



# Sprinklings

ST. CROIX VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

May 2017

## National "Green Ribbon" honor bestowed on Houlton Elementary School's initiatives

Through hard work and creativity, MGVs Sandy Madsen, Julie Weinberg, Lynn Steely and John Ramstad helped bring national attention to Houlton Elementary School's gardens. One of 45 schools receiving a "U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School" award, it was cited for innovative efforts in reducing environmental impact, improving health, and ensuring sustainability. MGVs help students with composting, planting, weeding, and harvesting herbs and vegetables. The grounds also contain a rain garden, butterfly garden, and a one-acre prairie, all of which have been sustained through SCVMGA grants, the school's education fund and personal donations. Congratulations, MGVs!



(From left) Lynn Steely, Sandy Madsen, Julie Weinberg and John Ramstad

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

### Upcoming topics: Watersheds, Weeds

by Carolyn Barrette

Our **May 25** meeting will feature Dave Fodroczi, Executive Director of the Kinnickinnic River Land Trust. He will summarize the new measures and plans to conserve land and water resources of this prime stream flowing through River Falls and surrounding lands on its way to the St Croix River.

On **June 22** we'll hear again from Teresa Marrone, our Garden U speaker on fruits and berries. This time she'll tell us about the weeds in our gardens. How can we not want to hear about that pesky vegetation we didn't plant?

Both meetings will be at First Covenant Church in River Falls, starting at 6:45 p.m.

## New Richmond Community Garden Service Day

8:30 a.m. Friday, May 19

[Click here for more info.](#)



## 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Plant Sale set for June 3 at Octagon House

by Corky Weeks

Tell your neighbors and friends to stop by the Octagon House, Third St. and Myrtle St., in Hudson from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, June 3.

The plant sale is our main fundraiser with money going to Community Grant recipients. Last year the plant sale contributed over \$4,000.

You can contribute in several ways. We need your divided perennials, volunteers, annual flower and vegetable seedlings you started, and if you are cleaning out your garage and have extra garden tools, pots, etc, donate these to the sale too. But **no house plants**, please. They just don't sell.

You can help organize the sale and work during the sale day. Remember, you can count volunteer hours for whatever you do for the plant sale, including potting up your plants. Also

please come and spend money.

WIMGA recently sent us a reminder in a Volunteer Vibes email about buying and selling invasive plants and our own wonderful extension agent, Diana Alfuth gave a seminar on invasive species in April. We must be careful, as MGV's, about what we sell at the plant sale and what we grow. The WI DNR has a list of 145 prohibited or restricted invasive plants that are illegal to transport (as in digging and selling). [Click here for a list.](#) Please make sure you are not contributing any invasives to the plant sale.

When you donate plants, please label your plants with the name of plant, color, name of variety, if known, height and sun or shade. Use plastic or wooden sticks or paper labels. Stapling it to the pot or wooden stick works well. We will have pots, paper labels

and large sticks for labels available at the May meeting.

Plants should be dropped off in the back yard of the Octagon House Friday, June 2 between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. Use the side entrance by their garage on Myrtle St. You can also drop them off before 8 Saturday morning.

If you have plants to contribute, but can't get them to the Octagon House Friday evening or if you need help dividing your plants, email [Corky Weeks](#) or call her at 651-210-5160.

We are in need of portable banquet tables to display the plants on so if you have any you can loan for the day, please let Corky or [Tim Wilson](#) know.

Please come join us. We will start setting up at 6:30 a.m. It's fun and you'll be able to buy some great plants. Our members always donate the best stuff!

## President's Message

Spring is finally here. Daffodils, tulips, alliums, and my favorite fritillaries are blooming. The spring bulbs have always been my favorite. As a child I would wander the yard looking for the first tulip or peony of the season. Spring is trout fishing, tree planting, mushroom hunting, apple blossoms and lilacs. My turkey hunting spot was graced by the presence of a patch of trout lilies and some bloodroot. The new calves are bucking and chasing each other around. I have always loved those little white faces of those Hereford calves. There are so many wonderful parts of spring. Everyone has their own favorites.

