



WE GO GARDENING

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

www.westchicagogardenclub.org

Volume 14 Issue 10 October 2011

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Babysitting—The Club provides babysitting during its regular monthly meetings when held at Faith Community Church. There is no fee to you for the service, but if you plan to use it, please **call Linda Harlson** at 377-5750, so we can plan for the right number of children.

Rides— Need a ride to the meeting? Call Billie Childress at 231-1791 the Wednesday before the meeting.



October 27th Meeting : "Holiday Decorating"

Yes, Halloween is still around the corner, but come to this month's meeting to get a jump on planning for holiday decorating. Mari Mackenbach will share ideas for decorating using natural materials.



Faith Community Church at 910 Main Street in West Chicago

6:45 - refreshments and gathering

7:00 - brief business meeting

7:15 - speaker

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 17th "Dinner and Garden Dollar Auction"

Next month will be one of our favorite events, the Garden Dollar Auction. We hope you have been **picking up your garden dollars** when you attend meetings, participate in club events, or help out. These dollars will be used to bid on fabulous prizes before, during, and after our potluck dinner. See page 7 for how to earn garden dollars.

Prizes include gift certificates from garden vendors, from donated hand-crafted items, or from gently used and donated items from members. **If you have garden-themed items that you want to donate**, please alert Jeff Handel so we can get an idea of what will be available that evening. Hope to see you at this must-attend event!



Upcoming events (outside the club)

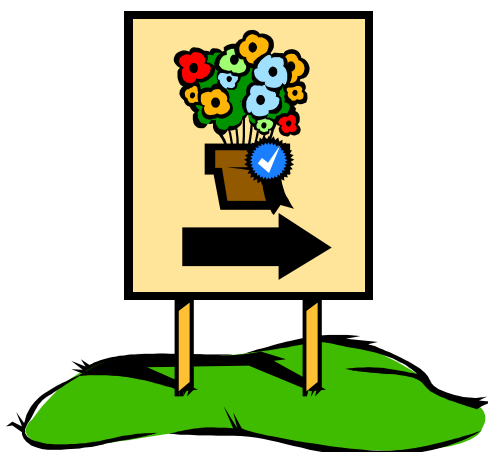
Morton Arboretum: Gourd Art Workshops Make your own jewelry and home décor from gourds. Saturday afternoons in October, costs vary. See more here at:

<https://education.mortonarb.org/ei/cm.esp?id=26&pageid=38J0RX1W8&showpage=srchresults&pagefrom=coursesrch&eiscript=59433RWGH&cd=6523574184>

The Growing Place: Planting for the Birds Learn how to make your yard a sanctuary for birds. Saturday, October 22, 10am, Aurora, free, call 630-355-4000.

Heinz Brothers: Pruning Trees and Shrubs Learn different techniques for pruning. Saturday, Nov 5, 10 am, \$10, register online at <http://heinzbrothers.com/events>.

Plant Sale Planning Meeting



On Thursday, October 13th, several garden club members met to discuss possible ways to continue our plant sale tradition in 2012 with new leadership. **Six volunteers stepped forward** to say they want to see this continue. Several others have indicated they would like to be part of the planning to make the sale a reality, but were unable to attend the meeting. If you were in the latter category, you will be contacted soon.

We will **still need many members in many roles** to have a successful sale. It takes months of advance planning to get to May 2012 smoothly. **If you would like to be part of this team**, please contact Jeff Handel, club president, to see where you can fit it.

Club information

www.westchicagogardenclub.org
West Chicago Garden Club
P. O. Box 313, West Chicago, IL 60186
(630) 585-4005

Membership information

Dues for 2011: 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

2011 WCGC BOARD:

President:

Jeff Handel 630-231-6765, jjhandeldds@yahoo.com

Vice President:

Dick Darrah 630-584-1900, info@bwdarrah.com

Treasurer:

Barb Darrah 630-584-1900, info@bwdarrah.com

Secretary:

Dee Soustek 630-393-0652, dsoustek@aol.com

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June Luther 630-876-1295, june@markluther.com

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Melissa Birch, 630-621-0128, melissabirch@gmail.com



Planned WCGC Events - 2011

Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event	Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event
27 Oct	Mari Mackenbach	Holiday Decorating	17 Nov	All members	Dinner & Garden Dollar Auction




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Your Gardening Source....



