

## President's Message October 2023

For those of us in the Midwest, I'm betting October is one of our favorite months. Cool, crisp, sunny days, brightly colored leaves, football and tailgates, and pumpkin spice lattes. October is my birthday month (shout out to my mom!) and will be the birthday month to two new grandchildren (shout out to my daughter!!).

Lurking behind all that change-of-the-season festivity is the memory that the end of October is a little bleaker. Colder, darker, windier...grayer. But, truth be told, I'm not completely sad about that. I'm ready for the change. As much as I love the summer, with all it's fun and freedom and the gardens with the wonderful flora and fauna, i'm kinda tired of watering, fertilizing, dead-heading, mowing, staking, pruning, and fighting with bugs and deer. I don't think I'd like living in a place where October doesn't give any break. October is a time to step back, take stock, consider what worked and what I liked, consider what didn't work or needs to change, and start pondering and penciling in those plans for spring.



So it goes with the Association. We've accomplished a lot this year! You should be proud. It was productive, educational, and fun, and I'm looking toward the future with anticipation. But is it also time to step back, take stock, consider what worked and what didn't. Our association has changed and those changes mean we may have to adapt as we work to fulfill our mission and continue to do the things we most enjoy. We'll be talking about these things in the coming months and looking for your feedback and ideas. I'm very interested in what benefits your membership in WCMGVA provides, or what you wish it would provide. So, reach out. Give me a call, send me an email; let's talk. In the meantime, your Pumpkin Spice latte is ready. Enjoy!

Chris

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# October Program Information

## Bonsai Horticulture

Bob Cline, Retired WCMGV

Photographer, Keeper of 40 Acres of Wildlife Habitat  
near Vesper, Bonsai Practitioner

Marshfield Public Library, 104 South Maple

Felker Family Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

5:30-7:30 PM, October 24, 2023

In person and Zoom

Bob Cline, a retired Wood County Master Gardener Volunteer, has found his horticulture focus evolving from Midwestern gardening to the Japanese tradition of bonsai.....the culture of growing trees in a container. He has established an environment in one of his out buildings to house his growing bonsai collection where he pursues his new interest throughout the year. He says he is only a beginner and may not have that much to share. I reassured him that compared to the rest of us, he could probably be considered an expert. Bob will share a bit of bonsai history, tell us how he became interested in bonsai horticulture, describe some of the key points and techniques of this tradition and give us a glimpse of bonsai up close with some examples he is growing. Maybe you will catch the bug of this very special kind of horticulture.

**Please note** that we revert back to our **start time of 5:30** because we are asked to begin vacating the library at 7:30.

**Note also that our October meeting is again scheduled for the Marshfield Library** as the meeting space at McMillan Library was reserved long ago. We will be in the **Felker Family Room space in the far corner of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor**. Enter the library front door, walk past the checkout desk and you will find the elevator for your ride up. Or walk the stairs situated on the left side of the library.

### Future Programs

November 14: **Looking Back; Moving Forward**, election of officers and A Festive Social Hour at the Alexander House, Port Edwards. Note that this is a week earlier than usual because of the proximity of the Thanksgiving holiday. Details will be forthcoming in next month's newsletter.



# September Meeting Minutes

Wood County Master Gardener Volunteer Assoc. General Membership Meeting

September 26, 2023 5:30 pm

Marshfield Library

**Program:** Keystone Plants - Dr. Paul Whitaker of UWSP - Wausau Total Present: 12

**Business Meeting:** (Chris Grimes) Called to order 6:45

**Secretary's Report:** (J. Miller) Review of minutes from August 15, 2023. without additions or corrections. Minutes will be put on file.

**Treasurer's Report :** reviewed and put on file

**WIMGA:** (Mickey Erickson) Members meeting will be coming up in October to approve another change to WIMGA bylaws. No change in online training:

September 27, 6:30 pm Matt Wallrath, Wisconsin First Detector Network Coordinator Invasive Species

October 26, 6:30 pm Dr. Susan Carpenter, Restoring Native Prairie Stream & Savanna: Restoration in Progress

January 16, 2024 Craig LeHoullier, Bring Your Garden to the Sun: All About Container and Straw Bale Gardening

**Wood County Horticulture Report:** (Chris for Janel) Janel encourages current members to audit a class or to come share their experiences with trainees. Janel has made the syllabus for class topics available. Let Janel know if you are interested. There are currently 16 participants taking Janel's class. They are not obligated to become Master Gardeners. They can decide if they want to join MG or not.

