

We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 28—Issue 10—October 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: October 24

Meeting Time:

Meeting Location:

6:45PM Refreshments

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

7:00PM Business Meeting

7:15PM Program

Bulb Bingo

Ruth Kyme

Autumn is a special time of year. So many fun things to look forward to; stunning fall foliage, the crisp fall air, taffy apples, jack-o-lanterns, pumpkin spice everything, and best of all.....BULB BINGO!

Join us at the October meeting for this fun fall event. Everyone is a winner in Bulb Bingo. Each time you get a bingo, you win a small bag of bulbs to plant in your garden for lovely flowers in the spring. We will play a couple rounds until all the bulbs are gone.



Please note that this is a MEMBERS ONLY EVENT. No guests for this event please.

This month's treats:

Barb M, Barb B, Mary A, Tom F

Where to find us online

Website: www.westchicagogardenclub.org



Facebook:

facebook.com/westchicagogardenclub



Instagram:

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

Next Month: November 21

**Potluck &
Garden Bucks Raffle**

Note from the President

Dan Beebe

As we enter Fall, I am reminded of all of the garden projects that I had planned for this year, how many of them that are not finished, and, most importantly, how little time is left to get some of them done. It doesn't help that my plans are often too grand for the time available to get them done. The shortening Fall days do not help, but the cooler temperatures help keep me going for the hours of daylight we get and often a few more with the help of portable floodlights (yes, I really do this).

We've pretty much reached the end of perennial planting season and I still have a few plants that have not made it in the ground. I have had good luck overwintering perennials by



placing the pots tightly together in the pathways between my raised bed vegetable gardens and lightly covering them with leaf mulch, which I remove in early Spring. This method isn't 100% successful, but it does a pretty good job.

My next garden deadline is dictated by the freezing of the ground. This deadline applies to trees, shrubs, and bulbs. I have been less successful overwintering trees and shrubs, and the only way I have found that works is completely burying the root balls/pots in a mound of soil or mulch as if they were planted in the ground.

Bulbs are usually the last to make it into the ground in my garden. With the help of a cordless hammer drill (or two) and a bulb auger, I have found that I can get a large number of bulbs in the ground very quickly, even after the surface of the ground has slightly frozen. If I only have a few bulbs to plant, like I will after this month's Bulb Bingo, a good hand bulb planter or spade works well, too.

After planting is done, I start putting up Christmas decorations. While not technically gardening, these do go in the yard and garden, and if the weather cooperates, I extend my time outside well into December.

If you have an overwintering technique that has worked well for you, I would like to hear about it via email to westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com or in person at one of our upcoming meetings, and I'll be sure to pass it on in a future article.

Dan

Club Information

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

We Go Gardening

Join the Cookie Caravan

A number of people and organizations have generously helped with our projects and activities to achieve our club's mission. We are asking our members to donate batches of your favorite homemade cookies to be delivered to deserving folks including the West Chicago Park District and Cantigny.

Each baker should bring 2–3 dozen cookies or bars to Kerry Perry's house on Tues. Nov 5th between 4–7 pm. Stay and help package the treats into festive boxes. Boxes will be delivered early Wed. Nov 6th via our "cookie caravan".

Kerry Perry



Join the fun!

Contact Kerry with questions at 847-721-0076.



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Would you help us?

**A successful club of any kind,
depends on the volunteer work of its members.**

Please consider helping your garden club in one of the following areas:

We still have 2 volunteer positions open. These positions may also be held/shared with another member(s); we are open to suggestions.

Refreshments Coordinator ~ **OPEN**

- Manage refreshment sign-up sheet
- Send treat reminders to participants

Director At Large (Board Member Position) ~ **OPEN**

- Assist specific events, projects, activities
- No specific duties or responsibilities ~ help where needed
- Attend monthly board meetings

If you have any questions, or to sign up to volunteer, please see Janet Frogner or send an email to: westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com

Janet Frogner



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For the Love of Gardening...



NANCY MORES

Resident of: Over-55 community called Trillium Farm, West Chicago for about 1-½ years - Moved from Wheaton, where we lived for 31 years

WCGC Member: May 2023

How did you become a member: Blooming Fest 2023

What is your current/past profession: I retired almost 20 years ago! I was a teacher for 9 years and made the move into the business world in 1978 when more opportunities were opening for women.

