



Sprinklings

ST. CROIX VALLEY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

 [SCVMGA Website](#)

MAY 2015

*Peg's
Plantings*
p. 8


“Beautiful, fascinating creatures”

By Carolyn Barrette

SCVMGA member Gerald Bridge will introduce us to the world of insects at our next meeting, Thursday, May 28.

Bridge served as a resource person for demonstrations on insects in the Master Gardener booths at the St. Croix County and Pierce County fairs last summer.

“Insects are the most successful group of animals on the planet,” he says. “Most are very beneficial; however, some transmit disease and a few cause enormous economic losses, but many insects also have a good deal of success in our gardens!”

Bridge will explain how to identify insects and what type of management control works for each kind.

“Insects can be a challenge to deal with,” he says, “but they are beautiful and fascinating creatures.”

Thursday, May 28

6:45 p.m. Meeting

7:15 p.m. Break

7:30 p.m. Speaker



First Covenant Church
1374 N. Main St.
River Falls

**Entrance is on Quarry St.
Go east at Kwip Trip corner.**

Annual Plant Sale set for June 6

By Corky Weeks

This year's plant sale is Saturday, June 6 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Octagon House, 1004 3rd St. (corner of 3rd and Myrtle), in Hudson. The plant sale is our main fundraiser, and the money supports our Community Grants program. This year we awarded \$4,225 to 19 organizations in the two counties.

You can contribute in several ways. We need your perennial divisions, volunteers, and annual flower and vegetable seedlings you started. If you are cleaning out your garage and have extra garden tools, pots, etc., donate these to the sale, too. You can volunteer to help organize the sale or 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.

When you donate plants, please label them with the name of plant, variety if known, color, height, and sun or shade preference. Use plastic or wooden sticks or paper labels. Stapling labels to the pot or wooden stick works well. We will have pots, paper labels and large craft sticks available at the May meeting.

Plants should be dropped off in the back yard of the Octagon House Friday, June 5 between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. Use the side entrance by the garage on Myrtle St. You can also drop them off before 8 a.m. Saturday morning.



2013 PHOTOS BY LISA DEMBOUSKI

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, contact Corky Weeks at 715-386-2243 or cweeks@presenter.com or Heather Lane at kaycei@hotmail.com.

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 Heather know.

Members have volunteered to help during the sale and answer questions from the public, but we can always use more help so please come join us on the 6th of June. 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!

[Click here to download flier to distribute!](#)



President's Message

Spring has truly arrived and I have been fortunate to have the time to attend to my gardens, completing work I didn't have time to do last fall.



Barb Peterson

As I have been removing the mulch, assessing the survivors, digging and in some cases moving, I have also been potting plants for the SCVMGA Plant Sale, June 6th and for several other gardens I help maintain. It is a pattern I have tried to follow most of my adult life, trying to incorporate service to others into my daily life.

As Master Gardeners we have committed to completing 24 hours of volunteer service each year. May is a great time to get started on the goal. There are so many opportunities and you are sure to find ones that fit your interest and schedule. You will find them very well organized on

our website, <http://scvmga.weebly.com> (password is Daisy) or come to our May 28 meeting where there will be sign-up sheets and the opportunity to ask questions.

I find that I end up completing more than 24 hours each year for a variety of reasons. Many of the volunteer opportunities are group activities and I find that working together with others is a great way to develop friendships with others who have a passion for gardening. They are often a source of valuable know-how too. I frequently return home with ideas to try out. And I must confess that it feels good to help to make a difference in someone else's life, whether it is helping to maintain a well-tended public garden, delivering fresh vegetables to a food shelf or providing science-based gardening information at a farmers market.

I look forward to seeing you at our May 28 meeting or volunteering somewhere this month.

Happy volunteering!

Survey results provide insight into members' needs, ideas

With 62 responses (31% response rate), the recent SCVMGA survey had a higher-than-average return for email surveys (25%). Nearly half (48%) who responded are new members who joined in the last five years. Here's what we found out about ourselves:

We are primarily flower/perennial gardeners (77%) and food gardeners (74%). Twenty percent are indoor gardeners and 13 percent are hobby farmers.

The main reasons for joining SCVMGA are education, followed by fellowship and service.

Respondents overwhelmingly believe that SCVMGA provides a wide variety of volunteer opportunities (96% either strongly agree or agree).