The growing season is beginning and

everything is fresh and full of potential. Be sure to stop by our Annual Plant Sale on June 3. If you can help out, that's even better.

There's a wonderful opportunity for you to work with young people – potential Master Gardeners – at the New Richmond Community Garden on May 19. The benefits and rewards are too numerous to mention. One only needs to look at the Houlton Elementary School to see the impact that gardening can have on children.

It's also important to stop and enjoy the season; it's our reward for persevering through winter. Especially that rhubarb cake (see *Karalyn's recipe on page 7*), rhubarb pie and rhubarb sauce on ice cream. That's the real reason spring is my favorite season. It's a good thing spring has arrived; I only have half a jar of strawberry rhubarb jam left!



Trent Kowalchuk

## What's happening?

### SCVMGA Scholarship winner announced

Amanda McCarty, a junior Horticulture major at UW-River Falls, was awarded the 2017 SCVMGA \$1,000 scholarship. "It was horticulture that caused me to jump out of bed and begin transforming my backyard into my home farm," she wrote. "My ultimate goal is to be an organic farmer." McCarty is from Hastings, Minn.

### WIMGA UPDATE

by [Paul VanDenMeerendonk](#), WIMGA representative

The Wisconsin Master Gardener (WIMGA) [website](#) is up and running. We have a webmaster who is continuing to update and is looking for suggestions.

The WIMGA newsletter committee is continuing to improve file sizes of photos so that all members' email servers can download the newsletter. If you have ideas for articles, please contact [Lynn Caine](#). Suggestions are welcome to implement the Mentoring Program document. The Speaker's Bureau committee is working on an "intake" form to gather information from potential speakers.

Everyone should have received the May 2017 issue of WIMGA. I'd like to call attention to page 3, "Save The Date" for upcoming Conference dates, speakers, and more! Also, there's lots of information about what MGVs are doing.

A big thank-you to **Matt Schmitz** for serving on WIMGA's Board of Directors for 17 years. As chair of the member committee, he wrote the "Responsibilities of Local Reps and Board of Directors." In 2011 he became an At-Large Director and served as Vice President from 2013-16. He also worked on the planning committee for the Midwest Master Gardener Conference at Wisconsin Dells. He said he enjoyed learning about other MGV groups and their different situations. The state, he said, "is focused on local associations, while the MGV program is focused on individuals."



Matt Schmitz

### 2017 SCVMGA Grant Recipients

*Restoring prairies, teaching kids, growing-to-share are some of the creative horticulture projects*



PHOTO BY LESLIE HOLT

Nineteen grants were awarded this year by the SCVMGA Grant Committee for a total of \$4,482. (Front from left): **Debby Walters**, Viking Middle School prairie garden, Woodville flagpole garden; **Avery Richardson**, Girl Scout Troop at Glover Park, Hudson; **Jessica LaPeau**, working with youth at New Richmond Library, New Richmond; **Karen Furo-Bonnstetter**, Woodville Community Library gardens; and **Angela Boles**, Prescott School District. (Back from left): **Cynthia Doty**, St. Croix County Fairgrounds; **Deb Pederstuen**, Christian Community Homes garden, Hudson; **Barb Nelson**, Play and Learn Series, Emerald, Glenwood Public Library entrance; **Lisa Mosbey**, Grow-to-Share herb garden, River Falls; **Heidi Heubner**, Bluebird Hill Homestead garden, Hudson; **Sandy Madsen**, Houlton Elementary School; and **Rebecca Strand**, Norseman Manor raised-beds, Woodville. Not pictured are **John Ramstad**, Christian Community Homes Garden Club, Hudson; **Peggy Grubbs**, rain garden in Glen Hills Park, Glenwood City; **Sue Helmers**, garden cart, Houlton Elementary School; **Mandy Pflingsten**, 4-H project, Elmwood; and **Chantel Mitchell**, Montessori School, River Falls.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

by Deb Pederstuen



*Deb is a 1999 MGVC class graduate and our first Membership Director, beginning in 2000. Her mission has been to welcome and inform every new Master Gardener Volunteer.*