## **Old Business:**

**Garden Walk 2024 Team:** Planning Raffle Baskets and making plant labels to be used in Garden Walk gardens next summer. More information to follow in monthly newsletters. Lil is gathering information for expenses associated with the walk to create a budget request. Garden Walk Team meetings will start after members respond to a poll for best meeting dates/times to tackle our work. Notify Lil or Chris Grimes, President, if you'd like to be part of the planning.

**Fall Plant Sale Report:** Jill provided a very detailed report from the plant sale. She commented on the great team effort to cover all the necessary tasks. The sale brought in about \$300.00 more than last year. Total is yet to be determined with a few final plant sales still pending.

## **New Business:**

**Bylaws Revision:** M/S/P to accept the recommended Bylaw changes. They will be filed.

**Nominating Committee:** (Karleen & Bea) The 2 Directors currently at the end of their terms will accept the nomination for another term, as will Chris for President, and Judy for Secretary. Karleen's term limit for Vice President is up. We are seeking a new VP.

**Annual Membership Dues:** Further discussion is needed to finalize the Membership Dues form.

**Social Event for November meeting:** The Nov.14 meeting is at 6:00 PM at the Alexander House in Port Edwards. More info to follow.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30. M/S/P to adjourn – Shelby/Donna

**Next meeting:** Tuesday, October 24 at 5:30pm Marshfield Library (second floor). Bob Cline: Bonsai

Respectfully Submitted,

Judy Miller, Secretary

# Education Opportunities for C. E. Hours

## **UW Extension Horticulture**

**No free classes** but Lisa Johnson's gardening classes are \$12 each For a list of October programs go to: [Events – Master Gardener Program \(wisc.edu\)](#)

Recordings from last year's webinars, if you missed them, are at the bottom of the page at: [Webinars for WI Gardeners – Wisconsin Horticulture](#)

The Extension Horticulture website is a treasure trove of educational articles, videos, webinars and courses. You can get on the Horticulture email list to be notified of educational opportunities at: [Stay informed about Extension gardening learning opportunities!](#)

## **From the Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic**

**Diseases of Houseplants**      October 25, 2023 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Description

As gardening moves indoors for the winter, growing houseplants can prove challenging. Learn about common houseplant diseases that adversely affect your indoor gardening efforts. This presentation will include information on how to identify these diseases, as well as information on how to manage them.

To register: [2023 PDDC Monthly Disease Talk Registration Form | Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic \(wisc.edu\)](#)

**Garden Guru** October 18 at 6pm in person at the Marshfield Public Library or on Zoom

Topic is "Houseplant Care". To enter the Zoom presentation, go to Everett Roehl Memorial Public Library web page and click on Adults, then Programs, scroll down to Garden Guru and click on "Online". That will take you to the YouTube location of the program. Click on the Garden Guru icon to watch the webinar live. The direct link that should work is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U31npJm3OhY>

## **WIMGA Educational Program Oct. 26 6:30pm via Zoom**

"Restoring Native Prairie Stream & Savanna: Restoration in Progress " by\_Dr. Susan Carpenter, The education series will continue in October with Susan Carpenter, Native Plant Garden Curator and Gardener at the University of Wisconsin–Madison Arboretum. She works with students and community volunteers to maintain and monitor a 4-acre garden representing the plant communities of southern Wisconsin. She also supports students and the public in documenting native bumble bees, including the endangered rusty-patched bumble bee. Susan's presentation "Stream and Savanna: Restoration in Progress" will describe projects, lessons, and challenges of managing/restoring a diverse Driftless Landscape

To register contact WIMGA or wait for the registration email to be sent.

# Education Opportunities for C. E. Hours



## UW Plant Disease Facts Medallion Project

The UW Plant Disease Facts Medallion Project aims to make learning about plant diseases exciting, challenging and hopefully fun.

