



Sprinklings

ST. CROIX VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

JULY 2015

St. Croix County Fair

July 15-19

Fairgrounds
Glenwood City

Kids learn about soils, plants, bugs

By Diana Alfuth

Junior Garden U was held on Saturday, June 27. We had 20 kids participate, ages 5-12. Master Gardeners who taught sessions were **Lisa Mosbey**, **Laurie Green**, **Dot Seebach**, insects; **Marilyn Gorham**, **Cindy Gleason**, **Maria Scheidegger**, soils/composting; and **Deb Andazola**, **Susan Mooney**

Vare, **Pam O'Reilly**, plants and propagation. The highlight was probably the snake that slithered out of the compost pile, or perhaps the 13-lined ground squirrel that kept popping his head up in the garden!

Kids took home plants, a magnifying glass, bug stickers, a lighted bug, and hopefully, some new knowledge about gardens and the natural world around them.

All in all, it was another successful Junior Garden U! My thanks to all our Master Gardeners who made it happen.



PHOTO BY DIANA ALFUTH

Laurie Green, Dot Seebach and Lisa Mosby introduce kids at Junior Garden U to the fascinating world of insects.

Volunteers Needed

By Yvonne Koch-Proctor

Volunteers are still needed for 3-hour shifts on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Please contact booth coordinator **Norma Rudesill** at 715-688-2160. Tomatoes will highlight the MGV booth this year. If you have ripe tomatoes to contribute to the display, please notify Norma. Set-up begins after 3 p.m. Wednesday, July 15; call Norma if you can help. **Peg Wastell** will bring a display of past trial results and plant samples from the 2015 trials. Other displays include a plant ID board, a sandwich board where fairgoers can draw their favorite plant, and a critter box for kids to dig through. SCVMGA cookbooks and field guides to invasive plants in the Midwest will be on sale. Both make great gifts!

JULY MEETING

All about garlic

By Carolyn Barrette

Mike Hicks, the garlic guru of Afton, will give us tips on growing, harvesting and storing garlic at our July meeting. Using fish emulsion, Hicks raises large heads of naturally fertilized stiffneck varietal garlic. The garlic season begins in October, when Hicks plants up to 10,000 cloves. These are protected by a foot of mulch. There is no machine involved – all the planting on his one-acre plot is done by hand.

Thursday, July 23

6:45 p.m. Meeting

7:15 p.m. Break

7:30 p.m. Speaker

First Covenant Church

1374 N. Main St.
River Falls 54022

MGV project featured in Artful Garden Tour

By Sandy Madsen

This year's Hudson Artful Garden Tour had six gardens on their tour, including our MGV project at Houlton Elementary School. So we all worked hard to spiff up the flower, fruit and vegetable beds, and the rain garden so they would be "tour worthy."

Julie Weinberg and I coordinate the project. Julie, **Donna Davis**, **Jane Hanson** and I, along with a 3rd grader, Elizabeth, were tour guides for more than 30 visitors.

The poster for this year's tour was designed by **Daphne Brackley**, one of our founding members, who also designed our "watering can" logo used on all promotional materials.

The Houlton project began in 2008 when the principal asked for

help with a perennial bed. From there the project grew to a one-acre prairie with 30 plant varieties, a vegetable garden for each grade level, a weekly noon garden club, an after-school flower group, and composting. During the summer months volunteer families come every week to harvest and do general maintenance.



PHOTO BY PETER VERSTEGEN

President's Message

I am writing my article as my husband, Bob, and I return from two weeks in Cluj, Romania. We were part of a 15-person Habitat for Humanity (HfH) work camp team helping to build a 16-house project in the small village of Jucu.



Barb Peterson

Bob and I spent the first two days working together on the installation of exterior wall sheeting and then I joined crews insulating interior rooms and applying exterior stucco.

One of the great things about the team was the wide range of ages of the participants and the wonderful opportunities for intergenerational collaboration it provided. Four of the 15 participants were 18-year-olds, two were in their twenties, and three in their early thirties.

Our recent SCVMGA Communication Survey highlighted an interest of our members in increasing the number of younger people in our Master Gardener program and projects and I wonder if there are aspects of the HfH work camp experience that we could replicate to attract younger people.