Our membership is like a climbing vine! It has crept up to 195 members. Joining recently are 2016 MGVC intern, **Karen Nork** of New Richmond, and renewing members, **Peggy Berg**, **Betty Schultz** of River Falls and **Ellen Hurtgen** of Woodville. A warm welcome to all four!

My assistant, **Lynn Steely**, and I thought it would be fun to reach out to our 2016 interns. We were amazed by the variety of volunteer projects they've selected within our association and across their communities.

Three of our 17 interns are stepping into leadership roles. **Leslie Holt** is thrilled snapping photos and coordinating our Visual Communications committee. Go to our [Shutterfly sharing site](#) to see if your photo is posted there!

**Rachel Baumer** and **Janet Bliven** are **Trina Frank's** new Hospitality Assistants.

This spring **Patricia Henderson**, **Tom Kujawa**, and **Amanda Lawrence** joined Diana Alfuth on the St. Croix County Fair Committee. They will create a new outdoor MGVC booth site at the Home and Community Education Building with lawn improvements and a new floral garden.



Volunteering at our sponsored community gardens are **Patricia Miller** and **Nikol Shirts**. They will lend a hand to Coordinator **Donna Cadenhead** at the New Richmond Community Garden. Always room for more volunteers! **Katherine Mastny-Byboth** is helping with Lisa Mosbey's Grow-to-Share herb garden and at Diana's Demonstration and Learning Garden in River Falls.

Seven interns selected projects in their community. **Bob & Faye Gartmann** linked up with **Rebecca Strand**, a \$250 SCVMGA grant recipient, to build two handicapped-accessible raised vegetable beds at Norseman Manor.

Elementary school teachers **Erin Abrahamson** and **Elizabeth Schuster** are teaching students about gardening.

**Karen Nork** and **Carol Hokenson** are restoring floral gardens at Som-

erset's Christ Lutheran Church. They welcome any advice from MGVCs with floral garden expertise.

Best wishes to all our interns in their new projects. You can see no matter how far our membership climbs, there's no shortage of community volunteer service projects.

## NEW PLANT SALE CO-COORDINATOR

In 2016, **Christine McGinnis** donated truck-loads of plants! This year, Plant Sale Coordinator **Corky Weeks** announced that Christine will assist her at our 13th Annual Plant Sale at Hudson's Octagon House.

## APRIL MEETING DOOR PRIZE

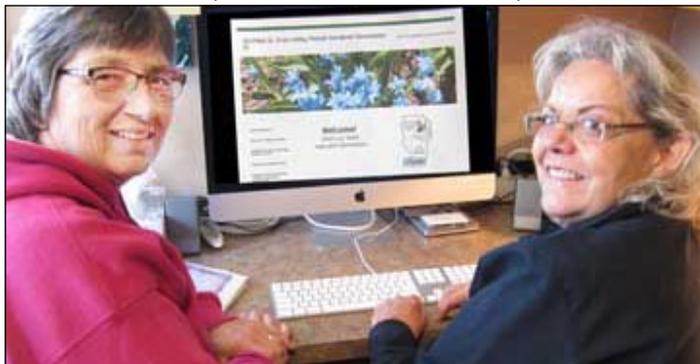
Our thanks to retiring Assistant Volunteer Coordinator **Barbara Johnson**. For two years she notified coordinators of new volunteers. She won the book, "Restoring Ecological Health to Your Land" by Steven I. Apfelbaum and Alan Haney. A perfect gift to relax with "up north" where she and her husband plan to retire. We send our best to Barbara!

