



Winnebago County Master Gardeners

Newsletter

December 2021

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.

“The color of springtime is in the flowers. The color of winter is in the imagination.”

-Terri Guillemets



Pots at Bethel Home on the Miravida Living grounds were put together by members of the Butterfly Garden group for the enjoyment of residents, staff and visitors.

Submitted by Jane Kuhn, picture by Vicki Daniels.

What am I?

By Jane Kuhn

I am a deciduous, multi-stemmed shrub which can add color and interest to your winter garden. I am native to the eastern and central United States and can be found at the edge of the woods or in swamps. My leaves are alternate, simple, sharply toothed, two to three inches long, green above while paler and generally hairy below. Both male and female flowers are stalked and greenish-white with 5-7 petals appearing in spring. My fruits, which are present only on the female plant, are round drupes, ¼ inch in diameter, in clusters of 2 to 4, green during the growing season and ripening in fall to bright red and glossy, and persisting through the winter. My plants are dioecious; a male plant is needed for pollination of female plants. Generally one male will be sufficient for pollinating 9-10 female plants.

I grow best in full sun to partial shade – more sun means more fruit on female plants. I require a neutral to acid soil with adequate moisture and am tolerant of poorly drained soils. I am used in mass plantings, in native plantings, where soils are wet, to attract wildlife, and for fruit display in fall and winter. Propagation is best through early summer cuttings which are easily rooted; seeds possess a dormancy period making germination tricky.

WCMGA Contacts

Check your membership guide for contact information.

Co-Presidents (Nominations Accepted)

Ed Dombrowski & Bob Kneepkens (12.31.21)

Vice President

Kathy Procknow & Debra Butch (12.31.22)

Secretary

Open

Treasurer (Nominations Accepted)

Deby Voyles (12.31.21)

Board Representatives (3 positions Nominations Accepted)

Ruth Retzlaff (12.31.22)

Grace Oliver (12.31.22)

Virginia Slattery (12.31.21)

Sandra Gollither (12.31.21)

Advisor

Open

Newsletter Compilation

Anne Murphy



We would love your help! If you are interested in contributing to a future newsletter by writing an article, submitting a photo, or sharing a story, please let me know by the 15th of each month by emailing pakster0605@yahoo.com. Each article submitted will count toward your volunteer hours. Thank you!

Letter from your Presidents

Ed Dombrowski & Bob Kneepkens



At the time of writing this Presidents' Message, there is a magical covering of freshly fallen snow. Among the snow-covered cedar trees, a male cardinal is sitting making a stark contrast of red against the white and green background. While there are many depictions of cardinals in winter in art and photographs, seeing live cardinals in the backyard against a snowy background is always a special experience.

While Thanksgiving is behind us, we still want to express our thanks to all the WCMGA members that "hung-in-there" during the last 20 months. Given the unusual experience of this time i.e., pandemic and UW Extension reorganization and redefinition of its relationship with the Master Gardener program, it took an extra effort to keep your engagement with the Association.

Joel Roberts Poinsett introduced poinsettias to the United States. He was the first appointed U.S. ambassador to Mexico.

We would like to thank the board members completing their two-year term of volunteer service. A special and heartfelt thank you goes to **Deby Volyes** as the Association Treasurer. Deby has spent countless hours preparing financial reports, reimbursing members expenses, and keeping the board and membership up to date about the current financial picture. Also ending their term are **Bob Kneepkens** and **Britton Drake**. Britton is the past Vice President and continued her involvement to assist with the transfer of responsibilities to the new Co-Vice Presidents.

We would like to thank **Ed Dombrowski**, **Sandy Gollither**, and **Virginia Slattery** for agreeing to extend their term limits into April 2022. Given that no members were willing to volunteer for officer and board member positions at this time, we are indebted to these individuals for their willingness to stay on for an extended time.

During January's Business Meeting, the Board will hold a board meeting. This is designed to give members an opportunity to observe a meeting and observe how the Board functions.

We want to wish everyone a happy and healthy holiday season.

Ed and Bob

Prevent Plant Diseases Next Year

By Lawanda Jungwirth

Four practices can help prevent the spread of disease in vegetable and flower gardens. They include mulching, good clean-up, crop rotation, and making sure there is good air flow between plants.

