

Winnebago County Master Gardener December 2012

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

December is here and Christmas is fast approaching! Mary Shepard and I have just about finished our first year as Co-Presidents and have found it to be very rewarding. We have learned a lot, got to know most of the new members, and overall found it to be a very enjoyable year!

We want to thank:

...**Linda Baeten** for the great job she has done as Secretary over the last four years for the Master Gardener Association. Mary JoMaher was elected to that position and will be taking over in January.

...**Ivan Placko and Jane Kuhn** who will continue on as Co-Vice Presidents for another two years.

...**Audrey Ruedinger** who will be stepping down from the Board of Directors and will be replaced by Dara Sitter and Pat Behm will also be joining the Board of Directors.

...**Dani Stolley** for her wonderful presentation on "Growing Oshkosh" in November. Lawanda Jungwirth for the wonderful article she had in the Oshkosh Northwestern on Sunday, November 25 on "theme gardens". She had many wonderful examples.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at the Annual Awards/Holiday Banquet on Tuesday, December 4th.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Mary and Linda



Winter Escapes

/Summer Dreams

Saturday, February 2

at Reeve Union

more information to come

Advisor's Note

For 2012, Winnebago County Master Gardener's volunteered a total of 8,984 hours to their communities. That is an 8% increase from last year! In particular, 7,465 hours of community service, 1,144 hours of community education, and 375 hours of youth education were donated. Plus, 2,520 hours of continuing education was attended. Thank you for all your hard work and for the difference you make in the communities of Winnebago County.

In 2013, Master Gardener Level 2 Training will be conducted a little different. Training will be held on Tuesdays, 9am to 11am, from February through June (21 lectures). The training will be covering subjects related to fruits, veggies, & community gardens. The program is targeted for an on-line audience. MGV's may participate live from home or watch the archive at their convenience. For those without computer access or those who just prefer to view the lectures in a group, the Winnebago County UWEX office will provide a place for viewing. However, space is limited to 15 people.

The training is \$50 per person. This includes all lectures and approximately 40 hours of continuing education. If the time of day is not good for you, or you cannot make it a couple of times, no problem. The archives allow you to go back and watch everything at your convenience. Registration will open Dec. 15, 2012 and must be completed online at <http://wimastergardener.org>. If you plan on viewing the lectures in the UWEX office, please call us so that we can ensure that there is adequate space, 232-1971.

Topics for Level 2 Training

<p>February</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a Local Food System? & Food Insecurity in Wisconsin • Basic Plant Breeding • General Vegetable Gardening Practices • Organic Vegetable Gardening Practices 	<p>March</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Square Foot Gardening • Planning, Planting & Seed Starting • Kids in the Garden • Cover Crops 	<p>April</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil Contamination • Post-Harvest Handling • Cole Crops • Apples • Leafy Greens & Legumes
<p>May</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raspberries • Solanaceous Crops • Grapes • Root Crops 	<p>June</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strawberries • Vine Crops • Perennial Crops • The Cornucopia of Leftovers 	

What Am I ??

by Jane Kuhn

I am a member of a genus that contains 20 species of herbaceous or evergreen perennial flowering plants. My genus is native to much of Europe and my popularity has grown markedly in North America over the past decade. Although in zone 6 and above my plants maintain their dark green, glossy foliage throughout winter, many are hardy to zone 4, depending on microclimates and local conditions. In areas of constant snow cover, plants will survive very cold temperatures. My flowers which are 2 to 5 inches in diameter have five "petals" (actually sepals) surrounding a ring of small, cup-like nectaries (petals modified to hold nectar). My white flowers which often age to pink generally bloom between December and March and may continue into May in colder climates. My species produces only basal leaves and has relatively bare, 6 to 9 inch, flower stalks which often produce only one or two flowers per stalk.

My plants are relatively care-free and soil preparation is the key. A well-drained base containing plenty of organic matter is best. My plants may be propagated through plant division or by seed as long as you have patience since it may take 6-18 months to germinate. I can be found in native areas or in a traditional cottage garden.



Did You Know?

Christmas trees have been sold commercially in the United States since about 1850. Between 30 and 35 million real Christmas trees are sold in the US every year with Wisconsin being one of the top producing states.

