We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 29-Issue 9-September 2025



andscaping

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 25

Meeting Location:

St Andrew Lutheran Church

Corner of Prince Crossing & Geneva Rd

Meeting Time:

6:45PM Arrive & Mingle 7:00PM Business Meeting

7:15PM Program

Buckle Up! Climate Change is Here



Our September speaker will be Barbara Collins. Barb earned a Masters Degree in Horticulture from the University of Illinois, Urbana. She is the published author of two books: Landscaping Herbs and Professional Interior Plantscaping.

The NOAA has declared that 2024 was our planets warmest year. In Barb's presentation, "Buckle Up: Climate Change is Here," we will examine wild weather extremes as a result and

learn what we can do to help our plants survive.



Thank you to all the members who have volunteered to bring treats for the September and October meetings!

We are still looking for help in setting up before meetings and also for cleaning up afterwards. Please give a little bit of you time to help our meetings run smoothly: SignUp

Genius page for Meeting Setup & Clean up

Where to find us online

Website: www.westchicagogardenclub.org



Facebook:

facebook.com/westchicagogardenclub



Instagram:

westchicagogardenclub

OCTOBER 23RD MEETING

Bulb Bingo!

Note from the President

Dan Beebe



At last month's meeting, I announced that I plan to transition out of the role of President over the next two years. If you might be interested in exploring the possibility of becoming the Garden Club's President, please let me know. I am willing to share the role as Co-President during the transition period and split the duties of the office. Alternatively, you can take on the President role with me in an advisory capacity (all of the Board Members are great advisors, too), or I can step aside entirely for a candidate who has been on the Board at any time.

The club has functioned without a president in the past, but the president's duties fall on the other board members. The Board members are already very busy and do a great job; loading them with additional responsibilities doesn't seem fair. Please consider taking on the role of President. I will do my best to make the transition as easy as possible.

All of the Board members make running the club relatively easy. I want to acknowledge two members of the Board who do a lot of work but rarely get credit. Ruth Gauss, our Publicity Director responsible for communications with the public, has done an absolutely fantastic job of re-energizing our social media presence. Her experience, knowledge of gardening and environmental issues, and ties to many other local and regional garden-adjacent groups bring the right blend of information to the public. Ruth also volunteered to send out the Calling Post reminders for meetings and events. Thank you, Ruth, for continuing to take on and run with this role.

The other Board member I'd like to call out is Pamela Darrah, our Information Director. In this role, Pamela is responsible for communication with club members. Every time you get a newsletter or weekly update, you may not realize the amount of time it takes to coordinate all of that content (hint: it's way more time than you think). Pamela has filled this role for many years, and her work is greatly appreciated. Thank you, Pamela, for all your work in getting club news out to the members.

One last shout-out to Lisa Marie Vogt. Lisa is our Member Services Director and does great work for our members. Lisa Marie started on the board as a Co-Publicity Director and worked with Ruth Gauss to kick-start our social media presence. More on Lisa's role next month. Thank you, Lisa, for staying on the Board and for all of the work you have done.

Hope to see you at this month's meeting.

Dan

Club Information

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

Membership Information

Dues for 2025: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

2025 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: Kurt Schramer

Plant Sale Chair: Mary Schramer & Dan Beebe

Kruse Garden Chair: Open

To Contact any Board Member, please send email to

WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com

Adopt A Highway

Dan Beebe



It is time for our Fall Adopt A Highway roadside pickup. We will be meeting on Saturday, September 20th 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. If we get a good turn out, we can be done quite quickly!

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 clinking 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

November's Potluck & Raffle Information

Remember to fill out your Garden Bucks* tally sheet for the November Potluck & Raffle. If you need a copy you can download it at: https://westchicagogardenclub.org/wp-content/files/GardenBucksTallySheet-1.pdf

Please bring your completed tally sheet including your name to the October's monthly meeting (Bulb Bingo). You will receive your raffle tickets at the start of our November Potluck meeting.

Further details will be emailed starting in October.

* Members earn Garden Bucks when they participate in club activities, volunteer at events, and donate items! There is more information on the last page of every newsletter.

Use your Garden Bucks to win donated garden related items at our November meeting. We have a Tally Sheet that you can use to help you keep track of your own Garden Bucks. We work on an honor system and you need to add up your total yourself.

Janet Frogner



September 28th Barn Drop Off

The barn at Kress Creek will be open to drop off your 4 inch and larger pots on September 28 from 1 to 3 PM.

