

We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 26 Issue 3 March 2022



The purpose of the West Chicago Garden Club shall be to increase interest in gardening through sharing our ideas and knowledge, promoting and participating in community beautification and protecting and promoting a clean environment in which we live.

Meeting Date: March 24

Meeting Time:

Meeting Location:

**St Andrew Lutheran Church NE
Corner of Prince Crossing &
Geneva Road.**

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

Foraging for Wild Edibles



Our March speaker, naturalist David Brooks of Spring Valley Nature Center in Schaumburg, will be presenting "Foraging for Wild Edibles." Foraging for wild edible plants requires knowledge and skill possessed by our ancestors but lost to most of us. This introduction will show you how, when and where to gather a variety of highly nutritious and delicious wild plants as well as provide recipes and other preparation

tips. Suggestions and resources for improving your wild plant identification skills will also be available.

We are planning to hold the March meeting in person as usual this month. If there are changes due to the ongoing pandemic, we will notify everyone via email and calling-post. Masks are now optional and we will be having refreshments before the meeting.



**Save the Date
BloomingFest &
our Plant Sale
are May 21st!**

Where to find us online

Website: www.westchicagogardenclub.org



Facebook:

facebook.com/westchicagogardenclub



Instagram:

[westchicagogardenclub](https://www.instagram.com/westchicagogardenclub)

APRIL 28TH MEETING

**"A Well Rounded Garden"
presented by Landon Gibbs
from Cantigny**

Notes from the President

Dan Beebe

At last month's meeting I mentioned the club's need to continually attract new members. New members may come from diverse backgrounds, have different perspectives on gardening, and bring new skills that can be put to good use on committees or during club events. New members generally make our club culture and our gardening community richer and more vibrant.

One of the biggest issues we have in getting new members is letting other people know that our club exists and welcomes new members regardless of their level of gardening experience. In the interest of attracting new members, I would like to encourage every member to:

- Ask a neighbor, friend, fellow church member, or people you know from other clubs or groups who have expressed interest in gardening to come as your guest to a club meeting.
- Invite new residents your neighborhood to attend one of our meetings as your guest especially if you see them out working in their yards.
- Tell everyone you know about our Plant Sale and Bloomingfest. Historically, this has been a great event for us to introduce our club to potential new members.
- Start conversations about gardening when in garden center or nursery lines with someone who is purchasing plants or flowers.
- Put up the poster that can be found on the last page of this newsletter at your work, local businesses you frequent, your church and in other public places that allow posters to be displayed (please always ask for permission before you put up a poster).
- And the most important one of all: **MAKE OUR VISITORS FEEL WELCOME!** If you see someone you don't know at a meeting, please make an effort to introduce yourself to them and spend some time getting to know more about their interests.

If you have any additional ideas or thoughts on how to attract new member to our club, or activities you would like to see the club offer please let me know.

Dan

Club Information

Website: www.westchicagogardenclub.org
P. O. Box 313, West Chicago, IL 60186
E-mail: westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com

Membership Information

Dues for 2022: Individual: \$20 Family: \$30 (2 people)

Board Meetings

2nd Thursday most months at 7 p.m.

Regular Meeting Location

St Andrew Lutheran Church—155 N Prince Crossing Rd

2022 WCGC Board & Committees:

President:	Dan Beebe
Vice President:	Janet Frogner
Treasurer:	Kerry Perry
Secretary:	Hayley Hawkinson
Program Director:	Ruth Kyme
Plant Sale Chair:	Mary Schramer & Dan Beebe
Information Director:	Pamela Darrah
Kruse Garden Chair:	Billie Childress
Hospitality Chair:	Jan Grismore
Director at Large:	Patti Zaputil

To Contact any Board Member, please send email to WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com

Zone Envy is Real

Hayley Hawkinson

A friend's wedding took my husband Ryan Anderson and I to Raleigh, North Carolina the first weekend of March 2022. And what is any vacation for a gardener without a trip to a local botanic garden? So off to the [Juniper Level Botanic Garden](#) we Uber'd! Luckily, our trip coincided with their Winter Garden Open House, as the garden/nursery is typically closed to the public. An atypically balmy 75 degrees out in early March- and - OH -all the blooms! The Magnolia, redbuds, and cherry trees are all in full color. Daffodils and hellebores are massed in the city parks. But I walked away with a new favorite plant - a bush I had never encountered before! Edgeworthia chrysantha, aka Paperbush Plant, Oriental Paper Bush. The smell knocked me sideways - a bit like gardenia, but spicy lilac as well. Incredible yellow flowers that bloom in December and persist well into Spring. This Zone 7 Winter Garden is colorful, but also dynamic with its use of agave, cacti, and an incredible collection of pitcher plants (which are an Illinois native). Now if only they'd make a Zone 5 hardy Crepe myrtle.... Zone envy is a real thing, my friends.

