



WE GO GARDENING

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

www.westchicagogardenclub.org

Volume 19 Issue 2 February 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.

Think Spring!

Our Plant Sale will be here before we know it!

February 26th Meeting : "Basics of Pruning - Proper Tools, Timing, Techniques and Best Practices " with Don Guzan

Don will discuss the basics of pruning as they pertain to the overall health and aesthetics of landscape plants. Covered groups will be herbaceous perennials, woody ornamentals, evergreens and trees.

Don 'Dplantmann' Guzan is an alum of Southern Illinois University's College of Agriculture. His studies focused on General Agriculture, Plant and Soil Science, Horticulture, Geology, Hydrology, Fine Arts and Food and Nutrition. He is a Master Gardener, Animal Behaviorist, Naturalist, Patented Inventor, Published Photographer, Landscape Designer, Garden Coach and the creator of Dplantmann Brand Nature Products. Don was an adjunct horticultural staff member at both MCC and CLC. He has hosted a Green Industry Horticultural Talk Show for seven years and is involved in independent green innovation research. He is also the creator of a Green Innovation Think Tank and was the tour guide for professional groups visiting the Chicago Flower and Garden Show.

Faith Community Church at 910 Main Street in West Chicago

6:45 - refreshments and gathering

7:00 - brief business meeting

7:15 - speaker

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 26th:

"Hydroponic, Aquaponic and the Future of Vertical Garden Systems: true organics and healthy choices" with Shawn M. Odneal

Please make note of the Member Survey on page 6.

If possible, please complete and return to the board at the end of our February meeting. Thank you in advance!



Plant Sale Chairperson Still Needed

We need one person to whom everyone can report and who can keep track of who is doing what when and remind volunteers when they forget for what they volunteered. There are many members that will gladly offer support and advice to whomever is willing to do this job for 2015. Remember—our Plant Sale proceeds are vital to continuing our quality programming year to year! If you are willing to help your club out with this please contact Dick Darrah, either by email (info@bwdarrah.com) or phone (daytime 630-584-1900, evening 630-231-4745).



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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, annetewulffe@yahoo.com

Program Co-Chairs:
Pauline Briggs, 630-254-2969, briggspm@gmail.com
Marcy Kozlowski, 630-846-3466
marcellakozlowski@yahoo.com

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	TBA	At Kruse Garden
26 Feb	Don Guzan	Basics of Pruning	23 Jul	All members	President's Dinner
26 Mar	Shawn M. Odneal	Vertical Gardening	27 Aug	TBA	TBA
23 Apr	Billie Childress	Kruse House History	24 Sep	Bulb Bingo	Pauline
16 May	ALL MEMBERS!	PLANT SALE!	22 Oct	TBA	TBA
28 May	TBA	TBA	19 Nov	All members	Dinner & Garden Dollar Auction



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News from Kruse

by Billie, Angie, Kerry and Tom

If you've been reading garden magazines lately, you've probably come across articles extolling and listing the best new annuals/perennials, or the best sun/shade plants of all time, etc. Well since its winter and gardening is all talk and no action I thought I would talk about ten of our favorite plants in the Kruse Garden and why we like them.

1. **Bergenia, aka Saxifraga or Pig Squeak:** We have it in the back garden. It makes a nice ever green border and it's a tough plant, doesn't suffer unduly in drought (the back garden is always dry as a bone), and its thick shiny leaves hold up well throughout the seasons. Trim off a few dead leaves in the spring and they're good to go. The clumps increase slowly and there's no self-seeding to control. Here's a remarkable fact: Jeff Handel grew Bergenia from seed last year and generously donated some to the plant sale! I've never known anyone else to grow this plant from seed.
2. **Yellow Daylily we call Carole's Father's Daylily:** Carole Bates, a charter member of our GC, gave us this one. We know its old but don't know its real name. There are three or four clumps of it in the back garden. We like it because it's sturdy tall scapes bear numerous clear yellow flowers and the spent flowers drop easily. We divided it for plant sale last year but are likely to do so again this year. Clumps multiply quickly!
3. **Bleeding Hearts:** everyone's garden favorite is one of ours too. We have both white and pink in Angie's garden above the pond. They are pretty and sturdy. What more can I say!
4. **Bears Breech's aka Acanthus:** it's unusual so it adds some pizzazz to the back garden. It came from Angie's garden and it has done very well with no special care. Nothing in the garden gets "special care."
5. **Hosta, green margin cream center, medium size:** Right! We don't know its name. We will have to invite Pam Caligiuri to identify it.....she can ID hundreds of hostas by sight! It's a foundation planting on the east side of the house that looks good year after year and predates any of us current gardeners. Leaves remain intact and it tolerates drought well. Not much moisture reaches it but no worries, it thrives and looks good all year, year after year!
6. **Lespedeza aka Bush Clover:** another plant that you don't find in everyone's garden. It provides a statement at 6-8 ft. and late season color behind the yellow shed. Marion Martin donated 3 of these lovelies ... Thanks again, Marion!
7. **Hardy Ageratum aka Eupatorium coelestinum:** this one is in several gardens...back, east side and pond gardens. We like its bluish purple flowers in the fall and so far haven't experienced any of the aggressive spreading noted in resources describing this plant.
8. **William Baffin shrub Rose:** pretty in pink at 8-10 ft. blooms prolifically in June. ARS (American Rose Society) rating 8.9. Besides being pretty it's tough as blazes!
9. **Fothergilla shrub:** provides 3 season interest in the back garden with fluffy white spring blossoms, thick dark green foliage and riotous orange red fall color. Can't beat that with a stick!
10. **Dawn Redwood tree:** Donated by Meyer Landscaping about 5 years ago to replace a big old black cherry that croaked. It survived some significant storm damage and has almost doubled in size. With mature dimensions at 60-80 ft. tall and 20-30 ft. wide this tree will provide lovely bones to define a large part of this garden as time goes forward.

