

# We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 28—Issue 8—August 2024



*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, sustainable environment in which to live.*

**Meeting Date: August 22**

**Meeting Location:**

**St Andrew Lutheran Church NE Corner of Prince  
Crossing & Geneva Rd**

**Meeting Time:**

**6:45PM Arrive & Mingle**

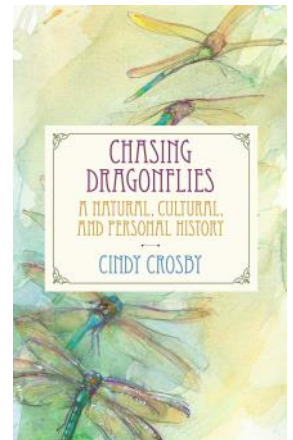
**7:00PM Business Meeting**

**7:15PM Program**

## Dragonflies and Damselflies

Our August speaker is Cindy Crosby. Cindy is a Master Gardener, a steward for the Schulenberg Prairie at Morton Arboretum and at Nachusa Grasslands in Franklin Grove, Illinois. She is also an author. Her most recent book is *Chasing Dragonflies: A Natural and Personal History*. Through Cindy's presentation, *Dragonflies and Damselflies: The Garden's Frequent Fliers*, we will discover the fascinating and bizarre lives of these jeweled garden fliers with plenty of group fun and lively interaction. There is so much to discover and marvel about! Be amazed at their natural history through close up photography of Illinois dragonflies. Find out how dragonflies tell us about the health of our waterways and the world. Discover how you can garden to attract these remarkable flying creatures.

**Ruth Kyme**



## We're Having a Tomato Tasting!

Everybody loves a homegrown tomato. It's also fun and satisfying to be able to share our abundant harvests. At our August meeting you will have the opportunity to share one of your garden tomato varieties and taste some other varieties as well. Bring one of your favorites or maybe a new variety that you are excited about. Please bring your tomato tastings pre-cut and ready to serve on a dish of your choice. Cherry tomatoes are sampling size and don't need to be cut. The club will provide small plates and forks for members to use.

Note: This month's refreshment volunteers are: Candy T, June L, Jen K

## Where to find us online

Website: [www.westchicagogardenclub.org](http://www.westchicagogardenclub.org)

Facebook:  
[facebook.com/westchicagogardenclub](https://facebook.com/westchicagogardenclub)

Instagram:  
[westchicagogardenclub](https://www.instagram.com/westchicagogardenclub)

**Next Month: Sept. 26**

**Plant Breeding  
Presented by Dianne Blazek**

## Note from the President

Dan Beebe

Pamela and I would like to thank everyone who attended last month's President's Picnic, especially those who helped with setup and takedown! We also want to extend our heartfelt appreciation to Marilyn Santos McNabb for her fabulous dessert spread. The food, wine, and good weather made for an excellent setting for us to socialize with over 80 of our club members and spouses. We hope everyone had a fun time, a chance to look around



Members visiting the Garden at Ball Horticulture.

our gardens, and an opportunity to learn a little about the history of the field where the picnic was held. We hope to have you all back in the future to share our journey as we move away from turf grass and towards more diverse spaces featuring native plants, shrubs, and trees.

Several members have expressed interest in native plants and their ecological benefits. Given the growing national movement towards using more natives in urban and suburban areas, member interest in this topic shouldn't be a surprise. While not part of an intentional, coordinated effort, the club is responding to this trend in several ways. In June, Ruth Gauss started writing a monthly newsletter article, Growing Native, to share the knowledge she has gained on the benefits of native plants. We also have an upcoming local field trip to Bruce Blake's native plant nursery and gardens. Our Fall field trip will include a stop at Possibility Place, a native plant, shrub, and tree nursery. As gardeners, we all learn through shared experiences. If you are interested in native plants, please pull me aside at one of our meetings or email me your thoughts, experiences, and plans for growing and propagating natives.

We also had a well-attended local field trip to the gardens at Ball Horticulture. We are so lucky to have access to these gardens located so close to home. I hope that all those who attended had as much fun as I did wandering around all of the garden 'rooms' and looking at the fabulous annual and perennial flowers, vegetables, and containers on display. As always, the hardscape and grounds did not disappoint. Kudos to the employees at Ball!

That's all for now. Hope to see you all soon,  
Dan

### **Club Information**

Website: [www.westchicagogardenclub.org](http://www.westchicagogardenclub.org)

P. O. Box 313, West Chicago, IL 60186

E-mail: [westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com)

### **Membership Information**

Dues for 2024: Individual: \$20 Family: \$30 (2 people)

### **Board Meetings**

2nd Thursday most months at 7 p.m.