The young people on the work camp trip to Romania told me they decided to sign up because they were looking for a meaningful experience (for others), they wanted to learn how to build and they wanted to be outdoors. The SCVMGA Board would welcome your ideas about how we might meet these needs,

Just think how wonderful it would be if we were working alongside twenty somethings sharing our love of gardening and our horticultural knowledge.

PS. I hope the weeds in my garden are not as large as those in Jucu – the thistles were amazing!

What's happening in July?

Blooms

Evening primrose, knapweed, compass plant, purple coneflowers, bergamot, Turk's cap lily, cattails, goldenrod, wild cucumber, jewelweed.

Birds

Young goldfinch, barn swallows and blue jays fledge. Ducks form velvet.

Fish

Walleyes gather in northern lakes. Northern pike and young muskellunge leave wetlands for open water.

Reptiles

Tadpoles' tails disappear.

Native Plants

Members of SCVMGA's Gardening with Native Plants Group have been keeping records of first blooms. Here's the averaged data for July 2014:

- St. Johnswort: July 3
- Joe Pye weed: July 15
- Ratibida pinnata: July 18
- Liatris spicata: July 27
- Culver's root: July 18
- Monarda fistulosa: July 15

THANK YOU TO **PAT TREMAINE** FOR PROVIDING PHENOLOGICAL INFORMATION.

Insects (thanks to Jerry Bridge)

Polyester bees line their nests with water-proof material; cuckoo bees lay eggs in nests of other species; mason bees build walls to separate brood cells. Cabbage aphid nymphs feed on crucifers; potato aphid nymphs feed on tomatoes, potatoes and many other plants. Squash bugs prefer winter squash, pumpkin; young nymphs often cannibalize one another. Pistol casebearer larva carries "case" around while feeding on apple, pear leaves. Thistle caterpillar larva (will turn into painted lady butterfly) has a wide range of hosts. White-lined sphinx caterpillar larva appears on evening primrose, grape, roses. Zebra caterpillar larva appears on vegetables and flowers. Rose chafer adult prefers rose and peony, and contains a heart poison toxic to birds. Tomato hornworm larva favors tomato, eggplant, potato, pepper. Spotted tentiform leafminer larva appears on apples. Curled rose sawfly larva appears on roses, also tunnels into canes. Onion thrips (nymphs and adults) thrive on beans, onions.

Blueberries



Ripening stages of blueberries in colors of green, pink, purple, blue

Blueberry picking begins July 10 at Blue Ridge Growers, 246 Carlson Lane (off Hwy. MM), west of River Falls. Owner and MGJ Jill Berke offers six varieties. Picking continues through late August. Jill says that blueberries need acidic soil (pH 4.5-5.5), early spring pruning, lots of sun, and one-inch of water a week. Jill recommends purchasing plants from reputable, high-quality nurseries that propagate blueberries for our climate. She purchases young plantings from South Haven, MI. [Click here more info on Blue Ridge Growers.](#)

ANNUAL STATE CONFERENCE of WISCONSIN MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

Hosted by the Bluff County Master Gardener Association

LaCrosse, WI • July 31-Aug.1

[Click here for info](#)



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 for several years.

What do I do with all these herbs?

If your garden is like mine, you are herb rich. A few leaves here and there for tea or garnish does not keep up with the herb growth. But, never fear, there are ways to use herbs, especially in salsas.

Chermoula from North Africa typically partnered with fish, Chimichurri from Argentina on grilled meats and El Liño from Ecuador to marinate meats or season beans are examples. Add some nuts and hard cheese and you have pesto to eat on your pasta noodles.

All salsas have a few components in common. First, every variation contains an acid, such as vinegar or citrus juice. Use apple cider vinegar, red wine vinegar, white vinegar, lime juice or lemon juice, or a combination. Second, they all contain garlic – the amount depends on your taste. The third ingredient is herbs. All variations seem to have flat leaf parsley and most have cilantro and oregano. I like to add anything that I have growing in the garden. A little mint livens things up. The fourth ingredient is seasonings. Salt and pepper as well as spices are included. The most common are cumin, paprika, cayenne or red pepper flakes. The fifth ingredient is olive oil.

