

# We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 20 Issue 5 May 2016



**Meeting Date: May 26, 2016**  
**Meeting Location:**  
**Cantigny Gardens**  
**1S151 Winfield Rd in Wheaton**

**Meeting Time:**  
**6:15 PM Carpoolers Meet @**  
**Faith Community Church**  
**7:00 PM Tours Begin**

**From the program coordinators desk: May 2016**

**May 26 Program: Tour Cantigny Gardens with a Master Gardener Tour Guide**  
**This will be a wonderful Spring evening to remember.**

From the Cantigny website:

"The Gardens at Cantigny beckon you. They tug at your senses, drawing you closer. If you listen carefully, each garden will tell you a story, unfolding with every step. You will feel your body relax as you absorb the landscape and the landscape devours your stress. The hustle of life melts away just a few steps into our 29 acres of flourishing, blooming tranquility."

We will gather in front of the visitor center at 1S151 Winfield Rd, Wheaton, starting at 6:30 p.m.. If you need a ride be at the church at 6:15 p.m. and cars will leave there no later than 6:30 p.m..

There will be a **\$5 per car entry fee** so you are encouraged to carpool. We will have 3 tour guides so our groups can be small. Please respect everyone in your group by keeping chatter to a minimum and addressing questions so the entire group can be included. There will be an announcement of our Plant Sale outcome and distribution of a small treat bag prior to tour. The tours will begin at 7 p.m. and last about an hour. The Park closes at Sunset which is at 8:17 p.m. on May 26, so we cannot tarry in the garden too long after our tours.

***Next Meeting: June 23, 2016 AT Kruse House Gardens.***

The real star of this show is the garden so make sure you spend time having a look around. But the show doesn't end there. You will also have the opportunity to get a garden tool or knife sharpened. John Wills from John's Sharpening Services will be on hand offering his expert services. The Garden Club will pay for sharpening one tool per member. Also, Tracy Atkinson, floral designer extraordinaire, will be demonstrating how to use materials from our gardens to create beautiful arrangements.



*We've been here since heirloom tomatoes were just called tomatoes*



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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 2016: 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

**2016 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

Secretary:  
Annette Wulfe, 630-462-0208, annetewulfe@yahoo.com

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

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



<b>WCGC 2016 Calendar</b>					
Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event	Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event
<b>21 May</b>	ALL MEMBERS!	PLANT SALE!	<b>25 Aug</b>	President Dick Darrah	Butterflies
<b>26 May</b>	Master Gardener Tours	AT Cantigny	<b>22 Sep</b>	TBA	Birds
<b>23 Jun</b>	John Wills and Tracy Atkinson	AT Kruse Garden	<b>27 Oct</b>	TBA	TBA
<b>28 Jul</b>	President Dick Darrah	President's Picnic	<b>17 Nov</b>	All members	Dinner & Garden Dollar Auction



A tree finder guide, as pictured above, may be of help with your tree inventory project!

### TREE INVENTORY PROJECT: UPDATE

*Have you identified and counted your trees?* The Tree Inventory for your yard is due at the end of June. We will have a basket at the Kruse garden in June to gather your completed forms. Don't have a form? There will be forms available at the May 26 meeting at Cantigny. See Billie: she will have some blank forms and can answer questions.

### Recap of April Program

38 lucky souls heard Kim Hartman's presentation on "New Plants" at our April GC meeting! It was informative, delightful, and drew rave reviews on the program evaluations. 29 out of 30 people returning evaluations, described themselves as extremely satisfied with the program. It was fabulous to see, touch, smell, the plants she brought and many of us went home with a specimen. We also went home with plenty of ideas of what we will be looking for at the Garden Centers this year!

We loved the program. Thank you, Kim!



## Club Finances: 2015 Review

At our April meeting we reviewed with the club how our funds are spent to support our Garden Club activities. Below is an Expense Statement that reflects our expenditures for the calendar year 2015. As you can see, we spent a bit over \$7,100.00 on club functions and income from dues and newsletter ads offset only a small portion. The \$5,800.00 shortfall is made up from the proceeds from our only fund raiser, our annual Plant Sale. That's how important the Plant Sale is to West Chicago Garden Club and why we need every member to do their best to help in any way they can.

	Jan - Dec 15
<b>Expense</b>	
Communication Expenses	237.78
Donations	1,437.52
Field Trips & Workshops	642.49
GCI Membership Fees	451.00
Kruse House Expenses	
Kruse House Standard Expenses	1,330.40
Total Kruse House Expenses	1,330.40
Meeting Expenses	
Babysitting	100.00
Meeting Miscellaneous	281.77
Rent	400.50
Speakers & Programs	2,251.53
Total Meeting Expenses	3,033.80
Newsletter Expenses	521.23
Total Expense	7,132.99
<b>Income</b>	
Interest Income	1.37
Membership Dues	790.00
Newsletter Income	525.00
Total Income	1,316.37
<b>Net Operating Expenses</b>	<b>5,816.62</b>



## News from Kruse: Gardening.....GAME ON !!!

We are "in the game" for the season and loving it! It's true that we get a late start at the Kruse House Garden since we are preoccupied with Plant Sale preparations most of April, but we jumped in and attacked those weeds full force in May! Wednesday mornings at 9am we always start out with a quick assessment of the place, deciding on a game plan, then off we go. Angie, Billie, Tom and Kerry have gleefully greeted additional volunteers Linda Fischer, Sandy Nicholson and Keith Letsche. The additional help makes a huge difference! Not everyone can make it every time but there is always more work than volunteers, so seriously think about joining us when you can. Maybe you only want to work twice a month or once a month. We welcome you whenever you can come. Pack a few tools and show up at the garden, 527 Main Street, West Chicago, at 9am on Wednesdays whenever you can. Together we will create a beautiful garden!



