

# We Go Gardening

## Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 29—Issue 7—July 2025



*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, sustainable environment in which to live.*

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>July 24</b>
<b>Meeting Location:</b>	<b>Dan Beebe's Yard</b>
<b>Meeting Time:</b>	<b>6:00PM Brief Meeting &amp; Picnic</b>

### President's Picnic

**Pamela Darrah**

This month's meeting is our traditional annual President's Picnic. The first picnic was hosted in July 1999 by one of our early club presidents, Carole Bates. She provided some basics and everyone was asked to bring a dish to share and your own food to grill. We all had a such a wonderful time and we continue to hold our President's Picnic every July. Our venue has changed over the years and members only have to bring themselves for a fun evening of food and lively discussions with fellow gardeners.

This year's picnic, like last years, will be held in the Beebe/Darrah back yard. As you can see in the photo taken during last year's setup, there is a lot of space and we will have tents to provide shade. The event starts earlier than a normal meeting (at 6pm) since we will be having dinner.



If you submitted your RSVP for the Picnic, you should receive an email with all the details on **Tuesday, July 22nd**. If you do not receive an email, please contact us at [WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com](mailto:WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com) so we can figure out what happened and get the information sent to you.

If you are unsure if you submitted your RSVP, you can check at the [SignUpGenius page](#). Unfortunately, it shows the list in the order everyone signed up, not alphabetically, so you will need to look through the full list to find your name.

### Where to find us online

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



Facebook:

[facebook.com/westchicagogardenclub](https://facebook.com/westchicagogardenclub)



Instagram:

[westchicagogardenclub](https://www.instagram.com/westchicagogardenclub)

**AUGUST 28TH MEETING**

**DuPage Forest Preserve:  
Natural Area Reclamation**

## Note from the President

Dan Beebe

At our club board meeting earlier this month, we discussed getting more members to participate in club activities. To include as many members as possible, the club offers a wide and varied range of activities and programs throughout the year, but the Board feels that we may be falling short of some members' expectations. To better understand the expectations of the membership and ensure that our programming reaches as many members as possible, we will start asking members to fill out mini-surveys at club events. These mini-surveys will generally be designed to focus on one topic and be completed in 5 minutes or less. Rumor has it that there may even be a raffle for those who turn in their surveys at each event.

The mini-surveys are not the only way to express your likes, dislikes, suggestions, and other club-related thoughts to the Board. For those of you who are new to the Club and those who may have forgotten, members of the Board are always available to discuss your suggestions for future activities, programs, and events. Many on the board can be found socializing before and after our regular monthly meetings, and you can reach any of us by email or send suggestions to the Club's [westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com).

For any of you who may be interested, the Club has completed the independent biannual financial audit process. As expected, "the books for 2023 and 2024 are in good order." Kerry Perry, as club Treasurer, does an exceptional job keeping our financial accounts in order. She shares a lot of detail with other board members on a monthly basis and is always coming up with interesting facts based on the data she keeps. Want to know exactly how many 'blue stick' plants were sold during the Plant Sale... ask Kerry, she knows. If you happen to see Kerry, please join me in thanking her for the excellent work she does for the club.

Finally, I want to thank all of you who sent in your RSVP for the President's Picnic. We stand to have a record-breaking attendance and are working through a few final logistical issues. We will be using a different catering service for our main course selections. Marilyn Santos-McNabb will prepare sides and salads to complement our main courses and bake some special desserts to complete the menu. If the weather chooses to be uncooperative on the day of the picnic, the picnic will be held indoors at St. Andrew Lutheran Church. As always, we will make the call by 5 pm the day before the picnic and send out change of location notifications by email and calling post message. If your plans to attend change, please email [westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com) and let us know.

I hope to see you at the upcoming picnic, Twilight Tuesdays, and local field trip!

Dan

### Club Information

Website: [www.westchicagogardenclub.org](http://www.westchicagogardenclub.org)  
P. O. Box 313, West Chicago, IL 60186  
E-mail: [westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com)

### Membership Information

Dues for 2025: Individual: \$20 Family: \$30 (2 people)

### Board Meetings

2nd Thursday most months at 7 p.m.