News from Kruse by Angie & Billie, Kruse House Garden Coordinators

This October the Kruse garden has sparkled with fall color. The Norway maples are turning gold, as are the red buds. The service berries are a red-gold color. Among the shrubs, the fothergilla, a reddish gold, is a great shrub for fall color. The viburnums range from red to gold, the trilobas have the red berries that persist through winter. The red chokeberries have red leaves and blue berries, loved by birds.

The ornamental grasses are blooming, though the goldenrod and asters are about finished for the season. We are ready to tuck the garden in for the winter cutting back perennials, pruning shrubs, and most of all taking notes on what to take out or add next spring. Every garden is evolving and every gardener looks for improvement.

This year, the Historical Society had the stucco on the museum house repaired, and the side porch and windows were painted. The museum has a very fresh look. Thanks Historical Society!

We are still thinking of something to add to the garden in memory of Keith's aunt. We'd like it to be permanent and beautiful. Any suggestions?

Correction from the last newsletter—all 3 of the lespedezas we have in the garden were donated by Marion Martin; (Sept newsletter mistakenly said one was donated by one of our speakers). Thanks, Marion! If you're having trouble remembering what lespedeza is here is a brief review and pictures. Common name is Bush Clover. Grows 4-8 feet high! Blooms pink/rose/purple in fall. The plants, located directly behind the shed, are new to the garden so we haven't seen their full potential yet.



As mentioned earlier, we are thinking ahead to a next season in the garden and would dearly love to hear your thoughts on how to improve and enhance the maintenance of the Kruse Garden which the Garden Club has chosen to support. Please share your thoughts with Angie, Billie, Tom, or any of our board members. Your input would be greatly appreciated!

Until next time...Enjoy the last of the garden season. **A&B**



Plants Don't Mind the Cold by Heather Prince of the Growing Place

Many people are concerned about the predictions of snow and cold for this winter Don't be alarmed! As gardeners, we at The Growing Place believe winter can be wonderful!

Believe it or not, cold temperatures and snow are good things for the garden! A thick layer of snow insulates plants and gives a ready water source once thaws set in. All that snow from the February blizzard this year watered our gardens in early spring. We may dislike those icy temperatures that cause us to bundle up, but they do have some important benefits. Research shows that we have fewer pests and diseases after a harsh winter. Many damaging pests are killed off by negative temperatures when they occur for several nights in a row.

Fall is a perfect time to plant trees, shrubs and bulbs. Soils are nice and moist, creating ideal conditions for roots to grow and spread. At The Growing Place, we plant trees and shrubs nearly all the way through November. Even though woody plants are dormant, root growth will still occur this year, allowing the plants a great start next spring.

Spring flowering bulbs offer a bright splash of color but wait to plant until nighttime temperatures fall into the 40s for several days. If planted too soon, bulbs may start to sprout. As long as you can work the soil, you can plant bulbs. This means you can plant into December! Once planted, our hardy plants are adapted to our conditions and will thrive, even through a harsh winter.

Once they go dormant, cut back spiraea and potentilla to a few inches from the soil so they sprout into thicker, more lush plants in the spring. It's not too late to move small deciduous trees and shrubs. Once foliage has fallen, you can safely move a plant without worrying about keeping soil on the roots. In fact, planting bare root makes it easier to transplant and ensure proper depth and root spread. Keep watering evergreens until the ground is frozen, as they photosynthesize all year long.



Protect your plants, especially from animal damage. Young and thin barked trees can benefit from brown paper tree wrap or white corrugated plastic tubing around their trunks. This keeps the animals away and prevents sun scald damage. Critters get especially hungry in winter when there are limited resources and may eat a variety of woody plants. Netting or fencing around young and newly planted shrubs will keep the hungry rabbits away. They particularly like to feast on fothergilla, burning bush, viburnum, and roses.

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Worth the Trip - Hawaii - The Big Island *by Elaine McCluskey*

Many of you have been probably been to Hawaii or have seen photos of the lush tropic paradise of our 50th state. I was fortunate to travel there earlier this month, and made sure I looked at everything "through a gardener's eyes."

