



WOOD COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

Wood County WI

March 2024

President's Message March 2024



SAVE THE DATE!

That's the key phrase this month. Lots of planning is going on for the coming season.

Our kickoff meeting in March will be a fun reunion at the Alexander House. April 20th will be Tea & Tulips again at the South Wood County Museum, this time with a

timely presentation by Janell Wehr. Discussion is ongoing about a possible Spring Plant Sale in May. Back by popular demand is the Garden Walk in July, followed by a fun Picnic in August and our highly anticipated plant sale in September.

Not only that, but the Socialization committee will soon announce some fun outings throughout the year. Look for info about these and monthly educational meetings in this and future newsletters. Remember, these events are not just for us. I encourage you to invite your friends and share information about these with your wide circle of acquaintances through social media, emails, etc. so the community knows about opportunities to learn through our events and fundraisers. Hope to see you all in March!

Chris

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March Meeting Information

WCMGV REUNION

With

WCMGV Officers

Alexander House

1131 Wisconsin River Drive, Port Edwards

6 to 9 PM, Tuesday, March 26, 2024

(This meeting and program will **NOT** be available via Zoom. Our goal is a **reunion** so it seems important for members to attend in person.)

It's been many months since we have physically seen and conversed with each other. So, instead of an educational program in March, we are going to treat this meeting as a **reunion**.....an opportunity to catch up with each other, find out what the BOD has been acting on since Christmas, re-introduce officers, present service awards, do a little socializing and find out what new horticulture adventure you are planning for yourself or your project for 2024.

Note: A Change in Venue

We are starting our year where we left off in November.....at the Alexander House in Port Edwards. We will not have any restrictions on our time so it will allow for a leisurely evening and an opportunity to refresh our connections. Thanks to Judy Miller for making arrangements and serving as our docent for the evening.

Treats to Start the Gardening Season

WCMGV Officers and BOD members will provide baked goods, coffee and lemonade. Seems like a little food always encourages good conversation.

A Program Note

Come prepared to share one new personal horticulture plan or goal that you have established for yourself or your MG project. It could be a new plant, shrub or tree for your garden; maybe a new gardening strategy to solve a problem; perhaps a downsizing or expansion of your activity. Gardeners are basically optimists with new yearly goals. Share your optimism with us.

Directions (for Marshfield Drivers)

Take Grand Avenue (73) into Wisconsin Rapids to the intersection of the railroad tracks and the expressway around town. Cross the railroad tracks and turn right onto the expressway. Just before the bridge over the Wisconsin River, turn right onto 2nd Avenue (WI 54-73). At the roundabout, take the 3rd exit onto WI 73 which is also Wisconsin River Drive. When you arrive at the Alexander House, turn onto Jackson Avenue to access parking.

It is recommended that members consider car-pooling as parking is somewhat limited.

Future Programs

April 23: Invasives with Matt Wallrath at the Chestnut Center for the Arts, Marshfield

May 28: Carolyn Schulein's garden, Marshfield

June: 25: Shade Gardening including Natives with Janell Wehr at Chris Grimes' garden, WR

July 23: Edgewater MG project with Judy Miller in Port Edwards

August 13: Potluck Picnic with local horticulture experts at Vesper Park, Vesper

Education Opportunities for C. E. Hours

UW Extension Horticulture [Wisconsin Horticulture – Division of Extension](#)

Plant Selection and Design—Using Native Plants to Support Pollinators

March 20 12 noon on Zoom Register: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

What's the Deal with No Mow May? April 3 12 noon on Zoom Register: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

From the Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic

Each month in 2024, the UW Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic will sponsor a Zoom presentation on a plant disease-related topic. To register for one or more talks, go to [2024 PDDC Monthly Disease Talk Registration Form | Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic \(wisc.edu\)](#)

Fundamentals of Plant Diseases March 27 6:30 – 9pm via Zoom

Learn about disease-causing organisms and the symptoms they cause, as well as information on environmental factors that favor disease development. Also, learn about disease-like disorders caused by non-biological factors such as nutrient imbalances, pesticide exposures, environmental pollutants and adverse environmental conditions.

