

We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 21 Issue 3 March 2017



Meeting Date: March 23
Meeting Location:
Faith Community Church
at 910 Main Street in West Chicago

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

March Meeting: Members Present

???

Our meeting will be held
in the church sanctuary.

Who is going to talk?
What are they going to
talk about?

Come to the meeting and satisfy your curiosity—it's sure to
be a smash hit! Plus...
everyone who attends will receive a Blooming Potted Plant!

Plant Sale Countdown!

Please bring your calendars to the meeting so you'll be
ready to sign up for the volunteer activities needed to
prepare for our Plant Sale. There is something for everyone!

Next Month:

April 27 Program: "Exciting Annuals: Getting Ready for Spring"




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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 2017: 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

2017 WCGC BOARD:

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

Vice President:
 Keith Letsche, 630-293-0192, keithletsche@aol.com

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

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Program Director:
 Billie Childress, 630-231-1791, billiedc@sbcglobal.net

Information Director:
 Melissa Ferguson, 630-621-0128, melissabirch@gmail.com



WCGC 2017 Calendar

Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event	Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event
26 Jan	Erik Neidy, DuPage Forest Preserve District	Habitat Changes in West Branch Forest	22 Jun	TBA	TBA
23 Feb	Mark Spreyer from the Stillman Nature Center	"Who's Who of Owls"	? Jul	TBA	TBA
23 Mar	Members Present	Members Present	24 Aug	TBA	TBA
27 Apr	TBA	Exciting Annuals: Getting Ready for Spring	28 Sep	TBA	TBA
20 May	ALL MEMBERS!	PLANT SALE!	26 Oct	TBA	TBA
25 May	TBA	TBA	16 Nov	All members	Dinner & Garden Dollar Auction

Big Crowd at February Meeting

More than 50 people attended our March program! Mark Spreyer from Stillman Nature Center in Barrington presented a fabulous program on **Owls**. I've never thought about how many toes an owl has and of course I thought those little tufts on top of their heads were their ears. Not! Their ears are asymmetrical, flat, and located at the sides of the head, behind the eyes, and are covered by the feathers of the facial disc.



Photo by Barb Melville

And.....Owls don't need eyes in the back of their heads to see what's behind them — they can just swivel their heads all the way around. In fact, many owl species, such as the barred owl, can rotate their heads 270 degrees in each direction, which means they can look to the left by rotating all the way to the right, or vice versa. Pretty cool huh?

And speaking of cool.....the owl themed treats were a hoot!!!



Photo by Barb Melville



Photo by Becky Hall



News from Kruse

Billie Childress

The Historical Society is busy readying the **Museum House** for the 2017 touring season. The **featured display** this year is **Cookie Jars**. Do you have any old cookie jar that you would like to add to the display? Contact Tom. He can get that arranged and the HS would appreciate it. Can you imagine how much work it is to get all the precious doodads that the house contains dusted, and shelves and floors cleaned, and cobwebs swept each Spring? Guess that embodies the term "spring cleaning"! The Kruse Museum House opens for tours in May...every Saturday 11 am to 3 pm. Here is a bit of information from the Kruse House web site. Note that the **house is 100 years old this year!**

"The Kruse House is a 1917 four-square home depicting the Fred Kruse family life style. Fred was a Collector for the Chicago and North Western Railroad. The house is furnished with period furnishings and collections including china, quilts, jewelry, toys, cut glass, and Chicago and North Western railroad history. You are invited to tour the period gardens which have been restored and are being maintained by the West Chicago Garden Club."



**Kruse House Gardens:
It's Spring! We better hurry! And Scurry!
There's so much to do!**



Well, the Kruse House Gardeners are seasoned hands and it will take more than the beginning of a new year in the garden to rile us. This isn't our first rodeo and we know it will all get done in good time. However, don't interpret that to mean we don't need every minute of help we can get. Many hands = light(er) work. And yes, we do have a sense of urgency about our Spring work. It's just that we're getting too old to be too crazy! Come work in the garden with us on Wednesday mornings officially starting in May. It's a fabulous way to get to know each other!

We are looking forward to delightful garden displays like these from previous years.



Member Opportunities / Activities of Interest

April 29-30, 2017:

Arbor Day Plant Sale at the Morton Arboretum

A selection of more than 10,000 plants! More information at mortonarb.org

May 30, 2017: BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir (Hindu Temple Tour) with West Chicago Park District.

Tour lasts from 9:45am—2:30pm and includes lunch on your own at a restaurant in Bartlett. From the Park District's website: Please note the following dress code: No sleeveless tops, shorts, skirts shorter than knee length and shoes must be removed before entering any of the buildings. Photography and Videography may be taken from ground level outside the Mandir and Haveli, but is strictly prohibited inside the building. Registration required, 18+ only, fee applies. For more information, or to register, please visit <http://www.we-goparks.org/> stop in at the ARC Center (201 W. National Street, West Chicago, IL 60185) or call 630-231-9474.



Warm Winters and What to Expect this Spring

The Growing Place

Well, this certainly has become a warmer winter so far. There's been very little snow cover and my snow-blower has been gathering dust since before the holidays. How will both of these conditions affect our spring plants?

Generally the best time to prune woody tree and shrubs for size control has been during the winter, or what we call 'dormant pruning'. Dormant pruning is removing interior crossed branches, deadwood, and editing for overall size. It does not mean shearing spring blooming shrubs as you will be cutting off the flowering tips. Spring blooming shrubs include: Lilacs, Forsythias and fragrant Viburnums. Winter pruning means you can safely prune while the plant is asleep (or dormant) because of the cold temperatures. With the warm spells of the past few weeks, not all plants are fully dormant. As the weather warms, the sap starts to flow, which can transmit disease. Oak trees, *Quercus*, and Sugar Maples, *Acer saccharum*, should no longer be pruned.

How else will these early warm temperatures affect our spring blooming shrubs?

I've already noticed that my climbing Hydrangea and old-fashioned Lilacs have buds that are swelling and getting ready to open. Normally this process can take a month or more. The warmer the days, the faster this can happen. But, as we know in Chicagoland, mother nature always throws in a few very cold days right up until April or May. Sometimes even a late season snowfall or freezing rain. Snowfall can be an insulating blanket, it's the days that are clear and cold cause the most harm.

Tree and shrub flower buds that are too far along the path of opening may end up get frozen. This can cause the flower buds to die and a spring bloom will not occur. Sometimes bud death only occurs on the part of the plant most exposed. That's why you may see only half a shrub blooming. Generally this does not hurt the plant but new flowers buds will not form for this year. As the plant leafs out, the newly growing branch tips will start forming flower their buds for 2018 sometime in June. If you do need to prune your spring flowering shrubs for shape, do it immediately after the flowers turn brown, approximately early June. This allows the plant to set new flower buds for the following spring show.

Most perennials can cope with the up and down spring temperatures more reliably. Wait to clean up or remove the old leaves and debris until we are into real spring. The old rubbish is still doing its job of insulating new growth. For the very early bloomers, such as Hellebore, it is ok to cut out the burnt tattered leaves.



Ivory Prince Hellebore

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 & 2 blocks west of Naper Blvd

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