It was hard to whittle the list to just 10 since we really like all our plants. If you ask me next month I might have already changed my list. However, you couldn't go wrong with choosing any of these plants for your own gardens.

See you at the meeting....the Krusies. Tom, Kerry, Angie, & Billie



Pruning Deciduous Shrubs

by *The Growing Place*

Late winter is the perfect time to prune trees and shrubs. The plants are not actively growing and it is easy to see their structure without the leaves.

Why prune?

- to remove dead and diseased branches
- to remove crossing branches to prevent a wound forming and creating an entry point for insects and disease
- to rejuvenate the plant
- to shape the plant for aesthetics or size
- better air circulation to prevent fungal disease

Not all woody plants need to be pruned each year. If the shrub is the size you desire and has no major crossing branches or dead twigs, feel free to leave it be. Most yearly pruning can be done with a good pair of bypass pruners and loppers. Bypass blades work similarly to scissors and leave a crisp clean cut. You will always want to make a 45 degree cut just above a branching point when pruning. The plant will naturally seal the wound, so no paints or sealers are necessary.

Tools

- bypass pruners – for branches up to about a half inch or so
- bypass loppers – for branches up to about two inches
- pruning saw – for larger branches up to about four inches
- pruning shears – either electric or hand held, designed for creating and maintaining a hedge

Types of pruning and timing

The first thing to think about when pruning deciduous shrubs is their bloom time. The general rule of thumb is that if the plant blooms before Memorial Day, prune it within six weeks of flowering. If it blooms after Memorial Day, prune it when dormant. For example, prune lilacs, forsythia and fothergilla after they flower. There are several types of pruning cuts.

- **Heading back** – used to control the size of the plant. Remove the tips of the branches back to a good bud or lateral branch, making sure that the bud is facing outwards. This ensures that the new growth will not grow back into the center of the plant.
- **Rejuvenation** – Sometimes old, overgrown shrubs can be best controlled by pruning all of the stems to within six inches of the soil. Spirea, forsythia, and weigela respond well to this treatment.
- **Renewal** – Removing old, overgrown stems over a period of three to four years to restore vigor and control size. Each year one third of the largest, oldest stems are removed at ground level. Red twig dogwood, in particular responds well to this treatment.
- **Shearing** – Only done to create a formal hedge, remove the tips of the twigs to a uniform height and width. Keep a slight angle so that the hedge is narrower at the top than at the bottom. This allows sunlight to reach the sides of the hedge, ensuring thick growth. Shearing should be done after the new growth is complete in the summer.

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Opening Day March 28!

SPECIAL GUEST Mark Dwyer from Rotary Botanical Gardens presents *Out of the Ordinary Landscapes* at 11:00am in Aurora

<p>Naperville... 630.355.4000 25w471 Plank Rd</p>	<p>Aurora... 630.820.8088 2000 Montgomery Rd</p>
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WCGC Member Questionnaire

(In order to learn a bit more about our members we kindly request your response)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

EMAIL/PHONE _____

MEMBER SINCE _____ fun to know our pioneers vs newbies

WHY DID YOU JOIN? _____

WHAT KIND OF GARDEN DO YOU HAVE/SIZE _____

(Flowers, veggies, shade, sun, water, work in progress, / backyard, acreage, hobby farm, community plot etc.)

HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU SPEND GARDENING PER WEEK? _____

ANY SKILLS YOU MIGHT SHARE? _____

FAVORITE PLANT/TREE etc _____

DO YOU VOLUNTEER AT ANY GARDEN? _____

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE can't do without tool/clothing/
fertilizer, etc _____

DO YOU ATTEND THE MONTHLY MEETINGS REGULARLY? _____ if not why?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SPEAK ON A TOPIC AT A FUTURE MEETING? Y or N

FAVORITE GARDEN TO VISIT, STORE, CATALOG _____

We will collect your sheet at the February Meeting. Our plan is to introduce more members to each other and we may produce a member booklet with your responses. Who knows, you might be sitting across the room tonight from your new best garden buddy!

****If you would like to exclude any information from being shared, please note CONFIDENTIAL on the specific response.**