



# WE GO GARDENING

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

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

Volume 18 Issue 1 January 2014

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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.

## January 23rd Meeting : "Home Grown Program" on Members' Gardens!

This month we will enjoy a member-based discussion on photos from member gardens—what worked, what didn't, what may have been a problem plant, or an area we just don't know what to do with, a favorite plant, a mystery plant, and so on!



**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, February 27th:**

**"Sex in the Soil" with Lynn Bement**



*Thank you to Dick Darrah and Ron Benschish for acquiring the gift certificates auctioned off at our November meeting!*



**LOOK FOR NEW MEMBER  
Kathy Reynolds AT THE January MEETING!**

Did you have fun at the auction in November? Be sure to start collecting **NEW Garden Dollars for 2014** when you participate in club activities. One way to earn an easy 50 GD is to renew your membership prior to February 2nd - see the last page of this newsletter for the form, and bring it to the January meeting!



### Upcoming events (outside the club)

**Cantigny:** Bird Walk. Feb. 8, 8:30AM. Free program and complimentary parking. Meet at Visitors Center.

**Growing Place:** Create a String Garden. Feb. 8, 10AM. Aurora. \$20. Registration required—630-355-4000.

**Chicago Botanic Garden:** Orchid Show. Feb 15—Mar 16. 10AM—4pm Daily. Indoor show of over 10,000 orchids. \$10.



#### Have You Heard the News?

Melissa Birch, our Information/Publicity Director, is getting married!  
Her boyfriend Evan popped the question on December 21st.

Congratulations to the happy couple!

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

West Chicago Garden Club  
P. O. Box 313, West Chicago, IL 60186  
[westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com)

### Membership information

Dues for 2014: 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

### 2014 WCGC BOARD:

#### President:

Keith Letsche, 630-293-0192, [keithletsche@aol.com](mailto:keithletsche@aol.com)

#### Vice President:

Dick Darrah, 630-584-1900, [info@bwdarrah.com](mailto:info@bwdarrah.com)

#### Treasurer:

Barb Darrah, 630-584-1900, [info@bwdarrah.com](mailto:info@bwdarrah.com)

#### Secretary:

Kathy Reynolds, 630-293-7462,  
[kreynolds2656@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kreynolds2656@sbcglobal.net)

#### Program Co-Chairs:

Pauline Briggs, 630-545-2234, [pmbiggs@juno.com](mailto:pmbiggs@juno.com)  
June Luther, 630-876-1295, [june@markluther.com](mailto:june@markluther.com)

#### Information Director & Publicity:

Melissa Birch, 630-621-0128, [melissabirch@gmail.com](mailto:melissabirch@gmail.com)



# Planned WCGC Events - 2014

| Date   | Speaker/Organizer | Topic/Event               | Date   | Speaker/Organizer     | Topic/Event                    |
|--------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 23 Jan | WCGC Members      | Home Grown                | 26 Jun | Aquascapes            | Water Gardens                  |
| 27 Feb | Lynn Bement       | Sex in the Soil           | 24 Jul | All members           | President's Picnic             |
| 27 Mar | Growing Place     | Edibles in Small Space    | 28 Aug | Chicagoland Gardening | Made in the Shade II           |
| 24 Apr | Dolly Foster      | Tips for the New Gardener | 25 Sep | June & Pauline        | Bulb Bingo                     |
| 17 May | ALL MEMBERS!      | PLANT SALE!               | 23 Oct | Jo Ann Loebel         | Pressing Flowers               |
| 22 May | Pioneer Gardens   | Insects, Diseases, Weeds  | 20 Nov | All members           | Dinner & Garden Dollar Auction |

## Community Garden Plots Available

People Made Visible is gearing up for its fourth year of hosting the West Chicago Community "Keepers Garden." Two plot sizes will again be offered this year. Plots can be rented for the fee of \$15 for a small plot and \$30 for a large plot. A \$5 deposit is also requested to ensure plots are maintained throughout the season; deposits will be returned at the end of year or applied towards a future plot rental. If you would like to be involved in the Keepers Garden please contact People Made Visible at [keepersgardenpmv@gmail.com](mailto:keepersgardenpmv@gmail.com) or (630)473-0268. Thank you to St. Michael's Church and Ball Horticulture for sponsoring this program. Additionally, the City of West Chicago and Mayor Ruben Pineda would like to work on expanding community gardening—more details soon!

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**Worth the Trip - Gardens of Charleston and the Lowcountry** by Elaine McCluskey

On a long weekend at the end of September to Charleston, SC, I encountered both familiar and new plants in gorgeous garden and natural settings. Walks around the historic downtown and local parks as well as tours to local low country plantations and beaches provided me the chance to see how long the growing season is compared to our area. Annuals and perennials we would see around Chicago included lantana, celosia, morning glory, gaillardia, and sea oats. But the difference was that in Charleston these plants are lush, and in fall, still in full bloom. And wandering jew that we grow as a houseplant was found cascading out a downtown sidewalk garden.



