Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 28-Issue 3-March 2024



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, sustainable environment in which to live.

Meeting Date: March 28

Meeting Location:

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

Meeting Time:

6:45PM Arrive & Mingle 7:00PM Business Meeting

7:15PM Program

Best Plants for 2024





Can't wait to start planning your spring garden?

In her presentation, "Best Plants for 2024," our March speaker, Kim Hartmann, will show us what is new in trees, shrubs, annuals, perennials, roses, vegetables, and herbs.

With the many weather extremes we have had in recent years and the challenges of insect pests and diseases, it is helpful to learn about new varieties that are more tolerant and resistant while producing beautiful and vigorous plants.

Please send photos to the club of the beautiful spring flowers that sprung up from your Bulb Bingo winnings. Hopefully, you had success with your plantings. Email photos to

WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com

Where to find us online

Website: www.westchicagogardenclub.org



Facebook:

facebook.com/westchicagogardenclub



Instagram:

westchicagogardenclub

APRIL 25TH MEETING

"The Elegant Edible Garden" by Nina Koziel

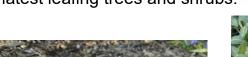
Notes from the President

Dan Beebe

Before writing this, I spent some time wandering around our yard (before tomorrow's "wintery mix"), looking at the early blooming Spring flowers.

The Grecian Windflowers (Anemone blanda) that have naturalized into a carpet of blue and white blooms in our wooded section are especially breathtaking. The blue Siberian Squill (Scilla siberica) has also naturalized in many areas of the yard, adding to the blue carpet, and, as a striking counterpoint, many early-blooming yellow Daffodils stand as reminders of gardening joys yet to come. We also have a very confused wine-purple periwinkle blooming.

I hope tomorrow's weather doesn't damage the flowers and buds that have set on all but the latest leafing trees and shrubs.





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

Membership Information

Dues for 2024: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

2024 WCGC Board & Committees:

President: Dan Beebe
Vice President: Janet Frogner
Treasurer: Kerry Perry

Secretary: Christina Covarrubias

Publicity Director: Ruth Gauss
Information Director: Pamela Darrah
Program Director: Ruth Kyme
Member Services Director: Lisa Marie Vogt
Director at Large: Marilyn McNabb

Plant Sale Chair: Mary Schramer & Dan Beebe

Kruse Garden Chair: Open

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



Plant Sale News

Mary Schramer

We are off to a great start with the Blooming Fest plant sale. Thank you to Billie C who has been our Cantigny connection and has helped to get some fantastic plants and thank you to club members

who have come out to help us pot up those plugs.

We were able to pot up 452 plants (including 20 houseplants) on March 2 in about an hour thanks to the crew (Dan B., Marilyn M., Laura L., Mitzi A., Jen K., Pauline B., Evelyn W. & her son, Charles, Mary S., and myself) who showed up to help.

We were able to procure more plants on 3/16 and thankfully had a great crew to help Dan and I get them settled in their new pots. Thank you to Marion M., Pauline B., Lisa Marie V., Ruth G., Jean F., Barb M. and Ruth K. who made quick work of potting 751 plants, bringing our total plant count up to 1203. That puts us slightly ahead of where we were last year at this time.

It is time to begin thinking about donations from our member gardens and potting parties to get those plants ready for our sale. I have set up signup lists using SignUp Genius again this year. I will send an email invitation to all





members I have email for with links to each activity you can sign up for. I will also have signup sheets available at the meeting. SignUp Genius will remind you by email what you have signed up for a day or so before the event. If you don't get the emails, check your spam/junk folder. Sometimes my gmail server will sort the emails into my "Promotions" tab so I suggest you also check there so you don't miss an opportunity. As we get closer to the sale date, signups for helping with the sale will be available.



Here are links to the signups I've created thus far if you want to check it out before you receive the email invitation:

Donate Plants from your Garden:

https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0444A8AE29A75-48482904-donate

Help move supplies to the potting tents April 7:

https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0444A8AE29A75-48484278-move

Potting Party #1 (April 14): https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0444A8AE29A75-48481569-perennials
Potting Party #2: (April 20) https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0444A8AE29A75-48482681-perennials
Potting Party #4 (May 4): https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0444A8AE29A75-48482681-perennials

If you have any questions about the sale or the events leading up to it, our Plant Sale team put together a document to help introduce you to the ins and outs of the sale. This document can be found here: WCGC Plant Sale: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know.

Getting to Know ...

