

Winnebago County Master Gardeners

Newsletter

April 2018

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.

“So many seeds,

So little yard...”



Picture by our new photographer, Kim Willman.

Letter from Your Presidents

Kathy Schultz & Linda Loker

April showers....

Last year we saw Snowdrops in March, but haven't seen any yet this year. Hopefully as this letter is viewed we will be seeing some of our spring beauties! This is the month that we gardeners start our season's journey into our yards and in our MG projects. Some of us have been caught outside in March - picking up the multitude of twigs this year!!!

We had a very successful March business meeting with our project leads hosting a signup event. Everyone had the opportunity to check out each of the projects and ask questions. Thank you to all the leads for being our very important resource to the organization's projects. For members not at the meeting and wondering about these projects, they are listed in the newsletter, with contact information, each month. A meeting for our project leads was held on March 20, hosted by our Vice Presidents, Eric Kropp and Nancy Karuhn. The leads were given guidelines and updates from the extension. Thank you to all who attended, and to Eric and Nancy for a successful meeting!

Jumping Worms is now a newly added committee on the Invasive Species project. Winnebago Co has identified them in our midst and our organization will do its best to get the word out to the community in controlling their presence...and we think we are off to a good start thanks to committee chairs, Sue Egner, Nancy Karuhn and Julie Birschbach. As we all start digging into our projects, please be mindful of these little critters this year, and the guidelines that have been created in attempts to decrease their spread.

The Education Committee has 2 trips planned this season - May 1 bus trip to Montello will educate members on hydroponic type gardening, and July 30-31 bus trip to Door Co will take us to the [lavender fields of Washington Island](#), a visit to [UW-Madison Agricultural Research Station](#) and the [Door Co Master Gardeners garden](#). Check for more information inside the newsletter on these exciting events going on in our organization. The committee also has 2 workshops scheduled at Neenah Public Library, and has other events in the works for educating our community - watch the newsletter for more information on how you can volunteer.

Our Scholarship Committee (Jane Kuhn, Donna Kudlas and Vickie Daniels) have been very busy and very productive - they will be sharing their good news with us at a business meeting soon!

June 12 is our picnic. It is in place of our normal business meeting, and is held at Parkview Health Center. It is a nice time to get together for fellowship and a great kick off to summer!

As we think about the summer months we would like to ask a few of our members to open their gardens for a garden walk as we enjoy and appreciate our own and each other's garden efforts. Let us know if you are interested. We thank you for your consideration.

Our speaker for April will be Andy Maracini, MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) Permit Coordinator for Winnebago Co.

*"And Spring arose on the garden fair,
Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere;
And each flower and herb on Earth's dark breast
rose from the dreams of its wintry rest."
- Percy Bysshe Shelley, The Sensitive Plant*

Kathy and Linda

Opportunity for Spring Hours - Garlic Pull

Date: Sat., May 5

Time: 10:00 AM

Where: Conservancy Park (behind Oshkosh North HS)

Meet at: 931 Park Ridge Ave., Oshkosh (Sue Egner's house)

What to bring: gloves, digger (long and narrow), larger pail

There are 4 areas that are close to Sue's home, which is opposite of the south west entrance to the park. If the weather is stormy, we will meet the following Sat., May 12.

What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am a mid-spring blooming, perennial bulb in the lily family that grows from 4 to 8 inches tall with floppy, narrow green leaves that emerge in early spring and are followed by fragrant, blue-purple flowers. Each bulb produces 1 to 3 flower stalks with 20 to 40 tightly-packed flowers per stalk. I prefer sun to part sun, soil that is sandy, free draining and alkaline and am hardy in zones 3 through 9. In fall new leaves will grow and are a reminder of the pretty blooms coming the following spring.

My bulbs should be planted in fall, 3-4 inches apart and 2-3 inches deep. Propagation can also be by division in late summer when plants are dormant. In some situations I can become invasive so care should be taken to plant where you don't mind spreading. I work well in rock gardens, along walkways and paths and in containers. I am low-maintenance, deer resistant and attract bees.

