

District II

Linda Groble, GCI District Director

Bloomingtondale Garden Club welcomes visitors to our programs on the third Tuesday of every month. This fall season, we wrapped up planting and harvesting produce and flowers from our community garden which we donated to our local food pantry. Our group had a fun time with our indoor potluck picnic in October, with a variety of tasty foods, followed by social time of garden trivia and garden-themed bingo games. We also learned all about Bonsai plants, made Christmas centerpieces for a local nursing home, and did a make-and-take holiday project with our members. We will start our 2026 programs on February 17 with our annual business meeting. On March 17, Gail Sanders will be sharing her insights and tips on container gardening and small gardens. Our April 21 meeting is all about preparing for our largest fundraising event, our annual plant sale. May 8-9 is our huge plant sale including annuals, perennials, beautiful hanging baskets, Ask a Master Gardener area, raffles, and more. Monthly meetings begin with social time and announcements at 6:30 PM with presentations starting at 7 PM. We meet at Cornerstone Faith Community Church, 118 First Street, Bloomingtondale, IL 60108. For more information, visit www.bloomingtondalegardenclub.org.

Bolingbrook Garden Club has monthly meetings and programs on the second Thursday of each month from September through June. Last year was our first year of making and selling porch pots. It turned out to be a very successful venture so we are doing it again. Last year we sold 60 pots, this year our goal is 120. Most of our supplies have been donated, and we cut the greens from our yards. We will be selling them in our online store and at The Promenade's holiday event. We donate all proceeds from the sale of our porch pots to the West Suburban Community Pantry. Last year we were able to donate \$2000. In December, we will be electing new officers and committee chairpersons. We also have our holiday social! In January, we will install our new officers and committee chairpersons. We also have a white elephant exchange. In February, our online store will open to pre-sell annuals for our May plant sale. The annuals will be available for pick-up the day before the plant sale. In April, we will have our seed library and exchange open at Fountaindale Library in Bolingbrook. We will also be getting ready for our annual plant sale by taking the plants we over-wintered out of the ground, cleaning them up, and labeling them. In May, we will be having our annual plant sale. The tentative date is Saturday May 8. We spend the week before the sale, setting up, organizing the plants, and having fun! For more information about our club, please visit our website at Bolingbrookgardenclub.org or on Facebook at facebook.com/bgc1993.

Cress Creek Garden Club of Naperville held their 50th anniversary meeting and celebratory luncheon on October 10, 2025, EXACTLY 50 years from the first meeting of the club on October 10, 1975. The club celebrated by making beautiful fall floral

District II

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arrangements to take home, by honoring past presidents, and by collecting winter gear for a local Naperville elementary school. The members donated 44 coats, 6 pairs of snow pants, 2 pairs of boots, 17 pairs of gloves, 18 hats, and 95 scarves, 65 of which were donated by our sewing group who decorated the scarves with little details sewn on them. In addition to the winter gear, the club members gave \$1,225.00 to the school. This winter, the children can look forward to playing with friends at school even on the coldest of days! The members of the club were busy this fall cleaning area gardens for the winter season. On November 14, the club held their 50th anniversary fundraiser 'Hats Off to 50 Years of Giving, at the Bolingbrook Golf Club with almost 400 attendees! Funds raised will be used for our extensive scholarship program, donations to local organizations, and for community gardens that beautify Naperville and the surrounding communities. www.cresscreekgardenclub.org

Crestview Garden Club of Elmhurst Please join us at one of our upcoming meetings: Feb. 3: "Tree Care for Homeowners" by Beth Botts. Meetings at 7 pm, Community Bank of Elmhurst, 330 W. Butterfield/Spring Rd., Elmhurst. For more info on our club and 2026 meeting topics as they are confirmed: <https://www.crestviewgardenclub.com>

The Darien Garden Club will be focusing on our 25th anniversary next year. There are several activities to celebrate including our SGI Symposium fundraiser on March 7 and our open house in May. We are also dedicating our Blue Star memorial at a local Darien Park.

The Garden Club of Bensenville is looking forward to a fun and eventful year after rededicating our community's Blue Star Memorial Highway marker in the fall. It has been restored and has a new place in Redmond Park. We are excited that the Blue Star will be seen by so many more at its new location. In the months coming up, we are planning more speakers. In March, Bill Karges will talk about caring for our hydrangeas. We all have them but not really sure how to care for them. This will be so helpful. We're also hoping to learn more about floral arranging and, perhaps, how to have a small floral show with our club members. Our plant and bakery sale will take place in May, and we're starting to prepare for that now. As all garden clubs know, this is a big event and takes a lot of planning. We are hoping that our sale will bring in funds that we can use for the club and our community. We meet at the Bensenville Library on the second Thursday of the month at 12:00 pm (except for July and August). For all upcoming events, check us out on our Facebook page, The Garden Club of Bensenville.