Janet Frogner



SUSAN TERRONEZ

Resident of: West Chicago 1985-2004. Lived in the family home of David and Ann Barber Ward (1890). I now live in the Village of Lily Lake.

WCGC Member since: Joined at its inception and have been on and off again member. Christine and Dennis Baxter were friends and helped me with the vision.

How did you become a member: As the Historian for the Kruse Museum I became familiar and protected family albums. Correspondence with a found, now deceased, family member opened a window on a

child's experience in the garden, especially the fishpond. The early work of WCGC of Billie and Angie and so many of you, have been breathtaking. Seasonally stunning I sit in my car and study your artwork when waiting for a Board meeting, even the cats.

What is your current/past profession: Volunteer. I am a retired SC High School SW. Too many passions – a trained "natural areas steward" at the Morton Arboretum working a specific woodland and creek area with chorus frogs on Fridays.

What are you most proud of in your garden: The beautiful 3-acre undisturbed oak woodland surrounded by like-minded neighbors. I leave trees on the ground. I cultivated its native plants and created a walkway with benches. I learned to conduct prescribed burns with a crew here.

A garden mistake you made: My naïve move to the woodland involved "gardening" with hostas, tulips, daffodils, etc. Deer loved the salad. I began protecting new oaks and shrubs with training at Morton.

What do you love most about gardening: I love the miracle of the soil. I love learning Latin/common names while I walk. Moving branches, removing invasives, planning a pathway, birdwatching and activities of wildlife.

Words of wisdom: Don't just create a worthy activity in and of itself, plant yourself and breathe in your creation.

Favorite place to purchase seeds/plants: I buy seeds at Prairie Moon Nursery. Virtually all my natives are from the WildOnes Plant Sale in May at Gray Willow Farm, Campton Hills. Plants are from a variety of nurseries: Possibility Place, Midwest Groundcover, Taylor, Majestic Oaks, and other local nurseries including vegetables. I only use local-ecotype.

Favorite spot in your garden: I bought a bench-swing and a porch swing. Perfect to enjoy paradise.

What plant can't you wait to see this season emerge from your garden: My favorite plants are bloodroot, red trillium, bluebells, trout lily.

What are you looking forward to this season: My current project is to place signs I purchased when the Planters Pallet closed. (Tony Tyznik did a design here before he died). My purpose is to allow myself and other native plant lovers to know more about natives and their ecological value. My bibles are (Native Plants and Natural Areas, Dick Young, and Flora of the Chicago Region, Swink and Wilhelm). I think I might just have time to do it.

Care to Share?

We have received a number of interesting items from our members this month! Some are below and others are articles scattered around this newsletter.

We are looking for anything that our members would like to share, such as tips & tricks, a good gardening book, a nursery or website you particular like, and so on.

To participate just email your item(s) along with your name and contact information (if you need to be contacted) to westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com

A seed starting tip from Dick Darrah:

I'm trying an experiment with the seeds I'm starting this year. Before planting the seeds, I'm exposing them to a couple of days of ethylene.

At the University of Tennessee tests were conducted and they discovered that exposing seed to ethylene for two days in darkness enhanced the plant growth and the plant resistance to drought, heat, and other extreme conditions.

Ethylene is produced by fruit when ripening so I'm putting my seeds in a sealed plastic bag with an over ripe banana and an apple for two days and putting the bag in an absolute dark place. Then I'm planting them as I normally do for seed starting.

So far, I've started Green Twister Echinacea, Purple Caster Bean, and Lantana. This next week I'll start working on several tomato varieties.

We'll see if there is any noticeable difference as the plants mature and fruit. I love to experiment!

Julie Blazek sent us a fantastic email from Wasco Nursery with all sorts of spring garden tips. If you want to receive these types of emails, visit their website at

https://www.wasconursery.com/vig-club/

Sent in by both Marjorie Edwards & Amanda Skinner—an event this Saturday in St. Charles at Trellis Farms & Gardens.

Link for more info



Sent to us by Barb Bizzarri:

"I just need a few things at the garden center"



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.



630-584-4424

6 miles west of Randall Road on Route 64, St. Charles 1 mile west of Wasco WWW.Wasconurserv.com

Find everything you need for your beautiful garden



222 W. Lake St. • Bloomingdale 2400 Randall Rd. • Carpentersville

We have the right plant for the right place!
We enjoy sharing our love of plants and knowledge with our customers year round. Stop in and browse.

For the Love of Gardening...

