



Sprinklings

ST. CROIX VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

July 2016

What to do with all that eggplant

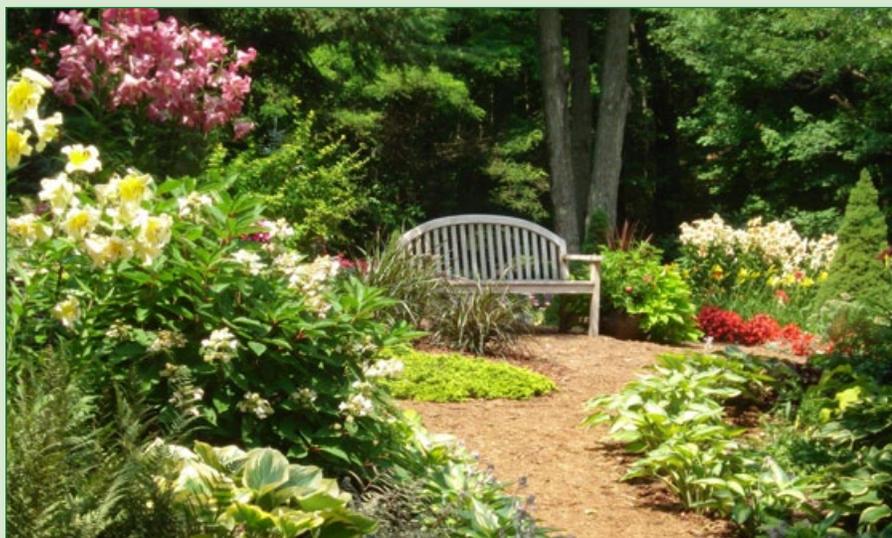
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July Garden Tour

SUNDAY, JULY 31

1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

Lynn Nehring's Garden in Colfax, WI



Lynn's gardens include 270 varieties of hostas, several varieties of brunnera, pulmonaria, ligularia, cimicifuga, golden-leafed bleeding hearts, rogersia, astilbes, heucheras and ferns, plus beebalm, phlox, daylilies, sedum and lilies. A path through the woods connects the shady gardens. Benches are scattered throughout to relax and take in the views. Good walking shoes are recommended. Volunteer drivers for car pooling needed. We can rent a bus depending on the number of attendees. For questions, contact [Deb Andazola](#) or [Debby Walters](#).



Lynn's gardens

[Click here to use SIGN-UP GENIUS to reserve your place](#)

JULY MEETING

Summer Retreat

by Carolyn Barrette

July's meeting will be at our president's home. Barb Peterson has invited Master Gardeners to visit her home and gardens for a summer tour and an evening of hospitality.

A beautiful home in the style of a Victorian farmhouse set back in the middle of 50 acres of woods, the grounds have a number of gardens well worth visiting, including four rain gardens, an orchard and a variety of shade and sunny perennial gardens.

The evening will begin with a light supper and a variety beverages starting at 6 p.m.

**Barb & Bob
Peterson's Gardens
6 p.m.
Thursday, July 28**

**1200 McKinley Drive
Hudson**

Directions: From the south, take County Rd. V off Hwy 35, go right onto River Road, go one-half mile to McKinley Dr., turn left, and proceed to 1200, straight ahead at the end.

From the east, take River Road heading west off County Rd. I, proceed to McKinley Dr. - several miles - turn right. Straight ahead is 1200.



It's 'County Fair' Season!

Pierce County, Ellsworth • St. Croix County, Glenwood City
Aug. 11-14 July 20-24



President's Message

In the early 1990s my husband, Bob and I found, fell in love with and bought a beautiful piece of western Wisconsin woods. Initially we just enjoyed tromping through it and clearing a trail into it. Then in the late 90s we worked with an architect to design and build a home that we hoped to operate as a Bed and Breakfast. While that dream did not come to fruition, as former farm kids, we have gotten great joy in trying to care for the land and creating more than fifteen gardens.



