie, home to his family's farm on Blue Creek in Evergreen, Colorado, she took one look around and announced that "this is NOT farming, there is NO soil".

And so it was the cry of every transplant to this rocky, dry, cold environment: how does one garden here? From those early inquiries the Evergreen Garden Club was born, created in an attempt to help those that came from a more hospitable gardening climate, which is just about anywhere.

Elsie Steffen wrote at the occasion of the club's 20th anniversary that... "This is the way I remember it all beginning. I was a member of Mile Hi Corsage and Arrangers Club in Denver and I kept my membership in that club for some time. I got to thinking how nice it would be to have a club up here and I felt there surely were other women who would enjoy it too. One day in talking with Gretchen Stoepelwerth, whose husband was the pastor of our church, I said why can't we have a garden club in Evergreen? She said, good idea, why don't you start one? I said, your come into contact with more people than I do, I think you should do it. She consented to try and with the enthusiasm and energy those of us who knew her remember so well she soon interested a group of women. She and Louise also had both belonged to garden clubs before they moved to Evergreen. They asked the Newcomers Club for help and they promised to help the new club in the way of publicity. Louise was also a member of the American Legion and that group was interested in getting some group to take over the planting at the American Legion memorial at the cemetery so they helped with publicity, as did Mr. Owen Ball of the Canyon Courier." And so it began.

The mission statement that these pioneers adopted is still our mission today – Evergreen Garden Club is a charitable and educational organization focusing on mountain horticulture and conservation of natural resources.

In the beginning, the club met in the community room at the Public Service building on Highway 74. They then moved to the basement of the Church of the Hills on Buffalo Park Road and, beginning next September, the club will meet at its new location at the Evergreen Fire and Rescue Facility in Bergen Park. Along the way, meetings, programs and celebrations were also held in the living rooms and gardens of the members. At every gathering two things were guaranteed: gardening talk and good food. Today will be no exception.

The club's first community garden was the memorial garden planted around the American Legion's memorial at the Evergreen cemetery. Elsie mentions in her memoir that the club struggled to keep the plants watered and ultimately that garden was sadly abandoned because of that lack of water.

Another of the club's first community gardens was a planter box smack dab in the middle of the intersection of Highway 74 and 73 in downtown Evergreen. The planter was built by the Elks Club and planted and maintained by the Evergreen Garden Club. Unfortunately, the planter was frequently used as a directional aid by the patrons of the Red Ram, now the Little Bear--they would hit the planter and whichever way their car bounced, that was the way home. That garden has since been replaced by concrete barriers and a stop light.

A small but interesting community garden was located at the Evergreen Artists Gallery along Bear Creek. The gallery was part of the Seven Falls Hotel which was notorious for housing ladies of the evening. The Evergreen National Bank Drive-up window sits at that spot today. Money still changes hands, but on a more legitimate basis.

The garden here at the Hiwan Homestead was developed with period plants used in the Victorian Era as well as plants used for medicinal purposes at that time. Today this garden also has plants that are deer and elk resistant.

In 1985, a memorial garden was planted at Church of the Hills in memory of Mary Johnston, a past president of Evergreen Garden Club and member of that church.

*(Continued on pg. 5)*

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

The Evergreen Metro Water District Garden was constructed in 1991 at the request of the EMWD. The garden's primary focus is to provide a Xeriscape demonstration of water-thrifty plans suitable to the mountain community. It is by far the best dam garden in Evergreen.

In the new millennium the Evergreen Library garden was constructed to help educate the community about landscape horticulture for this elevation.

In 2002, the Bergen Park Traffic Circle garden was adopted by the club. The garden's xeriscape plants survived the drought and traffic conditions not unlike our first downtown garden.

Also in 2002, the Evergreen Post Office Garden was re-acquired through a generous donation from an anonymous donor.

In 2004, raised bed gardens were started at the Evergreen Metro District offices on Stagecoach Blvd. The project was an exchange for the water source to the Bergen Park Traffic Circle garden.