The unfamiliar plants were what intrigued me most. Oleander (*Nerium oleander*) is a common southern shrub, growing up to 20 ft tall. The dwarf pink variety with its evergreen, leathery leaves, was blooming in the city parkways. The annual cypress vine (*Ipomoea quamoclit*), has feathery foliage that twines around garden fences with starry red flowers attractive to butterflies and birds.



The area is known for its long-lived Southern live oaks (*Quercus virginiana*). We enjoyed the entrance drive to Boone Hall Plantation [www.boonehallplantation.com](http://www.boonehallplantation.com) which is lined with 250-year old trees covered with hanging moss. Parks abound with lush flowers and foliage, including palms.



Charleston has two opportunities to visit seldom seen gardens and homes as well as more public venues in a tour setting. The Spring Festival of Houses and Gardens <https://www.historiccharleston.org/Events/Annual-Festival-of-Houses-and-Gardens.aspx> in March-April and the Fall Tours <http://www.thefalltours.org/> which ran throughout October. Although my visit didn't coincide with either of these events, it was still certainly worth the trip to see spectacular architecture, eat great food, and enjoy gardens and plants beyond what I'd see in Chicago.



## Plant Sale 2014

We are already planning for this year's Plant Sale. We are looking for increased member participation this year—with everyone's help, we will have another successful sale!

If you enjoy...

Donating plants from your garden—see Billie and Angie

Potting parties—see Pauline

Taking care of plants before the sale—See Marcie and June

Using your vehicle to transport plants, setting up the sale area, or working day of sale—See Melissa

*A preliminary sign-up sheet will be available at the January meeting!*



## **Garden Dollar Auction Sponsors—THANK YOU!**

We can do our part to thank the businesses who so generously provided auction items by taking the time to shop in their stores, and personally thank them for their donation to our club.

The Growing Place  
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## Re-Purpose Evergreens After the Holidays

by Heather Prince of The Growing Place

Many of us decorated for the holidays with live evergreen boughs, wreaths, trees or garland. While we enjoyed their fragrance and festive atmosphere, what can you do with evergreens now?

### Protect plants

Place branches over shallow rooted plants such as mums, coral bells, strawberries and spring bulbs to insulate their roots through freezing and thawing.

Acid loving plants such as rhododendron and holly appreciate a layer of evergreens as the needles add a slight acid boost. When picking them up in the spring, give boughs a shake to let the needles fall and mix in to your mulch.

Mulch Endless Summer hydrangea and other varieties of *Hydrangea macrophylla*. The boughs will add another layer of protection over their flower buds for next year.

Tender roses such as hybrid teas, grandifloras and floribundas do well with a layer of compost, then leaves or straw and a final layer of evergreen boughs. Mulch them now.

Rabbits will avoid treading on sharp evergreen needles. Layer boughs around some of their favorite shrubs such as fothergilla, roses, and viburnum. Rabbits may also sample the bark of fruit trees and berry shrubs.

### Welcome birds

After the holidays, place your cut tree out in the garden as a shelter for birds. Choose a back corner or out of the way place and birds will welcome the additional shelter from winter weather and predators. The tree will stay green for most of the winter and can be cut up and added to the compost pile in the spring.

### Decorate

Pretty up your beds, especially around your entranceways with a layer of evergreen boughs. Mix and match different kinds for a richer look and perhaps add some red or yellow twig dogwood stems for a little bit of color. You can easily create a natural winter look to enjoy until spring.

So, instead of taking your tree to the curb, enjoy the benefits of using evergreen boughs in your garden.



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## West Chicago Garden Club Membership Application - 2014

Our club year runs from January 1st through December 31st. Membership dues for 2014 are due by the February meeting and will be considered over-due as of March 1st. The board would appreciate receiving dues as soon as possible.

With your paid membership you receive a copy of the monthly newsletter and membership in the Garden Clubs of Illinois, which includes the quarterly publication Garden Glories.

**Individual Membership:**

**\$15 per year**

**Family Membership:**

**\$25 per year**

(for multiple members at a single address)

Our meetings in 2014 will be held on the 4th Thursday evening of each month from January through October and the 3rd Thursday of November (no meeting in December).

Please make checks payable to West Chicago Garden Club.

You can bring this form and your check to a club meeting, or mail both to:

West Chicago Garden Club  
c/o Mike Saad  
27W206 Manchester Rd  
Winfield, IL 60190-1440

**Application**

**Type:**  New or  Renewal

**Class:**  Individual or  Family

Name(s) (please print):

\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

City/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Numbers:** (include area code)

Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell/other: \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail Address(es):**

Used to distribute club information—may be shared with WCGC Board

\_\_\_\_\_

**Send newsletters via:**  E-mail or  Mail

Please DO NOT add my phone number to the Calling Post. (Note: if you check this box, you will NOT receive phone reminders of any garden club events).

***PAY DUES BEFORE FEB. 2ND  
AND RECEIVE 50 GARDEN DOLLARS!***