

MAMGA Newsletter

January 2022



Costa Rican Cloud Forest

Photo by Percy Mather

I escaped the start of winter and spent two weeks in Costa Rica as part of a Sierra Club tour. The cloud forest is an interesting area that is home to the legendary resplendent quetzal as well as hundreds of species. The elevation is between 3000 and 8000 ft and frequent fog supports the growth of epiphytes. One of the most famous, the Monteverde cloud forest, contains 700 species of trees and 500 species of orchids. I've included a few photos of greenery and scenery at the end of this newsletter to cheer us up until winter loses its grip on our gardens.

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President's Message

by Ed Meachen

Greetings from the New Year! My family and I thoroughly tested the challenges of traveling abroad in the midst of the pandemic. The maze of regulations, and the sudden changing of requirements made for some interesting problem solving. Thankfully, none of our family contracted Covid. And we did enjoy the trip. I hope you all had a good holiday season.

I also hope all of you had a chance to read Lisa's December 23rd email entitled "Onboarding Lite: NEW REQUIRED VERSION for 2022." Lisa did a good job of explaining how and why these new MGV requirements are occurring. If you haven't read it yet, I will sum up the requirements without going in depth into the reasons.

Starting on January 6, a new Canvas course, "Onboarding Lite," will be announced. Even if you took the onboarding lite course last year, you will need to take the new Onboarding Lite course. All currently certified MGVs will be required to take this course through the UW Madison online course application, called Canvas. So if you don't have a UW Madison net ID you will need to get one to access Canvas. The Onboarding Lite course will be worth 10 Continuing Education credits. That is the entire year's CE credits in one course.

MGVs must complete this course prior to volunteering in 2022. I understand that this requirement may appear a bit harsh since volunteering is a gift freely given to Extension and other public gardening enterprises by gardeners who have long since qualified as master gardeners.

The CE credits and the forbidding of volunteering until Onboarding Lite is completed are the carrot and the stick that tell us that we are starting over from square one.

I hope you have submitted your CE hours for 2021. If you've inadvertently missed the December 31st deadline, I'm not sure what the path is to be reinstated as a certified MGV.

Our good news is that as the "alumni" organization, MAMGA has no such requirements for continued membership beyond your initial certification. No matter what is happening at the MG program office, we invite you to renew your membership for 2022 if you haven't already done so. We have great programs coming up and a wealth of gardening friends eager to talk with you about making your garden better!

Hurrah for 2022! We made it through 2021, so let's stay healthy and enjoy the next gardening year.

Calendar Events

January 1 Canvas email was sent to all MGVs and contains the info about the required renewal coursework for MAMGA. If you see an email from "Canvas", don't delete it; it's from the MGV program. Check your 'Spam' file to see if it is there.

January 6 MGV Canvas site is open and available for On Boarding. You'll need to complete the On Boarding process prior to volunteering as an MGV.

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.

January 10 Monday 4 – 6pm – MAMGA Board Meeting via Zoom If you are not on the Board but wish to sit in, please contact Ed Meachen via email at willismeachen@gmail.com to make arrangements.

January 15 Saturday 10am Tour of Olbrich Greenhouse An onsite event for a maximum of 20 people. Olbrich's fee of \$5 per person will be collected at the tour. Sign up via Eventbrite [at this site](#).

January 14 Friday Board Candidates' Statements & Photos are due. Please email JPG photos and text either in an email or a .doc format to percy.mather@gmail.com Call 608 233-1955 if you have questions. You can find examples of past statements in the February 2021 newsletter on the MAMGAWi.org

January 29 Saturday 10 – 11:30am via Zoom Nathan Larson speaks on Growing Hope: The Local and Global Youth Garden Movement. [Register via Eventbrite](#) and be sure to include **MAMGA** in the code in order to waive the fee listed as \$10. (This event is a joint program with Friends of Allen Centennial Gardens and is free to their members.)

February 1 Tuesday MAMGA newsletter will include Board candidates' statements and photos as well as information about the Annual Membership Meeting scheduled for Saturday Feb 26. **Green Thumb Tuesday 12:30 – 2pm Zoom or live at Monona Gardens to be determined.**

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](#).

MAMGA Board Meeting Minutes (*DRAFT*)
November 8, 2021
via Zoom

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

1. **Review of September 13, 2021 board minutes:** Moved by Dana Warren and seconded by Judy Janowski. Minutes were approved as written.
2. **Report of Nominating Committee for 2022 board members:** Sally Kefer and Dana Warren will be leaving the board at the end of their term. The committee has recruited two candidates to stand for their positions. They will also make an announcement in the newsletter to let other interested members know how to apply.
Proposal to revise by-laws: Proposal will allow a MAMGA member not currently certified to serve on the board
3. **Treasurer's Report:** 2021 deficit will likely only be \$1000 - \$2000, rather than the \$3,000 that was budgeted.
4. **Community Grants update and timeline for 2022:** Sally Kefer and Mary Collet are

currently working together to finish the reports for 2021 and establish the timeline for 2022. Sally will be stepping down as chair of this committee at the end of the year. Mary will be the new chair. The 2021 grants are nearly finished and the announcements for 2022 will begin soon. The 2022 application period will be between Dec 1, 2021, and March 4, 2022. Grants will still need a member sponsor, but that member will not need to be certified.