### How to Participate

1. Choose a UW Plant Disease Facts Sheet
2. Read the fact sheet to learn about the disease
3. Choose the corresponding quiz for the fact sheet you've just read.
4. Take the quiz.

### If you get a perfect score (100%):

The system will email you the electronic medallion for the fact sheet.

### If you don't get a perfect score:

- Reread the fact sheet.
- Take the quiz again until you get a perfect score.

Collect All 130 Medallions!!

**This is a way to earn your required hours of education for the year if you still need them!!**



## Plant Disease Management and Organic Gardening

September is National Organic Month, so I thought I'd use this month's PDDC web article to explore techniques for plant disease management that fall within the philosophy of organic gardening. This philosophy tends to steer gardeners away from the use of chemicals for plant disease control. There are many disease management techniques that are appropriate for organic gardening, and quite frankly, when I am making control recommendations for virtually any client, the primary techniques that I recommend are organic in spirit. These include:

**Practicing good garden clean up.** Disease-causing organisms often survive in the remains of infected plants. Removing and properly disposing of this debris can help reduce pathogen populations in a garden or landscape. Whether you do this clean up in the fall after plants have gone dormant for the year or in the spring before plants begin to emerge for the new growing season is up to you. There are pros and cons to either choice. Disposal methods for this debris include burning (not the most environmentally friendly option), burying (a somewhat laborious task), or hot [composting](#) (probably the best technique if done properly).

**Using resistant plant varieties.** Individuals of a particular plant species can be highly variable in terms how they react to disease-causing organisms. Plant enthusiasts have exploited this variability by watching for plants that develop less severe symptoms and interbreeding these healthier individ-



uals to develop disease resistant plant varieties. I often recommend that home gardeners plant apple trees that have been bred for resistance to [apple scab](#) and [fire blight](#), or rose shrubs that have been bred for resistance to [black spot](#). Monarda, phlox, and cucumber varieties that are resistant to [powdery mildew](#) can be useful in home gardens as well. One downside to using resistant varieties, is that these plants may not have other horticultural characteristics (e.g., flower color, size, scent, flavor) that gardeners are looking for.

**Buying healthy plants and seeds.** You can easily introduce disease-causing organisms into a garden via infected (or otherwise contaminated) plant materials. Carefully inspect new plants for evidence of disease issues (e.g., leaf spotting, sunken areas on branches or trunks, fuzzy growth on upper or lower leaf surfaces, etc.), and avoid buying problematic plants. Seeds can also be a source of disease-causing organisms but can be much more difficult to assess, as they may not exhibit obvious symptoms. Try to purchase seeds from a reputable grower/company (although even the best of growers can occasionally have disease issues). If you have a suspect batch of seed (particularly vegetable seed), consider using [hot water treatments](#) to help eliminate disease-causing organisms. These treatments can be particularly effective for controlling seed-borne bacteria.

**Planting trees and shrubs (and plants in general) in the right environment.** Plants that are under environmental stresses tend to be more prone to disease issues. Before purchasing plants, make sure they are well adapted to the light, moisture, and fertility conditions at your location. Put the right plant in the right place. Pagoda dogwood is a tree that is often sited poorly in urban landscapes. I see these trees in the middle of an open yard with grass growing up to the trunk where there is a lot of light, excessive heat, and limited water. Pagoda dogwood is an understory tree that prefers shady, cool, moist conditions. When planted in a hot, dry, sunny environment, this tree tends to be more prone to developing [golden canker](#), a serious and often lethal fungal disease. Also, be cautious about planting pin oaks or red maples. In much of Wisconsin, these trees are prone to [chlorosis](#), because soil pH is so high that the trees have trouble taking up adequate iron (pin oak) or manganese (red maple).

**Using proper plant spacing and thinning of trees and shrubs.** Plant diseases tend to be more of an issue when plants are crowded. Crowded plants trap humid air, which slows leaf drying. Wetter leaves favor infection by disease-causing fungi and bacteria. Planting herbaceous plants farther apart, routinely dividing large clump plants (e.g., peonies), and regularly [pruning trees](#) and [thinning shrubs](#) can help create a drier environment that is less favorable for disease development. Regular pruning also removes diseased branches, thus eliminating a source of pathogens and reducing pathogen spread.

