



WINDOW TO WEST CHICAGO Spring 2020

IMPORTANT DATES

- April 1**
National U.S. Census Day
- April 6 – 10**
Free Spring Leaf Collection
- April 6 – November 30**
Yard Waste Collection
- March 30 – April 30**
Spring Hydrant Flushing
- May 4 - 8**
Citywide Collection Event
- May 4 – November 2**
Brush Pickup
- May 16**
Blooming Fest (tentative)
- May 16** (at Blooming Fest) Coffee with the Mayor (tentative)
- May 18**
State of the City Address (tentative)
- May 25**
City Hall Closed
- June 6**
On-site Paper Shredding & Rain Barrel Pickup (tentative)
- June 27**
Coffee with the Mayor (tentative)

Visit the Community Calendar at www.westchicago.org for community-wide events you won't want to miss. Once there, bookmark it on your favorite device and check it often.

Follow the City on social media.



The health and safety of the West Chicago community and our employees is the top priority of the City of West Chicago. The COVID-19 outbreak is a rapidly evolving situation with new information becoming available every day. The information below is based upon the latest information at the time this publication went to print, but remains subject to change. We appreciate your patience and cooperation during this trying time.

Out of an abundance of caution to minimize the community spread of COVID-19, the City of West Chicago is taking the following precautionary steps until further notice:

There will be no public access to City buildings, except for the Police Station (325 Spencer Street). Customers needing to drop off plans/forms or pay for utility bills, building permits, inspections, deed certification stamps or any other payments that would normally be made at City Hall may make those payments in the dropbox in front of City Hall, online, or at the Police Station.

Staff in all Departments will be available via email or telephone. The City made this decision based upon guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and the Illinois Department of Public Health to begin implementing appropriate "social distancing" precautions into our City operations so that we may protect the health, safety, and well-being of our employees and customers, while also continuing to maintain essential City functions and emergency response services.

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, the CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

As a local government, it is our shared responsibility to try to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 by following the recommendations of federal and state public health officials.

Those with questions or concerns about COVID-19 can call the Illinois Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Hotline 1 (800) 889-3931 or send an email to dphsick@illinois.gov anytime, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For those planning to travel, visit CDC's Coronavirus Disease Information for Travel page for the latest information.



West Chicago City Hall
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✓ TAKENOTE

With warmer temperatures and additional daylight hours inviting us to spend more time outdoors this spring, please take note of the following tips to keep your yard in tiptop condition.

Brush Pickup – Brush pickup begins on the first Monday in May. Until then, please store neatly stacked branches in a discreet area of your yard out of public view.

Lawn Maintenance - Keep your lawn looking great by never parking any vehicles on the grass and keeping your grass trimmed to a height below eight inches. Be prepared when abundant spring rains cause the need for more frequent cuttings. If you are out of town, please arrange to have grass maintenance in your absence. If you receive a Notice of Ordinance Violation for tall grass and/or weeds, please cut your grass within seven days to avoid enforcement action such as fines. Let the Community Development Department staff know of any extenuating circumstances that may qualify for an extension.

Garbage Containers - Yards look tidier when garbage and/or recycling containers are stored out of view from the public right-of-way. Per City Code, please store yours away as needed (except during your regularly scheduled pickup day).

Dead Tree/Shrub Removal – Please remove any dead or dying trees or shrubs to prevent eyesores and more importantly, potential consequences resulting from falling limbs and trunks. Use a qualified contractor to ensure safe removal.

Spotlight on CERT (Citizens Emergency Response Team)

CERT was created in 2005, mainly in response to 9/11. The Federal government authorized the funding of CERT to support citizen emergency response efforts to manmade or natural disasters. The training CERT provides in general first aid, weather safety, light search and rescue, and fire safety increases the ability of citizens to survive until responders or other assistance arrives.

Alderman Becky Stout has been involved with CERT since 2005. She serves as co-coordinator and team leader. Her personal experience of being at the scene of her nephew's tragic car accident and feeling unequipped to help, led her to take a lead in the formation of West Chicago CERT. She wanted to be able to give back by creating a trained community team for emergency response support.