Our most recent garden was just planted this month at the Evergreen Fire and Rescue Facility in Bergen Park. The garden features fire-wise plantings and also provides the club with our new meeting place.

Gardening in Evergreen continues to evolve. There is still little soil, less water, and something our forbearers didn't have to deal with: deer and elk. 40 years ago they truly were the illusive Wapiti; today they are an integral part of our community.

Something that hasn't changed since our early days is the club's commitment to our youth and the gardening community outside of our boundaries. The club's nearly 40 year relationship with Forest Heights Lodge is celebrated each December. The boys who reside at the lodge receive a BIG cookie and plant to nurture. The club continues to donate to the World Gardening Fund. We buy each others, plants, books and other gardening paraphernalia and the money is distributed to countries around the world to purchase seeds and tools.

In 2001, the Evergreen Garden Club scholarship was created in cooperation with the Evergreen Bootstraps Scholarship Organization. Funds for the scholarship are earned through our semi-annual garden tour and plant sale.

The club still meets the second Tuesday of the month and our newsletter the "Wild Iris" continues to inform, educate and entertain us. In 2001, the club got technologically with it when our Website was created and the Wild Iris went online. We continue to combine our efforts with other community clubs and organizations. Each spring and fall large numbers of us can be seen working in the community gardens. Usually we are bent over at the waist and our rear ends are sticking way up in the air. Friendships continue to be made among our members. We continue to love and support one another, celebrate our joys, and mourn our sorrows. We share our plants and knowledge with one another and swear that next year we will have the answer to the query, "what plants will the elk not eat"? We know what the all the members of our club over the years have known, gardeners are good people.

Ken Ball was our club's president in 2000-2001. His gift to the club that year was a sculpture he made called "Flowers for a Friend". The name plates on the base of the sculpture have the names and years served of all our presidents. The sculpture is nomadic and lives in the home of the current president. Today the sculpture will go home to live with Nan Spence our president for 2006-2007.

The president's sculpture, yearbooks, scrapbooks and newsletters are on display. Please take a look and share a moment of our past with us.

The refreshments are provided by our members, please enjoy them.

We are grateful to our founding members for their vision, commitment and love of all things gardening.

Today my hope for our Evergreen community is that she never knows a time without her garden club, that our gardens and our people continue our mission for another 40 years.

Thank you.

At this time we would like to acknowledge the past presidents and founding members in attendance. As your name is called please stand to be recognized and given a gift.

The first president of Evergreen Garden Club was Gretchen Steoppelwerth, she is unable to be with us today but writes to us... "So sorry to miss this neat event. Love the website. Our 50th wedding anniversary is June 24th so we will be celebrating with all four children and eight grandchildren together for the first time! Sign me up for your 50th and I will be there. So many fond memories of Evergreen and especially the Garden Club. Love, Gretch

## Compost and Compost Tea Boost Soil Vitality

from Seeds of Change.com The Cutting Edge July Newsletter.

by Cindy Salter



smell.

Just about every gardener knows something about compost: how rich it looks and smells; how it replenishes the soil with organic matter, which is so essential to plant health; how it is teeming with beneficial microorganisms; how it helps conserve moisture and moderate soil temperature extremes; and how fun it is to make!

Long before the advent of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, farmers and gardeners relied on compost and other sources of organic matter such as animal manure or cover crops for plant nutrition. Now as then, many organic growers rely on compost as an integral part of their fertility program.

A relatively new twist on the use of compost is compost tea—a liquid extract of compost produced by "brewing" compost in water under controlled environmental conditions. The process consists of suspending compost in a vessel of water (70–75°F), adding a microbial food source, and aerating the solution continuously for up to 24 hours or more.

These conditions represent an ideal environment for extracting and growing beneficial microorganisms and for extracting the nutrients, micronutrients, and other plant-beneficial organic compounds present in compost. The finished compost tea is a rich, dark-brown liquid that has a pleasant earthy



Compost tea should be used soon after it is made, since it is teeming with live microorganisms. Ideally, the tea should be applied within four hours of removing it from the [brewer](#). Any tea that is not used immediately should be kept reasonably cool and out of direct sunlight in an open-top container. Periodic stirring or continued aeration will prolong its life even further.

