



# Evergreen Garden Club

## The Wild Iris

Volume 20, Issue 7

March 2009

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

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#### **EGC 2008-2009 Board Members**

##### **President:**

Tina Kellogg

##### **Vice Presidents:**

Bonnie Hisgen

Lucy Ginley

##### **Secretary:**

Pam Hinsh

##### **Treasurer:**

Beth Feldkamp

Last Thursday I went to a FROG meeting. The Front Range Organic Gardeners had invited Ellen Rosenthal to speak on permaculture. She is a dynamic speaker who is a must on our list for speakers next season, or perhaps some evening when I can arrange it. She's inspired me to do more than just plant a garden this year, she's inspired me to do better with the space and the land I have.

I've read a good deal about permaculture; certainly subscribe to the ideals of a whole living earth, after all, the Mother IS the expert on gardening. I've always been inspired by nature and try to keep an eye out for where ever I felt I could duplicate her processes, such as composting, use of organics and companion planting. I also felt some methods I've seen were impractical in the veggie garden, but this year we're going to 'kick it up a notch' and do more with the 'lasagna' or layer gardening. When done properly no further amendments or fertilizers are needed, water is conserved through this layering system and weeds are minimized if not (as they say) eliminated all together. O M G No Weeding? Could it be?

Permaculture is, if nothing else about conservation. Gardening and living with a lower output of energy on all fronts; less work, less weeding and less watering... conservation on all our resources; that can't be a bad thing. It's beginning to look like this will be another year of watching our water resources. In fact if we don't get some measurable snows in March, we're going to head into another very dry year. We keep hearing about how the snow pack in the mountains is well above average, but tell that to my yard! This month IS all about our water resources, along with Karla's report I'm anxious to listen to what our speaker Jim Knopf has to say about "Water-wise" and wildlife gardening.

*(Continued on page 5)*

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 Fire & Rescue Station on Bergen Parkway at 9:15 am. All are welcome.

For **membership** information please contact Beth Feldkamp at 303-679-9465 or EGCBeth@comcast.net

**Newsletter Contributions** are due by the 20th of each month to Edito@EvergreenGardenClub.com

**Newsletter Editor & Website** EvergreenGardenClub.org

### *Upcoming Meeting: Waterwise Wildlife Gardening - Combining Two Great Gardening Themes*

#### **March 10, 2009**

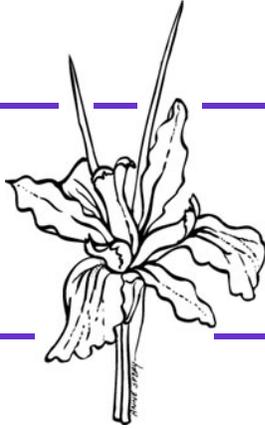
Jim Knopf will explore the wonderful world of waterwise wildlife gardening. He will explain xeriscape principles & wildlife gardening fundamentals.

the World Gardening Table.... And in keeping with being green, your own coffee mug. See you there!

#### **Meet at the Fire & Rescue Station on Bergen Parkway**

**at 9:30 am.** Remember to bring your plants, cuttings, pots etc for

*Garden Club meetings will be cancelled wherever Jefferson County Mountain Schools are closed because of inclement weather. This will eliminate any confusion or the need for last minute communications about weather cancellations.*



# Garden Club News

## Hospitality Bites



The hospitality team for March is as follows:  
Please would you arrive between 8:45 & 9:00 am to help set up the room and be prepared to stay after the meeting for clean-up. **THANKS!**

**Priscilla Chaplin**

**Sandy Swan**

**Pam Hinish**

**Kathi Grider**

**Ann Bolson**

**Lucille Nelson**

## New Members

Marsha O'Keefe

Kathy Kubes

Diana Aldridge

Jacque Whyte

## March Birthdays

3/09 Ruth Alford

3/06 Barbara DeCaro

3/16 Vivian Michaels-Anagnoste

3/04 Lucy Ginley

3/09 Stan Barrett

3/26 Jill Epstein

3/13 Lorna Lind

3/30 Bonnie Hisgen

3/27 Liz Hamilton

## *Minutes of the February 10th, 2009 Meeting*

Tina Kellogg called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. at the Evergreen Fire and Rescue Department, 1802 Bergen Parkway, Evergreen, Colorado. Thirty-two members were present.

Tina announced that member Bonnie Hisgen lost her home to fire. Irma Wolf spoke with Bonnie and she wanted the club to know she and her husband Harv are doing well. At this time they have no needs but the members will stand by for further instructions. The club sends all their best hopes for Bonnie and her family.

Karla Briggs standing in for Pam Hinish as secretary introduced two new members; Marsha O'Keefe and Kathy Kubes, as well as visitor Diana Aldridge.