Please remove tags and empty pots of soil and other debris.

We will also accept 1 inch vinyl mini blinds, popsicle sticks, flats for holding pots, other items you have related to the annual plant sale but hold cardboard flats for the May sale.

Mary Schramer



The Barn" belongs to the West Chicago Park District and they kindly allow us to store our plant sale items there. It is located at 30W150 Wilson Rd, West Chicago, IL 60185 at the Kress Creek Park. The park entrance is at Joliet St and Wilson Rd.

Getting to Know ...

Janet Frogner



Annette Musil

Resident of: 30 years in unincorporated West Chicago

WCGC Member: January 2018

How did you become a member: My very active neighbor, Barb

Melville

What is your current profession: Retired, but before retirement worked as a Data Analyst at Quaker Oats and Acxiom

What are you most proud of in your garden: Replacing invasives (multiflora rose vines, buckthorn, honeysuckle, and turf grass) into an Oak Woodland, a pollinator picnic, and a shady sanctuary to restore habitat for birds, critters and fungi. Certified by Conservation@home,

Audubon Society, Wild Ones, Homegrown National Park, National Wildlife Federation.

A garden mistake you made: Many! Stubbornly hoping that sun loving plants will survive in shade; allowing too many volunteer trees to shade out understory woodland plants; planting pots of plants from neighbors and friends that contained invasives.

What do you love most about gardening: Getting a good workout all the while being surrounded by nature which allows us to be a musician within nature's rhythm, beauty, and nurturing ecosystem. The everlasting opportunities to continue to learn and identify plants and critters.

What tip or words of wisdom can you share: "

There is no such thing as bad weather. It's just the wrong clothes."

"Look deep into nature and then you will understand everything better." ~ Albert Einstein

"You are a natural born scientist. Every day you wake up, you have opportunities to observe. You find yourself doing conservation work every day." ~ RootsandShoots.org

"Think like a mountain." ~ Aldo Leopoldo

"Biophilia: We feel better when we touch plants." ~ Kay McKeen, founder of Scarce

Favorite houseplant: Large treelike cactus of the Cereus species **Favorite garden tool**: My dad's very sharp old shovel and 2 handmade trowels that my neighbor made for me (he even engraved my name on them).



Favorite flower & love to grow: Favorite is Swamp milkweed which smells sweeter than a rose. Love to grow are Blazing Star, Prairie Dock, Compass Plant

New Year's Resolution: To not make one





News from Kruse

Kerry Perry

It's all a buzz at the Kruse Garden. We have an enormous variety of perennials that the bees and other pollinators love. Blooming now is calamint, sedum, blue lobelia, golden rod, joepye weed and others. Look closely and you'll see lots of different insects. There are around

500 species of bees native to Illinois. Surprise, honey bees are

non-native.

Can you identify the five insects in these photos I took at Kruse? Let me know at the next meeting. You might "bee" a prize winner!

A special "Care to Share" from Christina Covarrubias

The Kruse Garden is in need of 10-12" round rocks suitable for edging a garden bed as well as 12" or slightly large pieces of flagstone to help stabilize some plantings on one of the sloping garden beds. We are also accepting any donations of large to giant hostas varieties you may be fall dividing from your own garden. Please email Christina Covarrubias cmcgal.220@gmail.com or the club westchicagogardenclub@gmail.com.















Recycling Event

Christina Covarrubias

One aspect of gardening is preserving our earth in our garden as well as the impact of our lives on the environment. One way to offset our environmental impact is recycling. For example, synthetic clothing and textiles such as polyester can take between 20 and 200 years to break down, nylon takes anywhere from 30 to 40 years, and rubber takes 50 to 80 years but it can be recycled rather than dumped in a landfill!

West Chicago residents can recycle many household items at the Winfield Township Recycling Extravaganza Saturday, September 27 from 9am-12pm. After you recycle there, head over to our barn to drop off your grower plant pots!