**Watering properly.** Avoid using sprinklers for watering your garden, as this method wets leaves and creates a favorable environment for fungal or bacterial infection. Use of overhead watering can eliminate any benefits you might gain by properly spacing and pruning/thinning plants (as described above). Instead of a sprinkler, water with a drip or soaker hose that applies water directly to the soil and keeps moisture off of leaves.

**Keeping weeds under control.** Weeds compete with garden and landscape plants for nutrients, leading to stress that can predispose plants to infection. Weeds also crowd other plants, trapping moisture and creating an environment conducive to infection and disease development. Finally, weeds can serve as reservoirs for disease-causing organisms that can eventually move from the weeds to your favorite ornamentals and vegetables. So, weed, weed, weed. Fewer weeds translates into a healthier garden.

The points that I've outlined above are just a few of the many techniques that you can employ to achieve a healthier and more aesthetically appealing garden or landscape. If you have questions about these or any other plant-disease-management techniques, feel free to contact me at [pddc@wisc.edu](mailto:pddc@wisc.edu) or (608) 262-2863.

Now, go forth and garden!! ...Brian Hudelson

# Plant Sale Buzz



The WCMGV fall plant sale was a successful venture thanks to a lot of people, a lot of planning and a lot of hard work. The weather gods smiled and provided a beautiful environment both days. The Maple Fall Fest crowds were in a festive and buying mood both Saturday and Sunday. Jill reports that all the expended efforts yielded well over \$3,500. I share with you the what made the sale successful with thanks from the planning committee to all who helped. A special thank you to the spring sale people who started the “Buzz” newsletter. Here’s what makes a 2-day plant sale work:

A huge variety of dried materials that yielded some gorgeous dried arrangements

The creative people who constructed the dried arrangements and priced them.

A shopping-friendly setup of tents and displays that encouraged browsing



The muscle power expended to set up the tents for Ask a MG and dried arrangement building

Five MG’ers who did winter sowing and grew over 700 native plants

The sub-committee that selected perennials for re-sale

The people who provided transportation to bring 186 perennials to the sale

The people who loaded and moved the MG “stuff” in storage.....tables, tents, signage, etc.

More muscle power expended to set up 20-plus tables for display purposes

The presence of a charming “monarch butterfly” handing out packets of milkweed seeds

Boxes provided by members for customers to carry away plants....customer friendly service

A table full of succulent gardens created by one MG’er

All the donated “garden treasures” for resale and the people who priced and arranged them

The 118 houseplants that were rehomed



# Plant Sale Buzz

The Marshfield Park and Recreation team that loaned us 10 tables  
The 5 former MG'ers who helped with the sale  
The Visit Marshfield organizers who allocated a generous display space at no charge  
The support staff at the extension office who met printing deadline challenges with good cheer  
The MG'ers who answered customer questions and promoted sales  
The people who staffed the Ask a Master Gardener booth  
Our friendly cashiers checking out satisfied customers  
The clean-up crew who washed, folded and loaded up tables to go back to storage  
Another clean-up crew who disassembled and folded tents and made them ready for storage  
The MG'ers who are wintering over plants for future sales  
The people who placed and collected "Plant Sale" signs at strategic Marshfield locations  
An organized chairperson who knew the answers to almost every question  
All the other contributions.....small and large.....that might be missing from this list.

## **Don't Stop Now**      By Ann Rozner

October and November are prime months to harvest seeds as well as dried plant stems, pine cones and milkweed seed pods for the 2024 plant sales. The cooler weather can make this activity more enjoyable and costs next to nothing to do. October breezes are ideal for cleaning chaff and other unwanted plant debris from your collected seeds. I often bring seeds in and give them extra drying time in the house. Using large 8 1/2" x 11" paper envelopes, place all of the dried seeds of one kind in with a paper label to identify the seeds. Do not rely on memory. Store the large seed envelopes in a breathable bag that is open on the top and has handles. Hang the bag on the wall in the unheated car garage where it is cool, dark and also dry for the winter. Seeds that need cold stratification will be prepared for spring planting. Make sure there are no critters that will want to take advantage of this bank of seeds.

