

ADDRESSING THE MONTHLY HAPPENINGS OF THE MADISON AREA MASTER GARDNERS
ASSOCIATION & DANE CO. UW EXTENSION HORTICULTURE PROGRAM

FEBRUARY 2014



Quote of the Month

"Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit.

Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad."

Anonymous

Save the Date!

Please plan to attend MAMGA's Annual Meeting

and luncheon on March 8th

at the Candlewood Suites in Fitchburg.

More information and how to register coming soon!

The Extension Express

From Lisa Johnson
Dane County UW-EX Horticulture Educator



Teaching Garden

We are looking forward to another year and hoping we didn't lose too many tender woody plants to the deep freeze. We are also starting to plan the 2014 Plant Sale. If you are interested in helping, please contact Haley Hart at packfan7378@sbcglobal.net for more information. We need people to host and help with digs, make labels, divide plants, plan concurrent activities, make signs and I'm sure a few other things I've forgotten.

Programming Potpourri

We have got programs coming out of our ears!! Here are a few upcoming opportunities:

- I'll be doing 3 presentations at the Garden Expo Feb 7, 8 and 9 and an appearance with Larry Meiller. Feb 8 at 9:30—Larry; Feb 8 at 1 p.m. Organic Techniques; Feb 8 at 3:30 p.m. Container Gardening; Feb 9 at 2:15 p.m. Hostas and Friends.
- EAB Summit and Ash Ambassador run by Community Groundworks on Wednesday, February 12th at 10 am at the Fitchburg DNR. Contact Mike Ecker at mgecgw@gmail.com to register. Also, check your email for more details on this that I sent you on 1/15/14.
- An EAB 101 Class run by Community Groundworks, but Lisa will be one of the speakers. It will be Wednesday, March 19th at 6:30 pm (aprox. 2.5-3 hrs) at the Warner Park Community Recreation Center. Contact Mike Ecker at mgecgw@gmail.com to register. Also, check your email for more details on this that I sent you on 1/15/14.
- MGVS Speakers Bureau Training on February 19, at the Extension office from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Check your email for more details on this that I sent you on 1/15/14.
- I am doing a talk on growing apples and pears at Olbrich on Feb 20 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- MAMGA's Annual meeting on Saturday March 8.
- UWEX Annual Pruning Workshop (also open to the public) Saturday March 29 here at the office. check your email for more details on this that I sent you on 1/15/14.
- Details are still being resolved, but we will have a fruit tree grafting and pruning workshop open to MGVS and the public

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Forms

- [2013-14 MGVS Hours Reporting Form](#)
 - [2014 MAMGA Membership Form](#)
 - [2014 Volunteer Interest Form](#)
-

Calendar of Events

For reporting purposes:

Items in green count as CE credits for re-certifying MGVS.

Items in red count as a MAMGA event.

February 1, 2
[Orchid Quest 2014](#)
Alliant Energy Center, Madison

February 7, 8, 9
[Garden Expo](#)
Alliant Energy Center, Madison

February 13
[2014 Southern WI Vegetable Production Workshop Series 1 - 5 p.m.](#)
Dane Co. UW-Extension
5201 Fen Oak, Madison
[More Info](#)

March 8
[MAMGA Annual Meeting](#)
Details coming soon.

March 22

on Sat March 22 at the West Madison Ag station. Stay tuned for more info.

Hort Shorts

I know I usually use this space to talk about plants, but today I want to use it to talk about a fellow plant-lover. My friend Shelley Ryan, host and creator of the Wisconsin Gardener program on WHA TV passed away this morning, January 16, 2014. I know you'll



be seeing news

releases on this and get my email about it long before you read this in time delay. But right now, I need to remember her and everything she did for us. She was a strong, bright, joyful, creative and feisty spirit and it is hard to believe she is gone. Here is a photo taken by MGV Dan Caucutt at a garden cleanup the MGVs and I did at her house in 2012. I miss her already. Shelley, I'll see you on the other side in another garden.

Additional information about Shelley Ryan may be found at the two links following: [here](#) and [here](#).



Many Thanks!

Thank yous go to: Stephanie Bloomquist - picking up our mail, routing all the membership renewal and volunteer interest forms, depositing the dues payments; Bonnie Berg - updating 2014 membership form cards, printing 2014 membership cards; Joan Fitzgerald - newsletter, assistance with new email list; Jane LaFlash - membership database updates; Marilyn Sallee - assistance with website updating, assistance with new email list; Janie Starzewski - membership database extracts, assistance with website updating, assistance with new email list, assistance with newsletter improvements; and Wipfli, LLP - printing 2014 membership cards. Thanks also to newsletter columnists Jackie Winchester, Lisa Mlinar, Marilyn Sallee and proofreader Peg Schumann.

