

# Winnebago County Master Gardener March 2013

## Volunteer Newsletter

### Mission Statement

Our purpose is to provide horticultural education, community service and environmental stewardship for our community in affiliation with the University of Wisconsin Extension Program.

### Presidents' Letter

February may be the shortest month but it always feels very long to me, and this year it seems longer than ever! Last year was a lost year for me in the gardening world and I am anxious to get going!! Fortunately there are loads of activities to occupy our time. Several area gardening groups are offering educational programs—see our website for a listing of many of them.

The WCMGA Project Leads meeting February 27 is the kick-off point for many of our key projects. Hopefully, all the new members who have indicated interest in those projects have heard from the leads and, although it is too early for many projects to be up and running the teams are getting information about the timeline and planned activities. Please don't forget about the Tri-County Home and Garden Show March 22-24. This is a great opportunity to help Master Gardeners provide Community Education, and to get Continuing Education by attending some of the presentation. Cindy Meszaros and Joni Pagel do a wonderful job organizing this event, and in making all the participating members feel very welcome.

This time of year the group gets numerous requests to attend functions in the area to provide presentations, demonstrations, or information as various groups incorporate garden info in their fund raising activities. We will send out e-mails to the membership about these and give you a chance to participate.

Planning improvements to our own gardens is another great way to keep busy. The catalogs and websites are full of beautiful illustrations, the UW Learning Store has some new publications, and Lawanda Jungwirth continues to delight and inform with her Northwestern column. Grafted plants have been a special interest of mine for a few years and I really found good information about grafted tomatoes in her article. As most of you do, every year I run experiments in my garden evaluating culture practices, plant varieties, new ways to deter bunnies, etc. This year I am hoping to try some grafted tomatoes!!

Continuous improvement and making MG activities fun are two of our major goals. Please share your thoughts on these or other topics—it is your group!!

Stay well.

*Mary and Linda*

## Advisor's Note .....

Want to volunteer hours that can qualify as Youth Education! UW-Extension has the perfect opportunity for you.

Many of you may not be aware that last August UW-Extension hired Leonard Polzin as our new Youth Development and Science Educator. One of Leonard's responsibilities is overseeing the afterschool programs, which promotes activities using "4-H STEM". STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. Through these core focuses, STEM curriculums provide youth with hands-on experiences through problem-solving, experiments, computing, and additional areas that are being promoted as 21st century skill sets - preparing our youth for the many science-related jobs that will be available in their future. The afterschool programs promote STEM activities that offer students an additional educational outlet that may include everything from robotics, to mechanics, to agriculture, to HORTICULTURE, and much more!

The afterschool program will run for the rest of this school year and pick back up next August with the new school year. If you want to help with these activities, Leonard welcomes you and any ideas you might have. Volunteering can range from just showing up and helping with the activities, to helping plan the activities, to teaching the program. The choice is yours.

Below is the schedule of when and where the programs are. If interested in volunteering feel free to call Leonard directly to confirm a time when they are conducting horticulture activities. And if you have any questions please feel free to call myself or Leonard at 232-1970.

### Hoover Elementary in Neenah

- Every-other Tuesday from 4:00pm-5:00pm

### Maplewood Middle School in Menasha

- Every Thursday from 4:00pm-5:00pm

### E. Cook Elementary in Oshkosh

- Every Friday from 4:00-5:00 pm

### Lighted School House sites: Washington and Webster Stanley Elementary (Oshkosh)

- Thursday (Washington) or Monday (Webster Stanley) from 4:00-5:00pm– These two schools run on a rotation a few weeks at one school, then a series of a few weeks at the other.





## Black Plants in the Garden

*by....Lawanda Jungwirth*

Several years ago a fellow Master Gardener asked the group for information on black flowers because she wanted to make a black garden. I was a bit worried about her state of mind, but also intrigued because I had never seen a black flower.

This year's seed catalogs offer a plethora of black flowers, so the idea of black gardens must be catching on. A black flower garden with pops of silver, white or red could be quite dramatic.

Here are some of the black offerings I found in this year's seed catalogs.

Jung offers 'Black Velvet' petunias. Like all petunias, they grow well in containers and hanging baskets and do best in full sun. They grow to a height of 8-12".

Also from Jung is 'Black Coral' elephant ears. These large-leaved, tropical looking plants thrive in moist soil in full sun, but will do fine in lower light situations. They need a big pot and can be used for privacy screening or at the edge of pond or even submerged in shallow water at the pond's edge.

'Odessa' is a black calla lily from Jung. It has glossy black flowers with a blue sheen. The 5-6" flowers top 18-24" stems. One bulb produces enough stems to fill an 8" pot. Calla lilies can be planted in the ground but are not winter hardy so bulbs must be dug up and stored indoors in a cool, dark spot over the winter. They do best with bright morning sun but appreciate late afternoon shade. Bulbs should be planted 4-6" deep, 1-2' apart.