West Chicago has trained over 200 community members in the practices and guidelines of CERT as established by FEMA. One of the primary functions of West Chicago's CERT team is to respond to large fire scenes in which it assists with the rehydration and cooling of firefighters. CERT members were deployed to the scene of the Aspen Ridge and Timber Lakes Apartment fires.

Members have assisted in search and rescue recovery in a drowning incident, and have helped with traffic control when necessary. West Chicago often utilizes its CERT members to assist at local festivals and events. They are on hand to provide hydration therapy and first aid to attendees and participants.

Brian and Kurt Freund, life-long residents of West Chicago, have been long-standing members of the CERT team. They are familiar faces, attending many community events where they often recruit new members. Brian is one of the CERT team leaders and a certified trainer of the CERT program.

Those wishing to get involved with the next training course should contact the West Chicago Police Department staff at (630) 293-2222.



CERT members (from left to right) Brian Freund, Kurt Freund, and Francisco Gomez on hand at Blooming Fest to provide hydration therapy and first aid, if needed.

By now, West Chicago residents should have received an invitation from the U.S. Census Bureau with instructions on how to participate on April 1, 2020.

Residents have the option of taking the Census online, by phone, or by mail. Those who wish to participate online but do not have access to a computer or the internet are encouraged to visit the West Chicago Public Library on April 1st between 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Staff will be on hand to assist residents with completing the Census.

Census takers will also begin visiting senior centers and group quarter facilities in April to conduct the Census at these locations. From May through July, Census takers will visit households that have not yet responded to the Census.

Residents are encouraged to participate in the Census as soon as possible to ensure that a complete and accurate count is accomplished. Please remember that all responses given to the Census are confidential and the U.S. Census Bureau will NEVER ask for your social security number or ask for money. Residents who believe they may have received fraudulent material under the guise of the U.S. Census Bureau are encouraged to contact the Census Bureau at 1-800-923-8282 and may also visit www.2020census.gov/en/avoiding-fraud.html.

Finally, keep in mind that everyone living in our community, regardless of age, country of origin or citizen status counts, and needs to be counted in the 2020 Census. Participating in the Census is

required by law, even if you recently completed another survey from the Census Bureau. The U.S. Census Bureau is bound by law to protect your answers and keep them strictly confidential. For

more information on the 2020 Census, please visit www.2020census.gov.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ruben Pineda". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Respectfully,
Ruben Pineda

Art & History

Due to facility closures and event postponements/cancellations at Gallery 200, Gallery Theater, and the City Museum, the City recommends sourcing information directly from each organization and has provided contact information below:

Gallery 200

103 W. Washington Street
(630) 293-9550
www.gallery200.org

Gallery Theater

129 Main Street
(630) 234-5919
www.gallerytheaterstudio.org

City Museum

132 Main Street
(630) 231-3376
www.wegohistory.com

We look forward to bringing you detailed information as is usually found in this section in the next issue of Window to West Chicago.



Celia Kruse, it is said, was a quiet, private lady, who demurred most invitations to visit others with the excuse that she had to "cut her grass."

The captivating opening to Shirley Remes' article published in the Kane County Chronicle on September 22, 1998, *Garden Club sets out to restore Kruse House Gardens*, is followed by a brief history of the magnificent gardens that **Celia Kruse, her mother Bertha, and maternal grandmother Johanna Louise Kiechbush** designed and tended at the four-square home at **527 West Main Street**. The article hooks the reader instantly with this insight into their world, provided by docents of the West Chicago Historical Society, the organization entrusted with the care and preservation of the historic landmark built for the Kruse family, German immigrants, in 1917.

It was the discovery of old photographs of the garden that thrilled and inspired the small group of docents in the 1990s including **Chris and Dennis Baxter, Nancy Kifer Assian, and Mackie Sprague** (cited in Remes' article). They recognized the need to rebuild a sustainable Garden Club to work on restoring and maintaining the gardens, which had sadly fallen into neglect at the end of Celia's life when she was confined to a nursing home.

Moved by pictures of the gardens found at the Kruse House, the docents began exploring the grounds to see if any remnants of the rock garden, pond and stone steps, among other documented gardens remained.

