



60th
Anniversary
Gratitude Gala
TROWEL

Special Edition October 2023

Plus 60 Year Historical Review Addendum

Gratitude

The Bloomingdale Garden Club celebrated its 60th Anniversary with a gala “Gratitude” luncheon on Sunday, October 29th at the Bloomingdale Golf Course. Over 80 guests included members and their families, as well as VIPs and longtime friends.

President Cheryl Svee welcomed everyone and mentioned that our gratitude extended to the refined relationship the Club enjoys with the Bloomingdale Park District and she introduced Joe Potts, Executive Director, who spoke enthusiastically about the history of this relationship over the span of 12 years and told about the success of the community gardens.

Bloomingdale Mayor, Franco Coladipietro, read the Proclamation issued by the Village and congratulated the Club on achieving 60 years of service to the community.

Among the VIP guests was Diane Greenawalt from Garden Clubs of Illinois who spoke of the Club’s many achievements.

Joyce Basel acknowledged the pride the Club has in having many of the octagenarian members present and a standing ovation was given to the Club’s most senior member, Josephine Dabrowski at 90+. Gratitude of the entire club and everyone present was also extended to two members who are Veterans—Kirt Shore, Boatswaine’s Mate First Class who served in the Navy Reserve for six years, and Hector Rivera, Sergeant in the US Air Force who served for six years and was in the last bombing raids in Vietnam.

The annual plant sale hosted by the club provides the funds for the club’s generous philanthropic program and Linda Kunesh spoke of the history

of this plant sale which originated in the front yard of members some 50 years ago to the highly successful event now held in the Park District maintenance building.

Gail Sanders told guests of the participation by almost all members of the club in planting, watering and weeding the Community Garden which has over the years provided several thousand pounds of fresh produce to local food pantries for those in need.

The grand finale of the day was the announcement of the winner of the Auction of an African Adventure. Dan and Kelly Vitacco won the auction and were joined by two more winners Cheryl Svee and Peggy Laraia! While it was not the intention that this event become a fund raiser, nevertheless, the hugely successful auction of over 20 beautiful baskets and the safari has given the club additional funds to enhance its philanthropy in the year to come.



The aspirations of the original small group of women who started the club 60 years ago have certainly been achieved by the men and women who are today’s dedicated and hardworking members.

*Be sure to take time to enjoy the attached
Bloomingdale Garden Club 60 Year Historical Review
produced by Debbie Matuszak*