And, finally, be creative. I have seen recipes including saffron, capers and anchovies. So, if you have it and you like it, use it.

A variation on Sergio's Chimichurri

- 2 cups parsley
- 1 1/2 cups cilantro
- 1 stalk mint
- 1 small red onion
- 3-4 garlic cloves
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1/2-3/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp red pepper flakes
- 1/3-1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- juice from one lemon or lime

Remove tough stems from herbs, wash and dry. Coarsely chop. Smash garlic and coarsely chop onion. Add to food processor with the vinegar and finely chop. If more liquid is needed to get a good chop, add the olive oil. Add the spices and mix well. Process to desired consistency. Add the lemon or lime juice. Mix until blended. Taste and adjust as needed (most likely salt and the acid).

Once you have made your signature herb sauce, you can freeze it, either in ice cube trays or in jars. Or, if you are going to use it in the next six months or so, put it in a glass jar, smooth the top with the back of a teaspoon and pour enough oil to film the surface of the sauce, then put on the lid and store in the refrigerator. Each time some is used, smooth the surface and add a little more oil.

My main rule for cooking is "recipes are merely guidelines" and a close secondary rule is "if you like it, use it." I'm including a recipe to give some guidance on ratios. Try your own and use it to marinate meat, fish or vegetables, flavor beans, add some zest to yogurt or sour cream to dip in, or use as a finishing sauce.



Easy Herb Gardens

By Lisa Mosbey

"Dog-Gone Deer & Rabbits"

With the cooler temps, my leaf lettuce is still growing and the deer & rabbits love it. So I asked myself what we can do besides get a dog to protect the garden from the deer and rabbits. . . herbs, of course!

Lamiaceae Family



Mints contain menthol, which is a great repellent for rabbit, deer, mice and many insects. Low growing mints such as spearmint, peppermint, chocolate mint (*Mentha* spp.), sage (*Salvia* spp.), rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) and lemon balm (*Melissa officinalis*) can be interspersed throughout the garden. Use taller mints for the perimeter including horehound (*Marrubium vulgare*), anise hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*) and bee balm (*Monarda fistulosa*). I grow all of these to harvest for both hot and iced tea, used to increase circulation and support the respiratory system.

Many species are very invasive (especially *Mentha* spp. and *Melissa officinalis*) so I grow them in a buried black garden pot with the bottom cut off. Continually harvest the tops for teas, to share or dry for later use; if it goes to flower, remember to dead head the horehound and anise hyssop or you'll have more than you want.

Asteraceae Family

Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), a fragrant native plant, deters deer and is a very useful herb to stop bleeding wounds. I have also used a washcloth soaked in tea to cover a bruise, aiding in the movement of stagnant blood; a mild tea can also aid the movement of lymph fluid in the body.



French tarragon (*Artemisia dracunculoides* 'Sativa') is a bitter-sweet leaf, contains a potent antioxidant, and is rich in minerals. It makes a tasty vinegar, dressing and poultry seasoning. My favorite use is a grilled brie and tarragon quesadilla with a calming cup of tarragon tea to end the day. I interplant tarragon among my lettuces.

Herbs alone aren't the solution. If animals are hungry, they will find a food source no matter the taste. I figure if I'm going to plant herbs anyway, I'll use a strategic approach, placing them among the lettuces and vegetables to annoy the furry ones and deter a few.

Precautions: Because many herbs are potent, small amounts used regularly may be safest. Anything beyond culinary amounts may be too strong for certain individuals, such as women who are pregnant or nursing; individuals with some health conditions (e.g., liver disease); or those taking medications such as blood thinners and blood sugar-lowering drugs. For the science and studies on herbal remedies visit www.Pubmed.gov.



Lisa, who received her MG training in Nevada, is a Holistic Health Practitioner, Herbalist and Aromatherapist whose mission is to educate and empower people to use herb and essential oil plant remedies to aid their health and well-being. She writes a [blog](#) on herbs, gardening tips and recipes.

Volunteer Opportunities

Coordinator: [Lisa Mosbey](#)

Lisa completed her MGV training in Nevada in 2009 where she taught herb container gardening classes. She transferred to SCVMGA in 2013. Lisa is a holistic health practitioner, herbalist, and aromatherapist.

