

# We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 28—Issue 9—September 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: September 26**

**Meeting Time:**

**Meeting Location:**

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

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

## Behind the Scenes of the Horticulture Industry

**Ruth Kyme**

Our September speaker will be Diane Blazek, Executive Director of All-America Selections and National Garden Bureau. Diane has been deeply (and happily!) immersed in gardening from an early age. From growing up on a small family farm to her small suburban lot, she is passionate about everything green.

After spending 15 years with Ball Publishing, Diane moved to take on her current role where she can be even closer to the end consumer. Both organizations are in an exciting period of growth and influence both inside and outside the industry. Innovative ideas and progressive programs for consumers, garden communicators, public gardens, and a full range of growers and retailers have benefited home gardeners, master gardeners and hobby farmers.

Diane Blazek's presentation is titled: Behind the Scenes of the Horticulture Industry: How Plants get From Here to There and Other Cool Facts about the Industry. Are you an inquisitive type? Do you like knowing "How was that made?" Or do you look at your garden and wonder how that plant came to be? Diane Blazek has been involved in the horticulture industry since 1993 and is ready to share some behind the scenes facts and figures about how plants get from the breeding fields and greenhouses to your garden. Along the way, a few fun facts are thrown in for an even more interesting evening!

This month's treats provided by: Marion M, Mary S, Cindy B

## Where to find us online

Website: [www.westchicagogardenclub.org](http://www.westchicagogardenclub.org)



Facebook:

[facebook.com/westchicagogardenclub](https://facebook.com/westchicagogardenclub)



Instagram:

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



**Next Month: October 24**

**Bulb Bingo**

## Note from the President

Dan Beebe

To avoid the Thanksgiving holiday, our November meeting will be held on the 3rd Thursday of November, one week earlier than our other monthly meetings. The November meeting is our annual business meeting, as specified in the Club's bylaws. During the short business meeting, I will present a brief State of the Club presentation. Kerry will give the year-end Treasurer's Report, and we will hold the election for the Club's 2025 Board of Directors. We will also have our annual Pot Luck dinner, hosted by our Vice President, Janet Frogner.



Several months ago, I mentioned that some of our traditional events, including the November meeting, would be experiencing some changes due to the growth in the club's active membership. The Board has decided that the annual Silent Auction will be replaced by two raffles. One raffle will be for Gift Cards to local nurseries, and the second will be for new and gently used items brought to the event by members, similar to what we have done in the past. Raffle tickets will be purchased using the Garden Bucks ('real fake money') that you

have been earning all year while attending and volunteering at club events. Please start calculating the number of Garden Bucks you have earned and collect them from the Member Table at our September and October meetings. If you have any questions about Garden Bucks, please ask at the Member Table. Do not wait until November, as there is a lot going on, and we expect many members to attend.



We are also looking to fill the Director at Large position on the board for 2025. This position doesn't have any specific responsibilities and is a great way to familiarize yourself with how the board works and participate in setting the club's direction. If you are interested in or have questions about this position, please let Janet Frogner or me know.

That's all for now. Hope to see you all soon,  
Dan



**Please wear your name tag  
to our meetings**

### Club Information

Website: [www.westchicagogardenclub.org](http://www.westchicagogardenclub.org)  
P. O. Box 313, West Chicago, IL 60186  
E-mail: [westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com)

## Last Chance to Sign Up: Bus trip to Sunrise & Possibility Place

Our field trip is THIS Saturday, Sept 21! Meet up place will be the parking lot of St Andrew Church at 8:45 am. We will depart promptly at 9:00 am. Our field trip will visit two places, Sunrise Woldhuis Farms and Greenhouses in Grant Park, IL and Possibility Place Nursery in Monee, IL! We will have a tour or presentation at both locations.

Both Sunrise and Possibility Place have huge retail markets, so bring your cash, checks or credit cards! The bus has a lot of room for your purchases. Please visit their websites at <https://possibilityplace.com/> and <https://www.woldhuisfarms.com/> for more information.

A reminder that because we are visiting two places, there won't be much time for a lunch or picnic so we are recommending that you bring a sack bag!

Price for this field trip is **\$10** for members and **\$15** for non-members. Please register using out Square Store using the links below. If you are registering both a member and a non-members, you will need to use both links.

- [\\$10 for members. Register at our Square Store](#)
- [\\$15 for non-Members. Register at our Square Store](#)

Bus services will be provided by Infinity Transportation and as usual if you would like to add a gratuity to our driver, we will pass an envelope on the way back to West Chicago, which will be at 5:00 pm!

Please dress for the weather and wear comfortable shoes.

