

West-Win Homeowners' Association

Spring 2024 Newsletter



General Meeting ~ 7pm, Tuesday April 23rd

Winfield Township Road District Office ~ 30W575 Roosevelt Rd, West Chicago

- 6:30 ~ Welcome & check in.
- 7:00 ~ Brief business meeting and directors vote.
- 7:15 ~ Updates from Winfield Township Roads, DuPage County Forest Preserve & County Sheriff's Dept.
- 7:30 ~ 2 guest speakers: Fire Chief Steve Evans & Naturalist Pam Otto.
- 8:30 ~ Adjourn.

Have you ever wondered how the Fire Department and EMTs respond to emergencies in our area where there are few if any hydrants? Steve Evans, Fire Chief of the Winfield Fire Protection District, will be at our meeting to talk about the teamwork of his and many other fire departments when emergencies occur in our area. And no, they don't want to drain nearby ponds and swimming pools. He will also be available to answer questions both during and after the meeting.



We've got some interesting phenomena on tap for later this spring, including the emergence of Brood XIII, the 17-year cicadas, as well as reports from Cook County that the introduced spotted lanternfly has been spotted in the East Lakeview neighborhood. Pam Otto, a Naturalist and Outreach Ambassador with the St. Charles Park District, will be on hand to address these events as well as answer your nature questions. Pam has been featured as the "Nature Nerd" on WGN TV and YouTube.

Did you know the Morton Arboretum's Plant Clinic is a leading source of science-based advice about trees, plants, and landscapes helping gardeners to have healthy, attractive, well-chosen plants? You may call the Plant Clinic at 630-719-2424 or email your plant care questions to plantclinic@mortonarb.org.

"Those people who think they know everything are a great annoyance to those of us who do." — Isaac Asimov

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What's?... Eating Your Garden!!!

Nature is a beautiful thing, but sometimes it can wreak havoc on a garden. Insects and wildlife have to eat, of course, and when we lay out a veritable buffet, who can blame them for gorging? This is the natural order of things, and we should be happy to see monarch butterfly caterpillars munching milkweed leaves, or birds feasting on dogwood berries in our yards. Yet other critters can annihilate plants we don't want to share, such as food crops, prized blossoms, expensive trees and shrubs, or even the lawn. The first step to protecting your plants is identifying the culprit.

Rabbit damage results in clean cuts of stems, branches, flowers and foliage near ground level (except in winter, when snow mounds provide elevation; if the damage goes unnoticed until spring, it could be more than 3 feet high). Rabbits also gnaw bark at the bottom of tree trunks, especially over winter in cold areas, and can decimate a vegetable patch quicker than you can say, "What's up, Doc?" Then they pay for their meals by leaving "gifts" of round, dull brown, pea-size pellets behind. Applications of commercial repellents or blood meal, bone meal or cayenne pepper offer some benefit but need to be reapplied frequently, especially after rainfall. The most effective deterrent is a 30- to 36-inch chicken-wire fence with mesh openings smaller than 1 inch. Because rabbits like to dig, install the bottom of the fence 8 inches deep into the soil.

Deer, on the other hand, tear at plant material, which results in uneven, jagged damage to leaves. Their height also means they can destroy plants and trees as high as 6 feet off the ground. Deer droppings are oblong, shiny and darker than rabbits'. Deer repellents work somewhat, but constant reapplication to large trees and shrubs can make them cost-prohibitive, especially on large

properties in areas with large deer populations. As with rabbits, fencing is the only surefire solution. But not any fence will do. Deer can jump as high as 6 feet, so you'll need to install either a single 8-foot barrier, a 6-foot fence outwardly angled at 45 degrees, or two fences 3 feet tall and 4 feet apart (deer won't be able to scale both). You also might consider planting deer-resistant plants, but keep in mind that a hungry deer will eat anything, so no plant can be considered deer-proof.