### **Regular Meeting Location**

St Andrew Lutheran Church—155 N Prince Crossing Rd

### **2024 WCGC Board & Committees:**

President:	Dan Beebe
Vice President:	Janet Frogner
Treasurer:	Kerry Perry
Secretary:	Christina Covarrubias
Publicity Director:	Ruth Gauss
Information Director:	Pamela Darrah
Program Director:	Ruth Kyme
Member Services Director:	Lisa Marie Vogt
Director at Large:	Marilyn McNabb
Plant Sale Chair:	Mary Schramer & Dan Beebe

## Local Field Trip: Prairie Wind Native Plants Nursery

Ruth Kyme

Bruce Blake has invited us to visit and tour his native plant nursery, Prairie Wind Native Plants. For more information about this nursery, visit their website at <https://www.prairiewindnatives.com/>

Where: [1177 Londonberry Lane, Glen Ellyn 60137](#)

When: Saturday afternoon, August 24, between 2:00 and 5:00pm.

This is an Open House so you may arrive at any time convenient for you between 2:00 and 5:00.

Bruce will be there to share his knowledge about natives, answer questions, and “talk garden.” You will be able to purchase plants if you’d like. Car pooling is encouraged, as parking is limited.



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## Bus Field Trip: Possibility Place & Sunrise

Marilyn Santos McNabb

Mark your Calendars and Save the date! Our second field trip for 2024 has been set for Saturday, Sept 21! Meet up place will be the parking lot of St Andrew Church at 8:45 am. We will depart promptly at 9:00 am, please arrive on time! Bus services will be provided by Infinity Transportation and as usual if you would like to add a gratuity to our driver, we will pass an envelope on the way back to West Chicago, which will be at 5:00 pm!

Our field trip will visit two places, **Sunrise Woldhuis Farms** and Greenhouses in Grant Park, IL and **Possibility Place Nursery** in Monee, IL!

**Sunrise Woldhuis:** “With nearly 400,000 square feet of greenhouse growing space and 572,000 square feet of outdoor production, Sunrise provides quality perennials, annuals, trees, shrubs at very affordable prices! They produce over 7,600,000 spring annuals, 325,000 perennials, and 210,000 fall mums annually.”

**Possibility Place:** “Possibility Place specializes in growing plants native to the eastern United States, primarily those native to Northern Illinois! “From large contract grows for restoration projects to small back yard plantings, our goal is to get as many native plants in the ground as possible. We currently produce over 150 species of trees and shrubs and nearly 250 species of forbs, grasses and sedges. The majority of our plants’ seeds are collected in Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin. Plants grown from seed collected in these areas are better adapted to survive in these areas.”

Both Sunrise and Possibility Place have huge retail markets, so bring your cash, checks or credit cards! The bus has a lot of room for your purchases. Please visit their websites at <https://possibilityplace.com/> and <https://www.woldhuisfarms.com/> for more information.

A reminder that because we are visiting two places, there won’t be much time for a lunch or picnic so we are recommending that you bring a sack bag!

Price for this field trip is **\$10** for members. You are asked to [register at our Square Store](#) by September 7, after which we will open the registration to guests and nonmembers for **\$15**! Last day to sign up is Sept 20. If we do not reach our minimum attendance, we will cancel this trip!

Please dress appropriately!





## Would you help us?

**A successful club of any kind,  
depends on the volunteer work of its members.**

Please consider helping your garden club in one of the following areas:

Thank you to the 2 members who stepped forward to help with the Welcome Table and the Welcome Notecards! We are still looking for help with the following.

### Member Name Tags

- Manage name tags by creating and distributing to new members

### Refreshments

- Manage refreshment sign-up sheet
- Send treat reminders to participants

If you have any questions, or to sign up to volunteer, please see Janet Frogner or send an email to: [westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com)

Janet Frogner



### Meeting Setup

Are you only available once a month on the 4th Thursday? Consider helping set up chairs and 3 tables for our monthly meetings. Feel free to do this just once or help every month. To help, arrive by 6:15 PM, a board member will be there to meet you.