Mulching prevents diseases that splash up from the soil during rain or overhead watering and is especially important for tomatoes. Place mulch around seedlings as soon as they are planted, not touching the stems, and spread it out much further than you expect the plant to grow. If you've grown tomatoes or any other plant before, you know that they always, always grow larger than you expect them to!

Fusarium wilt and verticillium wilt are two long-lived fungal diseases that can splash onto plants from the soil and are also spread by re-using old plant stakes or tomato cages that haven't been properly sanitized. In the case of tomatoes, rotating them out of the area for 5-7 years should help.

Bacterial spot and bacterial speck are soil-borne diseases that are bacterial rather than fungal. They affect both tomatoes and peppers. Bacterial speck is also seed-borne, so do not save seeds from an infected plant.

Powdery mildew is a fungal disease that affects many ornamental plants including zinnias, roses, bee balm, crabapple, lilac, snapdragon, and spirea, as well as cucumber and squash. It appears as a white powder covering leaves and stems. It is usually not fatal, just unsightly. Another fungal disease, downy mildew, appears on the undersides of leaves and often appears bluish in color. The top of the leaf may show large brownish specks or appear pinched or crinkled. Roses, pansies, impatiens, grapes, squash and cucumbers are particularly susceptible.

Both fungal and bacterial diseases generally can overwinter in plant debris. This is why it's a good idea to scrupulously clean up all diseased leaves and stems at the end of the season. Burn the debris if at all possible. Alternatively, bury it a couple feet deep, or bag it and put it out with the trash. Do not compost it as most home compost systems do not get hot enough to kill disease.

Another way to help control fungal diseases is to space plants so as to allow for good air flow between them. In addition, avoid overhead watering because it creates humid conditions in the plant canopy that are conducive to fungal growth.

Before storage, tools like clippers, loppers, stakes and tomato cages should be wiped clean of soil using a dry rag and then disinfected with either bleach or alcohol. To use bleach, make a 10% bleach solution – one part bleach and nine parts water – and soak the items for 30 minutes. Rinse the tools very well and dry them afterward as bleach is corrosive to metal. Alcohol is easier and safer to use as it can be wiped on and left to dry. The bottles of 70% isopropyl alcohol that you buy at the drug store will work just fine.

October 2021 Master Gardener Program Updates

<https://t.e2ma.net/webview/u4j8sd/5ba9afdb651bcb282465837a81578f18>

Mike Maddox and Jay Dampier Answer Your Questions on the Updates to the Master Gardener Program

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZXqKHrP-dv8>

Attention all Master Gardener Volunteers

Co-Leads needed to head up the Oshkosh Farmers Market project.

- ***This is an important project, fitting with our MGV community education priority.***
- ***The Oshkosh Farmers Market wants us back! "The information and activities the Master Gardeners have presented in previous markets have been enjoyed by both young and old." - Michelle Schmid-Schultz, Market Manager***
- ***Can participate as much or as little as you would like. Plan dates according to your schedule and interest; such as one Saturday morning a month, 2 or 3 times a season, every other week, or whatever works for you.***
- ***Materials all ready to go; tables, reference books, hand outs, posters, etc. Or, do something different; create &/or purchase new materials. Be as creative as you want!***
- ***A large source of volunteers (our membership) willing to help out. Also, former leads are available to provide advice and guidance.***
- ***A fun and enjoyable morning; visiting with others, people watching, and shopping at the Market!***

If interested in being a Lead or Co-lead for this project, please contact Kathy Procknow or Deb Butch. Thank you.

Fun facts about pine cones

Dixie Sandborn, Michigan State University Extension



Aside from their decorating uses, pinecones play an important role in nature. Like all plant parts, they have a very specific function in the plant world.

Pine cones are everywhere this time of year. We see them on wreaths, in baskets, door-swags, and of course on trees and the ground. I started to think about all the ways I have decorated with pine cones, and how bringing them in the house is a fun way to add a little nature to our indoor environments.

Aside from their decorating uses, pine cones play an important role in nature. Like all plant parts, they have a very specific function in the plant world.