What are you most proud of in your garden: At our Wheaton house we had a large garden that attracted a lot of pollinators and birds. Our garden is tiny now, but we still plant for pollinators and we still have plants the hummingbirds love and we still have birds at our two birdbaths. We had Bluebirds at one of them the other day! We try to plant a lot of native plants but also non-native that the pollinators like too, like zinnias.

A garden mistake you made: Have made a lot of mistakes! At our old house I planted Snakeroot. Looks great in the big woods. I had a rain garden in that yard and planted Bottle Gentian and Turtlehead in a place that was dampish. It was too sunny and they suffered. Going to try to find another spot.

What do you love most about gardening: Watching the pollinators that show up. The bees with their little pollen sacs and the hummingbirds at the cardinal flowers and other flowers.

What tip, trick, or words of wisdom can you share: This year I've learned regular feeding of flowering plants does seem to help blooming.

Favorite place to purchase seeds and plants: I love The Growing Place. A lot of people around here seem to like Wasco, but we haven't been there yet. I also go to We Grow Dreams routinely.

Favorite spot in your garden: The front

What plant can't you wait to see this season emerge from your garden: I'm always happy to see my Cardinal Flowers come back, as well as Little Blue Stem.

What are you looking forward to this season: Looking forward to the fall asters. I bought one at the Blooming Fest last year and it's started to bloom. Also, love the colors of Little Blue Stem in the fall.



November Potluck & Auction

Janet Frogner

The Annual Potluck dinner and Member Appreciation Raffle will be held on Thursday, November 21st.

Remember to collect your “Garden Bucks” at the October’s meeting; they will NOT be available to collect in November.

To participate in the raffle you will need to bring 1 item to donate to the raffle. We are requesting that only new and “gently-used” garden-related items be donated. i.e., houseplant, fresh flowers, bulbs, flower pots, birdhouse, etc.

New this year, the Raffle tickets are only purchased with “Garden Bucks” which are earned by members by participating in the club. See page 12 for a chart, We use the honor system, so if you haven’t been picking up your Garden Bucks as we go through the year, tally them up and pick them up at the October meeting.

Please also bring a food item to share with fellow members. This year you will be asked to list what you are bringing on the Signup Genius email that will be sent to members in the next couple of weeks. Please keep a lookout for this email to RSVP. For the potluck, the club will provide plates, napkins, utensils, water, etc.. Members each bring a dish—such as sides, soup, salad, desert, etc.

This is a Members only event.

If you have any questions, you may email me at westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com



Adopt A Highway Thank You

Dan Beebe

Thank you to everyone who came out to clean up our adopted section of Hawthorne. We had great weather and finished in record time.

We only had a few volunteers this time, but we were able to pick up everything along both sides of the road in about 1 hour!

Our next clean up will be next April. Come on out and join us then—it is actually a lot of fun.



News from Kruse

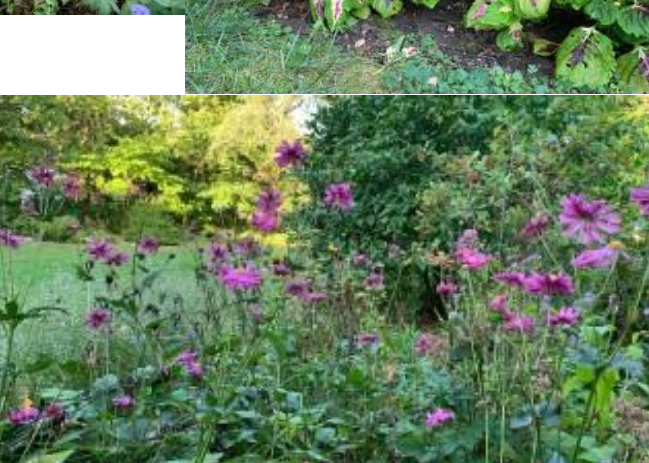
October brings more signs of changing seasons, brisk breezes, (sometimes) cooler temperatures, shorter days, and a riot of new colors appearing in the garden. Plant growth slows down, we as gardeners slow down, but things do not have to be blooming to be growing. A lesson for plants and people alike!

