

We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 25 Issue 9 September 2021



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: September 23

Meeting Location:

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

Meeting Time:

**7:00PM Business Meeting
7:15PM Program**

All-America Selections: What's Old is New Again!

Barb Melville



All-America Selections (AAS) is a 90 year-old non-profit, but don't think of this as grandma's organization! AAS is stronger and more encompassing than ever before. With almost 1000 varieties

that have been declared as AAS Winners over the years, it's almost guaranteed that you have some AAS Winners in your garden.

Come listen to Executive Director Diane Blazek as she gives a high-energy presentation about the AAS Trials, Display Gardens and shows you some tantalizing varieties you will want for your own gardens.

Diane Blazek is the Executive Director of All-America Selections® and National Garden Bureau. For more than 30 years, Diane has been immersed in gardening both personally and professionally. She brings a passion to the subject based on a history in the field of horticulture publishing as well as a love for gardening and culinary exploration.

Growing up on a small family farm in northern Missouri, Diane spent years helping her parents plant, tend and harvest a large home vegetable garden. As the president and publisher at Ball Publishing for 15 years, she

led the way in connecting the commercial side of the industry with consumers via the live focus groups called Consumer Buzz Live! Diane also managed Ball Publishing's entry into consumer garden book publishing.

Since December of 2009, Diane has been leading both All-America Selections and National Garden Bureau through an exciting period of growth as they establish themselves as inspirational resources in the minds of garden communicators, public gardens, growers, garden retailers and home gardeners.



OCTOBER 28TH MEETING

Bulb Bingo

Notes from the President

Dan Beebe

At last month's meeting, I mentioned that the Garden Club Board is looking for additional members to help fill board vacancies and committee chair positions for 2022. Our current board members and chairs have served for at least two years and many of them have held positions for much, much longer. A number of our serving members, including myself, have expressed interest in stepping down from their current positions for a number of reasons and we are actively seeking replacements for next year.

I strongly feel that we are more effective as an organization when we actively changeover serving members on a regular basis. We need to continue to bring in new people with fresh ideas and thoughts so that we can better fulfill the club's mission (found on the top of the first page of every newsletter). This is especially true as we start to move beyond the COVID era; our club can truly have a positive impact on the quality of people's lives, but we need new, strong, committed leadership to help do this.

At this time, we are actively looking for replacements for the following positions for 2022.

President (or Co-President... If someone is interested, please talk to me at the next meeting)

Vice President (we have a name... possibly filled)

Secretary (you need to be able to take detailed notes of every board meeting and type them up)

Director At Large (if you want to be more involved, but aren't sure how the board works – perfect fit)

Plant Sale Chair (or Co-Chair... If someone is interested, please talk to me at the next meeting)

Kruse Garden Chair (our biggest, longest running public project and the reason the club was created)

Refreshments Chair (in anticipation of a return to pre-pandemic normalcy)

If you are interested in any of the open positions or have a suggestion of who might be interested, please let me know at a meeting or send an email to WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com.

More at the next meeting,

Dan

*The sunflower children
Nod to the sun
Summer is over
Fall has begun !*



Monarchs enjoying the garden Tithonus

Ruth Kyme

Mexican sunflower



Mark your Calendars!

Barb Melville

Next month on October 28th. One of our favorite meetings! Bulb Bingo!

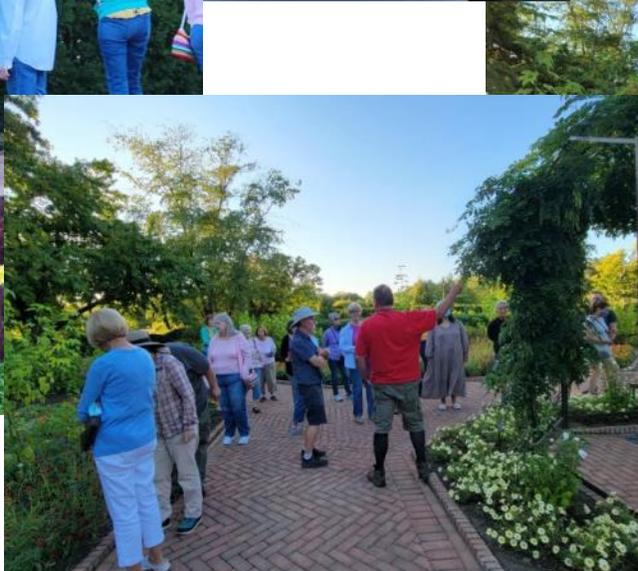


Mark your Calendar for November 18th.

