

We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 24 Issue 4 April 2020



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: Canceled

A Garden Club Photo Contest

Since we are unable to meet as a club right now, we thought it would be fun to do a casual Photo Contest for our members. To participate, please submit ONE photo of your spring garden. The photo should be taken this year in your own yard. Next month, we will include the photos with the newsletter (or if there are too many for that, we will put them on the website.) They will be anonymous and each labeled with a number for voting. Each member will then be asked to vote for their favorite and the winner will be announced in June. There might even be a prize.



To submit your photo:

- 1) Choose ONE photo from your yard that you have taken this spring.
- 2) Email it to WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com **OR** Give a printed copy to a board member **OR** Mail it to P. O. Box 313, West Chicago, IL 60186

Deadline to submit your photo is May 10, 2020. (If you are sending a print in the mail, please mail it early enough to arrive before May 10th)

Notes from Dan Beebe

I woke up this morning to about 4" of fluffy, white snow covering almost everything, including my car that I had to clear off before heading into work at my 'essential' job at my 'essential' employer. It did not look or feel like the 27th day of Spring and I really did not want to head out into the cold and icy morning. On my drive, I started thinking about our cancelled meetings, plant sale and Bloomingfest and the mind numbing gloom that has fallen over most of our normal lives. Knowing that I was going to be asked over the course of the day (and probably more than once) whether I had written this article, I decided that what we all need is for a little bit of 'normal' to come back into our lives. Now how, I pondered, could I help do

that? Well, the answer, it turns out, is inspired by the 300 or so Tomato and Pepper plants growing in the greenhouse behind my house. These little, healthy plants will need good homes and since we won't be having a public plant sale, I want to try and pull off the first ever, socially distanced Member Only Plant Sale on Saturday, May 16th (rain date: May 17th). I'm not sure of the exact logistics at this point, but I'll be sure to let you all know more over the next couple of weeks. Watch your e-mail for details. In the meantime, stay safe. -Dan

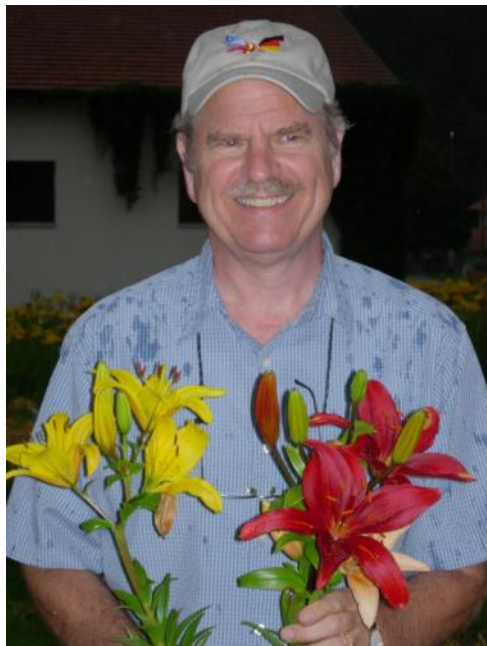
MAY 28TH MEETING

**All American Selections
By Diane Blazek**

Getting to Know ...

Barb Bizzarri

Jeff Handel



Resident of West Chicago: 28 years

West Chicago Garden Club Member: Since 1998, President 2010-2011

Hobbies: Gardening and designing fine jewelry in both gold and silver.

Jeff is currently attending to almost 300 plants (which were destined for our now cancelled Bloomingfest) which he started several weeks ago. The plants include lupines, balloon flowers, painted daisies, cupids dart, Sweet William, caraway, geraniums, butterfly and tomatos

Favorite Flower: Clematis

What Gardening chore do you hate: Weeding

If you could have one flower in your garden what would it be: Oriental Lilies

What Spring Flowers Are Already Open In Your Garden: Tulips, daffodils, and crocus

What Were Your 2020 Gardening Resolutions: "I don't make resolutions. I do make a Gardening-To-Do List". This year I plan on planting many more Spring Bulbs in the Fall.

A Quick Craft For You To Make

Barb Bizzarri

Have you ever noticed terra cotta pots with beautiful moss attached? You'll find these at upscale garden shops and florists. They're easy to make and now is the perfect time, given our cooler weather.

Use one terra cotta pot of your choice.

Combine buttermilk and moss which will encourage moss growth. The moss serves to hold the runny buttermilk in place and vary the texture as well as promote growth.

You'll need moss from your garden,

Remove as much soil as possible.

Tear moss into small pieces, removing any dead leaves, bark or pine needles. Pour buttermilk into a bowl, add moss and combine. Use a brush to paint the mixture all over the pot, set aside in a shaded place until you like the look. If you want a more subtle look, use a wire brush to remove any heavy clumps of moss.



Peonies

Barb Bizzarri

One of my favorite flowers are peonies. They are easy to grow, deer don't bother them and they withstand and thrive during our Chicago cold winter weather.