Fruit tree pruning & grafting workshop

Olbrich Gardens

RBG Spring Symposium
Janesville

March 28-29
WIMGA Annual Conference
Appleton

March 29
Annual Pruning Workshop
5201 Oak Fen, Madison
[More Info](#)

June 25-26
[Midwest Regional MG Conference](#)
Bettendorf, Iowa

Olbrich Gardens did not have its new calendar posted at press time. Go to www.olbrich.org/events to find new events.

[More Wisconsin Events](#)

Contact Info



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Website: www.mamgawi.org

MISSION

Dedicated gardeners promoting responsible gardening through education, volunteer service, and fellowship.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Catherine Murray, President
Cheri Schweitzer, President-elect
Mary Burke, Secretary



Green Thumb Tuesday

Tuesday, February 4, at 5 p.m.

Monona Gardens Restaurant
6501 Bridge Rd, Madison, WI 53713
[Map/Directions](#)



TOPIC: Catalogs - The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly.

Come enjoy an evening with other master gardeners. An opportunity to get together, get caught up, visit, etc. Get-togethers are happening on the first Tuesday of the month, now known as Green Thumb Tuesday (catchy huh?),

Look forward to seeing you there!

Need more information? Call Dana at 608-833-5703

Events of Interest in 2014

Mark your 2014 calendars for the following out-of-Madison events:



RBG Spring Symposium 2014
March 22, 2014

Theme: Gardening for Good
Times: 9:00am-3:30pm (check-in begins at 8:15am)
Price: \$55 RBG Friends Members/\$65 General Public

Optional boxed lunch with drink (soda or water) and sweet treat, \$11 (see options on the attached PDF). For those who choose to remain at RBG during the lunch hour, Hort. Director Mark Dwyer will be talking about our Gardens in 2014—color themes, special gardens, etc. Bridget’s Family Bakery will also be on hand to sell her delicious baked breakfast goods and more. Coffee, tea and juice will be provided.

Speakers:

- Eliza Fournier, Manager of School & Community Gardening from the Chicago Botanic Garden.
Topic: Urban Agriculture – Growing More Than Plants (will speak about gardening for the good of our bodies and for the community).
- Barb Kreski, Director of Horticultural Therapy Services at Chicago Botanic Garden.
Topic: Gardening as We Grow Older (extending our

Cathy Cryor Burgweger,
Treasurer
Aleta Murray, WIMGA Rep
Steve Hoffland
Paula Lenius
Anne Rodgers-Rhyme
Dana Warren
Lisa Johnson (Ex-officio Advisor)

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MAMGA is a 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit organization.



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own gardening season, if you will).

- Cindy Peterson-Berlovitz, Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist from Minnesota Landscape Arboretum and Abbott Northwestern Hospital.
Topic: Gardening for the Good of All (will speak on what current research says about Nature promoting healing both at home and in the clinical setting; and practicing Mindfulness in Nature to “recharge one’s batteries” on a regular basis).

As always, there will be a silent auction, a raffle, some goodies and some surprises...but that’s not all! Don’t forget that Master Gardener Volunteers from both IL and WI can claim education hours for attending these programs.

Online registration coming soon to <http://rotarybotanicalgardens.org>. Please feel free to contact [Kris Koch](#) (click on her underlined name) or call 608-752-3885 ext 17 with any additional questions.

Garden Expectations State Conference March 28 & 29, 2014

Join us at the beautiful Radisson Paper Valley Hotel and Conference Center in downtown Appleton on March 28 and 29, 2014 for the [Garden Expectations Annual WIMGA Conference](#). Each year, the Outagamie County Masters Gardener Association hosts a Garden Expectations Conference and, in 2014, will combine the event with the annual Wisconsin Master Gardeners Conference. The 2-day event will be jam-packed with wonderful speakers on a wide variety of topics, and you’ll have the opportunity to visit with vendors introducing some interesting and exciting products. While this event is organized by the Wisconsin Master Gardeners for its members, it is open to the public! [Download Conference Brochure](#) (PDF)

All About Herbs Lecture Series - 2014
Sponsored by the Herb Society of America – Wisconsin Unit AND Ozaukee Master Gardeners
Dates: March 13, April 10, May 1. [View schedule and event details](#).

Upper Midwest MG Conference June 25-28, 2014

You won’t want to miss the Upper Midwest Master Gardener Conference June 25-28, 2014 in Bettendorf, Iowa. Keynote and featured speakers are already lined up for the conference. Scott Ogden and Lauren Springer-Ogden, authors of Plant-Driven Design and Passionate Gardening will both be speaking at the conference. Felder Rushing, author of Garden Hearts, Bottle Trees, and Slow Gardening is another of the keynote speakers. Melinda Myers, contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and author of more than 20 garden books will be a featured speaker. Check out the [conference website](#). Registration will begin in early 2014. You can also Like the [Facebook page](#) for the conference to

WI Master Gardener website:
<http://wimastergardener.org>

MG Program Office Blog
<http://fyi.uwex.edu/wimastergardener/>

INCLEMENT WEATHER ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR MAMGA EVENTS

Please note that event cancellations or other inclement weather announcements for MAMGA events will be posted on our [website](#).