Here are some fun facts from Michigan State University Extension about pine cones you might not have known:

- Pine cones only come from pine trees, although all conifers produce cones.
- Pine cones and pine trees belong to a group of plants called gymnosperms and date back to prehistoric times.
- Gymnosperms are a group of plants who have naked seeds, not enclosed in an ovary.
- The main function of a pine cone is to keep a pine tree's seeds safe.
- Pine cones close their scales to protect the seeds from cold temperatures, wind and even animals that might try to eat them.
- Pine cones open up and release their seeds when it is warm and it is easier for the seed to germinate.
- Some pine cones, like that of the Jack Pine, need a fast hot fire to open and release their seeds. This is called the Jack Pine ecosystem.
- Pine cones can stay on a tree for more than 10 years before dropping to the ground.
- All conifers produce male and female cones. Sometimes on the same tree, sometimes not. The pine cones we see are only the female cones. The male cones are much smaller and not showy. You may have never noticed them. The male cones

release pollen, which drifts into the air and eventually finds and fertilizes the female cones.

- Pine nuts come from pine cones.
- Only 20 varieties of pine tree worldwide produce cones with large enough pine nuts for harvesting.
- Pinyon Pines, *Pinus edulis* (which only grow between 6,000 and 9,000 foot altitudes), offer the finest pine nuts in North America. Pinyon pines are native to the desert mountains of California, east to New Mexico and Texas, and north to Wyoming.
- The second part of Pinyon Pine's botanical name, *edulis*, means "edible" in Latin. It refers to the tasty seeds produced in its 2-inch, roundish, light brown cones that grow in clusters on very mature trees.
- Pine nuts are a good source of thiamine (B1), Vitamin K, magnesium, and protein. They are also one of the best natural sources for manganese, phosphorus and zinc.
- The pineal gland in the brain is named after pine cones because of its shape. The pineal gland controls our body's perception of light, as well as our wake and sleep patterns. It has long been considered our biological "third eye" and "the epicenter of enlightenment."
- Pine cones have been exalted in religious imagery for thousands of years.
- Ancient Romans also associated pine cones with Venus, Goddess of love and fertility.

Enjoy the season of pine cones!

Answer to What am I?

By Jane Kuhn



I am winterberry holly. Family: Aquifoliaceae (holly family). Genus: *Ilex*. Species: *Ilex verticillata*. Other common names are common winterberry, black alder, coralberry and Michigan holly. Excellent year round interest, highlighted by the showy display of red berries against white snow in winter. Warning: all *ilex* species may be somewhat toxic if ingested.

Resources: USDA Plants Database and associated links.

COVID-Approved Projects Open for Volunteers

The following is a list of projects that are COVID-approved and open to Master Gardener Volunteers:

- Butterfly Garden at Miravida Living
- Park View Cutting Gardens
- Park View Vegetable Garden
- Park View Prairie Garden
- Oshkosh Area Humane Society Memorial Garden
- Rain Garden at Coughlin Building
- Morgan House
- Paine Art Center and Arboretum
- Octagon House
- Pollinator Garden at Neenah Public Library
- Carter Memorial Library, Omro
- Sullivan's Woods-invasive removal only
- Plant Health Advising-virtual

Please see the [2021 Winnebago County Master Gardener Guide](#) and contact the Project Lead for more information.

Honored Status Award Application

Volunteers in the University of Wisconsin Division of Extension Master Gardener Program may apply for the awarded Honored Status. The purpose of this status is to 1) recognize volunteers for their contributions to the program, 2) increase flexibility in annual reporting requirements, and 3) create a uniform recognition status across the state.

To qualify for this award an individual must:

- Complete 10 years OR 1000 hours of service to the Master Gardener Program *in Wisconsin* as recorded in the online reporting system.
- List significant accomplishments to the local or statewide program. This should include leadership, contributions to projects, or support to other volunteers and Extension staff.
- Complete the application, including the signature from the local Extension staff and the Master Gardener Program staff.
- Be reviewed and approved by statewide Master Gardener Program staff.

- **Applications will be accepted only from November 1 through December 31**, with decisions awarded before March 31. Applications received outside of this deadline may be misplaced.

Awardees will be recognized with:

- New name badge, with honored designation
- Reporting exemption for volunteer and continuing education activities. You may report less than the required hours for perpetuity. This includes reporting ZERO hours).
- **Note: individuals must still complete other requirements of the program, including annual enrollment, the criminal background check, etc.**

Comments/Explanation:

Over the decades, many local associations created their own criteria for an “emeritus” status to acknowledge the contributions of local volunteers. The emeritus criteria was not consistent across counties. And, this never was a recognized status statewide, leading to increased confusion and frustration regarding membership in the program.