See more pics at @HayleyHawkinson on Instagram



Plant Sale Volunteer Opportunities

Mary Schramer

As the snow is melting and the weather is warming, I've had an opportunity to walk around my garden and begin to take note of what is beginning to green up and where I have perennials in need of dividing. Hosta, phlox, sedum (stonecrop), coneflower, wild bergamot, several varieties of iris, bee balm, balloon flower, cranesbill/wild geranium, coreopsis, spiderwort, Shasta daisy are just a few of plants in my garden that have been growing vigorously during the pandemic and in serious need of division. With the first plant sale potting party fast approaching, please look around your garden/yard and see what you can donate. Then go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0444A8AE29A75-potting>, choose "donate plants" and give us a hint about what you may have to share. We also need everyone to help get these plants into pots so they can develop strong roots and look their best for the plant sale on May 21st so don't forget to sign up for a potting party while you are there. Potting parties and the plant sale are a great way to get to know garden club members better and have a lot of fun. Whether you are an experienced gardener or just getting into gardening your skills are needed!

Making sure our young plants thrive by checking on them after potting them up and making sure they are getting enough water to thrive between the April showers is also a key volunteer role. If you would be willing to help tend the plants, sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0444A8AE29A75-tending>. Many more volunteer opportunities are coming soon. Sign up for times on signup genius anytime from your smartphone or computer or at monthly garden club meetings. Remember, you will earn garden bucks for your donations of plants and time!

Begin saving flats and similar boxes to use at our sale. Our customers love it when they can put their plants in a flat and they tend to buy more plants when they have an easy way to group and carry the plants they want to buy. Be on the lookout for suitable boxes and store them until the weekend of the sale.



Look around your garage or basement and see if you have a sign from a past sale you would be willing to place out in a visible location the Sunday before the sale and remove after the sale. Let us know on sign up genius (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0444A8AE29A75-place>) or email westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com. We will also need people to help place the signs so if you are willing to help coordinate the placement of signs or at least put out some signs, we will appreciate your help!

Potting Party Dates:

- Saturday, April 9, 2022 9 AM to 12 PM**
- Saturday, April 16, 2022 9 AM to 12 PM**
- Sunday, April 24, 2022 1 PM to 4 PM**
- Sunday, May 1, 2022 1 PM to 4 PM**

Frequently Asked Questions About Potting Parties Billie Childress & Mary Schramer

Plant Acquisition:

Where do plants for our sale come from? Perennials from member gardens are the backbone of our plant sale. If you can donate plants from your garden that would be wonderful! It could be a [division of a plant or a whole plant](#). Small shrubs and trees are also welcome.

How should I prepare plants for donation? Put plants for donation in a pot, bag or even a cardboard box for transfer to the potting party. How much dirt you leave with the plant depends on how fragile the plant roots are. A daylily or Siberian iris are tough as nails so you can leave most of your soil in your garden. Pulmonaria (lungwort) will wilt quickly when roots are disturbed. Leave some dirt on the fragile ones and dig them as close to Potting Party time as you can. Leave the donations in chunks. We will size them for potting in the prep area. A waterproof label (paper in a Ziploc) in the bag/pot/box will help a great deal. Tell us as much as you can: your name (in case we have questions), plant name (common name is fine), color of bloom, and anything else you think is important.

How many of one type of plant should I donate?

We are looking for variety! A small division of a unique plant or several chunks of a more common one would be excellent! While there isn't a "correct" number for any type of plant, it will be a challenge to sell 50 of any one variety of plant. It will be very helpful if you indicate what you plan to donate on the Potting Party signup sheets so we can plan wisely.

Can I donate plants from seed? If you start plants from seeds we would welcome donations of these as well. Edibles or annuals are the most common plants from seeds but maybe someone is starting native perennials from seed. Plants that are not cold hardy will need special care so if you don't have space to care for them until the sale reach out to Billie Childress or Dan Beebe so we can find a spot in a member greenhouse.



What types of plants should I donate from my garden? We have a list from previous sales that includes hundreds of different plants! Here are some suggestions:

Daylilies are popular. We'd like a variety of colors or special characteristics. It's great if you know the cultivar! The common orange lilies often referred to as ditch lilies won't sell.