Assistant Coordinator: [Deb Schommer](#)

Deb Schommer is interested in all things organic, self-sustaining and "green" promoting. She enjoys raising chickens, gardening (including straw-bale gardening) and learning how to work with her new greenhouse. She completed MGV training in 2014.

PLEASE NOTE: Underlined names are active links to email addresses. This list is also available on our [website](#).

BALDWIN

Community Garden, 1650-8th Ave.
[Wendy Kramer](#) 715-684-3642
Supervise, maintain, harvest, donate

ELLSWORTH

Pierce County Fair (Aug. 13-16)
[LeRoy Clark](#) 715-273-4245
Planning, setup, man booth, help with displays

Pierce County Fairgrounds Garden (May-Oct)
[Karen O'Brien](#) 715-273-4191
Plant, maintain flower gardens

VFW Post, 154 S. Plum St.
[Carol Matzek](#) 715-262-5232
Mulch, edge landscape, perennial care

GLENWOOD CITY

St. Croix County Fair (July 15-19)
[Brenda Bodelson](#) 715-688-4434
[Yvonne Koch-Proctor](#) 715-225-2296
Planning, setup, man booth, help with displays

Glenwood City Community Garden (April-Oct.)
[Barb Nelson](#) 715-307-3821
Plant, manage seed trials

Glenwood City Welcome Cows (April-Oct.)
[Bonnie Walters](#) 715-220-6975
Aid 4-H club with planting, maintaining sign plot

HAMMOND

Hammond Community Garden, Ridgeway Road
[Mike Deneen](#) 715-386-9792
Coordinate, help with community food, flowers, orchard

HUDSON

Hudson Hospital, 405 Stageline Road
[Jean Weiler](#)
Indoor plant caretaker; coordinate, help with garden

Octagon House, 1004-3rd Ave. (Mondays)
[Jean Haut](#) 715-377-0645
Redesign gardens in 2015, maintenance

Christian Community Home, 1320 Wisconsin St.
[Jackie Daharsh](#) 715-381-6804
2-5 hrs. monthly maintenance of Memory Care gardens

YMCA Camp St. Croix, 532 Co. Rd. F
[Stephanie Lentz](#) 612-465-0561
Landscape, greenhouse, flower & vegetable gardens

Accessible Space
[Jennifer Richards](#)
Design, install gardens for residents

Humble Acres, 433 East Cove Rd.
Diane Reszka 612-290-5004
Answer questions, assist with workshops,
"Happy Gardener Tour" on July 13

E.P. Rock Elementary School

Heidi Schimon 715-222-6111
Plant, supervise school learning garden

Hudson Farmers Market, Plaza 94

[Janet Jones](#) 715-386-9246
Thursdays, 8 a.m.-noon, (June-Oct)
Set up, tear down table, provide information, answer gardening questions

Hudson Farmers Market, Faith Community Church

Dawn Kleinknecht 612-203-9030
Saturdays, 8 a.m. -noon (June-Oct)
Set up, tear down table, provide information, answer gardening questions

Lakefront Park (April-Oct.)

[Ramona Robinson](#) 763-412-9936
Help design, maintain, harvest, share edible landscape

Willow River Elementary School

[Ramona Robinson](#) 763-412-9936
Help design, supervise, maintain education garden

Willow River State Park, Cty Rd. A

Lauren Brathal 715-386-9340
Tours and garden maintenance near Nature Center

St. Croix County Park, Perch Lake (April-Oct.)

[Justin Townsend](#) 715-781-6833
Need Coordinator, "Book Worm" trail maintenance, beautification of public areas

NEW RICHMOND

Deer Field Gables Care Center, 575 Hospital Rd.

[Carolyn Craig](#) 715-246-6242
Spring cleanup, maintenance of therapy, rain gardens, bird sanctuary

Community Garden, 2050 Hwy 65

[Carolyn Barrette](#) 715-549-6438
Planting, weeding, harvesting, planning, sharing

Boardman Meadows Senior Complex, 460 W. 8th St.

Ninette Nolen 715-246-7959
Help senior gardeners with raised-bed vegetable garden
Establish flower garden

PRESCOTT

Great River Road Visitor Center, 200 Monroe St.

