

MAMGA Newsletter

April 2022



Photo by Percy Mather
Hellebores in Snow

In this issue:

President's Message pp. 1-2

Calendar Events pp. 2-3

Plant Sale May 22 pp. 3-4

MAMGA Grants pp. 4-7

MAMGA Board pp. 7-8

Board Departures pp. 9-10

Board Project Updates p. 10



President's Message

by Ed Meachen

I know many of you have planted gardens very intentionally with native plants. Only recently in the last 8 years since I became a master gardener have I paid any attention to planting natives. I was not very knowledgeable about them, didn't know their names, didn't

understand the symbiotic relationship between them and the birds and insects that inhabited the garden space. I was always a “tinkerer,” seeing plants that I liked the look of, buying them, and planting them wherever there was space. I was the accidental gardener.

Some years ago we purchased Lynn Steiner’s *Landscaping with Native Plants of Wisconsin*, a wonderful book many of you, no doubt, are familiar with. What an eye-opener for me. The book prompted me to ask, how many native plants do we actually have in our gardens? The answer was, a lot more than we ever imagined...all planted without intention or landscape design. Some of them we didn’t even plant or want. For example, we have common milkweed practically everywhere. We have *Tradescantia ohioensis* (spiderwort) expanding every year in one of the gardens. Then there is butterfly weed that travels all around the gardens but always welcome wherever it makes home. Never planted any of these on purpose. We bought *Clematis virginiana* (virgin’s bower) at the Flower Factory way back in 2005 because we loved its climbing habit and small white flowers. It has become the most difficult plant to control, taking over not just chain link fences, but many other plantings. And then there are fiddlehead Ostrich ferns given to us by friends who live in the woods. Ouch. I’m digging them out of all kinds of places they don’t belong. *Diervilla lonicera*, bush honeysuckle, is another plant we purchased without understanding its invasive habit. All perennial native plants.

As we get ready for the 18th year of our gardens, I’m still learning, I’m still tinkering, but I’m so much more intentional these days. It is so great to have spring just around the corner. Happy gardening everyone!

Congratulations to re-elected Board members Dennis Tande, Judi Janowski and Ed Meachen. Congratulations & welcome to three new Board members Barbara Park, Carol Troyer-Schank and Eugenia Beecher.

Calendar Events

April 1 Lussier Prairie Signature Project Planning – Zoom at 11am. Additional workdays may be held on April 8, 22 (Earth Day) and 29 starting at 9am.

Green Thumb Tuesday continues in its face-to-face format 12:30 on Tuesday April 5th at Monona Garden restaurant, 6501 Bridge Road.

April 8 and 29 Friday Lussier Prairie Workday Friday 9 – 11 am Contact percy.mather@gmail.com if you are interested in participating in the workdays in April. Call 608 233-1955 to check for last minute changes due to the variability of the weather. Meet at the Lussier building. Dress for the weather. Tools will be provided.

April 9 Saturday 9 – 11am MGV Graduation and Celebration at the Goodman Community Center – Brassworks Room, 214 Waubesa Street. Mark Dwyer, our keynote speaker, will be presenting live via Zoom on how to maintain perennials. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2020-2021-and-2022-mgv-graduation-event-tickets-269152421137> People who completed MGV training in the last three years will be recognized. Please wear masks to enter the facility. A light breakfast will be served.

May 12 Thursday 1pm Lilac Tour UW Arboretum led by David Stevens Director of Longenecker Horticultural Gardens. May 12 1 PM. Attendance limited to 25. Register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/uw-arboretum-lilac-tour-tickets-310536381677>

May 21 Saturday 10am – noon Lussier prairie plants arrive for planting, 3101 Lake Farm Road. Bring knee pads if you have them. Other tools provided.

May 22 Sunday 2022 Plant Sale 11am – 3pm 5201 Fen Oak Court Do your plant shopping and support the Teaching Garden at the same time. Bring along a gardening friend as well.

May 25 Monday 6pm Tree ID Workshop at the UW Arboretum led by certified arborist Briana Frank. Attendance limited to 25. Register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/tree-id-workshop-tickets-310547274257>

MGV Graduation April 9 9 AM, Goodman Community Center. Mark Dwyer keynote speaker will be presenting live via Zoom on how to maintain perennials. Register at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2020-2021-and-2022-mgv-graduation-event-tickets-269152421137>

May 3rd Tuesday 12:30 – 2pm Green Thumb Tuesday

May 18 Wednesday 4 – 6pm MAMGA Board Meeting

Employment and volunteer opportunities are listed on the MAMGA website under [Resources](#). MAMGA lists that information as a courtesy to our local organizations, businesses & employers.