Jung's final black-flowered offering is a double hellebore called 'Onyx Odyssey' featuring blooms up to 3" across. These perennial plants grow in clumps to 18" tall and 25" wide. Hellebores are some of the earliest flowers to bloom in spring, possibly even before the snow melts. They prefer well-drained soil in dappled shade.

Johnny's Selected Seeds offers 'Black Knight' scabiosa with "almost black" blooms. Scabiosa is sometimes called pincushion flower. It is normally a perennial plant, but 'Black Knight' is not winter hardy and is considered an annual. Plants grow 24-36" tall and prefer full sun. Because they grow so tall so quickly, they may need staking. Seeds can be started indoors 4-6 weeks before the last frost or outdoors after the last frost. Scabiosas make good cut flowers.

Johnny's presents several black and very dark purple vegetables that could be mixed among the black flower garden to provide utility along with beauty. Some of their offerings include 'Purple Passion' asparagus; 'Royal Burgundy,' 'Amethyst' and 'Velour' bush beans; 'Red Noodle' pole beans; eight different dark purple to black eggplant varieties; several varieties of greens and lettuces that are such dark red as to be almost black; 'Indigo Rose' cocktail-sized tomatoes; and two purple basil that are very close to black.

Gardens Alive offers black fruits: blackberry, black raspberry, jostaberry and huckleberry.

Whether you are a flower gardener, a food gardener, or you like to mix it up, there are plenty of black flowers, fruits and veggies from which to choose.

36<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL



HOME & GARDEN SHOW

TRI-COUNTY ARENA

700 E. Shady Lane Neenah, WI 54956

MARCH 22-24, 2013

Oh, that it would be spring...and with the Home & Garden Show right around the corner the promise of spring is truly in the air. WCMGA will have a booth at the show with Master Gardner volunteers available to the public to answer questions and to share gardening information.

Come and visit the various vendors displaying home improvements, landscape ideas, foods, garden related classes, and our MG booth. We have display boards of "How to" grow vegetables, tree planting, conquering invasive species, composting, and the 2013 annuals, perennials, and hostas.

Reminders to our volunteers will be sent out two weeks prior to the show. Please remember to wear your WCMGA nametag as this also gives you admittance to the show.

We're looking forward to seeing you at the show where we can all share our enthusiasm for getting started with our 2013 gardening season.

Co Chairs: Cindy Meszaros 233-3550

Joni Pagel 233-6619



## FLOWER ARRANGING AT PARKVIEW

A creative group of master gardeners met on the 28th of January to make flower arrangement and share smiles and conversation with the residents. Our thanks to Helen Parker, Bob Potter, LuAnn Westenberger, Pat Behm, Dorothy Gayhart Kunz, Synda Jones, Patti Schmitz, Janet Priebe, Dorothy Bonnin and Lil Hansche.

The next time we meet at Parkview is March 25th.

Bring a smile and  
join us.

### Flower Arranging

2013 dates are:

March 25

April 22

May 20

June 17

July 15

July 29 (the county fair bouquets)

August 12

September 23

October 7

November 18

December 2

### **Tax Exempt Businesses**

When you purchase something for the Master Gardeners, please make sure you're not being charged tax. These businesses have already been used by members and will give a tax exempt when you check out:

A&T Industries  
Allenville Nursery  
Cooney's Embroidery  
Country Corners Greenhouse - Omro  
4 Imprint  
Fleet Farm  
Graphic Point  
Honeymoon Acres Rosehill Gardens - Green Bay  
Hrnak's  
JoAnn Fabrics - FDL  
Kinko's  
Little Village Greenhouse - Larsen  
Lowe's  
Michaels - Appleton  
Menard's  
Office Max  
Pansy's - Neenah  
Shopko  
Staples  
Stein's  
Stuart's  
Wal Mart - each person must register

**Newsletter Contributions**  
To contribute an article or more to the Newsletter contact Diana Dougherty at 233-7137 or email to [dldoug5@charter.net](mailto:dldoug5@charter.net)

## Grafted Vegetables

*By Lawanda Jungwirth*

You probably learned in middle school science class about how the top of one kind of apple tree is grafted onto the roots of another apple tree to make a better tree. This process is often used to “dwarf” a tree - a good productive tree top is grafted onto roots that will keep the tree from growing too tall, making harvest much easier.

The grafting process has been used on vegetables in Asia for a century and today in Japan over 90% of melons, cucumbers, tomatoes and eggplants are grafted, but the process was introduced in the U.S. only 20 years ago. This year, several mail order nurseries are offering grafted tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants.

