

WIMGA



WISCONSIN MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION
Serving its members since 1992

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WIMGA Vision - The Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association will be the collective voice for the local Master Gardeners Associations and individual members in active support for their horticultural projects and services; build networks to enhance outreach, share ideas and promote projects; and help extend UW-Extension's educational role to the public.

2017 Masters at the Prairie Conference

Vicky Hopp, Committee Chair, Washington County MGV

On October 13-14, 2017, Washington County Master Gardeners hosted the 2017 WIMGA Conference at the West Bend Mutual Insurance Company. Friday night attendance totaled 140 and 179 Master Gardeners attended the WIMGA Conference on Saturday.

The conference began with a vendor show in the afternoon. There were 15 vendors from Dane, Door, Calumet, Milwaukee, Sheboygan, Ozaukee, and Washington Counties selling everything from honey and maple syrup, to garden art.

2017 Masters at the Prairie began Friday evening with Susan Carpenter of the University of Wisconsin – Madison Arboretum. Susan encouraged gardeners to grow more native plants in their landscape. Wisconsin prairies provide inspiration and a diverse native plant palette for our gardens and landscapes. She highlighted versatile, sustainable, and beautiful prairie gardens and provided practical tips for creating and maintaining native plantings.

Martine and Edgar Anders from Fragrant Isle Lavender Farm were the keynote speakers for the Conference providing attendees with a history of the Midwest's largest lavender farm. Edgar spoke on research based information he obtained from the University of

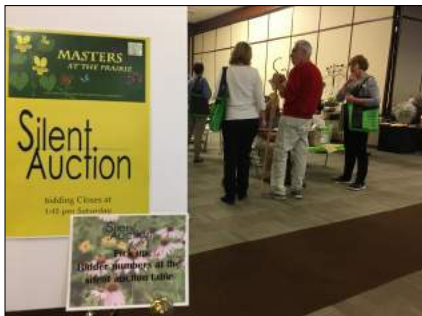
Oregon on growing lavender. A couple of tips from Edgar on growing lavender:

- Space lavender three feet apart
- Prune back lavender beginning in mid September and then again in mid October.

A delicious breakfast of fruit and homemade granola bars began our conference on Saturday. Break-out session topics ranged from Succulents to Winter Gardening with Micro greens. Conference evaluations scored most speakers four or more on a scale of five. The only complaint of the conference was that rain canceled our Prairie walk. West Bend Mutual sits on 120 acres of mostly reclaimed prairie. The facility scored high compliments for its beauty and accessibility.

Thank you to all the Master Gardeners who attended the 2017 Masters at the Prairie Conference and for making this conference such a success. Thank you, also, to all the counties who donated to the Silent Auction. We had over 120 items for the auction. And, **“Thank You”** to the Washington County Master Gardeners who worked on this project. Without your hard work this conference would not have been such a success.

2017 WIMGA Conference Photos



President's Greetings

Thanks to everyone who attended the Board Meeting at the 2017 Masters at the Prairie state conference in October. Your input was valuable, and I hope you have been able to share some of the information from the meeting and the conference with your local members.

Welcome to a new Local Representative, Ruth Cline, who replaces Barb Herreid in Wood County. We still have vacancies for local representatives from Adams County, Portage County, Racine-Kenosha, and Rock Prairie MG groups. The Central District has elected Linda Dahlke from Marquette County as Director, replacing Lynn Caine from Portage County. In July, Rose Kennedy was elected by the Board to finish out Jim Culbertson's term as At-Large Director.

Last year WIMGA updated the roles and responsibilities of directors and local representatives. Please note that district directors are ALSO local representatives, so they need to cover both sets of duties.

Send the dates of your garden seminars to me at buckhill@centurylink.net. I will see that these garden seminar dates are posted on the WIMGA website.

Website update: a committee of Karin Peacock, Ellen Terwilliger, Marilyn Gorham, Cathy Lombard, Vicky Hopp, Byron Hacker and myself have been working on clarifying who the audience is for this website (YOU!) and its use. We hope to be meeting soon with the webmaster to make some changes in layout and design to make the site more useful. In the meantime, you can find the WIMGA marketing power-point by clicking on "Our Story" at the website: <https://wimga.org/>

Thank you for your willingness to be a leader in WIMGA to help serve our members across the state! Please let me know if I can answer any questions or help you in any way. Enjoy your winter garden projects!

