

MAMGA Newsletter

February 2022



Wishful thinking
Photo by Percy Mather

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President's Message

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by Ed Meachen

February 1st is the halfway point for winter. We have another month to get all the indoor projects done we'd planned on last November. There's still a nice snow cover out there, so nature has forbidden any gardening work outside...well, except for fruit tree and other woody pruning. I love gardening, but it's a blessing to have time out. It's time now to do some serious thinking about rotating the vegetable garden and supplementing the perennials. I'm out on the web looking at plants I don't have, colors I'd like to add to parts of our gardens, advice from horticulturists and landscapers. We bought four very large pots from a ePlanters.com this fall. Lightweight, fiberglass, two and a half feet high. We will need to purchase some pretty substantial plants to fill these out. That necessitates studying garden catalogs and plant photos. What could be more pleasant than that? We're trying to hide some outdoor equipment in our yard, and these pots, we hope, will do the trick.

Of course, members of the board and executive committee, as well as other volunteers, have been planning the annual meeting. As you know by now, the annual meeting will be on Zoom. The upside is that you can be practically anywhere in the world that has wifi and participate in the annual meeting. The downside is that we can't talk to each other face to face. All you need to do is go out to our website, mamgawi.org, to register. You can do a donation if you like, but there is no cost to register for the annual meeting. If you haven't had a chance to meet her yet, you should register just to hear our keynote speaker, Reba Luiken, the new director of the Allen Centennial Garden. And we do need your vote on a couple of important bylaw changes and the election of board members. Percy has included all the particulars of the annual meeting in the newsletter below.

And please join us for a Green Thumb Tuesday Zoom social at 12:30 on February 1st by going to <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88068464022>

Calendar Events

February 1 Green Thumb Tuesday 12:30 – 2pm Zoom

To join the Zoom Meeting, go to <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88068464022>

February 11-13 Wisconsin Garden & Landscape Expo See [the website](#) for more info.

February 23 Last full day to register for the Annual Meeting [here](#). It's free for MAMGA members, but donations are always welcome.

Feb 26 Saturday 9 to 11am MAMGA Annual Virtual Membership Meeting . You will be sent the link to Zoom. Additional documents (meeting agenda, proposed bylaw changes, etc.) will be posted on [the Notes page](#) of the MAMGA website. Voting will take place via Zoom. Our keynote speaker is Reba Luiken. We will also hear presentations from two grant recipients.

March 4 Due date for MAMGA Community Grants MAMGA members can sponsor a grant request for an eligible site such as a community, school or public garden project. See the MAMGA [website for details](#).

Employment Opportunities

MAMGA lists the following information as a courtesy to our local businesses & employers.

Henry Vilas Zoo is looking for a horticulturist. See [this website](#). Closing date is February 11.

Schonheit Gardens is looking to hire seasonal staff. Check [their website](#).

MAMGA Board Minutes - Draft

4:00, January 10, 2022

Zoom

(EIN 39-1694554)

Board Members Present: Karen Allenstein, Mary Collet, Art De Smet, B'Ann Gabelt, Judi Janowski, Sally Kefer, Percy Mather, Ed Meachen, Victoria Robertson, Dennis Tande, Dana Warren

Also Present: Lisa Johnson

1. **Special Thanks** The Board recognizes the incredible contributions of Dana Warren and Sally Kefer, who are retiring from the Board. We thank them for many years of service, dedication, insight and support. [Note: After the meeting, Victoria Robertson chose to retire; we extend the same gratitude for her many contributions.]
2. **Review of November minutes** Moved by Percy Mather and seconded by Judi Janowski. Approved.
3. **Treasurer's Report** Art sent a budget prior to the meeting and will send the revised version. The final budget will be affected by the decision for a virtual Annual Meeting, such as no Silent Auction. The value of our assets is comfortable for the near future. The Board decided to not charge for either of the Olbrich tours. We will charge for the Boerner and Badger Ammunition tours. Ed will remind Deb that we need the budget for the 2022 programs.
4. **By-Law Changes** Ed proposed two changes.
 - The Annual Meeting will be held no later than April 30, instead of March 31
 - Eliminate the need to be a Certified MG in order to serve on the Board
 He will send these proposed changes to members two weeks prior to the February 26 Annual Meeting.
5. **Community Grants** Mary is now the contact for this committee. All grant applications for 2022 have been sent, with one inquiry. Sally suggested a name change to "MAMGA Grants" instead of Community Service Grants. The Board agreed with the change. A grant will still need a MG sponsor, but current MG certification is not required. The grant application is on the website, with a deadline of March 4. The committee has fine-tuned the whole process and will send a copy to Percy for the website and to Dennis for the MAMGA files.
6. **Board Candidates** Percy will publish the bios/photos in the February newsletter. She still needs a couple of items. We currently have 7 candidates for 6 openings, with a possible 8th candidate. Ed will send candidate information along with other Annual Meeting information in February.
7. **Membership** Art reported a 96% membership renewal rate. He will pick up the mail on the 17th, update the Excel spreadsheet and send the renewal names to Dennis.