Garden Club of Downers Grove Our general meetings are on the third Monday of the month at 12:15 pm at the American Legion Post 80, 4000 Saratoga Avenue, Downers Grove, and we welcome the public to attend. Meetings begin with social time from 12:15

District II

Linda Groble, GCI District Director

until 12:45 followed by our general meeting which includes updates from our president, treasurer, secretary, and chairs. Short presentations are given by our Conservation & Environment and Horticulture chairs and the general meeting concludes with awarding door prizes. Featured programs begin at 1:45 until 3:00. On January 19, Bill Karges, formerly from Villa Park's Pioneer Garden and Feed will present "Talk Dirty to Me." On February 16, Ken Benson will present "Houseplants our Friends." On March 16, Dolly Swibes Foster will present "Long Blooming Perennial Gardens." For more information on our winter meetings, visit our website and "like us" on Facebook <https://www.gardenclubofdownersgrove.net/> <https://www.facebook.com/gardenclubdownersgrove>

The Garden Club of Hinsdale celebrated the holidays with its annual Holiday Workshop, a cherished club tradition for many years. The Holiday Workshop brings members together to celebrate friendship while giving back to the community. This year, DuPage Pads was the beneficiary of the workshop. Members assembled necessity bags and donated gift cards, contributing an impressive \$4,660 in gifts and donations to support DuPage Pads' work. One of the event's chairs was featured in the local paper for her long standing support of the work of the club. You can read the article [here](#).

The Garden Club of Oak Park/River Forest will celebrate the season at the beautifully decorated Cheney Mansion. This year's annual fundraiser, 'Tis the Season Holiday Boutique, will feature an array of member-crafted gifts for sale. In preparation, members will gather earlier in the season for a festive craft workshop to create handmade items for the boutique. During the winter months, members will also participate in the Garden Therapy program, leading floral design activities at local senior centers. In addition, the club's monthly meetings will feature informative presentations on conservation, gardening, and floral design.

Geneva Garden Club is excited to begin 2026 with the following programming:

January - Transforming Hardscapes by Olivia Locket, "The Brick Chick", and Mike Anderson.

February - Succulents: Indoors & Outside by Cindy Tyley.

March - Pet Friendly Landscaping.

April - Raised Vegetable Beds by Danielle Stojan.

We will hold our annual scholarship winners presentation of awards in May. Our spring plant sale is TBD.

District II

Linda Groble, GCI District Director

Join us at our monthly luncheon meetings on the second Tuesday of the month. Visit us on Facebook and www.genevagardenclub.com.

Grassroots Garden Group, founded in 2015, continues to beautify the Village of Westchester. Our pet project, the three gardens at the village fountain, bloomed beautifully this summer after several years of clearing, planting, and nurturing. The gardens feature a variety of native plants. Since 2018, our strategic partnership with the Westchester Food Pantry has raised nearly \$50,000 through annual events like our spring plant sale and summer garden walk, as well as proceeds from the sale of GGG market garden accessories. As we do every year, the fall and winter seasons are about reflection and preparation, as we celebrate our successes and begin planning for 2026. For more information about us and our upcoming events, please visit grassrootsgardengroup.org or check us out on Facebook at @GrassrootsGardenGroup or Instagram at @grassroots_garden_group.

Pleasantdale Garden Club in Burr Ridge In January, members celebrate the new year with our annual member pot luck meal where everyone is asked to bring a dish to share. February brings a garden gnome workshop taught by two of our members using clay pots. Members will learn about coyotes from a Cook County Forest Preserve employee in March. In April, Kim White will tell us about women in natural history. We will also be getting ready for our May 6 annual spring luncheon/fundraiser with entertainment and raffles.

Schaumburg Community Garden Club wrapped up 2025 with interesting educational opportunities on indoor gardening, dahlias, growing garlic, and holiday wreathmaking. Members got the gardens at Schweikher House and the Schaumburg Township Town Hall wrapped up for the season in October. The club's food pantry garden ended its growing season in November with a total donation of nearly 3000 pounds! Our 2025 speaker schedule will continue to reflect a lot of horticultural/environmental variety. The club's annual native plant sale will start as an online sale in March and April, with a tent sale in mid-May when online sales' orders are picked up. Check out Facebook or our website for more details on speakers/dates/locations...schaumburggardenclub.org.

Tri-Village Garden Club (Bartlett, Hanover Park, Streamwood) meets at 6:30 pm on the third Wednesday of the months from February through May. We meet at the Streamwood Fire Station, 1204 Park Blvd. Our pantry garden was very productive and we were able to donate about 1,070 pounds of produce. Members also tugged in the community gardens for the winter. We ended the year in December with our annual Christmas/members appreciation party. This is always a welcome event, with a lot of fun, games, food, and spending time with our members. In January, we meet for a

District II

Linda Groble, GCI District Director

planning meeting for the upcoming year. One of the changes to our annual plant sale will be the addition of a garden bazaar. Our sale will be on May 9 at 9am until 3 pm at the Bartlett Park Log Cabin. Please join us.