Respondents also highly rated the amount of educational opportunities available (95%). The most favored method for continuing education is 1-2 hour in-person presentations (89%) with day-long seminars coming in second (73%). Topics suggested for continuing education include trees and shrubs, plant selection, landscape design, environmental issues and compost/soil improvement methods.

Offering more youth-oriented activities and better mentoring for new MGVs are among the top overall suggestions for new activities.

The majority of respondents are aware of the three interest groups (Flower Garden Design, Native Plants, and Seed Trials). The Seed Trials Group had the most awareness with 92 percent. Suggested topics for additional groups include vegetables, fruits, specialty crops, invasives, pollinators, and shade gardening.

Sixty-one percent "always" reads Sprinklings newsletter

Where We Live

The following data is taken from the SCVMGA membership list.

COUNTY	MEMBERS
St. Croix	120 (62%)
Pierce	64 (33%)
Barron	2 (1%)
Polk	2 (1%)
Dunn	1 (< 1%)
Goodhue (MN)	1 (< 1%)
Washington (MN)	3 (1.5%)

and 23 percent "usually" reads it. Educational articles and upcoming events were rated the most valuable information. Two suggestions are having more articles on MGV projects and Board meeting highlights.

Thirty percent visit the website weekly and 41 percent on a monthly basis. Almost half of the respondents (44%) would like to see Board minutes posted. Ideas for additional information include a schedule of Board and Interest Group meetings, MGV projects, and summaries of speaker presentations.

Fifteen percent visit the Facebook page "daily" or "weekly." Some members indicated a lack of awareness of the Facebook group. [Click here for Facebook link.](#)

In the event of meeting cancellations, 82 percent prefer notifications by email, 32 percent via telephone, and 26 percent by text message.

"I'm confident that the Board joins me in thanking members who took time to complete the survey," said Barb Peterson, Board president. "At our next Board meeting, May 12, we'll review the results and discuss possible steps to take in response to the information gleaned. I'll share the Board's initial ideas at the May 28 meeting and in my next Sprinklings column."

[Click here to read the complete results.](#)

Reasons MGVs joined SCVMGA

EDUCATION	94%
FELLOWSHIP	55%
SERVICE	47%
OTHER	15%

Updates

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

This spring our SCVMGA family tree grew to 198 members with 181 Master Gardener Volunteer (MGV) renewals and 17 new members.

We look forward to meeting our newest MGV from River Falls, **Jeanne Friedell**, a 2013 graduate. Our last MGV to renew in March was **Mark Hafner** of Hudson.

You can learn more about our MGV family by volunteering at one or more of our many community service positions.

In March, **Darla Fischer** of Ellsworth, one of our friendly greeters, was the lucky winner of a perennial gardening book. In April, Sprinklings Editor **Colleen Callahan** of Hudson found it a hoot to win the "metal owl" garden art stake to adorn her backyard. Special thanks to **Kathye Beebe** (owl stake) and **Karen Pavlis** (book) for their donations.

– Deb Pederstuen

OCTAGON HOUSE DONATION

The Board approved a \$500 donation to the Octagon House for the building of a new bathroom, and may make another donation if needed. This will be the 11th year the Octagon House has been the site for the annual plant sale.

SCVMGA IN AREA MAGAZINE

Deb Pederstuen graced the pages of the April issue of St. Croix Valley magazine in an article on the SCVMGA. [Click here to read it.](#)



BASIL DOWNY MILDEW

A fungus-like pathogen found on basil is becoming more prevalent in the Midwest. Sweet and Italian basil varieties are more susceptible than others. Spice, Blue Spice, and Blue Spice Fil varieties are found to be resistant to the disease. Twelve varieties are tolerant. [Click here for more information.](#)

MGV STATE PHOTO CONTEST

Bluff County Master Gardeners is sponsoring a photo contest in conjunction with the 2015 Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association's annual conference in LaCrosse July 31-Aug. 1. Both the conference and contest are open to the public.

Amateur photographers are invited to submit photos in five categories: Plants, Edibles, Fauna, Landscapes and Black & White. Deadline is June 30. [Click here for more information.](#)

MGV STATE NEWS

The Wisconsin Master Gardener Association (WIMGA) is holding its [2015 Annual Conference](#) in La Crosse July 31-Aug. 1, 2015.