Priscilla Chapin made the motion to approve the January minutes, Tricia Scott seconded and the motion was approved.

Beth Feldkamp shared a letter from the "Christian Children's Orphanage". Beth reported the checking account balance \$501.12 and the savings account balance \$8821.57 as of 2/10/09.

Tina Kellogg presented amendments to the by-laws of Evergreen Garden Club, Inc. (see attached) in writing. Lorna Chorn made the motion to accept the amendments as written; Mary Dickhoff seconded the motion, the membership voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Tina Kellogg presented the Standard of Procedure Policy developed by the board regarding benefits of Evergreen Garden Club, Inc. business members. (See attached)

Tina Kellogg presented the Standard of Procedure Policy developed by the board regarding the benefits of Evergreen Garden Club, Inc. Individual and Family members. (See attached)

Tina Kellogg announced that the Plant Sale committee meeting February 24th, 10:00 a.m. at the EFR Dept. Irma Wolf presented the EGC Herb Recipe Book written in 1989. She suggested that the book be reproduced and sold at the 2009 Plant Sale as an additional fundraiser. Tina asked for volunteers to work on the project. Lorna Chorn and Susan Blake volunteered to take the project.

Beth Feldkamp presented the "Durable Plant Book". The book is available to the membership at a reduced cost. Interested members need to sign up to purchase a book.

Tina Kellogg asked for volunteers to sign up to work the EGC, Inc. booth at the Earth Day event on April 18th, 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. This year is the 20th Anniversary of the Evergreen Earth Day event. EGC, Inc. member Mary Dickhoff was recognized for her 20-year participation in organizing the event. Frances Sorenson will research the possibility of getting the Garden Glove donation from Wells Lamont to use as a fundraiser at the EGC, Inc. booth.

A request was made for donations of dated and sealed packages of plant seeds for the World Gardening table. Next month a penny can will be passed around to collect change for the World Gardening fund.

Tina Kellogg announced that the CSU Master Gardening program has approved volunteer work done in the EGC, Inc. community gardens for credit hours. Master Gardeners wanting to volunteer to work in the gardens should contact the coordinator of the community garden.

Marilyn Kaussner reported that the Earth Day and Weed Awareness organizations are looking for "new blood" to get involved with their activities. Marilyn has the "Colorado Plant Book" for sale to the members. She asked that a link be set up on the Evergreen Garden Club, Inc. web page to a recycle video. She also shared information about Senate Bill 80 and House Bill 1129. The senate bill is legislation regarding the use of cisterns to collect run off water and the house bill is regarding the pilot program for developers to create run off water systems in Colorado. Karla Briggs spoke regarding the current Colorado water law. Karla will attend a water symposium at the Denver Botanic Gardens and write an article for the Wild Iris.

Irma Wolf invited the new members and visitors to each select a door prize as a welcome gift.

Tricia Scott gave an update on "Otis" the cat. Otis will continue to reside with the Scott family. He has not been advised of the move to Moab, Utah and as a result he has no comment.

A motion was made to adjourn by Liz Barret and seconded by Susan Blake. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted

*Karla Briggs*

Past President standing in as secretary



## Over The Garden Fence

By Karla Briggs

### SHALL WE GATHER AT THE RIVER

I recently attended the Sustainable Landscaping Symposium 2009 held at the Denver Botanic Gardens, put on by the Front Range Sustainable Landscaping Coalition, [www.frslc.wetpaint.com](http://www.frslc.wetpaint.com). This year's symposium was "Muddy Waters: Who Owns the Rain?" The speakers were Brad Lancaster, author of "Rainwater Harvesting for Drylands and Beyond", Michelle DeLaria, storm water BMP scientist with Denver Urban Drainage, Keith Bowers, president and founder of Biohabitats, an ecological restoration company and a panel of lawyers and analysts discussing Colorado's quirky complicated water laws.

The symposium was interesting, educational and Brad Lancaster was a hoot. But the most powerful feeling I had at day's end was hopeful. Hopeful in that some of the most important issues of our time involving the environment were being researched and addressed by some very intelligent and thoughtful people.

The question of whether or not we should continue to use fresh water to irrigate our landscapes is beginning to answer itself, and the answer is a resounding no. So with that answer Colorado needs to look at amending its stringent water laws to allow for the harvesting of rainwater and reuse of gray water to irrigate both residential and commercial landscapes.