### Regular Meeting Location

St Andrew Lutheran Church—155 N Prince Crossing Rd

### 2025 WCGC Board & Committees:

President:	Dan Beebe
Vice President:	Janet Frogner
Treasurer:	Kerry Perry
Secretary:	Christina Covarrubias
Publicity Director:	Ruth Gauss
Information Director:	Pamela Darrah
Program Director:	Ruth Kyme
Member Services Director:	Lisa Marie Vogt
Director at Large:	Kurt Schramer
Plant Sale Chair:	Mary Schramer & Dan Beebe
Kruse Garden Chair:	Open

To Contact any Board Member, please send email to [WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com](mailto:WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com)

## It's time for Fall Bulb Orders

Pauline Briggs

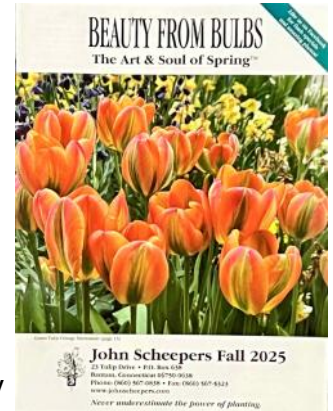
It's been the tradition of West Chicago Garden Club to pay shipping on members' orders placed through the club. Shipping is 15%, and the club will cover up to \$15 in shipping costs per member order. So if you order over \$100 of bulbs, then you may need to pay some of the shipping! You will still be responsible for taxes.

Like last year, we would like to collect all orders by email. After checking the websites below, email Pauline Briggs at [briggspm@gmail.com](mailto:briggspm@gmail.com) with:

- The site you saw the item on
- The name of the bulb
- The item number
- The quantity
- The price
- Your name and contact information

We will be ordering through John Scheepers (retail), [johnscheepers.com](http://johnscheepers.com), and Van Engelen (wholesale), [vanengelen.com](http://vanengelen.com). Although minimum quantities may be larger on the wholesale site, that is not always the case. However, wholesale prices will always be less, even if the minimum quantity is the same as the retail minimum quantity. So, before letting me know what you want, check both sites. **DO NOT PLACE YOUR ORDER THROUGH THE WEBSITES.** If you do, the club will not pay your shipping. AND THIS YEAR THERE WILL ALSO BE A 6% TARIFF CHARGE. If things change on that front, they will let us know.

**All orders should be sent to Pauline by July 31st**, with a subject line of **Bulb Order**. If you don't receive an email back from me within a couple days saying I received your order, please resend your email. Bulbs should arrive by the October Bulb Bingo meeting. Payment will be expected then.



## Ball Field Trip: August 4th

Ruth Kyme

Ball seed opens up its gardens to organized garden groups such as WCGC weekdays in August during its normal business hours. Our visit is scheduled for 9:00AM on Monday, August 4. If you plan to attend, please [add your name to Sign Up Genius by July 31](#). Space is limited to only 30 members. There is no charge for this event, but please let us know if you sign up and then cannot make it in case we have a waiting list. If the sign up is full and you would like to be added to a waiting list, please email us at [WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com](mailto:WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com).



This is a self guided tour which averages about 1.5 - 2 hours. Ball Gardens are located at 622 Town Road. Ruth Kyme will sign our group in and get maps and then meet our group at the entrance to the gardens at 9:00.

A map of the area and parking information will be sent to everyone who registers for the Field Trip. Car pooling is encouraged.





**Vicki Jovien**

**Resident of:** Northwoods (unincorporated Winfield Township) since 1995. The house was built in the 1950's on pasture land behind the now Kline Creek Farm Museum.

**WCGC Member:** About 25 years ago; although not an "active" member at the time. Now I'm retired and have met a lot of members, you'll probably see more of me.

**How did you become a member:** Gardening has been my passion for many years so the club seemed like a good fit.

**What is your current profession:** I recently retired from Platt Hill Nursery in Bloomingdale. I was the office manager

for 33 years.

**What are you most proud of in your garden:** My large, raised-bed, vegetable garden. I think I was a farmer in a past life.

**A garden mistake you made:** I've unknowingly planted a few invasive plants and then spent years trying to eliminate them.

**What do you love most about gardening:** My garden is the opposite of formal. I love every plant that reseeds or that a squirrel moves to a new place.

**What tip can you share:** Relax and enjoy

**Favorite houseplant:** African Violet

**Favorite garden tool:** I have several favorites; most used to pull the neverending weeds.

**Favorite flower & love to grow:** Hollyhocks. I have not been able to grow them. I plant some every year and fail every time!

**New Year's Resolution:** I gave up years ago.



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## **News from Kruse**

The Kruse Garden is in full bloom and looks fabulous.

In keeping with the Club's mission statement, we are committed to preserving the nearly one-acre garden at the Kruse House Museum.

We would greatly appreciate any volunteers who can spare some time to pull a few weeds, dead-head spent flowers, trim a few shrubs, refill the bird baths....your choice. Get your hands dirty and spend an hour, part of a morning, a couple of hours one evening. Please help!

Everyone is welcome to visit any time at 527 Main Street, West Chicago. Our regular work day is Wednesday 9 – 11:30. Contact us for other times at [WestChicagoGardenClub.org](http://WestChicagoGardenClub.org).