The Bluff Country Master Gardener Association is hosting the event. We welcome all Master Gardener Volunteers and anyone who wants to learn more about gardening. More information is available [here](#).

The International Master Gardener Conference, "[Horticultural Horizons in the Heartland](#)," will take place Sept. 22-25, 2015 in Council Bluffs, Iowa. You can join the mailing list to get regular updates by texting [horticultural horizons](#) "IMGC2015" to 22828. You can also check out its [Facebook](#) page.

Planning has begun for the next Midwest Regional Gardener Conference, scheduled for Sept. 14-17, 2016 in Wisconsin Dells. WIMGA is hosting the event with assistance from MGV organizations throughout the state.

Matt Schmitz and Marilyn Gorham are serving on the planning committee on behalf of the St. Croix Valley Master Gardener Association, and will be needing additional volunteer help as planning goes into full swing. – *Marilyn Gorham*

Service Day at St. Croix Valley Community Garden set for May 15

By Carolyn Barrette

It's early, but the St. Croix Valley Community Garden in New Richmond is dry, tilled and ready to be planted.

Friday, May 15 is New Richmond Service Day — the day 30 New Richmond High School students will come help us plant the Community Garden. Full of energy, vim and vigor, they will need some guidance on how to prepare the garden beds, plant the seeds and onions, lay the drip hoses and generally help SCV Master Gardeners prepare for another year of growing vegetables.

We need your help that day. The students will arrive about 8 a.m. Guides, mentors, leaders, gardeners, teachers — whatever we are called as volunteers helping them learn the practicalities of

gardening — are needed to be sure the rows are planted straight, the seeds are put down properly, the broccoli and cabbage sets are put in and the onions planted.

We are using shredded corn stalks again, which can be blown around to serve as mulch for the coming year. Wednesday, May 13 at 6 p.m. (or a little earlier) we could use help in laying out the garden, stringing the rows, and preparing the garden to some extent, although the students — some of whom are returning volunteers — should be allowed to do as much as possible.

Not only do you get volunteer youth service hours, we end the Service Day with a potluck picnic at the garden

with food and a fun time to recuperate.

The Community Garden is located at Garden Expressions, 2050 Hwy 65, 1.5 miles north of New Richmond. Rental plots are available alongside the community garden. Last year one of them served as one of the vegetable trial gardens, which provides yet another chance to earn volunteer hours later in the season.

The produce from the big general garden is all donated to senior meal centers, public health programs, senior living centers, and food shelves in our community.

For further information contact Carolyn at 715-549-6438 (home), 612-201-5916 (cell) or [email tbarrett@presenter.com](mailto:tbarrett@presenter.com).



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.

The juicy sweetness of strawberries

Strawberries have been around and eaten for many years. In Greek and Roman times, the strawberry was a wild plant.



The first documented botanical illustration of a strawberry plant is from 1454. The first strawberry hybrid "Hudson" was developed in the United States in 1780.

Strawberries are indigenous to every continent, except Africa and Australia. If you would like to celebrate the strawberry, mid to late June brings strawberry festivals around the world. In Wisconsin, you can enjoy the Strawberry Festivals in Cedarburg and Waupaca, and The Colonial Club Strawberry Fest in Sun Prairie. Even closer to home, Afton and Cottage Grove in Minnesota both celebrate this delightful fruit.

The start of berry season is one of my favorite times of the whole year. I absolutely adore the juicy sweetness of a strawberry straight from the vine. There are many recipes to incorporate this fruit but, by far, my favorite is Fresh Strawberry Pie. This recipe was one that my Aunt LaVonne made every strawberry season. I suppose you could use other berries, but I have not, mostly because of tradition.

FRESH STRAWBERRY PIE

Wash, drain and hull one quart of strawberries; leave whole. Prepare and bake a 9-inch pie crust.

FILLING

Mix dry ingredients:

3/4 c. sugar

3 T. cornstarch

1/4 tsp. salt

Add 1 C. water.

Cook until thick and clear, stirring continuously.

Boil for 2 minutes.

Add 3 T. strawberry gelatin dessert mix (Jell-O).

Mix well and let cool.

Pour a thin layer of filling in the bottom of the prepared pie crust. Pile in the berries. Pour over remaining filling, taking care to coat all berries.

Chill in refrigerator until filling is firm. Slice and serve.