Becky Gutzman, WIMGA President

Become a WIMGA Board Member

Are you interested in becoming more involved in the MG program beyond your own local association and helping MGVs throughout the state? Elections are held every year to select one Wisconsin MGV to serve a 3-year term as an At-Large Director on the WIMGA Board (3 of the 15 Directors are At-Large; the remaining 12 are selected from the Local Reps in each of the six districts). The At-Large Directors represent all MGVs in the state, not just their own associations. They are expected to attend five in-person Board meetings at a central location in the state and serve on WIMGA committees.

The Board is now soliciting nominations for this position. Only certified MGVs are eligible. Nominees must submit a short bio (preferably by email) to Hali Dessecker at halirenee@yahoo.com by February 1 to be included on the ballot that will be published in the March newsletter.

Dues Reminder

Don't forget the deadline for submitting your WIMGA dues (\$5) to the WIMGA Treasurer is January 15, 2018. If you belong to a local association they should collect and submit your dues as a group. Individuals can send in their own payment if they live in a county without an association.

Local association treasurers should send a check made payable to WIMGA along with a list of their current members, current address and email to WIMGA Treasurer Byron Hacker: N4511 Hwy 57, Chilton, WI 53014.

Also, please send an electronic list of members to Byron at plantdr47@gmail.com and a copy to Susan Mahr, MG Program Coordinator at semahr@wisc.edu.

Payments SHOULD NOT be sent to the MG Program Office. If you have questions, contact Byron at (920)849-2654.

The Kids In The Garden

Caprice Ellefson and Sandy Vold, Crawford County Master Gardeners

Kids in the Garden (KIG), recipient of the Wisconsin Parks and Recreation Association 2017 Silver Award for the best youth program in Wisconsin, started as a seed of an idea by Crawford County MGV Donna Teynor. Teynor, who has enjoyed working with her children, grandchildren, and now has a great-granddaughter in the garden, says she first got the idea for KIG several years ago as she watched a young mother with several small children weed a garden on St. Feriole Island in Prairie du Chien. The children started out playing, but soon came over to help with the weeding. "I thought," said Teynor, "that it would be fun to get kids involved in the garden."

At the time, Teynor was far too busy working to do anything about her idea, but she started writing down her thoughts. Last winter, after she retired, she came across her notes and pictures of the little kids she'd seen pulling weeds, and decided to take action. She put together an outline of the plan and continued to refine it, then contacted the City of Prairie du Chien's Parks and Recreation department which generously set aside an area of St. Feriole Island Memorial Gardens for this project. She was hoping to attract six or eight children a day. Instead, an average of 15-20 kids came to each session, with 27 children at one of the afternoon sessions!

The group met twice a month from mid-June to mid-August, with sessions scheduled for 10-11 a.m. and 4-5 p.m. Children ages five to 14 were invited, with an adult, to enjoy learning about gardening and all of the beauty and mystery of nature. The afternoon sessions proved a bit more popular, probably due to working parents. Several other MGVs came to assist Teynor with the classes.



The project started off with the children getting hands-on involvement in planting their own seeds and annual flower plants in raised beds. They made plant labels to identify

their own planting area. Each time they showed up they could see the progress where their seeds had sprouted and grown, and their flowers were strong and blooming.

Over the course of the summer, the children learned about:

- ◇ Planting and caring for a garden (from seed and from plants)
- ◇ Honey bees (don't be afraid of them, be respectful)
- ◇ Monarchs (what to do to attract them to your garden)
- ◇ Hummingbirds (how to feed them so that you can enjoy them)
- ◇ Bug hotels (to encourage beneficial bugs to your garden)
- ◇ Seed bombs and harvesting their garden along with a scavenger hunt

Each session included tastings. One of the most popular tastings was when honey bees as pollinators were discussed. The fresh honeycomb was an instant hit with the kids. Also offered as tastings was actual produce from some of the garden area that were planted early by Donna such as radishes, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, spinach and lettuce leaves and kohlrabi. There was usually a sit-down instructive lecture on the subject for that session. The session wrapped up with a book walk that allowed the older children to read the pages to the younger children.



At the last session, Teynor asked for feedback from the parents and the kids. One mom was impressed by the themes of the classes, the number of things the kids got to do and try, and especially the fact that the kids could taste the vegetables. All in all, Teynor said, the children probably liked the story walks the best, but also listed as highlights digging in the dirt and trying

Send your articles on projects or accomplishments to WIMGA Newsletter Committee Chair, Hali Dessecker at halirenee@yahoo.com

new foods. Changes the kids suggested included making bird houses, cleaning the park, and growing more food.