Did you miss a past e-newsletter?

If you didn’t receive one of our past e-newsletters, be sure to look in your "spam" or "junk" folder. Some email applications mistakenly place emails in these folders.

If you use Gmail’s new design, you may have noticed that your emails are now being sorted into three tabs — Primary, Social, and Promotions. If you’d rather see the emails we send end up in your Primary tab, it’s simple to tell Gmail where these emails should go. Simply drag and drop this email into your Primary tab and click “yes” when Gmail asks if you’d like future messages from this email address to go to your Primary tab.

follow developments.

WHPS Trips and Tours for 2014

June and July

The Trips committee for Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society recently announced its schedule for "trips" and "tours" for 2014. Additional information will be published in their June newsletter.

Tours:

- Monday, July 14 - Windsor - gardens of Mark Anderson/Carmen Zajicek, Monique Warnke, Allis Meier, Char Hanson and Jane Rouleau.
- Monday, July 21 - gardens of Jeannette Golden in Black Earth and Judy and Dan Peterson in Mazomanie.

Trips:

- Sunday, June 1 - Buying trip to Milwaukee area featuring four nurseries: Shady Acres, Johnson's, Minor's and Bluemel's; and two private gardens: Dorothy Danforth and Will Radler, developer of the Knock Out roses series.
- Saturday, August 9 - Chicago Botanic Garden - Bus ride to the gardens; lunch on your own and spend day seeing this wonderful garden.
- Friday - Sunday, September 12-14- Trip to eastern Iowa featuring Seed Savers, two arboreta: Dubuque and Bickelhaupt, three nurseries: K & K, In the Country, Hosta Leaf; and five (or more) private gardens.



Volunteer Opportunities

1. HELP NEEDED TO KEEP MEMBERSHIP DATABASE CURRENT: Starting in February, MAMGA will be using a new and improved method of routing our monthly newsletters to members' email boxes. Hopefully this new method, drawing directly from the MAMGA membership database, will improve accuracy and currency of the email addresses to which the newsletter is sent. Please help us keep your information current in the MAMGA membership

database. Please email name changes, new email addresses, new addresses, or new telephone numbers to mamgamail@yahoo.com.

2. AGRACE HOSPICECARE NEEDS

GARDENER: Help 2-3 hours per week from mid-April through November. Job Description: Agrace gardeners are responsible for maintaining the 8 acres of developed gardens which surround our facility.

Duties include: planting, watering, mulching, deadheading, pruning, cutting back perennials, edging beds, sweeping patios and lots of weeding. Location: AGRACE HospiceCare, 5395 E. Cheryl Parkway, Madison, WI 53711. Contact: Cassie Deacon, (608) 327-7163, cassie.deacon@agrace.org.

3. MIDDLETON OUTREACH MINISTRY (MOM)

FOOD PANTRY GARDEN: The MOM garden consists of 25 20' x 20' garden plots that are made available to clients of the food pantry garden. Mentors are needed to assist gardeners with limited garden experience from planting through harvest.

The mentor's duties are as follows:

This spring will be the 4th year for our garden. Each family generally harvests between 200 and 300 pounds of fresh produce that goes directly to their dinner table. The reward for participating in this project is knowing that you have helped provide fresh produce for families who do not have access to an adequate and healthy food supply.

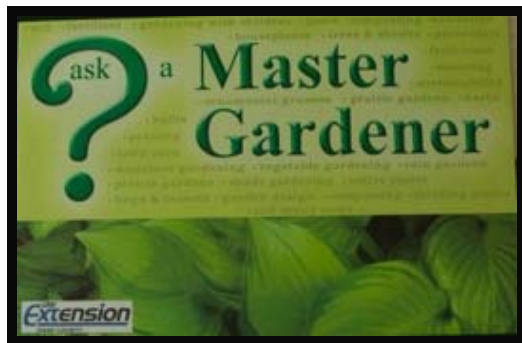
Contact Dan and Mary Johnson at 608-836-1638 or email maedouuro@live.com

- o Meet with garden manager to discuss in detail MOM food pantry garden protocols and policies.
- o Initial meeting with client to discuss expectations and responsibilities.
- o Help client decide on what vegetables to plant.
- o Assist with planting.
- o Meet, when necessary, with client to weed, mulch, trellis, harvest, etc..
- o Time commitment will vary with skill level of gardener but 2-4 hours a month would be a reasonable estimate.
- o The garden is located near the corner of Evergreen and Pleasant View Roads, near the Middleton Hockey Rink & UW Provisions.

4. COMMUNITY GROUNDWORKS has internships available in organic agriculture, natural areas restoration, and environmental education. We offer both paid and volunteer internships at Troy Gardens and at our other sites in Madison. Learn about our organic vegetable farm, natural areas, kids' garden,

and youth farm positions and find an application on our website by clicking [here](#). Due March 1.

