



Kewaunee County Garden Club Newsletter

July-August 2022

C.O.V.I.D in the Garden

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Like they say, “It isn’t a matter of **if** you will get Covid, but rather when.” Our gardens are not immune to Covid, just as we as humans aren’t. When it comes to flowers and veggies, this is what happens when Covid strikes:

C = critters, you know those pesky rabbits, chipmunks, deer who love to nibble and desecrate your precious plants.

O = organisms (*micro/macro*) in the soil. Once they get out of balance, the roots and plant suffers.

V = viral, bacterial, and fungal diseases attack. That dreaded mildew, blight, rust, etc.

I = insects and pests that can devour a plant in no time leaving only a skeleton in your garden.

D= death by any of the above or damaging wind, hail, or flooding.

However, it is not all gloom and doom. Just as there are medications for the ‘human Covid’ symptoms, there is help for the gardener as well. “An ounce of prevention is a pound of cure” as has been stated many times.

Make it difficult for those critters to get into the garden. Entice them with treats away from flowers and veggies. Fencing or netting can be a deterrent for getting to their next meal.

A healthy soil is a happy soil. Just as humans need food and water, so do our garden flowers and veggies. Each has requirements for fertilizing and watering. It is wise to adhere to the guidelines.

Companion planting is a great way to help fight the many diseases that attack flowers and veggies. Using marigolds, nasturtiums, alyssum, or herbs are some of the ‘meds’ that work great for warding off some of the diseases as well as some of the common pests. Consistent watering, good air circulation, mulching, and keeping weeds out of the garden are a must.

Damaging winds, hail, or flooding may come; however, if the flowers and plants are healthy, they will bounce back. Or, there is always next year!

Again, if one is vigilant about planting, watering, fertilizing, and weeding, COVID doesn’t stand a chance in your garden!



Programs and Events



*"Success is where
preparation and
opportunity meet."*

Bobby Unser

Tuesday, July 26—6:30 p.m. Kris and Terry Fulwiler's Garden Tour, N7879 Willow Drive, Algoma. Meeting to follow tour.

August— Possible Tour of Van der Bohre Arboretum in Two Rivers and West of the Lake in Manitowoc.

Tuesday, August 23—KCGC Meeting TBD

Tuesday, September 27 or Tuesday, October 25 Meeting—Desert Botanical Garden presentation by Mary, Joel, and Tom

Tuesday, November 22—KCGC Meeting TBD

Plant Sale Opportunity?

Searching for ideas for planters this year was a real eye opener. The hanging planters were not as eye catching as in previous years. It wasn't only the flower selection; it was the colors and the sparsity of flowers that was discouraging. Then, if that wasn't enough, the price was over the top! Containers were the same.

So, I got to thinking ... sorry! What if we plant some containers with colorful flowers and also plant tomatoes in containers with basil. These are just a couple ideas of what to plant. Could be other veggies or a combination of flowers and veggies. Strawberries would be a good choice for a container garden. Stage containers on either side of a path leading to the flowers, veggies, fruit, and herbs that are for sale. The container content could be educational showcasing companion planting and its importance. It not only would be educational but very cost effective for attendees. Yet another way to bring in more cash to the garden club.

Homemade Insecticide

Tomato leaves can be used as an insecticide.

Trim the lower leaves of your tomato plants for good air circulation. Use the leaves to make an effective insecticide against aphids. Toss about 2 cups of leaves into a food processor or blender. Pulse them a few times, put into a clean quart jar and fill with water. Give it a good shake. After 24 hours, strain the chopped leaves and put the strained liquid in a spray bottle.

The naturally occurring alkaloids found in tomatoes are toxic to those tiny, green bugs. The spray is safe to use around people and pets.

Mist infected plants well, especially the undersides of the leaves where the little pests like to hide.



Most Useful Kitchen Scrap: *Banana Peels*

If you want big, healthy plants with showy blooms or delicious fruit, you need potassium in your fertilizer. Here is where banana peels enter the picture! In addition to potassium, banana peels contain calcium, manganese, sulfur, and magnesium. Each of these nutrients play a role in maintaining plant health, whether it is photosynthesis, generating chlorophyll, or regulating the movement of water among cells. The peels do not contain nitrogen. Banana peel fertilizer is perfect for plants with low-nitrogen requirements which include tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, eggplant, zucchini, roses, and even radishes. Even nitrogen-loving plants will benefit from the use of banana peel fertilizer. The calcium content found in banana peels helps plants absorb nitrogen in the soil a lot easier.

All that is needed to make this amazing fertilizer is ...

banana peels, one-quart Mason jar/lid, and distilled water. Add banana peel to jar, fill jar with water, put on the lid and let it sit for a week to two weeks. Remove the banana peel and dilute mixture in a 1:4 ratio to water plants. Water the base of plants with this amazing fertilizer once a week. It can take a few weeks to see the results.

Use the mixture as a 'bug buster'. Spray diluted banana peel fertilizer on plants to repel pests such as aphids.

Banana peels and apple cider vinegar make a fantastic bug trap. Pour a small amount of apple cider vinegar into a jar and add a couple of tablespoons of chopped banana peel. Place a funnel in the container so the bugs can get in but not out. Discard after 48 hours and repeat the process.

How about Banana Peel Powder?

Cut banana peels into 1" pieces, place on a baking sheet so they are not touching. Dry on the lowest setting in your oven or simply, leave banana peels on a rack to dry in the sun for a few days. Once dry, crush the dried peels into a fine powder using a mortar and pestle or an old coffee grinder. Keep the banana peel in a sealed jar. To use, loosen the soil around the base of each plant and then sprinkle one or two tablespoons of the powder over the soil. Water thoroughly and let the banana peel work its magic!

Compost Banana Peels—Banana peels break down quicker than most kitchen scraps, making them perfect for the compost bin.

Seed Starter—Pop a piece of banana peel into the hole and drop the seed in on top. Or place the seed directly on a piece of banana peel before covering it with soil. The banana peel will give seeds an extra boost while germinating.



**25th Anniversary
Plant Sale 2022**



Dana Farm Workday

Tuesday, June 28, 2022



Nice Job Gardeners!



KC Garden Club

President: Tom Zenner

V. President: Cheryl Eberle

Treasurer: Ann Brunner

Secretary: Sue Hepp

Marketing Committee:

Barb Smith, Tom Zenner, Cheryl Eberle, Mary Novak, Nancy Lamack, and Joel Weichelt

Website: www.kcgardenclub.org



It is the mission of the Kewaunee County Garden club to support the horticulture efforts of the people and communities of the county with volunteer work, education, and example.

Membership is open to Master Gardeners and all other gardeners interested in horticulture.



Summertime Tasks...

July and August are very busy months in the garden. Some tasks that make a gardener tired just thinking about it ...

1. Weeding the flowers and veggies (*never ending!*)
2. Deadhead spent blossoms on various flowers
3. Cut back faded perennials
4. Take softwood cuttings of ornamental shrubs that can propagate fairly easily and successfully. (*forsythia, hydrangea, potentilla*)
5. Thin out carrots, beets, and other root crops
6. Pick summer squash and zucchini (*prepare for eating, baking, or freezing*)
7. Cut flowers for bouquets to brighten up your home
8. Continue to pinch side shoots off the tomato plants and continue to fertilize
9. Train cucumbers, squash, peas, etc. to grow vertically guiding them into supports.
10. Harvest beans, peas, leafy vegetables during the summer months

And the above are just some of the tasks that need to be done in the garden!