



WE GO GARDENING

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

www.westchicagogardenclub.org

Volume 17 Issue 7 July 2013

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July 25th Meeting:

"President's Picnic" at Hawthorne's Backyard!

Our annual picnic will be catered at **Hawthorne's Backyard Bar and Grill at 1200 W. Hawthorne Lane, West Chicago.** All those attending should have called in advance for reservations. If you are late to do this, please call June Luther at 630-876-1295 or Keith Letsche at 630-293-0192 to see if there's room.

Make a new gardening friend - sit next to someone you don't know yet!



6:30 - gather

7:15 - dinner is served!

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.



Next Meeting: Thursday, Aug 22:

"Monarch Magic"

LOOK FOR NEW MEMBERS Barbara Bizzarri and Barb Melville AT THE JULY MEETING!



Upcoming events (outside the club)

Cantigny: Wine Through the Gardens. Aug 8, 6:30PM. Leisurely stroll through the gardens, 3 stops to listen to horticulturists in each area, optional glass of wine at each stop. Meet at Visitor's Center. \$25 per person. Registration required. 630-260-8162. Butterfly and Nature Hike. Aug 10, 11AM. Meet at Information Kiosk/Visitor's Center on Golf Course side. Free program. Contact Patrick at 630-260-8135 with questions.

Growing Place: Winging It Day. August 3, All Day. Aurora. Mosaic Stepping Stone, Flower Pot, or Mini Birdbath Craft, August 10. 1PM—4PM. Aurora. \$75. Limit 10, Register by phone at 630-355-4000.

Heinz Brothers Greenhouse: Farmers Market on Wednesdays, 3PM—7PM.

Chicago Botanic Garden: Herb Garden Weekend. July 27-28, 11AM—4PM. Photo Walk. August 3, 9AM. Many more at <http://www.chicagobotanic.org/calendar>

Morton Arboretum: Garden Journaling. July 21, 11AM—4PM. Use photos, nature prints, and pressings to create an embellished sketchbook or journal, and learn to keep a record of what works in the garden and what doesn't. \$60M/\$71NM. Registration required. 630-719-2468.



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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 2013: 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

2013 WCGC BOARD:

President:
Keith Letsche 630-293-0192

Vice President:
Dick Darrah 630-584-1900, info@bwdarrah.com

Treasurer:
Barb Darrah 630-584-1900, info@bwdarrah.com

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Pauline Briggs 630-545-2234, pmb Briggs@juno.com
June Luther 630-876-1295, june@markluther.com

Information Director & Publicity:
Melissa Birch, 630-621-0128, melissabirch@gmail.com



Planned WCGC Events - 2013

Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event	Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event
25 Jul	All members	President's Picnic	26 Sep	June & Pauline	Bulb Bingo
22 Aug	TBA	Monarch Magic	24 Oct	Bill Karges	Fall Garden Prep
			21 Nov	All members	Dinner & Garden Dollar Auction

America in Bloom Report

by Merle Burleigh

Judging for America In Bloom in West Chicago took place, Monday and Tuesday, July 8, and July 9, 2013. The national AIB judges were Jack Clasen and Jim Sutton. Clasen is the Contest Committee Chair, Judge Coordinator and trainer. Sutton is Design Manager for Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, PA. They are judging communities with populations ranging from 25,000 to 50,000. Judging is based upon eight criteria, which includes tidiness, environmental awareness, community involvement, heritage, urban forestry, landscape, floral displays and turf and groundcover.

The judges were guests at a dinner on July 8, 2013. Other persons attending were some park district staff and commissioners, West Chicago Garden Club members and Dr. Martin Miller from Ball Horticultural Company, currently president of the AIB Board of Directors. Clasen explained that as they toured and visited some designated locations, he and Jim also were taking into consideration the factors of management, planning, maintenance, improvement and innovation. "We stop looking around 3:00 p.m. on the second day, so we can evaluate our notes before we visit the next community. It is possible for a community to receive 1,000 points." He added, "We may have 40 to 50 recommendations. The majority are small improvements, such as a flower box at a certain building would enhance the exterior." This does not occur until the Symposium and Awards Program September 19 – 20, 2013 in Orlando, Florida. "We send an email to each of the participating communities the Monday after this."

America in Bloom is a national awards program that provides a framework for improving the quality of life in a community. The West Chicago Park District is spearheading West Chicago's first year of competition. Superintendent of Parks Jesse Felix said, "The program helps build community pride. It is more than a one-year competition, but one that constantly evolves."



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News from Kruse

by Tom Fessler

Summer is finally here in all its glory and the Kruse House gardens are in full bloom. No matter where you look you will see something wonderful. And the colors this year are outstanding.

The Yucca plants are blooming and look better this year than they ever have. Just in back of the Yucca plants are the Smoke Bushes. The color of these bushes is hard to describe. Each year we cut these bushes down quite low, and each Spring they come back. The plants which are planted on the hill require very little care. The weeds are another story, it keeps us busy trying to control them. Most plants on the hill require very little water, other than what nature gives them. This area is in full sun most of the day but due to the selection of plants they thrive here.

