

We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 22 Issue 4 April 2018



Meeting Date: April 26

Meeting Location:

**Faith Community Church
910 Main Street, West Chicago**

Meeting Time:

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

The Latest and Greatest: The Lure of New Plant Varieties

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Every year the world's breeders introduce a wide range of new plant introductions and this year is no exception. This presentation will cover a number of the latest including; annuals, perennials, vegetables, plus a few surprises. Information will include heights and sun/shade tolerance.

This program will be presented by Jim Nau, Corporate Archivist and Cultural Advisor for Ball Horticultural Company.

For 34 years, Jim Nau managed the greenhouses and gardens of the Ball Horticultural Company in West Chicago, Illinois. He is celebrating his 36th year during 2018. His current role is Curator of the Ball Horticultural Archives and Cultural Advisor to the Ball Horticultural Company.

Jim graduated from Iowa State University with a degree in horticulture and business. He is a Past President and judge for All

America Selections as well the Past President of the Association of Specialty Cut Flower Growers (ASCFG). Jim is the recipient of the Perennial Plant Association's Garden Media Award winner and has been a keynote speaker for Cultivate as well as several other Greenhouse Conferences. In addition, Jim received the Medallion of Honor award from All America Selections for Outstanding Achievement in Horticulture.

Growing and gardening are a passion with Jim. Cooking is also a passion. Besides his own cooking, he is a chili judge in the western suburbs of Chicago, tasting 16-20 chili's at a time and evaluating cooks all over the Midwest.

May Program:

Bridget Bittman will help us create our own succulent container gardens at the Kruse Garden. Start looking for a small container and even decorations to use next month.

Bonus Article:

If you receive this newsletter via email, see the link to a bonus article.

If you receive this newsletter via postal mail, visit our website's newsletter page to see the extra article.

www.WestChicagoGardenClub.org

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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 2018: 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

2017 WCGC BOARD:

President: Barb Bizzarri
Vice President: Keith Letsche
Treasurer: Kerry Perry
Secretary: Billie Childress
Program Director: Barb Melville
Plant Sale Chair: Dan Beebe
Newsletter: Pamela Darrah
Director at Large: OPEN

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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Plant Sale 2018

Dan Beebe

Despite the sleet, snow and rain, Mother Nature was nice enough on April 15th to give us a brief break from our extended winter so that 17 club members could participate in our first potting party of 2018. We potted around 200 plants in a very short amount of time. Billie reported similar success with the first Annual Plant Potting Party held in Marcy's new, warm hoop house; 15 flats of annuals were planted.



Due to the unseasonably cold weather, many members' plants have not yet made an appearance in their gardens. Hopefully, the weather will warm up soon and we can have more plants ready for planting at the remaining potting parties. An additional potting party has been added on Saturday, May 5th at 9am to make up for our late start. Signup sheets are available at our monthly meetings.

There will be a number of signup sheets at the April club meeting for the Member Sale (Thursday, May 17th), Tent Move-In Day (Friday, May 18th) and Plant Sale Day (Saturday, May 19th). We welcome the help of friends and family, especially for the Friday Tent Move-In on the 18th. If you will not be at the next meeting and would like to volunteer on the 18th/19th, please contact me as soon as possible.

We have made great progress towards finding donors to help us cover the increased costs for renting the sale tent. We are still looking for one (or possibly two) additional tent sponsors to donate \$250 each. If you know of any local business who would be willing to help us out, please let me know.

As always, if you have any questions, concerns or comments, feel free to e-mail me at dbeebe@yahoo.com. — Dan Beebe



Needed Supplies:

Member Plants – Bring to Potting Parties
\$\$\$ Donations to Offset Increased Tent Costs
Box Flats – Bring to Sale Setup on Friday 5/18
1" Wide Vinyl or Aluminum Mini Blinds

Potting Parties Kress Creek Barn:

Saturday, April 21st—9 am
Sunday, April 29th—1 pm
Saturday, May 5th—9 am

News from Kruse

Tom Fessler

Spring in Illinois is usually like Spring in the other states in the Midwest. But this year is an exception with cold temperatures and snow. You never know, one day to the next what the weather will be like. It has already caused some changes in our schedule for potting parties but we still have enough time to prepare.

I have always had mixed feelings about Spring. I either like it hot or cold, and Spring has both in no kind of order. I recall a Spring when I was in high school when three of my friends and myself decided to take the morning off. We went back to school during the lunch hour and told our teacher that we had a flat tire and it took us all morning to get it fixed. She smiled and told us that we had missed a test while we were gone, but that she could give it to us right now. She told us to take seats apart from each other and take out a piece of paper. Still smiling she waited for us to get ready. She then said: "First question: Which tire went flat?"



Those of you who have been to my home know that I have an outside Fairy garden which I have had for about four years. It started out small but over the years it has grown. It has a number of Gnomes and Fairies and tree houses for them to live in. Fairy gardens have become very popular over the years, to the point that they have shows for them with all the latest items a Fairy or Gnome may need. Fairy Gardens have been around since about 1893. The Japanese built little bonsai dish gardens and their popularity climbed from there. My Fairy Garden was built for my Granddaughter. She helps me keep things under control, and



keep track of the Gnomes and Fairies that tend to wander off. I used to have Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs on the back of my property. They were nicely painted and made out of cement. As they were so heavy I did not worry about them being stolen. As of today I have Snow White and Dopey, who is broken in half. How appropriate is that? I have found several in my neighborhood but have decided that since they have relocated on their own I will just leave them there.

We are coming up on our annual Bloomingfest, and things from here on out are going to be very busy. I encourage all members to assist in this event and do whatever they can to help. This is a great way to meet and work with others in the club and get to know them. We have a lot of exceptional members. Remember that helping our club makes our club better. See you at the potting party.

