



WE GO GARDENING

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

www.westchicagogardenclub.org

Volume 14 Issue 8 August 2011

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August 25th Meeting : "Unusual and Seldom Used Perennials"

Joannie Rocchi is the perennial plant specialist and the retail perennial manager at The Growing Place, Aurora location. She loves to educate people on plants and their life-giving benefits. She often speaks at the Chicago Flower and Garden Show. This month she will expand our gardening knowledge about those often overlooked or unknown perennials that you might enjoy having in your own yard.



Faith Community Church at 910 Main Street in West Chicago

6:45 - refreshments and gathering

7:00 - brief business meeting

Next Meeting: Thursday, September 22nd
"TREES"

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, but if you plan to use it, please **call Linda Harlson** at 377-5750, so we can plan for the right number of children.

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



Secret Garden at the Kruse House event was a success! See page 4 inside.



Upcoming events (outside the club)

Heinz Brothers Greenhouse: Fall Containers: More than just Mums! Create your planter on site. \$15 includes soil, fertilizer, and instruction. Add'l class materials available. Sept 3, 5, & 7, 10-11 am.

The Growing Place: Landscape Sampler: Front Yards Learn how to create an inviting front yard with this workshop. Participants are encouraged to send photos in advance and our landscape designers will provide multiple suggestions. Saturday, August 27, 10am, \$5, Aurora, pre-registration required, call 630-355-4000.

Morton Arboretum: Vanishing Act: Trees Under Threat Exhibit Learn how trees enrich our lives, explore the forces that threaten them, and find out how you can help these endangered species. Exhibit is located in the Conifer Collection. Sept 2011 - Sept 2012.

July Potluck enjoyed by all - wish you were there!



Thanks to Billie and Sam for hosting us, to Linda and Karen for arranging the food, and to all who brought such wonderful food to share. Everyone had a great time. See more photos on page 6.

Club information

www.westchicagogardenclub.org
West Chicago Garden Club
P. O. Box 313, West Chicago, IL 60186
(630) 585-4005

Membership information

Dues for 2011: 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

2011 WCGC BOARD:

President:

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Treasurer:

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

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Planned WCGC Events - 2011

Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event	Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event
25 Aug	Joannie Rocchi Master Gardener	Unusual & Seldom Used Perennials	27 Oct	Mari Mackenbach	Holiday Decorating
22 Sep	Tom Tyler/Bartlett Trees	Trees	17 Nov	All members	Dinner & Garden Dollar Auction




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Your Gardening Source....



News from Kruse by Angie & Billie, Kruse House Garden Coordinators

Yes, we did have a nice party on Sunday August 7! The heavy rain that morning provoked some doubt but by 1 PM the skies were clear and **we had a lovely afternoon.**

Many thanks to all who brought treats for our guests! No doubt, we have some talented bakers in our group. Thanks so much for your generosity! Donna and Kent Orlandini were a great help with table set up and arranging docents for house tours. Thanks D&K! At least 30 folks toured the house and the hand-painted garden accoutrements by Mary Kay were definitely a point of interest to all. There was ample appreciation for the beautiful gardens....lots of praise for the many varieties of coleus tucked throughout the gardens.

Humming birds were on hand (Dave Urhausen will testify to that) and the pond was jumping with frogs! **Highest count on frogs was 6 and one posed nicely for a photo.** It was wonderful to have so many garden club members come to visit the garden. As always, your interest and support are greatly appreciated!



A huge **thank you to Dan Beebe, Dick Darrah, and Tom** who recently repaired the garden's sprinkler system! Working conditions were brutal with sweltering humid 90+ degree weather but these three guys persevered and the plants and gardeners are very grateful!

We are also appreciative of a recent memorial donation in memory of Keith Letsche's aunt. We are mulling over possibilities for this remembrance and your suggestions are welcome.

Our latest project in the garden is a major overhaul of the east fence line. We have basically been ignoring this area and it is a mess! Once its cleared, we plan to install some Rose of Sharon (ROS) shrubs. If anyone has a ROS to donate we would love it! We do have some seedlings, which grow pretty quickly, but some good size ones would really help. We can come dig if you have something.

The gardening season is starting to wind down but there is one last event in the garden that you don't want to miss. The Historical Society's Ice cream Social will be Sept 10, 12-3 PM. The cakes and pies they serve are phenomenal! And the silent auction always has great stuff! If you have a donation for the auction contact Donna Orlandini at 630.231.2671.

Enjoy your gardens as fall approaches and stop by visit Kruse Garden anytime! **A&B**

Linda Harlson and Bill enjoy the new garden bench.