On-Boarding Lite is required for all current members as well as any member who has reported volunteer hours within the last 5 years. There continue to be hurdles including obtaining the Net ID. Carol Troyer-Schank volunteered to help members. Percy has included her contact information in the newsletter. Lisa was unaware of the board members continued problems obtaining the log in. She will follow-up with the concerns and frustration. Ed has talked with Jay Dampier regarding the issues and lack of communication with members. Email is not an effective means, since one third do not open emails. Ed will also check on the number of credit hours for On-Boarding Lite

8. **Program Committee** The calendar is set for 2022. Dennis will include the program list in the January mailing with the membership cards. Deb reported there were 329 attendees for 2021 programs, not including the Annual Meeting.
9. **Annual Meeting** The February 26 meeting will be held virtually. Because of the detailed work done last year, the organization is in place. The meeting will start at 9:00 am. Ed will send an invitation prior to the meeting along with all the necessary documents. Ed will contact Reba for her topic and update her on the virtual status. Sally volunteered to help with Grant presentations. Members will need to register on our website to attend the Annual Meeting so that they will receive the Zoom invitations. Emily will generate a list of registrants and send an email Zoom invitation. There will be a deadline to register, but last year there was an extension.
10. **Board Calendar** Ed will send out a calendar for 2022. Dennis requested Mondays, just to keep better track of dates.
11. **Next Board meeting** March 21, 4:00 by Zoom
12. **Meeting Adjourned**

Meet Your Fellow Master Gardener: Cathy Spann

by Mary Collet

The UW Extension website describes the role of a Master Gardener as “helping deliver meaningful community programs to improve the well-being of individuals and communities, to protect natural resources, and to help keep fresh fruits and vegetables on the table.”

What an apt description of Cathy Spann! Cathy devotes her time and energy to the Blackhawk Community Garden, which is situated on the grounds of Gompers and Black Hawk Schools and was once a school garden. She serves on a team of leaders who oversee maintenance of common areas and administer 44 community plots as well as a dozen school plots. Gardeners pay an income-based fee for their plot to the garden, with fees going to Black Hawk School. Gardeners are required to garden organically, devote at least 60% of their plot to vegetables, and contribute four community service hours to the garden. Service hours can be earned in a variety of ways such as mowing, weeding, maintaining equipment, and tending perennial beds and fruit trees.

The requirement of community service hours opens up time for the leaders to tend to the fruit trees, the spiral herb bed, and other common areas. All the leaders have garden plots where they intentionally grow a variety of vegetables. Cathy’s plot includes okra, a nod to her upbringing in Oklahoma. All gardeners donate produce to the River Food Pantry. Because Black Hawk Community Garden is located on school grounds and is in the Community Garden Network, there can only be organic solutions to problems. One problem tackled was thistles! Cathy helped introduce the mechanical solution of mowing. A current

problem is an infestation of voles and field mice harboring in hay bales, boxwoods and

rhubarb. Two predator perches have been installed and this season gardeners will be required to treat hay bales with an organic repellent and bag any unused hay.

When Cathy was 11 years old, her family moved from the city to the country. Their rural Oklahoman neighbors had large garden plots and Cathy developed a love for gardening. She carried that passion into adulthood, “learning more by failures than successes.” At her previous home, which was shaded by black walnut trees, she learned a lot about what vegetables and perennials can tolerate juglans. At her current home, she makes the most of limited growing space.

In addition to her involvement with Blackhawk Community Garden, Cathy serves on the UW Extension Speakers Bureau and as a Plant Health Advisor. She loves being able to research plants, pests, and problem solving.

Why garden? “There is nothing like connecting with the earth. It is a miracle what can grow from one seed!”



Photos supplied by Mary Collet

Cathy Spann



Canvas site is open and available for On Boarding. You'll need to complete the On Boarding process prior to volunteering as an MGCV.