If you have not been to the Kruse House lately, there have been some changes. These changes don't jump out at you, but if you know where they are, you may be surprised. One of these changes has taken place on the hill in the Northwest corner of the property. This area was used in the past as the place for our compost pile. Since the compost pile has been removed there was nothing of interest there. Angie and Billie decided that this would be a good place to plant Hostas. The soil in this area is so rich you could grow a rock there, and there is just enough shade. A number of different types of Hostas were planted in a very unique design. Angie tells me that as these plants mature they will block out all the weeds, which has always been a problem in this area.

Just before closing, I would like to comment about our meeting at the Kruse House. Something about our meetings there are very special. Not only did members get to walk through the gardens, but I thought our guest speaker was great. I can't wait to try out some of his ideas. To see if they actually work. That's it for now, I hope to see everybody at Hawthorne's Backyard on July 25.

-B, A & T



The Amazing Poinsettia!

by Elaine McCluskey

Tim, my work colleague, got a small poinsettia plant in December from a local school fundraiser, and I have been amazed at how beautiful it still is. As you know, *Euphorbia pulcherrima* is a culturally and commercially important plant species of the diverse spurge family that is indigenous to Mexico and Central America. It derives its common English name from Joel Roberts Poinsett, the first U.S. minister to Mexico, who introduced the plant into the United States in 1825 (background information from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poinsettia>).



I didn't realize that the colors of the leaves, or bracts, are created through "photoperiodism," meaning that they require darkness to change color. But once they finish that process, the plants like a lot of light during the day to keep their bright color. They also don't like extremes in temperature.

Tim told me he gets a plant every year, and usually it's done with by the end of January. The plant sits near his eastern office window where it gets modest light and the winter/spring room temperatures are on the cool side. His care routine is to check before watering and only water if it's dry, using filtered, room temperature tap water. Very few leaves have fallen off in the last 7 months. I'm looking forward to seeing if the plant stays looking this good until next holiday season!

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Beautiful Bloomers for a Late Summer Show by Heather Prince of The Growing Place

August can be magical in the garden. There are several shrubs and perennials that bloom in late summer for a burst of color. Butterflies, bees and hummingbirds will be attracted to these plants. Try planting them in groups for a broad band of flowers and added drama. The shrubs will anchor a perennial bed or could be a focal point in the landscape. This is but a small list. Stop by The Growing Place to see these plants in our gardens and find the best selection.

Perennials

Agastache or *hyssop* - this drought tolerant, sun-loving perennial sends bottlebrush-like blooms up in late summer. The spicy scented foliage is avoided by rabbits and deer while hummingbirds seek out the flowers. Delicate in texture, it's lovely in the middle of the border.

Chelone or *turtlehead* – features dense spikes of white or pink hooded flowers atop dark green foliage. It prefers moist soil in full sun to part shade and is a favorite of bumble bees and butterflies.

Eupatorium or *Joe Pye weed* – this bee and butterfly magnet tends to be a large, bold perennial for the back of the border. Blooming white, pink or white in broad clusters of nectar-rich flowers, it prefers moist soil in full sun to part shade.

Helenium or *Helen's flower* – this showy native daisy-like flower blooms in shades of yellow, red or orange on tall stems. Pretty in a vase, this plant prefers moist, well-drained to wet soils in full sun. Terrific in a rain garden!

Japanese Anemone – beginning in August, this coarse-textured plant begins to delight with pretty pink or white flowers held high on delicate stems. It prefers average soil in part shade and blooms for weeks!

Lobelia or *cardinal flower* – this native two to three foot perennial blooms on tall flower spikes in red or blue and is a magnet for hummingbirds. It performs best in morning sun in moist to average soils in full sun to part shade.

Rudbeckia or *black-eyed Susan* – this heirloom favorite is a vigorous bloomer covered in yellow flowers. There are many cultivars and all are easy to grow in average soil in full sun to part shade. A wonderful cut flower, you can find rudbeckia as small as 12 inches and as large as six feet!

Shrubs

Clethra – clethra offers tall, fragrant flower spikes attractive to butterflies beginning in mid-July and flowers into August. With enough moisture, it will grow in full sun to full shade and has a lovely deep yellow fall color.

Hydrangea – a favorite of Midwestern gardeners for its long flower show, hydrangeas come in many shapes and sizes for both sun and shade. In August, the panicle hydrangeas steal the show with their large, conical flowers that bloom white, then turn shades of pink as the petals age. Look for new cultivars that are three to five feet high such as 'Little Lime', 'Bobo' or 'Tickled Pink'.

Rose of Sharon – nothing compares to the flower show of Rose of Sharon! Covered in hibiscus-like blooms for almost two months, this large shrub is favored by butterflies and bees. It prefers well-drained soil in full sun to part shade and comes in white, pink, lavender and blue.



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