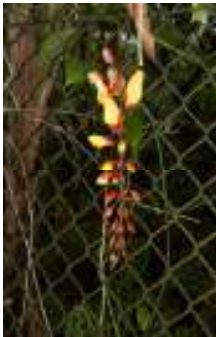
Although all the islands are beautiful, Hawaii, also known as the Big Island, has the most diverse microclimates. The drier, desert-like west side near Kona gets 10-20 inches of rain a year, while the rain forest area on the east side near Hilo gets more than 300 inches. The top of the dormant volcano Mauna Kea is always snow covered! The plants on the island reflect this great range in climate.

Plants we think of as houseplants in Illinois grow freely outdoors. Imagine philodendrons as a wild groundcover, crotons as decorative landscape plants, and ferns as big as trees!

Using a local plant guide, I learned which plants are native (prickly pear cactus and morning glory), which were introduced from Polynesian travelers (bamboo and sugar-



cane), and which were introduced after Capt. Cook arrived in 1778 (pineapple and bird of paradise). But whether native or not, the plants are extraordinary and a very different experience from my back yard in West Chicago!



If you go, plan to visit Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden at Onomea Bay near Hilo, where you can see more than 2000 species of plants. I enjoyed the



orchids hanging over the path. Also not to be missed is Hawaii Volcanoes National Park. Not



only can you see an active volcano, but also the miracle of life that returns after lava hardens. A drive around the entire island can be done in 6 hours and provides many opportunities to visit state parks, see waterfalls and beaches, and learn about plants you never imagined. It was, for me, definitely worth the trip!

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Garden Dollars - remember to collect them!

WCGC distributes tokens (Garden Dollars) to members who participate in club activities. At the **November meeting**, you will be able to use them at the **auction to bid on fabulous prizes**. Here's now to earn them:

Volunteer for workdays, plant sale or garden contest (1 to 4 hrs , >4hrs)	75 - 150	Donate plants for the sale <50, 50-149, ≥150	75, 200, 300
Donate pots	50	Write newsletter article	100
Donate snack for meeting	75	Donate door prize	50
Set up or clean up meeting	25	Meeting attendance	25
Trip attendance	25	Pay dues before Garden Dollar Auction in Nov 2011	75
Donate to Kruse House	50	Pay dues before February 2nd	50

To receive your Garden Dollars after earning them, pick them up at special events from the event organizer, or see club officers at the information table at any meeting, and let them know what you've earned.

About Fall Color

One of the nicest things about living in northern climes is the ever changing seasons. For a few weeks, nature puts on one of its most spectacular displays as native trees and shrubs finish out the growing season in a brilliant display of fall colors.

Jack Frost usually gets credit for the beautiful colors, but, in reality, fall color is controlled by both the plant's genetic factors and the environment. Carotene and xanthophyll are yellow pigments produced in foliage all year; along with chlorophyll, the green pigment. In autumn when short days and cool temperatures slow down the production of chlorophyll, the remaining chlorophyll breaks down and disappears. Then the yellow pigments that have been masked by chlorophyll show up. These pigments give the ginkgo its clear yellow color. Redbud, larch, hickory, birch and witch hazel turn hues of yellow and gold.

Some plants produce anthocyanins (red and purple pigments) that may mask the yellow pigments. Some maples, dogwood, black tupelo, oaks and winged euonymous seem to be on fire with red and purple.

Anthocyanin production increases with increased sugars in the leaves. A fall season with sunny days and cool nights increases sugar content of the leaves and intensifies fall reds. This also explains the two-tone effect on green ash which exhibits yellow on leaves inside the tree and purple on the outside leaves where they are exposed to sunlight. It also explains the amelanchier which may be red on top branches and yellow on bottom branches.

The tans and browns of oaks are caused by tannins which accumulate as the chlorophyll disappears.

Fall color starts in September with poison ivy and sumac and ends in November with the larches and weeping willows. Frost and freezing temperatures will stop the coloration process and blacken the leaves.

Source: Barbara Larson, University of Illinois Extension Educator, <http://urbanext.illinois.edu/fallcolor/about.cfm>