WCMGA Contacts

Check your membership guide for contact information.

Co-Presidents: Linda Loker & Kathy Schultz

Co-Vice Presidents: Nancy Karuhn & Eric Kropp

Secretary: Ann Abraham

Treasurer: Joni Pagel

Advisor: Kimberly Miller

Newsletter Compilation: Anne Murphy



Time To Plan This Year's Garden

By Lawanda Jungwirth

Longer days and warmer temperatures signal that it's time to begin serious planning of this year's garden. Seed catalogs were mailed months ago and the big box stores have seed offerings on prominent display.

It's a good idea to begin with a list of everything you want to plant including seeds, purchased seedlings, and larger items like trees, shrubs and vines. The list may be exactly the same as last year's or it may itemize different plants for a newly developed garden bed or landscape area. Why not page through your favorite garden catalog and make a dream list – what you would buy if you could purchase every plant you desire? Probably the initial list will be overly ambitious and way too long, but that's fine for now.

Check to find out if you have seed left or saved from prior years or if you'll have to purchase new. As for plants, do you need to buy all those on your list or does a friend or neighbor perhaps have plants to divide?

Once you have a wish list, look at your budget – don't forget to include containers, potting soil, fertilizer, watering cans, hoses, etc. – and give realistic consideration to the amount of time, space and ambition you have to devote to your garden. Edit your list accordingly. Overestimating will only lead to discouragement or wasted money.

Next, decide where you will purchase seeds and plants. Do the local economy a favor and buy plants and seeds as near to home as possible. Support privately owned nurseries and if you go the mail order route, try to use Wisconsin or Upper Midwest companies. Also, patronize local garden plant sales. Outagamie County Master Gardeners will hold their annual plant sale on Saturday, May 19 and Wild Ones Fox Valley offers native plants for sale the same day.

Mail order nurseries usually send seeds immediately but wait to ship live plants until planting time.

Read seed packets carefully to determine if you need to start seeds indoors ahead of time. For example, tomatoes always need to be started indoors and if you want a decent length of bloom time from some flowers they should be started ahead as well. If you are not prepared or equipped to start seeds indoors, wait and buy seedling plants in May.

The back of the seed packet will give instructions as to planting dates. Organize the packets in date order and get planting dates on your calendar. Don't worry if you can't meet the exact dates. A seed packet that says "plant as soon as soil can be worked" may find those seeds in the ground anywhere from late March to early May depending on the weather.

When live mail order plants arrive, open the box immediately even if you can't plant right away. A good nursery will include instructions on how to care for your plants until you are able to put them in the ground.

What is an AAS Winner?

By Lawanda Jungwirth

Have you noticed a little blue and red “AAS Winner” logo on some of the flower and vegetable photos in mail order nursery catalogs? Have you wondered what that means and how a particular plant earns that designation?

AAS stands for All-American Selection. The AAS designation is like the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval for plants. The plants, which are new previously unsold varieties, are tested for performance in the garden by independent judges throughout the United States. There are national and regional winners, but regional winners are to be considered no less exalted than national winners. When a plant is a regional winner, it just means that it isn't suitable for planting over the entire United States. For example, the Serrano Pepper 'Flaming Jade,' the pumpkin 'Super Moon' and the radish 'Sweet Baby' do particularly well in the Great Lakes region but perhaps not as well in other climates.

The expert judges are from seed companies, universities and botanical gardens throughout the United States. In Wisconsin, we have two AAS judges, Mark Konlock at Green Bay Botanical Garden, and Mark Dwyer at Rotary Botanical Garden in Janesville, so we are well represented both north and south. You can understand why the AAS tagline is “Tested Nationally and Proven Locally.”