Looking for some help completing the new requirements? Carol Troyer-Shank has generously offered to help others walk through the process. Contact her at ctshank2gm@gmail.com to get started.

Volunteering in 2022 and Beyond by B'Ann Gabelt

As many of you may know, the On-Line Reporting System (ORS) will no longer be populated with projects but, rather with the names of the Organizations that these projects fall under. Associations, MAMGA in our case, have been asked to enter this information for their members. In order to avoid duplications of effort and multiple submissions for a given organization, we propose the following: MAMGA executive committee members will submit the information for as many Organizations as possible that had projects listed in the ORS in

2021. We will provide this list at the time of the annual meeting. Then, if any organizations are missing or others need to be added, we will ask members to notify us at info@mamgawi.org.

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The information that will be needed includes the following:

Name of Organization
Organization Mailing Address
Organization City
Organization State
Organization Zip Code
Organization County
Organization Contact Person
Organization Contact Person Title
Organization Contact Person Phone Number
Organization Contact Person Email
Organization Website/Social Media Site

MAMGA Board Candidate Statements

Dennis Tande

My love of gardening started in my Dad's backyard in Britt, Iowa when I was 5 years old and lives on with work in our own back yard, numerous volunteer activities and continuing education.

Our yard includes perennial and vegetable gardens, plus prairie and oak savanna restorations. Our gardens were featured in the 2007 Waunakee Garden Tour.

My first year on the MAMGA Board included work on the "Footsteps to our Future" strategic planning process, developing a new MAMGA brochure, new signage and serving on the Executive Committee and WIMGA representative. During my second and third terms, I served as MAMGA secretary and worked on the MAMGA Signature Project - prairie restoration and pollinator garden at the Lussier Center. I created a MAMGA handbook outlining job responsibilities, time lines and "to do" lists for future board members and arranged for MAMGA member business discounts and mailed membership cards. I have volunteered for many years with the Dane County Parks prairie restoration projects including organization, seed collection, cleaning, weighing and seed sowing. I have been most active at the Yahara Heights site, just north of Cherokee Marsh. I also volunteer at Drumlin Ridge, which is part of the Empire Prairie in Westport. Last year, I clocked 120 volunteer hours. I am also a member of Olbrich Gardens, Friends of Allen Centennial Garden, Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society, Wild Ones and Prairie Enthusiasts.



This spring I am starting my twelfth year as a seasonal worker at a local greenhouse, planting and assisting customers with questions, planning and plant selection.

I look forward to another exciting term, working with the Board to promote this incredible organization which provides a variety of educational, volunteer and social opportunities.

Carol Troyer-Shank

A retired elementary teacher who grew up with a long heritage of organic vegetable

gardening, Carol Troyer-Shank became a certified MGV in 2015 in Lisa Johnson's class. Since then, she has served on the MAMGA Grants Committee, and volunteered in various MAMGA efforts, including the Signature Project, the Teaching Garden, the Plant Help Line and the Garden Expo booth. Her primary volunteer energy goes to coordinating the Allis Elementary school garden and the Allis Heritage Community Garden. Serving on the MAMGA board would be a satisfying way to give back to an organization that has been so

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important to her own growth as a gardener.

Why am I a Master Gardener:

Being a Master Gardener allows you to spread your knowledge, learn more about gardening and be of service to your municipality. As below:

Contribute to your community -- every year Master Gardeners contribute several thousand hours of volunteer service educating our communities about sustainable gardening. Greatest site for meeting the community is Community Markets, you get questions that hopefully you can answer or at least to know where to look for the answer.

Gain excellent knowledge about the life of the garden through classes on growing plants learning what Horticulture is and working in gardens as a volunteer with other volunteers.

What is Horticulture: it is the art of cultivating plants in gardens to produce food and medicinal ingredients, or for comfort and ornamental purposes. Horticulturists are agriculturists who grow flowers, fruits and nuts, vegetables and herbs, as well as ornamental trees. Gardeners are members of the local community who take an active interest in their lawns, trees, shrubs, flowers and gardens. They are enthusiastic, willing to learn and help others and able to communicate with diverse groups of people.

These are the reasons why Master Gardeners are important to me and to the community.

It is now a time of some changes that could change what the Master Gardener program is about and how one becomes a Master Gardener with the knowledge that can offer the proper answers to the community. I would like to be a part of these changes hopefully to be of benefit to new members.

My name is Eugenia Beecher and I am a gardener.