Next year, Teynor plans to add more stories to the story walk, including bees, Monarch butterflies and ants. A \$400 grant from the Wisconsin Master Gardener Association should help cover some of the costs. She also wants to add a unit on composting and adjust the schedule a bit. "We found," she said, "that some things were done too early and some too late."



Children and adults, inspect growth on vines the children planted. Donna Tenor is second from right in the photo

Poinsettia Care

Tim Jergensen, Agricultural Agent, UW-Extension-Barron County

Information in this article comes from "Care of Poinsettias" the University of Minnesota Extension.



Poinsettias brighten our homes during the Holiday Season and with proper care can be a year round potted plant. The poinsettia thrives on bright, sunny natural day-

light; at least six hours daily is recommended. Placement near a sunny window is ideal. To prolong the bright red of the bracts, temperatures ideally should not exceed 70° F during the day, or fall below 65° F at night.

Poinsettias do best with a moist soil condition, not too wet and not too dry. Water the poinsettia thoroughly when the soil surface feels dry to a light touch. The best indication of a thorough watering is when the water begins to seep through the drain holes at the bottom of the inner pot. Water just enough so the water barely begins to seep through these holes.

It is not necessary to fertilize your poinsettias when they are blooming during the holiday season. However, after 6-8 weeks, a balanced, all-purpose household plant fertilizer mixed ½-strength will help maintain the rich, green foliage color and promote new growth. Repeat once more in another 6-8 weeks.

If you wish to enjoy the beauty of your poinsettia throughout the year as an attractive green foliage plant, then at the end of April or early May, when the bracts age and begin to turn a muddy green, cut the plant back to about 8 inches. The amount you cut from the top will depend on the shape of the plant. Some plants will need to have more cut than others to achieve a full, rounded canopy. After you cut the plant back, it will probably look rather stark, with bare

branches and bluntly cut woody stems. This is not the plant's most attractive state, but by the end of May you will see vigorous new growth as the plant develops more lush green foliage. Keep the plants near a sunny window.

You may place your plants outdoors where they can bask in the warmth of summer when the outside night temperatures are warmer. Continue to water the plants regularly during the growing period. Fertilize every 3 to 4 weeks throughout the spring, summer and fall months with a well-balanced fertilizer mixed ½-strength.

Around June 15th you may wish to transplant your poinsettias into larger pots, about 2" to 4" bigger than the original inner pot. Use a soil mix that incorporates a considerable amount of organic matter such as peat moss.

Starting October 1, the plants must be kept in complete darkness for 14 continuous hours each night. This can be accomplished by moving the plants to a dark room or placing a large box over them. During this period, the plants require 6 to 8 hours of bright sunlight and night temperatures between 60° and 70° F. If the temperature is too high or too low, the setting of the flower buds may be delayed or halted. The blooming process may also be delayed or disrupted by any stray light that may shine near the plants during the critical darkness period. This regimen must continue for approximately 8 to 10 weeks in order for the plants to develop a colorful display of blooms for the holiday season. Obviously, the re-flowering process takes more than a little vigilance, perseverance and patience to be successful.

WIMGA Educational Grants—Awarded 2017

Amount	Group	Project
\$100 (3)	Grant Co.	Level 1 Training Equipment
	Winnebago Co.	Funding for Winter Escape- Summer Dreams Conference
	Vilas Co.	Hand garden tools for school/student gardens
\$250 (9)	Bluff Country	Spring Conference Silent Auction Funding
	Calumet Co.	Small Garden Tiller & Products for Community Garden
	Crawford Co.	Rain Garden Sign in Katie's Garden
	Grant Co.	Driftless Area Garden Conference
	Portage Co.	Display Board about Portage Co. MG
	Racine-Kenosha	Hort. Gardens at Union Grove Veteran's Home
	Washington Co.	Supplies for Children's Day @ Farmers Market
	Winnebago Co.	Morgan House Landscaping Project Historical Dist.Oshkosh
	Wood Co.	Shrub Display in a Community Park
\$400 (7)	Bluff Country	"Spring Into Gardening" Conference Speaker
	Calumet Co.	Educational Program Speakers for MG's & Public
	Crawford Co.	"Kids in the Garden" Program.
	Dodge Co.	Youth MG's Build Bat Houses
	Marquette Co.	Interactive Prairie Walking Trail in Montello
	Vilas Co.	Spring/Fall Garden Plants for School/Student Gardens
	Washington Co.	Speakers for Public/ MG Events

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Spring Education Seminars

First Saturday Robert Mongin Garden Lecture Series presented by Northeast Wisconsin Master Gardener Association at the Neville Public Museum, Green Bay. Programs are on Saturday 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. and cost is \$45 for all three or \$15 each. For registration information and a brochure, visit

browncountyextension.org or call 920-391-4610.