Under Colorado water law (with exceptions), 100% of the precipitation that falls on your property is assumed to reach the natural waterways. That means that as a resident of the state you may "detain" but not "retain" any precipitation. Colorado water laws established in 1860 dictate "first in time, first in right". Those owners of senior water rights to Colorado's water, including any precipitation, must be given their share of the water first. The State Engineer administers the water rights and does not separate gray water from black water; all of it is considered sewage and must be treated as such. So that means that as a resident of the state you may not reuse any gray water; it must go into the sewage system to be recycled and sent on its way. Or, in the case of septic, the gray water must be allowed to flow uninterrupted into the septic system and leech field.

What does all of this water law mean for us as Colorado gardeners? Simply put, it is illegal to collect (retain) and reuse any rainwater or gray water for reuse. What are the chances of getting busted by the water police for having a rain barrel or a bucket in your shower? The chance is small considering the State Engineer's department does not have the funds or manpower to enforce the law to that degree. However, there is community in Summit County that was organizing reuse of rain/snow for irrigation, they were turned in by a neighbor and the water department was forced to investigate by knocking on every door and checking for everything from hot tubs to containers of plants that were using water illegally. I personally think the neighbors that tattled should move to a different state, like Louisiana.

Now for the hopeful part. Beorn Courtney, a Professional Engineer, conducted a research project with Douglas County to determine the effects of detaining and reusing rainwater and gray water. The study showed that there was no measurable adverse effect on downstream users and that, she said, is what is needed to begin to change Colorado water law: actual science to justify change. Both the senate and house bills that are in legislation this year seek to take the first steps in that change. Jenny Fifita, a Reclaimed Water System Analyst, is working with the city of Wheat Ridge on their gray water reuse program. The premise of that program is to substitute fresh water for gray water to be used to irrigate landscapes.

Arizona is another case in point. That state's water laws were equally restrictive and over a period of only two years they have changed from no reuse of gray water to the state paying up to a \$1,200 tax credit to residences

*(continued on pg. 5)*

*(continued from President's Message pg1)*

Regretfully I don't have enough space to copy the handout Ellen gave out at the meeting involving the twelve principles of permaculture, but I'll list them off as food for thought. You can also visit her website at <http://www.livingearthcenter.org>

### The Twelve Permaculture Design Principles

Compiled by Jason Gerhard

1. Observance and Interact
2. Catch and Store Energy
3. Obtain a Yield
4. Apply Self Regulation and Accept Feedback
5. Use and Value Renewable Resources and Services
6. Produce No Waste
7. Design From Patterns to Details
8. Integrate Rather than Segregate
9. Use Small and Slow Solutions
10. Use and Value Diversity
11. Use Edges and Value the Marginal
12. Creatively Use and Respond to Change



*(continued from Over the Garden Fence pg.3)*

that install a reuse gray water system for irrigation. Wa Hoo! Other countries are even getting into the act. Chris Gray, you are going to love this—Australia, which has been suffering from severe drought and wild fires, has gone from government fining people who harvested rainwater to an astounding 90% participation in a government sanctioned installation of cisterns to harvest rainwater. Good on ya, mate!

I spoke with Brad Lancaster, the funny author of "Rainwater Harvesting", about how to translate the information in his book from Arizona rainwater harvesting practices (he hails from Tucson, Arizona) to our high altitude Colorado situation, i.e. freezing temperatures. He suggested a book by Lisa Rainer, "High Altitude Rainwater Harvesting" and the web sites on rainwater harvesting in Alaska and Montana, and [www.harvestingrainwater.com](http://www.harvestingrainwater.com) Brad's book is a compendium of how to harvest rainwater, everything from design to implementation, common-sense solutions to water scarcity and a perspective on the political and ecological conscience of doing so.

Now for the challenge that lays before us, my fellow pilgrim gardeners. It is imperative that we consider the following: What is our water budget? How much water can we "afford" to use on our landscapes? Are we following the golden rule of gardening "right plant, right place"? Are we participating with nature or fighting against her? Are we aware of the living systems in our own backyard? Is our relationship with those living systems connected? And most important, are we going to rat out our neighbor for their rain barrel or move to Louisiana?

I intend to follow the progress of the water legislation, continue to participate in the education and discussion of creating sustainable landscapes, and to be ever grateful to live in a place of such beauty.

Karla Briggs

## Pit Gardening



I promised to write about pit gardening (using heat from the sun and the soil). The work pit comes from old English pytt that is related to Old High German pfuzzi well and finally from the Latin puteus well. My interest comes from an old DBG discarded book, *Winter Flowers in the Sun-heated Pit*, originally printed in 1941! The co-author, Mrs. Taylor built her pit garden after seeing a grower's pit garden designed to hold potted plants over-winter. She already had a south facing lean-to greenhouse similar to several residential homes we see in our area.

Primarily lean-to and pit gardens were created to overwinter less cold tolerant plants to keep them in a dormant stage. However it is possible to bring heat, sunlight & protection from the harsh elements while growing healthy vegetables, flowers and bulbs.

