



July-August Garden News 2025

It's Our 100th Anniversary!



In celebration of our 100th Park District anniversary, I've been digging up some historical facts about the garden program. Community Gardens have been a part of park district programming since the 1972 when it first began. Hugely popular from the start, residents were eager to roll up their sleeves and plant their own vegetables to combat rising food prices as well as a desire to put garden-fresh vegetables on the dinner table. And besides, gardening was, and still is, easy, fun and rewarding! As Frank Stucko quipped "You put in your seeds and wait for the Good Lord's blessing".



5/15/1976 Frank Stucko tending his garden at Sunset Meadows

By 1976, the demand for garden rentals grew to over 700 plots at Camelot, Frontier and Pioneer Parks. Each plot was 25 x 30 and cost \$5. Renters had to plow their own space and bring their own water! Soon, additional plots opened up at Kirchoff & Wilke, (Sunset Meadows) and even under the ComEd Right of Way near Camelot. As a matter of fact, *farming and gardening* was so popular in this era that a real-working farm was pitched to the community for the south side of town that was to include animals, a barn, fields of

vegetables, a green house, and class rooms. While that didn't materialize, a playground and park did! Prairie Park, at 1681 S. Belmont Avenue emulates a farm atmosphere and was renovated this past spring.

The Park District works closely with the Village of Arlington Heights to program open space like detention ponds, for sports and garden leisure. Some of you may remember the Cypress Garden plots in the detention basin at Arlington Heights Rd. and Cypress Street. For decades, this was a popular garden spot until recently when the Village needed to reclaim it for storm water purposes.



Arlington Heights started out as a farming community and despite our growth, the Park District maintains a healthy number of gardens to offer the public each spring. Our staff work hard to till the fields in fall and disc them in spring before laying out the plots. Upgraded irrigation provides renters with seven pumps between the two locations- Frontier and Forest View. While many homeowners enjoy their own backyard garden, our community gardens are here for you.

So, sit back and watch your garden grow and know you are making history!

Herbal Mosquito Repellent Spray

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 C fresh basil leaves | 1. Boil basil & mint leaves in the water for 10 mins. |
| 1 C fresh mint leaves | 2. Remove from heat and let cool completely. |
| 2 C distilled water | 3. Strain the liquid to remove the leaves. Add witch hazel. |
| 2 T witch hazel | 4. Pour liquid into spray bottle using a funnel. |
| | 5. Shake well before each use and apply to skin or clothes. |

C= cup T = Tablespoon

Send pictures, gardening tips, recipes, comments & suggestions to: gardens@ahpd.org