We are getting company! The Winfield GC is having their June 7 meeting in the Kruse Garden. We love to share the Garden so this is a good thing! We also want it to "show well" so we are working with purpose toward that deadline. It seems like more mulch is always a "go to" when prepping a garden for special occasions. Marion Martin gave us a \$100 gift certificate to Homer Industries, and we ordered some nice mulch. Bagged mulch is much easier to transport to tortuous locations but it never goes far, so we are doing it the hard way with pitchfork and wheelbarrow. Sure does look good when it's spread!

### MULCH!!!

Preparation for the Winfield GC visit on June 7 is really just practice for the bigger event on June 23. That is when we will be holding our monthly meeting at the garden. You are going to love the evening we have planned! First of all, John Wills owner of John's Sharpening Service will be set up at the garden to sharpen gardening tools. The Garden Club will pay for the sharpening of one tool per member. In addition to all the excitement of tool sharpening we will have a second spectacular activity. Tracy Atkinson, floral designer will demonstrate how to use material from the garden to create beautiful arrangements. All of the design material will come from the Kruse Garden!

How exciting is that?! Yes, you are encouraged to bring guests to this meeting. We love having company! So, we will continue to beautify the Kruse Garden and we will be enjoying every minute of this labor of love. No time on the bench for us! **-Billie**



*At Right: striking flower shapes of Pink and White Bleeding Hearts captivate attention*



## Plant Sale 2016

Our annual fundraiser, **THE PLANT SALE** will be May 21, 2016!

The club needs all members to pitch in and help again this year. It's actually fun to work side-by-side with fellow club members and the following will give you an idea of some of the items that need staffing:

On **Friday afternoon, May 20th**, around 2:30 or so, the tent will be delivered and set up. We could use some help setting up the inside of the tent.

On **Friday evening**, starting about 5:30, we will be moving the plants to the tent in downtown West Chicago. We need loaders, drivers, unloaders and members to move plants around the tent.

On the **day of the sale**, May 21, we will need cashiers, sales persons, plant holding area watchers, tally sheet people, and a clean-up crew.

There is a job for everyone and we need everyone to take on one of the jobs. If you can help, please call Pauline Briggs: 630.254.2969, or one of the other board members.

And, don't forget, on Thursday evening, May 19th, we have our member's pre-sale. Watch for an e-mail with further details. Or, call one of the board members if you don't have e-mail. This is the opportunity for members to get their pick of the plants. Many of the best plants never make it to the sale tent!

Also, remember to put out a plant sale sign. Don't have one? Keith Letsche will have them on his porch. Stop by and pick 1 or 2 up.

Please feel free to contact any of your WCGC board members for more information or to volunteer for the job(s) you want.

THANK YOU! -Pauline



## **Adding Edibles to Your Garden**

## **The Growing Place**

You don't need a designated space to grow edibles in your garden. Intermix them in your garden beds for new and beautiful combinations.

### **Perennial Edibles**

Chives are a great low maintenance kitchen garden herb that loves the sun. Grow them near your kitchen door in a garden bed or container so they are easy to reach from early spring all the way through the growing season. They have a mild onion or garlic flavor and their edible lavender flowers are considered a delicacy. Perennial chives can be used as an edging plant in the flower bed where they grow in clustered clumps. They combine well with other early blooming flowers such as iris and columbine.

French Sorrel is the first green to perk up in spring and the last to lose its usefulness in winter. Its bright green leaves are high in Vitamin C and the slightly sour taste of the leaves combine well with chicken, fish, and eggs. Cut its distinctive sword-shaped leaves as you need them and allow the plant to regrow after each harvest. If not allowed to bloom, French Sorrel adds a soft graceful shape and texture to the flower border. It likes full sun and moist soil but is very adaptable to other conditions. Simply cut its distinctive sword-shaped leaves as you need them and allow the plant to regrow after each harvest.

Asparagus can be planted in rows in the vegetable garden or decoratively in the garden. Its foliage is soft and fernlike and provides a beautiful background for other perennial plants. Asparagus plants need full sun, and because they remain in place for many years, the soil should be prepared very well.

Strawberries are a favorite of just about everyone! Easy to grow in any sunny location, and even in a container. Combine a spring-bearing variety with an ever-bearing type to have some to harvest all season long. If you are limited in space, try growing the alpine strawberries. They form neat clumps and can be used as an edible edging in the flower garden.

### **Vegetables**

Do you have a particularly sunny spot in the garden where a tomato will flourish? Go ahead plant your favorite tomato variety there! Instead of using just a plain tomato cage for support, use a decorative rose topiary. You'll have delicious tomatoes and a beautiful garden accent piece.

Of course, you can't forget to mix in leafy crops like lettuce, spinach, swiss chard, and kale. They add texture and color to any garden. Let some Bright Lights Swiss Chard mature they will have vividly colored stalks in red, orange and yellow. Cabbage and kale can also add interesting texture and color element to your garden.

### **Herbs**

Herbs make some of the best additions to your garden with their varied leaf textures and flowers. And best of all, many of them are rabbit resistant because those pesky rabbits do not like to get the scent on their fur. Plant herbs around a particularly tasty favorite to help deter them.