Barb Peterson

A good friend, who was a Minnesota Master Gardener and a garden designer, provided the plans for the first gardens we planted after the house was built. We added a vegetable and fruit garden with three truckloads of compost and then slowly created additional perennial gardens with her guidance. In 2008 I retired and fulfilled a long held dream of becoming a Master Gardener. With the knowledge I gained from Diana Alfuth and the time I had available plus the enthusiastic help of

my husband, I developed plans for additional gardens including our first rain garden.

Along the way there have been many challenges beginning first with the buckthorn that had overtaken the woods during the 25 years before we bought the land; it had been in a "preservation program." Much of the soil is very sandy and the compost pile that Bob turns with his tractor has helped us amend it and make it more productive. And in recent years, oak wilt has taken many of our red oaks changing shady areas to sunny ones.

During the last two months we have planted three new gardens including one at the entrance to our property on McKinley Drive and another rain garden along the driveway. Bob and I are looking forward to hosting all of you for our July meeting on July 28. There will be good food and beverages and plenty of time for community building and checking out the house and grounds. We hope you will be able to join us for this opportunity to get to know your fellow Master Gardeners better and we look forward to any advice you might have for us.

See you on the 28th.

In Memory of MGV Herb Florczyk

by Deb Pederstuen

Sadly, former SCVMGA member "Herb" Florczyk passed away in Hudson on Saturday, July 2, 2016.

Herb, age 87, formerly of River Falls, was an active Master Gardener for nearly eight years, from 2005 to 2012. You may know his daughter, MGV Andrea Nelson, who is also a SCVMGA member.

Herb's dream was to develop a Japanese Garden in River Falls, Hudson, or a nearby city. He had a passion for the Japanese style of pruning that he learned abroad. MGV Susan Reese recalled Herb pruned many overgrown shrubs into the Japanese style at several River Falls businesses. According to Susan, a few of his bonsai-like shrubs are still noticeable in the city.

Herb was passionate about running and other athletics. MGV Carolyn Barrette shared her memory of Herb when he lived

in Houlton years ago.

Carolyn said, "We were in the process of naming town roads and Herb requested his (road) be called 'Quarter Mile Run.' He was one of the very first people who did long-distance running before it was a popular fad like it is now. He kept logs and ran for miles."

Running wasn't his only passion. Herb also traveled to the State of Eritrea in East Africa to promote and train residents for running marathons. More recently, Herb was featured in a local publication with other seniors lifting weights in their 80's.

To view a video of Herb, [click here](#). A celebration of his life was held at Bakken-Young Funeral Home in River Falls. Our thoughts and prayers are with Herb's family and friends.



Herbert Florczyk



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.

'Ratatouille-style' Summer Vegetables

Have you seen the 2007 Pixar movie, Ratatouille, where a young and determined rat that can cook makes an unusual alliance with a young kitchen worker in a famous restaurant? It was an excellent movie, but that is not really the direction that I am taking. As I write this column, I am thinking of my Dad. He passed away six years ago this June and his birthday is in July. My Dad was an agronomist specializing in alfalfa and he was a farmer. I was raised on the family farm where my Dad was raised. In 2008, when Dad first got sick, I bought an Abundant Harvest Garden (4' sq. raised bed), thinking that he would like to work in the soil when he could not work in the fields. Well, for those of you who are farmers or know farmers, you can probably imagine how well that went for me. However, he did make suggestions about what to plant and one was eggplant. I said, "But Dad, we don't eat eggplant." His answer was "they look so pretty when they grow." So, every year, I plant an eggplant to honor my Dad. I would not say that I have grown fond of eggplant, but I will eat it, especially cooked with other summer vegetables and good herbs in a Ratatouille. I have taken some liberties with how I prepare this dish. The ingredients and quantities are all dependent on your personal preference and what is available.



'Ratatouille-style' Summer Vegetables

- 1 onion – medium diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small to medium egg plant, ~ 1/2" pieces
- 2 small zucchini, scrubbed, quartered lengthwise, sliced into 1/2" chunks
- 2 small yellow squash, scrubbed, quartered lengthwise, sliced into 1/2" chunks
- 1 bell pepper, color of your choice, chopped
- 3/4 - 1 lb. ripe tomatoes, chopped (~1 1/2 cups)
- 1/2 - 1 teaspoon Italian Seasoning
- 3/4 - 1 teaspoon salt, to taste
- 1/4 - 1/2 teaspoon ground pepper
- 1/2 cup shredded fresh basil leaves

Bring a large skillet or saucepan to medium heat and add oil. Add vegetables, garlic, Italian Seasoning, salt and pepper. Stir occasionally and cook until vegetables are soft, 15 to 20 minutes. Before serving, add basil and stir well to combine. Add a pinch of sugar to enhance the flavor, if desired.