"Many people thought all the rocks were gone," said Chris. But after poking around with a trowel and pitchfork, and gently cleaning away some dirt, they completely uncovered the rock garden, and have made good progress on the pond and its rock wall. They also think they have the location of stone steps as well.

Clearing much of the overgrowth rewarded the docents with the reemergence of some of

Celia's favorites, tulips and other bulbs, as well as an Ornamental Alpine strawberry. Gardening books that featured perennial plants of the 1920s allowed them to replicate some of the plant types that would have been favored. The arduous, but rewarding, task of restoring the historic gardens as accurately as possible, reinvigorated interest for what is now the thriving and active West Chicago Garden Club.

For many who visit the Kruse House and Gardens, the unique connection to Celia and her gardens, made possible by the passionate efforts of the West Chicago Historical Society and the West Chicago Garden Club, is enriched by history giving context to the sensory delights that await in the garden.

"Celia liked to sit by the pond," said Dennis. "She trained her fish so that when she would clap her hands, the fish would come up to her."

The work of early Garden Club members continues today at the Kruse House, most notably by current member gardeners **Billie Childress, Kerry Perry, Jan Grismore, Keith Letsche, Barbara Darrah, Chris Gicela, and Shirley Schramer**, who weekly provide the heavy lifting required in maintaining and nurturing these legacy gardens.

A scanned copy of the complete article, and photos from the West Chicago City Museum and West Chicago Garden Club, may be found on the City's website, www.westchicago.org.



Celia Kruse in her garden.



Current West Chicago Garden Club stewards of the Kruse House gardens.

HAPPENED Around Town

Gallery 200 was proud to host Art is the HeART of the City during Youth Art Month in March. The exhibit of original art was created by the students of West Chicago School District 33. The Opening Reception was well-



received and those attending enjoyed a wide variety of artwork from grades 1 – 8. Students used a variety of media to show their creativity in how they interpret art style, subject, or cultures from around the world. Youth Art Month is a nation-wide initiative and Gallery 200 is proud to support young artists through this show and give them and their families an opportunity to participate in a real gallery setting.



Business Development News

As the national economy continues to move forward at a steady - if not breakneck - pace, the City of West Chicago is taking full advantage of the favorable conditions to facilitate new development. The DuPage Business Center (DBC) in the southwest corner of the City is home to several new projects in various stages of completion.

Alton Industries, a manufacturer of air compressors and parts for vacuum cleaners, is in the process of constructing a new 150,000 square foot facility. Scannell Properties, one of the nation's premier industrial developers, will complete a 303,000 square foot warehouse/logistics project in the coming weeks. And Suncoast Corporation, a plastic fabrication company, recently occupied its new 830,000 square foot state-of-the-art facility at the Center.

These are just a few of the ten projects either recently completed or under construction in the DBC. Collectively these projects total over three million square feet of new construction in the 640-acre Business Center. This construction boom will add significantly to the property tax base and generate hundreds of new jobs for area residents. After seeing little in the way of activity for the first 15 years of its existence, the DBC is home to some of the most sizeable and significant industrial development in the western suburbs.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

CITY COUNCIL

Ward 1



Lori Chassee
(630) 231-8709



James Beifuss
(630) 231-0584



Jayme Sheahan
(630) 330-7972



Heather Brown
(630) 853-7131

Ward 2

Ward 3



Michael Ferguson
(630) 248-6053



Alton Hallett
(630) 254-7112

Ward 4

Ward 5

Ward 6



Sandy Dimas
(630) 293-5170



Melissa Ferguson
(630) 621-0128



Christopher Swiatek
(630) 217-5885



Matt Garling
(630) 791-0575



Rebecca Stout
(630) 293-7335



Jeanne M. Short
(630) 293-2200

Ward 7



John Jakabcsin
(630) 386-7267



Noreen Ligino-Kubinski
(630) 762-9929

City Hall (630) 293-2200

Fire Administration (630) 231-2123

Police Administration (630) 293-2222

Police and Fire Emergency 911

Ruben Pineda, *Mayor*

Nancy Smith, *City Clerk*

Michael Guttman, *City Administrator*