



# We Go Gardening

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club  
www.westchicagogardenclub.org

Volume 16 Issue 9 September 2012

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**Babysitting**—The Club provides babysitting during its regular monthly meetings when held at Faith Community Church. There is no fee to you for the service and no reservations are necessary.

**Rides**— Need a ride to the meeting? Call Billie Childress at 231-1791 the Wednesday before the meeting.



## September 28th Meeting : BULB BINGO! *with June and Pauline*

What's that?! We'll be playing bingo, and the prizes will be bulbs. And, these won't be your everyday red tulips, yellow daffodils, purple muscari. We've tried to get bulbs that are a little out of the ordinary.

**No need to bring anything, except yourself, and a friend!** We'll supply cards, markers and the bulbs. It's still a little early to plant them, but then you'll be ready when the time comes.

The common wisdom is: plant spring blooming bulbs when average night-time temperatures drop to around 50° or cooler for about two weeks. So, come on out, bring your friends, and have fun!

Faith Community Church at 910 Main Street in West Chicago

6:45 - refreshments and gathering

7:00 - brief business meeting

7:15 - speaker

Next Meeting: Thursday, October 25th:

*ORCHIDS*



## ARE YOU REMEMBERING TO PICK UP YOUR GARDEN DOLLARS?

By participating in club events, contributing to the newsletter, attending **club meetings, you earn GD's that can only be used at the legendary WCGC GD Auction in November.** Stop by the check-in desk and pick up at least 25 GDs for attending our Bulb Bingo meeting. You can collect for past events at any time.



## Upcoming events (outside the club)

Cantigny: Hayride Tour: See the fall colors in the gardens via hay wagon with Cantigny foresters. Tuesday, Oct 2, free, but registration is required. Call 630-260-8162.

Growing Place: Pumpkin Palooza - two days of pumpkin activities and crafts. Pumpkins for sale, Aurora, 8 AM - 5 PM, Saturday and Sunday, Oct 6-7.

Heinz Brothers Greenhouse: Scarecrow Making Class, Sunday, Sep 30, 2-3 PM, \$15, reserve your spot at 630-584-0473.

Spring Bluff Nursery: Fall Farm Days - **Feed the chickens & see the funny 'running' ducks. Fall harvest** products for sale. Tree fields open for tagging for fall planting. Hayrides all day October 6 & 7, weather permitting. Oct 1 to 7.

Morton Arboretum:: Scarecrow Trail - Admire more than 50 nature-themed scarecrows showcased around Meadow Lake. Daily, Sep 30- Nov 4.

Danada Forest Preserve:: Fall Festival - Join this annual celebration of the horse and the autumn season, which includes a parade of breeds and numerous equestrian performances in the outdoor arena, hayrides, family activities, educational displays, food, and more. Activities ongoing. All ages. Free admission and parking. Fees for some activities. 11 AM to 5 PM, Sunday, Oct 14.

## GARDEN PHOTOGRAPHY

*Capture your garden in professional photos before the season's over.*

Create a calendar of garden pictures or custom note cards featuring your summer garden landscape. To view samples of my work or get a quote, contact [nancy.reppe@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.reppe@gmail.com), or 630-306-1089.



### Club information

[www.westchicagogardenclub.org](http://www.westchicagogardenclub.org)  
West Chicago Garden Club  
P. O. Box 313, West Chicago, IL 60186  
(630) 585-4005

### Membership information

Dues for 2012: 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

### 2012 WCGC BOARD:

President:

Keith Letsche 630-293-0192

Vice President:

Dick Darrah 630-584-1900, [info@bwdarrah.com](mailto:info@bwdarrah.com)

Treasurer:

Barb Darrah 630-584-1900, [info@bwdarrah.com](mailto:info@bwdarrah.com)

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Program Co-Chairs:

Pauline Briggs 630-545-2234, [briggspm@gmail.com](mailto:briggspm@gmail.com)

