

We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 27—Issue 9—September 2023



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: September 28

Meeting Time:

Meeting Location:

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

**6:45PM Refreshments
7:00PM Business Meeting
7:15PM Program**

Sharpening Garden Tools

Ruth Kyme

Our presenter, Ken Benson, is a landscape architect with degrees in horticulture from the University of Illinois. Ken will discuss the myth that gardening tools come from the store sharp. He will demonstrate how to use various sharpening stones to sharpen pruners, shovels, and all other gardening tools. You may bring a pair of hand pruners to be critiqued and if possible, sharpened with a hand file. Ken will try to sharpen as many pruners as possible, time permitting.



Benson is a landscape architect and was the host of cable TV's Landscaping with Ken Benson 1992-2000. He was a board member of the Chicago Flower and Garden Show 1998-2008 and a founding board member of MELA- Midwest Ecological Landscapers Association. Benson is also a past member of the Men's Garden Club of Villa Park and has been giving programs since 1972 to garden clubs throughout the area.

REMINDER: If you still have pots that you would like to donate, our Plant Sale Chair people have organized to collect them at this month's meeting. This is only for THIS month—we don't have the space or time to handle this at other meetings. We are looking for 4" pots that we use for small plants and vegetables and for the standard gallon pots. Trays for both are also great. Ideally, we prefer pots that don't have names/advertising printed on them, but we will take those. It would help, if you have the chance, to use a large sharpie to cross out whatever is printed on the pot and remove/cross out any labels on the pot.

Where to find us online

Website: www.westchicagogardenclub.org



Facebook:

facebook.com/westchicagogardenclub



Instagram:

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

OCTOBER 26TH MEETING

Bulb Bingo

Notes from the President

Dan Beebe

As the end of 2023 nears, there are a couple of business items that I need all of the members to think about.

The first item is the election of the Board of Directors and Standing Committee Chairs that will take place at our November meeting. The Garden Club Board is looking for additional members to help fill board vacancies and committee chair positions for 2024. As many of you have heard me say before, I strongly feel that we are more effective as an organization when we actively change over 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).

At this time, we are actively looking for replacements for the following positions for 2024.

- Secretary - "The Secretary shall record minutes of regular meetings and board meetings. He/she will provide correspondence, which will be distributed by the Information Director, on behalf of the WCGC as the Board may assign."

If you can take notes, type them up and distribute them to the Board in a timely manner, this position is for you. You can always volunteer to take on special projects, too.

Kruse Garden Chair - "Kruse House Garden Chair, whose responsibility it shall be to oversee and recruit assistance for the planting and care of the Kruse House Garden."

Lead our biggest, longest running public project (and the reason the club was created) with the assistance of a great group of dedicated gardeners. You also get to work with Christina, our Kruse House Events Coordinator, as she plans fun, interactive events that are designed to get members of the Public into the garden.

Secondly, the Board is also starting the budgeting process for 2024. If you have any ideas on programs, workshops, field trips or projects that the Club should consider for 2024, please email them to WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com or talk to a Board member as soon as possible. Some of the best ideas come from our member... we really need your help keeping this the most active, fun and educational Garden Club in the area!

Dan

Club Information

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

Membership Information

Dues for 2023: 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

2023 WCGC Board & Committees:

President:	Dan Beebe
Vice President:	Janet Frogner
Treasurer:	Kerry Perry
Secretary:	OPEN
Publicity Director:	Lisa Marie Vogt & Ruth Gauss
Information Director:	Pamela Darrah
Program Director:	Ruth Kyme
Member Services Director:	Christina Covarrubias
Director at Large:	Marilyn McNabb
Plant Sale Chair:	Mary Schramer & Dan Beebe
Kruse Garden Chair:	Billie Childress

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

Free Mulch

Ruth Kyme



We have received an email from St. Andrew Lutheran Church (where we meet):

“Just wanted to let you know we have piles of mulch on the church parking lot that we are trying to get rid of. Please feel free to take as much as you want.”

COD Scholarship Recipient—Fall 2023

Kerry Perry

The College of DuPage presented the West Chicago Garden Club’s scholarship of \$1,000 to Jennifer Suszek. Jennifer is working toward a career in Horticulture and will sit this fall for the certified arborist exam. Jennifer intends to maintain her 4.0 grade average and use her degree and knowledge to help our communities and the environment.

We wish Jennifer well in her endeavors.



Volunteers Needed

Christina Covarrubias

Check out a variety of volunteer opportunities below, help the club and earn garden bucks for our silent auction in November! Click on the links to Signup Genius or email westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com to let us know you would like to volunteer.