Note: if eggplant is fairly large and you're concerned with bitterness, place the chopped eggplant in a strainer and generously sprinkle with salt. Allow to sit for 30 minutes for the bitter solanine to leach out. Rinse with water and dry with a paper towel.

RECIPE BY MGV KARALYN LITTLEFIELD - July 2016 Sprinklings



Easy Herb Gardens

Growing herbs in shady gardens

By Lisa Mosbey

Six hours of sunlight is the minimum recommendation for growing a garden. But, what if your yard is mostly shade? No worries, many herbs are really shade lovers, especially during the hottest part of the day.

We can still grow an edible herb garden in that shady yard.

Common cooking herbs: parsley, cilantro, chives, anise, thyme, oregano and tarragon.

Tea making herbs: peppermint, spearmint, lemon balm and ginger.

Wild/Native herbs: angelica, comfrey, wild ginger, wild geranium, bee balm, heal-all, creeping Charlie, sarsaparilla, and meadowsweet.

These herbs loves rich, well-draining soil, but that's not a deal breaker if you have poor soil, a poor soil may intensify flavors. Water once or twice a week; Herbs thrive in the heat and wilt in very high temperatures; by growing in dappled light or partial shade it protects the delicate leaves. Harvesting often will allow for continuous production. Eat fresh, freeze for stews and casseroles or dry them for teas or spice blends.

Herbs are packet with nutrients and prolific growers so add some color, fragrance and flair to your shady yard and enjoy the harvest!



Spice Blend Recipes

Vegetable Seasoning

Equal amounts of chives, parsley, thyme and anise

Fish Rub:

Equal amounts of dried parsley, chives, tarragon, and lemon zest

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 MGV 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.

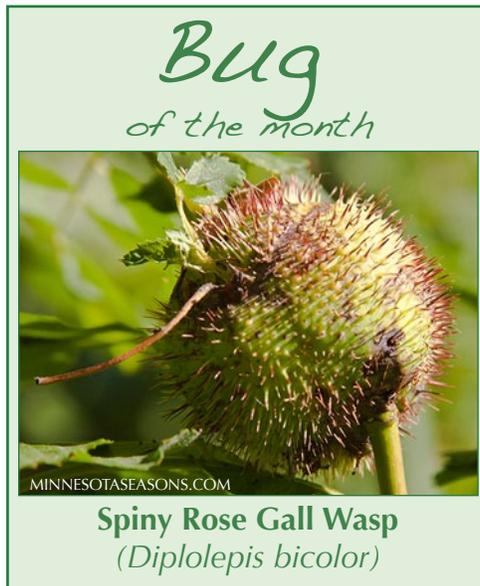
The World of Galls

by Jerry Bridge

A gall is an abnormal growth caused by the activity of certain organisms which induce a plant to produce this strange structure. Various types of insects (such as wasps, flies, scales, aphids), mites, bacteria, viruses, fungi, and nematodes can initiate gall production. Most galls do not harm the plant so control is usually not recommended. There are some exceptions: galls on grape for example can cause a reduction in photosynthesis, premature leaf-drop, and even root death.

Feeding, mechanical damage or egg-laying can cause the plant to change its growth pattern, producing galls. The gall provides some protection for the developing organism(s) as well as a food source; galls tend to be rich in proteins and carbohydrates. Galls can form only on actively growing tissue and cannot be 'cured.'

Some gall makers are inquilines; they take over existing galls and enlarge them. There are, for example, almost 800 species of gall wasps in North America. Many species have a very complex life cycle and a good deal of the process is not well understood. Most gall wasps produce galls on oak



or members of the rose family, especially roses. Galls can be found on any part of the plant and the kind of gall produced is determined by the species of gall-maker.