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## Kruse Garden Gardening Day

Christina Covarrubias

You all may be familiar with the garden that our club maintains at the Kruse House Museum 527 Main Street, West Chicago, but you may not have had a chance to contribute to its care personally. Here is your opportunity!! All club members are invited for the next weekend Kruse gardening day happening **Saturday, October 12, 2024 from 9-11:30am with a break at 10am**. Autumn will be in full swing but that doesn't mean we will be done in the garden! Please come help us continue to maintain, weed and tidy our club-maintained garden. A regular "Kruse crew" gardener will be there to help direct you to areas of the garden that need tending. Every little bit of help makes a difference. As always, this is another way to earn some Garden Bucks.

## Thank you Volunteers

A special thank you is due to all the volunteers who came out to last month's Kruse weekend gardening day- Dan, Jen, June, KK, Mary, Mitzi, Paula, and Vicki. The fresh eyes, strong gardener muscles and the heart for gardening from each of you really made a difference in the look and health of our garden!



## Would you help us?

Janet Frogner

**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:

Thank you to the members who stepped forward to help with the Welcome Table, the Welcome Notecards and Name Tags! We are still looking for help with the following.

### Refreshments

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

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



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.

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

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*For the Love of Gardening...*

## Coming up in October & November

Pamela Darrah

Our last two monthly meetings for 2024 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 event in November. There will be some changes this year to accommodate our growing club!

This is your chance to use your Garden Bucks which are earned by participating in the club. See page **13** 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 Bucks as we go through the year, tally them up and pick them up at the next couple of meetings. Note that the line gets very long at the November meeting, so there is an advantage to handling this in September or October.

Be on the lookout for a garden item that you can donate for the raffle. 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. More information will be in future newsletters.

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## Adopt A Highway

Dan Beebe



It is time for our Fall Adopt A Highway roadside pickup. We will be meeting on **Saturday, October 5th 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. Please check the weather forecast and dress accordingly.

## The Containers: The Gardens within the Garden at Kruse

Thinking of the Kruse House garden brings to mind rock-terraced rows of summer phlox, rudbeckia, cone flowers, and other tall perennials. But then there are the containers, bits of garden within the Kruse Garden, bursting with coleus, ornamental cabbage, and other flashy annuals that are in distinct contrast to the clumps of natives that predominate in the beds. Placed at strategic points, like the main entry to the house or the end of a bed, they draw the eye to these points or ornament what would otherwise be a barren space.

Unlike the recovered rock terraces, the containers are a modern addition to the Kruse garden. The Victorian penchant for garden urns having faded by the time of the Kruse House's building in 1917, virtually no outdoor pots or urns appear in historic photos of the grounds, and although a number of trellises survive from when the Kruses lived in the house, no containers do. The containers therefore give a contemporary feel to the garden, but not enough to distract from the overall sense of its historical nature.

So, the next time you are at Kruse, stop and look at—and even sniff—the planted containers.



White alyssum overflows in abundance from this contemporary-styled urn by the front steps of the house.



In the most spectacular urn of all that anchors the front street-facing bed, a canna flames over brightly colored coleus.



Though beginning to fade with the onset of fall, the riot of colors created by the combination of coleus, annual salvia, and inch plant in this pot in the small front bed is still much apparent.

We welcome you to visit Kruse House Gardens and if you are interested in working in the gardens we are there Wednesdays, 9:00 to 11:30am.

See page 3 for information about our October 12th evening volunteer opportunity.

## 31st Annual Chicagoland Orchid Fest

Janet Frogner

Sept 20-22: 8-5 Fri & Sat; 10-3 Sun

- Free Admission and Free Parking
- Special Sales
- Guest Growers
- Refreshments available

Chicagoland  
Orchid  
Fest



<http://www.chicagolandorchidfest.org/>

Hausermann Orchids  
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Natt's Orchids  
24645 103rd Street, Naperville  
[www.nattsorchids.com](http://www.nattsorchids.com)

### COD Scholarship Recipient—Fall 2024

Kerry Perry

The College of DuPage presented the West Chicago Garden Club's \$1,000 scholarship for the fall 2024 term to Leslhy Luna. Leslhy is working toward a Landscape/Contracting Management Degree. She is devoted to creating beautiful and sustainable outdoor spaces. In her thank you note to our club, she said "I am truly grateful for your investment in my future and I am committed to making the most of this opportunity. Your generosity has inspired me to work harder and strive for excellence in all that I do."



We wish Leslhy much success in her endeavors.

### Board Position: Director at Large

Marilyn Santos McNabb



In general, the Director at Large represents the general membership on the Board of Directors but is not assigned any specific duties or responsibilities. It is probably the most easy going of all the positions but, it becomes an even bigger challenge to find ways to assist or support specific events, activities or projects. In addition to attending board meetings, I had taken the job of organizing the field trips! And now that we are on our third trip, it just gets easier!