Start collecting new or like-new raffle prizes to bring to the meeting (in lieu of our traditional silent auction and no pot luck dinner) Also a workshop to create your own holiday centerpiece!

Tour of Cantigny Gardens

Photos from Barb Melville



Asters



For vivid fall colors plant Asters in front of your windows where you will enjoy them until the first frost; mine are 5 feet tall and can be enjoyed from my family room.

Asters have stunning masses of brilliant purple, pink or white flowers with contrasting yellow, daisy-like centers. These perennial

plants bloom from August to October and are easy to grow, and add beauty to late season border gardens, cottage gardens or containers. They make valuable cut flowers and attract birds, bees and butterflies to the landscape. The compact dark green foliage is mildew and rust resistant. Asters thrive in full sun with average well-drained soil. Divide mature clumps every 3-4 years in the early spring or late fall after flowering. If your local garden center is sold out of Asters I saw many varieties for sale at Mariano's on Gary Avenue.

Barb Melville



American Beautyberry shrub



Barb Bizzarri



News from Kruse

Billie Childress

FALL IS THE NEW SPRING

Well it is in my opinion!

It's a great time to renovate existing flower beds. Do what you can in the Fall. It's way too busy in the Spring. We are putting that advice into operation in the Kruse Garden.

In the middle garden we have a sea of day lilies. All of them are lovely but none of them stands out. There's just too many of them! Once upon a time that's the best we could hope for was to have the beds filled with plants whatever they were. But, we're sneaking into a new level of gardening....One where contrast and variety matter. So out with some old and in with some new!

Jan Grismore gave us Hellebores and Allium Millenniumtwo plants we did not have in the garden. Both of these plants are stalwarts! We are thrilled to have them! Thanks Jan. It was fun to make a big change in the garden.

We have a sun spot right up front that needs a redo also. We think Montrose White Calamint. (*Calamintha nepeta* ssp. *Nepeta*) would be the plant to put there. We saw this plant in abundance in the Cantigny Gardens while touring. Nice plant! It is perennial 'Plant of the Year' this year and its outstanding features include: blooms Spring through Fall, beneficial pollinators love it, doesn't seed and is hearty to zone 4.

It's a good plan but none of us have the plant in our gardens to divide and contribute. We hope that one of our members has some to donate (call or text Billie 630-862-1213 if you have a donation) or at last resort we will have to buy some.

BIG NEWS: Dee Soustek joined us in the garden last week and we hope she becomes a "regular". She recently retired and thinks every day is Saturday but I think we can help her remember to join us on Wednesday mornings. What a wonderful thing to have a new gardener!!! Lucky, lucky us! Welcome Dee!



Montrose White Calamint.
(*Calamintha nepeta* ssp. *Nepeta*)

We Grow Dreams' Fall Festival September 25-26 from 10:00 – 3:00



Our spectacular mums will be available for sale along with other fall plants such as ornamental cabbage and kale, fall pansies, traditional and heirloom pumpkins, corn stalks and straw bales, and more.

We will have booths for local businesses like City Bee Savers who will have their delicious honey for sale ~ their bees live part time here on our property! Also for sale will be apple cider donuts, apple pies, cider and taffy apples!

Do you have plant questions? The DuPage County Master Gardener's will have a "Master Gardener Help Desk" set up at the greenhouse the day of the festival! Their knowledge can help you to produce even more beautiful blooms! They are also experts on Monarchs, so tap into their knowledge about the best plants to select for next year's garden.

It will be a wonderful day to bring the family and get in the fall spirit.

The [We Grow Dreams Greenhouse](#) is at 1055 West Washington St in West Chicago.

Getting to Know ...

Barb Bizzarri



Mary Anne Young

Resident of West Chicago: 21 Years

WGCG Member: Since 2008

Hobbies: Gardening, knitting and crocheting

Favorite Flower/Plant/Bush/Vegetable: Hydrangeas, especially Annabelle

What is your earliest memory of a favorite garden? Growing up in Chicago, on a small lot, my father always grew vegetables in the backyard, my mother was in charge of the flowers in front. Later on they moved to Carol Stream where they enjoyed gardening on a 1/2 acre lot!