June Luther 630-876-1295, [june@markluther.com](mailto:june@markluther.com)

Information Director:

Elaine McCluskey 630-441-8500,

[emcluskey@sbcglobal.net](mailto:emcluskey@sbcglobal.net)

Publicity:

Melissa Birch, 630-621-0128, [melissabirch@gmail.com](mailto:melissabirch@gmail.com)



## Planned WCGC Events - 2012

Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event	Date	Speaker/Organizer	Topic/Event
25 Oct	Orchids by Hausermann	Orchids	15 Nov	All members	Dinner & Garden Dollar Auction

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### New Gardening Books at the WC Public Library

There are several new books at the library that you might enjoy:

- *American grown: the story of the White House kitchen garden and gardens across America*, by Michelle Obama
- *Fairy Gardens: a guide to growing an enchanted miniature world*, by Betty Earl
- *Gardening shortcuts*, by Jenny Hardy
- *Good bug, bad bug: who's who, what they do, and how to manage them organically (all you need to know about the insects in your garden)*, by Jessica Walliser
- *Midwestern native garden: native alternatives to nonnative flowers and plants: an illustrated guide*, by Charlotte Adelman and Bernard L. Schwartz
- *Prairie-style gardens: capturing the essence of the American prairie wherever you live*, by Lynn M. Steiner
- *Stand up and garden*, by Mary Moss-Sprague

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News from Kruse *by Billie Childress*

Someone has been edging the Kruse Garden beds! And they are doing a mighty fine job of it! We have asked around trying to identify the gracious gardener but to no avail. The crisp edging is so perfect it looks to be machine done. It really helps keep the weeds out of the beds and frames the gardens very nicely. As you know from touring the gardens, there are **many feet of edging surrounding the beds and it's not an easy task to keep up with. Whoever is helping us.....thank you.....it is greatly appreciated! We'd love to thank you in person** and pick up some tips from your fine skills. Let us know who you are. We know there are other helpful gardeners who stop by the Kruse Garden and pull some weeds, pick up some trash or do a bit of deadheading or watering. We tip our sun hats to all of you and encourage your continued efforts. Small acts do make a difference and you are encouraged to join us when you can on Monday mornings or go solo and contribute as you can on your own. **We will schedule a 'mulch distribution' work day this fall so maybe that will be your opportunity to be involved.** It is rewarding to work with other gardeners. The things learned are remarkable!



How many of you own a mattock? Definition, mattock: a digging and grubbing tool with features of an adze and an ax or pick. Tom, Angie and Billie took turns swinging a mattock at the remains of a large root of the Black Chokeberry tree that was removed from the lawn about five years ago. That root has been protruding from the lawn making a nuisance trip hazard for years and it was high time for it to go. The ensuing years softened it up a bit and we were pretty proud to get that beast of a root down to ground level. We added a good dose of compost from the compost pile to fill in and planted some grass seed to patch up the **lawn. We congratulated ourselves on a job well done! It's not every day one gets to use a mattock!**

The drought brought all things associated with watering, front and center this year. The 2 existing hose reels needed repairs, accomplished with new tires and minor parts, but we needed a third reel so east, west, and back faucets could service their adjacent areas. Mission accomplished! We purchased a nifty new hose reel and a 100 ft hose. The job goes a lot easier with the right tools! We are downright proud of that new hose reel. **Take note on your next visit....east side of the house.**



We hope you were able to participate in the **Ice-cream Social, Historical Society's annual fundraiser. The treats are always spectacular and the auctions items good deals. It's a fun Saturday afternoon** and if you missed it this year, tuck a note in your calendar for next year. Never miss a chance to spend time in our favorite garden!