The Waisman Center is looking for volunteers to maintain an outdoor play area used by children with diverse developmental needs. See [the MAMGA website](#) for more information.

Looking for some help completing the new requirements for MGVs? Carol Troyer-Shank has generously offered to help others walk through the process. Contact her at ctshank2gm@gmail.com to get started. The Online Reporting System is up and running so MGVs can begin entering volunteer and continuing education hours. You'll need to complete the On Boarding process prior to volunteering as an MGV and counting those hours. (Remember that MGV certification is not required to be a member of MAMGA.)

Help the Plant Sale by Donating Plants, Volunteering & Shopping

Mark your calendars for the Dane County Master Gardener Plant Sale on Sunday, May 22th from 11 am to 3 pm at the Dane County/UW Extension Office parking lot at 5201 Fen Oak Drive.

The sale will include hundreds of perennials for shade or sun, vegetable & herb starts, house plants and more! Follow us on Facebook for updates on the sale <https://www.facebook.com/uwexteachinggarden/>. A week before the sale you can access a list of plants we will be selling on our website at

<https://dane.extension.wisc.edu/horticulture/plant-sale>.

4

Jumping worms continue to be a concern for gardeners, and we want to assure you that we are taking several steps to protect plants that are dug up and donated for our plant sale. We hope you will consider donating plants following the [Plant Contribution guidelines](#) or hosting a “dig”. You can donate plants from your garden or contribute vegetables, herbs or annuals started in pots. The guidelines include information on plants that we desire for the sale, and those we can not accept. In particular we had a high demand for shade plants last year.

If you can contribute plants for the Plant Sale please email Karen Allenstein at kallenstein@charter.net. If you are interested in volunteering for Plant Sale workdays, here is the link to signup.com, where we manage signups for all Plant Sale volunteer activities: <https://signup.com/go/wsynmve>.

Don't forget, your hours spent in these activities count towards your volunteer service requirements for this year.

If you have any questions on how to contribute plants for this event, please email Karen Allenstein at kallenstein@charter.net. We would also appreciate if you could share the [Plant Sale Flyer](#) with your gardening friends.

Thanks for all your support!

2022 MAMGA Grant Awards

Sally Kefer and Mary Collett are the outgoing and incoming chairs of the Grant Committee and prepared this list of awardees. We thank all the committee members for selecting the grant recipients for this year listed below.

Sun Prairie Community Garden Organization (SPCGO) Soil Improvement Project,
1340 Linnerud Dr, Sun Prairie

Grant applicant: Sandy Meyers

MAMGA sponsor: Sandy Myers

NPO: SPCGO, Attn: Tom Kinney, 923 Jerico Lane, Sun Prairie, WI 53590 608-837-4968

Approved: \$500. Goal: Improve fertility and friability of soil by providing fertilizer packets to interested gardeners before planting in the spring. Soil will be tested at the end of the growing season. Compost will then be added to all plots.

Olbrich Gardens native plant project: Native Plants, Natural Wonders

Grant applicant: Jake Immel, 608-243-0153, jimmel@CityOfMadison.com

MAMGA sponsors: John and Jan Kinar

NPO: Olbrich Botanical Society, Jake Immel, 3330 Atwood Ave, Madison, WI 53704

Approved: \$500. Goal: Olbrich Gardens is dedicated to the creation, conservation, and interpretation of sustainable gardens. The Horticulture Team will highlight specific native plants throughout the outdoor gardens. The overall goal is to achieve a plant composition of at least 70% native plants within Olbrich's collection.

Mt. Horeb Area Community Garden (MHACG) Infrastructure Improvement Project 5

Location: Howard Himsel Park, Mt. Horeb

Grant applicant: Carolyn White, mothershare@yahoo.com

MAMGA sponsor: Mary Collet

NPO: MHACG c/o Lynn Messinger, President, 213 S Fifth St, Mt Horeb, WI 53572

Approved: \$500. Goal: Enhance MHACG infrastructure and improve the garden experience by (1) installing indoor and outdoor bulletin boards, (2) installing hanging rails for tools and hoses, and (3) providing mulching straw to gardeners. The indoor bulletin board will have a task sign-up sheet to inform volunteers of needs and improve volunteer–garden manager communication. The outdoor board will post the latest garden news, events, and educational messages.