The best selling trees are Scotch pine, Douglas fir, Noble fir, Fraser fir, Virginia pine, balsam fir and white pine. 93% of consumers recycle their trees in community recycling programs, their garden or backyard. An acre of Christmas trees provides for the daily oxygen requirements of 18 people.



Flower Arranging Dates

December 3 -- Christmas arrangements
(Please bring your wire cutters and pruners.)

Next year's dates are:

January 28

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

Share Your Favorite Places!

What are your favorite public gardens? What is your favorite place to shop for the best selection of plants or the best deals? The Education Committee wants to know! We would like to plan more one-day trips to special Wisconsin gardens and growers. We have a few ideas, but are sure you can give us even more. Because we want the trips to be doable in one-day, we are looking for places within three hours of the Fox Valley. If you have some suggestions, please email them to Roy Anne Moulton at royanne@new.rr.com. Thank you!

Plant a Theme Garden Next Year

By Lawanda Jungwirth

Do you need a challenge to perk up your enthusiasm for gardening? Why not try a theme garden? A theme garden is a mix of plants related in some way. The connection between the plants may be very apparent or it may be a little more difficult for visitors to discern.

The most obvious of themes are those designed around a particular color or a couple colors. Pink, white, purple and yellow are probably the easiest to design for color throughout the season, but red, orange, blue, and even black, silver and gold are other options.

Some other common themes are gardens that include plants only from the Victorian era, plants mentioned in the Bible, cutting gardens full of flowers with stems long and sturdy enough for bouquets, butterfly or hummingbird gardens with nectar and pollen producing plants, night-blooming gardens and scented gardens. *The Scented Garden* by Rosemary Verey can help with a scented plant theme.

A theme garden popular with children is a pizza garden. Often in the shape of a circle with triangular divisions representing pizza slices, pizza gardens are comprised of plants used in pizza making, like oregano, tomatoes, basil, onions, peppers and parsley.

Herbs lend themselves to healing or medicinal gardens. Those gardens may perhaps showcase chamomile, mint, lavender, thyme, feverfew and lemon balm.

Crafters often use natural items and a themed craft garden might feature dye plants, those that produce colors used in natural dyes. It could include roses, strawberries, red cabbage, blueberries, grapes, spinach, and carrots. Flax, grasses, willow and grapes for basket or wreath making, flowers for drying, and plants with leaves or flowers for pressing could also part of a craft garden.

What about a garden with all plants with animal names? Lamb's ears, horsetail, elephant ears, pussytoes, cardinal flower, trout lily, rattlesnake master and turtlehead are some you could incorporate.

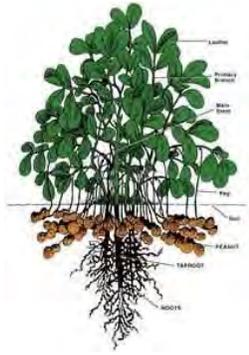
You could do a musical name garden: coral bells, bellflower, fiddlehead fern, trumpet lily, bugleweed, and bells of Ireland are a few of the options.

A real challenge would be to design an attractive garden with plants whose names begin with each letter of the alphabet: aster, bee balm, cosmos, daisy, echinacea, fern, etc. Your guests will have fun searching for the plants corresponding to each letter. Even trickier would be a vegetable/herb garden with the same theme.

Or pick your favorite letter, perhaps the one that begins your first or family name and use all plants beginning with that letter. Or use only plants native to your family's country of origin.

Planting a theme garden utilizing only plants native to Wisconsin sounds difficult but it may actually be one of the easiest of themes to accomplish. *Landscaping With Native Plants of Wisconsin* by Lynn Steiner will be a great help, as will these websites: www.wildones.org and www.wildflower.org.

There are so many options for theme gardens! Planning and planting an attractive one is a challenge that will add some extra fun to gardening.



Push the Limits and Try Something Different

By Lawanda Jungwirth

Georgia grows about 42% of the U.S. peanut crop and nine other states in the south and southeast combine to grow the rest. There's a reason for that – peanuts require a long growing season of at least 120 days. The growing season is the number of continuous days during which the temperature remains above the 32°. Sometimes we get a 120-day growing season in Wisconsin, and sometimes we don't, so trying to grow peanuts is a risky proposition. Nevertheless, I'm going to try growing them next year.