While walking around the Kruse garden you may see bright, red berries from viburnum and chokeberry shrubs, resilient flowers still in bloom from Japanese anemones, ageratum, Rozanne geranium, boneset, caryopteris shrubs, beautyberry shrub, lespedeza shrubs, aconitum, and ALL the many asters from east to west and north to south.

As we begin to put the garden to bed for the next season we have to pause to recognize some outstanding plants that survive our once-weekly tending. These plants include the coleus donated as plugs from Cantigny. Who knew they tolerated such dry, dry, dry conditions? The red batwing begonias in containers, fully 28-30 inches tall and gorgeous.

Finally, an honorable mention goes to our newest "archeological discovery" buried flagstones edging a central garden bed above the pond and leading down a path several feet. It may not be quite as exciting as when Christine Baxter, Dick and Barbara Darrah (among others) found the hole that was the pond or the stone steps buried in the hill! Still, the "Kruse crew" composed of our West Chicago Garden Club members continue to preserve this lovely little corner and discover garden design from over 100 years ago. Come visit the garden any day during daylight hours. Come garden whenever you can Wednesdays 9-11:30am.

Christina Covarrubias



Growing Native—Leaving the Leaves is good for every garden, not just native ones!

Ruth Gauss

Hi, gardening friends! I wanted to address the idea keeping your leaves in your garden. I found this article I felt said almost everything I would want to say, so I thought I would just share it (with an added note from me at the end.) Provided on the USDA's website:

Posted by Brooke Franklin, NRCS

October 17, 2022

It's the time of year to do your fall garden cleanup. Rather than the tedious task of raking and bagging leaves and taking them to the landfill, the best way to reduce greenhouse gases and benefit your garden is to leave the leaves!

Leaves create a natural mulch that helps to suppress weeds while fertilizing the soil as it breaks down. The leaves also serve as a habitat for wildlife including lizards, birds, turtles, frogs, and insects that overwinter in the fallen leaves. These living creatures help keep pests down and increase pollination in your garden, so having a habitat for them in the fallen leaves can help to keep them around when you need them the most.

Micro-organisms are the life of soil, and they need food and nutrients all the time. The more leaves left on your garden, the more feed for these micro-organisms that make soil healthier and plants grow stronger. As the leaves decay, they add organic matter back into the soil, which lessens the need for fertilizer.

You can also include leaves in a compost mix to use on your crops. Mulching is a simple and beneficial practice you can use to create a healthy garden, and if you have trees, you have free mulch at your fingertips each fall. Mulching can protect the soil surface and help stop erosion from rainfall. Mulch also helps to moderate temperature extremes by keeping roots warmer during the winter and cooler in the summer, and helps to keep moisture in the ground, which is especially helpful during times of drought.

You can mulch leaves where they fall, chop them up with your mower, or choose to move the leaves. Leaves work well in between rows of crops or around fruit trees, areas where there is heavy machine or foot traffic, and shaded areas where vegetation doesn't grow well. They can also be used in between growing seasons rather than leaving the soil bare. The leaves can also be useful in areas that have compacted soil as they help to reduce runoff as well as using their nutrients to create healthier soils.

*I'm adding that if you have disease issues (such as powdery mildew), it is best to throw those leaves into the trash as they have the potential to spread disease if put them in your garden or your compost pile. Also, when you leave your leaves unshredded it helps to protect the insects that are overwintering there.

I hope this was helpful! Happy (native) gardening!



Nature Notes—What's this Flower?

Asters are fall-blooming daisy-like flowers. Asters and daisies both belong to the same family as sunflowers, dandelions and chrysanthemums.

Benefits of Asters

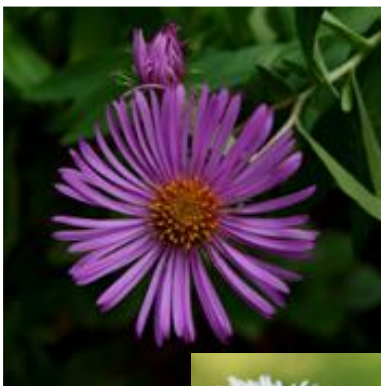
- Give your garden late-season color, blooming August – October
- Provide food for pollinators, especially the Monarch butterfly
- Adaptable; grow in any soil with adequate drainage
- Require very little care. Pinch back in July to reduce height and increase the number of flowers

The Greek word asteri means 'star' and the shape of the aster flower resembles a star.

