



WE GO GARDENING

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

www.westchicagogardenclub.org

Volume 18 Issue 6 June 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.

Make Note!

Our June meeting location is at the Kruse House Garden, 527 Main Street.

In the event of inclement weather, we will meet at Faith Community Church.

June 26 Meeting: "Edibles in Small Spaces" by Kris Van Vleet from The Growing Place

Kris will be speaking at the Kruse House on growing your own edibles in small spaces, and also about new plants and herbs!

PLEASE NOTE: Our June Meeting will be held outdoors at the Kruse House Garden, 527 Main Street. Parking is available at City Hall (475 Main St.) In the event of inclement weather, we will hold the meeting at our usual location.

**We had several new members join in May!
Have you met them yet? Be sure to welcome:**

**Matthew & Catherine McNeil, Sandy & Bill Nicholson,
Joan Wells, and Lisa Wiemann at the June meeting!**

Kruse House Garden at 527 Main Street in West Chicago

6:45pm - refreshments and gathering (arrive early to enjoy the garden!)

7:00pm - brief business meeting

7:15pm - speaker

Next Meeting: Thursday, July 24

President's Picnic — Location TBA



Upcoming events (outside the club)

Cantigny: Garden Tips and Tastes. July 2. 12pm—1pm. No fee w/paid parking. Call 630-260-8162 for details. Purple Martins. July 12. 7:30am—10am. Golf entrance 27W270 Mack Rd. Parking and program free. Meet at “little brick building” by houses.

Growing Place: For the Butterflies Weekend. June 28-29. Both locations. Downton Abbey Flower Faire. July 19. Aurora. 1920’s garden party style event co-hosted by Naperville Garden Club.

Morton Arboretum: Trees Under Threat Exhibit. Daily, 7am—sunset in the Conifer Collection.

Chicago Botanic Garden: Northshore Iris/Daylily Show & Sale July 12-13. WI-IL Lily Society Show July 12 at 12pm. “Meet the Horticulturist” July 18 1PM. More info: www.chicagobotanic.org/calendar/july

NEW! West Chicago Farmers Market: Thursdays, 7am—1pm, until October 30th. Mosaic Crossing Shopping Center (64/59 near Hobby Lobby and McDonalds).

West Chicago Railroad Days: July 10-13, Reed Keppler Park in West Chicago

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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 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

Vice President:

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

Treasurer:

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

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Planned WCGC Events - 2014

Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event	Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event
24 Apr	Ed Max	Spring Ephemerals	24 Jul	All members	President's Picnic
17 May	ALL MEMBERS!	PLANT SALE!	28 Aug	Chicagoland Gardening	Made in the Shade II
22 May	Nancy Carroll	Summer Fun	25 Sep	June & Pauline	Bulb Bingo
26 Jun	The Growing Place	*at the Kruse House	23 Oct	Jo Ann Loebel	Pressing Flowers
			20 Nov	All members	Dinner & Garden Dollar Auction

Flower Pressing Craft at October Meeting!

Right now is the time to be thinking about what kinds of flowers you might want to press.

If you know how to press, start now. A couple quick tips: smaller, flatter flowers work best (pansies are a good candidate); and, phone books or large books with non-glossy paper work well.

If you're not familiar with pressing flowers, more detailed instructions are on page 5!



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News from Kruse

by Billie, Angie, Kerry and Tom

Are you waiting with bated breath to read what is blooming in the Kruse Garden? Are you wondering what we've been doing there on Mondays? Well let me tell you.

We've been busier than bees trying to position the garden to look its best for the June meeting. Right now the pile of chips in the driveway is a depressing sight never magically decreasing. We were happy to get the chips. They came from the dead pine trees, killed by the walnut tree as it grew bigger. Our chore is to mulch the back areas of the garden to keep weeds in check and provide a nice look to the native shrubs in the back.

The bearded iris that survived the grubs are beautiful. We Grub-Xed the beds to see if that would be of help. The bridal wreath spireas, original to the garden, had a short bloom time, due to the heat of the season. Dusty Miller at the bottom of the museum sign at the front survived well through many winters, but this winter was just too cold. They had to be replaced. It is a good plant that needs no extra water and seems to thrive in heat. Two different types of milkweed were planted on the hill to encourage monarch butterflies. The prairie smoke plants, *Geum triflorum*, are finally established so we could see what the plants should look like in bloom. It is an Illinois native, one foot tall, with nodding reddish-purple flowers, with densely hairy tails developing which give a smoke-like appearance.

Out of our lilacs the old-fashioned white had the most fragrance, though Miss Kim which blooms later does provide some competition. But what could beat the blooms of the old-fashioned? It's easy to imagine a bride of old having a bouquet of bridal wreath spirea and white lilacs.