Peanuts grow best in poor soil, meaning soil low in nitrogen. Too much nitrogen will lead to excess top growth and not many peanuts. However, they are happy to accept an application of compost at planting time.

Peanuts prefer a loose sandy soil, not at all what I have in my garden. I'm going to pick the spot with the fluffiest soil and hope for the best. Full sun is absolutely necessary and that I can provide.

Peanuts can be started indoors about a month before the last frost or planted directly into the soil outdoors once it warms up. I'll start half of them indoors and the other half outdoors just to cover my bases. Those started indoors should be planted outside when they are about six inches tall, being very careful not to disturb the roots. Outdoors, plant peanut seeds 12 inches apart.

When plants are 8-10 inches tall, hill soil up around them, piling it up to the base of the bottom branches. Place a loose mulch around the plants. Once you mulch the plants, don't disturb them until it is time to harvest.

Just watch what happens next! Soon small flowers will form in the leaf axils. Don't give them any further supplemental water once you notice the flowers. Then comes the amazing part. The flowers develop shoot-like structures that bend toward the soil and bury themselves in it, forming new seeds underground. That's the reason it is so important for the soil to be loose. Those new seeds are the peanuts you'll later harvest.

Harvest takes place after the first hard frost kills the plant tops. With luck, that won't be until October. Lift the plants from the soil with a garden fork and pick off the peanuts. Dry them in the sun and then place the peanuts in shallow trays and store them in a cool, dry place to cure. After about two months, they are ready for roasting. Spread them in a single layer on a cookie sheet and roast in the oven at 300° for 20 minutes.

There are a few types of peanuts you might try to grow: Early Spanish, Mammoth or Jumbo Virginia, and Early Virginia. Peanut seeds aren't offered in local retail stores because there isn't much demand for them around here, so mail order is the way to go. They can be ordered from Park Seed, Gurney's, Henry Fields and Burpee.



Give a Gift and Support WCMGA

The gardeners on your Christmas shopping list will surely appreciate a copy of *Down the Garden Path with Lawanda* (\$15), a bag of Wormiculte (\$5) or a ticket to the Winter Escape~Summer Dreams seminar (\$35). Information on all three can be found on our website www.winnebagomastergardeners.org. Click the green Winter Escape~Summer Dreams box on the Home page for information on the seminar. Click the WCMGA Fundraisers tab on the left for information on Wormiculte and an order form for the book.

Down the Garden Path with Lawanda will also be available for sale at our WCMGA Awards Dinner on Tuesday, December 4.

Down the Garden Path Book Sales

We need your help to sell the remaining copies of *Down the Garden Path with Lawanda*. We've surpassed the break-even point, but the goal for having the book printed was not just to break even, but to raise funds to support our other projects. Every book we sell from this point forward contributes \$15 toward funding the many projects in which our association participates. Please help by buying one or more copies of the book for Christmas gifts or selling a few copies to your friends, relatives or co-workers. If you'd like to take a few books to your workplace to sell them, Lawanda can provide you with a poster (either 8 ½ x 11 or 8 ½ x 5 ½) with your work contact information at the bottom.

After the holiday season, we would like to collect any unsold books that you may be holding so that we have them available to sell at Winter Escape~Summer Dreams. **Please bring all unsold books to the January WCMGA business meeting on Tuesday, January 15.**

Answer to What Am I ?

I am a hellebore. Order: Ranunculales. Family: Ranunculaceae (Buttercup family). Genus: Helleborus L - hellebore. Species: Helleborus niger L - black hellebore. Common names: Christmas Rose, Lenten Rose. Despite its common name, the Christmas rose may not bloom during the holidays. Depending on climate and genes, plants may bloom any time from November to May. The name Christmas rose comes from an old legend that it sprouted in the snow from tears of a young girl who had no gift to give the Christ child in Bethlehem. An overdose of medication containing hellebore has been suggested as a possible cause of the death of Alexander the Great.



References: USDA Plants Database and associated links

Are You an Early Christmas Shopper?

Are you one of those people who like to get their Christmas shopping done early? You can cross all the gardeners off your holiday shopping list by purchasing a copy of *Down the Garden Path with Lawanda* along with a bag of Wormiculite. See www.winnebagomastergardeners.org and click on WCMGA Fundraisers. Both items are available at most Winnebago County Master Gardener business meetings as well.