They do like sun (don't we all !) and good air circulation. Best planted, moved or divided in October to allow for root development before the ground freezes. One key to successful peonies is that you **MUST** plant each one so that the crown is just 2" below the soil level with the eyes/sprouts pointing up. If peony crowns are planted too deeply and you didn't have blooms last Spring, dig up the root ball, work the soil and replant root ball 1/2" higher than the soil. Water and mulch through the summer; the crown should settle down to soil level.

In order to improve air circulation for your peonies and avoid rain/wind damage, various support systems are sold at garden stores and online. I like my husband, Joe's, innovative idea. He simply cuts down a wire tomato cage. He used a bolt cutter, and ends up with two supports. They're not obtrusive, mine are green so they blend right in, but actually any color will soon be hidden by the peonies foliage.

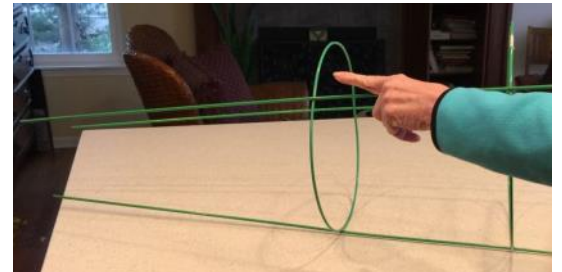
The peonies are coming in right now and need your support !

Here are the steps in making the supports:

Step 1:



Step 2:



Step 3:



Step 4:



2020 Dues?

Have you paid your 2020 Garden Club Dues yet? About 20% of our members still need to renew for this year. If you still would like to receive this newsletter and be a part of our club, please renew now.

Dues remain at the low price of \$15 for a single membership and \$25 for a family membership (2 people).

The membership form can be found on our website at:

www.WestChicagoGardenClub.org

Please mail your renewal to the club at:

West Chicago Garden Club

P.O. Box 313

West Chicago, IL 60185-0313

A Glimpse of Our Facebook Page

Pamela Darrah

You can find our page at <https://www.facebook.com/westchicagogardenclub/>

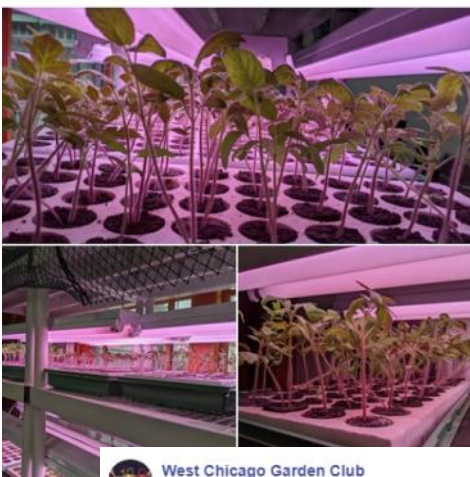
We try to post items that will interest our members. In normal times, we post once or twice per week, but since this is our only regular club communication right now, we are posting more frequently. Here are a few things from the past month if you missed it.

If you come check out our page, take a moment to Like and Follow. If you see a post on our page that you enjoy, we appreciate all Likes and Shares. Doing this helps to spread information about the club to your friends and followers.



West Chicago Garden Club
Published by Pamela Darrah [?] · March 24 at 10:40 AM · 🌐

Looks like Dan's (our president) tomato and pepper seedlings have had spectacular germination this year. Looks like he is going to have to come up with some sort of Member Sale or something later this spring!



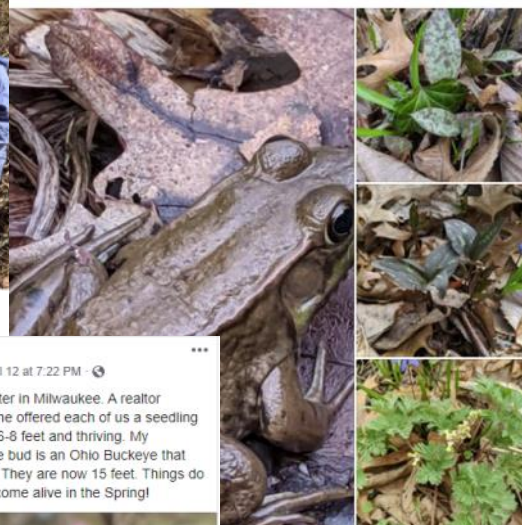
West Chicago Garden Club is with Billie Childress.
Published by Billie Childress [?] · March 25 at 5:20 PM · 🌐

Chris, Billie, and Kerry along with Linas, spent the morning cleaning up the gardens at the Kruse Museum. The grape hyacinths were thankful they will now have a spiffy background when they're ready to strut their stuff in a couple of weeks. Weather was great.



West Chicago Garden Club
Published by Pamela Darrah [?] · April 7 at 11:20 AM · 🌐

Member Dick Darrah has been sending us photos of Spring in his yard. These include the first frog sitting this year, emerging Trout Lily and Wake Robin Trilliums and the first blooms of Dutchman's Breaches (all these are Spring ephemeral wild flowers)



West Chicago Garden Club
Published by Pamela Darrah [?] · April 5 at 8:25 AM · 🌐

The hummingbirds are likely to be arriving here in the next couple of weeks. Getting your feeders out and ready with nectar can help them if there aren't enough flowers for them to feed from.