RECIPE FROM KARALYN LITTLEFIELD, SPRINKLINGS MAY 2015



Easy Herb Gardens

By Lisa Mosbey

This month's herbs are all in the mint family, Lamiaceae.

Peppermint (*Mentha piperita*) is easy to start with a cutting from a friend or purchased as a starter plant at a nursery, as it does not reproduce true from seed. Mints are considered invasive, so you may want to plant them in containers. Popular in Middle Eastern and Mexican cuisine, peppermint offers some valuable nutrients. One ounce of dried peppermint contains 540mg calcium, 220 mg magnesium and 753 mg potassium. Peppermint is a common remedy taken for stomach upset, hiccups, bad breath, congestion, gas, nausea and headaches, as well as applied externally to soothe itching and inflammation of the skin.

Lemon balm (*Melissa officinalis*) grows in full sun or part shade, and likes well-drained soil. This plant can become invasive be sure to harvest often and cut back well. A tea made from the leaves and flowers offers a mildly sedative effect to ease headaches, indigestion or nausea, and causes a slight dilation of the blood vessels, thus helping to maintain balanced blood pressure. Lemon balm has antibacterial, antispasmodic and antiviral properties.

Sage (*Salvia officinalis*) does well in full sun and sandy loam soil. The main ingredient in poultry seasoning, it also makes a wonderful sage brown butter. The aroma alone may promote mental alertness and uplift the mood. Other remedy uses include anxiousness, hot flashes, night sweats, excessive perspiration, and headache. My favorite remedy is a warm sage tea with honey and lemon for a sore or scratchy throat. It is an antioxidant, containing carnosic acid and rosmarinic acid. It is also anti-inflammatory, antifungal and antiseptic. Garden sage contains a small amount of thujone, which has potential toxicity in large doses. Sage leaves collected in spring, before and around the flowering season, have been shown to contain the lowest

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.

Join our Master Gardeners FACEBOOK GROUP!

This is a fun and social way for MGVs from St. Croix, Pierce, Dunn, Polk and Washington Counties to share news, information, events, and photos as well as ask questions. Click on the Facebook icon (at left) to start keeping in touch today!



MARCH MEETING

Helping our “feathered friends”

By Lisa Bigaouette

Those of us fortunate to be present during Cathy Olyphant’s presentation on birds came away with some great ideas on how to bring birds to our backyards.

Cathy introduced us to the St. Croix Valley Bird Club, of which she has been a member for six years. The club’s mission, via education and exposure, is to encourage interest in birds among



Cathy Olyphant

people of the St. Croix Valley, promoting habitat conservation and restoration efforts mainly through education. Some of the club’s activities include school programs, grassland surveys, Christmas bird counts, monthly programs, birding hikes, River Falls library birding backpack, field trips, and bluebird nest box trails.

With so many threats to our birds and grassland bird populations reduced by 75 percent, there are some things we as gardeners can do to help out our little feathered friends. We can plant native plants such as any of the seed bearing flowers or grasses, and trees that are helpful to birds for food and shelter. Hanging feeders, providing water and keeping natural habitat can be a welcoming stop for migratory birds on what could be a 6,000-mile journey if you happen to be a bobolink!

For more information or to become a member, visit www.scvbirdclub.com, or like them on [Facebook](#).



June 25 Meeting

“Through the Lens: The Beauty of Horticulture” will highlight the work of photographers who turn everyday landscapes and plants into works of art. Colleen Callahan, Sprinklings editor, will explain lighting, angle, distance, composition, and timing techniques.

APRIL MEETING

Mushroom Mania

By Annie Blide

We had the pleasure of listening to Joni Garbe, MGV and amateur mycologist, during the April monthly SCVMGA meeting. Joni shared her expertise and knowledge of what to look for, where to find mushrooms, and how to identify the safe mushrooms from the not-safe.

Mushrooms cannot make their own food like green plants, so they absorb nutrients from decaying organic matter. Mushrooms are cultivated in sterile soil and in warm humid conditions. When growing in the wild, they prefer rich undisturbed woodlands, especially sandy soil that is facing south, due to the warmth the sun provides to the soil. Perfect conditions for picking are April to mid May. Nighttime temperatures should be in the 40-degree range, with daytime temperatures of 60-70 degrees and ground temperatures between 50-60 degrees.

50% of mushrooms are inedible.
25% are edible and tasteless.
20% are toxic and undesirable.
4% are tasty and excellent.
1% can kill you.

