



WFB Garden Club Activities

Bird City Designation for Whitefish Bay, WI

On March 22, 2012, the Village of Whitefish Bay was given the distinction of becoming a Bird City of Wisconsin member. This distinction is a testament to the care of our green spaces and natural conservation efforts that are part of the Village's smart growth plan. The Whitefish Bay Garden Club led the effort to earn this distinction in conjunction with support from the Civic Foundation and Village Board. The Club is responsible for renewing the Designation annually by providing continuing community education, observing International Migratory Bird Day, and filing proper renewal paperwork.

Community Education on Gardening and Environmental Sustainability Topics

The Garden Club strives to provide the Village of Whitefish Bay and neighboring communities and organizations continuing education through open meetings featuring expert speakers on relevant gardening and sustainability topics. Past meetings have focused on growing and using herbs, the importance of native pollinators, current water issues facing the Milwaukee River, youth gardening initiatives in our community and schools. These meetings are always free to the public and allow time for refreshments and a question and answer period after the presentation.

Celebration Stones

Selling Celebration Stones is a fundraiser for the Garden Club. The engraved stones leave a lasting impression in gardens or yards. They can proclaim one's love, honor someone special, decorate gardens, or memorialize a pet. Stones are ideal for personal gardens or as gifts.

Forget-Me-Not

The Forget-Me-Not is a way to remember fellow Whitefish Bay residents who may be facing hardships (e.g., a health issue, loss of a loved one). A flowering plant, along with a handwritten card and seed packet, are delivered anonymously. Garden Club members may submit names of deserving recipients ; however, recipients cannot be Garden Club members.

Sustainable Land Management Practices

Removing invasive plants (garlic mustard, burdock, Canada thistle, and buckthorn) from parks along Lake Michigan and advocating for sustainable land management practices in our public green spaces has been a major focus of the Club. Weed outs in Village parks are organized and hosted by the Club regularly. Members are constantly experimenting in their own gardens with pesticide-free ways to control weeds and invasive plants in order to encourage and initiate such practices in public green spaces. Also, there are two club members designated specifically as WFB Community Liaisons who serve on official Village committees that develop green space management policies and recommendations. Lastly, as part of the Sustainable Land Management Project, the club organizes activities for Bay Day on the first weekend in May. These activities feature demonstrations of such practices as worm composting, education on birds and butterflies, the elimination of plastic waste, and information about the value of mulching grass and leaves as sustainable turf management and to allow winter habitat for pollinators.

Village Gardens

The club maintains several community gardens in the village. Many volunteer hours are donated by members during the spring, summer, and fall to weed, water, supplement, mulch, and maintain each of these beautiful gardens.

1. **Cahill Park Butterfly Garden.** This garden boasts many varieties of butterfly friendly native plants, both perennials and annuals, which are clearly labeled using all-weather plant markers; as well as shallow vessels to hold water, and rocks and stones to provide a warm landing place for the butterflies. The garden has become a welcoming habitat for many species of butterflies, including the endangered Monarch.
2. **Lydell Community Center.** The landscaped entrance to this busy community center is filled with a variety of perennials and colorful annuals.
3. **Klode Park Native Garden.** This native garden is located in the popular lakefront park.
4. **Silver Spring Park Redevelopment.** Together with the village and the Milwaukee Sewerage District, Phase One of a revitalization plan was completed to create green infrastructure, including a bioswale and rain garden to keep runoff from entering the lake. In addition, the area was planted with native pollinator plants. Phase Two includes securing the bluff from invasive plants and will include ways to use the park for educational purposes.
5. **The Pollinator Pocket Project** represents a series of established and planned pollinator, insect, and butterfly friendly spaces running north from the Butterfly Garden in the playground at Cahill Park and including the field and wall prairie plantings at Cahill, the Community Gardens at the high school, the middle school gardens, the library, and Old Schoolhouse Park, Silver Spring Park and ending in the plantings at Klode Park.



WFB Garden Club Committees

Art in Bloom

This annual event, sponsored by the Milwaukee Art Museum (MAM), provides an opportunity to share our love of beauty, showcase innovative use of plant material, and demonstrate design principles. Each year this committee takes on a new design challenge as the members create a stunning floral arrangement inspired by a particular art piece from the Milwaukee Art Museum Collection. In 2019 the Garden Club was honored with a People's Choice Award.

Bay Day / Bird City

This committee works with other civic and village organizations to celebrate World Migratory Bird Day at Bay Day, an annual Spring event. The committee brings awareness to migrating birds and their needs, and threats to their migration.

To maintain the Village's Bird City USA designation, the committee also gives presentations in the schools to educate students about birds and their migration and what we can do to help their journey. The committee may do other projects to promote a healthy ecosystem for birds and pollinators.

Bylaws Committee

On a regular basis, the Bylaw Committee updates and revises the Bylaws. The Bylaws are essentially the rules by which the Club is governed and must reflect how the Club actually operates.

Fundraising...aka FUN-raising

The Fundraising Committee is responsible for planning and executing fundraisers to support the Club's projects. Past fundraisers include handcrafting and selling leaf vessels made from cement to be used in the garden or home; hand-made note cards featuring photos of butterflies, flowers, and plants; and hosting an authentic Chinese tea tasting event. This committee of both creative and detail-oriented members is always planning new and profitable "fun-raisers" to financially support the Club's many worthwhile community service projects.

Directory

The Directory Committee is responsible for publishing the Directory (or Yearbook as it was referred to in the past).

Philanthropy

The club allocates 10% of its net fundraising proceeds (after club dues to Milwaukee District and the Wisconsin Garden Club Federation). During the budgeting process in the spring, the club votes on how to allocate these discretionary funds.

Publicity

This committee publicizes the Club's meetings, events, and fundraisers to the Village and surrounding area as well as to the garden clubs of the Milwaukee District, Milwaukee Art Museum, and the Wisconsin Garden Club Federation. Maintenance of the Club's website, Facebook page, and Instagram and other social media also fall under the responsibilities of this committee.

Village Gardens

This committee is responsible for creating and maintaining a healthy and happy habitat for the area's many species of butterflies and birds by planting and maintaining native plants in public gardens across the Village, including: the butterfly gardens and landscape gardens at Cahill Park, Klode Park, Lydell School, Pollinator Pocket Parks, and other areas. The Cahill Butterfly garden, with its markers identifying native plants and diorama depicting the life cycle of a butterfly, is also used as an educational resource for neighboring schools. The Silver Spring Park project falls under this committee. The committee also hosts weed-outs to address unsightly and unsafe weed issues in our public spaces. The committee is particularly active in the fall and spring, with some occasional workdays in the summer.