The judges plant the AAS nominees next to a control group of plants for comparison. They document bloom time, disease and pest tolerance, novel colors, flavors and flower forms, yield, length of bloom or harvest time, and overall performance. An entry needs to be significantly better than the control group in at least two of those categories to be considered for AAS designation. At the end of the growing season, the judges give each plant variety a score from zero to five and add their comments and observations. The information is sent to the AAS office for tabulation and only the highest scoring plants earn the AAS designation.

Once a plant receives the AAS Winner designation, it is immediately available in garden centers, big box stores, mail order nurseries and online, either as seeds or young plants or both.

There are nearly 200 AAS Display Gardens across the United States that are open to visitors. Visiting an AAS Display Garden is an opportunity to see former AAS winners in an attractive, well-maintained setting. In Wisconsin, we are fortunate to have eight of them. They are Antigo Community Garden, Boerner Botanical Garden in Hales Corners, Green Bay Botanical Garden, Hancock Agricultural Research Station, Kenosha County UW Extension/Racine-Kenosha Master Gardeners in Bristol, Rotary Botanical Gardens in Janesville, University of Wisconsin-West Madison in Verona, and UW Spooner Ag Research Station.

If you're planning to travel, you can find the complete list of United States AAS Display Gardens here: <https://all-americanselections.org/search-garden-displays/>.

AAS is not a marketing ploy and it's not new – testing has been going on since 1932! A complete list of plant winners can be found at <https://all-americanselections.org/complete-aas-winner-list/>.

Join the Winnebago County Master Gardeners for a one-day motorcoach trip to Nelson and Pade Aquaponic Greenhouses in Montello; Amish greenhouses in the Dalton area; the Pineapple Hill Orchard, Green Lake; and Elim's Hostas in Princeton on Tuesday, May 1. Cost is \$40.00 which includes motorcoach travel, admissions and tips. Cost is non-refundable, but if you cannot attend you can find someone else to take your place.



At [Nelson and Pade](#) we will tour their greenhouses, learn about aquaponics and controlled environmental agriculture and why it tastes better and is better for you. Each adult will receive a sample head of lettuce and be able to purchase vegetables at the Fresh Farm Stand. Some special bio-security health procedures apply: All guests must be free of influenza, common cold, and other contagious diseases – this is a food growing facility! All guests must show up in clean clothing and clean shoes, free of dirt, plant and debris. Anyone who arrives in dirty clothes, dirty shoes, is coughing or sneezing or displaying symptoms of communicable disease will not be allowed in the greenhouse.

Next we will travel to several Amish greenhouses. Because we are on a bus and many will be interested in buying plants, I am asking everyone to bring labeled large Rubbermaid type containers with lids. That way we can stack the containers under the bus and will be able to provide room for a number of purchases.



We will not be stopping at restaurants on this trip, so you will need to bring your own lunch, snacks and drinks. I will provide a cooler packed with bottled water for the afternoon. We will either eat on the bus or at one of the Amish farms. They do not have picnic areas for us!



In the afternoon, we will visit the [Pineapple Hill Orchard](#) where the owners Greg and Barb Becker specialize in apples grown on miniature trees that Greg has modified to grow close together and that produce a large amount of fruit! They also have beautiful gardens. We will probably be there too early for apple blossom time and definitely not for apple picking time! Greg will provide a tour and talk about his specialized orchard.

Last we will travel to [Elim's Hostas in Princeton](#). We will get an introduction to their yard and look around at their 1300 varieties of hostas and will have an opportunity to purchase some of the 300 that they have for sale. Again because it is early, the hostas won't be in their prime, but it still should be quite interesting. He does have an open house the last weekend of June for those who would like to go back to see them in full beauty.



We will leave the Coughlin Center at 7:30 and Penney's parking lot at 7:45 and should arrive back in Oshkosh at 6:00 pm. Bring your own lunch, drink and snacks. Water will be provided. If you plan on buying plants, please bring your own labeled plastic container with lid to put your plants in. These containers will be stacked in the bus so be sure that your lid fits the container!