**It's been a challenging year in the garden yet it's been rewarding! We go each Monday morning to work and find many things to be delighted with. Hope your gardens have given you joy despite the tough conditions.**

See you in the garden, Angie & Billie



## The Color of September - Golden

by Elaine McCluskey



During a mid-September bike ride on a glorious fall afternoon, I traveled the Geneva Spur of the Illinois Prairie Path, from Prince Crossing Road to the Fox River. Along the way, I went through downtown West Chicago and Reed-Kepler Park, where people were out strolling and playing games. The trail passes along the north side of the West Chicago Prairie (site of 2011 WCGC field trip), through industrial parks in Kane and DuPage Counties and the Prairie Landing Golf Course. I watched corporate jets take off from the Du-

Page Airport, noticed the Geneva power generation station, saw gardens in neighborhoods with modest houses, and rode down a steep path along side a cemetery, before reaching the park that borders the river. I even stopped at Good Templar Park in Geneva to see the **Viking Ship (from the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, see [www.vikingship.us](http://www.vikingship.us))**.

Throughout the ride, one color (and mainly one plant) was in every location - goldenrod. In the open areas there were fields of goldenrod (*solidago*), sometimes intermixed with heliopsis. The swath of color was breathtaking - **a truly 'golden,' autumnal yellow, not the bright yellow of daylilies or roses from our summer gardens.** The plant grows well along the bike trail, since it is wind-pollinated. I have heard it proclaimed as the cause of hayfever, but its **heavy, sticky pollen can't be blown far from the flowers. The blame really comes from the fact that ragweed, the real cause, blooms in the same July- September period.**

The golden color mixes well with other flowers blooming simultaneously - the white flowers of eupatorium, tiny purple asters, and occasionally a primrose-**type yellow flower I can't identify.** What amazes me at this point in the summer is to think that these have thrived with the drought that has decimated other plants in our area. The cornfield standing next to the goldenrod at the airport looked awful while the goldenrod wafted in the breeze. With their deep, prairie roots, these plants are made for the hot, dry weather we had this summer.

Goldenrod is the state flower of Nebraska, Kentucky, and the state wild-flower of South Carolina. The website [www.statesymbolsusa.org](http://www.statesymbolsusa.org) says that it **was designated as Nebraska's flower because it, "... has a long season, and nothing could better represent the hardy endurance of Nebraska's pioneers."** I planted it two years ago in a rain garden in my yard, and it's done very well. **Even if you don't plant one of the multiple available species in your yard, I hope you'll take time to enjoy the show this amazing flower puts on in late summer and early autumn.**





## Autumn To Dos in the Garden *by Heather Prince of the Growing Place*

Fall brings crisp bright days that are great for getting out in the yard. Plants are **slowing down and going dormant, but there's still plenty to do in the garden.** Here are some things to keep in mind as the leaves turn color.

### Plant Bulbs for Spring

Hardy bulbs offer weeks of blooms and are so easy! Wait until about mid-October when the soil is cooler to plant bulbs. Planted sooner, and they may sprout this fall. You can continue to plant them as long as the ground is not frozen. Daffodils and tulips are classic favorites, but why not try something different this year such as allium, snowdrops, winter buttercups, or crocus?

### Plant Trees and Shrubs

Many trees and shrubs do well when planted in the fall. Check out the bare root tree selections at The Growing Place for an inexpensive, easy to plant option. Bare root plants settle in quicker and grow faster come spring.

### Protect Plants

Protect tender plants from the first frosts by bringing them indoors or covering them overnight. Now is also a good time to protect thin barked trees and small shrubs from rabbit damage in the winter. Use chicken wire or wire fencing to cage favorite plants such as apple trees, fothergilla, oak leaf hydrangea, Japanese maples and burning bush. You can also use a repellent spray or granules to keep the critters away.

Protect broadleaf evergreens such as boxwood and rhododendron by spraying their leaves with an anti-desiccant such as Wilt-Pruf. The spray needs to be applied in daylight when temperatures are above 40 degrees and dry thoroughly so it doesn't freeze on the leaves and properly bonds to the surface. The spray creates a protective film so that the leaves do not lose as much moisture in the dry winter wind.