Vegetable grafting is similar to fruit tree grafting in that the rootstock is selected for vigor and disease resistance and the top of the plant, the scion, is chosen for fruit flavor and quality. Many growers see 50% increases in yield over non-grafted vegetable plants.

One of the huge benefits of growing grafted vegetables is avoidance of soil-borne diseases. When you buy a hybrid tomato plant, you often see a list of letters after the plant name. It usually starts out VFN and more letters may follow, such as T, A, and St. These letters mean the plant has been bred to be resistant to verticillium wilt, fusarium wilt, nematodes, tobacco mosaic virus, alternaria stem canker, and stemphylium gray leaf spot. The downside of all this hybridizing to avoid disease is often that good tomato flavor is bred right out of it.

Heirloom vegetables are those that have been in existence for 50 years or more, and are very tasty. Their downside is that they often succumb to the diseases listed above.

When the top of an heirloom plant is grafted onto the roots of a hybrid plant, you have the best of both worlds. Not only do you have a plant producing superior tasting fruit, you have a disease resistant plant that reduces or eliminates the need for pesticides, grows more vigorously, and produces more fruit for a longer time period. Grafted plants are especially good for organic gardeners and for those who don't have space to rotate crops from year to year to avoid soil-borne diseases.

Planting a grafted tomato plant is a bit different from planting a regular tomato plant. You must be careful not to bend or put pressure on the graft. With a regular tomato you should remove some bottom leaves and set the plant deep into the soil, but a grafted plant should be set at the same level as it was in the nursery pot, keeping the graft well above soil level.

Grafting is a labor-intensive process, so they are more expensive. You might buy a 3-pack of hybrid plants for a dollar, but you will pay \$7 to \$13 for just one grafted plant. But if you've been unsuccessful growing tomatoes, peppers or eggplants and really want that just-picked fresh flavor, maybe you'd like to give grafted vegetables a try.

## **Master Gardeners Business Meeting**

**February 12, 2013**

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 by Mary Shepard

Presentation: Stuart's Nursery

Chad Muche from Stuart's Nursery presented on the "Best Plants of 2012". Chad did a wonderful presentation on the annuals, perennials, shrubs and trees of 2012.

Annuals of 2012; Black Velvet Petunia, Picobella Salmon Petunia, Sky Blue Petunia, Bubble Gum Petunia, Diamond frost Euphorbia, Marquerite Sweet Potatoe Vine, Ace of Spades Sweet Potato Vine, Purple Fountain Grass, Sedona Coleus, Versa Lime Coleus, Sun Patiens, Sun Patiens Magenta, King Tut and King Tut Baby Grass

Perennials; Stacys Hummelo Lambs Ear, Coreopsis Route 66, Astilbe Visions in Red, Heuchera Peach Flame, May Knights Salvia, Russian Sage Little Spire, Purple Coneflower

Shrubs; Wine and Roses Weigela, My Monet Weigela, Little Lime Hydrangea, Vanilla Strawberry Hydrangea, Summerwine Ninebark, Little Devil Ninebark, Magic Carpet Spirea, Dwarf Norway Spruce, Rose-Sunrise Sunset, Rose-My-Girl, Rose Mystic Fairy, Rose Ramblin Red.

Trees; Cleveland Select Pear, Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry, Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry, Celebration Maple, Golden Raindrops Crab, Purple Prince Crab, Freedom Apple, Liberty Apple, Superior Plum, Reliance Peach.

### **Treasures Report: Sue Egner**

Handouts were supplied for January. Current membership is 111.

All accounts as of 1/30 were \$16943.98

### **Secretary's Report: Mary Jo Maher**

Minutes for the board meeting are listed on the web site

All minutes for the business meetings have been submitted for the newsletter

### **State Report:**

Information was supplied for the Fond du Lac Master Gardeners Seminars, along with information on the Gottfried Prairie at the Fond du Lac UW- Campus

### **Education Committee:**

Mary thanked the Education Committee for the hard work and success of the “Winter Escape, Summer Dreams event. There were 216 attendees.

Roy Anne Moulton presented the future trip to “The Gardens of the Canadian Northwest”

This trip be on June 22, flying from Outagamie airport to Vancouver, British Columbia. Gardens to be visited are; VanDusen Botanical Garden, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden and the gardens of the University of British Columbia.

There will be a ferry ride to Vancouver Island, Victoria city. Butchart Gardens, Hatley Gardens and Abkhazi Gardens will be visited.

The trip will return on June 29. Cost will be \$2400 or less. If you are interested, please email [royanne@new.rr.com](mailto:royanne@new.rr.com).

### **New Business**

Project Lead meeting will be February 27 at 5:30.

Home and Garden show will be March 22-24 at Tri-County Arena.