The Spiny Rose Gall Wasp (*Diplolepis bicolor*) is shown in the image. There are 40 species in this genus alone, all producing galls on roses asexually; males are unknown. The wasp overwinters as a pupa inside the gall and the adult wasp chews an exit hole out of the gall in spring. The adult female wasp, less than 0.2 inches in length, now lays eggs on growing tissue and the larvae now develop. Some birds and weevils feed on the developing larvae during the summer

months. If you cut open one of these galls, or a similar one, you often can see a growing larva, or larvae. This gall is slightly smaller than one inch in diameter and is found on some wild roses as well as rose cultivars with a Rugosa background.

Insecticides are difficult to use with these insects because spraying must be timed to when the adult wasp is laying eggs. Often this is not practical.



Steve Meyer holds tilapia fish (above) that provide nutrients to lettuce greens (below).



AUGUST MEETING

Fish help plants grow at Future Farm and Fuel

by Carolyn Barrette

August's meeting is a tour of Future Farm and Fuel LLC, at 2047 County Rd E, Baldwin. A sister company to Baldwin Dairy across the road, Future Farm and Fuel takes advantage of new technology in 'green' and 'sustainable' farming to use the waste streams of farm operations to create food, fuel, revenue, and reduce the impact on the environment.

Future Farm is a combination of aquaculture and hydroponics, which is fish raised for their meat and plants grown floating on rafts, their roots dangling into nutrient-rich water. It's an experiment to see if innovative energy strategies and sustainable bio-systems can produce a model for the agriculture of tomorrow.

The system used on the farm is mostly self-contained and extremely water efficient.

"A typical head of lettuce in Arizona or California might take 22 gallons of water," says Steve Meyer, Future Farm's co-owner and director of operations. "In something like this, it'd be about four. It's very green."

A short meeting will start at 6:45 pm with the tour following. This ends the summer tours meeting.

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.

BALDWIN-WOODVILLE

B-W Giezendanner School Forest

[Debby Walters](#)
control invasive species

Viking Middle School

[Debby Walters](#)
maintain prairie restoration project

ELLSWORTH

Pierce County Fair (Aug. 11-14)

[Leroy Clark](#)
plan, setup displays, staff booth

Pierce County Fairground Gardens

[Karen O'Brien](#)
plant, maintain flower gardens

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](#)
maintain garden

Glenwood City "Welcome Cows"

Bonnie Walters
help 4-H club with planting, maintaining sign plot

St. Croix County Fair (July 20-24)

Norma Rudesill, 715-688-2160
plan, setup displays, staff booth

Reserve your volunteer spot at the St. Croix County Fair!

Thanks to MGV Norma Rudesill, you can use "Signup Genius."

HUDSON

Hudson Farmers Market (Plaza 94)

Tuesdays 8 a.m.-noon (June-Oct.)
[Janet Jones](#)
set up, tear down MGV 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
set up, tear down MGV table, answer questions, provide info to public

Lakefront Park (April-Oct)

[Ramona Robinson](#)
help design, maintain, harvest, share edible landscape

Octagon House (Mondays)

[Janet Haut](#)
maintain gardens

Willow River Elementary School

[Ramona Robinson](#)
help design, supervise, maintain education garden

Willow River State Park

[Tashina Lahr-Manifold](#)
give tours, maintain Nature Center

Hudson Middle School

[Mike Deneen](#)
restore, maintain courtyard garden, help with outdoor classrooms

Birkmose Park Indian Mounds

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

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

NEW RICHMOND

New Richmond Community Garden

[JoAnn Ryan](#)
plant, weed, harvest, donate produce

Deerfield Gables Care Center

[Carolyn Craig](#)
spring cleanup, fertilizing, mulching therapy garden, bird sanctuary

Cancer Center of Western Wisconsin

[Julie Walsh](#), 715-246-9999
design, maintain Journey Garden

PRESCOTT

Great River Road Visitor Center

[Deb Kittilson](#)
garden maintenance

RIVER FALLS

Boulevard Flower Plot

[Donna Reuter](#)
rejuvenate flower plot

Demonstration and Learning Garden

(Hoffman Park)
[Diana Alfuth](#)
plan, weed, give demonstrations, scout for problems