Hostas sell well, especially named varieties or even the old fashioned variegated ones.

Spring natives like Jack-in-the-pulpit, bloodroot, Mayapples, Virginia Bluebells, Celandine poppy, Wood geranium, Ostrich Ferns, and Jacob's ladder are all quick to sell. Other natives like Canadian ginger, Joe Pye weed, sun drops, some goldenrods (stiff, zigzag), early meadow rue—really [any natives](#)—are well received.

So are peonies, iris, columbine, pulmonaria, daisies, monarda (bee balm), coreopsis, purple coneflower, phlox, nepeta, black-eyed Susan, ornamental grasses, and tall sedum.

See the next page for the rest of this article

Continued from previous page

Other less known plants like hellebores(lenten rose), summer alliums, anemones, aconitum (monkshood), variegated Solomon's Seal, Asiatic Lilies, penstemon, epimedium, Stachys(Lambs Ears and big betony Humelo), Goat's Beard, amsomia, European ginger, coral bells, bergenia, astilbe, bleeding hearts, Brunnera, geranium (big root, sanguinum, Johnson's blue, etc), lady's mantle, sedges, and trout lily.

Edibles like rhubarb, chives, lemon balm, Egyptian onion, oregano, thyme, etc are popular with customers.

Trees/shrubs like red bud, dogwoods, raspberries, elderberry, and more, are all great.

Can I donate house plants?

Yes. We'd love them! They should be held at home until Friday before the sale. Bring them to the tent that evening. Find Dan or Mary to get a price stick added. They will be sold in the pot as donated.

What tools should I bring to potting parties?

Gloves, a hand pruner or kitchen shears (for trimming dead leaves and an occasional unwieldy root), an old serrated knife (for prying/cutting plants apart), a "dirt scoop/cupped trowel for filling pots, a paint stir stick (to make sure the dirt fills to the bottom of the pot) are all helpful tools.

How Can I Help At Potting Parties?

It's a lot of fun working at potting parties! You get to know other members and usually learn something about plants. Plus you have the satisfaction of serving a common goal.

Jobs include:

- Checking in donations.
- Prepping plants to be potted. Basically this means dividing the plants into pot-size pieces. Prying chunks apart is preferable to cutting because it preserves more roots. However, sometimes a saw is the only option.
- Monitoring supplies at the potting tables and hauling in potting soil and pots as needed.
- Potting the plants is a carefully considered process. Find the right size pot. The same size pot for a group of plants is desirable but alter pot size to the plant. Make sure the dirt fills to the bottom and finish with dirt a couple inches from the top with no roots sticking out. Trim off dead leaves and add a temporary label.
- Make temporary labels and group plants for transfer to holding.
- Transport potted plants to appropriate spots in holding area.



Caroline Kos



Resident of: West Chicago since 2021

WCGC Member: 2021 ~ I knew we were moving to West Chicago. I was clicking around on the internet and so pleased to stumble on the West Chicago Garden Club site. Plus, my good friend, Mary Ann Young, is also a member.

Current Position/Occupation: I've been in sales for most of my career but recently transitioned into a Human Resources role at Wheaton College.

Hobbies: Covid helped me develop my knitting skills. I've mastered how to knit a basic sock.

Favorite Garden Tool: I have two ~ a pitchfork to turn the compost pile and a sharp pair of pruning shears.

Favorite Flower/Plant/Bush/Vegetable: Knockout roses never fail to please.

Earliest Favorite Memory of a Garden: My parents had a vegetable garden at the end of our property. I know it was a lot of work but I loved being in the garden with them and checking on any progress.

Are You a Self-Taught Gardener or Who Taught You: I'm not shy about asking friends and neighbors for gardening tips plus I enjoy going to events where local experts share their knowledge.

What Is Your Summer Garden Success: One Christmas I received a packet of heirloom gourd seeds from my sister. What beautiful, funky shapes the seeds produced.

A Garden Mistake I Have Made: Don't over water!

Recent Garden Projects: My handyman husband made me 4 raised garden beds that we surround with fencing. We also added a bean tower. Such a happy place!

A Garden Tip To Share: Start small - you can always add more.

Favorite Garden / Nature-Related Location to Visit: I love visiting the Garfield Conservatory or any conservatory for that matter.



Spring has sprung!

Species crocus blooming March 15th in Dan Beebe's garden.

