



WE GO GARDENING

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

www.westchicagogardenclub.org

Volume 19 Issue 8 August 2015

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Babysitting—The Club provides babysitting during its regular monthly meetings when held at Faith Community Church. There is no fee to you for the service and no reservations are necessary.

Rides— Need a ride to the meeting? Call Billie Childress at 231-1791 the Wednesday before the meeting.

August 27th Meeting: “Inspirational Gardens & Plants” with Rich & Susan Eyre

Rich Eyre is the owner of Rich’s Foxwillow Pines Nursery in Woodstock, IL. The nursery emphasizes dwarf and rare plant material especially suited for modern downsized spaces. All tree selections exhibit a unique quality whether it is a superior growth habit, outstanding color, unusual texture, or extremely slow growth. He can help you become a garden-artist painting the landscape with an expanded palette of plants.

Rich will take us around the world to gardens and plants that inspired him. Visiting new gardens provides information and inspiration. As a result, we have a chance to enhance our designs with a great idea, new layout, or better use of plants in the landscape.

Faith Community Church at 910 Main Street in West Chicago

6:45pm - refreshments and gathering

7:00pm - brief business meeting

7:15pm - speaker

Next Meeting: Thursday, September 24th

BULB BINGO!



Upcoming events (outside the club)

Morton Arboretum: Acorn Express Tram Tours. View the Arboretum's 1700 acres on a guided tram tour. One hour ride. Tram service available until October. Fees apply. Call 630-968-0074 for times. Weather permitting.

Growing Place: Gardening 101: Getting the Most Out of Your Yard. Sept. 5, 10AM—11AM. Aurora Location. Fall Festival. Sept. 19 & 20, 9AM-5PM Aurora Location. Phone: 630-820-8088.

Chicago Botanic Garden: Bike the Garden. Sept 13, 7:30AM. Free, registration required: <https://register.chicagobotanic.org/show.asp?shcode=2559>

City of West Chicago: Mexican Independence Day Parade & Celebration. Sunday, September 13. Noon—6pm. Main Street area.

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



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Club information

www.westchicagogardenclub.org

West Chicago Garden Club
P. O. Box 313, West Chicago, IL 60186
westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com

Membership information

Dues for 2015: Individual: \$15 Family: \$25

Board Meetings

2nd Thursday each month at 7 p.m.

Regular meeting location

Faith Community Church
910 Main Street, West Chicago

2015 WCGC BOARD:

President:

Dick Darrah, 630-584-1900, info@bwdarrah.com

Vice President:

Keith Letsche, 630-293-0192, keithletsche@aol.com

Treasurer:

Barb Darrah, 630-584-1900, info@bwdarrah.com

Secretary:

Annette Wulffe, 630-462-0208, annettewulffe@yahoo.com

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Pauline Briggs, 630-254-2969, briggspm@gmail.com

Marcy Kozlowski, 630-846-3466

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Information Director & Publicity:

Melissa Birch, 630-621-0128, melissabirch@gmail.com



Planned WCGC Events - 2015

Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event	Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event
22 Jan	Cindy Tyley	Tips for Lazy Gardener	25 Jun	Nancy Carrol: Grow and Go Green	At Kruse Garden
26 Feb	Don Guzan	Basics of Pruning	30 Jul	All members	President's Picnic
26 Mar	Shawn M. Odneal	Vertical Gardening	27 Aug	Rich & Susan Eyre	Inspirational Gardens & Plants
23 Apr	Billie Childress	Kruse House History	24 Sep	Bulb Bingo	Pauline
16 May	ALL MEMBERS!	PLANT SALE!	22 Oct	Mel Zaloudek	Epiphytes
28 May	Blumen Gardens	FIELD TRIP!	19 Nov	All members	Dinner & Garden Dollar Auction



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News from Kruse

by Billie, Angie, Kerry and Tom

It's the beginning of the end.....of Summer. And we are sad to see it go.

The garden has been delightful this year. The plantings have matured and filled in. It will always need tweaking and trimming and replacements, but it's a really nice garden. I think Bertha Kruse would be proud. The purple cone flowers always put on a good show and here they are joined by Annabelle hydrangea, morning glories and a yellow Daylily.



This red Daylily is really "a looker". It is tall and its vibrant color is complimentary to the purple smoke bushes. Angie and Tom severely cut back/prune all our smoke trees every other year in the Spring. I cringe and worry that they surely killed them each time they are cut back. It seems like forever before the lush deep purple foliage emerges and I take a lot of razzing about not having faith in their techniques.

We always see butterflies when we are gardening. This swallow tail is perched on a variegated tall sedum but she had been giving the purple cone flowers most of her attention. I didn't get a photo of a monarch but they have been numerous as well. We have a dozen or so species milk weed plants (favored host of the monarch) in the garden and saw the eggs on the backs of the leaves. By now the caterpillars will have devoured most of the leaves well on their way to becoming beautiful monarch butterflies.