Newsletter Contributions

To contribute an article or more to the Newsletter contact Diana Dougherty at 233-7137 or email to dldoug5@charter.net

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

Linda Baeten 232-1224

Treasurer

Sue Egner 231-1729

Members

Susan Bohn 685-0427

Marge Menacher 233-3467

Carole Dorsch 589-5936

Anne Murphy 379-7132

Audrey Ruedinger 231-5745

Roy Ann Moulton 886-1283

Diana Dougherty 233-7137

Mary Wiedenmeier 426-0991

Kathy Daniels 233-0410

Alice Graf 203-8252

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	223-3467
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 Memorial 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
Habitat for Humanity Partnership	David Leonard	379-5860
Washington & Webster Schools	Marge Menacher	233-3467
The Wild Center	Marv Wiedenmeier	426-0991

Master Gardener Business Meeting November 13, 2012

Speaker: Dani Stolley of Growing Oshkosh gave a presentation tonight.

Meeting was called to order by Ivan Placko at 6:22

Treasurer's Report – Sue Egner

Sue explained the report printed on the back of the agenda.

Please turn in your project expenses before the end of the year.

Total as of all expenses as of 10/31/12 is \$15,463.49.

Secretary report – Linda Baeten

Board minutes are posted on the Website, Business minutes are posted in the Newsletter. No one had any corrections.

Old business

None

New business

Nominations: Mary Wiedenmeier introduced the nominees for Vice President, Secretary and Board Member at Large.

- Kathy Daniels passed out the ballots. In order to vote you have to be a member in good standing. Kathy and Mary will count the ballots.

Grants - Roy Anne

- A \$250 grant was received from the State Organization. This grant money will be used for Master Gardener signs.
-

Winter Escape/Summer Dreams - The brochure is ready. They are available tonight.

Lawanda's book - Lawanda

- Half of the books have been sold and all expenses have been covered. The other half will be our fundraiser.
- Lawanda asked members to help sell books. Take some to work, or buy some for Christmas gifts. After Christmas, anything unsold should come back to the January meeting.
- The remainder will be sold at Winter Escape/Summer Dreams. Cost \$15.00.

Horticulture Educator Position – Ivan

- Some of the MGs and Nick Schneider put together talking points to convince the County Board to create a part-time Horticulture Educator Position for 2013.
- Chris Kneip, Department Head for the Extension Office also attended the County Board meeting. The Board was very much in favor, and the position was approved. This is essentially Kimberly Miller's position. There is a chance Kimberly will be the educator. Funding issues still need to be ironed out.

Election Results:

- Ivan and Jane will serve another term as Co-Vice Presidents.
- Mary Jo Maher was elected for Secretary.
- Dara Sitter was elected for the new Member at Large in a close contest.
- 46 members voted.
- The first runner up for Board Member, Pat Behm will be appointed to the Board to fill the vacancy left due to the past presidents leaving their position on the Board.
- Mary Wiedenmeier thanked all those who agreed to run.

MG project summaries

- Only half of the project summaries are in for 2012. They are due by Dec 1. If you have questions or concerns, please call Ivan or Jane for help.
- If you have an ongoing project, there is no need to submit application, but you do need to do a funding application.
- It would be good to have individual projects submit reports as well.
- The Home and Garden Show project is always looking for new photos.
- We will have project presentations during the January, February, March & April business meetings.

Other New Business

- Marty is here with clothing orders. Please pick up your order.
- Forms are available for the Awards Banquet to be held at Bridgewood on December 4th.

Next Board meeting - January 8 @ 6:00

Next Business meeting - January 15 @ 6:00. **Please note the normal meeting time.**

Winter Escape/Summer Dreams is on Saturday, Feb 2 at the UWO Reeve Memorial Union.

Door Prizes.

Meeting adjourned – 6:50

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Baeten, Secretary
Winnebago County Master Gardener Association

January 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 MG Board meeting 6:00	9	10	11	12
13	14	15 MG Business meeting 6:00	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

December 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3 Flower Arranging at Parkview 1:30	4 Awards Dinner 6:00	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25 Christmas 	26	27	28	29
30	31					