

We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 25 Issue 3 March 2021



The purpose of the West Chicago Garden Club shall be to increase interest in gardening through sharing our ideas and knowledge, promoting and participating in community beautification and protecting and promoting a clean environment in which we live.

Meeting Date: April 22

Meeting Location:

ZOOM Online Meeting

Meeting Time:

6:30PM Zoom start

7:00PM Program

Designing a Flower Bed with Seasonal Interest



This month's speaker, Nancy Heath, comes to us from the University of Illinois Extension Speakers Bureau.

Have you ever seen a garden that just took your breath away? You visit again, two months

later, and the garden is again in full glory. How do people do this? How do design a garden that offers visual interest through the seasons? This lesson will walk you through the design process step-by-step, You will learn how to plan a garden that will offer you visual interest spring through fall with a few winter accents as well.

Nancy sent us a brief biography:

I am a seedling from the newest crop of DuPage Master Gardeners, and so proud to be a part of this supportive community. I have been gardening for about 30 years. My parents were gardeners and as a child I found plants tedious. But, like an heirloom tomato, I couldn't escape my genes, and I have been devoted to gardening all my adult life. My husband is also a gardener and we have many stimulating discussions about mulch and the like. We have lived in Lisle for 30 years, and have two grown sons, two cats, and two dogs.

One of my favorite things about gardening is propagation. I am fascinated by the ways plants reproduce themselves, and how we as gardeners can assist in the process, or subvert it in the case of weeds. Dividing and replanting perennials is my idea of a good time.

I am also a Master Naturalist and a Morton Arboretum Plant Clinic volunteer. Although I have gained confidence as a gardener through the Master Gardener program, I still have to remind myself often: "If you're not killing plants, you're not growing as a gardener."

Look for the Garden Club email on the morning of April 22nd which will have the link to the Zoom meeting.



MAY 27TH MEETING

BEE AMAZED!

BEE DELIGHTED!

BEE AT THE KRUSE HOUSE!

Notes from the President

Dan Beebe

Happy Spring! What a wonderful season we are having this year! Everywhere I look there are bulbs, bushes and trees blooming. I was a little worried that the warm temperatures we had a few weeks ago would shorten the bloom time of many of my springtime favorites, but the rain and cooler weather have really helped us to have so many different plants in bloom right now.

As you may have noticed, we are going to start this month's Zoom meeting at 6:30pm to allow everyone some time to socialize before the speaker starts her presentation at 7:00pm. After the speaker, the meeting will stay open for a while for anyone who just wants to chat for a while with other gardeners.

Although we are not having a plant sale this year, I am looking for a few stalwart volunteers to help me clean up and straighten our plant sale supplies at the Barn. We will probably hold two cleanup sessions over the next couple of months. The first cleanup session will be on Saturday, May 29th from 9am-Noon. The second session will be in June. If you are able to help with the sorting and stacking of pots, please email westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com or let me know in person at the May meeting on the 27th.

As you plant your gardens, save your pots and mini blinds (for plant labels) and we will allow drop offs at the Barn during the cleanup sessions. We are most in need of 'trade gallon' pots, but will take other pots, too. We also use a lot of 3 1/2" round pots and trays at the sale and can always use these, too. We do *not* need any large pots (over 2 gallons) that would usually hold shrubs or trees.

Hoping to see you all at the meeting on the 27th and at least some of you on the 29th. I hope that we will not need to do this for much longer, but for now please remember to wear a mask and maintain social distancing at both events.

Warm, Spring Wishes -

Dan



Zoom Meeting Information

We have had a great turnout for our first couple of Zoom meetings. Although we do not have any more Zoom practice sessions scheduled, if you need help getting started, please email WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com. We will do our best to get you going with Zoom.



The [January Newsletter](#) had extra information to help you get started with Zoom on the last page. If you haven't used Zoom before, that information will hopefully get you started. We are planning to use Zoom for the next few months while we wait for vaccinations and/or warmer weather for outdoor meetings.

Out and About

Kerry Perry



Today was a nice day to visit one of DuPage County's 60 forest preserves. Fullersburg Woods in Oakbrook is home to the Graue Mill which is the only operating waterwheel gristmill in Illinois in its original spot. And, it's one of only three authenticated Underground Railroad stations in the state.

The Graue family dug the ditches recovering clay used to make bricks. The family built a kiln, fired the bricks and raised the mill structure and waterwheel. The mill went into operation in the summer of 1852.

The surrounding woods have great paths. Daffodils, hyacinths, brunnera (Forget Me Nots) and May apples were popping up or blooming.

The mill and woods are a lovely place to visit. Get out and enjoy nature.



It's Spring at the Kruse House

Spring has arrived in full force in the Kruse garden, thanks to the recent spate of warm weather and a little help from the Kruse House gardeners. Clusters of daffodils sprout from bulbs planted last fall, and the rock garden in the back is lush with tiers of grape hyacinths. Supplementing this show are borders and pots planted by the Kruse House crew with plugs of violas, johnny jump-ups, alyssum, and stock donated by Cantigny.

The return of spring, of course, has also meant the return of the first crop of weeds—blankets of creeping Charlie and tenacious clumps of wild violets among the more obnoxious. On Wednesday, April 7th, the Kruse House Crew assembled in the garden for its first official work day of 2021, starting in on the weeds and clipping and removing dried stalks and other debris from last season. The goal is to tidy up the garden for the early summer blooms—and for the arrival of a very special swarm of “bees” at the end of spring (“bee” on the look out for them!).