In 2020, the Master Gardener Program tasked a group of volunteers to draft a proposed statewide solution. The group reviewed similar recognition strategies in other states. Ours incorporates elements of those models while meeting the requirements of our state’s program. It was named Honored Status to reduce confusion with campus based emeritus status. Applicants must have previously reported a total of 10 years of service OR a minimum of 1000 hours of service *in Wisconsin* to be eligible.

In addition, applicants must briefly list their accomplishments as a volunteer in the Wisconsin Master Gardener Program. Accomplishments may include your leadership activities, your contributions to projects, and/or your support to volunteers and Extension staff. This can include local, regional, or statewide efforts. All efforts must have occurred in Wisconsin. Your write up should be limited to 500 characters or less, which is approximately the number of characters in this paragraph.

All individuals with previously designated emeritus status at the local level must still complete the application process and meet program requirements. Individuals who are awarded Honored Status may continue to report hours only if they would like.

Download Application:· [Honored Status Award Application \[Word\]](#)

Continuing Education Opportunities

By Linda Werner



UW-Extension Master Gardener Webinars, go to:
<https://mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/events> to register and for more information about each session.

- Care for Common December Plants, Monday, December 6, 6:30 p.m. or Monday, December 13, 11 a.m.



Members of the Butterfly Garden group put together pots at the entrance of Bethel Home on the Miravida Living grounds for the enjoyment of residents, staff and visitors.

*Submitted by Jane Kuhn.
Picture by Vicki Daniels.*

Business Meeting Minutes, Nov. 9, 2021

Presentation: "Tracking Insects Across Wisconsin in a Pandemic Year" presented by PJ Liesch

Standard Agenda

1. Treasurer's report - **Deby Voyles** presented the financial report.
2. Secretary's report – Minutes from the October Business meeting were published in the November's Newsletter.
3. Project update/ sponsor appreciation – **Debra Butch/Kathy Procknow** expressed appreciation for all members helping with projects.
4. Extension update – no report
5. Education Committee update – **Valerie Stabenow** provided a report about the number of members that have not met the educational requirement of 10 hours during 2021. She reported there are about 60 members that have not recorded 10 hours of continuing or no hours of continuing education. Contact Valerie if you need help with entering your education hours.
6. State Representatives - report No report

New Business

1. On December 31, 2021, the term ends for Co-presidents **Ed Dombrowski** and **Bob Kneepkens**, Treasurer **Deby Voyles**, and Board Members at Large **Sandy Gollhofer**, and **Ginny Slattery**.

Since there were no volunteers for officer and board positions, **Ed Dombrowski**, **Sandy Gollhofer** and **Ginny Slattery** will extend their term limit to April 2022. Ending their terms on December 31 are **Bob Kneepkens** and **Deby Voyles**.

2. Nominations for the Golden Trowel Awards should be sent to **Linda Loker** by November 13. The winner will be announced in 2022.
3. At the November Board meeting, the Board decided to cancel the 2021 December Business meeting.
4. A video presentation by Jay Dampier and Mike Maddox, which shed more light on the new Master Gardener Program framework, was played for the remainder of the Business Meeting.

WCMGA Projects

Check your Member Guide for contact information.

Project	Project Lead(s)
Butterfly Garden Miravida Living Oshkosh	Jane Kuhn
Carter Memorial Library, Omro	Jenny Breining
Coughlin Rain Garden	Ed and Jill Dombrowski
Octagon House, Neenah	Jerry Robak
Invasive Species	Valerie Stabenow/Sue Egner
Morgan House	Kathy Schultz
Neenah Public Library	Susan Forbes/Bette Hoytink
Oshkosh Area Humane Society	Julie Miller/Matt Miller
Oshkosh Farmer's Market	NEEDS LEADS!
Paine Gardens & Arboretum	Virginia Slattery
Park View Cutting Garden	Donna Kudlas/Jane Kuhn
Park View Prairie Garden	Carol Swannell/Ruth Eberwine
Park View Flower Arranging	Lil Hansche/Diane Thompson
Park View Vegetable Garden	Tom Weber (with assistance from Renee Donner)
Plant Health Advisors	Mary Shepard
Sullivan's Woods	Linda Loker

Project Leads: If you'd like your meetings listed on the calendar, please email information to Anne Murphy pakster0605@yahoo.com.

December 2021

Sun	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25 
26	27	28	29	30	31	

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