I am the daughter of a gardener but not always a happy helper when I was younger. My father was in the military but wherever we were we had a garden and even when he traveled he would bring home fruits or vegetables that needed attention ASAP. One such occasion sticks in my mind. It is a Friday afternoon and Dad comes home with two bushels of Georgia peaches that have to be preserved or frozen as he spoke. Date canceled we worked all day and evening filling the freezer with sliced peaches and making pickled peaches to put in some in Mason jars. I must say while this was not my happiest day but months later enjoying the results of our work was a joy.

I have been gardening, teaching gardening, and continuing learning about growing fruits and vegetables for over 50 year. I just planted a prairie garden on our west terrace after road construction on Toepfer Ave two summers ago. I ask that they not plant grass on my terrace and could I have some of the huge boulders they were digging up and so began my newest garden. The top of my garden(on my property) was destroyed by not very bright back hoe driver. I needed to replanting and it became a more formalized pollinator garden now with a sign says no pesticides.

I have so enjoyed being a Master Gardener the experiences and hope to help others enjoy the gift of Master Gardeners in the community.



Eugenia Beecher

Ed Meachen

I probably would not have run for re-election to the board for a sixth term if there were no Covid 19 pandemic and no complete overhauling of master gardener certification in 2020 and 2021. But I feel an obligation to this wonderful association to help guide it through some tough times ahead.

Six years ago the board created a five-year strategic plan that revitalized MAMGA. We rewrote the bylaws, made educational programs and volunteering the central focus of our association, and revitalized our commitment to provide grants to school and community gardens. We have realized nearly all our goals in that plan. We are now on a sound financial footing, we have a marvelous, creative board, a great group of master gardener members, and a vital relationship with our friends at UW-Extension.



Ed Meachen

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So I feel good about running for re-election in 2022, and I would appreciate your vote. We have a lot of work before us to bring our association through a challenging year. I think it will be a happy new year with your continued support and commitment to MAMGA.

Barbara Park

I am interested in running for the MAMGA Board because I have been a Master Gardener for about 16 years and decided it was about time that I gave back to the organization.

I have been volunteering at Olbrich in the library for most of the time that I have been in the program. For the last several years I have also been on the management committee at the Marlborough Community Garden. I am particularly interested in helping with the program that selects groups to receive our grants as Marlborough Community Garden has been the recipient of a couple of our grants so I understand the process from the recipient's viewpoint and could help guide groups through the process.

In my home garden I have been emphasizing plantings for pollinators. I have a city lot with a wooded and rather wild back yard and a new garden in the front with an emphasis on pollinator friendly plants. It is fun to watch which flowers are being used by who during the course of the seasons. I realize that I am paying more attention to the insect activity in the garden. Fun!



Barbara Park

Judi Janowski

I became a Master Gardener in 2014 after retiring as Program Director from a non-profit organization in Madison. My love of gardening began as a child spending weeks at my Grandparents' farm eating warm, juicy tomatoes from my Grandfather's beautiful, weed-free, vegetable garden in southern Delaware. What fun I had riding in the tractor helping to survey the fields of Silver Queen corn, a new sweet corn hybrid.

I completed the Plant Health Advisor training and have attended the annual PHA update training. I volunteered at the John Muir school garden helping to create a walking path in a

wooded area on the school grounds. For 2 annual community service days I worked with a group of Edgewood HIGH School students teaching about and removing invasive plants (large buckthorn and pampas grass particularly) from 2 large garden beds at St. Dunstons Church in Madison. I am also a member of the MAMGA Speaker's Bureau.



I have served two terms on the MAMGA Board of Directors; however, I would like to continue as a member of the Board as the Association continues to adapt to the on-going 3-year pandemic as well as numerous, substantive changes to the Master Gardener Program, our core. MAMGA's Board is an active, effective and creative body which is committed to sustaining and developing the organization's mission in spite of numerous challenges.

I have served on the Board's Planning Committee and have been a member of the MGV Graduation Planning Committee since 2016. During the past 2 years, the Board Planning Committee has continued to offer an array of interesting, educational programs in spite of COVID limitations. We have planned an interesting array of educational, enjoyable programs for 2022.

I would like to continue to serve as a member of the MAMGA Board to sustain its mission. I am committed to the importance of public gardens in our communities. They provide beauty, respite, food and opportunities for people to connect with others. I will bring my passion for gardening, my ideas and cooperation as a team member to the MAMGA Board if I am elected.