



# PORTAGE PARK GARDEN CLUB

*Come Help Us Grow*

February 22nd, 2024

## In this issue:

- Introducing the New Board Members
- Our 2024 Program at a Glance
- What is NPK?
- Announcements

Welcome to the 25th year of the Portage Park Garden Club. Our first meeting will be this **Saturday, February 24th, 2024 at 9:30 am**. We will meet at the Trinity Lutheran Church, 5106 N. LaCrosse where there is plenty of free parking, ground level meeting room and easy access to bathrooms. We serve coffee and snacks. We will be playing Bingo with fun prizes to win!

## 2024 at a glance...

Feb 24th  
Treasurer's Report  
Bingo

March 23rd  
Gardening Indoors  
Joy Walker

April 27th  
Flower Arranging  
Harry Nyholm  
Sharpening by Dave

May 25th  
Landscaping  
Rich Hord

June 29th  
Garden Walk

July 27th  
Speaker TBD

August 24th  
Field Trip

September 28th  
Speaker Bats

October 26th  
Board Elections  
Year in Review

## Our New Board Members

*Anita Klein: President*

*Lisa Smith: Vice-President*

*Sherry Fantauzzo: Secretary*

*Debra O'Kennard: Treasurer*

*Jerald O'Kennard: Tech Support*

*Julie Larsen: Programming/Outreach*

*Joy Walker: Communications/  
Newsletter*

*Inquiries about joining the Portage Park Garden Club should be emailed to [ppgardenclub10@gmail.com](mailto:ppgardenclub10@gmail.com).*

## What is NPK?

All plants need nutrients! Of course they need water and air (oxygen and carbon dioxide) but they also need other nutrients such as potassium, phosphorus, nitrogen, calcium, sulfur and magnesium—the macro nutrients and iron, zinc, copper, boron, manganese, molybdenum and chloride—the micro nutrients. *continued on next page*

Match these seeds to their names:

- squash,
- peas,
- radishes,
- peppers,
- carrots,
- broccoli,
- kale,
- parsley,
- cucumbers,
- chives,
- sunflowers,
- beets

Answers on next page



Comments, suggestions and contributions about this newsletter may be sent to Joy: [justonlyweb@gmail.com](mailto:justonlyweb@gmail.com). Please include PPGC in the subject heading.

When you buy a fertilizer it will often have an NPK number like 10-10-10 or 25-5-15 or 4-4-4. These numbers refer to the percent by weight of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. (*Note: potassium has the symbol K from kalium [latin]*) This allows for the comparison of different fertilizers that may use different chemicals to provide the nutrients. Nitrogen promotes lots of green leafy growth. Some plants like grass

### Announcements

Please consider donating items for our raffles. Items should be new or in excellent condition and should have a gardening theme. Wine is an exception to this (*well not really because wine comes from grapes;-)*

Consider volunteering your garden for the June garden walk.

and corn need a lot of nitrogen. Heavy rain depletes nitrogen. If there is too much nitrogen, like if you have a German Shepherd that pees in your yard, plants may put too much energy into their leaves and not develop their flowers. Phosphorus is for the roots. Too much phosphorus can run off with the rain and end up in lakes and rivers causing too much algae to grow and starving fish of oxygen. If you think you need phosphorus you might want to test your soil to be sure. Potassium is usually readily available, especially in clay soils. The best time to use fertilizer is AFTER a heavy rain as this is when the soil is most likely to be depleted of nutrients. Micronutrients are usually very available in soils in the Midwest but there are situations where soils can become deficient. There is a relationship between pH (acidity or basicity) of soils and the available nutrients. For example, iron is more available in acidic soils.

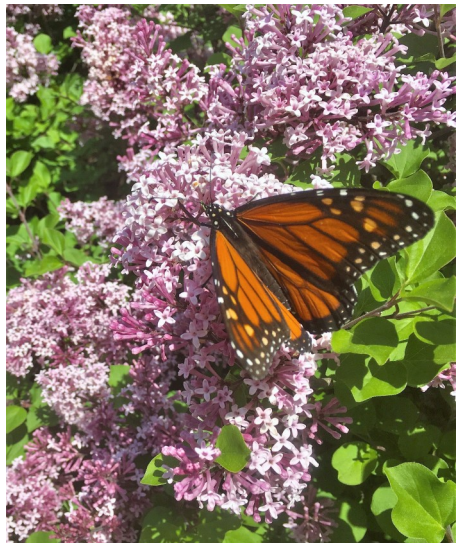
When considering houseplants the situation is completely different than outdoors. Houseplants need fertilizers as they use the finite amount of nutrients they are given in the soil you provide. You could repot them periodically and give them fresh soil—or feed them. If you are growing plants hydroponically then nutrients are essential or the plants just won't make it.

There isn't a one recipe for all formula. Every plant is different. We grow tropical plants as houseplants and they evolved in completely different environments. The best approach would be to research the needs of the specific plant then feed it according to its needs. Of course, the other approach is to wing it and just see what grows:-)



Last month's mystery plant:  
*Creeping Phlox.*

New mystery plant—  
do you know what it is?



#### Answers to seed puzzle:

parsley, cucumber, peas, sunflowers

Beets, chives, kale, carrots

Peppers, broccoli, radishes, squash