5. Annual Meeting Options:

Room is reserved and Speaker is scheduled, but deposit to caterer is not due until early January. Will try for a hybrid meeting with in-person and zoom attendees. Those attending by zoom will be able to vote by Zoom poll.

Proof of vaccination will be required for those attending in person.

Registration is due in early February.

There will an introduction of 2019 and 2020 grads who were unable to have a graduation ceremony due to Covid restrictions.

There was a discussion about flipping the Spring Annual Meeting and Fall Graduation going forward, but doing so would mean a significant revision of the by-laws.

6. **MGV Graduation 2022:** Lisa will not have the list of those who have completed the onboarding process for 2021 until after 3/31/2022, so we will be unable to welcome them at the annual meeting. The by-laws do not allow us to move the Annual Meeting forward into the spring. It was suggested that the program committee put something together for them in April or early May.
7. **Timeline for membership renewal drive:** Ed sent letters to all 2019 and 2020 non-renewals today. A second letter to 2021 non-renewals will go out shortly. Notices in the newsletter and Facebook are ongoing. Lisa will get Ed an updated list of all those who have completed the onboarding process for 2020, so he can contact those who are not already members.
8. **January Newsletter:** Percy will be out of town in late December. The Board supported publication of the newsletter on January 7th or 8th. Percy will send an email to all MAMGA members on January 1st indicating that the publication will be delayed.
9. **2022 Goals:** Need to be flexible to accommodate more changes than are sure to come.
10. **Next Board Meeting:** January 10th. See above. □
11. **Meeting Adjourned: Sally motioned to adjourn. Percy seconded. Motioned passed. 5:52 pm.** members on January 1st indicating that the publication will be delayed.
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Meet Your Fellow Master Gardener: Patricia Bennett

by Mary Collet

Patricia Bennett has been gardening all of her life. As a child, she worked alongside her mother in their gigantic vegetable garden. Now, she and her mother work side by side in the flower garden at Four Winds Manor, which Patricia designed, planted, and maintains. “She taught me early, and I am teaching her later,” says Patricia.

Five years ago, the garden alongside Patricia’s house consisted of five daffodil plants. Today,

there is a profusion of all sorts of perennials, plus a pond with a waterfall. “Somehow, everything keeps expanding,” she says. Patricia particularly enjoys old-fashioned flowers like four o’clocks, hollyhocks, and bleeding heart. She’s a member of the Day Lily Society and Badger Bonsai Society. She has become increasingly interested in growing native plants and has started a pollinator garden.

Tucked alongside one side of the house is a small vegetable garden, which features something new every year. This past season, Patricia experimented with black radishes. She saves seeds and grows all her vegies from seed.

Following the example of her parents, Patricia is very civic-minded and believes strongly in contributing to the community. She sits on the Madison Transportation Commission. She initiated a Coffee with a Cop program, which brings together police officers and the community, over coffee, to discuss issues and learn more about each other.

Patricia’s first project as a Master Gardener Volunteer was planting a vegetable garden for Quaker Housing. Later she worked in the vegetable garden at Midvale School. She has written and received grants for neighborhood gardens, namely Zook Park and Mohican Triangle Park. She received free plants for the Zook Park garden. For Mohican Triangle Park, neighbors will be asked to contribute plants from their gardens.



Before (above)

After (below)

Photos by Pat Bennett





Photo by Mary Collett

Costa Rica by Percy Mather

Costa Rica is near the equator, with Panama to the south and Nicaragua to the north and coastlines on both the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Much of the country is mountainous but there are several large plains alongside major rivers. The country's 23 volcanoes have contributed rich mineral soils; 3 volcanoes remain active. For a country about the size of West Virginia, the diversity of habitat, flora and fauna puts the country among the top 20 countries in the world—5 % or roughly half a million of the total species in the world are found here. All but 7,000 of those species are invertebrates; sixty per cent are insects. The reason for this diversity is that the original area consisted of islands that allowed many species to develop in specialized locations. Eventually the islands emerged from the sea and were linked in a single land mass connected to North and South America that allowed species to spread.

I learned something interesting about day length in the tropics. Being close to the equator means that the day length is not dramatically different in different seasons. It gets dark around 6pm summer and winter, with summer days only half an hour longer than winter days.

Costa Rica relies on tourism as a major source of revenue in addition to exporting pineapple, coffee, and decorative plants. Twenty-seven per cent of Costa Rica's land is being kept in its

natural state either as national parks or through agreements with private owners.

The cloud forests support the growth of many epiphytes as shown below. Ginger, cassava, white yams, yucca, citrus, melons, star fruit, onions, and greens are available at this San Jose farmers' market.

