

We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 24 Issue 1 January 2020



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 environment in which we live.

Meeting Date: January 23

Meeting Location:

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

Meeting Time:

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

Dr. Megan Dunning—The Trees Near My Home

The trees close to your home affect your life in so many ways – and you are also important to those trees. Join Megan Dunning, Manager of Adult Learning Programs at The Morton Arboretum, to explore our relationship with nearby nature. She'll introduce you to a few of her favorite trees, discuss the benefits trees bring to our lives, and share what community members are doing to protect and care for the trees they live with.

Megan Dunning is proud to be a Champion of Trees in her role as the Manager of Adult Learning Programs for The Morton Arboretum, a 1700 acre museum of trees west of Chicago. She oversees curriculum development and management of educational programs focused on trees, gardens, nature, and botany for college and adult audiences. Before joining the Arboretum, Megan completed a Ph.D. in Genetics at The University of Chicago, studying plant-pathogen co-evolution. She is a plant enthusiast and an advocate for the power of spending time in nature.



TIME TO RENEW

Renew your membership for 2020!

FEBRUARY 27 MEETING

**The February speaker isn't finalized yet.
Watch your email for more information.**

The Cookie Caravan Rides Again

In January this will seem like old news....BUT we want our members to know that on November 20 the Garden Club Cookie Caravan made two important stops! Kerry and Billie dropped off cookie boxes at the West Chicago Park District and at Cantigny. These two organizations are very helpful with our Kruse Garden and Plant Sale and we wanted to say thank you.

Next year, we will try to set this up so that the membership can help bake & put the boxes together.

Billie Childress



A sample box of cookies



Kerry with Mike Gasparini Superintendent of Parks



Billie with Bob Carr Manager of Greenhouse at Cantigny

Save the Date!

**Blooming Fest (and our Plant Sale) will be on
Saturday, May 16, 2020**

Notes from Dan Beebe —

Happy New Year! As the new President of the West Chicago Garden Club, I would like to thank our Past President, Barb Bizzarri for all of her hard work over the past two years. I want to also thank everyone on last year's Garden Club Board for their dedication to making our club one of the most, if not the most, dynamic in the area. I am encouraged to see a number of new faces on the Board who have stepped up to keep things rolling!

As many of you know, my wife, Pamela Darrah, and I have been West Chicago Garden Club members since it was restarted, after a 20 year hiatus, in 1998. Pamela grew up in West Chicago and we moved back to town in 1990 and have been working on our house and gardens ever since. I have also been active on City commissions over the past 25 years and am currently Chairman of the West Chicago Environmental Commission. Pamela and I have one son, Darrah, who has participated in club activities in the past and is currently off at college most of the year.

I have also been the club's Plant Sale Committee Chairman for the past two years and will be leading this effort again this year, however, **I need at least one member to step up and help run the 2020 plant sale with an eye on taking a more active role in the 2021 sale.**

Over the past two years I have really enjoyed working with all of our great member volunteers who help make the sale a success, however, assuming that all goes as planned, I will need to be at a college graduation ceremony the weekend of the 2021 plant sale and need someone to take the lead on the days of the Member Plant Sale, Tent Load In and Plant Sale. Please give this serious consideration as the plant sale is our only fund raising activity. Member dues do not cover even a fraction of the costs of running the club. Without the plant sale we couldn't have perks like bulb bingo, the president's picnic, the silent auction and dinner, and we might have to cut back on the quality of our speakers at our monthly meetings. The plant sale also makes it possible to for the club to give back to the community by supporting our member's work at the Kruse House and through direct donations in support of gardening related initiatives in and near West Chicago. If you are willing to help your club (and me) out with this, please contact me by email (dbeebe@yahoo.com) or see me at our monthly meeting.

I look forward to seeing all of you at our January meeting!

Dan



Pretty Winter Scene—from Kerry Perry

November Meeting Recap

Barb Bizzarri

Our year end November Meeting seems like months away after this past Holiday Season. Here's a recap:

A slate of officers was announced and approved. Introducing your 2020 Board of Directors:

Dan Beebe, President/Bloomingfest Chair

Barbara Bizzarri, Vice President

Kerry Perry, Treasurer

Cherie Kraft, Secretary

Bar Melville, Programs Director

Jan Grismore, Hospitality Chair

Billie Childress, Kruse House Chair

Tom Fessler/Kerry Perry, Refreshments

Pamela Darrah, Publicity & Information Chair

Mary Schramer, Director-At-Large

Following our short business meeting our annual Potluck dinner was enjoyed by all. I'm always amazed with how many talented chefs we have as members.

We ended the meeting on a very fun note with the Annual Silent Auction. An array of outstanding auction items (both new and "very gently" used) and donated gift cards from local garden nurseries who also sponsor our WCGC newsletter (see their listing on the last page of this newsletter) awaited the anxious bidders. The most popular items were handmade crafts including Dick Darrah's hand painted gourd birdhouses and Kerry Perry's and Billy Childress' mosaic balls. Thanks to everyone for making this a fun night.



News from Kruse

Kerry Perry

Although it's the dead of winter, spring planting catalogs started arriving in the mail Jan 2nd. The nurseries and big box stores have already put out starter pots, soil, gardening tools, etc. What an inspiration to think spring!

Since 1998 the Kruse House Garden has been our Club's community service project. The garden was resurrected, restored and has been tended by many hard-working and dedicated club members. Last year's garden was spectacular and had an increased number of visitors.