**Kerry Perry**





## Kruse 2nd Saturday Gardening Day

Christina Covarrubias



Thank you to all the wonderful gardeners who so graciously shared their time and gardening talents in the Kruse garden at our Second Saturday Kruse gardening day. It was fun meeting new club members and conversing about club members' ponds, koi and pond care.

Overgrown "bonsai" shrubs were trimmed, our weekly removal lady bellflowers took place, the pond was cleaned and aerator installed, in addition to weeding on the driveway garden bed and order restored

to the flagstone steps (aka more weeding!).

This candid photo was taken when gardeners were admiring that the Magnolia is reblooming!

If you missed your chance to join in this past month you're cordially invited to our next event Saturday, August 9th from 9-11:30 AM. [See Signup Genius for more details](#) or email Christina Covarrubias at [cmcgal.220@gmail.com](mailto:cmcgal.220@gmail.com).



## Kruse Night Twilight Tuesday

On Tuesday night our members had a chance to admire the results of all the hard work from our regular Kruse Gardeners and the lovely members who came out to the 2nd Saturday Garden Day. This week's Twilight Tuesday was held at the garden. There were lovely snacks, beautiful gardens, tours, plant exchange & fun socializing.



Pamela Darrah





## Twilight Tuesdays

Pamela Darrah

July had 2 regular Twilight Tuesday events plus the Kruse Garden night. It has been fantastic to see so many members coming out and enjoying these events. Thank you to our hosts: Karen Sherman & Vicki Jovien. Photos from Barb Bizzarri & Dick Darrah.





## Help needed after the Picnic

It will be held in our president's back yard as it was last year. Many thanks to all of those who have signed up to help setup the tents before the event and for setup/cleanup the day of the event. We are still looking for some help to move the table and chairs back out and take down the big tents. This is scheduled for 9:00am on the Saturday after the picnic (July 26).

Thank you to all our members who always seem to step up and get the work done!

To volunteer, please [visit our Sign Up Genius for this event](#) (The Saturday morning signup is at the bottom of the page—you may need to scroll down to see it.)

Pamela Darrah



## Care to Share?

Do you have something you would like to share with the club? A photo of a favorite plant, an upcoming gardening event, a recipe, or something else?

Send your items to the club at

[WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com](mailto:WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com)



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## Growing Native—Why a Master Naturalist recommends iNaturalist! Ruth Gauss

Hi, gardening friends! I have a recommendation for a great tool for identifying plants and other living things that also allows you to possibly contribute as a citizen scientist to research. It's an [app](#) called iNaturalist and I love it. I don't like to add apps to my phone, but this is one that I feel like I should have installed when it was first recommended to me.

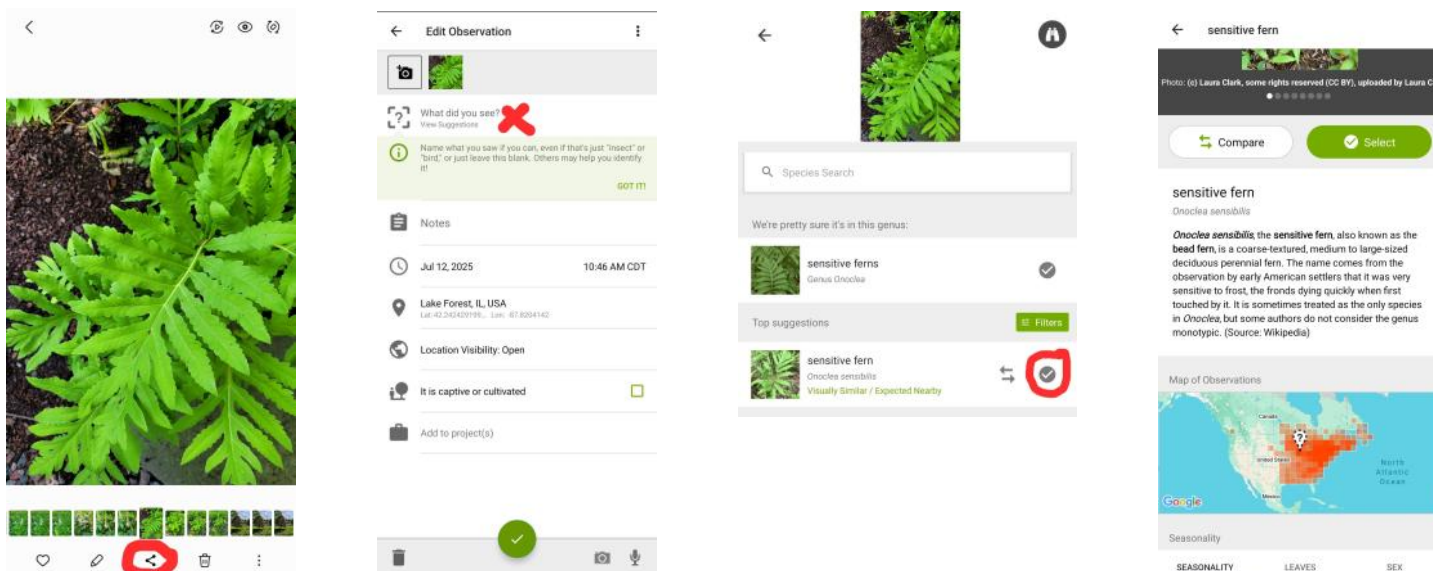
I'm going to share the basics here and if you see me at a meeting or on Twilight Tuesday I'd be happy to share how I use the app with you in person or try to help you if you are having any issues.

