



WE GO GARDENING

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

Volume 10 Issue 8 August 2007

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"Lazy, hazy days of summer"

By Sandy Saad

The last four weeks have been like the old song "LAZY AND HAZY". The flowers seem to love all the nutrients that comes with the rain. The ground is pretty wet and everything looks green.. ..Mother Nature has given us a holiday!

Here is where the LAZY comes in.....it's been like "pulling teeth" to get this newsletter out and I apologize.

We didn't have a regular meeting in July. We had something better!!!!!! The potluck at Angie's was outstanding. The food was sumptuous!!--it really was! I'm convinced that gardeners are also "foodies". The weather was just right and we ate outside on Angie's multi-layered deck. Yes, there was wine for "tippling" and we all filled our tummies. Besides food, great people, conversation and hospitality....we were invited to wander through Angie and Ed

Max's gardens. Ed even gave tours. Have you seen his chickens??? Wow, what a great evening!

On August 1 we spent another great evening together at Ball Seed Gardens. It was a muggy evening, but Dave Kucharski, the Grounds Supervisor, gave us his full attention for almost two hours. So many "Oohs and Aahs"... "Isn't that one beautiful"... "Dave, what is this?"... "Smell this one."... Have you ever smelled Prairie Drop Seed? It smells just like cilantro (or, some say, freshly popped corn). The colors, the shapes, the innovative gardens were such a treat. We even saw some of the plants Jan Calhoun (of Ball Floraplant) brought with her when she spoke to us at our June meeting.

Thanks Dave....three hearty cheers for being such a great tour director!

Next Meeting: Thursday, August 23

POND CONSTRUCTION: step-by-step

Speaker: Mark Luther, President of the West Chicago Garden Club

Mark Luther, president of our garden club, will speak to us and show us photos of the new pond in his back yard. He will show us step-by-step how he did it. It was a family affair from what we've heard. Hope we see you all there.

Join us at the Faith Community Church at 910 Main Street in West Chicago

6:45pm - sharing time, conversation and refreshments

7:15 - brief business meeting

7:30 - speaker



Upcoming events (outside the club)

The Growing Place: has two locations: Naperville at Plank Road, just west of Naper Blvd. Tel: 355-4000 and a Fox Valley location at Montgomery Road, just North of Ogden. Tel: 820-8088.

- Just a reminder that the “Summer Sale” is on at both locations and the “Farmstand” is open at the Fox Valley location only.

University of Illinois Extension Office: Just to remind you that the DuPage office has moved 1/2 mile west of Naperville road on the south side of Warrenville Road. They’re in a beautiful new office on the first floor. NEW ADDRESS: 1100 E. Warrenville Road, Suite #170, Naperville, IL 60563. TEL: (630) 955-1123. www.extension.uiuc.edu/dupage.

Morton Arboretum Plant Clinic: Call or e-mail them with your question ‘cause they have the answer. Telephone: 630/719-2424 or E-mail: plantclinic@mortonarb.org.

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Club information

West Chicago Garden Club
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www.westchicagogardenclub.org

Membership information

Dues for 2007:
 Individual: \$15
 Family: \$25

2007 board

President:
 Mark Luther (630) 876-1296
 mark@markluther.com

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 info@bwdarrah.com

Regular meeting location

Faith Community Church
 910 Main Street
 West Chicago

Calendar of events - 2007

| Date | Speaker | Topic |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| August 23 | Mark Luther | Pond construction: step-by-step |
| September 27 | Lynn Bement | Healthy gardens by "The Compost Queen" |
| October 25 | Bill Scheffler | Organic lawn, tree and shrub care |
| November 15 | Elections, Potluck and Nora Liu | Ornamental vines |

Reminders

Babysitting—The Club provides babysitting during its regular monthly meetings when held at Faith Community Church. There is no fee to us for the service, but if you plan to use it, please **call Linda Harlson** at 377-5750, so we can plan for the right number of children .

Guests and Visitors are always welcome. Members are encouraged to bring a friend or neighbor.

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

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News and Announcements

July Potluck at Angie's Home: Please read the article on page one. A great turnout and a great time was had by all who attended.