Ask a Master Gardener (AAMG)



If you would like to be part of the MGV Team that staffs the Ask A Master Gardener (AAMG) booth at local farmer's markets, read on.

How it works: AAMG volunteers should have completed the Core Course and filed volunteer and continuing education hours to maintain certification under UW guidelines. MGs can also volunteer if they are working with Extension to get recertified. The Plant Health Advisor class is good preparation, but not a requirement. Current students are encouraged to sign up, to observe and get comfortable with the Q&A format. Two MGs and one student are scheduled at each Market date.

Ask A Master Gardener (AAMG) Training: The single, 2-hour orientation class for first-timers and returning AAMG volunteers is offered twice to accommodate busy schedules. [Watch for training class schedule coming this spring.](#)

For more information, contact Lisa Johnson, Extension Horticulture Educator (johnson.lisa@countyofdane.com) or Rosanne Horne, AAMG Coordinator (rosannemh@gmail.com).

Teaching Garden Work Days



Will resume in Spring 2014!

As always, don't forget to record your Volunteer hours so you can report them in October.



Continuing Education Opportunities

MGV Speakers Bureau Training
Wednesday, February 19, 2014 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM
5201 Fen Oak Drive, Madison WI

One of the most important things you can do as a master gardener volunteer is to go into the community and give presentations on garden-related subjects for community groups. It is actually fun and people are so grateful for the information! We have handouts, presentations and speaker's notes all ready for you and another master gardener volunteer speaker to deliver to groups right now!

- Learn how to engage an audience
- Learn how to answer questions (remember, you have resources and it's ok to say "I don't know but I'll get back to you"!)
- Learn some techniques for conquering stage fright
- Learn how to set up, work and trouble-shoot the presentation equipment
- Learn some do's and don'ts of speaking
- Share your experiences with presentations and learn from others
- Have fun!

REGISTER NOW WITH LISA JOHNSON at 608-224-3715 or johnson.lisa@countyofdane.com.



Garden Reflections

by Joan Fitzgerald, MGV, PHA



New year, new beginnings! I'm not one who makes New Year's resolutions because I don't keep them. Life always seems to get in the way of my resolutions.

As a new year begins I want to send a special "Thank You" to MGV members who have helped with this newsletter the past year. You've probably noticed that Jackie Winchester and Lisa Mlinar are regular columnists and have been for quite some time. I can always count on them for interesting and informative articles. Lisa Johnson and Joe Muellenberg are also regulars, alternating months with their Extension Express column.

Behind the scenes I get help from Marilyn Sallee and recently, Janie Starzewski. Marilyn keeps the MAMGA website up-to-date and we work together to get announcements made in a timely manner. She also likes to contribute articles for addition in the newsletter. Janie and I spent a few hours recently going over the newsletter contents. She is creating updated templates for each month and assisted with the overall organization and look of the content. She also gave me some tips on working with MailChimp, the program in which we create the newsletter.

I could not conclude my "Thank Yous" without thanking Peg Schumann, proofreader extraordinaire! I find it dangerous to not have my work proofread and when I asked for a volunteer, Peg heeded the call. She has a good eye for errors and makes me look good!

I've noticed a few signs of spring in my yard recently. Thanks for neighbors who feed the birds, we have a nice selection of birds to watch in the neighborhood. I hear the male cardinal out there singing his song, marking his territory for spring. We

have a significant number of chickadees and juncos that I love to watch outside my kitchen window. The most interesting birds around are a flock of cedar waxwings. I see them around over time but I don't believe I've spotted so many in winter before.

Finally, I have to mention two of my favorite events of the year in Madison: Orchid Quest and Garden Expo. They occur the first and second week-ends of February. I especially love Garden Expo because I can smell "dirt" and I know that spring is on its way (after a few more snowstorms and cold that is.)

Forty-nine days to spring and counting down. Stay warm!

Perils of Winter/Indoor Gardening

From Marilyn Sallee, MGV

For those who move their gardening skills indoors for the winter, here are a couple of pests to watch for in the comfy warm and dry growing conditions near your windows or grow lights. The indoor plants provide an excellent environment for Spider Mites and Whiteflies.

Spider Mites are



so small, they

look like pale dust or pollen, but are most easily identified by their webbing. They are in the spider family and with a lens you can see the eight legs on adults, but six legs on immature. They are a sucking insect that leaves tiny dots on plant leaves. A few mites are generally tolerated, but indoors in the winter they proliferate and can quickly get out of hand, covering the plants in webbing.

To control an infestation, spray the plant vigorously with water, possibly with a shower head in the tub, which helps knock down the population. It can also be treated with insecticidal soap according to package directions.



Whiteflies are related to other

plant pests such as aphids, mealybugs and scale and are similar in size and suck plant juices. They can't live through a Wisconsin winter outdoors, but proliferate inside homes and greenhouses in dry, warm conditions. Adults look like tiny moths, but the nymphs are wingless and may be crawling or attached to the leaf and sucking plant juice.