Items accepted: Cell Phones, Chargers, Cords, Holiday Lights, Bicycles, Keys, Cooking Oil, Old Flags, Hearing Aids, Propane Tanks, Fire Extinguishers, Records, Gently Used Office Furniture, Ink Cartridges, Wheel Chairs, Walkers, Crutches, Clothing, Sewing Machines & Supplies, Yarn, Musical Instruments, Books, Crayons, Small Housewares. Computers, Monitors, Laptops, Keyboards, Printers, Scanners, Modems, Telephones, TV's, DVD Players, Gaming Devices, Stereos, Computer Cables, Fax Machines, Microwaves, Aluminum, Gutters, Metal Chicken Wire, Metal Fencing, Garden Tools, Metal Hangers, Metal Lawn Furniture, Metal Pipes, Metal Shelving, Metal Wagons, Metal Wheel Barrows, Tomato Cages, Radiators, Water Heaters, Washer & Dryers

See link for more information, including items not accepted. Sponsored by SCARCE. Click here for more information.

Kane County residents may recycle many of these same items including old clothes and shoes, smoke detectors, many electronics, scrap metal for free at the Batavia Recycling Center at 517 E. Fabyan Parkway, Geneva, IL 60510, Monday- Friday 8am-4pm. See more details on their website

At Cantigny this Fall

Christina Covarrubias



Visit Cantigny Free on Wednesdays: Enjoy free parking every Wednesday, March - October. Advance online registration is required. The normal \$6 parking fee applies for guests not registered. https://cantigny.org/event/first-wednesday-free-parking-9-17/

Bring your dog to Cantigny on Mondays: Dogs are welcome in the park on Mondays, except holidays, from 9am-9pm with \$6 paid parking. Not allowed in buildings, plan accordingly.

Accessible Birding at Cantigny: Visitors Center, Wednesday, October 8th, 2025, 8:30 am—Accessible Birding events at Cantigny aim to make a fun activity available to all. Ideal for those with limited mobility, the outing will last about 90 minutes. Participants should feel free to stay as long as they wish. We will be on firm or hard surfaces — fine for those using canes, walkers and wheelchairs. We'll search for birds at a slow and easy pace,

staying fairly close to the Visitors Center. Beginning birders are welcome, and binoculars will be available for borrowing (first come, first serve). All must register (including Cantigny Park members) The \$6 program cost includes parking. https://cantigny.org/event/accessible-birding-10-8/

Saturday & Sunday, September 27-28: Fall Fest at Cantigny: 10 am – 6 pm—Parade Field—Parking: \$21 per car—Celebrate the season with us at Cantigny's Annual Fall Festival on September 27 & 28! This family-friendly weekend features a vibrant Fall Market, live music, guided garden tours, and a variety of food trucks offering tasty bites. Kids can enjoy hands-on crafts, bounce houses, and a delightful petting zoo, creating memories for all ages. https://cantigny.org/event/fall-fest/

Note from the Editor: Oops! Last month, only part of this article from Mary Anderson was included in our newsletter. Please find the complete article here this month.

Several Twilight Tuesdays ago, I found myself in a conversation where I described my hugelkultur garden, and I was encouraged to share just what this is with the Garden Club.

Hugelkultur is a hill created from logs, branches, and other brush materials as the base, and then covered with grass clippings, and finally a layer of soil. The idea is similar to a compost heap: the logs and branches will feed the garden as they slowly disintegrate.

I discovered that the first stage looked rather like I had tried to hide a body in my backyard....



You can start planting on it right away, and I transplanted some sedum and cone flowers and added some plants I got at a nursery, but even then it looked like a grave someone has visited and left a few flowers on. I knew the plants would fill in, but that wasn't happening soon enough, so I bought some annuals and they seemed very happy and eventually filled the empty spaces quite nicely. (The following pictures show the two long sides as they evolved over the summer.)



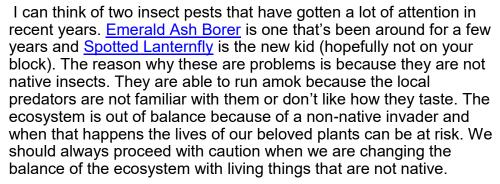
I want to add a couple more hügelkultur gardens, which I think will make a more interesting arrangement than just the one. I do plan to create more of a tiered effect so I'm planting on a flatter surface than the rounded sides of my first one. I'm going to start them this fall and give them a chance to settle before adding plants in the spring—my husband says it is going to look like Boot Hill over the winter!

Growing Native—Don't' Let it Bug You!

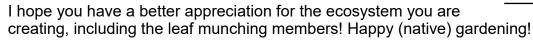
Ruth Gauss

Hi, gardening friends! One of the topics that I think is important for anyone who is interested in supporting the ecosystem by growing native plants is bugs. The majority of us have been raised to look at holes in the leaves of our plants and think that we should grab the insecticide to protect the plants from further damage. It's definitely hard to see our plants looking a little less than perfect, but not every insect is going to completely destroy our beloved plants. The key difference I find is if it's a naturally occurring/native insect or if it's invasive.