### **UW Extension Updates: Kimberly Miller**

Save the date for “Diagnosing Tree and Shrub Diseases and Pest” with speakers Brian Hudelson and Phil Pellitteri. This will be in Oshkosh on August 20, Appleton on August 21, Green Bay August 22, Wausau August 13.

“Got Dirt” will be held on February 28 at the J.P. Coughlin Center at 6:00-9:00 p.m., cost is \$5.00

### **Presentation: Farmers Market in Oshkosh by Dorothy Gayhart-Kunz**

The farmers market consists of half produce and half crafts held on Saturdays during the summer.

This counts as education points. There will be a sign up sheet in March for volunteers

### **Presentation: Parkview by William and Tom Weber**

This project was started for a cutting garden for the Parkview residence. The residence visit on Tuesdays to make arrangements of the fresh cut flowers.

The gardens are in a park like setting. Residences are able to visit the gardens and enjoy them. There are about half perennials and half annuals. Some plants are donated by local high schools from their greenhouses.

There are also vegetable gardens with beans, pole beans, squash,

Water has been run out to the gardens this year.

They are talking of a possible memorial for John Procknow. There was discussion of a possible orchard or roses to be planted in John's memory.

**Presentation: Webster Stanley and Washington Schools by Marge Menacher**

Marge presented the after school learning program at Webster Stanley and Washington School. This is from 3:00-5:00 for five weeks. Some activities include planting of seeds, plant parts, soil and making cold frames and raised beds.

Both schools have woodland areas that need attention.

**Down the Garden Path Books**

Please return all books so inventory can be taken

Shelia from the Paine Center will be the speaker at the next meeting.

**Next Meeting March 12, 2013 @ 6:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jo Maher, Secretary

Winnebago County Master Gardeners

## Winnebago County Master Gardeners Board of Directors

### Co-Presidents

Mary Shepard 235-9242

Linda Petek 233-5730

### Co-Vice Presidents

Ivan Placko 721-9394

Jane Kuhn 231-3993

Secretary Mary Jo Maher 915-2506

Treasurer Sue Egner 231-1729

### Members

Linda Baeten 232-1224

Pat Behm 410-3290

Susan Bohn 685-0427

Carole Dorsch 589-5936

Diana Dougherty 233-7137

Marge Menacher 233-3467

Roy Anne Moulton 886-1283

Anne Murphy 379-7132

Dara Sitter 420-0620

## COMMITTEES

Education and Trips	Roy Anne Moulton	886-1283
Education – Meetings	Linda Petek	233-5730
June Picnic	Kathy Daniels	233-0410
	Mary Wiedenmeier	426-0991
Membership	Dawn Kent	410-8866
Newsletter	Diana Dougherty	233-7137
	Anne Murphy	379-7132
	Lawanda Jungwirth	836-2878
	Jane Kuhn	231-3993
Refreshment Committee	Linda Loker	426-1435
State Rep	Sue Bohn	685-0427
SOP & Bylaw Committee	Ivan Placko	721-9394
	Jane Kuhn	231-3993
	Alice Graf	203-8252
Sunshine	Diana Dougherty	233-7137
Hours	Patty Schmitz	420-1676
Home & Garden Shows	Joni Pagel	233-6619
	Cindy Meszaros	233-3550
Website	Jean Reed	729-9012

## CORE PROJECTS

Community Education	Marge Menacher	233-3467
Community Gardens	Ruth Freye	734-5978
Education and Control of Invasive Species		
	Lawanda Jungwirth	836-2878
	Audrey Ruedinger	231-5745
Farmers Market	Dorothy Gayhart Kunz	233-8468
	Janet Priebe	233-1898
Home & Garden Shows	Joni Pagel	233-6619
	Cindy Meszaros	233-3550
Humane Society Reflection Garden	Dara Sitter	582-4405
Lincoln School	Linda Christensen	233-0044
	Mary Haave	231-2542
Octagon House	Jerry Robak	722-3311
Paine Gardens	Betty Kuen	558-9586
Park View Cutting Garden	Bill Weber	231-2936
Park View Vegetable Garden	Tom Weber	233-3729
Park View Prairie Garden	Ken Hawk	426-1691
Park View Flower Arranging	Pat Behm	410-3290
Plant Health Advisors @ UWEX	Ann Gratton	231-3015
Shared Harvest	Ken Friedman	235-6766
Washington & Webster Schools	Marge Menacher	233-3467
The Wild Center	Mary Wiedenmeier	426-0991

*March 2013*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5 MG Board meeting 6:00	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 MG Business meeting 6:00	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
					Tri-County Home and	Garden Show through Sunday
24	25 Flower Arranging Parkview 1:30	26	27	28	29	30
31  Easter						

*April 2013*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 MG Board meeting 6:00	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 MG Business meeting 6:00	17	18	19	20
21	22 Flower Arranging Parkview 1:30	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				