Refreshments

As many of you have noticed our membership has increased this year to over 150 individuals. At our monthly meeting we like to share refreshments and could use an additional person to help bring food for the October meeting. (We will still meet in November, however it is a potluck.) Our request is for sugar free foods to serve approximately 30 people; for example, veggies, nuts, cheese, meat, or even chips/dip. Please bring your food between 6:30-6:45pm to allow members to have plenty of time to enjoy the treats and socialize before our evening program begins.—[Signup Genius Refreshment Link](#)

Meeting Setup

Are you only available once a month on the 4th Thursday? Consider helping set up chairs for our monthly meetings. Feel free to do this just once or every month. To help arrive between 6:25-6:30PM, a board member will be there to meet you. To sign up click the link: [Signup Genius Meeting Setup](#)

Coming in October & November

Pamela Darrah

Our last two monthly meetings for 2023 are special “Member Only” events. If you have a friend that you want to bring to a meeting to introduce them to the club, please bring them to the September meeting.

October Bulb Bingo

For many years now, Pauline Briggs has organized this event for our club. For this event, the club has purchased an assortment of bulbs for fall planting. Each member who attends will get a bingo card when they check in at the meeting. As we play a couple rounds of bingo, Pauline will discuss the bulbs that are available. When you complete a “Bingo!” you will win a small bag of bulbs.

November Auction

We will once again be holding our Annual Potluck dinner and Member appreciation Silent Auction in November.

For those who are new, the Silent Auction bids are only in “Garden Dollars” which are earned by members by participating in the club. See page 11 for a chart and pick up your dollars before the Auction starts. We use the honor system, so if you haven’t been picking up your Garden Dollars as we go through the year, tally them up and pick them up at the next couple of meetings.

Be on the lookout for garden items that you can donate for the Auction. Remember, we are looking for new or very “gently used” items. We are particularly hoping for items related to gardening or that we can use in our yards. Janet Frogner, Vice President, is in charge of this event if you have any questions.

Adopt A Highway

Dan Beebe



It is time for our Fall Adopt A Highway roadside pickup. We will be meeting on **Saturday, October 7th 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 clicking on this link: [AAH Video](#).

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

“Try to remember a kind of September when grass was green and grain was yellow”

(Song by The Brothers Four)

I think of September as the most ambiguous month of the year. I never know whether to be happy or sad. Summer still lingers, but Autumn is in the air. Our gardens are still green but there are touches of gold everywhere. At Kruse the gardens are still blooming gloriously as you may have seen at the Ice Cream Social. Still, there is that overall feeling of a declining summer holding its breath as Autumn creeps in. I love the crispness of a September day, but I hate watching August’s grandeur fade away.

During our most recent workday at Kruse, we weeded and deadheaded, hoping to hang on to that last bit of blossom, but spent the break talking about what we would be doing next year, already transplanting and dividing in preparation. I will miss our “group gardening” in the coming months, but I must admit that the chance to step back and take it easy sounds very enticing indeed about now.

“Try to remember a kind of September when life was slow and oh so mellow.”



Kruse Gardeners—September 6th



Ice Cream Social—2023



Mulch Workday Volunteers!

Twilight Tuesdays

Pamela Darrah

The final Twilight Tuesday events for this summer were on August 29 and September 12.

A few photos from the member gardens (from Dick & Marilyn) are here. We have a Google Photo Album of all the photos (over 150) that have been sent in this summer for these events. Click to view: [2023 Twilight Tuesdays](#). (These are not necessarily in order—they were added to the album as they were received.)



Linda Hagen



Resident of: West Chicago since December 1989

WCGC Member: February 2023

How did you become a member: Cherie Kraft invited me to the January meeting and I decided to join.

What is your current/retired profession: Retired from North Central College as an Associate Professor of Voice in the music department.

What are you most proud of in your garden: My paperbark Maple and the Berry White Hydrangea

A garden mistake you made: Not containing the mint, horseradish, and lily-of-the-valley

What do you love most about gardening: The physical activity and just observing what Mother Nature has to offer.

What tip, trick, or words of wisdom can you share: Early in the season ants were creating a hill in one of my raised garden beds. Spreading cornmeal a couple of times over the area actually worked to eliminate them.

Favorite place to purchase seeds and plants: Prosek's along with other area nurseries.

Favorite spot in your garden: I actually have many special places in my garden...not just one.

What plant can't you wait to see this season emerge from your garden: There is always a plant or blossom that I'm waiting to see emerge.

What are you looking forward to this season: For right now, waiting for the toad lilies to bloom.

To be included in a future "Getting to Know", please email WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com



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Mulching at Kruse Garden

Billie Childress

Thanks to all who helped mulch the Kruse Garden!

Sixteen volunteers gathered Friday evening bringing with them an assortment of tools to start spreading the 15 yards of wood chips we had delivered to the Kruse Garden. Buckets and wheelbarrows of chips were loaded and moved to various locations throughout the garden. The wood chip pile diminished faster than I thought possible. We wrapped up the evening with about 2/3 of the chips gone! And we were back with a new crew of 8 volunteers Saturday morning. This industrious bunch finished off the rest in about an hour! WOW!

It is positively wonderful to have the new chips in the garden. **Many thanks to all the volunteers.** Your willingness to help made a big job seem pretty easy.