We did not drain the pond this year, due to time constraints and there did not seem need for immediate action. Our persicaria, which provided many divisions for the plant sale, was moved to the pond area. It is a stately plant that was getting lost amid the grasses on the hill. It is a non-seeding, clump forming type, a Sandy donation. We popped in some herbs into our oaken herb trough—marjoram, parsley, oregano, thyme. It was a deadly winter for the sage.

The peonies in front are not to be forgotten. They've settled in and are extremely strong and healthy. There is much to be said for providing a plant with the right situation—mainly light, soil, drainage. The peonies along the east side of the garden are the old-fashioned bomb type. They are very stunning if well-grown. We are considering moving a few out to a better situation in late summer, giving them more room and better soil.

We planted some annual plugs—marigolds, dianthus, petunias. Zinnias were seeded for the butterflies. All this we did in our short time on Monday mornings. Now we're basically down to

maintenance—weeding, mulching and telling the flowers they have to do their part—**STAND UP AND SHINE**—for their big day—June 26th!

By A,B,T and K



Flower Pressing Guide

Additional Information is available at: <http://m.wikihow.com/Press-Flowers>

Fresh flowers can be preserved with their color and shape intact through a method called pressing, which flattens the flowers and allows them to dry. Pressed flowers have long been used as decorative additions to cards and jewelry, and they are also beautiful framed on their own. Read on for information on how to press flowers using a traditional flower press.

Choose flowers to press. Pick flowers from your garden, or gather wildflowers from a field close by. Store-bought flowers may also be pressed if you wish to select a certain type of flower that doesn't grow in your region. Pick the flowers at the height of their bloom, when their color is at its brightest. Choose blossoms with shapely petals that haven't been bruised or damaged by insects. Flowers with naturally flat faces, such as daisies, violets and geraniums, are easier to press than flowers with conical faces, like tulips and roses. However, you can press rose or tulip petals individually, so don't dismiss conical flowers completely. Ferns and other leaves can also be preserved by pressing them, and they add a natural, wild element to the finished piece you'll create with your dried flowers. Allow the flowers to dry. If you pick flowers that are still wet with dew or rain, allow them to dry completely before you press them. Dab them gently with a paper towel to speed along the drying process.

Next, find a flower press. Flower presses are made with wood and metal screws and come with pieces of cardboard and flower press paper. They are available at craft stores or through trading or auction sites online. If you're using a used press, check that the press has clean papers and cardboard squares inside. If not, you may have to replace these. Recycle cardboard from boxes around the house. Cut them into rectangular pieces that fit inside your flower press. Cut rectangular pieces of parchment or freezer paper to use in your flower press. These should be the same size as the cardboard.

Prepare the flower press. When you're ready to press the flowers, remove the top piece of the flower press and set it aside with the wingnuts. Place one piece of cardboard on the bottom of the press, plus two sheets of flower press paper, the bottommost of which will serve as a "blotter." Arrange flowers on the piece of flower press paper. Lay the flowers flat on the top sheet of paper, leaving ample space between them so they are able to thoroughly dry. Play with the arrangement of the petals according to your artistic sense. You could lay them flat, or overlap some of them to create a windblown effect. The flowers will be preserved exactly as you position them. To press flowers with a conical shape, cut them in half lengthwise, or press individual petals. Add the remaining paper and cardboard layers. Place a piece of paper carefully over the flower arrangement you made.

Without disturbing the arrangement add a second "blotter" sheet. Add the second piece of cardboard to the stack. Press the flowers. Fit the top piece of the flower press over the screws, and gently lower it onto the cardboard piece. Use the wingnuts to tighten the flower press. Store the pressing flowers in a dry place in your house. Change the blotter sheets every few days. Unscrew the flower press to switch out the blotter sheets every couple of days. They will have absorbed some moisture from the flowers. Changing the damp sheets prevents the flowers from turning brown, which happens if they don't dry quickly enough.

Remove the flowers from the press. After a few weeks, the flowers will be completely dry and flat. Gently open the layers of paper and lift them using your fingers or a pair of tweezers. They are now ready to use in a craft design.



Plant Sale THANK YOU!

By Dick Darrah

We had a great plant sale again this year and everyone in the club is to be congratulated for all the hours of work they put into making the sale successful.

All the figures are still not in, but we know our profit from the sale will exceed our annual expenses so the club remains financially healthy.

Not only is the plant sale our major income producing activity, it is also the opportunity we get to interact with other club members and get to know each other a little better. The day of the sale itself we also have the opportunity to meet and discuss gardening with many citizens of West Chicago and surrounding communities who range from Master Gardeners to absolute beginners. It's a fun way to finance the running of the club and give us some extra funds for philanthropic donations.

Thank you very much to everyone who worked to make this another successful sale.

..and, on behalf of the Board and ALL Garden Club Members

a very special **THANK YOU** to Dick Darrah

for chairing the committee that ran our Annual Sale!

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