Caneel Corner Conservancy Neighborhood Improvement Project. Location: corner of High Rd and Caneel Trail in Middleton Ridge Neighborhood.

Grant applicant: Dawn Eberhardt

MAMGA sponsor: Dawn Eberhardt

NPO: Misty Valley Middleton Ridge Neighborhood Homeowners Assoc, Carl Cappabianca, 7130 Peak View Way, Middleton, WI 53562 908-723-1047

Approved: \$260. Goal: To convert an unsightly and weedy corner to a conservancy with native plants to be enjoyed by the entire neighborhood. The request is for compost and three red twig dogwood trees.

One of the tasks of the Grant Committee is to establish a fair and transparent process by which proposals are evaluated and determined to be worthy of funding. The Committee established the following process to be followed.

Madison Area Master Gardener Association Process for Awarding School and Community Garden Grants

The following summarizes the steps in awarding MAMGA grants, from making the annual announcement for the grant application period in the late fall to closing out the grants for that year by the following fall.

Grant Coordinator

The MAMGA grant coordinator serves as a primary contact for the interested grant applicants and ultimately for those awarded a grant. Likewise, the coordinator keeps the board informed throughout the process. The coordinator may or may not reside on the MAMGA board and may work with a co-coordinator.

Grant Applicants

Grant applicant must be a school or a nonprofit organization or affiliated with a nonprofit. Grants are not awarded to for-profit institutions or businesses, though such an organization may have a non-profit segment for maintaining gardens for the benefit of a sector of the community (aka. Hospital therapy patients, Olbrich Gardens, some religious organizations, etc.).

Grant Announcement

6

Each fall on around November or early December, the annual announcement for the grants is made in several on-line publications. These publications include the WI Department of Public Instruction newsletter to school districts and teachers, Community Groundworks, ROOTED, and MAMGA monthly newsletter and Facebook page. The announcement includes the beginning and end dates for that year's grant application and a link to the grant application form (both Word and pdf formats), which is housed on the MAMGA web page. Grants are submitted by email to the MAMGA grant coordinator whose address is included in the instructions for application.

Grant Evaluation

During the 3- to 4-month grant application period, the coordinator seeks a 3- to 5-person workgroup of MAMGA members (not necessarily certified) to review the grants and "score" them. When all applications have been submitted, the coordinator reviews each for eligibility for a grant, ensuring that a certified master gardener is identified as a sponsor and that the applicant is a school or non-profit. Eligible grants are then sent out to the workgroup members for review and scoring.

Grant applications are scored for their completeness right after the application deadline. The coordinator (typically) asks the workgroup to use a 1–10 point system for scoring such that when the group comes together, either in person or by conference call, they can identify the adequacy and priority of each application and the clarity of the budget in meeting the goals. If needed, the grant coordinator contacts the grant applicant for clarification so that a final decision and announcement of grant awards (\$0 to \$500) are made within about 7 to 10 days after scoring.

Grant Award Summary

The coordinator summarizes the grant application goals and amounts awarded and sends this information to the MAMGA Board *and also informs the grant applicants of the awarded amount*. The grant award summary should include the name and contact information of the grant applicant and the certified Master Gardener sponsor and nonprofit organization. It should also include title and address of the project, a summary of the grant goals, and the amount awarded by MAMGA. Past year summaries can be used as examples. The grant coordinator touches base with the MAMGA Treasurer to ensure the checks for the awards are sent to the contacts within the school or non-profit contact identified in the application. NOTE: Periodically a check for a grant award has been put on hold until a certain piece of information has been obtained. The coordinator emails and provides an overview of the summary at a board meeting.

Follow-Up

The coordinator is available for questions from the grantees during and following the grant application period. MAMGA board members and workgroup members may volunteer to help deliver garden signs and to visit grant sites during the summer to ensure that grant goals are being met. The coordinator takes note of who will visit each site and typically receives a brief report afterward. Alternatively, the coordinator may contact the grant recipients and request a brief update by email during July or August and use those responses to update the board. The point of this check-in is to determine if any grantee is having problems meeting the goals, which may be remedied with assistance from the board.

About a month before the end of the grant period, the coordinator sends an email to grantees with a request for a final report, including a few photos. The coordinator may include a note in the email that one or more grantees may be requested to present their project at the annual MAMGA meeting. Reports are to be sent to the grant coordinator. These reports are kept with each grant's file. Typically, a second email is sent three weeks later to grantees who have not sent in a report.