[Jessica Bierbrauer](#) 715-262-0104
Maintenance

Cont'd on next page

RIVER FALLS

Boulevard Flower Plot (April-Oct.)

Donna Reuter 715-821-7357
Rejuvenate flower plot

Town of River Falls Parks

Dan Randall 651-775-6052
Entrance sign planting, maintenance at 7 parks
3-4 hours per month

River Falls Farmers Markets, 2nd & Locust St.

Bev Hoppe 715-425-8870
(May-October)
Saturdays, 8 a.m.-noon. Tuesdays, 4 p.m.-6 p.m.
Man booth, answer questions

Demonstration & Learning Garden, Hoffman Park

Diana Alfuth
"Grow to Share Community Garden"
Plan, weed, demonstrate in garden, scout for problems

St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity

Susan Capparelli 715-425-5623
Working on new gardens for Habitat for Humanity homes

Grow to Share Community Garden, Hoffman Park

Anna Zalusky 715-426-0826
Weeding, planting, watering, harvesting

Grow to Share Community Herb Garden, Hoffman Park

Terry Anderson 612-240-3820
(April-October)
Plant, maintain, harvest culinary and medicinal herbs

River Falls Community Garden, RF High School

Amy Field, 715-307-7317
Weeding, watering, harvesting

VFW - Greenwood Cemetery (May-Oct.)

Kathye Beebe 715-425-2015
Maintenance

ROBERTS

Cross Community Garden, 1246 Co. Rd TT

Mike Deneen 715-386-9792
Growing community food & flowers, help with new trees, perennials, teaching garden

SOMERSET

Parnell Prairie Preserve, 1823-45th St.

Jean Hoffman
Weeding, watering showcase area
4 hrs. per month (May-September)

SPRING VALLEY

Spring Valley Village Gardens

Sue Christenson 715-778-4559
Help weed, maintain village gardens

ANYWHERE

Hospitality

Trina Frank 715-426-5659
Treats for meetings

Sprinklings Newsletter

Colleen Callahan 715-381-9683
Newsletter items, features, book reviews, ideas

ReUse/Recycle Garden Books

Joni Garbe
Donate old gardening books for library/resale.
Bring to monthly meetings

MGV Helping Hands

Gail Behr 715-698-4046
Help fellow Master Gardeners in time of need

Making a difference in someone's life



Janet Jones and Bonnie Sortland at the Plaza 94 market in Hudson.

I was minding my own business shopping for produce when *something* pulled me toward the Master Gardener table at Plaza 94 Farmers Market in Hudson. It must have been the beautiful cookbook, or the impressive title of "Master Gardener" or probably the friendly face of a volunteer eager to engage in conversation. I asked a lot of questions about the certification program. Being a city girl with almost no gardening experience, I didn't think I was a viable candidate. But the MGV encouraged me. "I didn't know anything when I started either," she said. "I learned so much from the course and other MGVs. You can, too!" So I ended up in the 2013 class, corrected my gardening vocabulary (soil, not dirt!), taught 4th graders about perilous plants, harvested and brought produce to a food shelf, attended conferences, and met so many amazing gardeners. Whoever worked that MGV table . . . thank you! — Editor



Rick and Kari Hussey at the River Falls market.

JUNE MEETING

Tips for beautiful garden photos

By Sandy Madsen

Colleen Callahan taught photography at UW-River Falls for 23 years! She has been a Master Gardener since January 2014. She did a delightful job sharing her vast knowledge about horticultural photography. Each of her concepts was accompanied by an inspiring photo.

A PDF of her talk is posted on the [SCVMGA Website](#). It is password protected.

The definition of photograph is photo = light and graph = writing. So we are using the qualities of light to tell a story. We should first know our reason for taking a photograph. The answer could be color, shape, texture, size, context or emotion.

LIGHT. Summer midday sun (9 a.m.-6 p.m.) is best for plant ID. Before 9 and after 6 is best for "Ooh! & Aah!" photos because of the warm colors, dramatic shadows, texture detail and a variety of light directions. The direction of light — front, back or side changes the shadow, the intensity of color and the observable texture. A cloudy day creates diffused light, low contrast and great closeups. Night pictures taken right before sunrise or right after sunset call for a tripod and patience.