Wait until the ground truly freezes in December before protecting tender roses such as floribundas, grandifloras and teas. Mound soil or compost over the base of the plant. Enclose the rose with a cylinder of chicken wire and fill with shredded leaves for extra protection. Shrub roses usually do not require winter protection.

### Prepare for Spring

Enrich garden beds for spring planting with a topdressing of compost or The Growing Place Garden Mix. It will break down over the winter to add important nutrients and encourage beneficial microorganisms. Add Bio-Tone Starter Plus when you plant to encourage good root growth this fall.

Water your evergreens until the ground freezes to give them plenty of resources for winter. These plants will continue to photosynthesize through the season, but at a slower rate.



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## Landscape Care in a Drought

From the U of Illinois Extension Service

This summer's drought conditions pose landscaping challenges, said a University of Illinois Extension horticulture educator. Plants are showing signs of stress, such as curling or wilting, foliage loss, a change in color from deep green to pale green, and leaves turning yellow and falling. If they are to survive, watering is crucial.

"Any trees, shrubs, or evergreens planted this spring and summer will need watering during dry periods until they go dormant for the season," said Richard Hentschel. Large, established shade and ornamental trees should also be watered.

Landscape plants located on a southern or western exposure will need to be monitored closely and watered more often. "Drought is easier to see on a shrub than a large shade tree," Hentschel noted. "Plants growing in a southern or western exposure will require more water than those in a northern or eastern exposure even if they are already established."

Shrubs typically need to be watered for at least two growing seasons after planting. A typical balled and burlapped or potted tree will need to be watered one year for every inch of trunk diameter.

Watering should be at the base of the plant and outwards towards the edge of the planting hole. On newly planted trees and shrubs the water needs to stay close to the trunk or stems where the roots are on a new planting. If there is a mulch ring present, there may be a watering ring too, making watering easier. On established trees, distribute water around the tree, starting several feet from the trunk and extending past the drip line, the area where most of the roots are located.

"Watering should take several minutes to several hours per tree, depending on tree size and soil type," Hentschel said. "It is much harder to see if a needle evergreen is in stress. You can assume that if your trees and shrubs need water, so will your evergreens."

Read more at:

<http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state/newsdetail.cfm?NewsID=27942>

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## Garden Dollars - remember to collect them!

WCGC distributes tokens (Garden Dollars) to members who participate in club activities. At the November meeting, you will be able to use them at the auction to bid on fabulous prizes. **Here's now to earn them:**

Volunteer for workdays, plant sale or garden contest (1 to 4 hrs , >4hrs)	75 - 150	Donate plants for the sale <50, 50-149, ≥150	75, 200, 300
Donate pots	50	Write newsletter article	100
Donate snack for meeting	75	Donate door prize	50
Set up or clean up meeting	25	Meeting attendance	25
Trip attendance	25	Pay dues before Garden Dollar Auction in Nov 2011	75
Donate to Kruse House	50	Pay dues before February 2nd	50

To receive your Garden Dollars after earning them, pick them up at special events from the event organizer, or see club officers at the information table at any meeting, and let them **know what you've earned.**

**Pick up the Garden Dollars you've earned before the auction in November!**



Gathering items for the auction:

**As you know if you've attended one of our fun November dinner/auction events** in the past, we depend on our members to bring items they have or have found **that could be won by others in a silent auction. It's great if these can be "garden-themed."** In the past we've had hand-made gazing balls, note paper, yard tools, flower arrangements, plants, books, and even mystery boxes. The club supplements the members' items with gift certificates from our generous sponsors. In November, we hope everyone takes home something!

**It's not too early to start thinking about what you might have at your house, or to keep your eyes open at a garage sale or dollar store - that could be the most bid-upon item of the night.** If you have any questions about the auction, please contact one of the WCGC board members (see page 2).