Control of whitefly is more difficult than spider mites, though vigilance, water sprays and insecticidal soap help decrease both. Yellow sticky traps are often used in green house conditions to keep the number under control. In the home whiteflies can also be removed with hand-held vacuuming the

plant carefully and putting the bag outside to freeze. The vacuum method works best for light infestations, so keep an eye out and inspect your indoor plants often.

Before you use any insecticide, be sure the specific insect, indoor site and the target plant are listed on the label and always follow label directions carefully.

Houseplant Twins: Telling Pothos from Philodendron

from Marilyn Sallee, MGV

Both Pothos and Philodendron make robust houseplants well suited to indoor conditions, and often sold mislabeled as the other, but telling Pothos (*Epipremnum aureum*) from Heart-leaf Philodendron (*Philodendron hederaceum*) requires a close look and some botany. They are different species, with different growing needs, though they have quite a common ground. Knowing which you have tells you important things about care and propagation.

As an indoor plant, Pothos is more robust in our homes, handling low light and dry heat better, and survives more neglect and dry soil. Philodendron is better at handling over-watering, is easier to propagate, but can get sunburn in too bright light.

Whichever you have, if you treat it right and get it to vine, you can encourage their distinctive traits – Heartleaf Philodendron is also called Velvet-leaf because a mature vine develops a velvety texture. And a true mature Pothos in a good location may develop a split-leaf trait.

While most are commonly grown in hanging baskets or small pots in the home, both of these plants are climbers and can be grown on moss covered posts, support columns or a trellis. If allowed to climb or vine, they can easily reach across the room, or climb a tree in warm climates. You can give it small hooks or supports to cling to and make the vines climb walls or even across windows. Lay the stems on the supports to train it.

Both vines will form new roots along the leaf-joint,

and can be started in water. But for good development, start new plants by air-layering, wrapping the leaf node in sphagnum or pinning into a good rooting medium. The best time to propagate is right now – at the end of winter - while the plant is dormant allows the roots to develop best. Also, tip cuttings encourage the parent plant to branch out and become thicker and fuller.

The propagation technique is best applied during winter dormancy, and not suitable for spring when plant energy will be directed to new top growth instead of the root system.

For additional information about these hearty houseplants, contact Marilyn Sallee at msallee111@yahoo.com.

Plant of the Month

-- Plumbaginaceae --
from Jackie Winchester, MGV

Plumbago is a genus of 10-20 species of flowering plants in the family Plumbaginaceae and common names include plumbago and leadwort.

Plumbago is native to



South Africa and is popular

in warm temperate to tropical regions of the world. Plumbago can grow in USDA Zones 8B-11 and can withstand some frosts. Even if killed to the ground, it will usually recover quickly. Plumbago is grown as an annual in our region.

Plumbago is an evergreen shrub with long, thin stems and pale blue flowers that can be used as a shrub, climber, potted plant and groundcover. Plumbago can be pruned to grow as a vine or pruned into a compact mounded shrub, or left to sprawl with its long, arching branches. The 2 inch oblong leaves are a fresh, light yellowish green color. The blue flowers are 1 inch long tubes expanding into 5 petals spreading about 1 inch across. The flowers are borne in rounded terminal clusters like phlox flowers. Plumbago blooms all year long except for the coldest winter months.

Plumbago does best in light, sandy soils with good drainage. Do not add lime to the soil as plumbago likes a slightly acidic soil. The foliage may turn yellow due to manganese deficiency which can be remedied by applying manganese sulfate. Plumbago should be pruned heavily to control growth, to maintain shape and to maximize the flowers. It produces its flowers on the current season's growth, so prune faded blooms in late winter.

Plumbago requires six or more hours of direct sunlight each day. It can tolerate partial shade but will produce fewer blooms. Water new plants regularly to keep the soil moist until the plants are established. Once established, blue plumbago requires watering only when the soil is dry to the touch as plumbago is considered moderately drought-tolerant. Excessive moisture can lead to root rot.

Plumbago is propagated from tip cuttings in the summer, but it can also be grown from seed. Plumbago is very fast-growing, relatively easy to grow and has few problems.



From the Bookshelf

Passalong Plants



Authors: Steve Bender & Felder Rushing

Passalongs are plants that have survived in gardens for decades by being handed from one person to another. These botanical heirlooms, such as flowering almond, blackberry lily, and night-blooming cereus, usually can't be found in neighborhood garden centers; about the only way to obtain a passalong plant is to beg a cutting from the fortunate gardener who has one.

In this lively and sometimes irreverent book (don't miss the chapter on yard art), Steve Bender and Felder Rushing describe 117 such plants, giving particulars on hardiness, size, uses in the garden, and horticultural requirements. They present this information in the informal, chatty, and sometimes humorous manner that your next-door neighbor might use when giving you a cutting of her treasured Confederate rose. And, of course, because they are discussing passalong plants, they note the best method of sharing each plant with other gardeners.