A Hint of the Master: Jens Jensen and the Kruse House Garden

You may have wondered where the ideas for the distinctive rock terraces and pond came from that you see in the Kruse House Garden. The source of these is likely the master landscape architect Jens Jensen (1860-1951). Born in Denmark, Jensen emigrated to Chicago in 1884, where he took employment with the city's West Park Commission, working his way up from laborer to general superintendent of the West Park system. During this time, he designed or redesigned the system's major parks like Humbolt, Garfield, and Douglass Parks, and his masterpiece, Columbus Park. In 1920, he started his own landscape architectural practice, creating gardens for prominent client's like Henry Ford and Ford's son Edsel.



Jens Jensen seated in one of his council rings

Jensen used natural features of the Midwestern landscape as themes for his designs. Terraced tiers of rocks were intended to invoke the rocky outcroppings of the Midwest's post -glacial landscape. Often the focal point of his rocked terraces was a small grotto that featured a pond or a "council ring," a circular arrangement of rocks for sitting. At the height of his influence in the 1920s and 1930s, his designs inspired much imitation, and the large size and natural contours of the Kruse House lot provided a perfect opportunity for the Kruses to realize what then a very contemporary garden design based on Jensen's ideas. Compare the Kruse House lily pond below with the one next to it that Jensen designed for Henry Ford's Fair Lane estate in Gross Point, Michigan.



Kruse House Lily Pond



Grotto pond at Fair Lane, Henry Ford's estate in Grosse Point. Michigan

Adopt A Highway

Dan Beebe

It is time for our Spring Adopt A Highway roadside pickup. We will be meeting on Saturday, April 13th at 8:45am in the parking lot of the Park District garage at 830 W Hawthorne Lane (Click here for Google Map). We will start our cleanup at 9:00am Expect to spend about 1 to 2 hours walking on relatively flat sidewalk & grass.

Once a year, all volunteers will need to sign a liability waiver stating that you won't blame the city if you get hurt during the roadside pickup. Copies of the waiver will be available at Saturday's event. In addition, all participants should watch the State of Illinois' Adopt a Highway video



that can be viewed by clinking on this link: AAH Video.

Orange safety vests, grabbers and garbage bags will be provided. Some roadside trash can be soggy, especially in the Spring, so please bring your own gloves to protect your hands. As the weather in April can be a bit unpredictable, please check the weather forecast and dress accordingly.









Lanternfly.

New Pest Alert

Billie Childress

Kerry Perry, Marion Martin, Dee Soustek, and Billie Childress recently attended an annual all day educational seminar sponsored by the Wildflower Preservation and Propagation Committee at McHenry College. There were four great presentations, one by Tricia Bethke from Morton Arboretum highlighted Illinois's newest invasive pest, the Spotted Lanternfly. The headbands we are wearing feature the creature and inside the band is a synopsis of the pest. You will also find a link below to Illinois Extension webinar by Bethke on the Spotted





Sunrise Woldhuis Nursery Tour Marilyn Santos-McNabb & Christina Covarrubias

Christina and Marilyn got a tour of the entire 8 acre Sunrise Woldhuis nursery in Grant Park, IL, the largest retail nursery in IL. This included the back of the house seed storage, seed starting process from seed injection and "unplugging" to potting up, and the super high technology greenhouses with automatic watering systems, magnetized rail systems, polycarbonate roofs and plastic bubble roofs, automated shades for the greenhouses that closes to protect plants from freezing in the winter! They have equipment from all over the world, from a seed potting mix grinder (which breaks down 5,100 cubic feet soil bales), to a dibbler, seed injector from Poland, Australia, Holland, and Italy! The tour was given by the owners who were so knowledgeable and engaging!







Volume 28—Issue 3—March 2024

www.westchicagogardenclub.org

Board Position: Secretary

Christina Covarrubias



In October of 2022 our current Vice President Janet Frogner asked me if I would consider a board position. I became the member services director last year. After restructuring of board member roles, I was elected as the 2024 secretary.

The secretary's sole task is recording minutes during our monthly club meetings as well as the board meetings. The other responsibility we all have, as a board member in general, is to greet all our wonderful club members at meetings and recruit new members as able. It is nice to be a part of an organized club as well as getting to know so many friendly and knowledgeable gardeners. I've said it before and I'll say it again, "I'm an introvert until I start talking about gardening." It's lovely speaking with all of you!