With the support of the board, the Director at Large can also find different ways to involve general membership!

The position is open for nomination! Because of various commitments, I will be stepping down from the role!



**MARJORIE EDWARDS**

**Resident of:** Winfield

**Year:** 2017

**WCGC Member:** May 2023

**How did you become a member:** I browsed WCGC's tent at the 2023 Bloom Fest and was impressed by the organization, especially the friendliness of all the members who had volunteered that day. Christina doesn't know this, but my conversation with her convinced me of the value of becoming a member.

**What is your current/past profession:** I retired in 2020 after a 45-year career with PNC Bank that spanned across roles in branch banking, retail operations, project management, sales strategy, and corporate communications.

**What are you most proud of in your garden:** The hibiscus root that a friend had discarded as dead but has flourished beautifully for me.

**A garden mistake you made:** Ensuring that the soil is best suited for various plantings. I was always mindful of drainage, but needed to pay more attention to nutritional aspects and organic matter.

**What do you love most about gardening:** Being outdoors on sunny, breezy days and enjoying the seasonal colors.

**What tip, trick, or words of wisdom can you share:** I've been inspired by Twilight Tuesdays in ways to create more beautiful gardens. Add garden art, have fun with pots, select focus plants, include diverse plants and flowers—simply create joy for you and others!

**Favorite place to purchase seeds and plants:** Wasco Nursery & Garden Center. I actually found seeds for the Trionfo Violetto pole bean (slim purple pods) there.

**Favorite spot in your garden:** Views from the front porch of the birds enjoying one of our birdbaths and of the pollinators attracted to our flowering plants.

**What plant can't you wait to see this season emerge from your garden:** I'll be anxious to see the tulip and narcissus bulbs that I purchased from the Fall bulb sale bloom next Spring.

**What are you looking forward to this season:** I love the autumn show of chrysanthemums, sunflowers, goldenrods, pumpkins and, yes, brussel sprouts too!





## Growing Native—A Native Plant Invasion?

Ruth Gauss

Hi, gardening friends! When I hear native plants being referred to as “invasive” it makes me sad. Why? Well, first, I feel like native plants already have a bad reputation for being glorified weeds or not being pretty enough to create a beautiful garden and I feel that anything else added to the list of “cons” for native plants is like another nail in the coffin. And that coffin contains not only that native plant, but all of the insects, birds, and mammals that rely on it along with other native plants in that same community that might benefit from its presence.

When we talk about native plants, we can call them aggressive or better yet, eager. I know that there is a long list of native plants that fall into the eager category. But, let’s reserve the term invasive for plants that don’t naturally occur in our area—the non-native plants. If you are interested in seeing the ever-increasing list of invasive plants as determined by the Midwest Invasive Plant Network, please see [this website](#). There are a lot of garden “standards” that have moved into our natural areas and are considered invasive. It can be very eye-opening to see plants that you purchased or were present when you bought your home on this list. The part of gardening that keeps us humble is that fact that we need to adapt and learn. I know my home landscape is evolving as I learn more about how my garden impacts the ecosystem.

Should we avoid aggressive native plants in our gardens? I think there are a couple of ways that we can live peacefully with more eager native plants. One is to plant eager native plants with other native plants that are more eager and avoid planting them near more delicate plants or ones that don’t reseed and spread easily. Plant the less eagere native plants in another area. The eager plant area could yield delightful results if you want to fill in the area quickly to outcompete actual weeds and invasives. And hopefully you allow them some room to spread. I am seeing more and more about how having larger numbers of one plants species helps birds and pollinators manage their energy by giving them a lot of “bang for their buck” like going to the mall instead of making stops at 5 different stores that are each a half mile or more away from each other which obviously takes more energy. I think we have all have seen how Goldenrod is beloved by pollinators. The Plant Fact Sheet from the USDA states: “Solidago species provide vital sources of pollen and nectar for bees and other insects in the late summer and fall throughout North America.”



*Solidago canadensis*. [www.discoverlife.org](http://www.discoverlife.org)

So, if you have room, dedicate an area of your garden to the eager native plants and then create an area where you can plant more reluctant native plants and enjoy how they both thrive and support the ecosystem!

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

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## Nature Notes—Bam!

Kerry Perry

The other day I heard a loud noise. Looking out the kitchen window, I saw that a bird had hit the window and was either dead or stunned. Was it a juvenile robin, a thrush or a warbler? Based on the markings I believe it was an Ovenbird. When I returned later to take a photo the bird was gone. Hopefully it recovered and continued its journey.



According to the IL DNR, the ovenbird is a statewide migrant. It winters

from the southern U.S. south to northern Venezuela.



The ovenbird lives in woodlands or thickets and is an insectivore. Its nest is built on the ground in a bottomland forest. The shape of the nest, like a Dutch oven, gives this bird its common name.