Grow to Share Community Garden

(Hoffman Park)
[Megan Loga](#)
need board member, coordinator

Grow to Share Herb Garden

(Hoffman Park) [Heidi Nemcheck](#)
plant, maintain, harvest herbs

Have a Heart Farm

[Bobbie Kuhn](#)
maintain three raised beds

River Falls Farmers Market

Tuesdays and Saturdays
[Elaine Baker](#)
staff booth, answer questions

St. Croix Valley Habitat for Humanity

[Dennis Schmidt](#)
work on new gardens for Habitat families

Wings of Spring Bird Festival

Saturday, May 7
[Wendy Hill](#)
staff booth, provide hands-on pollinator activity

Westside Elementary School

April-Oct
[Becky Cunningham](#)
guidance on seed, plant selection, coordinate student garden work

SOMERSET

Parnell Prairie Reserve (May-Sept)

[Jean Hoffman](#)
transplanting, general maintenance

ANYWHERE

SCVMGA Annual Plant Sale

Saturday, June 4
[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

[Deb Andazola](#)
take photos of SCVMGA events

MGV Helping Hands

[Gail Behr](#)
help fellow Master Gardeners in time of need

* * * * *

June Meeting

Van Someren Gardens Tour

Photos and article by Deb Pederstuen

We had great attendance on a perfect evening at the Van Someren Vegetable Farm! Thanks to Carolyn Barrette for arranging this event! Fifty-one members attended. I loved the new microphone that the Board purchased!

Betty Van Someren gave me a recipe she got from her neighbor to prevent insects from getting into the apples on the tree. She adds 1 c. apple cider vinegar, 1 c. sugar, and 1 banana peel to a clean gallon-sized milk jug and fills it 3/4 full of water. She hangs it in her apple trees early in the spring before the insects are active. And it works! Her apples are not affected by the bugs.



Ellen Hurtgen (left) and Judy Ziegler visited the garden store.



Pleasant weather brought out 51 SCVMGA members.



Betty Van Someren demonstrated a "wheel hoe" used to weed close to plants.



Betty Schultz (left), Debbie Barron (center) visited with Diana Alfuth, Pierce County Horticulture Educator.



MGVs were treated to a hay-wagon ride.

Fluffy beargrass flowers flourish in Glacier National Park

by Deb Pederstuen

Glacier National Park is known for its Going-to-the-Sun Road, but have you heard about beargrass, its iconic wildflower? With the National Park Service celebrating its 100th anniversary, we chose to revisit Glacier and four other parks the end of June. The mountains and waterfalls along the Going-to-the-Sun Road were breathtaking! Summer wildflowers were in bloom everywhere, but masses of big white puffy blooms caught my eye!

It was exciting to see this unique plant was identified on a roadside placard as "Beargrass (*Xerophyllum tenax*)". In my research, I learned beargrass is not really a grass. It's a member of the Melanthiaceae or lily family. Of the two species of *Xerophyllum* in North America, this western species is also known as Fire Lily, Elk Grass, Squaw Grass, Indian Basket Grass, and Soap Grass. Members of the Lewis and Clark expedition were first to name it, "Beargrass," a common name for yucca at the time.

Beargrass is native to the United States and is found in subalpine meadows and coastal mountains throughout the Pacific Northwest. It ranges in height from 2-5 feet when it's blooming. The base of the plant is thick with tough, wiry, grass-like, olive-colored leaves about 35 inches in length with toothed margins. At the top of its thick stem, large clusters of small, creamy-white flowers develop when it blooms. The lower flowers bloom first, creating a tight knot of buds at the top as seen in the photo. You'll have to agree the blooms resemble "fluffy, upside down ice cream cones." The blooms have a sweet aroma. Unfortunately, I didn't stop to smell the flowers while capturing this close up photo early in the morning!

It's questionable how often beargrass blooms. Some say, "Beargrass flowers in 5-7 year cycles." Other sources indicate that is a myth. They say beargrass blooms when there is plenty of spring rain and moist soils. After blooming in late summer or early fall, the plant produces a small amount of black fruits or seeds. These seeds are slowly spread for propagation. Like lilies, it may also send out offshoots from its rhizomes.