Who taught you to garden or are you self taught? My parents

Some gardeners do everything 'by the book' others 'wing it and watch'. Are you a 'wing it and watch' Gardner or a 'by the book gardener? "Wing it and watch" gardener

What is your summer garden success? Hydrangeas and great success with Proven Winners petunias. They were both outstanding this summer.

What's the hardest plant you ever tried to grow? Gladiolas

What advice would you give a new gardener? Don't be afraid to ask. If you see something you like in someone's garden, ask them. They'll be willing to share. That's how you learn.

Read any good books lately? I recently obtained 4 books by one of my favorite authors, John Patterson. I'll be doing a lot of reading recuperating from recent foot surgery.

Bits and Pieces

Barb Melville sent us information about a Zoom presentation for the Greater Kane County Wild Ones.

The Rainwater in Your Yard: What should you know?
Wednesday September 22nd 7:00 p.m.

Why are people using rain barrels, creating rain gardens, and maintaining less lawn? You likely know that these techniques help to handle the stormwater that would otherwise run off your property. But runoff is a complex topic, and we have the perfect person to help us understand its importance. Jessica Mino, an expert from The Conservation Foundation, will be presenting. [Click Here to register.](#)

This presentation is sponsored by Start In Your Yard and the Gail Borden Public Library. It coincides with Elgin's public art project, Storm Drain Art. Keep an eye out for these inspired street paintings that call attention to this issue.

Billie Childress sent us this photo

“When we took a break this morning three of us pitched our spearhead spades in the ground more or less in a line. No planning or even recognition of the unity. There was actually an identical 4th yellow spearhead spade a bit down the line. It caught my eye.”



Our friends at Countryside Flower Shop, Nursery & Garden Center sent the following:

WATER ALERT! Plants are dry! We are in a dry spell and plants are becoming dehydrated.

Please be sure to water newly planted trees, shrubs, perennials and mums, as well as those that are established until the ground freezes in late November.

Plants survive our brutal winters better if they are well hydrated. Evergreens especially need a heavy drink of water. They are stressed from summer, this is why you might be noticing a large amount of fruit set on the conifers.

It is critical that plants are not stressed from dryness throughout the fall and winter months.

Well it's that time of year, spiders (arachnids) are very active and there are webs everywhere. It was a surprise to find a spider building a web inside my mail box. Yikes. I had no clue what type it was, so time to do some research.

According to the U of I, Illinois has over 500 spider species, but only 30 to 35 are regularly seen.



Orb Weaver spiders spin very intricately designed webs attached to plants and structures. The webs are usually vertical, with strands of silk radiating out from the center and sticky cross-strands circling the center. Photo courtesy of U of I.

This Jumping spider (actually a little less than 1/2 inch) was on my garage door. He's really neat looking.



This web in the shape of a miniature tornado funnel is at my front door. It's made by a Funnel Web spider. Unlike many other web-building spiders, Funnel Web spiders are fast runners. When an insect or another spider happens by, it rushes out to subdue its prey.

A few interesting facts:

Spider silk is the strongest fiber in nature, five times stronger than steel, yet 30 times thinner than human hair.

All species create silk, but not all of them spin it into webs.

Spiders have eight legs. Most spiders have eight eyes. Some have no eyes and others have as many as 12 eyes. Most can detect only between light and dark, while others have well-developed vision.

Killing a spider doesn't just cost the arachnid its life, it may take an important predator out of your home. It's bad luck to kill a spider.

A Growing Legacy

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Club Information

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

Membership Information

Dues for 2020: Individual: \$15 Family: \$25 (2 people)

Board Meetings

2nd Thursday each month at 7 p.m.

Regular Meeting Location

St Andrew Lutheran Church—155 N Prince Crossing Rd

2021 WCGC BOARD:

- President: Dan Beebe
- Vice President: Barb Bizzarri
- Treasurer: Kerry Perry
- Secretary: Cherie Kraft
- Program Director: Barb Melville
- Plant Sale Chair: Dan Beebe
- Information Director: Pamela Darrah
- Kruse House Chair: Billie Childress
- Hospitality Chair: Jan Grismore
- Director at Large: Mary Schramer

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

You're invited to come explore, get inspired, learn
and add some beauty to your garden at



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