Moles and voles are often confused with one another, but they are very different animals. Think of the "M" in Moles as standing for Meat-eaters. These insectivores mainly eat worms, grubs and other insects. Their tunneling results in cone-shaped mounds of soil above ground. Although you might think moles are killing your lawn, they are not. They are present in a lawn only because the soil beneath it contains food. If your lawn also contains dead or thinning patches of grass, that's due to grubs, not moles. Moles are solitary creatures that spend most of their lives underground, out of sight. Typically, only two to three moles inhabit one square acre of land. "V" is for Voles and for Vegetarian. You may know them as meadow mice, ground moles or field mice. These rodents feed on plant roots, grasses, seeds, spring bulbs, root vegetables and the bottoms of trees and shrubs. Voles multiply like rabbits, producing five to 10 litters of three to six young per year, and they create golf ball-size holes in the soil that lead to long, narrow tunnels. They also tend to infest cluttered properties. Discourage voles by eliminating plant and other debris, which provide them with food and shelter.

This article taken in part from the *Daily Herald* for West-Win members' benefit.



West-Win is a voluntary, information-sharing association in unincorporated Winfield Township that includes about 700 independent homeowners bounded by Warrenville, West Chicago, Wheaton & Winfield. If your newsletter was addressed to "Current Resident", or you're not yet a member, we invite you to join us! Annual dues are just \$25 & used for newsletter & website expenses. For your convenience a self-addressed envelope has been provided. If your letter indicates 2024 as your last paid membership year THANK YOU! Your support is greatly appreciated, and you have helped us to continue our efforts.



From the Office of Sheriff James Mendrick...

➤ Frozen Meals for Older Adults

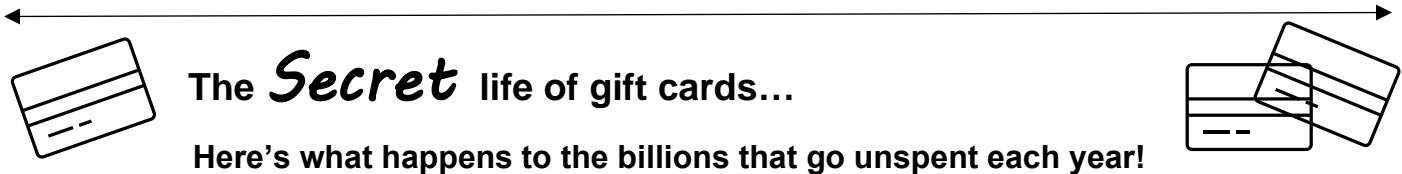
Via a partnership with the DuPage County Senior Citizens Council, residents 60 or older can sign up to pick-up frozen meals at the county complex or sign up for the Meals on Wheels Program. Residents can sign up by calling 630-407-2318 or 224-580-3748, DuPage Senior Citizens Council 630-620-0804 or info@dupageseniorcouncil.org

➤ DETERRA Drug Deactivation Kits

Sheriff James Mendrick announced that his office will offer free drug deactivation kits to residents. The DETERRA kits can deactivate drugs by placing water into the DETERRA kit and shaking the kit. This will neutralize the drugs inside and make them safe to throw away in the garbage. The DETERRA kit is also safe for the environment. Residents can pick up a DETERRA kit at no cost at the DuPage County Sheriffs Office.

Good to know...

The DuPage Senior Citizens Council is a not-for-profit 501c3, volunteer-driven organization dedicated to helping seniors live with dignity. It provides a variety of services for seniors, including Meals on Wheels, senior dining, health and wellness education, well-being checks, pet food and assistance, yard clean-ups, social connection services, and intergenerational activities.



The *Secret* life of gift cards...

Here's what happens to the billions that go unspent each year!

What happens to the money when a gift card goes unused? It depends on the state where the retailer is incorporated. Gift cards make great stocking stuffers — just as long as you don't stuff them in a drawer and forget about them after the holidays. Americans were expected to spend nearly \$30 billion on gift cards this past holiday season, according to the National Retail Federation. Restaurant gift cards are the most popular, making up one-third of those sales. Most of those gift cards will be redeemed. Paytronix, which tracks restaurant gift card sales, says around 70% of gift cards are used within six months. But many cards — tens of billions of dollars' worth — wind up forgotten or otherwise unused. That's when the life of a gift card gets more complicated, with expiration dates or inactivity fees that can vary by state. Here's what to know about the gift cards you're giving — or getting:

Loved, but lost...

