

New Project: No Beginning Date: April 2021

Completion Date: October 2021

1. Brief summary and objectives of project:

The Garden Club of Decatur takes seriously our club pledge to “encourage conservation of our natural resources, to aid in the protection of native trees, plants and birds”. We open each club meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and the Garden Clubs of Illinois Pledge and our programs are designed to promote a greater understanding of our need to contribute as gardeners to our environment. First Vice-President Kathy Stopher and her committee once again provided members with a wide variety of informative speakers.

At the Club meeting in April, Elizabeth Jeffrey, Professor Emerita, Department of Food, Science and Human Nutrition of University of Illinois gave a presentation on trees and shrubs in our gardens that provide for pollinators and other wildlife. Our May meeting was a trip to Allerton Park for a guided tour of the gardens in this lovely park. The July meeting was a presentation by Crossing Healthcare that informed the club about their vegetable garden and fruit orchard that provides fresh fruits and vegetables to their low income clients. This garden is one of very few gardens across the country that support clients of a healthcare service. Continuing to expand our knowledge Heather Wilcox of Growing Grounds in Bloomington Illinois provided information of care of house plants and tropical at our August meeting. Our September meeting the presenter was Becky Newton from Wren’s Gate in Decatur, IL on how to create beautiful designs using cut flowers from our gardens. The October meeting was a presentation by Jim and Kay Wessbecher of Decatur, IL on how to maintain our rose gardens.

The Garden Club of Decatur publishes a monthly newsletter where Conservation Chair Verlyn Rosenberger provide informative and timely environmental articles each month. The topics are wide ranging and very informative. The topics have included; solving the plastic problem, saving the Great Lakes bird populations, and the Bremer Bird Sanctuary. Verlyn also keeps our club members aware of local conservation opportunities in which they may wish to participate.

2. Involvement of club members, other organizations, etc.:

The membership of the Garden Club of Decatur continues to enjoy our program offerings with our monthly meetings typically drawing 50 members, approximately 50% of the total membership. We were very fortunate that our meeting room allowed us to have 50 members attend when Covid restrictions limited the amount of attendees.

3. Project expenses and means of funding:

The costs of speakers varies but generally runs between \$100 and \$300. This cost is built into the annual budget. The Garden Club of Decatur’s income is derived from annual dues (approximately \$2,200); and annual spring plant sale (approximately \$2,000); and miscellaneous income from activities such as awards, raffles, and a bake sale (approximately \$1,000).

4. Continuing involvement, follow-up, maintenance:

The Garden Club of Decatur continues to support conservation and environmental topics among our members. The leadership of our Program Chair and Conservation Chair provide a wide range of topics and this leadership will continue to make our members aware of the need to protect our environment.