

What's Up in the Gardens?

By Joan Andersen

I recently visited the flowers at the Gardens and I can report that they are doing great. It finally rained and plants are growing fast. The Rest Area and Formal gardens were planted first and the flowers are tall and blooming. Other areas are catching up fast. The Perennial Garden is looking great – the first of the lilies are blooming.

Of course, COVID-19 has affected the Gardens. The City of St. Cloud has a budget shortfall so that all City departments had to freeze spending and hiring. Munsinger Clemens Gardens staff was reduced from 25 to 21. Staff made some adjustments to their activities by social distancing inside and outside. There are now two break rooms with two people per table instead of six. Staff members allow time for extra sanitizing of common areas.

Unfortunately, COVID-19 has meant there are very few weddings this season, since the limit on the number of guests is very strict. All of the Music in the Gardens concerts and the Art Fair (sponsored by Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society) were cancelled.

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Memories soar at annual butterfly release-

by Kristi Anderson

Inside the warmth of its snug cocoon, a caterpillar prepares for the next leg of its journey. Just as one part of its trek is ending, light breaks through the thin layers of its little nest and beautiful new wings emerge. As it adjusts to the new world in a new form, it rests briefly before soaring into the air.

The butterfly is often recognized as a symbol of transformation and of hope. That is why Quiet Oaks Hospice House is finding a way during these unprecedented times to creatively make this annual event possible despite the pandemic and needs to social distance. 'Fly with Hope' will be held on Sunday, July 26th.

"The butterfly release invites us to come together as community, as neighbors and friends, to remember and celebrate the wonderful joy and treasure of our loved ones' legacies and lives," said Linda Allen, Executive Director of Quiet Oaks. "While we are asked to distance in an effort to keep everyone safe, we still can come together- even if it means doing so apart."

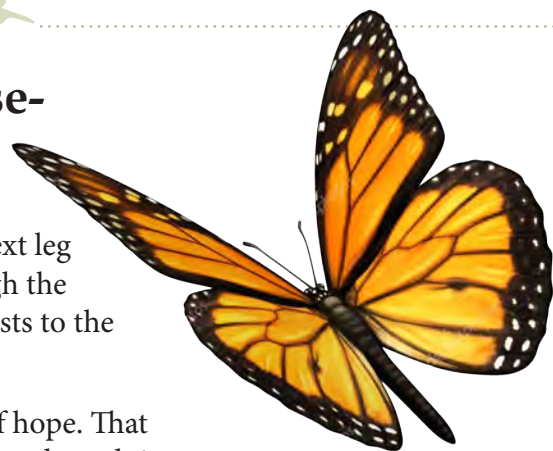
Those who purchase butterflies will be able to pick them up at Whitney Park the day of the event. A keepsake card and special reflection and reading will be given out for each family's private butterfly release. Those who prefer to not pick up butterflies will have their loved one honored and remembered at a small release at Quiet Oaks where nurses and staff will be releasing the butterflies after a brief program beginning at 2:30.

"While we cannot gather in person, we spirit to remember and honor

can be together in our loved ones who continue to give us encouragement, love and support" shares Quiet Oaks Board member Tammy Moore.

Through sponsorship by Leighton Broadcasting a program beginning at 2:30 will be broadcast through KNSI. Community members can listen into the program and release their butterflies in unison with others around the community.

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Rootbeer Float Sponsors

Thank you to all of these businesses for their donations and support the Music in the Gardens.



on 25th Ave



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Mary Wright, the event's organizer, became involved with Quiet Oaks after moving to the area a few years ago after her father died.

"When Dad was dying, there just never seemed to be the right place for him," Wright recalled. "After that, I knew I wanted to get involved with hospice in some way. I heard about Quiet Oaks and just drove out there one day. I've been volunteering ever since."



Quiet Oaks is a homelike setting nestled in the woods of St. Augusta which specializes in offering hospice, respite care and grief and healing support. The mission of Quiet Oaks Hospice House is to provide high quality, personalized care, comfort, and dignity to residents and their families in the remaining days of their life together. To date, they have served 930 residents and their families.

For Wright, the butterfly release has been one of the most amazing and touching experiences she has witnessed.

"Often the butterflies immediately soar into the air, but sometimes they hang around, even landing on a person's hand."

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2020 Photo of the Month - Facebook

We have started something new this year. We are selecting one photo every month from all the entries of the 2019 Photography in the Gardens contest. Each month we will post one photo, the title given by the photography and the photographer that took the photo. Be sure to like us on Facebook and see all of the wonderful photos that have been taken of the Munsinger and Clemens Gardens.





