



WE GO GARDENING

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

www.westchicagogardenclub.org

Volume 18 Issue 3 March 2014

Inside this issue

Non-Club Events & Club Information	2
Planned WCGC Events	3
News from Kruse	4
Plant Sale 2014	5
Growing Place Article	6

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.



March 27th Meeting: "Vegetable, Herb, and Flower Gardening the Natural Way" by Roberta Muehlhaus

Roberta Muehlhaus is a Member of the Downers Grove Organic Gardeners and a passionate gardener. She grew up on a small farm in Indiana and has had some type of vegetable garden most years of her adult life. She is a retired school teacher who co-wrote curriculum for Sixth Grade Biodiversity Units in science and in outdoor education.

Have you volunteered for the Plant Sale yet? See page 5 for more details on the upcoming plant prep—digging and potting parties! We need everyone's help for a successful sale. Contact Dick Darrah at 630-584-1900, info@bwdarrah.com with questions.

We know it's hard to believe—but Spring Will Come! Our Plant Sale is right around the corner!

Faith Community Church at 910 Main Street in West Chicago

6:45 - refreshments and gathering

7:00 - brief business meeting

7:15 - speaker

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 24th:

"Tips for the New Gardener" with Dolly Foster



Upcoming events (outside the club)

Cantigny: Monthly Garden Tour—First Tuesday March through November. 11AM. Meet at Visitor’s Center. Free with paid parking. For more information call 630-260-8207.

Growing Place: Vegetables: From Garden to Table. March 15. Aurora location. 10AM. \$15 fee. Container Gardening: Indoors and Out. March 22nd. Aurora. Call 630-355-4000 for more information. Opening Weekend—March 29th & 30th! More details at <http://www.thegrowingplace.com/classes.html>

Chicago Botanic Garden: Antiques and Garden Fair. April 11—13, 10AM—5PM. Celebrate spring at the Antiques & Garden Fair—find vintage items and garden-related merchandise. Ticket purchase required—more information at <http://www.chicagobotanic.org/antiques> or by phone at 847-835-5440.

Heinz Brothers: Spring Container Planting! April 5, 1PM—2PM. St. Charles. \$15 plus cost of materials. Call for more details: 630-584-0473.

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



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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
- Secretary:
Kathy Reynolds, 630-293-7462,
kreynolds2656@sbcglobal.net
- Program Co-Chairs:
Pauline Briggs, 630-545-2234, pmbiggs@juno.com
June Luther, 630-876-1295, june@markluther.com
- Information Director & Publicity:
Melissa Birch, 630-621-0128, melissabirch@gmail.com



Planned WCGC Events - 2014

Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event	Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event
23 Jan	WCGC Members	Home Grown	26 Jun	Bill Karges	*at the Kruse House
27 Feb	Lynn Bement	Sex in the Soil	24 Jul	All members	President's Picnic
27 Mar	Roberta Muehlhaus	Vegetable, Herb, and Flower Gardening the Natural Way	28 Aug	Chicagoland Gardening	Made in the Shade II
24 Apr	Dolly Foster	Tips for the New Gardener	25 Sep	June & Pauline	Bulb Bingo
17 May	ALL MEMBERS!	PLANT SALE!	23 Oct	Jo Ann Loebel	Pressing Flowers
22 May	TBD	TBD	20 Nov	All members	Dinner & Garden Dollar Auction



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News from Kruse

by Billie, Angie, and Tom

Happy Returns : The title is not referring to the splendid yellow daylily with that name nor is it a salutation to offer hope that a happy day will recur many more times. It *is* to say we are awaiting the happy returns of the Kruse Garden plants. The third worst ever Chicago winter is likely to delay Spring blossoms somewhat but the daffodils and grape hyacinths will be back! As will the short purple iris with those **wowie** blue fuzzy things and the gorgeous orange and rose streaked tulips (photo at bottom of page) will not be far behind. It's amazing how much better it feels when you conjure up those plants in anticipation of Spring. Tom Angie and Billie



will be back in the garden too and this year we will have a new partner to work with. Kerry Perry has agreed to join us on our Monday morning forays and we are all very excited with our new partnership. Thank you Kerry for volunteering! There is always room for more so don't be discouraged if you haven't made it known that you too will be a Monday faithful in the Kruse Garden. We welcome all comers. I need to mention at least one plant that will not be a happy return....Lady Bells. We have been trying to get rid of this plant for years! It does have a nice bloom but it is mighty invasive. Any little root left behind grows a new plant. Often its roots are entwined with a 'good' plant and it is impossible to eradicate. It works best to spray it but that is risky business. We will keep up the fight though! We are ready to garden whenever the weather cooperates!