After clothing, gift cards are the most popular present for a holiday season. Nearly half of Americans plan to give them, according to the National Retail Federation. But many will remain unspent. Gift cards get lost or forgotten, or recipients hang on to them for a special occasion. In a July '23 survey, the consumer finance company Bankrate found that 47% of U.S. adults had at least one unspent gift card or voucher with an average value of \$187. That's a total of \$23 billion.

The gift of time... Under a federal law that went into effect in 2010, a gift card can't expire for five years from the time it was purchased or from the last time someone added money to it. Some state laws require an even longer period. In New York, for instance, any gift card purchased after Dec. 10, 2022, can't expire for nine years. Differing state laws are one reason many stores have stopped using expiration dates altogether, says Ted Rossman, a senior industry analyst at Bankrate.

Use it or lose it...

While it may take gift cards years to expire, experts say it's still wise to spend them quickly. Some cards — especially generic cash cards from Visa or MasterCard — will start accruing inactivity fees if they're not used for a year, which eats away at their value. Inflation also makes cards less valuable over time. And if a retail store closes or goes bankrupt, a gift card could be worthless. Perhaps consider clearing out your stash on National Use Your Gift Card Day, a five-year-old holiday created by a public relations executive and now backed by multiple retailers. The next one is Jan. 18, 2025.

Or sell it...

If you have a gift card you don't want, one option is to sell it on a site like CardCash or Raise. Rossman says resale sites won't give you face value for your cards, but they will typically give 70 to 80 cents per dollar.

The money trail...

What happens to the money when a gift card goes unused? It depends on the state where the retailer is incorporated. When you buy a gift card, a retailer can use that money right away. But it also becomes a liability; the retailer has to plan for the possibility that the gift card will be redeemed. Every year, big companies calculate "breakage," which is the amount of gift card liability they believe won't be redeemed based on historical averages. For some companies, like Seattle-based Starbucks, breakage is a huge profit-driver. Starbucks reported \$212 million in revenue from breakage in 2022. But in at least 19 states — including Delaware, where many big companies are incorporated — retailers must work with state unclaimed property programs to return money from unspent gift cards to consumers. Money that isn't recovered by individual consumers is spent on public service initiatives; in the states' view, it shouldn't go to companies because they haven't provided a service to earn it.

Claim it...

All 50 states and the District of Columbia have unclaimed property programs. Combined, they return around \$3 billion to consumers annually, says Misha Werschkul, the executive director of the Washington State Budget and Policy Center. Werschkul says it can be tricky to find the holders of unspent gift cards, but the growing number of digital cards that name the recipient helps. State unclaimed property offices jointly run the website MissingMoney.com, where consumers can search by name for any unclaimed property they're owed, including cash from gift cards.

This article taken in part from the *Daily Herald* for West-Win members' benefit.



When pet parents think of what can be poisonous to their dogs, the things that come to mind are usually chocolate, grapes, antifreeze – the usual suspects. However, it's easy to overlook commonplace items like the plants we use to spruce up a room or cultivate a vibrant yard.

Certain plants can be aesthetically pleasing, but they can also cause problems if your dog chows down on them. That's why it's essential for pet owners to know which indoor plants are toxic to dogs in addition to outdoor plants. While this isn't an exhaustive list of toxic plants for dogs, the following are some of the more common toxic plants that may be around our homes or found in the yard: Azalea, Daffodils, Daisy, Hyacinth, Iris stems, Morning Glory, Rhododendron, Tomato plants and Tulips.

If you believe your dog has consumed a poisonous plant contact your veterinarian immediately. It can be helpful if you know or can identify the plant your pooch ingested. If your dog vomited, bringing a sample with you may be beneficial for testing, analysis and determining the proper treatment.