Gardening With Native Plants

Lisa Marie Vogt

On March 6, I attended a Learn and Grow webinar through the Nature Foundation Will County https://www.willcountynature.org/. The topic was Gardening with Native Plants Through the Season presented by Denise Sandoval from Good Natured Landscapes https://goodnaturedlandscapes.com/.

This topic caught my attention because using native plants is important to me, but I have struggled to have them look cohesive and provide interest throughout the growing seasons. Denise is clearly passionate about sharing her knowledge and helping others learn about the many benefits of native plants. Some of the plants she spoke about were new to me and others are already part of my landscape. I will be putting my new found knowledge to good use at all the Spring plant sales!

She compiled a list of 50 plants that included placement suggestions, plant habits, and wildlife tolerance information. These plants:

- · are available in this area
- can tolerate a range of moisture conditions
- can tolerate a range of sunlight conditions
- work well in smaller landscapes (under 1 acre)
- are good for wildlife (specifically butterflies, moths, native bees, birds, and pollinators)

If you would like information about this presentation, please contact me at woodthaus4@gmail.com or 630-291-1954.

About Denise Sandoval, landscape designer and owner:



I first discovered the beauty and benefits of native plants after volunteering at a local prairie. After completing my horticulture design degree in 2003 and making a career leap from engineering after 15 years, I created this business in 2005 to design landscapes that went beyond visual appeal and human function. My expertise is blending great landscape design with local ecology and sustainable solutions.

Editor's Note: Denise was our speaker at our February 2022 meeting.

Nature Notes – Wax Worms

Kerry Perry

I was looking out my kitchen window and saw a plastic grocery bag floating on the pond. AARRGG, we're going to bury ourselves in trash, especially plastic bags.

I recalled an article on PBS about solutions to deal with waste. Yep, recently a researcher who is also an avid beekeeper placed empty beehives in a storage room. In the spring she found the stored honeycombs plagued with wax worms, which is actually their normal habitat. She cleaned the honeycombs and put the worms in a plastic bag. After a short time she found the bags "riddled with holes". Her research team analyzed the proteins in the wax worm saliva and they identified two enzymes that could break



polyethylene down into small polymers in only a few hours at room temperature.



Maybe one day our waste management facilities can pour enzymes on piles of plastic and degrade it. What's the solution? We need more scientific research, more responsible shoppers and communities getting more involved in the environment.

Nature is amazing; let's all do our share to save it! I'm going out to snag that blue bag.

SAVE THESE DATES

March to be determined

Perennial Potting Parties:

Sunday, April 14, 1-4 PM Saturday. April 20, 9am to 12 PM April 28, 1 to 4 PM Sunday, May 4, 9am to 12 PM Saturday,

Plant Sitters needed from April 14th through May 16th

Plant Labeling and Pricing: Saturday May 11,

time to be determined

Put out yard signs: Sunday May 12th

Pop up potting parties: Saturday or Sundays in Member Only Plant Sale: Thursday, May 16th 5:30 to 8:30???

> Plant Sale Set Up: Friday, May 17th, time to be determined

Plant Sale: Saturday, May 18th, 7 AM to 3 PM (Sale open from 9AM-2PM)



Upcoming local events for gardeners Ruth Gauss RAIN BARRELS, RAIN GARDENS & OTHER WATER CONSERVATION PRACTICES

Sunday, March 24, 2024 1:00 — 3:00pm

McDonald Farm 10S404 Knoch Knolls Rd Naperville, IL 60565

In this workshop, Jim Kleinwachter will show you how rain barrels and rain gardens work and how to install them to capture the valuable water resource that falls on your land. He will also show ways to put the rainwater to good use or to solve water problems with a nature-friendly habitat in your backyard.



The presentation will be followed at 2:00pm with a tour of the 60-acre McDonald Farm, an organic vegetable farm as well as the headquarters of The Conservation Foundation. The farm, as a show-place of conservation in action, features on-the-ground examples of rain and butterfly gardens, rainwater harvesting, solar and wind energy, permeable paving, and native plants.

Rain barrels will be available for purchase for \$69.50 each. <u>Pre-order your rain barrel</u> and pick it up at the farm the day of the event. These rain barrels are repurposed food grade plastic barrels that are equipped with spigots, screens to prevent mosquito breeding, and overflow valves.

Register here: https://theconservationfoundation.org/event/2024-rain-barrel-workshop-1/

Kill the Lawn!