Because you might not spy a banana shrub or sweet pea in your neighborhood, the authors list mail-order sources for the heirloom plants described. They also give tips on how to organize your own plant swap. Although the authors live in and write about the South, many of the plants they discuss will grow elsewhere. Amid the clamor of press releases touting the newest, improved versions of this bulb or that perennial, what keeps people interested in old-fashioned plants? Nostalgia, for one thing. It's hard not to feel a special fondness for that Confederate rose, night-blooming cereus, or alstroemeria lovingly tended by your grandmother when you were a child. Such heirloom plants evoke memories of your first garden, of relatives and neighbors that have since passed on, of prized bushes you accidentally annihilated with your bicycle. Recall the time you first received a particular plant, and you'll recall the person who gave it to you.

About the Authors

Steve Bender is a senior writer for Southern Living and a

contributor to several books on southern gardening. He lives in Birmingham, Alabama. Felder Rushing is a seventh-generation Mississippi gardener, an author and columnist, and host of radio and television gardening programs. He lives in Jackson, Mississippi.

Snippets . . .

PLANT A SPRING CONTAINER GARDEN: Jody Torpey, contributor to *Fine Gardening E-Newsletter*, advises readers to plant a spring container kitchen garden right outside your kitchen door. She says they are easy to plant, maintain and harvest.

Jody prefers to plant and grow baby lettuce mixes because they grow quickly and a packet of seeds yields enough for many salads or sandwich toppings. They're also inexpensive. These are the same pricey gourmet blends found in up-scale grocery stores, specialty produce markets and farmers' markets.

Packets of mesclun, which are mixes of small salad greens that vary in color, textures and flavors, are excellent choices for your garden. Traditional mesclun salad mixes include chervil, arugula, lettuces and endive, but they can also include dandelion, mizuna, mâche, radicchio and sorrel. She recommends looking for salad mixes that offer assorted colors, textures and flavors. Jody likes combinations that include bronze and lime-green leaves, curley and leafy textures and flavors that are tangy or peppery. Baby leaf spinach is also a good choice.

Finally, Jody recommends planting chives in containers because they are perennials and are the first greens to appear in her container garden each year. Source: *Fine Gardening E-Newsletter*, January 20, 2014.

PERFECT EDGES FOR YOUR BEDS AND BORDERS: Ray Baker, an interior designer, recognizes the importance of well-defined lines whether inside his home or outside in his garden. In this month's *Fine Gardening E-Newsletter*, he provides four easy steps to achieving sharp lines in garden edges that provide a finished look and a sense of clarity to any area. In his garden, a razor-sharp edge serves as a stage that sets off the careful planning and maintenance he does each spring to prepare for the growing season. Find Ray Baker's four steps to sharp lines in garden edges by clicking [here](#). Source: *Fine Gardening E-Newsletter*, January 20, 2014.

GEN X, GEN Y ATTITUDES TOWARD

GARDENING: Ever wonder what the "younger" generations think about gardening? Research from Today's Garden Center's 10% Project gives us insight into future generations of gardeners. From almost 350 pages of transcripts from the focus group discussions, the research team identified four key insights into how Gen X and Gen Y potential customers think and behave when it comes to gardening: Click [here](#) to read the results of the 10% Project's findings in an article titled "*Younger Consumers Think Gardening Is Good, But Hard Work, Time Consuming And Dirty [10% Project]*."
Source: Today's Garden Center, January 21, 2014.

FROM MGV CHERI SCHWEITZER: The City of Madison December newsletter had two good articles of interest that I think would be great for inclusion in our newsletter. One is a story about how Madison Community Foundation funded a Large Scale Oak Savanna Restoration The second is about the Emerald Ash Borer being confirmed in Madison. Click [here](#) to go to the articles.



Master Gardener Volunteer Profile

-- Jackie Winchester --

by Lisa Mlinar, MGV

What do you get when you cross an engineer with someone who has a passion for growing flowers? You get this month's featured Master Gardener, Jackie Winchester, and some handy tips to boot.



You may recognize her name from the by-line on the "Plant of the Month" column in the MAMGA newsletter. In 2010 when her daughter headed off to college, Jackie had a little free time on her hands and a big desire to gain more gardening knowledge. She saw the

Master Gardening program as not just a chance to learn new things, but a good value and the perfect opportunity to meet new people with similar interests. With a full time career and other commitments, she soon realized it would be difficult to meet the requirement for volunteer hours. Her free time rarely coincided with scheduled work days, or even daylight.

Jackie likes to deal in facts, but is also naturally creative. She was also determined to solve the required scheduling problem. She talked to Lisa Johnson, and together they came up with the ideal solution. Jackie spends a few hours each month researching a plant and preparing an article that highlights what she learned. One would never guess that she has no formal training as a writer. Additionally, she photographs the plants herself. She enjoys taking pictures as much as she enjoys looking at what others have done. Some of the flowers are from her own yard, while others are grown by friends or neighbors. She is fortunate to have a handy resource: a neighbor works at the UW greenhouses.