The Kruse Crew game plan for 2020: Add more dirt and mulch to the beds. Replace Smoke Bushes that succumbed to some sort of rot. Thin the lilac bushes to promote new growth, yet retain branches to bloom this year. Add colorful perennials - Japanese Forest Grass, Aralia Cordata and Hibiscus.

The Crew meets regularly Wednesday mornings, weather permitting, May through October. But volunteer anytime that fits your schedule. Stroll through the garden and pull a few weeds or pick up litter that may have blown in. Dead head spent blooms and toss them on the compost pile. Every little bit helps.



Cranberry Viburnum at Kruse

Nature Notes

Kerry Perry

Christmas Miracle

Barb Bizzarri

Maximum life span in years:

Bristlecone pine
4,750 years

Human
120 years

Mouse
8 years

Earthworms
6 years



It was a Christmas miracle this year in my home when all my amaryllises opened on Christmas Day!





Janet Frogner

Resident of West Chicago: 2 years

West Chicago Garden Club Member: 1 1/2 years

Hobbies: Gardening and crafts

Favorite Flower: Snapdragon

Biggest Gardening Mistake: Planting a variety of flowers under a Black Walnut Tree!

Current Career: Office Manager for Accounting Firm

What Gardening chore do you hate: Weeding and applying mulch

If you could have one flower in your garden what would it be: Snapdragon

What do you look most forward to in your Spring Garden: The tulips and daffodils (I'm especially anxious to see the ones I won at our Bulb Bingo!) and also, seeing my gourd birdhouse and glass flower decoration I purchased with my "Garden Bucks"

Favorite Gardening tool: I call it a small "trench maker" it's curved & very good for planting flowers

2020 Gardening Resolution: Work on the layout and flow of my garden.

Note: Special thanks again to Janet for assisting with the setup and execution of our annual Potluck and Silent Auction in November.

Local Events for Gardeners

February 1: **Cantigny Park Reopens for 2019:** The Park and museums are open Fridays through Sundays during February from 9am– 5pm [February Calendar](#)

January 26: **Countryside Garden Center: All About Birds (10:00am - 1:00pm)** 10:00 a.m. "Backyard Birding" with Jeff Miller. 12:00 p.m. "Talk and Gawk" with Mark Spreyer of Stillman Nature Center. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. "Meet and Greet" with folks from the McHenry County Audubon Society, Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources and Friends of Volo Bog and Moraine Hills State Park. www.countrysideflowershop.com

February 8th: **The Growing Place, Aurora: A Houseplant Love Affair** 12-1:00 PM From big, bold leaves to delicate flowers bring some green decor into your home and learn how to take care of your favorite houseplants. Cost: \$15. Call 630.355.4000 to register. www.thegrowingplace.com

January 16th: **Kane Master Gardeners Present: Think Spring Gardening Classes.** U of I Extension, 535 S Randall Road, St Charles. Series starts on Jan 16: Growing and Using Herbs 6:30 pm. Other topics/dates: Landscaping for Dogs January 30 at 6:30 pm, Native Pollinators February 4 at 6:30 pm, Sustainable Gardening February 18 at 6:30 pm, Prepping the Veggie Garden March 19 at 1:00 pm. For more information: web.extension.illinois.edu

Out and About

Barb Bizzarri

Heinz Brothers Greenhouse is located in St. Charles on North Avenue. Close to my home so I visit it regularly. It's a wonderful January destination to stop in and explore the many offerings and to "Think Spring". The greenhouse is very large and the warmth of the greenhouse is so very welcoming at this time of the year.



With over 4 acres to explore (in the more pleasant weather), you're bound to find the perfect plant, pot or piece of garden art or statuary you're looking for. You'll also find a very friendly, knowledgeable and helpful team of people ready to answer any indoor or outdoor questions that you may have.

There are many classes and events held at Heinz Brothers. One of my favorite events is the annual Fairy Garden weekend.

This is a not-to-be-missed offering which includes a fairy treasure hunt! The greenhouse is decorated beautifully and both adults and children participate. So whether you are an enthusiast or merely wondering about the magic of fairy gardens, you'll need to come and enjoy. The 2020 date has not been established, however, we will include it in a future newsletter's "Local Events for Gardeners"



Heinz Brothers has been a longtime supporter of the West Chicago Garden Club and we thank them. Stop by soon and start your planning.

After a very busy and hectic Holiday Season the nursery has taken a hiatus, however, it does reopen on January 16th.

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Club Information

Website: www.westchicagogardenclub.org
West Chicago Garden Club
P. O. Box 313, West Chicago, IL 60186
E-mail: westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com

Membership Information

Dues for 2020: Individual: \$15 Family: \$25 (2 people)

Board Meetings

2nd Thursday each month at 7 p.m.

Regular Meeting Location

St Andrew Lutheran Church—155 N Prince Crossing Rd

2020 WCGC BOARD:

President:	Dan Beebe
Vice President:	Barb Bizzarri
Treasurer:	Kerry Perry
Secretary:	Cherie Kraft
Program Director:	Barb Melville
Plant Sale Chair:	Dan Beebe
Information Director:	Pamela Darrah
Kruse House Chair:	Billie Childress
Hospitality Chair:	Jan Grismore
Director at Large	Mary Schramer

To Contact any Board Member, please send email to WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com

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

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