**Vote in Your Volunteers!
West-Win 2024 Sample Ballot – Vote for 4**

Directors:

- ____ Kathy Hydo (incumbent)
- ____ Eileen Kelly (incumbent)
- ____ Ralph Watt (incumbent)
- ____ Anthony Gosling
- ____ Jim Klang
- ____ Bill Kovacs
- Floor nominee _____

Current board members thru 2025 – Mary Bakas, Collette Klouda, Rose Kuntze, Tim Van Hiel Jr & past president Gib Van Dine



Judy Cummings, West-Win’s longest-term board member, has chosen to step down from the board after more than 45+ years of volunteer service. During her stay, Judy has always involved herself with the inside story of events and situations affecting the homeowners in our area. Her corresponding in-depth analyses and incisive opinions will be sorely missed.



Spotted lanternfly: A new invasive insect to be aware of?

With permission, excerpted from 09/27/23 article by Ken Johnson, Horticulture Director, University of IL Extension

Spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*) is a newer invasive pest in the United States that has recently been discovered in Illinois. They will feed on a wide range of woody plants, including fruit, ornamental, and woody trees. There is no need to panic, and they do not pose a threat to humans or animals, but you should be on the lookout for them.

What do they look like? Adult spotted lanternflies are about 1 inch long. The front pair of wings are gray with black spots, and the tips of the front wings have speckled bands. The back pair of wings are red with black spots and a white band. Their heads and legs are black, and their abdomens are yellow with black bands. The young nymphs are black with white spots. The last immature stage is red and black with white spots.

Why the concern?

Both nymphs and adults suck sap from stems, branches, and trunks. When large numbers of these insects start feeding on plants, it can reduce the vigor of the plants. Their feeding can also cause dieback on branches. The damage they cause while feeding (they have a piercing-sucking mouthpart) also creates an opening for pathogens to get into plants and cause disease. Their preferred host is tree of heaven, which wouldn’t necessarily be bad if they were the only plants they fed on since these trees can be invasive themselves. Unfortunately for us, spotted lanternflies will feed on over 100 different species of woody plants (trees and vines). Some of the other plants that spotted lanternflies will feed on include some economically important plants like grapes, hops, apples, stone fruit, black cherry, maples, tulip poplar, walnut, and willow.

Spread

Both the nymphs and adults are capable of jumping 6 to 9 feet. The adults can also fly short distances, although they often prefer to jump and glide. Individual insects are capable of traveling 3-4 miles on their own. However, like many of our other

invasive insects, much of their long-distance spread is due to humans. This most commonly happens by moving infested plant material or items that contain egg masses.

If you believe you have found a spotted lanternfly in Illinois, send a photo and a detailed email to lanternfly@illinois.edu and include where, when, and the specifics of the location. In addition, contact the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) at (815) 787-5476. The IDOA recommends that after reporting sightings, remove and destroy spotted lanternflies by crushing nymphs and adults

and scraping egg masses into a container with rubbing alcohol.

Go to <https://extension.illinois.edu/search> and type "Lanternfly" in the search box for more information and photos.

Good Tip: According to the USDA, spotted lanternflies are the easiest to spot at dusk or during the night as they move up and down the trunks of plants. During the day, they will often cluster near the base of the plant, making it hard to find them.

Chuckles

- ✓ I've started investing in stocks: beef, vegetable, chicken. One day I hope to be a bouillianaire.
- ✓ It's my 1st week working at the bicycle factory & they already made me a spokesperson.
- ✓ The man who fell into an upholstery machine is fully recovered.
- ✓ Scientifically, a raven has 17 primary wing feathers, the big ones at the end of the wing. They are called pinion feathers. A crow has 16. So, the difference between a raven and a crow is only a matter of a pinion.
- ✓ My friend Jack says he can communicate with vegetables. That's right...Jack and the beans talk.
- ✓ What do you call a row of rabbits hopping backwards? A receding hare line.

Riddle me this –

What do you get when you cross a bunny and a leaf blower?

Answer: A hare dryer!



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