Grow Flowers for Pollinators

By Joan Andersen

What is a pollinator? This term includes insects of many types that transfer pollen from one plant to another during their daily activities looking for nectar or a place to lay eggs. Pollinators include honeybees and many species of native bees, flies, wasps, butterflies, moths and even beetles. Some birds and mammals can be considered pollinators if they move from plant to plant and transfer pollen. Pollinators are essential for many plants for reproduction and necessary for many agricultural crops to produce the food we eat.

Many of you already know about the stress experienced by pollinators in our modern environment. The biggest change for pollinators is the loss or fragmentation of their habitat. It is getting harder and harder for them to find a place to feed, live and nest. Many of the native pollinators are quite specialized and they may not fly very far to find a new place to live when their old place is transformed into housing or a parking lot.

Another issue for pollinators is the careless use of many kinds of pesticides to kill unwanted weeds or insects, but will also destroy beneficial habitat and desirable insects. Always read the label (in

the store before you buy it!) to see if the product is labeled for use on the weed or insect you want to treat and apply exactly as the label directs. Some products are labeled as toxic to bees and should be used with extreme caution. Often it is best to tolerate some weeds or insect feeding if it is not too severe.

Homeowners can make a difference by growing pollinator friendly plants in their yards. Aim for a healthy landscape and do not worry if your lawn and gardens are not perfect. When choosing flowers, plant things that bloom in spring, summer and fall so pollinators will always have flowers to visit. There are appropriate plants for both sun and shade.

There are many native and cultivated perennial plants that are used by pollinators. From observation in my own yard, pollinators visit penstemon, wild geranium, lupin and Virginia waterleaf that bloom early in the season. Midseason favorites include blazing star (liatris), coneflower and bee balm. In late summer and fall, many kinds of pollinators love sedum, helenium and asters. Don't forget





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to plant trees and shrubs. Bees especially love crabapple blossoms and right now they are buzzing all over the flowers on our native basswood trees and cultivars of linden trees that bloom in early July. Did you know that weeds look like flowers to pollinators? I hate to say this, but the dreaded dandelion is a favorite flower for bees. If you can stand it, let them bloom in an out of the way place.

Many annual flowers are also attractive to pollinators – think zinnias, salvia, rudbeckia and sunflowers. They have bright colors and pollinators can easily feed on nectar and move pollen. Don't forget that the flowers of herbs such as borage, basil and oregano will attract pollinators.

Pollinators are most attracted to flowers that have their reproductive parts exposed – they like 'single' flowers better than 'double.' We all love double flowers, but be sure to plant some flowers with a single row of petals, as seen on a sunflower because this form makes a great 'landing pad' for butterflies, bees and other insects. Reproductive parts are also easy to spot on plants that grow on tall spikes, such as verbena bonariensis. The favorite color of many pollinators is yellow, which might explain why there are so many kinds of yellow flowers. But pollinators will also visit flowers that are red, blue, pink, white and other colors. If you have the space, mass plantings of flowers will be more attractive to pollinators than single specimens.



Remember that some pollinators will use your plants for reproduction. Everyone knows that Monarch butterflies will lay eggs on milkweed and the caterpillars will eat the milkweed leaves and it won't look so nice. If this bothers you, plant your milkweed in an out of the way place and enjoy the caterpillar activity. A Swallowtail butterfly lays eggs on dill and the caterpillars can do quite a bit of damage. Plant extra dill in separate patches and let the caterpillars have some of it.

If every homeowner had some flowering plants, trees and shrubs, it would really improve the habitat for our pollinators plus give beauty to our yards. If you are interested in more information, you can check out the website at the University of Minnesota Extension at <https://extension.umn.edu/lawns-and-landscapes/flowers-pollinators> Explore this website for lots of useful information on how to make your yard friendly to pollinators.