New Monthly Program from the PDDC!!!! Ask the Experts

Join our monthly online programs in 2024 for an opportunity to connect with plant health experts from the UW-Madison Division of Extension. Each session, held on Monday afternoons from 1:00-2:00 pm, is your chance to ask questions about your trees and shrubs, garden vegetables and ornamentals, and lawn. Whether it's about plant diseases, pesky insects, or the selection and general care of plants in and around your home, our panel of seasoned experts will provide you with insightful answers. Don't miss out on this opportunity to cultivate your knowledge and keep your plants thriving. March 18 registration link: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

Melinda Myers website

Growing Summer Bulbs in Containers March 6 6:30pm

Add unexpected beauty to your patio, deck, or balcony with summer-blooming bulbs. Elephant ears, lilies, dahlias, gladiolus, and caladiums make great additions to container gardens. Some summer bulbs grow even better in pots than they do in the garden. These include the exotic-looking flowers of Abyssinian gladiolus, calla lilies, pineapple lilies, and spider lilies. We will cover tips for growing these summer flowering bulbs in containers, ways to display them, attractive combinations and needed maintenance. [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

Hydrangea Selection, Pruning and Care March 13 6:30pm

So many choices and not enough space. Fortunately, there is a hydrangea for every garden and even containers. Melinda will help you find the best hydrangea for your growing conditions, land-

Education Opportunities for C. E. Hours

scape design, and growing goals. Plus, she'll cover planting, ongoing care and pruning for each type of hydrangea. [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

How to Select Rain Garden Plants March 14 6:30pm

Selecting the right plant for the growing conditions is always an important step when planning and planting a garden. It is even more critical when it comes to rain gardens. Melinda will cover a variety of native rain garden plants from short to tall, those for the sun, a few for the shade, and a few non-native plants you may want to include. She will help you plan for color and interest throughout the year as well as suggest plants that will attract pollinators and support songbirds. [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

Maximize the Beauty and Your Enjoyment in Any Small Space March 20 6:30pm

Learn how to combine plants, furnishings, and accessories to create an entertainment space, retreat, or area for relaxation within your landscape. We'll explore strategies for maximizing the beauty and enjoyment no matter the size and location of the space. All to help you when dealing with small outdoor spaces, dressing up a patio, deck or balcony or trying to create a garden room within your landscape. [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

How to Start a Garden for Beginner March 27 6:30pm

Starting a new garden or renovating one you inherited can be overwhelming. Breaking down the planning and implementation into smaller steps can help reduce the anxiety and get you started. We will look at evaluating the site, preparing the soil, and selecting plants to create the garden you desire. [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

On the home page, scroll down to the orange button on the right side of the screen "Watch on-Demand Webinars". Click on it and you will find a long list of her programs that have been recorded in the past year or two.

Garden Guru

March 18 Secrets to Success in Planting Trees 6pm Live at the library or via Zoom.

To enter the online You Tube presentation, go to Everett Roehl Memorial Public Library web page and click on Adults, then Programs, scroll down Garden Guru and click on "Online". That will take you to the You Tube location of the program. Or use this URL : <https://www.youtube.com/@ermpplibrary2715>



to

WIMGA Educational Programs

Environmentally Sound Landscaping in a Changing Climate March 4, 11, 18 This series has a fee: \$30 for WIMGA members. Register at: [Environmentally Sound Landscaping Series | WIMGA](#)

Adaptive Gardening April 11 More info to follow from WIMGA



We hope you can join the Columbia County Master Gardener Association for **LET'S GET GREEN & GROWING 2024** on Saturday, March 23, 2024, from 8:45 AM to 2:45 PM at Rio High School, 411 Church St., Rio, WI.

Our keynote speaker, Susan Carpenter, Curator of the Native Wildflower Section of the UW-Madison Arboretum, will present on "Native Plant Gardening: Resilience to Climate Change." We have a great lineup of topics to appeal to a wide range of experience, from beginning gardeners to experts, including:

- Vegetable gardening
- Plant propagation
- Hydroponics
- Pollinators
- Flowers
- Soils
- House plants
- Trees
- Rain gardens

There will be several hands-on sessions, a vendor market, and an optional lunch for attendees.

We'll send an agenda in the near future with a complete program and additional information. Online registration will run from [February 1](#) through [March 11](#), 2024, and tickets will be \$20 in advance or \$30 at the door. You can also keep up with all the latest news and events, including LGGG 2024, at the NEW Columbia County Master Gardener Association Website:

[Home | cc-mga \(wimgasecretary.wixsite.com\)](http://Home | cc-mga (wimgasecretary.wixsite.com))

Project Updates

NEW FEATURE COMING TO GARDEN WALK 2024!

Joining a Silent Auction of some very special items (details soon), we are going to introduce a **BASKET RAFFLE** to replace the “gently used” garden items sale.

We Need Your Help!

We will build raffle baskets based on themes with suggested items for each one. Sign up to donate **new items** for any of the featured baskets. You'll be able to sign up at the March meeting. If you're unable to attend, just email Jan Myers jan_myers@comcast.net or Barb Herreid bherreid@wctc.net to let us know what you can contribute.