**Join us for our Spring Opening March 25 & 26!**  
 Free Seminars \* Artisan Market \* Terrarium Workshop  
 Visit [Countrysideflowershop.com](http://Countrysideflowershop.com) for details.  
**Call 815-459-8130 and register today!**

**Countryside**  
**Flower Shop, Nursery & Garden Center**

42W075 Route 38, Elburn, IL 60119

**Inspired to GROW**

Open April 1 - December 23  
 10am-5pm, 7 days a week

**Naperville** | 630.355.4000 | 25w471 Plank Rd  
 1 block south of Ogden Ave/Rte 34  
 & 2 blocks west of Naper Blvd

**Aurora** | 630.820.8088 | 2000 Montgomery Rd  
 2 blocks north of Ogden Ave/Rte 34  
 & Rush-Copley Medical Center

[thegrowingplace.com](http://thegrowingplace.com)

**The Growing Place**  
 Garden Center | Gift Shop | Gardens

**A Growing Legacy**

A lot has changed over the years but our commitment to our customers and to our community has not. Our goal remains providing high-quality, locally-grown plant and landscape material, expert advice and professional installation and design services.

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## News from Kruse

Barbara Darrah



The last day of July was a Wednesday and we stood in the Kruse House parking lot waiting for the driving rain to stop. Finally, we gave up, called it a day and prepared to meet on the coming hot, hazy days of August. Of course, the next Wednesday was a breezy perfect spring-like day. Here in the Midwest we never seem to know what the weather is going to do.

Nevertheless, it is August and as usual we are reaching into fall when I am not really through with summer. It used to be that summer lasted until Labor Day. It was a time for beach parties and barbeques and lazy days to read that novel waiting on the shelf. Now, it seems like, with back-to-school sales and upcoming elections, everything is pushing us towards fall.

Still, in the garden, August is the culmination of summer. Kruse glows with the hot pinks of phlox, the golden radiance of marigolds and black eyed susans and the scintillating red of the cannas and the perennial hibiscus.

These are nature's warm colors flaunting themselves in her last fling of the summer with the red/gold of the Viburnum echoing August's mellow fruitfulness. This is concentrated summer and we have a whole month to revel in it.

You are all welcome to join us at the Kruse garden to weed and deadhead on Wednesday mornings or to just walk around and enjoy summer's last stand.



We welcome you to visit Kruse House Gardens and if you are interested in working in the gardens we are there Wednesdays, from 9:00 to 11:30am.

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

**HEINZ BROTHERS**  
Greenhouse Garden Center

2010 East Main St. (Rt. 64), St. Charles  
630.377.6288 [www.HeinzBrothers.com](http://www.HeinzBrothers.com)  
Your Gardening Source....

 **PLATT HILL NURSERY** | 222 W. Lake St. • Bloomingdale  
2400 Randall Rd. • Carpentersville

We have the right plant for the right place!  
We enjoy sharing our love of plants and knowledge with our customers year round. Stop in and browse.

*For the Love of Gardening...*



## Kruse Garden All-Club Garden Evening

Christina Covarrubias

We realize the 162 members of our club are not all available at 9am on a Wednesday –our normal Kruse Crew gardening day- so we've made a spot for you!

A member of the Kruse Crew will be there **Friday, August 30th** to guide you in a variety of simple gardening projects to keep our garden looking fresh, vibrant and, coincidentally, ready for the Kruse museum's ice cream social the following weekend.

This is a great way to earn some additional garden bucks, perhaps meet some new members, familiarize yourself with some new plants that grow well in our area and help our very faithful Kruse crew who are getting a little tired at this point in the summer!

Please bring your favorite weeding tool, pruners and kneeling pad –don't forget to mark them as your own. Looking forward to gardening with many of you at Kruse House 527 Main Street West Chicago, IL 60185 **Friday, August 30, 2024, 5-7PM.**



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## Board Position: Information Director

Pamela Darrah



I believe that I am on my third stint as the Information Director for the club. The name has changed over the years, but the job has always been about communicating with our members.

This includes editing and publishing our monthly newsletter and handling the club email account and sending out email to our members. I also maintain our website. I do not write the newsletter—the majority of the articles are sent to me and I put it all together. Now that the newsletter is mostly sent out as a link to the PDF version on the website, the handful of snail mail copies are sent out by the Member Services Director (Thank you

Lisa Marie!) I also often coordinate with our Publicity Director (Ruth Gauss) since sometimes the information we use overlaps.

## Getting to Know ...

Janet Frogner



### Maritza Gonzalez

**Resident of:** Geneva; grew up in West Chicago      **Year:** 2020

**WCGC Member:** June 2024

**How did you become a member:** 2024 Blooming Fest - Marilyn was super helpful with questions I had about certain plants. Coincidentally, my mother recognized her from having worked together and we ended up chatting and we joined on the spot!