In February or March when all the seed catalogs are being mailed, take the large bag out of the garage and check the seeds. Using smaller paper envelopes, about 4" x 5", print out seed labels and place them on the envelopes. Pour equal amounts of seeds in each envelope and seal the envelopes well. Now they are ready for the spring plant sale. Make a list of the kinds and quantities of envelopes for your records. Return the seeds to the car garage.

When placing your seed order this winter please order seeds that can help bring more diversity in color and texture to our fall plant sale bouquets. The following are suggestions: northern sea oats ( *Chasmanthium latifolium*), Chinese lanterns (*Physalis alkekengi*), money plant (*Lunaria annua*), strawflowers (*Xerochrysum bracteatum*), cockscomb ( various kinds) and statice (*limonium*).

Search for annuals or perennials that have vivid colors such as yellow, orange, purple and bright red. Think "plant sale" year round, plan during winter months and don't stop now!



# Garden Walk



## Garden Walk 2024

Great news! Seven gardens have been selected for the 2024 Wood County Master Gardener Walk. Garden owners were thrilled to be notified about their selection this month. Our garden walk will offer a wonderful variety of gardening and landscaping ideas to visitors who are sure to be delighted by water features and unique garden art, beautiful flowers, vegetables gardens and fruit trees, and landscape designs that add whimsy. Garden Walk 2024 will have us touring homes in Wisconsin Rapids and Port Edwards.

Thank you to all who made garden suggestions to our committee. We are “filing away” a list of garden contenders for 2025 already, so share your suggestions when a special garden catches your eye!

Our garden walk survey of WCMGs revealed a strong interest for including a raffle with our walk. Raffle baskets are something we can be working on NOW for next year’s walk. Keep your eyes peeled for raffle basket ideas/items you might donate. Do you have a business owner in the family or a friend who might consider donating a gift certificate? A crafty friend/family member who might donate something professionally homemade (birdhouse/feeder, stepping stones, bird bath)? As we collect items they can be categorized together to create baskets that will lure shoppers in to take a chance at winning. Here are a few ideas:

Gardener’s basket: gloves, row markers, pots, seeds, bulbs, gift certificates, hat, knee pads, tools, bug spray, fertilizer (as you know the list is endless!)

Pamper me basket: Hand lotion, candles, book, wine, chocolates, slippers, foot soak, sunglasses, lawn chair, gift certificate, movie tickets

Sports theme: Tickets (any sport), games, sunscreen, snacks, refreshments, sports theme clothing, blanket, seat cushion

Foodie Basket: you name it-anything to do with cooking

Something for Kids: books, games, etc.

I challenge all of you to come up with your own witty ideas. If you have questions, ideas or need something picked up, contact me at [Lilyschotten@gmail.com](mailto:Lilyschotten@gmail.com). Until next month . . .

Your Garden Walk Committee

# Calendar of Events

**October 16 Garden Guru Mfld Library or Zoom 6pm**

**October 24 Membership Meeting Mfld Library 5:30**

**October 26 WIMGA Zoom Education Program 6:30pm**

**November 14 Membership Meeting TBD**

**Reminder:** If you know of a WCMGV member who should be remembered in case of illness, hospitalization, death of a family member, etc. be sure to contact Bea Kohl so she can send a card and/or note on behalf of our organization. It takes all of us to keep track of how well our members are doing and whether anyone needs a little bit of our thoughtfulness. Bea's phone number is 715-423-8908

## Note from the Editor

I need the articles for the newsletter at least two days before the First of the month. I have been getting articles very late which makes it hard to get the newsletter out on time. When an article is submitted at the last minute, it means the pages have to be reworked and often articles need to be juggled around to make it all fit and still look nice and be readable. Please make every attempt to get articles turned in within a day or two of Chris' reminder on the 25th of every month. Your editor thanks you for your consideration!