Here are the basket themes and suggested items:

| Theme of Basket | Suggested Ideas for Items for Basket |
|--|---|
| Girl Gardener (Toddler Size) (use Jan's bike art for container) | Girl's Bib overalls (already donated), Small Hat, Wellie boots or Crocs for child, Kids Toolkit, Sunscreen, Bug Catcher, Seed packets |
| Boy Gardener (Toddler Size) | Boy's Bib overalls, Small Hat, Wellie boots or Crocs for child, Kids Toolkit, Sunscreen, Bug Catcher, Seed packets |
| Birds in the Garden | Birdfeeder, Deck Birdbath (already donated), Birdseed, Hummingbird feeder, Suet |
| Garden (use canvas bag as the basket?) | Rain Guage, Thermometer, Kneeling pad (already donated), Garden Gloves, Hand Tools, Slow-release Fertilizer, Garden Art, Book for inspiration, Watering Can, Flower Pot |
| Canning Basket | Canning Supplies |
| Italian | Pasta, Wine, Italian Cookbook |
| Picnic (have received a donated picnic basket) | Checked tablecloth, Blanket, Picnic tableware, Wine, Gift certificate at a deli or Sub shop |
| Flower Drying | Flower Press, Drying Rack, Instructions/How-to, Silica Gel, Hairspray |
| Unknown | To be donated by Ann Rozner |

We are also looking for donated baskets or other appropriate containers to put the items in – let us know if you can help with this. All items can be turned in at the monthly meetings or to Jan or Barb – we need them no later than the June meeting. Thank you for your support!

Project Updates

Plant Sale Buzz



Things To Do Now

- Look for sales on potting soils and let others know.
- Donate 4-, 5- and 6-inch pots. Members doing winter sowing / propagations can always use them. We are trying to use uniform size pots to make sale pricing easier.
- Check on overwintering plants. With our goofy winter weather, you may need to water during warm dry spells to keep the soil from drying out. (Yes, watering in February/March may be necessary this year!!)
- Have you planned to add plants that have interesting seed heads for dry arrangements to your garden design this year? If so, start to think about starting seeds or shopping around for plants soon. See the 2023 September newsletter for a list of possible choices.
- Continue to propagate houseplants now that growth starts picking up in spring.

Spring Plant Sale

Bea or Jill will be contacting you to see what you might be planning

Central Wisconsin State Fair

Please add to your calendar and let either Bea, Donna, Judy or Jill know what date you would like a shift. Free gate pass provided and help with parking. Dates, Set-up is [August 19th](#). Booth shifts from Tuesday, [August 20th](#) to Sunday, [August 25th](#).

Marshfield Public Library Request from Andrea Halbersma

“This beautiful weather has me thinking about summer, how about you?!”

I was wondering about the possibility of doing some special programming this summer with the Master Gardeners. An all ages program that anyone and everyone could come to would be great. I once worked with one woman from the Master Gardeners when I was at the Vesper library that did a program about the composting worms. It was so interesting and she even brought some with her. Anyways, we would love something like that or interactive.

Let me know if you have any connections - I could reach out to them if you would like instead.”

If you have any suggestions for topics for this program, contact Andrea at the library or Donna Streiff.

If you would like to work on this project but don't know what to do, contact the same.



Is there going to be a Spring Plant Sale?

It depends on a few factors. Can we keep the sale simple, recognizing that we have members already putting forth a lot of time towards the garden walk? We do have some plants currently wintering over that could be sold for a spring sale if they survived. Can we finalize a profitable agreement with a local nursery to raise starter vegetable plants for us? What will we do with the leftovers? Some members have plants and products intended for the spring sale. Cathy Schutz is open to us having the sale at her place on May 18th during the Port Edwards Rummage sale. We will be having a fall sale.

I would like the membership's input. A small group of members have been discussing this and making contingencies plans if we go forward with this. Let your voice be heard on this matter. Bottom line – Members have the freedom to decide if they want to contribute to this sale, the fall sale or both. Any profit we make is a benefit towards expenses for the garden walk, gardening projects, etc.

Please be ready to tell Jill or Bea when they call you to find out what you might have for the spring sale and whether you will be able to work on May 18.

WIMGA CORNER

The WCMGV Board of Directors appointed me as the representative to the Wisconsin Master Gardener Association (WIMGA) at the January board meeting. WIMGA has about 45 local Master Gardener groups in its membership. Five (5) dollars of your annual WCMGV dues goes to support the work done by the organization statewide. Famia, our treasurer, has forwarded that portion of funds to WIMGA so you are officially a member again for 2024.