Billie Childress
Kruse Garden Chairperson



Cattails

While looking out my kitchen window, it was distressing to see the cattails taking over our ephemeral pond. Yikes! The vegetation is sucking up the little bit of rain water that's fallen this year. And, the weeds are obliterating the view of the turtles sunning themselves on the fallen tree branches, families of ducks swimming about, and other water fowl searching for food.



Under the right conditions, cattails can grow and spread vigorously. They spread from seeds dispersed from their brown fluffy "tails" or through rhizomes, a root-like, underground stem. What are cattails good for?

Cattails, also known as bulrushes, had a number of practical uses in traditional Native American life: cattail heads and seeds were eaten, cattail leaves and stalks were used for weaving mats and baskets, cattail roots and pollen were used as medicine herbs, and cattail down was used as moccasin lining, pillow stuffing, and diaper material.



According to the Farmer's Almanac cattails are considered the supermarket of the marsh. The rhizomes are one of the richest wild sources of edible carbohydrates in North America. Harvesting the rhizomes is super messy work, but it can be rewarding.

To learn how to harvest and process cattails into a gluten-free flour replacement check out Samuel Thayer's book *The Forager's Harvest*. And then, stop by my house to dig out as many cattails as you want. Please!

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.

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Local Garden Events

Pamela Darrah

Friday, September 22: Morton Arboretum Bulb Sale

Join The Arboretum Store for its 19th Annual Bulb Sale. The sale begins on Friday, September 22 and will run while supplies last or until supplies run out. Choose from a selection of tulips, daffodils, iris, alliums, crocus, fritillaria, and more—as well as a selection of pre-mixed bulb sets—for the perfect combination of color, size, and shape for a beautiful spring display. The Arboretum Store is open from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily .

<https://mortonarb.org/explore/activities/events/bulb-sale/>

Saturday & Sunday, October 7 & 8: The Growing Place Aurora—PumpkinPalooza: Pumpkins on Safari—10:00 am - 5:00 pm

Step into the wild at PumpkinPalooza, where a fun safari adventure meets the pumpkin patch! Explore our gardens in the safari-themed pumpkin scavenger hunt. Enjoy a photo safari hayride, kids' crafts, pumpkin slingshots, live music, handmade eats and more! Get up close at a live animal show from IncredibleBats! and shop for seasonal décor and art from local artists and makers. Bring the whole family to PumpkinPalooza and enjoy the perfect fusion of fall fun and wildlife wonder! Free to enter. Some activities have a nominal fee.


<https://www.thegrowingplace.com/events/save-the-date-for-pumpkinpalooza-2/>



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Friday-Sunday, October 13-15: Cantigny Fall Festival (Parade Field) \$15 per car

Friday, October 13: 4 – 11 pm, Saturday, October 14: 10 am – 11 pm

Sunday, October 15: 10 am – 4 pm

For the first time, our fall festival will be an entire weekend! The fun begins Friday night, October 13, from 4 – 11 pm featuring German-style food and beer, with live music under a big tent on the Cantigny parade field! Hang out in the tent or cozy up on the Adirondacks around a firepit or play lawn games outside of the tent.

We'll do it again on Saturday night after a fun day featuring 100 craft vendors, hayrides, petting zoo, inflatables, live music and entertainer, kids' craft, pumpkin and plant sales. Our three-day festival concludes at 4 pm on Sunday with another full day of colorful, seasonal fun for the whole family. Delicious food options prepared by Cantigny's culinary team will also be available during the day throughout the weekend.

<https://cantigny.org/event/fall-festival-2023-10-14/2023-10-14/>



We are still looking for a volunteer!

Board Member: Secretary—This involves taking notes at our board meetings and a short summary of our general meeting. If you would be interested in joining the board, let an existing board member know at the next meeting or send an email to the club.

**GET
ON
BOARD**

Garden Bucks

West Chicago Garden Club distributes Garden Bucks (real fake money) to members who participate in club activities. At the November 2023 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		Donate plants for Plant Sale	
1 to 4 hours	\$ 75	Less than 50	\$ 75
More than 4 hours	\$ 150	50 - 149	\$ 200
Donate pots for plant sale	\$ 50	More than 150	\$ 300
Donate snacks for meeting	\$ 75	Write newsletter article	\$ 100
Set up or clean up at meeting	\$ 25	Bring a guest to a meeting	\$ 50
Attend Field Trip	\$ 25	Attend Meeting	\$ 25
Donate plants to Kruse Garden	\$ 50	Pay 2023 Dues by Feb 23rd	\$ 50
		Pay 2024 Dues by Nov 16th	\$ 75

Refer a new member and participate in a raffle for a gift card at the Nov 2023 meeting.



Upcoming Programs & Events for 2023

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

Sept 28	Ken Bensen	Sharpening Garden Tools	Marion M, Cindy B, Dee S.
Oct 26		Bulb Bingo	Tom F, Dorothy O., Christina C.
Nov 16	Silent Auction	Pot Luck Dinner	

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