

We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 21 Issue 1 January 2017



Meeting Date: January 26
Meeting Location:
Faith Community Church
at 910 Main Street in West Chicago

Meeting Time:
6:45PM Refreshments
7:00PM Business Meeting
7:15PM Program

January: A new year begins with a presentation by.....

Erik Neidy, Director of Natural Resources, Forest Preserve District DuPage County.

Erik will talk about the major habitat changes taking place in the West Branch Forest over the past few years. He will also talk about the wildlife that make their homes in the county's Forest Preserves.

I heard Erik present this program for the Winfield Garden Club last year. I thoroughly enjoyed the talk and learned a lot. The Winfield Area Gardeners rated this program as one of their favorites. Bring a friend. Im sure you'll both enjoy your evening.

In his job at the Forest Preserve Erik

- Manages the District's natural-resource preservation, restoration and conservation programs
- Surveys, restores, enhances, manages and maintains ecological conditions to sustain plant and animal biodiversity to protect and preserve these resources.

With more than 60 Forest Preserves in DuPage County you'll want to make plans to connect with nature in these wonderlands. Erik will help to start you on those journeys.

Mark your calendars.....February 23 program will be:

"Who's Who of Owls" by Mark Spreyer from the Stillman Nature Center.

Here is your chance to see raptors up close and personal!




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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 2017: 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

2017 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 Wulfe, 630-462-0208, annettewulfe@yahoo.com

Program Director:
 Billie Childress, 630-231-1791, billiedc@sbcglobal.net

Information Director:
 Melissa Ferguson, 630-621-0128, melissabirch@gmail.com



WCGC 2017 Calendar

Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event	Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event
26 Jan	Erik Neidy, DuPage Forest Preserve District	Habitat Changes in West Branch Forest	22 Jun	TBA	TBA
23 Feb	Mark Spreyer from the Stillman Nature Center	"Who's Who of Owls"	? Jul	TBA	TBA
23 Mar	TBA	TBA	24 Aug	TBA	TBA
27 Apr	TBA	TBA	28 Sep	TBA	TBA
20 May	ALL MEMBERS!	PLANT SALE!	26 Oct	TBA	TBA
25 May	TBA	TBA	16 Nov	All members	Dinner & Garden Dollar Auction

Meeting Procedure Update:

We will no longer be offering door prizes each month, however, donations for giveaway to the sharing table will be accepted at each meeting.

Coming Soon: GardenWorks Project in West Chicago!

An excerpt from http://www.gardenworksproject.org/partnership_announcement appears below.

The GardenWorks Project, People Made Visible, and Healthy West Chicago have partnered to increase the accessibility of locally-grown produce to families facing food insecurity in the DuPage County area. People Made Visible, who operates a cultural center at 103 W. Washington St. in West Chicago, has made space available for The GardenWorks Project to open their **Suburban Agriculture Resource Center**.

The Resource Center, which will officially open in March, 2017, will be a hub for area food gardening education and supplies. People Made Visible is also sharing community garden space at 401 W. Washington which The GardenWorks Project will use for demonstration gardens and hands-on vegetable gardening instruction. These new additions will enhance the People Made Visible community garden that they have run since 2010 in collaboration with St. Michael's United Church of Christ.

At this time, The GardenWorks Project is looking to the community for donations of new or gently used gardening tools and supplies to lend to low-income families who wish to grow food at home, and community gardeners. To donate, please email info@gardenworksproject.org.



News from Kruse

Keith Letsche

The Kruse House Garden in January: Vestiges of the Season Past, Thoughts of the Season to Come

Looking at the Kruse House garden in mid-winter is like looking upon the ruins of an ancient civilization. Pressed against the recent memory of June's lushness, the bareness of January startles and shocks. Gone are the myriad zinnias, moonflowers, and other annuals that once populated the vistas, flattened into unrecognizable detritus by the successive snows. Stalks of yarrow and hydrangeas protrude here and there, like the columns of ancient temples, shorn of color, but their seared blooms still possessing the power to evoke the glory of what was. Only the dusty millers in front yard, eerily decked yet in their summery silver-gray, like figures on an ancient frieze, vibrantly dance a ghostly dance of the season past.