To create a great **COMPOSITION**, think flat and fill the frame. Follow the rule of thirds which divides your frame into a tick-tack-toe board. Place your horizon up high or down low. The main subject should be off center, anywhere but dead center. Use leading lines by having something start low and bring your eyes up into the top of the frame.

Use **ANGLES** to create an emphasis. A high angle makes a wide overview and emphasizes shapes and lines. Eye level will allow things to look normal size. A low angle makes things look larger than life and accentuates height.

DISTANCE makes many changes. Closeup (less than 5') increases texture, shape, detail and makes things larger.



One of the photos featured in the presentation. Photo by Magdalena Wasiczek of Poland, IGPOTY. A sweet pea taken with low sun, back light, at a low angle close-up.

What's your best garden photo?

Send **ONE** photo of your garden to [Ellen Montgomery](#), our webmaster, to post on our Website. It could be of a patio pot, a vegetable plot, a community garden where you volunteer, or just a favorite blossom. Identify the plant and include a caption about where, why, or how you took the photo.

Join our Garden Gallery!

Medium (5-20') creates immediate context at normal size. Long (more than 20') emphasizes space, a lot of territory but very little detail.

TIMING equals shutter speed or the amount of time the shutter is open. Experiment with different shutter speeds. Anything that moves while the shutter is open will be blurry and sometimes that is what you want. A lot of movement can create an impressionistic style.

If you want ordinary photos use ordinary light (midday sun), typical distance (medium), normal angle (eye level) and static composition. If you want "Ooh! & Aah!" photos, use any light but midday sun, close up or distant, low or high angle and dynamic composition. The most important photo technique is **LIGHT!**

AUGUST MEETING

Prairie Seeds

By Carolyn Barrette

The August 27 meeting will feature Mike Miller of Pure Prairie Seed. Miller's company collects seeds and raises prairie grasses and forbs on his land. Located on the north side of Kinnickinnic State Park hill on Cty Rd. F, Pure Prairie Seed is a native prairie seed nursery. It produces single species stands of prairie grasses and wildflowers whose genetic origins are Pierce and St. Croix Counties. His farm includes several native prairie remnants that have provided the base seed for many of his seed plots. The nursery includes machine-harvested and hand-harvested plots as well as a seed-cleaning facility. "Our seed is independently lab-tested for purity and germination and made available for sale to non-profit organizations and units of government," says Miller.

It would be good to car pool. Watch our Website and emails for directions and car-pool meeting places.

Seed Saving at "Last Chance" Workshop

By Peg Wastell

Saving and using seed is the thread that runs through our annual hands-on Fall Workshop. Diana Alfuth will start with "Beyond the Basics" of saving seed. Next will be "Ethics of Seed Collection" with an emphasis on collecting in the wild, followed by a demonstration on how to use dried seed materials in floral arrangements.

This is your "last chance" to get those education and/or volunteer hours needed for recertification since the deadline for turning in hours is Oct. 1.

Other reasons to join us is the slate of awesome speakers on timely and fascinating seed-related topics, "hands on" opportunity, luscious lunch, and it's exclusive to Master Gardeners at a rewardingly low cost of \$15.

Mark your calendar now! More details will appear in the next Sprinklings.

"Last Chance" Fall Workshop
Saturday, Sept. 26
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Pierce County Fairgrounds

Share your photos on Master Gardeners

FACEBOOK Group!

CLICK →



SPRINKLINGS PROFILE

Gardening with nature

By Colleen Callahan

Tucked away in a cozy corner of St. Croix County lie four acres of native trees, woody plants, a thriving vegetable plot, and a shady perennial garden patio. Wafting through the air is a quiet serenity.

Amid the constant nuisances (moles) and occasional dangers (bears), Marilyn Gorham has created a backyard haven.

“No matter what day, I find peace,” says Marilyn, a founding member of St. Croix Valley Master Gardener Association.

Although she’s spent countless hours bringing everything together, Marilyn doesn’t take the credit. “Nature does the work,” she says.

Except, of course, for the “thousands of buckthorns” she and her husband extracted from their woodland.