Ruby Throated Hummingbird Migration



Please:
1 c water,
1/4c pure sugar,
Nectar is best!
Fresh nectar every other day



HummingbirdPots.com

- March 1-15
- March 15-30
- April 1-15
- April 15-30
- May 1-15

West Chicago Garden Club
Published by Billie Childress [?] · April 12 at 7:22 PM · 🌐

Magnolia provenance...I was visiting sister in Milwaukee. A realtor stopped by (business prospecting) and he offered each of us a seedling magnolia he had in his car. Mine is now 6-8 feet and thriving. My sister's, not so much. I'm happy! And the bud is an Ohio Buckeye that was 5gal size when I planted 3 of them. They are now 15 feet. Things do grow! and it's so delightful to see them come alive in the Spring!



Are there any club members that might be interested in helping to post to the Garden Club page? If you do, please email to WestChicagoGardenClub.com.



Kerry and Linas removing a "weed tree"

We are "on it" this year, starting our Wednesday Workdays in the Kruse Garden on April 1st. It's so different this year since we're not pulled to Plant Sale activities. Who would have guessed that we'd be in the middle of a corona virus pandemic this Spring, which created the need to cancel our favorite activity, the Plant Sale! It does offer more time to devote to the Kruse Garden and if you have plants that won't hold until next year the Kruse Garden is always in need of plants. Contact Billie if you have donations.

We had some nice weather in March so we got some badly needed lilac bush pruning done. They look odd but it's the beginning of a process....a third each year. And the garden as a whole has been pretty much cleaned up. We piled the branches and all the debris on the driveway. We had BIG PILES! Chuck Strayve, the guy who mows the lawn all year

for free, came and hauled it all away.....no charge! We are so very grateful to those that help us out! Thank you Mr Strayve!

We have a tree and some plants on order from Wasco Nursery. The goods will arrive in May and we are very excited especially about the tree. It's an American Hornbeam (carpinus Caroliniana) and we staked out its spot up front.

I hope you all take the opportunity to walk around the garden this Spring. It's an acceptable activity while you're social distancing. The grape hyacinths are in bloom and those 200 "shades of pink" tulips we planted last fall aren't far off. Make a trip every week or two. There's always something interesting. And your suggestions are always welcome....help too. Enjoy Spring in our garden and yours too!

If you want to join the Kruse House crew this year, regular work days are Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. to noon, though adjustable to fit your schedule. Contact Billie Childress or Kerry Perry or email WestChicagoGardenClub@gmail.com and the message will be forwarded to both of them.

Garden Centers Can Offer Curbside Pickup, Delivery Under Revised Order

Although the original "Stay at home" order closed nursery and garden centers, a later revision now allows for curbside pickup and deliveries. Here are links to our advertiser's COVID info pages (and a few other local places that don't advertise with us):

[The Growing Place](#)

[Heinz Brother's Greenhouse](#)

[Meyer Landscaping](#)

[Platt Hill Nursery](#)

[Spring Bluff Nursery](#)

[Wasco Nursery](#)

Non-Advertisers

[Prosek's Greenhouse](#)

[Shady Hill Gardens](#)

[We Grow Dreams Greenhouse](#)

Upcoming Programs for 2020

These are the tentatively scheduled programs for the year. If there are any changes we will update this information in future newsletters.

May 28th	Diane Blazek	All American Selections
June 25th	Sharon Yiesla	Smaller Trees for Smaller Yards
July 23rd	Dan Beebe	President's Picnic
August 27th		Native Plants
September 24th		Butterflies & Other Interesting Creatures
October 22nd		TBD
November 19th	Silent Auction	Pot Luck Dinner

Nature Notes

Birds

While looking out my kitchen window I spotted a little bird pecking at buds on the hemlock. He had a bright crown of red and yellow. After checking my bird guide I figured it was a golden-crowned kinglet. Then, under the weeping willow I saw another little brown job (LBJ), got my binoculars out and because of the yellow markings thought it was a yellow-rumped warbler. I needed confirmation and wa-lah! The next day, my on-line

Bird Watchers blog arrived stating "Birds to watch for now". The first two birds shown were exactly what came into my yard. Truly, good things come in small packages.

Garter Snake

The other day it was warm and sunny and a little snake slithered amongst the hydrangea bushes. I know he has a den nearby. I occasionally find skins that he sheds as he grows.



This little guy had a nest under my front steps until the chipmunks took over.

A few garter snakes in the garden can be a good thing. They eat insects and other pests, so they can control those pests that harm your plants. When not resting, these snakes prefer moist, grassy areas and are often found near water, such as streams and lakes.

Kerry Perry



Billie recently found this guy under a dead tree in her yard. He looks chubby; maybe he just had lunch.

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& Rush-Copley Medical Center

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1 block south of Ogden Ave/Rte 34
& 2 blocks west of Naper Blvd

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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

2020 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

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and add some beauty to your garden at

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