Sheep, deer, elk, and goats are known to eat beargrass. However, bears use only the leaves inside their dens. Native Americans have used beargrass leaves, stems, and the cord-like roots for basket weaving. They also used the roots for



Beargrass flowers blossom from the bottom up (left). Below are clusters of beargrass that provide a picturesque frame near Haystack Creek at Glacier National Park.

PHOTOS BY
DEB PEDERSTUEN



treating injuries.

Beargrass is a fire-resistant species and is the first plant to sprout from its rhizomes after a light fire. Intense fires lingering in the same place for a long time will kill the rhizomes which lie just under the surface.

Park rangers in Glacier National Park noted beargrass blooms every year, but the mass blooming typically occurs every 5-10 years. Beargrass blooms in late May in lower elevations and continues into August in the high country. You still have time to enjoy the masses of Glacier's iconic wildflower!

ACTIVE-LINK RESOURCES:
[Beargrass in GlacierNationalPark](#)
[Garden Guides](#)
[BluePlanet Biomes](#)



*Bloomin'
Vacations*

Do you have any photos or information about plants you've seen on your vacation? We'd love to publish them in *Sprinklings*. Contact [Colleen Callahan](#)

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

by **Deb Pederstuen**

In June, we welcomed **Caroline Baker** of Hudson as our 200th member! Caroline, a 2015 MG intern, had so much fun at VanSomeren's Farm Tour in Baldwin, it convinced her to join the next day. From her 2015 MG class, 17 of 21 interns (81%) have joined. Also renewing at the June 23rd meeting was MGV **Betty Schultz**, one of our 1998 original members.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Putting bare-root trees in gravel

by **Carolyn Barrette**

September's meeting will feature Starla Enger in her role as a member of the Hudson Shade Tree Advisory Committee. Hudson has developed a new way of preparing trees for planting by putting bare-root trees in gravel and feeding them with nutrients rather than the old 'ball and burlap.'

Starla will explain how this method actually promotes root growth and the effect on trees they will be planting. People who drive in Hudson know that large trees were taken from Vine Street for the widening. In addition, with the threat of emerald ash borer, Hudson is replanting a variety of trees in the coming years.

Our September meeting will provide a preview of what will be happening in October as Hudson replants the trees along Vine Street.

SCVMGA PHOTOS

As we approach our 20th anniversary, we're looking for photographs of SCVMGA events to put into a scrapbook. If you have photos of our members at meetings, at fairs,



Teresa Davis

on tours, or working on projects, please share them with us! We now have a spot on Shutterfly.com to store, upload, and download photos from members. **Teresa Davis**, Scrapbook coordinator, will supervise the free, private group site.

All you need to do is create a personal password and enter your email address at Shutterfly.com. Then type in St Croix Valley Masters Gardener Association in the Search

box, and ask to join the group. Teresa will be notified, check the SCVMGA membership list, and allow access.

If you have photos to share, please include **identification information** (names of members, plants, gardens, places) for each photo.



PHOTO BY KATHY ZINN

FALL WORKSHOP • Saturday, Sept. 24

HERBS GALORE!

by **Peg Wastell**

Our annual Fall Workshop will focus on herbs: herb growing, herbal tea making, tincture making, lotion making, pesto variations and eating wild herbs.

Diana Alfuth, Lisa Mosbey, Debra Andazola, Phyllis Jaworski, Karen Littlefield, and Gail Behr will educate us on all things herbal. The cost is \$15. Our location is once again at the Seyforth building on the Pierce County Fairgrounds in Ellsworth. Look for more information and a registration form in the August issue of *Sprinklings*.

Is seed-sharing legal?

Our seed-sharing activity at last November's meeting was so popular that we plan on doing it again! But there's concern that it may become illegal. Look for an article on the legality of seed-sharing in the next issue of *Sprinklings*.



Sprinklings

Sprinklings is a newsletter publication of the St. Croix Valley Master Gardener 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. 5** for the August issue. Please email submissions or inquiries to giverny@me.com.

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