As part of closing out the year's grants, it is a good idea for the grant coordinator to check in with the treasurer to ensure that grantees cashed their checks and that expenditures as reported in the grant were in fact made. Sometimes grantees communicate or send information to the treasurer, who then forwards to the coordinator.

These steps represent the full grant period. This period may overlap the announcement for the following 3-4 month grant application period, such as mid to late November through early March.

MAMGA Board Minutes – Draft
4:00 March 21, 2022
Zoom
(EIN 39-1694554)

Board Members Present: Karen Allenstein, Eugenia Beecher, Mary Collet, Art De Smet, Judi Janowski, Percy Mather, Ed Meachen, Barbara Park, Dennis Tande, Carol Troyer-Shank

Also Present: Lisa Johnson

Absent: B'Ann Gabelt (traveling)

1. **Welcome** to our new Board members - Eugenia Beecher, Barbara Park and Carol Troyer-Shank
2. **Review of January 10 minutes** As a follow up, Mary will send the Community Grants process to Percy and Dennis. Moved by Art and seconded by Judi. Approved.
3. **Officer Elections** Officers will remain the same. Ed Meachen - President, Judi Janowski - VP, Art De Smet - Treasurer, Dennis Tande - Secretary, B'Ann - WIMGA Representative
4. **Meeting Dates** Because of numerous scheduling conflicts, the regular Board and Executive Board meeting time will be moved to the 3rd Monday at 4:00. Some meetings may change from Zoom to in-person. Lisa will check if the Extension conference room is available.
5. **Planning Sessions** Leading up to the July Board meeting, Ed is planning a series of planning sessions for MAMGA committees. Summaries and recommendations will be the focus of the July Board meeting. Ed will create a document with discussion topics.
6. **Grant Proposals** Mary reported that 4 grants were approved - Sun Prairie continuation of soil improvement, Olbrich Gardens new initiative for native plants throughout the gardens, Canell Corner creation of a pollinator garden and Mt. Horeb

7. Area Community Garden. We discussed signage and public acknowledgment of MAMGA's support. Ed will give his extra signs to Mary and Dennis to Carol. Eugenia showed the Pollinator Garden sign and will send the manufacturer.
8. **Committees** There are 6 committees specifically stated in the By-Laws - Executive, Communication, Community Service, Finance, Membership and Program. We have 6 Ad Hoc Committees - By-Laws, Marketing/Merchandize, MG Graduation/Awards, Nomination, Strategic Plan/Signature Project and WIMGA Representative. The Membership and Communication Committees were the primary focus of discussion. Strategies for maintaining and recruiting members, MAMGA promotion and our mission were discussed. Carol and Karen will work together to develop a script/questions for outreach.
9. **Membership** Current 2022 membership is near 300. For 2022, there were 23 On-Boarders with 10 joining MAMGA. Karen has updated the membership spread sheet and sends emails to new grads promoting MAMGA and volunteering at the Teaching Garden. All 2022 membership cards have been sent. If someone has not received a membership card, they will need to renew on-line or by mail. Even though members have not renewed, they will continue to receive the monthly newsletter for one year with a reminder to renew. The mailing list is usually updated in the summer, but not done last year. When registering for a class, is membership checked? We discussed ways to encourage membership renewals and recruitment. Record your ideas for our future strategy sessions this summer.

Membership Directory Percy asked for a membership directory in order to easily contact volunteers. Three options were discussed including 1. Online access to the database by key committee chairs & board members who need to know who's a member 2. Website access to current MAMGA members info behind a password 3. PDF emailed without some info included. When members join/renew, they are asked if they would like to be included in a directory. Currently 17% indicated they did not want to be included. This question may not be necessary.