We have great sun year round. But, it is common with glass, corrugated greenhouse panels or plastic covering for the high altitude greenhouses to get too much heat for ideal growing conditions.

The site selection is very important. Elevation, high winds and the ability to excavate factor into the selection. I researched and talked to high altitude greenhouse/sunroom owners. They recommend a site that receives morning and late afternoon sun to be superior to face-on south and west exposures.

Soil excavation of 4-6 ft deep for the foundation provides thermal heat for the harsh winter temperatures. The structure needs to be large enough to construct a wall and place drainage below the floor. Cement blocks, concrete, timbers and/or 'modern' materials such as foam board or a bubble wrap insulation for the floor and side walls. <http://www.greenhousegarden.com/energy.htm>. This is Shane Smith's site that will describe how he designed the Cheyenne WY Botanical Gardens greenhouse. Upright walls that receive the prevailing winds and the north exposures are insulated.

My simple thoughts about this is a small 8ft x 12-24ft pit garden that I can overwinter tender perennials, grow cold climate vegetables and enjoy annual, perennial flowers and bulbs during the winter. Believe me it is possible. Mikl Brawner at Harlequins Gardens in north Boulder has an excellent example. His sits low to the ground with a 4ft depth so you step down into the greenhouse. The north wall is 6ft.high, and painted black to store solar heat. A five foot pile of dirt covers the north section of the greenhouse. Glass windows pitched @ a 60 degree angle fill the south side. Additional insulation is attached to the interior greenhouse frame. Opposite the door a window fan pushes hot air outside to cool the greenhouse on hot days. Rarely needed it does come in handy during hot and dry summer days.

Believe me my first greenhouse choice is a **Growing Spaces dome**, from Pagosa Springs, CO. <http://www.geodesic-greenhouse-kits.com/> The Evergreen **Montessori** schools and **Rocky Mountain Academy of Evergreen** have domes and staff that provide instruction. Future development of Buchanan Park may include a geodesic dome. They are the ultimate "wish for" but I know I could be a very happy gardener with my own Ponderosa Pit.



Photo credit: **Global Children's Gardens**, Evergreen CO

Julaine Kennedy

### Your Expertise is Requested!

The Plant Sale Committee is in the process of choosing plants and quantities for the Evergreen Garden Club Plant Sale, to be held on Saturday, June 6, 2009.

Please send suggestions for plants that you like and that do well in Evergreen. Note any special characteristics, such as critter resistance or drought tolerance. We are interested in your recommendations for both the 'tried and true' mountain plants and any newer or lesser known varieties. This list will be compiled and discussed at the March general meeting.

Please respond to Lucy Ginley at lginley@comcast.net

### Members Update

We've had some very sad news that our member Gil Schoonveld, passed away on Fri. Feb. 13th. Jan & Gil have been involved with the Evergreen Garden Club for many years. A memorial service was held on Sat. Feb. 21st at Church of the Hills. Keep Jan and her family in your thoughts and prayers.



Our best wishes to Juanita Zellner who is recovering from a hip replacement at the Life Care Center. We hope she has a speedy recovery.

### Voles



Short-tailed, small-eared, prolific rodent that lives in the Northern Hemisphere. Most voles are grayish-brown, herbivorous ground-dwellers and are small. The semi-aquatic water vole is the largest. Length: to 18cm (7in). Family Cricetidae. Vole

Factoid: Voles have a very short gestation period of 21 days. After less than 40 days, females are sexually mature. With up to 12 litters a year and litter sizes of up to 10, voles can increase in number very rapidly.

Joy Young suggests, because they cannot burp, setting out saucers of Coke will get rid of them. Someone else suggested castor oil.....let us hear your feedback, or if you have any other suggestions.



### Help! ~Name this Plant ~

Mystery Plant.....I have this plant and no one seems to know what it is???

If anyone can identify it, please let me know and we'll solve the mystery~ I received it two years ago, and lo and behold this Jan. it bloomed. The leaves are variegated and the flowers are tiny white clusters on spikes.

Thanks, Beth

Evergreen Garden Club  
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Evergreen, Colorado 80437  
[www.evergreengardenclub.org](http://www.evergreengardenclub.org)



## Denver Botanic Gardens Schedule of Events

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

### **Tulip Mania**

*Lobby Court Display, through mid-April  
Free with Gardens admission*

Tulips and other bulb plants forced for early bloom are on display in our Lobby Court. Come walk among the bright, sunny colors of spring and learn a little about tulips!



### 2009 Spring Orchid Show

March is the month for our 2009 Spring Orchid Show and plant sale.

[Spring Show info.](#)

**Saturday March 14th and Sunday March 15th at Tagawa Garden Center.**