One of WIMGA's major functions is to sponsor periodic continuing education (CE) programs via Zoom that apply directly toward your personal ten (10) hour CE requirement. Beside the original Zoom presentation the programs are stored for a number of weeks on the WIMGA website where you can view them at your leisure. Currently the following past programs are available:

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Bring Your Garden to the Sun (Containers and Straw Bales) | Through March 10 |
| Trees in the Landscape | Through March 18 |

To access them go to the WIMGA.org website, find the program you want to watch on the home page and click on the title of the program. You will be taken to the Guest Area and asked for your password. The password is **wimga19**. Once you access the title page, you will find a link that will take you to the program. After you watch it, don't forget to record it in ORS, now open for your record keeping.

These programs are a great way to accumulate CE credit hours before the busy gardening season starts. Other programs on the Zoom schedule include:

| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Environmentally Sound Landscaping in a Changing Climate | March 4, 11, 18 |
| Adaptive Gardening | April 11 |
| Herbs as Houseplants | September 9 |

You can tell these programs have been planned by Wisconsin gardeners as none of them are scheduled during the late spring and summer! Enjoy and grow your horticulture skills!

AND BEFORE I END.....Many thanks to **Micky Erickson** who has been our able representative to WIMGA for a number of years and resigned from the position in November. She continues her WCMGV membership and her leadership with the museum gardens in Wisconsin Rapids.

By Karleen Remington

Calendar of Events

March 18 Ask the Experts 1-2 pm

March 26 Welcome Back Social and Meeting, Awards

April 20 Tea and Tulips with program by Janell Wehr

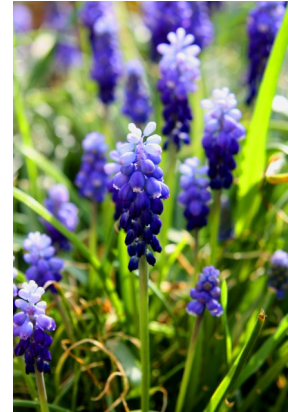
April 23 Meeting with program by Matt Vollrath

May 18 Spring Plant Sale ???????

July 20 Garden Walk

August 20-25 Central Wisconsin State Fair

September 13-15 Fall Plant Sale



Wood County Clean Sweep

May 25 at Marshfield Ag Station

September 7 at Saratoga Town Hall

HELP NEEDED



Facebook Co-administrator

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.



March Garden Guide

Taken from Portage County Master Gardeners website

- Plant tuberous rooted begonias indoors early in the month.
- Begin regular fertilization of houseplants.
- March is a good month to make cuttings of many houseplants.
- Order perennial plants and specify that they be delivered when the ground is workable.
- Start seeds of slow-growing annuals. Transfer them as appropriate in April to cold frame.
- Start bulbs of calla. They will bloom from June to August.
- Start seedlings of cabbage, celery, cauliflower, head lettuce, and parsley.
- Keep amaryllis foliage growing by watering and feeding.
- Continue to inspect stored vegetables. Anything showing signs of spoilage should be removed immediately and either used or discarded.
- Don't worry if spring-flowering bulbs are sending up green leaves. The foliage can withstand winter weather.
- March is the leanest month for wildlife, so protect shrubs and plants with wire cages or sprinkle ground with cat hair or blood meal.
- Do not remove mulch from perennials too early. Keep light covering of mulch over spring bulbs.
- Rake off last season's mulches on garden soil so it can dry and be warmed by the sun. Remove any plant residue left from last year.
- If the compost pile froze during winter, turn it now, and add fresh manure to help restart the composting process.
- Finish pruning dormant trees.
- Sharpen lawn mower blades and have mower serviced before spring rush.
- If you fertilize, apply to shade trees, fruit trees and shrubs when buds swell, as well as to evergreens and raspberries.
- Prune summer flowering (after end of June) shrubs.
- Finish pruning grapes. Non-dormant pruning will cause excessive bleeding.
- Finish dormant pruning of fruit trees and berry bushes. Remove diseased or infected branches.



2024 WCMGV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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715-424-2878

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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

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>

Reminders

- If you need continuing education hours, see page 3
- Start winter sowing for plants that need 60 or less days of cold (The Prairie Moon Nursery website has information on this for many native plants.)
- Continue to start house plants, succulents, fairy gardens, etc. for plant sales
- Volunteer to work on one of our major projects—Plant Sale(s), Garden Walk, CWSF, possible new Library Summer Program.