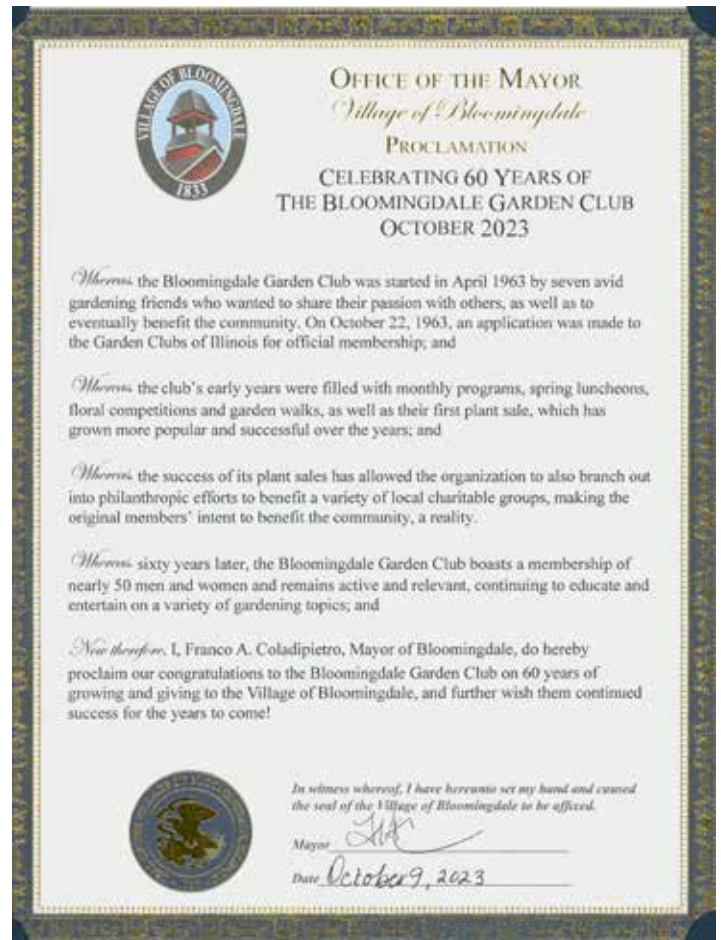
Proclamation

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
VILLAGE OF BLOOMINGDALE
PROCLAMATION
CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF
THE BLOOMINGDALE GARDEN CLUB
OCTOBER 2023

Whereas, the Bloomingdale Garden Club was started in April 1963 by seven avid gardening friends who wanted to share their passion with others, as well as to eventually benefit the community. On October 22, 1963, an application was made to the Garden Clubs of Illinois for official membership; and

Whereas, the club's early years were filled with monthly programs, spring luncheons, floral competitions and garden walks, as well as their first plant sale, which has grown more popular and successful over the years; and

Whereas, the success of its plant sales has allowed the organization to also branch out into



philanthropic efforts to benefit a variety of local charitable groups, making the original members' intent to benefit the community, a reality.

Whereas, sixty years later, the Bloomingdale Garden Club boasts a membership of nearly 50 men and women and remains active and relevant, continuing to educate and entertain on a variety of gardening topics; and

Now therefore, I, Franco A. Coladipietro, Mayor of Bloomingdale, do hereby proclaim our congratulations to the Bloomingdale Garden Club on 60 years of growing and giving to the Village of Bloomingdale, and further wish them continued success for years to come!

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the Village of Bloomingdale to be affixed.

Mayor, Franco A. Coladipietro
October 9, 2023



Fabulous!

Dear Members and Friends,

Our 60th Anniversary Gala Gratitude Luncheon was an unparalleled success mostly due to the fact that so many of you turned up to celebrate and enjoy the occasion with friends. I really do want to thank you all for your participation—it was wonderful.

The theme of this luncheon was “Gratitude” and I believe that it was expressed by all of the speakers—we do truly have so much to be grateful for!



I do want to thank Gail Sanders and Linda Kunesh for being so willing to participate with their interesting and informative speeches about the Community Garden and the Plant Sale

as well as the club’s philanthropy and good work with Du Page Convalescent Center.

Pastor Jeremy and our good friend Joe Potts were wonderful. Both were so complimentary as they told of the history of our relationship with the Church and with



the Bloomingdale Park District. Our Club is so fortunate to have such a great place to gather every month and for committee meetings etc. And the unique and special relationship we enjoy with our Park District is the

envy of other clubs throughout the region. Special guest Diana Greenawalt of GCI spontaneously congratulated us on our achievement of 60 years as members and also gave some insight with regard to the Garden Clubs of Illinois.



Bloomingdale Mayor, Franco Coladipietro, left a family gathering to join us briefly and read the Village Proclamation. This was quite amusing as he had left his reading glasses behind and borrowed those of Lori Potts! Making light of the fact

that he looked very pretty . . . his image may be published!

Now I would be terribly remiss if I did not extend a huge “Thank you” to the Committee who worked enthusiastically and energetically to make it all happen. Thanks to Jamie, Debbie, Cindy, Carole, Jennifer, Mary Sue, Kelly and Cheryl. We met every month for almost a year! And it showed. Thank you all!

We honored our members who are 80+ years and most especially our most senior and beloved 90+ member—Jo Dabrowski! Our 80+ members are Jennifer Moore, Sandra Kappeler, Art Datillo, Bobbie Pulido, Pauline Thomas-Brown and me! We also recognized our dear Esther Ahlrich and presented her daughter Kim with her roses.



And it is with sincere gratitude that we recognized our two Veterans—Kirt Shore and Hector Rivera.