As far as mushroom safety goes, never pick a mushroom that is white-capped and white-gilled. Joni covered these key mushrooms that grow in our valley:

Puffballs, which are edible, are most desirable from baseball-to-basketball size. The interior of the mushrooms should be white and tender, with no stem formation and no insects. These are delicious and plentiful.

Hen of the woods are fall mushrooms that grow between August and October. They grow on the base of oak trees and the most desirable color of these mushrooms is grey, not brown.

Oyster mushrooms grow on trees and in early summer and fall. They appear as overlapping clusters found on dead hardwood logs, and also on oaks higher up. They have a beautiful aroma.

Chicken of the woods are orange-yellowish to cream colored mushrooms found on stumps. These can be harvested by cutting off the edge of the “shelves,” as they will grow back again. If cooked correctly, these do taste like chicken.

Last but not least is the prized **Morel** mushroom. These mushrooms are very easy to identify, and grow under Elm, and Ash trees, recently dead trees, recently burnt areas, and old orchards. These can be found when trilliums and lilacs are blooming. When cleaning the morels, cut them in half and use a damp cloth. They should be hollow on the inside and free of insects. Do not soak mushrooms, since they absorb water and become mushy. Cooking and dehydrating the morels is the best way to prepare them. They can be frozen after they are dehydrated. There are false morels that you need to watch for; they have a dense brain-like center and do not have a hollow core. These are not edible.

Remember: If in doubt, throw it out. All wild mushrooms should be cooked to prevent gastric problems. Mushrooms contain cancer-fighting micronutrients. They kick up our metabolism, provide vitamins and minerals, and are a source of protein. Mushrooms are the only plant that provides Vitamin D.

2015 Grant Recipients

The Grant Committee awarded 19 grants for a total of \$4,225.



Seated from left: Kerry Peterson, Pat Tremaine, Susan Capparelli, Paul VanDenMeerendonk. Standing from left: Kathy Geraets, John Norquist, Ramona Robinson O’Brien, Sharon Gilles, Jeff Peters, Phyllis Jaworski, Clark Hagemeyer, Sue Klatt, August Hoffman, Dianne Wright, Jeanne Schmidt, Anita Voiles, Beth Stidham, Cathie Burtzlaff, Barbara Nelson. Not pictured: Maggie Wooley, Donna Lani, Clayton Snow, Roger Adams, Julie Hawley, Judi Brunner, Wendy Kramer, Susan Wallin, Lisa Mosbey, Marilyn Doornink, Pam Keil, Sandy Madsen, Debbie Walters, Justin Townsend, and Julie Weinberg.

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 16-20)
[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

MG Plant Sale at Octagon House (June 6)
[Corky Weeks](#), [Heather Lane](#)
Help with annual plant sale, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

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
Supervise students on May 15

PRESCOTT

Great River Road Visitor Center, 200 Monroe St.

[Jessica Bierbrauer](#) 715-262-0104
April cleanup, maintenance, plant sale May 17

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

Home Remodeling & Garden Show

Jan. 16-17, Knowles Center, UW-RF campus
Barb Peterson 715-549-6798
Man booth, give presentations

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, ideas

Another GARDEN U Success!

Raising nearly \$1,000, the 2015 Garden U event at the Hudson House Grand Hotel scored another success with 156 attendees, three dynamic speakers, and a variety of garden vendors. "The hot new subject lately has been the effect of climate change," says Carolyn Barrette. "Once again we hit the topical subject of the year with Lee's excellent presentation."

The Hudson House Grand Hotel has already been reserved for next year's Garden U on the third Saturday in March. Mark your calendar!



Carolyn Barrette
Garden U Coordinator



Janna Jonely of Prairie Restorations talked about the importance of restoring the prairie.



Margaret Smith & Diana Alfuth were among the 156 attendees.



Professor Lee Frelich, Director of the U of MN Center for Forest Ecology, spoke on global warming.



Lise Wolff, member of the American Herbalist Guild, presented herbal first-aid tips.



Trina Frank has been coordinating the monthly meeting "goodies bar" with help from her daughter, Lexi, 11, for five years. Anyone can bring treats. Please contact Trina ahead of time, and send your recipe. "People will sometimes ask for the recipe," says Trina. "I like to have a copy on hand."