**What is your current profession:** Estate planning and estate/trust administration advisor

**What are you most proud of in your garden:** Our plants that we haven't killed

**A garden mistake you made:** Planting without planning for bunnies

**What do you love most about gardening:** The happiness it brings us when we see the blooms and critters enjoying our garden as a source of food, water, shade and shelter.

**What tip, trick, or words of wisdom can you share:** We're novice gardeners, but we recommend marking down plants. Who knows how many plants we've planted and forgot about.

**Favorite place to purchase seeds and plants:** West Chicago Blooming Fest!

**Favorite spot in your garden:** Sitting on our bench under the shaded tree looking out at our small pond. I took this picture in the same spot while playing fetch with my sister's dog, Penny, in early June.



**What plant can't you wait to see this season emerge from your garden:** My peonies have bloomed already (they're my favorite), but I can't wait for my hibiscus flower to bloom this summer.

**What are you looking forward to this season:** Spring is my favorite season in our garden, the second picture was taken in late April.



## Growing Native—Made in the Shade

Ruth Gauss

Hi, gardening friends! Can I just say that most gardeners would not think Made in the Shade applied to their garden! It's a great place to relax in the heat of summer, but it's a challenging place to grow plants. Especially if you are trying to grow plants that support wildlife by planting native plants that bloom throughout the growing season.

I think that there are two aspects of this challenge. The first being that it's hard to find places that sell the native plants that thrive in the shade and the other that mid-season is not a time when there are very many plants flowering to help maintain nectar sources for pollinators and also give our shady gardens the colors we equate with beauty.

I have a couple of resources that I hope will help us all find the plants we are looking for as well as some thoughts about how to deal with the mid-summer slump.

First, the resources: plants can be found at our local garden centers. They all seem to carry at least a few shade tolerant native plants and I firmly believe that shopping with them is important as we need to support local resources for plants. That said, I also like to shop the pop-up types of native plant sales that are offered by the forest preserve and through other local resources, like our Bloomingfest Plant Sale. I will say that my personal favorite, is [The Nature Foundation of Will County](#). It's a bit of a hike to Romeoville for most of the sales, but what I appreciate is the diverse list of plants available, the fact that they have advance online ordering available, they offer plugs which are inexpensive and also easy to fit in most anywhere (especially when there is a lot of root competition from trees), and the fact that they offer multiple sales throughout the growing season.

Second, regarding mid-season: I think we need to consider the fact that a native woodland garden might not be in bloom all season long. Spring is definitely a time for many woodland wildflowers to shine and fall sees more blooming, but June and July there isn't as much blooming in a woodland setting. We can plan for lots of texture by planting a variety of groundcovers, ferns, and sedges, but mid-season might be fairly quiet otherwise. I have a shepherd's hook that usually has a fuchsia that the hummingbirds enjoy that's placed in the middle of my shady front yard. It gives some lovely color and yummy nectar for any critter that wishes to visit. I don't feel like I'm wasting potential native garden space by using this technique, but even if I chose to plant some impatiens or a few hostas or coralbells, it's okay to plant something that brings me joy that might also support the critters. Give yourself grace and plant something that brings you joy.

I hope this was helpful! Happy (native) gardening!



Virginia Bluebell (*Mertensia virginica*) from my very shady front yard—blooming before my maple leaves out



Zigzag Goldenrod (*Solidago flexicaulis*) {picture from [Wisconsin Wildflower](#)} This is one that I'd love to add to my shady garden.



## Care to Share?

We are looking for anything that our members would like to share. To participate just email your item(s) along with your name and contact information (if you need to be contacted) to [westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com)

## Kruse House Ice Cream Social—September 7th

Although you can stop by and visit the garden any time, the Kruse House Museum is only open on Saturdays from 11:00am to 3:00pm from May to September.

September 7th from Noon to 3:00pm will be the Ice Cream Social, primary fundraiser for the Historical Society that runs and maintains the Kruse House Museum. This event is held out in the garden and is a wonderful opportunity to visit the garden, the museum and enjoy some tasty desserts.

Tickets are \$5.00 each and can be purchased at the entrance of the Kruse House on the day of the event.



## Great News posted on the West Chicago Park District Facebook Page



We're excited to share some fantastic news! The West Chicago Park District has renewed its Arboretum Accreditation at Level II from the Morton Arboretum!