Compost tea can be applied to the soil as a drench or directly to the plant as a foliar spray. When it is used as a foliar application, it is best to strive for thorough leaf coverage using a fine mist. Foliar applications are best done early morning or pre-dusk to minimize the effects of UV rays.

Although it does contain some nutrients and micronutrients, and may improve a plant's natural ability to resist pests and diseases, compost tea should not be thought of as a fertilizer or pesticide. Compost tea is more accurately described as a soil or foliar inoculant to be used in combination with other good organic gardening practices and inputs. Its inherent value is in providing the microorganisms and organic compounds that support biological nutrient cycling. This kind of "biofertility" is very effective at providing plants the nutrients that they need in the right amount and form, often reducing the need for supplemental inputs of fertilizer.

Compost and compost tea are used throughout the growing season at the Seeds of Change Research Farm. Previously, all compost used on the Farm was purchased from outside sources. In keeping with its goal of sustainability, the Farm has pursued the development of its own compost operation that transforms farm-generated plant residues into high-quality compost for use as a soil amendment on the Farm, thereby reducing dependency on external sources. The Farm's new on-site composting operation is expected to provide most, if not all, of its compost needs.

The Farm also makes its own compost tea on site and uses it in a variety of applications. Compost tea is brewed twice a week (25 gallons per batch) and applied as a soil drench after transplanting in the spring, and then as a foliar spray on vegetable crops several times throughout the summer. "We are less concerned with effects of the tea on foliar diseases, as these are not much of an issue here in New Mexico," says Emily Gatch, Greenhouse and Pathology Coordinator for the Research Farm. "We are primarily interested in the beneficial effects of the tea on soil microbial communities—the humic acids, micronutrients, and growth-promoting compounds, in addition to the beneficial microbes, that improve vigor and yields of crops." Gatch conducted greenhouse trials on tomato transplants and saw obvious benefits from using compost tea in greenhouse production.

To apply the compost tea, the Farm staff have primarily used [backpack sprayers](#), but will begin using a tractor-mounted sprayer for more efficient application this year.

Compost has become a mainstay in organic farming and gardening, and compost tea is rapidly gaining similar status. Together, they represent a vital biological force of nature that is available to all of us in the pursuit of healthy and bountiful soils.

Printed with permission by **Cindy Salter, Compost Consultant to Seeds of Change and Research Director for Growing Solutions** *Photo Captions: (1) Kelle Carter, Field Coordinator, brewing a batch of compost tea (2) Finished compost tea in a bucket, ready for application (3) Kelle using a backpack sprayer to foliar feed kale plants (4) Kelle adding water to the tea brewer.*