But January also offers a time to reflect and plan. Uncluttered, the garden's essence is visible as never before, making what yet can be done perhaps never so apparent. Unburdened by daily gardening chores, the vision of what should be and the resolve to realize it come easily—"yes, those roses will definitely go, this trellis will be moved!"

And so Kruse in January, like the Roman god for whom the month is named, looks back to what was, and forward to what will be.



The Cookie Caravan Rides Again



"Twas the week before Thanksgiving and cookies all over the world, popped from ovens and flew to Billie's house." ...well maybe it wasn't quite as great a scope and as effortless as that! But it was a grand event!

November 15 & 16, 2016 marked our 2nd annual "cookie box" distribution. As a GC we recognize that there are organizations and people who step up and lend us a hand throughout the year. We say "thank you" to these good folks with home baked cookies as the holiday season commences.

We had eleven bakers this year! Each gourmand created three dozen tasty morsels. That's a lot of cookies!

Bakers included: Marion Martin, Sandy Nelson, Tom Fessler, Ruth Kyme, Marcy Kozlowski, Linda Harlson, Dorothy O'Connor, Joan Wells, Lisa Weiman, Kerry Perry, and Billie Childress.

Kerry and Billie packed up a few of these and a few of those and the assortments were as pretty as they were good. Not that we tasted any of them! Since we had more cookies than last year we delivered more and added a location. Delivering a lovely assortment of fancy home baked cookies..... now that's a job everyone should have at least once in their life! The recipients were delighted and thankful to be remembered in such a special way.



Cookies went to the following locations:

- Cantigny
- West Chicago Park District
- West Chicago Fire Department
- Several key people at Faith Community Church
- A Couple of folks at West Chicago City Hall

Thank you to all, for pitching in and making this a huge success!



Snow! The Good, The Bad, and The Freezing

The Growing Place

Well, it's winter in Chicagoland again and looks like we're going to be getting lots of snow this winter. The good news is that snow is mostly great for your plants although it does have some downsides.

Snow is an excellent insulator. It keeps soil temperatures from fluctuating. In general, under a blanket of snow, soil temperatures can be as much as two degrees warmer for each inch of snow accumulation as compared to air temperature. In winters with extreme cold, plants that are less hardy will experience less damage when under a layer of snow. These insulating properties help bulbs, ground cover, and perennials survive our typical freeze and thaw cycle. With a good snow cover, these plants are much less likely to heave out of the ground where their roots can dry out or be damaged.

Snow also helps conserve soil moisture in the harshest weather. This is especially important for evergreens since dry, windy winters can be especially damaging and drying to their needles. When the snow starts to melt in the spring the moisture gradually percolates through the soil and waters our plants.

A crisp new snowfall highlights our landscape in unexpected ways. We can newly appreciate the deliberate architecture of our large trees, notice the bright bark of a red twig dogwood, and enjoy the serenity of frosted pines and spruces. Even the seed heads or dried stems of perennials take on a new dimension. As you take that scenic stroll, stop to notice how plants can enhance your winter view.

As you are shoveling or snow blowing this season, be mindful of how and where you are piling snow. Most shrubs, especially low-growing evergreens, do not like having snow dumped on them. It can cause broken and bent branches.

Speaking of evergreens, in a heavy snowfall, you may be tempted to go out and knock off all the snow weighing down the branches. However, most evergreens can handle the snow load. The branches are flexible and built to bounce back once the snow melts or slides off. If you must brush it off, it's best to do it when temps are above freezing. Frozen branches are quite brittle and you may end up doing more damage if you knock off the snow.

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Aurora | 630.820.8088
 2000 Montgomery Rd, Aurora, IL
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West Chicago Garden Club Membership Application - 2017

Our meetings in 2017 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).

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

Individual Membership:
\$15 per year

Family Membership:
(For multiple members at the same address)
\$25 per year

Our club year runs from January 1st through December 31st. 2017 Membership dues should be paid by February 23rd, our February meeting.

Please make your check payable to:
West Chicago Garden Club

Bring this form and your check to a club meeting or mail both to:

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

Application

Type: New or Renewal

Class: Individual or Family

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

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Please do not add my phone number to the Calling Post. If you check this box, you will **not** get phone reminders of any garden club events.

Please Note: A Membership List, including your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address, will be distributed to Club members unless you check below the information you do **not** wish to appear:

_____ name _____ address _____ telephone number _____ e-mail address