

# We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 22 Issue 3 March 2018



**Meeting Date: March 22**

**Meeting Location:**

**Faith Community Church  
910 Main Street, West Chicago**

**Meeting Time:**

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

## How To Wake Up Your Garden

Information from our March speaker in his own words:

My name is Wally Schmidtke. I come from a commercial agricultural background, working on strawberry farms and cherry orchards in Traverse City, Michigan every summer thru school. You may have read my contributions to the column "Ask a Master Gardener" or "Tremendous Tomato Tips" published in the Daily Herald. I've been the proud recipient University of Illinois Master Gardener teamwork award for raising an organic vegetable garden and hosting workshops for the "Plant a Row for the Hungry" program. My nickname on the Mike Nowak Radio Show was 'Dr. Wally'. Some of my presentations include the Chicago Botanic Gardens, local colleges (Oakton Community, William Rainey Harper and Lake County), public libraries (Des Plaines, Niles and Schaumburg), and an extensive list of garden clubs. My presentations are based on organic/natural techniques teamed with 30 years in horticulture and a lifetime of gardening experience.



My lecture and Power Point presentation "Wake up Your Gardens for Spring" on March 22nd will include:

- ◆ Managing perennials and woody ornamentals for health and vigor for the upcoming season.

- ◆ Preparing veggie and herb gardens with tips on the using the latest in organic fertilizers and amendments.
- ◆ Seed starting – what you should be doing now.
- ◆ How to get the most out of Container Gardens.
- ◆ Tremendous Tomato Tips - Grow the best tasting and productive tomatoes this year, naturally.
- ◆ Question and Answer Period

### April Program:

Join us on April 26th for Jim Nau of Ball Horticultural Company who will present "Best New Annuals for 2018"

### Bonus Article:

If you receive this newsletter via email, there is a 2nd link to a bonus article for this month.

If you receive this newsletter via postal mail, visit our website's newsletter page to see the extra article.

[www.WestChicagoGardenClub.org](http://www.WestChicagoGardenClub.org)

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## Club Information

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

### Membership Information

Dues for 2018: 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: Barb Bizzarri  
Vice President: Keith Letsche  
Treasurer: Kerry Perry  
Secretary: OPEN  
Contact Barb Bizzarri if you are interested  
Program Director: Barb Melville  
Plant Sale Chair: Dan Beebe  
Newsletter: Pamela Darrah

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

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## Plant Sale 2018

Dan Beebe

At last month's club meeting we kicked off work on our 2108 Plant Sale at Blooming Fest scheduled for Saturday, May 19th. We have a lot of work to do and I am really encouraged by the number of people who have stepped up and volunteered to help with the sale, but we need more help!

I am looking for a few volunteers to help coordinate the donation and care of Member Plants. This role is really not as daunting as it might seem. Most of the work that needs to be done involves coordinating of plant donors and volunteers to pot the plants and water the potted plants; you can choose how much you want to be physically involved in these activities. Please let me know if you have any interest in volunteering for any of these activities, even if you do not want a coordinator role.

The potting parties are a great chance for members to socialize and meet other members of the club. This year's potting parties will be held at the Park District Barn located at the Kress Creek Farms Park (formerly Manville Oaks) West of the corner of Joliet and E. Wilson Street. For those of you who have not been there before, go South on Joliet St or Route 59 to E. Wilson St and turn right (heading West). The Barn is at the West end of E. Wilson St. Signup sheets are available at our monthly meetings.

We are also looking for businesses who would be willing to donate money to the club to help offset the cost of the sale tent. The company that we used to rent the tent from for the last 10 years has gone out of business and the best price we can find for an equivalent service costs double what we had been paying. We are looking for four three (I found one today!!!) additional tent sponsors to donate \$250 each. If you know of any local business who would be willing to help us out, please let me know.

We are working on a few possible changes to the plant sale logistics and some interesting new additions to the plant selections for 2018. With any luck, these will be ready for me to discuss at our next meeting.

As always, if you have any questions, concerns or comments, feel free to e-mail me at [dbeebe@yahoo.com](mailto:dbeebe@yahoo.com). — Dan Beebe

### Potting Parties Kress Creek Barn:

Saturday, April 7<sup>th</sup> – 9 am

Sunday, April 15<sup>th</sup> – 1 pm

Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup> – 9 am

Sunday, April 29<sup>th</sup> – 1 pm

### Needed Supplies:

Member Plants – Bring to Potting Parties

\$\$\$ Donations to Offset Increased Tent Costs

Box Flats – Bring to Sale Setup on Friday 5/18

1" Wide Vinyl or Aluminum Mini Blinds



## News from Kruse

Kerry Perry

### Take Note.....



The Kruse House Garden is mostly dormant now, but a few bits of green are poking through the debris. There's not much to see, but oohhhh the sounds! Just stand and listen. Spring has arrived!!