Tom

At next month's meeting in the Kruse Garden, you could create your own Fairy Succulent Container Garden!

Back on Wed March 29th, when it was relatively warm, Billie, Angie and Kerry did some spring cleanup at Kruse. Mike is part of the landscaping crew.

Normal volunteer workdays are Wednesdays.

These hearty posies were the only thing blooming.





Notes from Barbara Bizzarri

As I look outside today (Sunday 4/15), it's a cold (34 degrees!), gray, wet with a possibility of snow showers day! Is Spring ever going to arrive?

This year one needs to "make their own Spring". So as a very optimistic person, I set up my annual hummingbird food station. It's simple to do. Go to your local Dollar Tree and purchase a hummingbird feeder for, you guessed it, \$1.

The recipe is simple. Plain white sugar and water, 4:1 ratio. Boil 2 cups water with 1/2 cup of sugar. Do not use red food coloring.

Although Hummingbirds are tiny, they're strong. Their tiny wings flap up to 90 beats/minute. So hummingbirds are always hungry. Feed their speedy metabolism. These birds consume half their body weight daily, feeding every 10-15 minutes.

Check out hummingbirdcentral.com You'll see these beautiful, interesting birds will be arriving in our area around the 20th of April. So welcome them with something to eat!

Don't Forget....

Angie Sadauskas, your WCGC Greeter and Historian reminds you to let her know (via westchicagogardenclub.org) when she should send a member a "get well card", 'sympathy card for their close friend/family member', "congratulations" card etc. It's a nice touch that Angie does for our WCGC family.
Thanks, Angie.

Meet Your Board/Committee Member:

Kerry Perry, Treasurer

Resident of West Chicago since 2005

West Chicago Garden Club member since: 2013

Last or Present Career: CPA specializing in retirement benefits

Favorite Flower: Peony

Besides Gardening, my hobbies include: birding and 'puttering' around; home improvement projects, building things, welding!

Favorite Local Restaurant: Fiora's, Geneva

My top two favorite vacation destinations: Botswana, Okavango Delta and Mexico for the July, 1991, total solar eclipse

Getting to Know...Bill Zimmerman

Resident of West Chicago: Since 1957. His home was built in 1891 and is listed as a Historic Home.

Member of WCGC; Since the 1990's

Beside Gardening My Hobbies Include: Crossword puzzles and travel..favorite destinations include Costa Rica, Hawaii, Arizona

My Favorite Flower: Snowdrops

Biggest Gardening Mistake: "I have to be honest..I'm probably the only non-gardener in the WCGC"

Advice for a New Gardener: Learn all you can about gardening before you plan your garden, strive for low maintenance and blooms all year long.

Why should someone join WCGC: The members are all a bunch of super people. I've made so many friends!

Do you know ??..

Your West Chicago Garden Club mission statement?

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 to live.

We Go Gardening

Rain Barrel Sale

Did you know that a quarter-inch of rainfall on an average home is estimated to produce over 200 gallons of water? A rain barrel is an easy and environmentally-friendly way to collect clean water for outdoor use, including watering plants and washing your car.

The barrels are repurposed, industrial-sized food containers. The tops are modified to keep mosquitoes and other pests out while letting the water flow freely into the barrel. A spigot is installed to make water easy to access.

Rain barrels are offered for sale through a partnership between the West Chicago Environmental Commission and The Conservation Foundation. Rain barrels may be ordered online through May 28, 2018, and picked up on Saturday, June 2, 2018 from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. in the West Chicago City Hall Parking Lot, 475 Main Street.

For more information, or to purchase a rain barrel, visit <http://upcycle-products.com/westchicagoil.html>

March Meeting

.Our speaker, Wally Schmidtke, discussed “How to Wake Up Your Garden”. Wally recommended a number of (mostly organic) products in his presentation:

Espoma Soil Perfector: <https://www.espoma.com>

Back to Nature Cotton burr Compost: www.backtonaturecompost.com/cbc.html

Azomite: <http://azomite.com>

Beneficial Nematodes: <http://www.gardensalive.com/Nematodes>



Grandma’s Unsulfured Organic Molasses – Walmart

Mychorrhizae: <http://mycorrhizae.com/>

Note: Mychorrhizae is in Dr. Earth & Espoma Fertilizers. There are many types available on line for your particular gardening needs.

Any Questions feel free to contact Wally – weborganic1@yahoo.com



Cantigny Park Events

May 1: Garden Tour: Spring Annuals & Bulbs Visitors Center, 11 am. - Join Jackie Kosbab from Cantigny Horticulture on a guided stroll to check out what’s blooming. Free with paid parking (\$5)

May 6: Open House: Cantigny Greenhouse, 10 am to 3 pm—Bring the family and your green thumb to this popular annual event! Enjoy tours, exhibits and get answers to your gardening and plant questions from the Horticulture staff. Admission is free with paid parking (\$10). Use Cantigny’s main entrance, then walk to the greenhouse or use the complimentary tram service.

May 11: National Public Gardens Day, Visitors Center, 9 am to 3 pm—Staff-guided tours will focus on Cantigny’s colorful spring plantings and specialty gardens, plus updates on Project New Leaf. Container building demonstrations also will be offered. Visit Cantigny.org for tour and demo times. All events are complimentary, and a free parking voucher is available for download at cantigny.org. Without coupon, parking is \$5.

May 13: Garden Photo Tips: Visitors Center, 2pm.—Receive advice, share your knowledge and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow shutterbugs in beautiful surroundings. Group size limited to 10—register at Cantigny.org or 630.260.8162. Free with paid parking (\$10).