Seeking Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator for Volunteer Projects  
*Informing members of opportunities*

Please email [Lisa Mosbey](#)

## Meet our new Webmasters

With help from our computer expert **Suzy Naschansky**, our new webmasters, **Debby Walters** and **Mari Marson** have recently updated and reorganized the website. All forms are gathered under the "Forms" tag. The Bulletin Board, now open to the community, includes product specials and job openings from area businesses. SCVMGA-sponsored tours have their own page. Photos have been sorted by year. If you have additional suggestions for improvement, please go to "Contact Us." They would love to hear from you!



Debby Walters (left) and Mari Marson

## MGVCs celebrate Earth Day



PHOTO BY MARGARET SMITH

SCVMGA members helped staff a booth at the Earth Day Celebration (April 23) at the YMCA Camp in Hudson. From left are Mallory Abrahamson, daughter of **Erin Abrahamson**; **Peg Wastell**; **Donna Davis**; **Amanda Lawrence**; and **Corky Weeks**. Amanda and Erin are among our newest members, and Mallory may be headed in the same direction one day. She planted "Teddy Bear Sunflower" seeds for the display and her mother says, "All have germinated and are thriving on our windowsill."

## Cutworms in Wisconsin

by Jerry Bridge

'Cutworms' is a general term that refers mainly to larvae of the family of moths called the Noctuidae. They are caterpillars that cut and feed on young plants below ground, at ground level or above ground. Adults are often called Owlet moths. There are about 2500 species from this family in North America with about 12 cutworms (using the above definition) being common in Wisconsin gardens. The adult moths are night-flying and the larvae may be highly variable in their coloration. Larvae of most cutworms can be up to two inches long and tend to be thick and fleshy; many have two or three generations per year.

The Black cutworm (*Agrotis ipsilon*) and the Variegated cutworm (*Peridroma saucia*) are two of our most common species. The larvae of the first have been recorded to feed on over 50 species of plants including turfgrass, and the second feed on about 125 species. The black cutworm feeds at the ground level whereas the variegated cutworm feeds mainly above ground, hence called a 'climbing' cutworm. Black cutworm larvae tend to appear oily (they are not) with black granular spots. The variegated cutworm is readily recognized by the

yellow spots on the back.

The origin of these two species is uncertain but both are now nearly cosmopolitan. Both species rarely overwinter in Wisconsin, adults usually flying up from southern states in the spring. Most moths in this family are strong fliers and they also use upper air currents in their migration.

Other cutworms commonly seen in Wisconsin are the dingy cutworm, glassy cutworm and bronzed cutworm, all native to Wisconsin and these three overwinter here as eggs or larvae.

Management strategies, if necessary, include: tilling soil in spring and fall, avoiding the use of green manure, wrapping the base of stems of transplants or seedlings with aluminum foil, using insecticides (which usually are not needed) such as carbaryl or permethrin. Damage to plants after spring is usually minimal as the larvae like soft tissues to feed on.



**Black cutworm** (*Agrotis ipsilon*)  
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA



**Variegated cutworm** (*Peridroma saucia*)  
UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS

*Jerry has been a SCVMGA member since 2013. With a background in biological sciences and mathematics, he was an education consultant in a former homeland of South Africa. His interest in insects began many years ago in subarctic Canada.*

## Neo. . . what?

by Colleen Callahan

Neonicotinoid is an effective insecticide that's been used on farm crops and landscape plants since the late 1990s. It's the most widely used insecticide in the world, according to Vera Krischik, associate professor and University of Minnesota Extension specialist. However, a growing body of research is revealing its detrimental effects on bees.

According to the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, sublethal levels can reduce honey bees' navigational skills, taste sensitivity and ability to learn new tasks, all of which interfere with their foraging activities and consequently their hive production. At this point, there is no evidence that the insecticide causes honey bee die-off, known as colony collapse.