Marilyn’s work also shows up in just about every corner of SCVMGA history. It began with writing letters to UW-Extension initially asking for a horticultural position at the St. Croix County Extension office to provide guidance to the fledging MGV organization. Another important reason was to offer the MGV course locally. Back in the mid 1990s, it was taught via satellite from Madison and only when a minimum number of students enrolled. Marilyn remembers waiting three years to take the course.



The crisscross pattern of lattices is supposed to confuse deer and keep them out of the vegetable garden. So far, Marilyn says, it works.

Since then, she’s accumulated more than 1,000 volunteer hours and a number of “firsts”: first secretary, first state representative (now serving second term), first Sprinklings editor, first coordinator of the MGV booth at the St. Croix County Fair, helped plant the first garden plot at St. Patrick Elementary school, and helped establish the first community garden in New Richmond.

Twice she was in charge of soliciting vendors and silent auction donors for two state conferences held in River Falls and hosted by the Western District. She created a large database and “wrote hundreds of letters,” she recalls. She remembers receiving a peony tree from Cricket Hill Garden in Connecticut and boxes of seeds, garden tools and gift certificates from other businesses across the country.

Years ago, a city beautification project along Vine Street in Hudson enticed Marilyn to help aging residents plant flowers along their boulevard. Next, a county government nutritional program for women and infants (WIC) caught her attention. She planted tomatoes in ice-cream buckets and filled others with salsa ingredients to give young mothers first-hand

(cont’d on next page)



Two 10-year-old rosemary plants frame the porch (left). Marilyn relaxes on her patio (below).



(cont'd from previous page)

knowledge of growing and using fresh vegetables.

Marilyn's most rewarding volunteer hours, however, have been in education. She was involved in designing and maintaining the Demonstration Garden and helped organize the Junior Garden U project, both located in River Falls. She enjoys seeing children "light up" when they learn about gardening and nature.

"I believe in generational carry-forward," she explains. "I look to who educated me, and want to continue that with others."

She grew up next to her grandparents' urban farm in Des Moines. "My grandparents had 10 acres of orchard, pasture, chickens, and cows in the middle of the city," she says. "My mother would can 100 quarts of both beans and tomatoes."

Today, Marilyn continues her mother's tradition of freezing and canning, only the vegetable garden is in the middle of a county woodland, near the bee hives her husband keeps.

That's why one sees small shallow trays of water and soil strewn throughout the yard. Bees drink from the watering tray and suck up moisture from the soil trays.

Interspersed with the buzzing are songs from robins,

wrens, chickadees, goldfinches, evening grosbeaks, orioles, indigo buntings, and cardinals. They sing in a garden filled with hostas (planted from seed), roses, hydrangeas, magnolias, and native dogwoods (which popped up after the buckthorn left).

So it's no wonder after a day's work as a senior vice president in commercial banking, Marilyn finds her backyard a rewarding refuge. She can relax, sit back and let nature work its magic.



Bellflowers (*Campanula carpatica*) squeeze through cracks in a garden wall.

NEW RICHMOND Community Garden Update

By Carolyn Barrette

The beans are starting, zucchini is blossoming, and the tomatoes have little fruits on them. It's Harvest Time in the Garden!

We have already given away radishes and spinach to local senior centers. We're planting four rows of beans for a second crop, and leftover broccoli to lengthen the season.

Weeding next to the plants still needs to be done. The volunteer notebook is in the brown garden shed along with the scale to weigh our bounty. Keep a list of what vegetables are harvested in the same notebook. Plastic bags and containers will be in the tote.

Garden working hours are: Tuesday mornings, Tuesday and Thursday evenings, weekends, but feel free to come anytime.

It's located at 2050 Hwy. 65, 1.5 miles north of New Richmond. Look for Garden Expressions greenhouses on the west side. Park in back by the corn field and enter the garden from the south.



PHOTO BY BARB NELSON

Some of last year's bounty.

TOMATO TIE-UP DAY 1 p.m. Sunday, July 12

Help us do the "Florida Weave" and construct a string fence three strands high to keep tomatoes off the ground and make for easier picking. Park in back by the corn field and enter the garden from the south. "Many hands make light work." Stay for some iced tea and lemonade.
tbarrette@presenter.com

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, Aug. 7** for the August issue. Please email submissions or inquiries to giverny@me.com.

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