-Angie, Billie, Kerry, & Tom



The eminent Edwardian gardener Gertrude Jekyll wrote in 1900 "It takes half a lifetime to decide what's best worth doing in a garden and another half to try and do it." Garden writer Henry Mitchell concluded that "most gardeners take a full lifetime to discover what's best worth doing and then run out of time."



PLANT SALE 2014

by Pauline Briggs

The city has already set the date for Blooming Fest. It will be Saturday, **May 17**. And, they've already started having their meetings.

Although the ground may still have some snow, we need to start planning for things like: digging, potting, watering, moving plants, and all the things that go along with selling the plants! We will have plenty of signup sheets available at the next meeting. Check your calendars now!

There will be 2 potting parties on Sundays, **April 6** and **April 13**, from Noon to 3 p.m., and 2 potting parties on Saturdays, **April 26** and **May 3**, from 9 a.m. to Noon.

We will need people to water and care for the plants until the day of the Member's Sale - **May 15**. We will also need a few people to help at the Members' Sale.

Then, we'll need to move the plants from the different holding areas to the sale area. That will happen on Friday night, **May 16th**. We'll need people with large vehicles, and people to load and unload them.

And then, of course we'll need lots of help the day of the sale! **May 17th**.

Did I mention volunteering for any of these things is a great way to get to know other garden club members better? We all know gardeners are great people. And, you'll earn garden bucks! There are jobs for everyone, no matter what shape you're in. So, check your calendar now and plan on signing up for a few things.

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What a Winter

by Heather Prince of The Growing Place

Cold and snow is beneficial in the garden. The cold may kill some of our insect pests and the snow insulates our perennials. Snow also will provide much needed moisture first thing in the spring. Our gardens should be looking good this year!

However, our heavy snowfall has allowed our rabbit friends more access to trees and shrubs. We have noticed rabbit damage high above the ground level, thanks to snow drifts and piles. Check your trees and shrubs, especially crabapples, fruit trees, burning bush, shrub roses, witchhazel and viburnum. Rabbit damage looks like sharp, neat, almost 45 degree angle cuts, almost as if pruners had been used. They may also nibble away at exposed bark.

The most effective way to keep rabbits from eating is to fence them out. Trees and shrubs can be protected with a ring of quarter inch wire hardware cloth or chicken wire. You can tuck it into remaining snow. Monitor it as snow melts so that the fencing doesn't form gaps or collapse. You may have to reset it more than once as we edge into spring. You may also use bird netting to cover a particular specimen plant. Just make sure to tie it around the base so no gaps are evident.

Once the weather warms enough to be outdoors, now is the perfect time to prune woody plants if they bloom in summer. Wait to prune your fragrant viburnums, lilacs, and anything that blooms before Memorial Day until just after they flower. Remember, prune only if necessary to control the size of the plant or to remove dead, crossing or damaged twigs. Opening up the canopy of a tree or the structure of shrubs will allow greater air circulation and reduce fungal disease. Pruning now before leaves appear allows you to clearly see the structure of the plant. Try to enhance the natural shape of the plant when pruning and remember to make cuts just above a branching point or bud. This allows the plant to heal properly and seal the wound. Don't wait too much longer than March 20th to prune oaks, elms or maples.

Oaks and elms should only be pruned while insects are still dormant to prevent the spread of Dutch Elm Disease and oak wilt. Maples often will bleed sap if they are pruned too late in the season. **Join us at The Growing Place on March 29 and 30 at 2:00 pm in Aurora for our free Hands on Pruning class! We'll demonstrate techniques then let you try them out.**

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