Make checks payable to WCMG and mail the form to Marge Menacher, 4105 Westview Lane, Oshkosh, WI 54904. Questions? Contact Marge at marmen4105@charter.net or call 920-420-8472. Please choose the pickup place below.

Name _____ Cell phone _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

E-mail address for more information _____

____ Coughlin Center pick up _____ Old Penney's Parking lot pick up

Who Owns What?

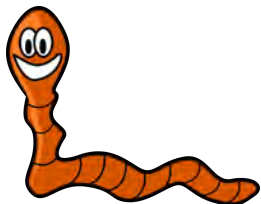
By Lawanda Jungwirth

Have you noticed that some of the many mail order nursery catalogs that crowd your mailbox seem to come from the same, or similar, return addresses? All of these seed and plant companies aren't as independent as you might think. Check out this website to find out who actually owns what: <https://davesgarden.com/products/gwd/whoownswhat.php>

Here are a couple surprises I found. Jung Seed, not too far away in Randolph, Wisconsin, owns all of these companies: Edmunds' Roses, Horticultural Products and Services (HPS), McClure & Zimmerman Quality Flowerbulb Brokers, R.H. Shumway Seeds, Roots and Rhizomes, Seymour's Selected Seeds, Totally Tomatoes and Vermont Bean Seed Company.

Gardens Alive!, in Lawrenceburg, Indiana, my go-to company for organic products (and a spring catalog that rivals a plant disease and insect damage textbook), owns all of these: Audubon Workshop, Breck's (Canada), Breck's Bulbs, Gurney's Seed & Nursery, Henry Field's Seed & Nursery, Henry Field's Seed & Nursery Co. (Canada), K. Van Bourgondien & Sons, Inc., Michigan Bulb, mySEASONS Garden Solutions, New Holland Bulb Co., Spring Garden Canada, Spring Hill Nursery, Thompson and Morgan (US), Thompson and Morgan Canada, Van Bourgondien Dutch Bulbs. On a personal note, my feeling on seeing this list was one of disappointment in Gardens Alive! How committed to organic principles could they be when they own all these other companies, many of them selling dangerous pesticides?

One prominent seed company I noted for its absence on the list is Johnny's Selected Seeds of Maine. Johnny's apparently owns no other companies, nor is it owned by another.



Worm Castings AVAILABLE!

Contact Sue Egner at mgardener4ever@yahoo.com if you'd like to order worm castings for pick-up at the April or May business meeting. Please email how many pounds of castings you would like to buy. We will be SELLING it at the April and May meetings. We would have your order all ready for you. Let Sue know if pick-up is in April or May with your order. The cost is \$1.00 a pound. Please have correct change or a check made out to WCMGA.

Another Way to Earn Education Hours for Master Gardeners:

Listen to [Larry Meiller on Wisconsin Public Radio](#)



Larry would probably do well on "Who Wants to be a Millionaire." He knows about geography, science, meteorology, the environment, travel and leisure activities, consumer issues, hunting, fishing, mountain biking, computers, home repair, gardening, cooking, medicine, and more. After hosting a public radio program for 34 years, he's obviously picked up a lot of facts and figures.

For most of his workday, Larry teaches at the University of Wisconsin - Madison. He advises about 100 undergraduate and several graduate students in the Department of Life Sciences Communication. He's assistant dean for undergraduate academic student affairs in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, and serves on several college and department committees.

But, he admits, the best part of his day is his 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. shift on the radio. "It's a break in my day that gives me a chance to sit back, meet interesting people and talk about interesting topics." Larry tends to focus on environmental issues, consumer issues, and helpful "how-to" topics. "But I love to talk with Wisconsin authors," Larry says, "and I really enjoy my food and [gardening shows](#), too."