Bumble bee queens have shown a significant reduction in reproduction at sublethal levels.

Sublethal amounts also harm reproduction of mason bees. The maturity

stage of larvae of blue orchard bees takes more time with sublethal exposure. Solitary bees have seen increased rates of mortality (alfalfa leaf-cutter and alkali bees).

Neonicotinoids have one of six types of active ingredients: imidacloprid, dinotefuran, thiamethoxam, clothianidin, acetamiprid and thiacloprid. The last two are the least toxic to bees. Neonicotinoids can travel in water and have been found in watersheds, rivers, streams, wetlands, groundwater and puddles.

In 2013, the European Union limited the use of imidacloprid, thiamethoxam, and clothianidin on crops that bees visit. That same year, the EPA added a bee advisory label to neonicotinoids specifying application restrictions to protect bees. In 2016, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service stopped using all neonicotinoids on National Wildlife Refuge lands.

Home gardeners can do three things to ensure that they are not causing harm: use a botanical insecticide, a chemical one that's bee-safe, and

buy plants with tags that say they have not been treated with neonicotinoids. David Smitley, professor of entomology at Michigan State University, suggests using insecticides containing *Bacillus thuringiensis* (B.t.), which works well

on caterpillars. Horticultural oils and soaps are safe for bees if applied in the early morning before bees get active. Prof. Krischik reports that Pymetrozine (Endeavor) and Flonicamid (Aria) are used by nurseries for aphids. Both are safe for bees.

*Thanks to MGV Phyllis Jaworski for suggesting this topic. SOURCES: Xerces Society, mother nature network, University of Minnesota Extension*



## Volunteer Opportunities \*

If you have a project that you would like to include on this list, please contact [Lisa Mosbey](#), Volunteer Coordinator.  
 Note: click on underlined names for direct email links. \*Now seeking coordinator and assistant coordinator. Contact Lisa.

### BALDWIN-WOODVILLE

#### Baldwin Community Garden

[Wendy Kramer](#)

#### B-W Giezendanner School Forest

[Debby Walters](#)

*control invasive species*

#### Viking Middle School

[Debby Walters](#)

*maintain prairie restoration project*

### ELLSWORTH

#### Pierce County Fair (Aug. 10-13)

[Leroy Clark](#)

*plan, setup displays, staff booth*

#### Pierce County Fairground Gardens

[Karen O'Brien](#)

#### Ellsworth Ambulance Hall

[Kevin Ballman](#)

### ELMWOOD

#### Personal Property Plant ID Project

[Teresa Davis](#) *Work as a team to identify plants in people's yards*

### GLENWOOD CITY

#### Glenwood Community Garden

[Barb Nelson](#)

#### Glenwood City "Welcome Cows"

Bonnie Walters

*help 4-H club with maintenance*

#### St. Croix County Fair (July 19-23)

[Norma Rudesill](#), 715-688-2160

*plan, setup displays, staff booth*

### HUDSON

#### Hudson Farmers Market (Plaza 94)

Tuesdays 8 a.m.-noon (June-Oct.)

**NEED COORDINATOR** *Volunteers will set up, tear down table, answer questions, provide info to public*

#### Hudson Farmers Market

(Faith Community Church)

Saturdays 8 a.m.-noon (June-Oct.)

Dawn Kleinknecht, 612-203-9030

#### Lakefront Park (April-Oct)

[Ramona Robinson](#)

#### Octagon House (Mondays)

[Janet Haut](#)

#### Willow River Elementary School

[Ramona Robinson](#)

#### Willow River State Park

[Melissa DuPont](#)

#### Hudson Middle School

[Mike Deneen](#)

#### Birkmose Park Indian Mounds

[Marianne Leverty](#), 715-549-5528

*maintain native plantings*

#### Homestead Gardens, Perch Lake

(April-Oct.) [Justin Townsend](#)