Calling all former Girl Scouts

Rose Ellen May from the Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois contacted the WCGC through our website to say that the Rockford – Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois will host a Girl Scout Alumnae Garden Party on Wednesday, September 14, 1 – 4 p.m. at Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden, 2715 S. Main St., in Rockford. Guests will tour the various gardens and enjoy afternoon tea and refreshments. A bus is available for touring. There is a \$10 registration fee that includes all activities and refreshments. Registration is available online at <http://girlscoutsni.org/alumnae.html> or at any GSNI Girl Scout service center.



This event is open to all Girl Scout alumnae. An alumna is a woman who was a Girl Scout in any area of the country, for any length of time, at any level from—from Girl Scout Daisies through Ambassadors—and all former staff, Board members, volunteers—both men and women. For more information on how to join, volunteer, reconnect or donate to Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois, visit www.girlscoutsni.org or call 1-800-242-5591, Ext. 7210.

GIRL SCOUTING WILL CELEBRATE 100 YEARS IN 2012!



Musings from Members

In this column a WCGC member can put help wanted ads or other kinds of appeals. Have something you want to advertise - contact the Information Director (see page 2).

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RATTLESNAKE MASTER - SEEN ON THE JULY FIELD TRIP - SEE PAGE 7 FOR MORE ABOUT THE WEST CHICAGO PRAIRIE FOREST PRESERVE.



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Field Trip of the West Chicago Prairie - a very fun time!



Several members of WCGC met on Saturday, July 30th, for a 2 to 3 hour guided tour of the West Chicago Prairie Forest Preserve. The tour was led by Steve Sentoff, President of the West Chicago Prairie Stewardship Group. The 360-acre West Chicago Prairie Forest Preserve in West Chicago is one of the region's premier natural areas. In addition to wetlands and upland oak savannas, the preserve is home to one of the most biologically diverse sites within north-eastern Illinois, the 126-acre Truitt-Hoff Nature Preserve.

The Stewardship Group aids in the management and preservation of the West Chicago Prairie Preserve. They are part of the Volunteer Network established by The Nature Conservancy and work as a Support Group in cooperation with the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, which is responsible for the overall management of the Prairie. They are an affiliate of The Conservation Foundation, a nonprofit land and watershed protection organization.

The City of West Chicago and the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County jointly own 153 acres of the West Chicago Prairie. The FPD owns the rest solely and manages the entire site. FPD has a webpage specifically for the WCP, with background and history

http://www.dupageforest.com/Conservation/ForestPreserves/West_Chicago_Prairie.html.

After an orientation and safety instructions for walking through the tall plants, Steve led us on a hike through a varied landscape, during which he shared background on how the site was saved from industry in years past and by dedicated volunteers. The hardier of us enjoyed an extended tour with Steve.



Visit www.wcpsg.org to learn more about this hidden gem in our backyard.



Plant for the Future *by Heather Prince of the Growing Place*

Autumn can be the ideal time to plant many kinds of plants. As the weather grows cooler and rains return, the time is right to add to your landscape. The fall is also a good time to plan for the future. In many ways, being a gardener requires trust and faith that seeds will sprout, bulbs will come up and plants will grow. We plant trees now for our children and grandchildren to enjoy. There are several ways to look to the future as you make garden plans.

Plant the right plant in the right place.

By choosing the right plant for a specific site, you can save time, money, and work! Planting small shrubs around foundations or in perennial beds can save you the maintenance of pruning as they stay an appropriate size. Placing water-loving plants in the wet spot in your yard means less watering. Siting trees where they can shade your home in the summer, but let in winter light will ensure smaller energy bills.

Patience is a virtue.

Oftentimes, planting a smaller sized plant works better than a large plant. Small pots of perennials can easily be tucked into an existing bed. Planting a smaller tree can be very rewarding in the long run. For each inch of trunk diameter, a tree will spend one year recovering from transplant. A one-inch diameter tree will bounce back from transplant shock and start actively growing much quicker than a three-inch diameter tree. Sometimes digging a hole among tree roots can be very challenging. A small shrub can more easily fit between tree roots and grow well to fill a hole or block a view.

Plant it for the planet.

As our wild places diminish, wildlife frequently seeks out suburban yards to live and raise their young. Hawks, foxes, and coyotes all call our neighborhoods home as well as songbirds, butterflies, bees and bats. Wildlife-friendly plants provide much needed food and shelter as well as delighting the eye with bold foliage, pretty flowers and glowing fall color. By building diversity in our landscapes as well as limiting pesticide and herbicide use, you will be rewarded with a bounty of beautiful and interesting wildlife.

The Growing Place has retooled its business motto to "Growing for the future with right plants in right places." Native and non-native Growing Place Choice plants, chosen by the veteran staff, offer longevity, low maintenance and beauty for most of the season.