Speakers are scheduled for February through October.

February 18 - Amy Daniel's topic will be seed starting

March 18 - Kathryn Mueller will talk about monarchs in the spring

April 15 - Sara, an arborist in Bartlett, will talk about tree care in our region

May 20 - Barbara DeLee, one of our club members, will lead a craft project of painting flower pots

No meetings in June - August

September - TBD

October 15 - Dave Brook's Lazy Gardener's topic is guide to landscaping

Western Springs Garden Club Our 100th year anniversary celebrations continue with a two-month exhibit of our history presented in the Village library display case. Kicking off our programs for 2026 is an exciting program on "The New Naturalism Landscape Design". We will learn about the changes in public and private garden designs promoted by Piet Oudolf and his first public garden, Chicago's Lurie Gardens. In addition, a skit will be performed encapsulating gardening trends, Western Springs events, club events, projects, civic involvement, and pop cultural aspects of life in the 70's and 80's. February will find us enjoying a members-only anniversary box lunch and presentation, "Western Springs Short Stories", by local historian John Devona. March concludes our programs with "An Introduction to Permaculture" by our own Beth Piersialla, a Master Gardener and urban farmer. She will focus on simple steps to transform our gardens into a more productive ecosystem. Our accompanying anniversary presentation will cover life in the 90's and 2000's. We continue Garden Therapy through March, as we assist residents at a local senior facility in making small fresh flower arrangements or crafts. In April, we distribute seedlings to kindergarteners in local schools for Arbor Day. In April, we also begin digging plants for our much-anticipated annual May plant sale, which is our primary fundraiser.

All are welcome to join us for our casual, friendly gatherings. For more information, visit us at westernspringsgardenclub.org or on Facebook, or contact us at wspringsgardenclub@gmail.org.

District II

Linda Groble, GCI District Director

Wheaton Garden Club members look back on our 100th year anniversary celebrations with fondness and pride. The Wheaton Garden Club was organized on May 30, 1925 at the House of Seven Gables, which was the home of Mary Lyford. She was joined by her friends Margaret Morton, Amy Adams McCormick, and Laura Plamondon.

Our festive 100-year celebrations included a beautiful luncheon in April at the historical Chicago Golf Club, where many of our early founders summered at. Attendees very much enjoyed the presentation on the early history of the garden club and its many connections to the local area. Guests of honor included members of The Garden Clubs of Illinois.

The City of Wheaton honored our anniversary with a proclamation at a May City Council meeting. Our monthly May meeting was on garden designs from the 1920's followed by a 1920's high tea.

Historical and present-day posters were displayed at the Wheaton Library and Wheaton City Hall in May and June.

These posters, along with posters and information on pollinators, were also on display in September at our booth at the Wheaton French Market. WGC bookmarks and coloring pages were also handed out and were very well received.

Also, in celebration of our anniversary, a sculpture was donated to the Wheaton Park District. A bronze planter, designed as a wheelbarrow with butterfly and bird adornments, was placed in Memorial Park. Joining us at the October dedication was Wheaton Mayor Suess along with other representatives from the City of Wheaton and Park District.

As we enter our 101st year, our January to April programs are "A Brief History of Trees in America", "Winter Landscape Interest", "Adding Public Gardens to Your Travel Plans" and our annual club luncheon and installation of officers. Also, in cold and snowy February, we always enjoy planning for spring and summer as we order our May plant sale flowers. www.wheatongardenclub.org

Woodridge Garden Club The primary fundraising event for the Woodridge Garden Club (WGC) is their annual plant sale which occurs on the first Saturday of May each year. All of the plants are divisions of plants from member's gardens. This year, we sold over 600 plants which raised over \$3,600 for the club. From the proceeds, a \$1500 donation was made to the West Suburban Food Pantry.

District II

Linda Groble, GCI District Director

We also initiated a grant/scholarship program for people/students doing garden related activities or studies. We have two \$500 scholarships that are now available for Woodridge area students, teachers, or gardeners.

The WGC also worked with a local grade school to establish a plaque honoring a 200-year-old bur oak tree on the school property christened the “Edgewood Oak”. The plaque describes the history of the area when the tree was born and how things have changed since then. All of the school children attended the christening event. We also worked with the school to establish a permaculture environment under the tree. For most of the past decade, the club has grown vegetables in community garden plots and donated them to the West Suburban Food Pantry. This has been on hiatus for the past two years due to the plots being relocated. Club members are looking forward to the new improved garden plots in 2026.

The Woodridge Garden Club meets monthly on the second Thursday of the month at 6:30 pm at the Fred Hohnke Community Center, 2600 Center Drive, Woodridge, IL 60517. We also have a Facebook Group: Woodridge Gardening Club.