*plant annual garden, bring ideas for beautifying park*

#### Christian Community Home

[Deb Pederstuen](#) *Weekly 2-hour maintenance of courtyard gardens*

#### Healing Waters Health Center

[Nancy Lawton-Shirley](#)

### NEW RICHMOND

#### New Richmond Community Garden

[Donna Cadenhead](#)

*plant, weed, harvest, donate produce*

#### Deerfield Gables Care Center

[Carolyn Craig](#)

#### Cancer Center of Western Wisconsin

[Julie Walsh](#), 715-246-9999

#### Leadership Trust Initiative

[Kristin Thompson](#)

### PRESCOTT

#### Great River Road Visitor Center

[Deb Kittilson](#)

### RIVER FALLS

#### Boulevard Flower Plot

[Donna Reuter](#)

#### Demonstration and Learning Garden

(Hoffman Park) [Diana Alfuth](#)

*plan, weed, give demonstrations, scout for problems*

#### Junior Garden U (Hoffman Park)

[Diana Alfuth](#)

#### Grow to Share Community Garden

(Hoffman Park) [Megan Loga](#)

*need board member, coordinator*

#### Grow to Share Herb Garden

(Hoffman Park) [Heidi Nemcek](#)

#### Environmental Stewardship

(Grow to Share Gardens) [Kristin Wilson](#)

#### Have a Heart Farm

[Bobbie Kuhn](#)

#### River Falls Farmers Market

Tuesdays and Saturdays

[Elaine Baker](#)

*staff booth, answer questions*

#### St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity

[Dennis Schmidt](#)

#### Westside Elementary Garden

[Becky Cunningham](#)

*guidance on seed, plant selection, coordinate student garden work*

#### Westside Elementary Science Showcase

[Becky Cunningham](#)

#### VFW-Greenwood Cemetery

[Kathee Beebe](#)

#### City of River Falls

[Crystal Raleigh](#)

### ROBERTS

#### Cross Community Garden

[Mike Deneen](#)

### SOMERSET

#### Parnell Prairie Reserve (May-Sept)

[Jean Hoffman](#)

### ANYWHERE

#### SCVMGA Annual Plant Sale

Saturday, June 3 [Corky Weeks](#)

*donate plants, help with sale*

#### Hospitality Committee

[Trina Frank](#)

*bring treats to monthly meetings*

#### Sprinklings Newsletter

[Colleen Callahan](#) *contribute articles*

#### Garden Book Collection

[Joni Garbe](#)

*donate used gardening books, bring to monthly meetings*

#### Visual Communications Team

[Leslie Holt](#)

*take photos of SCVMGA events*

#### MGV "Helping Hands"

[Gail Behr](#)

*help fellow Master Gardeners in time of need*

#### Native Plant Study Group

[Gail Behr](#)

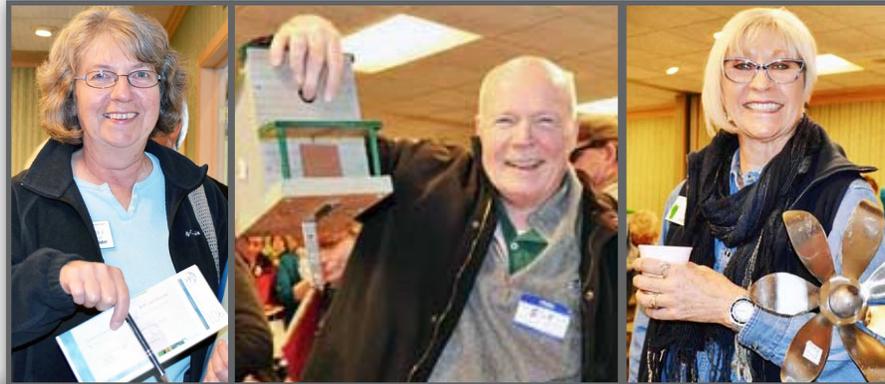
#### Coordinator needed to arrange schedules

Hudson Farmers Market, Plaza 94

Thursday mornings

Please contact [Deb Pederstuen](#)

# Sprinklings Good Times at Garden U



Of the 159 attendees at Garden U, 90 were SCVMGA members. Above are some of the lucky door-prize winners.