Flocks of Sandhill cranes have been flying over, their voices are a shrill rolling, chortling sound.



Redwing black birds are already beginning to declare their territories by making their loud chek and a high slurred tee-err. Their song is liquid gurgling.



American robins are here, their song is a clear caroling, short phrases, rising and falling. Robins are always a welcome sign of spring, and often closely tied to the appearance of the first earthworms. Earthworms appear at the surface as soon as the average temperatures of the ground reaches about 36 degrees. At the same time, the hungry robins return from the south.

Soon our crew will be out doing the annual cleanup at the Kruse House. We encourage all to join in and enjoy the camaraderie. And once things start blooming, be proud of our efforts. .

## Notes from Barbara Bizzarri

*A new feature from Barb: Getting to Know a Club Member...*

### Getting to Know...Rita Kitching

Resident of West Chicago: Since 1950.

Member of the West Chicago GardenClub: At least 12 years

Besides Gardening, other hobbies include: Knitting crocheting, pinochle and I'm a Eucharistic minister for my church

Favorite flower: Peony

Biggest Gardening Mistake I Made: Letting the weeds win !

Advice for a New Gardener: Stick with the weeding and watering. Gardening is magical. You plant a seed and get a return. It's very satisfying.

If I was recruiting a new member...I would tell them: You can socialize with great people and you learn things at the same time.

## Mosaic Class a Huge Success!

Fifteen talented participants took home lovely pieces of art! It was fun! We learned the process and we got to know each other better! There were lots of baubles to create with and we had a great room to work in. Huge thanks to all participants! You were great! And many thanks to Angie and Kerry for helping with the class. I regret that I did not get a photo of each of you with your masterpiece! — Billie



Photos courtesy of Billie Childress, Barb Melville, Kerry Perry and Dick Darrah.

To see more photos of the workshop, visit our website at [www.westchicagogardenclub.org](http://www.westchicagogardenclub.org) and see the Photos page.

## February's Meeting

Cynthia Anderson, our February Speaker, gave a wonderful presentation on "A Native Garden for Four Seasons". Cynthia's main focus was make sure you have



the "right plant for the right place" and "not all natives are good natives". She recommended we do our homework and organize our information into a tracking catalog that shows what plants we have, how big are they, are they sun or shade and what is their blooming time and color; all of this would certainly make it easier to remember what we have planted and what we still need to improve.



Cynthia stated that to have four seasons of interest in our gardens we should track plants that still look great when they are dormant such as grasses, shrubs and trees and certain herbaceous perennials. Before she left, Cynthia gave a handout to the membership with recommended websites and books for the avid gardener.

## Cantigny Park Events

April 3: Garden Tour: Cantigny Visitors Center, 11 am. Cantigny Horticulture showcases the park's collection of flowering trees, shrubs and wildflowers and answers questions. No registration required. Free program; parking \$5

April 5: Cantigny Gardens 2018 Preview: Visitor Center Theater, 9:30 am. Enjoy a free presentation by Cantigny Horticulture (about 90 minutes) highlighting the park's plant selections and plans for the main gardens, golf course and Idea Garden, spring through fall. Get the latest news about Project New Leaf, too! Parking \$5

April 15: Garden Photo Tips: Cantigny Visitors Center, 2pm. Learn how to take better pictures on a stroll led by one of Cantigny's volunteer photographers. Beginners welcome. First in a series of free monthly photo walks. Group size limited to 10; register at Cantigny.org or call 630.260.8162. Parking \$5.

### Do you know ??..

Kruse House (pronounced cruise)      Built: 1917      Architectural Style: Foursquare

Original Owners: Fred and Bertha Kruse, German immigrants to West Chicago,.

What's Inside: The home is filled with family heirlooms and Chicago and Northwestern Railroad memorabilia.

Who Owns the Kruse House: The Kruse's daughter, Celia, never married, and when she died in 1975, she willed the home and contents to the West Chicago Historical Society.

Your Garden Club enjoys its partnership with Kruse House as a public project, opportunity to provide a civic function and the obvious fit for a Garden Club reflecting pride in our community.

Today, the gardens are maintained by our very own West Chicago Garden Club.

Volunteers are always welcome!