A great example is the relationship between the Monarch butterfly and its host plant, milkweed. When I see holes in my milkweed leaves I get excited that I have a future Monarch butterfly (probably) chewing on the leaves of the plant that I added to my yard specifically to support that butterfly. Many of us grow plants like fennel and parsley because we love to support swallowtail butterflies and we wouldn't think of getting out the insecticide to combat the feeding caterpillars. Both of these are well-known examples of host plants and critters, a native plant supporting the native wildlife. There are lots of others that we are not as familiar with and it's wise to pause and do some investigating to try and determine whether a threat is potentially fatal or merely superficial. One resource that's very helpful for me is the Illinois Wildflowers Website. They have data for all kinds of interactions between plants (woody as well as herbaceous) and critters. You can also just search the plant you have and find the "faunal associations" near the bottom of the page, like this one for Zigzag Goldenrod (Solidago flexicaulis).



So, what can we do when we see munched leaves or a bug-infested plant? Getting an accurate ID is essential, which means not necessarily relying on Google alone. We can try to submit a photo on iNaturalist. This can sometimes take time to get results, but we would potentially be helping with research and also getting experts to weigh in on what we are seeing. Another plan of action is to reach out to the U of I Extension or Morton Arboretum Plant Clinic. Both of these resources are very helpful because if we need to take any actions to combat an invader, both of these places will help us take the most effective steps to protect our plants while doing minimal damage to the ecosystem. Please always make sure to get an expert's opinion if you are unsure of the cause of damage to your plant.





Monarch caterpillar on swamp milkweed



Emerald Ash Borer (Oregon Department of Forestry photo)



Viburnum leaf beetle damage (image from Morton Arboretum)

Wasco Nursery Fall Fest



October 4-5, 9 am-4pm

41W781 IL Route 64, Saint Charles, IL

Bring your family and friends and join us for this fun community event!

Hayrides Bounce House Food & Pumpkins Balloon Animals Tree Planting Cider Donuts Pumpkin Painting Touch-a-Truck Fox Valley Sips Face Painting Scavenger Hunt Lots of Fall Fun

Seed Library

Kurt Schramer

Kurt Schramer (our Board Member at Large) is looking for clearly-labeled packets of seeds, for our formal seed exchange program between club members. Ornamental and edible plants are welcome, store-bought or hand-picked.

Kurt brings the seed exchange to our meetings and even some of our events!

E-mail Kurt Schramer if you have questions or concerns: kurtisschramer@gmail.com



222 W. Lake St. • Bloomingdale 2400 Randall Rd. • Carpentersville

We have the right plant for the right place! We enjoy sharing our love of plants and knowledge with our customers year round. Stop in and browse.

For the Love of Gardening...









Upcoming Local Events for Gardeners

Patti Pirrie

Chicagoland

Orchid

Fest

Thank you to Patti for volunteering to send in these events for the newsletter!

Friday-Sunday, September 19-21: 32nd Annual Chicagoland Orchid Fest (2 locations: Villa Park and Naperville)

8 am - 5 pm Friday & Saturday; 10 am – 3pm Sunday. Free admission. Free parking.

Visit two different, interesting and unique nurseries located within a 40-minute drive. The festival features a vast array of plants for sale by "guest growers," presentations by world-renowned orchid specialists, refreshments, special bargains, and the opportunity to stroll among the most exotic and beautiful plants found in nature. https://www.chicagolandorchidfest.org/2025-flyer.pdf

Saturday-Sunday, September 20-21: Blumen Gardens Fall Fest (Sycamore)

9 am-4 pm. Free admission. Free parking.

The entire garden center and gift shop will be transformed into a fall wonderland filled with:

- Giant mums, ornamental kale, cabbage, and pumpkins
- Straw bales, corn stalks, and all the fall porch decor
- Seasonal planters and DIY supplies
- · Cozy faux florals, dried arrangements, and home accents
- Local vendors, food trucks, live music, and more https://blumengardens.com/events/fall-fest-sycamore-il-2025/

Friday, September 26-October or while supplies last: Morton Arboretum 21st Annual Bulb Sale

10 am-6 pm; Entrance to the sale is included with Arboretum admission.