TOP ROW (from left): **Carol Wilcox, Dick Haas, Julie Walsh**

MIDDLE ROW (from left): **Sharon Reyzer, Elizabeth Schuster, Andrea Nelson, Marion Farrelly, Gloria Bonse**

BOTTOM ROW (from left) **Faye and Bob Gartmann, Kerry Christopherson and Lisa Esselman**



SPEAKERS (from left): Lynn Steiner gave tips on growing native plants; Jake Thompson, Andy Carlson and Dan Sandager from Abrahamson Nursery explained residential landscape design; and Teresa Marrone talked about adding fruits and berries to our landscapes.

PHOTOGRAPHER  
**Leslie Holt**  
2016 MGV



PHOTO BY  
DEB PEDERSTUEN

## March Meeting

## Benefits of green walls

by Sandy Madsen

Sixty-seven members heard Prof. Sonja Maki share the rationale and directions for creating indoor green walls of plants. The benefits for both businesses and schools include improved attitude, mood, concentration, and perceived academic performance. Green walls are built through a system that uses a framed piece of vertical foam. The plants are inserted into the foam where circulating water is pumped to create a closed vertical hydroponic system. There has to be a basin at the bottom to collect water and a trickle pump to bring the water up to all parts of the foam.



PHOTO BY LESLIE HOLT

Sonja Maki

The Mall of America and US Bank Stadium each have one. Chefs have walls filled with herbs, and one can find them in hospitals, airports, education buildings, businesses and homes. There is one in the ag/sci building at UW-River Falls which is used as a room divider. Many have sensors to determine water needs.

The varieties of plants are limited by the light required. The pH and nutrition needs, as well as pest and diseases, must be monitored. Benefits include air purification, noise pollution control, cooling of the surrounding air, pleasant smells and visual stimulation.

The walls also exemplify biophilia, the "love of life and living systems" and create a feeling of well being. Green is reassuring and leads to a sense of harmony and balance.

## Karalyn's Kitchen



*Karalyn Littlefield, a MGV since 2013, teaches classes in Food Science and Animal Science at UW-River Falls. After receiving a master's degree in Food Science, Karalyn worked in the food industry.*

### Rhubarb Cake

It is spring. Rhubarb is coming slowly and can be expected to really pick up production as soon as a few warm days come along. We have harvested once already from our patch and made Rhubarb Cake. I found the original recipe in a clipping from the St. Paul Pioneer Press that was stuck in my Grandmother's cookbook. The column was written by Ellen Carlson and the recipe is from Lucy M. of St. Paul. The date is not recorded, but the add on the back from Meat at Miller's might give us a clue: Summer sausage chubs, 12 oz. each for \$0.99. Cornish Game Hens (16 oz.), 2 per tray at \$2.19. Any idea of the year?

As with most things, I modified the recipe. Remember "recipes are only guidelines" and sometimes I even say that "recipes are meant as shopping lists." Enjoy Spring!

## April Meeting

## Growing grapes in the Midwest

by Gloria Bonse

Sixty-seven members and seven guests learned the intricacies of vineyard gardening from Ernie Betker of Trout Brook Vineyard. Established in 1993, it currently has over 5,600 vines. Betker sells 30-40 tons of grapes each year to companies that make wine.

Newer, cold-tolerant grape varieties were developed in the 1970's when Elmer Swenson from the University of Minnesota developed several varieties including Frontenac noir, Lacrescent, Frontenac gris, Marquette, Frontenac blanc, and Itasca. Previously, Midwest growers had to bury their vines in winter to protect them.