The exciting auctioning of an African Photo Safari which was donated by my daughter, Kim Basel, owner

of Adventure Seekers was the culmination of our event and was won by Kelly and Dan Vitacco! It appears that they will be joined on this adventure by Cheryl Svee and Peggy Laraia—and perhaps even a few more lucky winners.

What a fabulous Affair!!! What a fun day—let us all continue with our friendships and our



wonderful camaraderie—and look forward to another ten years and another celebration when we turn 70!! Thank you all again!

Joyce Basel

Recognition

National Garden Clubs, Inc.

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT

Honoring

BLOOMINGDALE GARDEN CLUB

Member of

The Garden Clubs of Illinois, Inc.

In Recognition of their
60th Anniversary

Mary Warshauer

NGC President 2021-2023



Philanthropy

Linda Kunesch

When I think of Bloomingdale Park District's Executive Director, Joe Potts, two words come to mind: "Of Course." Any time we have made a request to Joe, this has been his immediate response: "Can we have our Perennial Potting Party at the Maintenance Building?" (I'm not sure Joe even knew what a Perennial Potting Party was!) "Of course." "Joe, Costco is donating a shed for us to store equipment. Can we put it at the Park District Maintenance Building?" His response, "OF COURSE"... then it became TWO sheds! Joe and the Park District have consistently supported our Plant Sales, not only with their cooperation, but also in PURCHASING our plants to beautify Bloomingdale parks!

Over the years, many deep friendships have been formed in the club at the Plant Sales. Testaments to this is how many members re-join each year, or come back to the Club who for whatever reason left for a while. Even our friend Joan who moved to KY, came back to help at our sales and is here today to celebrate with us.



Proceeds of our Sales fund our great monthly programs and are donated to various local charities and non-profits. Over the past 10 years, Bloomingdale Garden Club has donated \$70,665 to organizations that have included:

Bloomindale VFW Post 7539
Midwest Shelter for Homeless Vets
DuPage PADS
Garden Works Project
Humanitarian Service Project

We Grow Dreams
Various Food Pantries
Stepping Stones
DuPage Care Center

Our involvement with DuPage Care Center began in 2012 when Bloomingdale Garden Club was the lead agency, along with University of IL Extension DuPage Master Gardeners that submitted a grant proposal to the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation to benefit the Garden Program at the Care Center.

Our Club's proposal was one of 76 winning proposals nation-wide out of more than 300 applications submitted! To our delight, we were awarded our FULL request of \$10,748 dollars!

They say success breeds success: This award was the catalyst for more organizations to support the Care Center's Garden Program where more than 50 Resident Gardeners have their own garden plot to grow vegetables, herbs, and flowers of their choice.

The Resident Gardeners may: Keep the produce and flowers for themselves; give them to family and staff; or provide "mini-farmers' markets where the produce and flowers are sold to staff and volunteers. The money raised is then used to fund an end-of-year celebration. Surplus food is then donated to area food pantries. 221 pounds were donated just this season!

Bloomingdale Garden Club has assisted with planting not only the Residents' plots but also some large in-ground beds—including a large pollinator garden planted with natives & perennials. Due to the efforts of our friend Leslie Mabbot, Midwest Groundcovers donated more than \$800 in plants for the Pollinator Garden. Our pollinator population has exploded!

I could go on and on and tell you more stories how our Plant Sales have had an impact on others. Suffice it to say, Bloomingdale Garden Club is a premier garden club. And it is due to all of you who support it with your time and talents!

Centerpieces

So many club members engaged in the activity of creating centerpieces for our tables at this event. Our theme was gratitude and fall colors. The creativity was outstanding and created a warm and

welcoming feeling. Each table had a winner (or more) when it was announced the second person to the left of the most recent birthday could take it home. Thank you so much to all that contributed!

Our 60th Anniversary Seeds of Gratitude gift Commemorating the 60th Anniversary of Bloomingdale Garden Club was donated to us by Ball Horticulture Company. It was our thank you gift to guests for "helping us grow."