Birds often mistake clear or reflective glass for open sky or habitat, so window decals or netting may prevent birds from flying into windows. For other deterrent ideas go to <https://www.audubon.org/news/reducing-collisions-glass>



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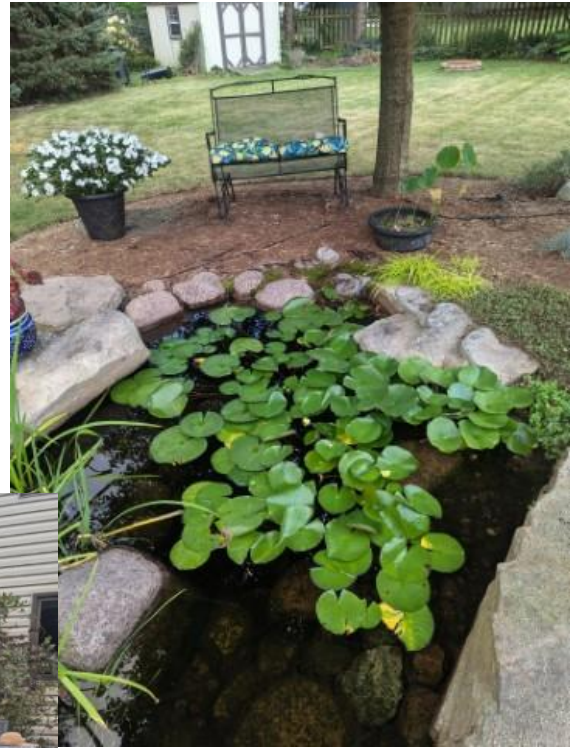
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PH. 630.668.0316  
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# Twilight Tuesdays

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's Twilight Tuesdays. Whether you opened up your garden or came out to visit the gardens, it is your participation that makes these events so successful. Our very last Twilight Tuesday for 2024 was at the end of August at Maritza's garden.



## Upcoming local events for gardeners

Ruth Gauss

### The Growing Place Events

#### **Quick Sketch Design Sessions**

Quick Sketch Design Sessions to redesign a small\* area by offering focused, one-on-one consultations with TGP staff. Each session is 30 minutes, and you'll leave with a not-to-scale sketch and plant recommendations to help you accomplish your project.

Sessions take place at both the Aurora and Naperville locations at 11:00am, 11:45am, 12:30pm, 1:15pm and 2:00pm. Cost is \$30. Registration required. See their website for details (click on the session name to go to the website.)

[Rain Gardens](#)—September 21

[Wet & Dry Conditions](#)—September 22

[Fall Garden Color](#)—October 5

[Four-Season Interest](#)—October 6

**PumpkinPalooza: Game On! - Aurora Location**—September 28,29

Level up your fall festival game with videogame-themed hayrides, yard games, music, pumpkins and more! [See website](#) for more details and schedule of events.

#### **Morton Arboretum Annual Bulb Sale**

Begins Friday, September 20th

The Morton Arboretum Store, 10am-6pm daily

[See their website](#) for a list of bulbs available and more details.

#### **Central States Dahlia Society Show**

Chicago Botanic Garden—Burnstein Hall

September 21: noon – 4:30 p.m.

September 22: 10 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

From their website: "Get ready for an explosive burst of color that will leave you loving dahlias! Presented by the Central States Dahlia Society, this judged exhibit will feature 16 total displays using nearly 1,000 dahlia blooms ranging in size from a silver dollar to a dinner plate. Society members will be on hand to provide written information and to answer questions about dahlias. Blooms will be available for purchase at the end of show on Sunday from 4 to 4:30 p.m."

#### **Illinois Orchid Society Fall Show & Sale**

Chicago Botanic Garden—Burnstein Hall

October 12 – 13, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

From their website: "Presented by the Illinois Orchid Society, this show will feature artistically arranged table top displays from the rarest of species to cultivated hybrids. Individual orchids in 128 classes will vie for red, white, and blue ribbons. Twenty-five entries will receive "best of class" green ribbons, and the best-appointed plant in the show will receive the Chicago Horticultural Society Award from American Orchid Society judges. The Illinois Orchid Society will also be providing orchid plants for sale, as well as repotting services."



## 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 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 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 next couple of meetings to avoid the long lines in November!**



## 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.

Sept 26	Dianne Blazek	Plant Breeding	Marion M, Mary S, Cindy B
Oct 24		Bulb Bingo	Barb M, Barb B, Mary A, Tom F
Nov 21	Garden Bucks Raffle	Pot Luck Dinner	

A poster of our 2024 schedule can be downloaded at <https://westchicagogardenclub.org/wp-content/files/2024PosterWithSchedule.pdf>