**Join our Communication Team!**

**Facebook Co-administrator Wanted**

For those of you on Facebook...we're looking for another person to help administer the WCMGV Facebook page. It's a digital age and our page is an important resource for accomplishing our mission to educate and to engage with the public. We use it to promote our activities and fundraisers and feature educational topics of interest to Central Wisconsin gardeners. Administrators respond to inquiries from the public sent to our page, post promotional notices about our meetings and fundraisers, and post topical educational features. It's easy and does not require much of a time commitment, so it's a great way to volunteer to get our message out there. Training provided! Call Chris Grimes with questions.

# October Garden Guide

Taken from Portage County WI Master Gardener website and Melinda Myers website

- On October 1, start treatment of poinsettias for bract coloration. Place in total darkness for 15 hours every day for 2 months. Night temperature should be 65-70 degrees F. Keep soil moist.
- Plant peonies until October 15. Mulch after ground freezes.
- Seed perennials such as Oriental poppy, Iceland poppy, gas plant, primrose, scabiosa, phlox, pansy and penstemon. Mark where planted.
- Plant spring flowering bulbs. Bulbs can be planted up to six weeks after first fall frost. Fertilize existing bulb beds with bone meal, Milorganite, or 5-5-5 fertilizer.



- Harvest gladiolas at least six weeks after bloom and before ground freezes. Cure for three days at 80 degrees before storing. Label and store at 40-45 degrees in open trays.
- Remove iris leaves to prevent over wintering of iris borer eggs. Cut leaves to four-inch fans.
- Store tuberose at 45 degrees F, tuberous rooted begonias at 45-50 degrees, and caladium at 60 degrees.
- After killing frost, rose bush foliage should be stripped and old leaves cleaned from bed. Shortly before ground freezes, roses should be given good deep soaking. Prune branches enough to prevent whipping around in wind or to fit under rose cones.
- Sow seeds of hardy annuals: cleome, pinks, candytuft, larkspur, bachelor buttons and calendula. Mark where planted.
- Plant Jerusalem artichoke during last two weeks of month.
- Prepare vegetable garden soil for early spring planting. Remove old stalks to prevent insect and disease problems next year. Spread manure, incorporate into soil.
- Rejuvenate rhubarb by dividing into quarters and replanting.
- Cut back asparagus ferns and dispose to prevent insect and disease problems next year. Incorporate manure into soil and mulch with straw.
- Use mulch around Brussels sprouts to moderate soil temperature and prolong harvest.
- Water plants well for more cold tolerance.
- Plant garlic 2-3 inches deep and cover with 4-6 inches of straw mulch.
- Rake, chop and compost any fallen leaves from lawn.
- Fertilize shade trees when leaf color changes and leaves drop.
- Plant dormant deciduous trees and shrubs from now until ground freezes. A two-inch layer of mulch reduces freezing and thawing, which can damage roots.
- If fertilizing lawn one time a year, apply it in the third week of October. If fertilizing twice a year, apply in October and early June. If three times a year, include a September application.
- Water evergreens and foundation plantings before ground freezes.
- Protect woody ornamentals and fruit trees against mice.

## 2023 WCMGV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President—Chris Grimes**

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**Vice President—Karleen Remington**

715-387-1863

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The Wood County Master Gardener Association is a non-profit organization with a mission to educate and share information with its members and the community alike. In addition, it is our charge to promote the UW Extension from which we are founded. We are a diverse group interested in the latest research-based horticultural information.

## Future Article Submissions

Please send items for inclusion in the newsletter by the 25th of the previous month to: [streiffonclay@tds.net](mailto:streiffonclay@tds.net)

**Wisconsin Master Gardener Website:**

<https://mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/>

**Wood County Extension Website:**

<https://wood.extension.wisc.edu/>

**Wood County Master Gardener Association Website:**

<https://wood-county-master-gardeners.org/>

**WIMGA Website:**  
<https://www.wimga.org>

## Plant Sale Reminders

- **A big THANK YOU to all the members who grew plants, collected materials for dried arrangements, helped set up, worked the sale days, helped with take down, and are planning for next year already.**
- 
- **Now is the time to start those indoor plants for the next sale.**
- **Continue to collect material for dried arrangements for next year.**
- **Get ready to winter sow in a month or two.**
- **Set aside those garden treasures when cleaning up this fall.**
- **Collect seeds and dry for next year.**
- **Store bulbs for the winter.**