Plot-to-Plate

Gail Sanders

The idea to start a garden that would supply fresh vegetables to a local food pantry came from garden club members.

A committee consisting of members from our club, Bloomingdale Park District staff, University of Illinois Extension DuPage Master Gardeners, and Roselle Park District Garden Club researched existing community gardens. They looked at their facilities and regulations and came up with an idea of what they would like. After visiting and evaluating various Bloomingdale Park District sites, they decided on an area near the maintenance garage on Springfield Drive. A site map was drawn up for three demonstration gardens to be worked by members of the Bloomingdale Garden Club, the Roselle Park District Garden Club, and the U of I Extension Master Gardeners along with plots for community members to rent to grow their own produce.

Once the plans were in place, the park District went to work installing water lines, tilling the grassy site, and amending the ground with compost. During this time a fundraising garage sale was held by the club to purchase the needed supplies—tools, hoses, tomato cages, and other miscellaneous items. A shed to house these things was donated by Costco and installed by the Park District.



The first year, 2015, only the three 20 ft x 20 ft demonstration gardens were ready, and our club jumped right in. In subsequent years, plots of 100 sq ft, 140 sq ft, and 200 sq ft were readied for renters followed by raised beds to accommodate gardeners of all abilities. A kiosk where gardening information could be displayed, and a weighing/donation station were added. Club members voted to call our garden the Plot-to-Plate Garden and there is a lovely permanent sign to mark it.

We have been working our plot ever since that start in 2015 and have added compost, coffee grounds, pumpkins, leaves, and other amendments to increase the fertility of the soil. This year we received a generous donation of 10 heavy duty tomato cages from Better Bilt Products in Addison to help us corral those huge plants resulting from these soil improvements.

I have been actively involved since 2016, and during the past 8 years, the club has donated over 3500 pounds of produce to food pantries. This is not something I have done by myself. Members of this year's Plot-to-Plate committee include Eileen Spaman, Susan Glick-Shore, and Barbara Weisenburger. And in previous years, Cheryl Svee, the late Joyce Boryla, and the late Kathy Mikutis were also members.

The garden is not something that the four of us tend alone. We have been aided by many members of the club who have volunteered to spend a week or two during the growing season to come and water or weed the plot. The economy and world conditions make your work even more important as we get fresh, organic produce to people who need it.

Finally, our club's commitment to the community gardens continues as Joyce Basel, Linda Kunesh, and I along with two Master Gardeners and Park District staff meet 6 times a year to oversee the operation of the gardens. None of this would have been possible without the wonderful cooperation of the Bloomingdale Park District. A big "Thank You" to them!

And the Silent Auction Winners Are . . .

Debbie Matuszak • Wine Tasting \$65
 Dean Svee • Jam Basket..... \$100
 Georgette West • Coffee & Breakfast \$45
 Dan Vitacco • Laugh Basket..... \$100
 Andre Burke • Bloomingdale Park District..... \$60
 Michelle Kacalo • Richardson Farm \$45
 Alice Paipa-Lenard • Smores Basket..... \$55
 Kelly Vitacco • Funway Family Fun \$45
 Lori Potts • Garden Tools Basket..... \$75
 Dillon Johnson • Coffee Trunk \$35
 Debbie Biondo • Garden Pottery Basket \$85
 Hector Rivera • Weber Grill Basket \$56
 Kim Basel • Hot Chocolate Basket \$55
 Debbie Biondo • Tea & Baking Basket..... \$75
 Dillon Johnson • Wine & Dine \$80
 Dean Svee • Gift Cards Galore \$185
 Lori Potts • Pizza, Puzzles & Beer \$60
 Lucas Johnson • Locomotive Picture \$125
 Andre Burke • John Medeiros Necklace \$85
 Jean Kurzynski • Watercolor of Fall..... \$60
 Troy Johnson • English Cottage Painting \$95
 Kelly Vitacco • In Bloom Romance Novels..... \$45
 Dillon Johnson • Fall Ciders/Jubilee..... \$30
 Troy Johnson • Plants in 1940s Basket \$60
 Kelly & Dan Vitacco • African Safari \$2700