Recap of February's Meeting

Ruth Kyme



Thanks to our members for braving such a cold and snowy February night. We had a great turnout at the February meeting. Our speaker, Denise Sandoval, gave a great program on using a variety of native plants in the home garden. She featured plants that are available locally and would be attractive in the home landscape. Denise explained which plants work well in mass and which are best just to 'sprinkle' in your garden landscape. Her detailed handout included much valuable information to help the home gardener pick the right native plants for their home landscape.

Photos from Pamela Darrah



Members began signing up for potting parties and to bring plants from their gardens. You can sign up at the March meeting or visit our page at Signup Genius to sign up on line: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0444a8ae29a75-potting>

Nature Notes

Kerry Perry

Looking out my kitchen window I spotted a flock of tiny birds. The thistle feeders and the ground below were loaded; there was a feeding frenzy. Were they Goldfinches or House Finches? I scurried for the binoculars that really should be hanging around my neck all the time. The feathered creatures were Common Redpolls, an arctic finch that we don't often see here in Illinois. Suddenly the flock scattered. Yikes! The Red-tailed Hawk swooped overhead. What a thrill to see them.



According to my local bird seed store, the Redpolls ventured here for food and are heading back now to their breeding grounds close to the Arctic Ocean. Quite a journey from Illinois. And we think five miles to the grocery is far.

This spring, think about planting trees and shrubs to feed the birds.

Photo courtesy of Missy Mandel, National Audubon Society

Interesting Photos from the Garden

Hayley Hawkinson



A lovely surprise this week! My 1st attempt at Snowdrops planted last Fall.... Maybe Spring ain't so far away after all...

#snowdrop #snowdrops #galanthus #springphemeral

Promoting our Club

Pamela Darrah

If you read all the way through to the end of this newsletter, you will find on the very last page a "Poster" to help promote our club to new members. Please feel free to print it out and put it up at your work, church, gym, coffee shop or anywhere else that has a place for these types of announcements. We will also have a printed out copies available at the March meeting if you would prefer to pick one (or more) up then.



News from Kruse

Dee Soustek

I'm new to Kruse and I'm so happy to be part of the crew! I love gardening and it's more fun doing it with fellow gardeners. At home I garden in a small space, so it's different and fun to garden in a large space, learning about new plants and sharing ideas and muscle. Gardening in a new space helps expand my gardening knowledge and I look forward to a full season at Kruse.



You can join the fun at Kruse, we garden on Wednesday's at 9:00am, contact Billie for more information. Please consider volunteering, more hands make the work quick and more enjoyable.

I went over to Kruse to look around and to see if Spring had sprung. I was a little surprised to notice a raccoon ??? had beat me to the punch. Look at the size of those paws! I took a stroll thru the garden on Friday, March 4th, being new to Kruse I didn't know where to look for the daffodils, aconite, and tulips that I know are there. So I looked around and most of the garden is still dormant but spotted bulbs poking up and some perennials and woodies starting to bud. I did notice the hellebores that we transplanted on a hot day in August seemed to have made it thru the winter! That was a nice surprise.

Happy Spring!



Garden Bucks

Kerry Perry

West Chicago Garden Club distributes Garden Bucks (real fake money) to members who participate in club activities. At the November 2022 meeting you will be able to use your Bucks to bid on donated items at the Silent Auction.

The chart below shows how to earn your Garden Bucks. Keep track of your dollars earned. Either pick up your earnings at each meeting or collect them before the auction.

Come out and volunteer. Your participation keeps our club going strong.

Volunteer for Workdays at Kruse, Plant Sale or other events		Donate plants for Plant Sale	
1 to 4 hours	\$ 75	Less than 50	\$ 75
More than 4 hours	\$ 150	50 - 149	\$ 200
Donate pots for plant sale	\$ 50	More than 150	\$ 300
Donate snacks for meeting	\$ 75	Write newsletter article	\$ 100
Set up or clean up at meeting	\$ 25	Bring a guest to a meeting	\$ 50
Attend Field Trip	\$ 25	Attend Meeting	\$ 25
Donate plants to Kruse Garden	\$ 50	Pay 2022 Dues by Feb 24th	\$ 50
		Pay 2023 Dues by Nov 17th	\$ 75

Refer a new member and participate in a raffle for a gift card at the Nov 2022 meeting.

Local Garden Events & Webinars

March 19, 2022—Hosta College, 9:00am to 3:30pm ET

Hosta College will be Virtual this year. It is FREE to all who register. Register on-line at hostacollege.org



All gardeners welcome. You do not need to be a member of a local Hosta Society to attend this FREE event. More information available on website.