Choose from a wide array of tulips, daffodils, iris, alliums, crocus, fritillaria, and more—as well as a selection of premixed bulb sets—for the perfect combination of color, size, and shape in your garden display this spring. Arboretum members save 10% on bulb purchases.

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

Saturday, September 27: Fall Native Tree and Shrub Sale. Citizens for Conservation (Barrington)

This is a pre-order online sale only. Pick-up will occur on Saturday, September 27 at Hill 'N Dale Preserve from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Each fall, CFC offers a large variety of native trees and shrubs. Native trees and shrubs are a great addition to any landscape as they attract a wide variety of birds and other wildlife. Some species are known to be extraordinarily attractive with their gorgeous flowers, colorful fruit, and impressive fall displays.

FOOD TRUCKS

ARTIST & MAKER MARKET

Arboretum
Store



https://citizensforconservation.org/cfc-events/fall-native-tree-and-shrub-sale/#



Local Events Continued

Tuesday, September 30. Be a Seed Shaker: Which are Worth Saving? Virtual Lecture.

Sponsored by the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. 1:30pm-2:30pm CST

Fall is a time to enjoy nature and learn when to harvest seeds for next season's bounty or blooms. Learn how to harvest those zinnia seeds after the butterflies have fluttered away for the season. Get tips and build excitement for the next growing season before this one even ends.



https://extension.illinois.edu/events/2025-09-30-be-seed-shaker-which-are-worth-saving

Wednesday, October 1: Setting Up Your Garden for Success. Morton Arboretum (Lisle)

6:30-8:00 pm. Parking free with advance registration.

In this free, single-session workshop at The Morton Arboretum, connect with other gardeners and hear from gardening experts on what to do now for success in the garden next year. This program will cover all aspects of garden maintenance from the ground up to improve your soil, protect valuable pollinators, and let your yard thrive.



https://mortonarb.org/explore/activities/adult-programs/setting-up-your-garden-for-success/

Saturday, October 11: Seed Collection. Charlemagne Park (Hoffman Estates) 8am – 10am. Free admission. Free parking.

Support HEParks by volunteering for this FREE event! Come spend some time walking around the beautiful Charlemagne Park collecting native wildflower seeds and learning about conservation in this fun and educational activity. Tools and gloves will be provided. All ages welcome.





Though seldom seen due to their nocturnal nature, moths are every bit as beautiful and charismatic as their butterfly cousins. We will take a photographic journey into the intriguing world of moths, exploring which of our native plants are most enticing to these lovely Lepidopterans. The Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory (FOPCON) are excited to host Chelsea Gottfried, co-author of *Gardening for Moths*, for this program. This lecture is co-sponsored by West Cook Wild Ones.





of OAK PARK



We Go Gardening

Garden Bucks

Members earn Garden Bucks when they participate in club activities, volunteer at events, and donate items. Use your Garden Bucks to win donated garden related items at our November meeting.

The chart below shows how to earn your Garden Bucks. Keep track of your dollars earned. Downloadable Tally Sheet: https://westchicagogardenclub.org/wp-content/files/GardenBucksTallySheet-1.pdf
Come out and volunteer. Your participation keeps our club going strong.

Each volunteer hour (potting party, Kruse garden, plant sale, etc)	100	Donate plants for Plant Sale (each time you donate)	100
Donate pots or blinds for Plant Sale	25	Donate plants for Kruse Garden	50
Set up tables & chairs before meeting	50	Put away tables & chairs after	25
Host Refreshment Table	100	Provide Refreshments	75
Attend a monthly meeting	25	Bring a guest to a meeting	50
Attend field trip	25	Write newsletter article	100
Host Twilight Tuesday	150	Attend Twilight Tuesday	25
Pay current year dues by Feb	50	Pay next year's dues by Nov 75	

Refer a new member and participate in a raffle for a gift card at the Nov 2025 meeting.



Upcoming Programs & Events for 2025

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

Sept 25	Barbara Collins	Buckle Up! Climate Change is Her	e Host: D. Hanahan, Treats: P. Pirrie, J. Luther, M. Veseling
Oct 23		Bulb Bingo	Host: B. Bizzarri, Sweet: B. Bizzarri, B. Melville, P. Pirrie, Savory: M. Edwards, E. Bassett
Nov 20		Member Appreciation Dinner	

A poster of our 2025 schedule can be downloaded at https://westchicagogardenclub.org/wp-content/files/2025PosterWithSchedule.pdf