 Dean Svee • 50/50 Raffle Winner \$270
 Guest, Tamera Peterson, won Jeff Dengler's 1963
 Village of Bloomingdale Centerpiece
 Henia Sullivan won Joyce's Fall Centerpiece



Guests

Photos taken by Debbie Matuszak

So many smiling faces! The cash bar must have been busy because everyone was having a great time! Our master of ceremonies included both honored club senior, Joyce Basel, and current club president, Cheryl Svec.



Tributes

Photos taken by Debbie Matuszak

Boy, that Cheryl really loves the camera—good thing she's so cute! This was a wonderful time to gather and honor our veterans, senior members, and those who have helped us along the way. Gratitude is always appreciated.



Thank You

Dear Cheryl,

What a fabulous 60th Anniversary Celebration for the Bloomingdale Garden Club! It was my pleasure to attend this festive celebration. Wow, your club has really been busy—and making Bloomingdale pretty! I had a wonderful time and learned so much about your group. I wish your club many more years as they work with the village.

Blessings,

Diane Greenawalt, First Vice-President
Membership, The Garden Clubs of Illinois, Inc.



Dear Joyce,

I just wanted to thank you and all the other garden club members who showed my mom so much love over the many years. Being a part of the Bloomingdale Garden Club was absolutely

her favorite place to be. I cannot completely express how much joy it brought her. The more I have gotten to know members, I can understand why. Being a part of your 60th Anniversary was very special and emotional for me.

Thank you,

Kim Blair (Esther Ahlrich's Daughter)

Dear Joyce,

I hope you are resting after a wonderful celebration! You and the committee did an outstanding job from the Save-the-date card through the invitation, the venue and decorations, the meal, to the program and auction. We really enjoyed the day. Please express our thanks to the entire committee.

Joe & Gail Sanders



Dear Joyce and Linda,

I hope you are doing well today. Thank you for including the Bloomingdale Park District in the Garden Club's 60th Anniversary celebration. It was a wonderful event with an impressive turnout of individuals. Lori and I were impressed with the number of Joyce's grandchildren who came out to support you as well. I was able to speak with a couple of them and they said they wouldn't miss it!

The Bloomingdale Garden Club is such an asset to our community. The Garden Club is also such a friend and partner to the Park District. I truly value our relationship. When I think of the Garden Club, I think of you both. Were it not for your nature—both of your abilities to diplomatically and effectively further the Club's (and the community's) needs and interests—I don't know if we would have these successes which I am so proud to have any part of.

Of course, I am very fond of all the members of your club. However, I have known you the longest and will forever associate you both with the Club. You have made our work together a pleasure and I look forward to many, many more years with you both.

Thank you again for including us in your celebration. You have so much to be proud of!

Respectfully,

Joe Potts, Executive Director
Bloomingdale Park District

The Gala Team

Joyce Basel

For the first time in months I slept through the night without waking to worry for a minute or two about whether we had remembered everything for our BIG event!! In fact I think I just relived some of the highlights of it and enjoyed it for a second time!!

Our Party was a HUGE success and I would be remiss if I did not thank each and every one of you for your contributions in time, energy, imagination and work! I have already had two messages of thanks and praise for the fun time enjoyed and before we left yesterday, a number of our guests stopped me to say that it was a really great party. THANK YOU!!!

Just briefly ...

Jamie—our save-the-date, invitations, seed packs, etc. were lovely and your reminders appreciated!

Debbie—the slide presentation was marvelous as well as the safari show! Table cards and name tags were great and your centerpiece was super!

Cindy—great job with keeping tabs of all the responses and payments and for welcoming and directing our guests at the Gala!

Mary Sue—I wish you had eaten with all of us but honestly you did a marvelous job with the 50/50 and meeting latecomers—thank you!

Carole, Jennifer, and Kelly—those baskets were superb and the arrangement and organization absolutely terrific!! It seemed that we sold every single one of them! WOW! (I think my family made a huge dent!)