- **February 3, 2018:** Interesting New Perennials for Your Garden with Nancy Nedveck of The Flower Factory, Stoughton plus; New Herbaceous Hybrid Peonies by Nate Bremer of Solaris Farms, Reedsville
- **March 3, 2018:** Prairie Plants for Urban & Suburban Gardens, Neil Diboll, Prairie Nursery, Westfield
- **April 7, 2018:** From Seed Starting & Plant Selection to Season Extending Crops, Eben Erhard, Natural Beauty Growers, Denmark

February 3, 2018: Ready, Set, Grow Winter Garden Seminar presented by Eau Claire Master Gardeners at the Chippewa Valley Technical College in Eau Claire, WI from 8:45 a.m.—3:15 p.m. Keynote presentation subject is pollinators of all kinds. Other subjects include backyard beekeeping, developing community gardens, creating diversity in our tree population, new plant varieties, cacao plantations of Costa Rica, garden herbs, and exploring renewable energy. There will be a workshop on developing your own tea varieties. Also, we will be raffling off a handmade quilt. For more information contact the Eau Claire County Extension Office at 715-839-4712.

February 9—11, 2018: Wisconsin Public Television's Garden Expo. Hosted by Wisconsin Public Television and the UW-Extension Horticulture Team, this event draws nearly 20,000 people to experience nearly 400 exhibitor booths. More than 150 seminars, demonstrations and workshops are offered on a variety of horticultural topics. The event is held at the Exhibition Hall of the Alliant Energy Center, Madison WI. A fee is charged and all proceeds from the event support Wisconsin Public Television. For details, visit wigardenexpo.com

February 17, 2018: Think Spring Seminar hosted by the Chippewa Valley Master Gardener Association at the Avalon Hotel and Conference Center, Chippewa Falls. Lectures, workshops, vendors, and lunch; call 715-726-7950 for registration info.

February 17, 2018: Winnebago County Master Gardeners **Winter Escape, Summer Dreams 2018.** Speakers include Mark Dwyer, Director of Horticulture at Rotary Botanical Gardens, Mark Schwartz, Distinguished Professor of Geography, UW-Milwaukee, Bernie Williams from the Wisconsin DNR, and MGJ Jennifer Lasewski. For a full program and to register go to www.winnebagomastergardeners.org.

March 10, 2018: Spring into Gardening. One day event offering educational sessions on gardening and plant related topics. Program brochure will be available online January 1, 2018 on the Kenosha County UW-Extension website (kenosha.uwex.edu) and the Racine County UW-Extension website (racine.uwex.edu). The event is held at Westosha Central High School, Salem, WI.

March 24, 2018: Let's Get Green and Growing by Columbia County Master Gardeners. 9:00 am – 3:00 pm at Rio High School. Keynote speaker is David Wanninger from Boerner Botanic Gardens; breakout sessions, vendors, book/magazine swap; lunch available for purchase. Registration \$10; brochures available after January 26, 2018 from buckhill@centurylink.net

April 7, 2018: Barron County Master Gardeners **Spring Expo**, Saturday, 8:30 a.m. - 2:45 p.m., WITC Conference Center, Rice Lake. Keynote speaker is Debbie Lonnee from Bailey Nurseries in the Twin Cities featuring cold climate gardening. Also presenting will be Crystal Schmidt on rare and unique edibles and Susan Frame on integrated pest management. Cost \$30, includes lunch, for more information contact Barron County-UW Extension, <http://barron.uwex.edu>, or call 715-537-6250

For more Educational Seminars visit the Wisconsin Master Gardener Program website at www.wimastergardener.org



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The Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association Newsletter is published 6 times a year (January, March, May, July, September and November) dedicated to providing horticulture education and information about the Master Gardener program to state association members. The newsletter is published in the Horticulture Department at the UW-Madison.

Articles, artwork and ideas are welcome, but final selection and editing are the responsibility of the editorial staff.

Visit the WIMGA Website at

<http://www.wimga.org/>