PHOTO BY LESLIE HOLT

Ernie Betker

Grape growing is definitely a commitment of time and energy. New vines are not productive until their fourth year. Best production occurs between 4-15 years. After 15 years, the quantity of grape production tapers down, but the quality and flavor improve. Grape vines can live 100 years. Wine made from old vines is more expensive.

Betker grows grapes on a single trellis wire with stake supports for each vine. The first two years, where root development is important, involve singling out two main vines and controlling weed growth. Years three and four involve developing a single cane, and pruning the vines to train along the trellis wire. Grapes grow best on a south-facing slope in soil with a pH of 6.5-7.0.

### Rhubarb Cake

- 1 ½ cups brown sugar
- ½ cup shortening
- 1 cup sour milk\*
- 1 egg, slightly beaten
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 tsp. soda
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 2 cups flour
- 2 cups raw, finely diced rhubarb



### Topping

- ¾ cup white sugar
- 1 ½ tsp. cinnamon

In mixing bowl, cream shortening and sugar. Add egg and vanilla. Whisk dry ingredients. Add flour mixture to sugar mixture alternating with sour milk. Stir in Rhubarb. Pour into greased 9"x13" pan. Combine sugar and cinnamon, sprinkle over cake batter. Bake in preheated 350°F oven for 35 minutes or until done.

*\*To sour milk: Pour 1 tablespoon white vinegar into measuring cup. Fill to one cup with milk.*

## SCVMGA-sponsored tours



PHOTO BY LESLIE HOLT

Thanks to the efforts of **Debby Walters** and **Anita Austin**, dozens of MGVs recently ventured behind the scenes at two area nurseries: Rush Creek Growers (pictured above left) and Bailey's Nursery Greenhouses (pictured above right).

Our next treat is visiting MGV **Donna Davis's** home gardens on Tuesday, July 18 at 5:30 p.m. You can read



PHOTO BY DEB PEDERSTUEN

about Donna's enchanted gardens in the June 2016 issue of Sprinklings.

A behind-the-scenes tour at Como Conservatory and Japanese Gardens is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 16 at 1:30 p.m. and will require a \$15 fee.

Members are asked to sign up in advance on our website for all SCVMGA-sponsored tours.

### Name this plant CONTEST

This Wisconsin native plant brightens forest floors each May.



Go to "Contact Us" on our website to enter the contest. You must give the genus name. **Deadline is midnight, May 22.** All correct answers will be entered in a drawing to be held at the May 25 meeting. This month's prize is a \$25 gift card from Humble Arces, a perennial plant farm in Hudson.

### SCVMGA is listed on 3M's Matching Gifts

Each year the 3M Foundation will donate \$250 to an approved nonprofit organization for each employee or retiree who volunteers at that organization. An employee must volunteer 20 hours a year; a retiree must volunteer 25 hours.

Thanks to MGV **Barb Kolpin**, SCVMGA has been accepted into the "Volunteer Match" program. Barb submitted the necessary nomination information.

If you are a current or retired 3M employee, all you have to do is register your volunteer hours by logging on to [www.3mgives.com](http://www.3mgives.com). Near the bottom of the page is a link to Employees and Retiree Matching Gifts.

## Sprinklings

*Sprinklings* is a newsletter publication of the St. Croix Valley Master Gardeners Association and is published eight times a year: monthly issues in May, June, July and August; and bimonthly issues in September/October, November/December, January/February, and March/April. It is emailed to members in PDF format, and archived on the association's website at <http://scvmga.weebly.com>

All SCVMGA members are welcome to contribute articles, information, book reviews, or ideas on any horticultural topic. Submission deadline is the first Friday of the publication month. The next deadline is **Friday, June 2** for the June issue. Please email submissions or inquiries to [giverny@me.com](mailto:giverny@me.com).

Editor: Colleen Callahan

Communications Coordinator: Suzy Naschansky

Circulation Manager: Diana Alfuth