An ancient Greek myth - the aster flower was created by the goddess Astraea. She was so upset by the lack of stars in the sky that she began to weep and asters sprouted from where her tears fell upon the ground. When humans began to descend into wickedness, she fled from the earth and joined the heavens as the constellation Virgo.

Plant an Aster – Feel good knowing you are helping the biodiversity in your own back yard!

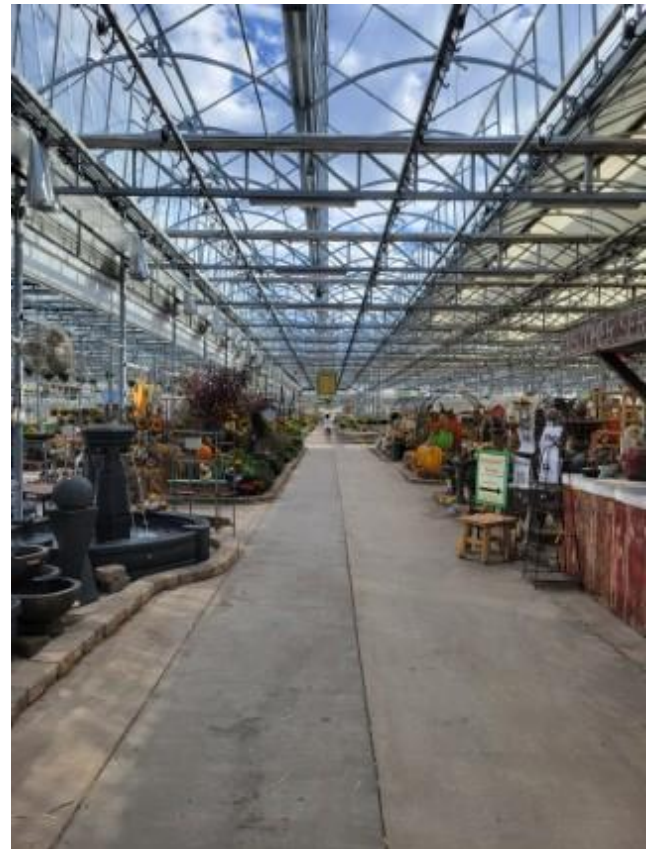
Kerry Perry



We Go Gardening

September Field Trip to Sunrise & Possibility Place

Although we had some bus trouble, we still had a great time on our fall field trip. The flat tire during the Possibility Place stop delayed our arrival at Sunrise. We didn't get our expected tour at Sunrise, but it is still an amazing HUGE greenhouse and was fun to explore. Here are a few photos of our day. Photos from Pauline Briggs, Barb Melville & Pamela Darrah.



Upcoming local events for gardeners

Ruth Gauss

Chicago Botanic Garden

Midwest Fruit Explorers Show & Sale

Saturday, October 19 - Sunday, October 20 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Burnstein Hall

See a display of freshly harvested fruit grown in the area by members of the Midwest Fruit Explorers, featuring apples, pears, paw paws, grapes, kiwis and more. Visitors can obtain information on growing fruit. Shop for apples, cider and more.



The Morton Arboretum

Nature Artists' Guild Autumn Art Exhibition

Friday, November 8 - Sunday, November 10, 2024, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Cudahy Room, Administration and Research Center, East Side

A juried art exhibit of local art inspired by nature. Free with Arboretum admission.



Cantigny Park

Greenhouse Tour

Saturday, November 9, 3 pm

Cantigny Greenhouse (directions will be provided 24 hours prior to event)

Price: \$25

As they prepare for the holiday season, they will be giving this tour to showcase the seasonal plants they are preparing. [Head to their website to register, here.](#)



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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 enter raffles for donated items and gift cards.

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 raffle.

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

Volunteer for Workdays at Kruse, Plant Sale or other events		
1 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 a monthly meeting	\$	25
Attend Twilight Tuesday	\$	50
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.

Pick up your garden bucks at the October 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.

Oct 24		Bulb Bingo	Barb M, Barb B, Mary A, Tom F
Nov 21	Garden Bucks Raffle	Pot Luck Dinner	

Please note that the October & November meetings are for Members Only.