10. **Signature Project** Percy reported an additional 100 plants from a variety of sources. 68% of the funds for the plants are covered.
11. **Annual Meeting Update** The general consensus is that things went smoothly, with the exception of honoring time limits. 3-4 people had trouble joining the Zoom. Dennis checks the info@mamgawi.org email before the meeting to send links if necessary. This will all NOT be a problem in the future, since we will have In-Person Annual Meetings!
12. **Meeting Adjourned**
13. **Next Board meeting (Wednesday) May 18, 4:00 tentatively by Zoom**

MAMGA Signature Project Update

MAMGA's on-going work at the Lussier Family Heritage Center picked up a donation of 100 seedlings representing some of the most colorful of the prairie natives. The Plant Dane

project is operated jointly by Madison Municipal Stormwater Partnership & Dane County Land & Water Resource Department. Eligible groups (schools, non-profits, etc.) as well as individuals in Dane County can purchase plants at \$2.50 per 2-inch pot. Cont. on p.10
Madison Area Municipal Stormwater Partnership (MAMSWa



9

Photo by Mary Collet

Thoughts on Leaving the MAMGA Board

Interview with Victoria Robertson and Dana Warren

by Mary Collet

As the Annual Meeting heralds in the new “MAMGA year,” we welcome new members to the Board. At the same time, we bid a fond (but sad) farewell to those who are moving on. How do seasoned members feel about MAMGA?

Having served two terms on the Board, Victoria Robertson is enthusiastic about MAMGA. She describes the Board as the most pleasant, congenial, and collegial body that she has ever served on. The strategic plan, which was developed before she joined the Board, provides a clear path for the future and demonstrates “amazing” leadership. Nonetheless, she feels that it is important to constantly bring in new people.

In her many years of service, Dana Warren also appreciates the camaraderie of the Board. She never had any trepidation upon entering a meeting, confident that all issues could be resolved without personal animosity. She would not hesitate to recommend serving on the Board and, like Victoria, feels that members need to change to get new voices and perspectives. She is not particularly concerned about the age distribution (i.e., number of graying heads) on the Board—older people are more likely to become Master Gardeners because of diminishing work and home demands.

Both Victoria and Dana laud the many ways in which MAMGA supports the gardening community in general and Master Gardeners in particular. Victoria has learned “an enormous amount” by working on the Lussier signature project (prairie restoration) and has enjoyed sharing her knowledge and enthusiasm with passers-by. MAMGA-sponsored events also provide opportunities to share ideas with other gardeners. A stellar example is “Green Thumb Tuesday,” which Dana initiated. This lunch-time program, which is held in a restaurant, has

been so popular that people met virtually while COVID restrictions were in place. “Flower people are good people,” says Dana.

Dana feels that MAMGA could do better with informing gardeners about knowledge available through the UW; for example, best practices supported by science. MAMGA could also do better at getting the word out about its programs. Could MAMGA signs and information be featured at Farmers Markets? 10

Dana describes MAMGA as a “go to” organization. Victoria sums up MAMGA and its Board as “good people who want to do good work.” The talents and enthusiasm of these two Master Gardeners have not vanished with their exit from the Board: Victoria continues to manage the MAMGA Facebook page and Dana to coordinate Green Thumb Tuesday.

Future Membership Directory?

by Percy Mather

Another project of the MAMGA Board is the creation of a member directory to encourage communication and coordination among MAMGA members while respecting each individual’s privacy. MAMGA members can opt out of sharing contact information and approximately 17% of our members do that. A decision will be made about which data will be shared—email or mailing address or phone number. Sorting members according to ZIP codes may encourage carpooling or cooperative projects involving MAMGA members who live in the same community. Another decision involves the media used to share this information: will it be on the website accessible by members only, a paper copy, or in electronic format as an Excel table? The topic will be discussed and decided at the next Board meeting on May 18. If you have an opinion or a question, feel free to email them to info@mamgawi.org for consideration.

Electronic Archive of MAMGA Newsletters

by Percy Mather

Art De Smet is not only MAMGA’s treasurer but he’s been converting past issues (prior to December 2020) of the MAMGA newsletter to a pdf (portable document format) that can be stored on our website at www.mamgawi.org. The first monthly MAMGA newsletter was published in December 2011. Before that, a publication was jointly published by MAMGA and Dane County UW-Extension. The MAMGA publication was distributed using MailChimp, a free software system that allows for distributing electronic publications via email to hundreds of individuals at a time. The problem is that the documents are stored in MailChimp, and they are only accessible to the individuals who have access to the individual MailChimp account.

Following a conversation with me during which I complained that MAMGA did not have easy access to its past publication, Art investigated his software and realized that he could download those past issues from MailChimp and put them on MAMGA’s own website for viewing. Many thanks to Art for allowing MAMGA to keep track of its history in a convenient format.

Groups can also create a “wish list” of plants; supporters donate in \$10 increments for the organization of their choice. MAMGA had 100% of its “wish list” donated. Plants will be ready for planting on Saturday, May 21, the day before the Plant Sale. Learn more [here](#).