Cheryl—thanks for your help with reminders along the way and for the really nice speech! Also fun co-operation with delivering flowers and candles. It went really smoothly.

I've probably forgotten something along the way, but honestly I am still basking in the thrill of it having gone off without a hitch! Thank you all!

We will probably have “after the event” things to do. I'm hoping we will get our results fairly soon.

The Safari may have three couples seriously interested with Kelly and Dan being the final winners at \$2750.00. The Club earned \$750 from this alone and will learn more about this soon. I heard that there may be at least one other couple!

Anyway, let's get together to review and celebrate!

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU!

Anniversary Gala Chair, Joyce Basel

We need to recognize who was at the helm of all of this with the amazing ability to keep everyone on track even when ideas went awry. I call it the gift of diplomacy. Joyce is like a duck in water, everything just seems to roll off her back. She just keeps moving forward toward the goal.

Not many of us could keep up with Joyce—it must be a DNA thing. She's a kind of “super woman” among us and we are blessed to have had her as a leader, friend, initiator, and completer of tasks. Time does not seem to be a factor—somehow she gets it all done. Are we all not just a little bit envious?

She loves doing weddings and the daily tasks of rearranging flowers at Costco, recruiting extra hands as needed. On top of this she cares for Bobbie Pulito, visiting her daily and watching over her medical, financial, and household affairs. She makes time for family and friends and has been club president for 18 years along with presiding on various committees.

It would be remiss of us had we not thanked you, Joyce. You made this ship sail. It was a wonderful and successful 60th Anniversary Gala. Thank you for all you've done!



2023 Club Officers and Committees

*President	Cheryl Svec
*1st Vice President	Marietta Serenda
(Membership)	
*2nd Vice President	Debbie Matuszak
(Programs)	& Kimberly Kennedy
*3rd Vice President	Linda Kunesh
(Ways and Means)	
*Treasurer	Laurie Dring
*Publicity	Jamie Schneck
(Website, Trowel, Graphics)	
Publicity Team	
Publications.....	Akhila Meda
Proofreading	Linda Kunesh
Photo Retouching.....	Alan Schneck
Facebook.....	Cathy Gall
Website Support	Dan Vitacco
*Secretary.....	Joyce Basel
Plot-to-Plate Garden	Gail Sanders
Susan Glick-Shore, Eileen Spaman, Barbara Weisenburger	
Good Cheer	Jennifer Moore
Hospitality.....	Carol Lockerbie
Memorial Garden.....	Joyce Basel
Nursing Home Liaison.....	Chris Magnatowski

*Denotes Executive Board

Let Us Hear From You:
jschneck1233@gmail.com

Phone: 630-372-6003

Posting Months:

March, June, September and December

OUR VISION

To educate members and the community about gardening through informative and educational meetings, workshops and activities

- To develop and promote projects for civic beautification and environmental stewardship
- To support philanthropic endeavors which aid the residents of the Bloomingdale community and surrounding areas
- To provide opportunities for fellowship for those interested in gardening and environmental and civic responsibility
- To aid in the protection of native trees, flowers and birds
- To further the extermination of invasive and/or noxious plants

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to all persons at his or her request of application regardless of residence. Annual dues are \$25.00 for a single member and \$30.00 for a couple when paid January 1st through June 30th. (\$6.00 pays each member's State Garden Club dues; and \$7.00 for each couple).

Half year dues for new members are \$12.50 for single member, and \$15.00 per couple when paid July 1st thru December 31st.

Visitors are always welcome, but we encourage them to join the club after 3 visits in order to help out with the costs of our monthly programming.

Meeting Location:

The 3rd Tuesday of each month. Social time and announcements at 1:15 PM. Program begins at 2. We meet at:

Cornerstone Faith Community Church
 118 S. First Street, Bloomingdale, IL 60108

Contact Us At:

bloomingtondalegardenclub@gmail.com

We're On The Web:

bloomingtondalegardenclub.org