Want to help out in the Kruse House Garden this year? The Crew works every Wednesday in the garden from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Contact Billie Childress (billiecd@sbcglobal.net) or Kerry Perry (kerry7000@yahoo.com) if you are interested.



One of the many clumps of daffodils sprouting from bulbs planted last fall .



A bed planted with alyssum plugs donated by Cantigny.



Grape hyacinths in full bloom in the backyard rock garden.



Kruse House volunteer Chris Gicela goes at the creeping charlie

Local News for Gardeners

Cantigny is participating in the EnChroma Color Accessibility Program, offered by [EnChroma](#), creators of patented eyewear for color blindness. Guests may now borrow EnChroma glasses at the information kiosk inside the Cantigny Park Visitors Center on a first-come, first-served basis. The special glasses enable the colorblind to experience an expanded range of colors as well as enhanced vibrancy, clarity, and differentiation.

Various styles of glasses are available for children and adults, for use with or without prescription eyeglasses. The glasses are for indoor and outdoor use. There is no charge to borrow the glasses, but a \$75 deposit is required.

Cantigny is the first public attraction in the Chicago suburbs to acquire EnChroma glasses for its guests.

The Tri-Village Garden Club will hold their annual plant sale on Saturday, May 8 from 9 AM to 1 PM at the Bartlett Log Cabin, located in Bartlett Park, 211 N. Eastern Ave. This is the day before Mother's Day and there will be a large selection of annuals and perennials that attract hummingbirds, butterflies and other pollinators: A perfect gift for

This is a link to a Forest Preserve article on spring clean up, with suggestions and reasons to delay: <https://www.dupageforest.org/blog/spring-cleaning-garden>

Bees Take Flight

Pamela Darrah

Our 12 Garden Club artists have completed their work and the Bees they created are being prepped for installation in the Kruse Garden during the first week of May. We want to provide a small taste without spoiling the surprise of the completed Bees, so here is a "quilt" of small details.

For those members in West Chicago, there is an article on the center page of the city newsletter "Window to West Chicago" about this project. (We would usually have a link to the digital version on the City website, but it is not there yet—it will presumably show up there soon.)

We are planning to hold our May 27th meeting in the garden so we will all be able to see the Bees in the garden.



2021 Blooming Fest Reimagined

City of West Chicago

From April 12th Press Release: As anticipation for a return to the garden mounts, the City of West Chicago is planning some unique ways to embrace spring and fill the void caused by the cancellation of Blooming Fest, an annual event which normally brings thousands of plant and craft lovers downtown on the third Saturday of May.

Nicolette Stefan, Special Event Coordinator for the City, has put together a tremendous schedule of alternative programming that will include classes and sales from a local greenhouse and other garden-related organizations, and exciting giveaways that will keep people coming back to the Blooming Fest Facebook page for details throughout the month of May.

"The City's abundance of caution in preventing the spread of COVID-19 has required the cancellation of large gatherings like those found at Blooming Fest, but residents and visitors who look forward to getting their annual garden fix in West Chicago will enjoy our alternative programming this spring," said Stefan.

Working with several great community partners, WeGrow Dreams Greenhouse and Garden Center, as well as The GardenWorks Project, The Conservation Foundation, and City Bee Savers, residents and visitors will have opportunities to shop, learn and become inspired.

For more details, visit the [City of West Chicago website to see the full press release](#) with more information about the various options available. There are 3 seminars available that require pre-registration and have limited space.

Nature Notes

Kerry Perry

Looking out my kitchen window this first week of April, I spotted a clump of white. A friend had donated the plant but I had forgotten what it was. After a bit of research, I recalled that it's Bloodroot.

Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*) is a native and one of the first wildflowers to bloom in spring. The "root", consists of a thickened rhizome covered with fibrous roots. A mature rhizome, if cut open, will "bleed" a reddish orange sap. The Cherokee used this sap to dye fabric and leather.

The root puts forth a single multi-lobed leaf that curls protectively around a white bud, guarding it from cold winds. When the days warm, the flower unfurls with a burst of activity.

Ants collect and store the seeds in their colony. Some of the seeds are consumed, but some remain in the nest and later germinate. One naturalist noted that myrmecochory (this mutual partnership) is "a lovely orchestrated dance that is a part of the mystery and beauty in co-evolution happening all around us"..



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Club Information

Website: www.westchicagogardenclub.org
West Chicago Garden Club
P. O. Box 313, West Chicago, IL 60186
E-mail: westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com

Membership Information

Dues for 2020: Individual: \$15 Family: \$25 (2 people)

Board Meetings

2nd Thursday each month at 7 p.m.

Regular Meeting Location

St Andrew Lutheran Church—155 N Prince Crossing Rd

2021 WCGC BOARD:

- President: Dan Beebe
- Vice President: Barb Bizzarri
- Treasurer: Kerry Perry
- Secretary: Cherie Kraft
- Program Director: Barb Melville
- Plant Sale Chair: Dan Beebe
- Information Director: Pamela Darrah
- Kruse House Chair: Billie Childress
- Hospitality Chair: Jan Grismore
- Director at Large: Mary Schramer

To Contact any Board Member, please send email to WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com

You're invited to come explore, get inspired, learn
and add some beauty to your garden at



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