Ball Seed Field Trip: We had a good turnout with 22 members and three children. It was fun! Please read the article on page one.

Surprise Raffle: There was no raffle prize at the July potluck but be assured there will be an extra-special one at our August meeting.

Trees and Ponds Article: Don't forget to read the article on page 5 from the Chicagoland Tree Care Advisor summer newsletter. This newsletter is produced by Chris Mest who is a certified arborist with Graf Tree Care (advertiser). Chris Mest was at our Plant Sale in May to answer questions. We will try to have something from his newsletter in each of our monthly garden club newsletters. The Trees and Pond article was written by Dave Kelly of Aquascapes.

Correct Telephone: To reach Mark Luther, our club president, remember to call him on his very own line stated on page 3 in the Club Information column: (630) 876-1296. You'll get a quicker response or e-mail him.

Foxwillow: Be sure to read Lou Horton's report on this field trip. "Late you Say!" It fell through the cracks. However, if someone writes an article for this newsletter—It Will Be Published. Thanks again for your patience Lou.

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Trees and Ponds

Guest columnist: Dave Kelly

www.aquascapeinc.com

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You may have heard that a water garden is an un-thinkable addition to a tree-filled yard and those of you lucky enough to have such a yard would have to do without a water garden.

Yes, ponds placed under trees do come with their own unique challenges, but don't let that keep you from installing a pond in your favorite shady spot. In fact, the shade can be a water gardener's friend.

Leaf litter and twigs that were once thought of as an unbearable maintenance headache and a big contributor to poor water quality are no longer a concern. A skimmer filter, with the help of a pump that is housed inside of it, skims the top surface of the pond water, collecting floating leaves and debris into a net or basket, ready for easy removal. Because of the skimmer, most of the debris never has a chance to settle to the bottom of the pond. In the autumn, when the leaf drop could become more than the skimmer can handle, you can give an extra hand by placing a net over your pond to collect the seasonal leaf drop.

With a shady pond, you will have a more limited selection of aquatic plants, but as with any shade gardening, there are still plenty of beautiful plants – even some water lilies – to choose from.

Then there's the benefit of placing your pond in the shade – algae, or lack of it. Since algae is a sun-loving plant, it does not flourish in a shady pond and crystal clear water is the result.

Instead of worrying about the leaves and shade, you should be concerned with the health of the tree that you're digging near. By avoiding digging inside the drip line of your tree (outside the canopy of the tree where rainwater would drip), you can lessen the negative effects of building a pond there.

Some trees are more sensitive to root disturbance than others, so it's best to consult with a certified arborist before digging near your trees. If some of your trees roots happen to suffer from your pond digging, you may be able to counteract the effects with some extra TLC – water and biofertilizer. A certified arborist can help with this too.

If you don't yet have trees near the area where your pond will be placed, plan ahead and plant trees when you construct the pond. With a little care and planning, trees and ponds can live together... harmoniously and beautifully. Get digging to create your aquatic, and shady, paradise!



The above article is excerpted from the Chicago-land Tree Care Advisor—Summer 2007 Newsletter by Chris Mest, a certified arborist, and Graf Tree Care.



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Foxwillow Pines Field Trip

Our garden club field trip to Rich's Foxwillow Pines Nursery in Woodstock on June 9th was blessed with good weather, a congenial group of travelers (18), and no more than our usual allotment of bad luck in terms of mechanical difficulty (one vehicle had problems and had to be switched out of our plans).

Our group got a personal lecture and tour from Rich Eyre and we concluded our visit with a very pleasant meal of sandwiches from Augustino's and other side dishes prepared by members. We consumed our picnic lunch in the beautiful surroundings of the pond area at Foxwillow.

Perhaps the biggest benefit of a visit to a specialty conifer nursery such as Foxwillow is that it opens one's eyes to the huge range of plant material that is out there and available to enrich our gardens. The impressive array of colors, shapes, and sizes available in conifers today surprised all of us and I know that at least a few of the choices made their way back to West Chicago when our visit was done.

Lou Horton

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