Like he sounds on the radio, Larry is a nice guy: outgoing, friendly, knowledgeable, and curious. You can't see it, but you can hear that Larry enjoys his time on the radio. He's attentive, involved, and quick with a laugh or anecdote. "After all these years, I still have fun with the show. And I still enjoy talking with our listeners."

Member Meeting Minutes - March 13, 2018

Treasurer's Report was read.

Project Updates: New project lead opportunities are Shattuck Park and Parkview prairie for 2019. Winnebago County Fair booth will not be continued due to light traffic at the booth.

Project lead meeting for all leads and interested project leads, March 20th at 6.00 pm.

Education Committee Update: Winter Escapes~Summer Dreams was a huge success. The valuation survey was very favorable. Diane Dougherty will not be doing the silent auction baskets anymore. The committee is looking into other options

May 1st is the Aquaponics farm trip, visits to the Amish greenhouses. The flyer is on the web site with a cost of \$40.00.

July 30 – 31st trip to Washington Island Lavender farms and other location. More information will come out later.

April 5th between 12.30 – 2pm we will be bagging up worm castings. We just ordered 500 more pounds. An email will be coming out to order your worm castings.

New business: Reading articles from our State newsletters and answering in the comment section will count as a ½ an hour credit on education. Radio shows and TV public television shows on Gardening count for education hours. Larry Meiller is an example of this.

Jumping worms committee is working on an information sheet. They are also going to be present at several farmer market Saturdays.

Wild ones annual plant sale deadline is March 31st for orders.

Spring cleanup at the Paine Art Center will be mid part of April with more to come later.

Virginia Slattery is still collecting your old worn out hand tools, no rakes.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Arlene Kosanke and Sue Egner seconded the motion.

Events

April 9: Neenah Library Presentation, 6:30 PM
April 12: Carter Library mtg., 5:45 PM
April 17: Education Committee, 5:30 PM, Ground Round

May 5: Garlic Pull, 10 AM, Sue Egner's home
May 15: Education Committee, 5:30 PM, Benvenuto's

Flower Arranging - Park View - 1:30 PM

Monday May 14
Monday July 23
Monday September 10
Monday November 12

Answer to What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am grape hyacinth. Order: Liliales. Family: Liliaceae – Lily family. Genus: Muscari Mill. – grape hyacinth. Species: *Muscari armeniacum* Leichtlin ex Baker – Armenian grape hyacinth. Common name: grape hyacinth. Muscari is derived from the Greek word for musk, alluding to the flower's fragrance. My common name refers to the plant's small flowers that look like clusters of grapes.



References: USDA Plants Database and associated links.

WCMGA Projects

Check your Member Guide for contact information.

Project	Project Lead	Next Meeting
Butterfly Garden Miravida Living Oshkosh	Jane Kuhn	
Carter Memorial Library, Omro	Pat Behm/Linda Petek	April 12 5:45 PM
Octagon House, Neenah	Jerry Robak	
Invasive Species	Sue Egner/Valerie Stabenow	
Morgan House	Kathy Schultz	
Neenah Public Library	Tamara Erickson	
Oshkosh Area Humane Society	Julie Miller/Matt Miller	
Paine Gardens & Arboretum	Virginia Slattery	
Park View Cutting Garden	Bill Weber	
Park View Prairie Garden	Sally Lindo	
Park View Flower Arranging	Lil Hansche	May 14, 1:30 PM
Park View Vegetable Garden	Tom Weber	
Farmer's Market	Dorothy Gayhart-Kunz/Janet Priebe/Synda Jones/Patty Schmitz	June 2018
Plant Health Advisors	Patty Schmitz/Mary Shepard	
Shattuck Park, Neenah	Julie Gutmiedl	
Sullivan's Woods	Linda Loker	

April 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 Board Mtg. 6:00 PM	4	5	6	7
8	9 Neenah Library 6:30 PM	10 Business Mtg. 6:00 PM	11	12 Carter Library 5:45 PM	13	14
15	16	17 Education Comm. 5:30 PM	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

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