How does she decide which plant to profile? She tries to match the bloom time to the current month. For example, past columns have featured the tulip in spring, hibiscus in summer, sedum in fall, and poinsettia in winter. The latter season presents a bit of challenge, so you may find that winter month articles feature what we can only dream will be growing in our gardens in warmer days to come.

When something catches her eye at Olbrich, the Rotary Gardens, or Garden Expo, she adds it to the list of contenders for a future spotlight. The Internet is also a major source of information; with her favorites being the reference material links from the State and University sites of Wisconsin and Minnesota. She also relies on her own sizable collection of gardening books.

Jackie's interest in growing flowers took a serious turn after college. She always liked plants, and had the typical collection while in school, including spider plants and Wandering Jew. After graduation, her roommate got her interested in starting flowers from seeds. Together they planted four flats of flowers they kept on TV trays by the window. Jackie was hooked when she found how "super easy" it was to grow alyssum and petunias. She has been starting her own seeds for the past twenty years. Each year she adds more and more plants, and last year's count was an astonishing hundred or so flats of 72-cells each. How does she do it? That is where her practical side really kicks in, resulting in a highly organized and efficient system from start to finish.

The process begins once the Christmas holidays are over. She pours over catalogs, deciding what to grow (she will start all of her own annuals). While some gardens are planted with the same things each year (one bed is all white, another is white and blue), she always tries some new varieties as well.

She sticks to pinks and blues and pastels. (Yellow and orange are not welcome!) The order is placed in time for her to be able to start the seeds at the end of January. Jackie is quite pleased with the seeds she buys in bulk from Geoseed.com. Other supplies are purchased locally. She is finally done starting seeds when she is finished with the case of 100 plants that she buys from Jung's.

Now that her yard has given over to lots of shade; impatiens, begonias, lobelia, fuchsia, coleus, dianthus, and petunias are the flowers of choice. She also starts a few tomatoes, peppers and herbs for her mother. She claims some are super easy to grow, most are easy, but the tuberous begonias can be difficult.

Her sowing method involves using 3x5 index cards (folded in half lengthwise to hold the seeds) and her favorite planting tool: a mechanical pencil. Once she gets a pattern going, she says it does not take long to plant two of even the tiniest seeds in each cell of Jiffy mix. Watering is done by hand, and the flats are covered and placed in the laundry room until the seeds have germinated. Then they are moved to the starting nursery in her basement. She has a U-shaped setup with the potting table and work area in the middle, surrounded by units of five shelves apiece. Ordinary shop lights are on 16-hour timers to provide both light and sufficient warmth. Two lights will take care of four flats, and she expects about a \$100 increase in the electrical bill for these few months.

Around St. Patrick's Day, it's time to thin, which she does with a little help from her friends. The extras are transplanted to empty cells. Jackie estimates the overall germination rate is 95%, with petunias and impatiens at the very high end while dianthus is just 60%. She generally ends up with between 1000 and 1500 impatiens each year. The plants will already have flowers on them by the time they are ready to be moved outdoors.

It is a Mother's Day tradition to put up the portable 6x12 foot plastic greenhouse in the yard. It can hold 50 to 60 flats. That becomes the staging area where the plants are hardened off for two to three weeks. This is also the time she starts preparing the dozen or so edged beds, adding compost or garden mix as needed. Another May custom is to take her mother to Ebert's Nursery in Ixonia. This nursery has a huge selection and great prices. Jackie also, not infrequently, picks up a plant or two, but she only buys the very unusual; such as new varieties of coleus, and maybe a fuchsia or begonia. Last year she bought a mandevilla vine for a mere \$13.

When it is time to plant, she takes a week off of work and spends five straight days planting; literally from dawn until dusk. Based on painful past experience, nothing goes into the ground before May 20, and bed sheets are kept handy to protect the tender plants in the event of a cold snap. She

plants rather densely, with each bed having three to five rows of different specimens. The thousands of annuals only take up about 20% of Jackie's ¾ acre yard. She budgets for some failure, and by mid-June any extra flowers are donated, planted elsewhere, or out on the porch and free for the taking.

The beds are mulched and watered by hand with a hose; an automatic sprinkler on a timer is not discriminating enough. She wants to be the one to decide which plants need it, and just how much. Two weeks after planting, everything gets a dose of Miracle-Gro, and then another feeding two weeks after that. Hanging baskets continue to be fed every other week for the rest of the season. These typically contain petunias, lobelia, verbena, and whatever else the rabbits would eat were it at ground level. She once had her entire garden wiped out by rabbits within a day of it being planted. Now, when rabbits eat something, Jackie will put salvia in its place. While it is infuriating, she takes solace in the thought that things could be worse. At least she doesn't have deer!

Over the course of 25 years, the initial "couple of sticks" have grown to become mighty trees, bringing shade to nearly her entire yard. As a result, the Hostas that she once considered boring have become more and more appealing, inspiring Jackie to join the Wisconsin Hosta Society, where she is currently Vice President. (She is also actively involved with the Hardy Plant society.) In addition, as a result of the increased shade in recent years, the day lilies started dying off and the roses looked shabbier.