Wednesday, April 10, 2024 6:30 p.m. on Zoom Benjamin Vogt, Monarch Gardens LLC

Lawn conversion is certainly a hot topic of discussion in the native plant community. In his presentation, Benjamin Vogt, writer, author, and landscape designer, will delve into the history of lawns in the United States and the problems they cause. He will share strategies and spend a significant amount of time showing you how to convert from lawn to a designed meadow garden. From plant selection to design, prep to management, this lecture runs the gamut on empowering folks to make local change.

Register here: https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJlofusrTotE9X-hPE35MyFq2Oo88Akxwbz#/registration



Upcoming local events for gardeners

Ruth Gauss

Cantigny Launches Free Entry on Wednesdays

New for 2024, enjoy free parking at Cantigny every Wednesday, March through October. Advance online registration is required. The normal \$5 parking fee applies for guests not registered.

Follow this link to register: https://cantigny.org/event/first-wednesday-free-parking-10/2024-04-03/

Also in 2024, Cantigny will close on Tuesdays. Closing one day per week enables maintenance work in high-traffic areas without disrupting the visitor experience.

Cantigny parking fees in 2024 are as follows:

- \$5 weekdays, through October 31
- \$5 weekends, through April 30
- \$15 weekends, May through October
- \$20 Concert Sundays, June through August

For frequent visitors, Cantigny now offers a season pass for \$199. Pass holders receive unlimited free parking throughout 2024 along with five guest

passes, each redeemable for 2024 Cantigny parking on any day.



Nature themed art exhibits

Nature's Ambiguities

It's cold outside, but you can connect to nature through art in comfort inside beautiful and historic Mayslake Hall with this exhibit featuring dozens of works by the Downers Grove Artists Guild. Free. No Registration. Questions? Call 630-206-9566.

Feb. 20 – March 30, Monday – Friday Noon – 3 p.m., Saturdays 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Mayslake Peabody Estate is located at 1717 31st St, Oak Brook, IL 60523

Nature Artists' Guild Spring Art Exhibit

The Morton Arboretum's Nature Artists' Guild will host its juried Spring Art Exhibit in the Cudahy Room in The Morton Arboretum's Administration and Research Center.

Enjoy art inspired by nature, with works featuring plants, wildlife, and landscapes from The Morton Arboretum and beyond. Many art pieces—all produced by local artists—will be available for purchase.

The exhibit is free with admission to the Arboretum.

Opening Reception

Friday, April 5, 2024, 4:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Exhibit Hours

Friday, April 5, 2024, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday, April 6, 2024, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Sunday, April 7, 2024, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Arboretum event website: https://mortonarb.org/explore/activities/adult-programs/nature-artists-guildspring-exhibit/

Garden Bucks

West Chicago Garden Club distributes Garden Bucks (real fake money) to members who participate in club activities. At the November 2024 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	
l to 4 hours	\$ 75
More than 4 hours	\$ 150
Donate pots for plant sale	\$ 50
Donate snacks for meeting	\$ 75
Set up or clean up at meeting	\$ 25
Attend Field Trip	\$ 25
Donate plants to Kruse Garden	\$ 50

Donate plants for Plant Sale					
Less than 50	\$	75			
50 - 149	\$	200			
More than 150	\$	300			
Write newsletter article	\$	100			
Bring a guest to a meeting	\$	50			
Attend Meeting	\$	25			
Pay 2024 Dues by Feb 24th	\$	50			
Pay 2025 Dues by Nov 17th		75			

Refer a new member and participate in a raffle for a gift card at the Nov 2024 meeting.

Upcoming Programs & Events for 2024

These are the currently scheduled programs. If there are any changes we will update this in future newsletters. The last column will show who has signed up to bring treats.

Mar 28 Apr 25	Kim Hartman Nina Koziel	Best new Plants for 2024 The Elegant Edible Garden	Shirley S, Lisa C, Vicki B Margie V, Carol G, Karen K
May 18		PLANT SALE	
May 23	Marcy Lautanen- Raleigh	Herbs	Amanda S, Carol G, Julie B
June 27	Thom Skibble	Permaculture	Lisa H, Christina C, Carol G
July 25	President's Picnic		
Aug 22	Cindy Crosby	Dragonflies and Damselflies	Cindy T, June L, Jen K
Sept 26	Dianne Blazek	Plant Breeding	Marion M, Mary S, Cindy B
Oct 24		Bulb Bingo	Barb M, Barb B, Mary A, Tom F
Nov 16	Silent Auction	Pot Luck Dinner	

A poster of our 2024 schedule can be downloaded at https://westchicagogardenclub.org/wp-content/files/2024PosterWithSchedule.pdf