March 22, 2022—Cantigny Greenhouse Guided Tour 6pm-7pm, Adults: \$10. Members: \$5



Join our greenhouse manager, Bob Carr, as he leads you on a tour of the Cantigny greenhouse bursting at the seams with spring bedding plants. Our greenhouse is only open to the public three times during the year so don't let this date pass you by! The tour starts at 6pm with parking available at the greenhouse from our Shaffner Road gate entrance. [See website to Register](#)

“Month-By-Month Gardening Illinois, Indiana, Ohio: What To Do Each Month To Have A Beautiful Garden All Year” by Beth Botts

“March is the adolescence of the year, the stormy transition between winter and spring, swinging tempestuously between balmy and freezing. Crocuses are blooming but blizzards are still in play.”

PLAN:

- Time to decide if you want to buy soil, compost, and mulch in bag or bulk
- Watch for snowdrops and crocuses to bloom
- Take notes and pictures of spring blooms for gardening journal
- Plan your container gardens and groundcovers
- Choose shrubs beyond their blooms and consider all seasons
- Consider planting native shrubs and plants to provide nature food

PLANT:

- Wait to dig, till, plan or work vegetable and flower beds until dry and thawed
- Continue to sow annual seeds; start pepper and tomato seeds
- Remove old mulch and remaining plants from vegetable bed
- Top-dress well-amended beds with compost and rake lightly
- Add 2-3” layer of organic matter such as compost or shredded leaves to new beds
- Wait for 4-6” of new growth before dividing summer-blooming plants, i.e. hosta, yarrow, daisy, monarda, aster, sedum, rudbeckia, and coreopsis
- Plant bare-root shrubs and new trees in late March

CARE:

- Step carefully in garden and lawn to avoid compacting wet soil
- Thin out indoor seedlings and transplant from flats to individual pots; pinch back plants
- Water seedlings from the bottom to deter fungus diseases
- Check stored over wintered bulbs and discard soft and moldy ones
- Decide how to support vegetable vines and build needed trellises
- Prune raspberries early March before buds swell; remove dead, damaged canes
- Be prepared to protect early crops from late frosts
- Mow or cut back groundcovers to remove brown foliage; edge bed border to contain
- Root houseplants inside for annual use in outside shade garden
- Core-aerate lawn in late March if not done in fall
- Add mulch layer around trees and shrubs
- Pull mulch away from new plant growth
- Install perennial supports as soon as plant emerges

A Growing Legacy

A lot has changed over the years but our commitment to our customers and to our community has not. Our goal remains providing high-quality, locally-grown plant and landscape material, expert advice and professional installation and design services.



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West Chicago Garden Club

The West Chicago Garden Club is a place for all gardeners: new gardeners with their first flowerbeds, master gardeners with years of experience, vegetable gardeners, flower gardeners, etc. Our members are both male & female, young & old—all are welcome.

We meet on the **4th Thursday** of each month at St. Andrew Lutheran Church (Corner of Prince Crossing & Geneva Rd) at **7:00PM**.

If you are interested, please come to one of our meetings. We are glad to welcome you!

Membership Information

We have two types of memberships:

Individual Membership costs \$20 per year.

Family Membership costs \$30 per year for 2 members living at the same address.

If you would like more information, please visit our website at

www.WestChicagoGardenClub.org

or send us an email to

WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com

Please follow us on **Facebook**

facebook.com/westchicagogardenclub) and

Instagram [@WestChicagoGardenClub](https://www.instagram.com/WestChicagoGardenClub).

Schedule for 2022

Date	Event
March 24	Meeting: “Foraging for Wild Edibles “ presented by naturalist David Brooks from the Schaumburg Nature Center
April 28	Meeting: “A Well Rounded Garden “ presented by Landon Gibbs from Cantigny
May 21	Plant Sale at BloomingFest
May 26	Tour of Batavia Wildflower Sanctuary
June 23	Meeting: Garden Tour
July 28	Meeting: President’s Cookout—Members only
August 25	Meeting: “Be an Herbal Gourmet” presented by Marcy Lautanen-Raleigh
September 22	Meeting: “Biomimicry” presented by Kim White
October 27	Meeting: Bulb Bingo—Members Only
November 17	Meeting: Annual Elections, GardenDollars Silent Auction, Raffle, Potluck Dinner (Note this is the 3rd Thursday) - Members Only