This recognition highlights our commitment to excellence in tree conservation and public garden standards. As part of the Morton Register of Arboreta, we play a crucial role in advancing our shared mission to plant and preserve trees. Our Level II accreditation demonstrates our adherence to enhanced arboretum standards, including:

- Meeting all criteria for Level I accreditation
- Maintaining a diverse collection with at least 100 species, varieties, or cultivars of trees or woody plants
- Implementing a comprehensive arboretum collections policy that aligns with professional standards and the Saint Louis Declaration on invasive species

Thank you to everyone who supports and contributes to our efforts. Here's to continuing our journey in making a positive impact on our environment!



## Twilight Tuesdays



We have had three Twilight Tuesdays since the last newsletter. It has been fantastic to see so many members coming out and enjoying these events. Thank you to our Twilight Tuesday hosts: Judy Knaak, Christina Covarrubias & Karen King, and Billie Childress.



There will be 1 last Twilight Tuesday event this summer on Aug 27.

Thank you to Barb Bizzarri and Dick Darrah for sending in photos from these events!





## Upcoming local events for gardeners

Ruth Gauss

### The Growing Place Events

#### Quick Sketch Design Sessions

Various dates — 11:00 AM - 2:30 PM

Naperville and Aurora locations

Quick Sketch Design Sessions are for customers who want to redesign a small\* area by offering focused, one-on-one consultations with TGP staff. Each session is 30 minutes, and you'll leave with a not-to-scale sketch and plant recommendations to help you accomplish your project.

Sessions take place at both the Aurora and Naperville locations at 11:00am, 11:45am, 12:30pm, 1:15pm and 2:00pm. Cost is \$30. Registration required. See their website for details (click on the session name to go to the website.)

Instructions on what to prepare and bring with you will be emailed after you register.

\*Suitable for areas up to 10'x10.' Not suitable for multiple areas, full front or back yard designs, areas larger than 10'x10', terraced beds or hardscape projects.

[Island Beds](#)—August 24

[Patio Landscaping](#)—August 25

[Rain Gardens](#)—September 21

[Wet & Dry Conditions](#)—September 22

#### Make and Take Fall Containers

September 7 - 11:00 am and 1:00 pm

Naperville and Aurora locations

Bring a container or find a new one to purchase there along with the plants to make it beautiful. The only cost is what you purchase.

#### Macrame Plant Hanger Workshop

September 14 @ 11:00 am - 1:30 pm

Aurora location

\$35—see [website](#) for more details and to register

### We Grow Dreams Event

#### Fall Festival

Saturday, Sept 14

All of our fall favorites at our hometown garden center, from mums and pumpkins to all of the yummy treats that fall brings.

(No times were listed on the website, I assume the event will be during normal operating hours.)



## Garden Bucks

West Chicago Garden Club distributes Garden Bucks (real fake money) to members who participate in club activities. At the November 2024 meeting you will be able to use your Bucks to bid on donated items at the Silent Auction.

The chart below shows how to earn your Garden Bucks. Keep track of your dollars earned. Either pick up your earnings at each meeting or collect them before the auction. Come out and volunteer. Your participation keeps our club going strong.

Volunteer for Workdays at Kruse, Plant Sale or other events		Donate plants for Plant Sale	
1 to 4 hours	\$ 75	Less than 50	\$ 75
More than 4 hours	\$ 150	50 - 149	\$ 200
Donate pots for plant sale	\$ 50	More than 150	\$ 300
Donate snacks for meeting	\$ 75	Write newsletter article	\$ 100
Set up or clean up at meeting	\$ 25	Bring a guest to a meeting	\$ 50
Attend Field Trip	\$ 25	Attend Meeting	\$ 25
Donate plants to Kruse Garden	\$ 50	Pay 2024 Dues by Feb 24th	\$ 50
		Pay 2025 Dues by Nov 17th	\$ 75

Refer a new member and participate in a raffle for a gift card at the Nov 2024 meeting.

## Upcoming Programs & Events for 2024

These are the currently scheduled programs. If there are any changes we will update this in future newsletters. The last column will show who has signed up to bring treats.

Aug 22	Cindy Crosby	Dragonflies and Damselflies	Candy T, June L, Jen K
Aug 24	Local Field Trip	Prairie Wind Native Plants	See Page 3
Aug 30		Kruse Garden All-Club Evening	See Page 6
Sept 21	Bus Field Trip	Possibility Place & Sunrise	See Page 3
Sept 26	Dianne Blazek	Plant Breeding	Marion M, Mary S, Cindy B
Oct 24		Bulb Bingo	Barb M, Barb B, Mary A, Tom F
Nov 14	Silent Auction	Pot Luck Dinner	

A poster of our 2024 schedule can be downloaded at <https://westchicagogardenclub.org/wp-content/files/2024PosterWithSchedule.pdf>