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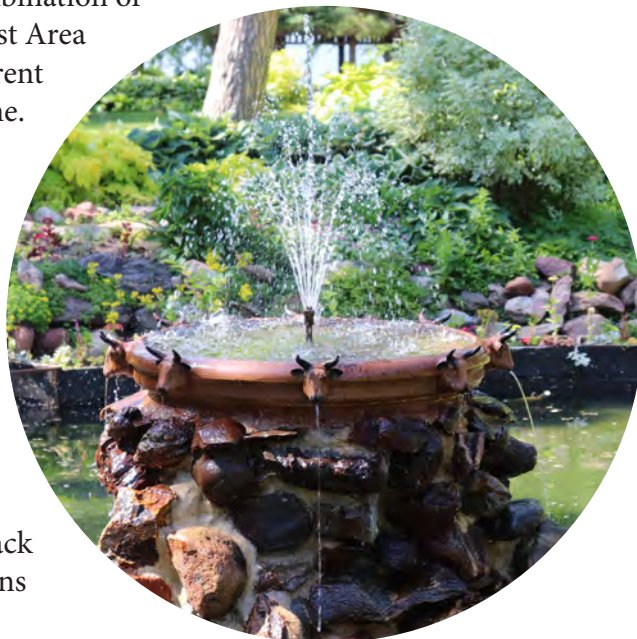


Fortunately, you can still visit the Gardens and we hope you will stay safe by social distancing while you are there. The Gift Shop and the adjacent restrooms are open. While you are there, take some photos so that you can enter our one remaining MCBS event – the Photo Contest. Entry forms are on the website at munsingerclemens.com

Check out the color theme in the Rest Area garden: orange, purple, pink and a touch of burgundy. Visitors are especially impressed with tithonia 'Goldfinger' that is 3-4' tall with bright orange flowers. They are planted with salvia 'Rockin Purple,' sun coleus 'Mariposa' and zinnia 'Profusion Double Fire' for a zesty combination of colors. Other areas in the Rest Area Garden are planted with different flowers in the same color scheme.

The Formal Garden and Fountain features flowers in yellow, red, and blue. Yellow is provided by marigolds, cannas and sun coleus, red is found in petunias, canna and sun coleus and blue is represented by spikes of salvia.

Be sure to continue to visit the Gardens as they continue to evolve throughout the season. Be safe by observing social distancing to protect garden staff and other visitors. There are places to sit and relax and it is OK to bring your lunch to enjoy the outdoors. The Gardens and MCBS hope that things will be back to normal next season, but we are happy to report that the Gardens are just as gorgeous this year as they always are.



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That is so important to the families. For some, it's like a sign from their loved ones. And for some, it's about letting go. It's a great reminder of the people that each of us has lost," Wright said and it is even more meaningful to her this year after her mother's recent passing.

The Memorial Butterfly Release is hosted by Quiet Oaks Hospice House, and sponsored in part by St Cloud Floral, Moments Hospice, Daniel Funeral Homes, St Croix Hospice, Williams Dingmann Family Funeral Homes, Miller Carlin Funeral Homes, Wenner Funeral Home and LexisNexis along with Leighton Broadcasting. Special keepsake cards are created by DKG, International Society for Key Women Educators.

All funds raised will go toward compassionate funds supplementing the cost of resident care at Quiet Oaks.

Organizers are planning for the release of about 400 butterflies that day. Those wishing to release a butterfly in honor of their deceased loved ones are encouraged to order one in advance through Quiet Oaks at <https://quietoakshospicehouse.org/events/butterfly/>. The cost is \$25 per butterfly and quantities are limited.

"Those of us who have lost loved ones know that even though they have passed on, we continue to hold them close in our hearts," Allen said. "Even though they are gone from our sight, they live on — not only in memories, but in the love we still have for them; and in the love they somehow still share with us."



**WE NEED
VOLUNTEERS**



**Looking For
Volunteers To Help
Plan Our Events And
Join Our Board:**

**Music in the
Gardens,
Photography in
the Gardens &
Art Fair in the
Gardens.**

Munsinger Clemens Botanical Society is a non-profit that plans events in the gardens as well as raising money to help support the gardens. You would not be gardening at Munsinger or Clemens Gardens but helping with events. Please contact us if you would like additional information.

2020 Photo Contest

You can enter your photos online now for the 2020 Photography in the Gardens contest. You can submit and pay for your entries completely through the online process. This will provide visitors of the gardens who do not live close to the St. Cloud area the opportunity to enter their photos. ALL entries must be entered online to be eligible. All Juniors (18 and under) can enter their first photo free of charge.

This year's contest runs until November 1st, when entries will be due, and a contest reception will be held on November 21. If you want to submit photos this year, check out the rules and entry details on our website: www.munsingerclemens.com.



2019 winning photos will be on display at the following places:

2020 Locations:

June & July – St Cloud River's Edge Convention Center

August & September – Waite Park Library

October – Quiet Oaks Hospice House

November & December – St Cloud Library

Start taking your photos now. The gardens are beautiful year round.



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Gifts over the Basic Membership may be designated to:

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