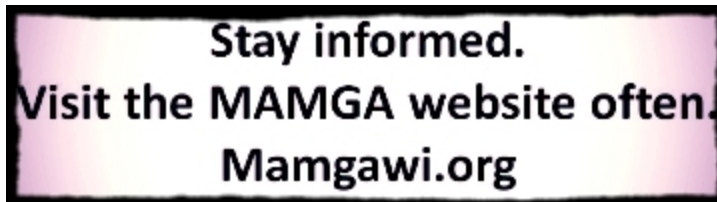
She hired a professional arborist this past fall and had major tree pruning done to open up the yard again. While she had done her own pruning and shaping in the past, she learned through the Master Gardening courses what she had done wrong, not just when pruning and trimming, but also when she planted trees. She is excited to see the rejuvenated yard come spring, as well as whether the Hellebores come up. She fell in love with these flowers after seeing them at Garden Expo last year, and simply had to buy and plant a few.

Jackie over-winters some plants, such as hibiscus (watering once a week), and also enjoys starting plants from cuttings. For her, it is as easy as putting them in buckets of water or soil in the garage or basement. Soon enough they are rooting.

She decorates inside the house fall, winter and spring, using plant cuttings for the holidays. In summer, the yard itself is the decoration. She says that plants are her pets, and just as most pet owners interact with their pets rather than just look at them, Jackie is happiest when she is doing something in the yard. She rarely can bring herself to just sit back and admire. But she will take time to visit gardens when she

travels. One of her favorite plants is the plumbago shrub with its beautiful blue flowers. It is found carpeting walls all over France. She also recalls the blue wild hydrangeas on Madeira, and thinks the most exquisite tropical plants are found in Costa Rica.

Given Jackie's drive and background, I would not be surprised to hear someday that she has engineered a way to turn Zone 9 plants into permanent fixtures in her garden. Or perhaps we will all read about it in her own columns.



2014 MAMGA MEMBER DISCOUNTS

Once again, many local nurseries and garden-related vendors are offering special discounts to MAMGA members in 2014. The Bruce Company and Moyer's Hometown Nurseries have increased their MAMGA member discounts for this year!

Our member discounts are summarized below. For more information, please see the discount information posted in the [Membership section of the MAMGA website](#), as well as the letter that accompanied your 2014 MAMGA membership card.

- America's Best Flowers (10% off green goods - non-sale items only)
- The Bruce Company (20% off green goods, nursery stock & construction materials - Tuesdays only)
- Fair Oaks Nursery (10% off plants, shrubs & trees - excluding Christmas trees)
- K&A Greenhouse (10% off green goods - April to July only)
- Klein's Floral & Greenhouses (10% off)
- Moyer's Hometown Nurseries (15% off retail on cash & carry materials)
- Paradigm Gardens (15% off)
- Schonheit Gardens (10% off in-stock plant material)
- Taylor Creek Nursery (10% off retail on in-stock plants and seeds)
- Wild Birds Unlimited (10% discount)
- Winterland Nursery (10% discount)

When requesting a discount, please show your 2014 membership card and let our participating vendors know that we appreciate their support!



What's the Difference Between MAMGA, WIMGA & Certified Master Gardener Volunteers?

MAMGA, the Madison Area Master Gardeners Association, is a local non-profit organization of persons who have completed the basic Master Gardener training course, or are current students. MAMGA members may or may not also be currently certified Master Gardener Volunteers. MAMGA exists to provide education, service, and fellowship opportunities for its members. Membership costs \$15 per year. MAMGA members receive discounts at many local nurseries, participate in educational programs and garden tours throughout the year, and are invited to social events.

WIMGA, the Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association, is a state-wide non-profit organization of persons who have completed the basic Master Gardener course, or are current students. Most MAMGA members also choose to join WIMGA, but doing so is not required. WIMGA membership costs \$5 per year. WIMGA members receive periodic newsletters and other informational communications from the state master gardener office. WIMGA also hosts a statewide master gardener conference each year.

Certified Master Gardener Volunteers have completed the basic Master Gardener training course and have satisfied annual volunteer service and continuing education requirements. Most Certified Master Gardener Volunteers choose to join MAMGA and/or WIMGA, but are not required to do so. There is no cost to be certified as a Master Gardener Volunteer. Certified Master Gardener Volunteers assist gardeners through the local UW-Extension Office by serving as plant health advisors, answering hotline calls, tending the Teaching Garden, and performing various other activities that support the UW-Extension Horticulture Program and reach out into the community. Certified Master Gardener Volunteers also perform lots of other gardening outreach and service at places like University Display Gardens, Allen Centennial Garden, Olbrich Gardens, the UW Arboretum, churches, community gardens, and many other venues.



University of Wisconsin-Extension, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Wisconsin counties cooperating. UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and ADA.

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