One of our favorite garden accessories is a holster for our small clipper/pruner. We all have one (Tom's is not visible in picture, but he is wearing it on his right side). We are as faithful to our holsters as the Cowboys of the old west were to theirs. We frequently need to prune and this way a tool is at our fingertips, not lost in a pile of refuse. We'd be lost without these things! These gardeners look very fresh but that's just because the photo was taken before we started. Believe me, we are sweaty and have dirty knees when we leave.

See you in the garden.....Billie



FIELD TRIP!
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12 at 9:00 AM

Plan on spending the day in Rockford where we will tour Anderson Japanese Gardens, lunch at the Wild Rose Saloon (organic menu) and enjoy a guided tour of the Tinker Swiss Cottage Museum & Garden. Please have \$10 (cash or check WCGC) with your reservation to hold your spot.

Any questions please call Annette Wulffe 630 346-0406. Stop by the table at our club meeting to sign up.

**IF YOU'RE NOT GOING ON THE FIELD TRIP,
ENJOY THE KRUSE HOUSE AND GARDENS:
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12 from 12:00PM to 3:00PM**

The West Chicago Historical Society will again be sponsoring the Kruse House Museum Ice Cream Social and Silent Auction on Saturday, September 12 (Rain date: Sunday, September 13).

Great cakes and pies are served along with the ice cream and you can't beat the items on the auction. It's fun! House tours will also be available. The special theme this year is railroad memorabilia. Don't miss this event! It will also give you another chance to see the garden. Our Krusies have been grooming it just for YOU! You will be impressed by the beautiful blue ageratum.



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The Wonderful World of Hydrangeas

by The Growing Place

Hydrangea are the belle of the summer garden, providing splashes of color at a time when few other shrubs are in flower. These are not your grandmother's Hydrangea. In recent years plant breeders around the world have been focusing their efforts on creating new varieties. Their work has resulted in colors, flower types, growth habits and garden performance that were unheard of a generation ago. Several species make up the genus Hydrangea and within each species there are many distinct varieties.

Hydrangea arborescens

H. arborescens is famous for their large, snowball-like blooms. The most common variety is 'Annabelle' recognized for its large, tight, symmetrical white blooms. 'Incrediball' is a newer arborescens variety that has stronger stems. All the arborescens varieties can tolerate full sun to full shade conditions and are hardy to zone 4. Arborescens varieties bloom on old and new wood. They can be pruned in the fall or spring, but when left through the winter the dried blooms add winter interest to the garden.

Hydrangea macrophylla

The most colorful of all the species is *H. macrophylla*. The mophead varieties are the most popular because of their gaudiness, but lacecaps with their flatter flower heads are gaining popularity. Macrophylla are unique because most set buds in the fall and overwinter them. Although root hardy to zone 5, a hard winter can kill buds and curtail flowering. An early fall or late spring frost may also affect flowering. Adding a light mulch in the fall may improve bloom reliability. Plants of the Endless Summer Collection, such as 'Twist-n-Shout,' or newer addition 'BloomStruck', bloom on both old and new wood. This means that plants whose blooms are killed in the winter can still generate new buds from their base. Pruning is best done after they leaf out in the spring and remove only the dead stems.

One of the most interesting characteristics of macrophylla hydrangea is their variable flower colors. For this type of hydrangea the bloom color is determined by the pH of the soil. In Chicagoland, our soil pH is generally high (or alkaline) so the flowers tend to be pink. In high pH soils aluminum, the element that determines blue flower color, is unavailable to plants. To turn macrophylla hydrangeas blue you need to lower the pH in the soil to make it more acidic. We recommend amending your soil with Espoma Soil Acidifier and organic materials such as pine fines, pine needles, or decomposed oak leaves before planting to help change the flowers to a lavender or blue color.

Hydrangea paniculata

The varieties of the species *H. paniculata*, named for their lacy, conical flower heads, are the hardiest hydrangea and well suited to Midwest climate and soils. The paniculate varieties are versatile in the landscape because they are available in a wide range of growth habits from the 2-3' tall 'Bobo', to 6-8' tall 'Quick Fire', and sizes in between. Flowers produced by most of the paniculata varieties open a brilliant white, and then turn to hues of warm pink. Two exceptions are 'Limelight' or the smaller 'Little Lime', which start out chartreuse, then turn white, and fade to a subdued antique pink. Note that pH doesn't affect the flower color of paniculata varieties. Since paniculata bloom on new wood, its best to prune in early spring.

Hydrangea quercifolia

H. quercifolia or Oakleaf Hydrangea are know for their wonderful fall color and oak-shaped leaves. A great variety for smaller gardens is 'Pee Wee'. It grows to around 3-4' and in the fall leaves turn a striking reddish-purple. Flowers start as a white, fade to pink and dry to a papery brown. Oakleaf Hydrangea prefer moist well-drained soil. Prune this type of hydrangea after it flowers and only to control the size (if necessary). Because this type blooms on old wood, their buds are set on the previous year's growth. If you cut them down in the spring, you will remove flower buds for the coming year.

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