You do need to register an account to fully use the iNaturalist app and what I really like is that you can also see lots on their website—this is helpful for exploring and seeing details more closely than possible on a phone screen. Here are my [Observations](#) (posts with pictures I have taken) from the past 13 months that I've used the app.

I was recently exploring a garden and found a fern I wanted to try and ID. It was quick and easy to make the ID using iNaturalist. I clicked on the “share” symbol on my phone's photo album while I was viewing the picture of the fern (first picture below). I chose the iNaturalist app from the list of apps and it brought a very small thumbnail image into the app form for submission (picture 2). Right under the thumbnail is where you will want to tap in order to see the suggestions by the AI that evaluates the plant or animal based on what is seen in the image along with the date, time, and location where the picture was taken. (You can add the date, time, and location by clicking on the appropriate line if that information wasn't included with your image's data. You will get much better results with this information entered before clicking “what did you see?”) The AI will give its best guess, in this case it was a Sensitive Fern—which was the only species that it found. When I clicked through the description, looked through the images, and checked the Map of Observations I determined that it was most likely a Sensitive Fern. You can click on the check button if you don't need to investigate further (circled on image 3) or you can click on the big green “Select” button on image 4 if you chose to investigate before choosing your ID.

Click the green check at the bottom of the Observation (picture 2) and you'll allow others to see your Observation and they can confirm if your ID was correct (or provide more insight in you were only confident to Genus). I've learned so much just from using the app to try and ID plants and animals I find. The fact that there is a whole community of people adding their Observations is so wonderful and makes using the app more interesting.

I hope this helps you when you are in your own native garden and also out exploring! Happy (native) gardening!





## Easy volunteer opportunity

Pamela Darrah

Each month, we like to feature 2 or 3 local events that our members might enjoy. These are often events at Cantigny, the Arboretum, local garden walks or festivals, etc. Unfortunately, I don't always have time to search out these events to include in the newsletter.



I am looking for someone who would like to find a few of these each month and send me a short “article” for each with just basic information. I can format it and lay it out on the page, I just need the basic information sent to me by email. If you would be interested send me an email at [WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com](mailto:WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com).

## Photos from our June Bus Field Trip





## Garden Bucks

Members earn Garden Bucks when they participate in club activities, volunteer at events, and donate items. Use your Garden Bucks to win donated garden related items at our November meeting.

The chart below shows how to earn your Garden Bucks. Keep track of your dollars earned. Downloadable Tally Sheet: <https://westchicagogardenclub.org/wp-content/files/GardenBucksTallySheet-1.pdf>

Each volunteer hour (potting party, Kruse garden, plant sale, etc)	100	Donate plants for Plant Sale (each time you donate)	100
Donate pots or blinds for Plant Sale	25	Donate plants for Kruse Garden	50
Set up tables & chairs before meeting	50	Put away tables & chairs after meeting	25
Host Refreshment Table	100	Provide Refreshments	75
Attend a monthly meeting	25	Bring a guest to a meeting	50
Attend field trip	25	Write newsletter article	100
Host Twilight Tuesday	150	Attend Twilight Tuesday	25
Pay current year dues by Feb	50	Pay next year's dues by Nov	75

Come out and volunteer. Your participation keeps our club going strong.

Refer a new member and participate in a raffle for a gift card at the Nov 2025 meeting.

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## Upcoming Programs & Events for 2025

These are the currently scheduled programs. If there are any changes we will update this in future newsletters. The last column will show who has signed up to bring treats.

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July 24	Please RSVP	President's Picnic
Aug 28	Dave Andrusyk	DuPage Forest Preserve Natural Area Reclamation
Sept 25	Barbara Collins	Buckle Up! Climate Change is Here
Oct 23		Bulb Bingo
Nov 20		Member Appreciation Dinner

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A poster of our 2025 schedule can be downloaded at <https://westchicagogardenclub.org/wp-content/files/2025PosterWithSchedule.pdf>

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