<http://growingolutions.com> & <http://seedsofchange.com>

## **Close Encounters of the Worst Kind!**

### **By Kim Stark**

It was around 9:00 on an uneventful, summer Monday night and time for my doggies to have their last potty break. Since my husband was out of the country and we were alone, I decided to be a good "mountain mom" and take them to the small dog run off the deck outside our bedroom instead of letting them out into the big backyard. So after locking up, we head up the stairs, turn on the lights, and proceed outside into the cool evening air. They are very good doggies, quickly take care of their business, and we head back inside. The wind had blown the door shut so, I go to open it and discover, it is locked! My heart sinks. Then my mind starts to race as I realize I am all alone, my husband is in Costa Rica, I am in my yoga pants, tee shirt and barefoot, all the doors downstairs are locked, I do not know any of my neighbors (we moved here last October) and my sweet doggies and I are in trouble! I decide to try each of the doors, nonetheless, all the while praying for a miracle. Not this night, they are all, in fact, locked. I try to calm the rising panic so I can think logically, how do I solve this? I decide against breaking into the back doors as they are too big and would let in too much cold air, and perhaps some critters. I opt for the small window of the garage door, at least there would still be an inside door to protect us from the weather and animals. I grab a large rock and smash it against the glass. It bounces off. I try again. Nothing! Now I am really frantic and frightened, so I try again and again, with all my strength. Nothing is happening except I now have a bloodied hand. Terror is seeping in and I start to cry but realize that is certainly not going to help me; I must figure out a way to rescue me and my dogs! I can see lights on up the hill from me but I do not know how to get there. There are lights across the road but they have three dogs that patrol their property all the time. I once met my neighbors to the south while walking the dogs; theirs is the only house I can walk to so, I set off, barefooted, down the rocky driveway, into the pitch black night. I am really praying with all my heart as three weeks earlier, a bear had demolished our bird feeders and a week afterward, I had seen a mountain lion cruising the back of our property. I gingerly make it down our driveway, into the road, find their rock-filled driveway and head up the hill. Their porch light is on and I am so thankful for the bit of light! I can hear Mr. Knox taking out the trash and am so grateful they are home and awake! I am overcome with relief and again start to cry, knowing in just a few seconds I will be warm and safe and it will all be well! I ring the doorbell and there is Mrs. Knox, avidly waving me in to the house! I stumble into the doorway and try to explain what in the world I am doing, wandering about in the middle of the night, barefoot and in a tee shirt, when she yells, "Come in, come in, we have a bear in our trash cans!" I then realize, it was NOT Mr. Knox taking the trash out, it was a bear rummaging through their trash cans, and I was less than 12 feet away from it!

So the miracle that night did not come in the form of an unlocked door, but as the safe arrival into a new friend's home. And yes, I now have not one but two spare keys hidden outside!

*Thank you Kim for sharing this is a true story.*

*If you have a story you'd like to share with the Evergreen Garden Club, please email it to me for the Wild Iris.*

*Thanks,*

*Beth Feldkamp*

***brucebethf@comcast.net***

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.denverbotanicgardens.org](http://www.denverbotanicgardens.org)

From April 20-October 31, 2006, Denver Botanic Gardens will display 26 monumental bronze sculptures that integrate plants in them.



This traveling exhibit showcases the contemporary work of renowned artist Robert Wick, and the figures express transcendent themes from a variety of traditions. Through internal watering systems, plants are added to the sculptures, giving an added dimension to these monumental works.

The sculptures range in height from six feet to eighteen feet and weigh up to 2,500 pounds. Wick's sculptures have been exhibited throughout the United States, most recently at Red Butte Botanic Gardens in Utah and Ft. Worth Botanic Gardens in Texas.

This exhibit will be constantly changing as horticulture staff changes out plants in each sculpture throughout the exhibit. Be sure to come back and visit often, and witness how the sculptures will look differently with added plants and maturing flowers throughout the seasons. Be sure to walk around the Gardens and explore the sculptures!

Saturdays and Sundays from May through October, 11 a.m. or 1 p.m.

Enjoy a guided outdoor tour of Denver Botanic Gardens. Tours will cover varying topics about the over 45 gardens throughout the 23 acres. Tours are included in the price of admission.

Call our Information Desk at 720-865-3585 to find out which tours are scheduled.

Corn Maze Sept. 8th—Oct. 29th Fri. Sat. Sun. Mon. Oct. 30th & Tues. Oct. 31st.  
Fri. 4-9pm, Sat. 10-9pm, Sun. noon– 8pm  
Mon. Oct. 30th & Tues. Oct. 31st 4-9pm

Glass Artists Fellowship, <http://www.glassartistsfellowship.com>, Contact: Liz McRae, 303-452-8774

Show or Sale Date: September 12 - 22, 2006

9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Mitchell Hall

Gloxinia Gesneriad Growers, Contact: Ann Watterson, 303-467-2135, Show or Sale Date: September 16-17, 2006,

1 - 4:30 p.m. (16th), 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. (17th)

Gates Hall and Garden Court