SPRINKLINGS PROFILE

Growing projects from great ideas

By Colleen Callahan

When Peg Wastell hears a good idea, her energy level rises immediately. "I feel a responsibility to *do something*, to make it happen," she says.

It begins with visualizing the outcome, then setting priorities, establishing time management goals, and teaching others. For some people, that can be drudgery. For Peg, it's "just fun."

Ideas pop up everywhere: at conferences, board meetings, in parking lots and on road trips.

One idea, the Seed Trials Group, blossomed during a trip home from a Minnesota MG event with SCVMGA members in 2012.

"As soon as I visualized it, I wanted to make it real," Peg says. "I love working on projects."

Today, SCVMGA's Seed Trials Group is among the first in the Wisconsin MG program.

Communicating its successes to the public is part of Peg's strategy. She created displays for the St. Croix County and Pierce County Fairs. Last year, the Eau Claire Leader-Telegram published trial results, which are also located on the [SCVMGA website](#). Currently, she's creating a presentation about the project to give to MGV groups throughout Wisconsin.

Communication among trial group members is also important. Each season, Peg sends monthly emails to seed trial volunteers to "stay connected and keep informed about any problems." This year 40 MGVs are participating.

Peg gives particular credit to Diana Alfuth. "Diana gave me a lot of support, ensuring that trials follow scientific protocols."

She also appreciates the support from group volunteers who help with plant selection, seed sorting, and ongoing development.

Another project that Peg coordinates is the annual Fall Workshop.

Dubbed the "last-chance" workshop where MGVs can accrue both volunteer and educational hours before the October deadline, it offers an advanced level of education and hands-on activities specific to MGVs.



One of 10 apple trees on Peg's city lot.

Malus domestica, 'Haralson'

That idea originated in a parking lot after a board meeting. Peg says she "scooped up ideas and made a sketchy plan." Today, an average of 50 MGVs earn continuing education hours each fall.

As state representative from 2006-12, Peg initiated enhancing the state WIMGA website. Peg put together resource pages and places of horticultural interest, and then trained other reps to gather and assess information.

The [Program Resources](#) section provides links to tips on improving leadership skills, connecting with government officials, financing, educating youth and more.

"It's important for MGVs to have a place to go for organizational and program help," she says.

The [Places of Horticultural Interests](#) is a collection of off-the-beaten-track gardens in each county, including public, private, and MGV projects.

One private garden that is not listed is Peg's. A raised-bed vegetable garden plus currants, blueberries, raspberries and strawberries is framed by fruit trees - 19 in all. On a typical city lot in New Richmond, Peg virtually oversees a mini orchard.

Her inspiration came from a talk on backyard orchards by Bob Tomesh, a senior lecturer at UW-Extension, at a WIMGA state conference in 2011.

"He taught me the pruning technique I use," says Peg. "He passed away later that year, and is still missed by so many of us." Peg highly recommends MGVs to attend state conferences: "Who knows what will be an inspiration?"

Having purchased the fruit trees in the last two years, Peg has already cut off the tops and extra branches to create a minimum of 18 inches between them. She's planning to attach weights to the limbs to create a 60-degree angle from the trunk.

With two pear, two apricot, two plum (including a Lydecker/BlackIce bred by Dr. Brian Smith at UW-River Falls), three cherry and 10 apple trees, Peg will eventually harvest the fruits "just for fun." Her husband will turn the juices into beer, wine and cider, she will do small-batch canning for Christmas gifts, and will give away the rest.

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For Peg, one of the “best Christmas gifts ever,” was from her husband and son who paid for her Master Gardener course. It was 1997 and Peg became one of the founding members of SCVMGA.

She served as its first treasurer, which involved completing the paperwork to establish the organization as a non-profit group. “That took many, many hours!” she says.

Her teaching skills were already honed. Working at Home Depot, she had developed curricula for woodworking classes and conducted 45 segments on DIY projects on FoxNews AM.

In 2006 she received a degree in Human Resource Management that added to her understanding of problem-solving, planning and reaching organizational objectives.

That’s when Peg embarked on a three-year landscaping project for St. Croix Industries in New Richmond. She created the design, worked within budget, and coordinated MGVs, building volunteers, and Youth Boot Camp helpers – about 40 in all.

In between projects, Peg has given talks on flower garden design, container gardening, dormant oil application, constructing concrete stepping stones, and building hypertufa garden pots and ornaments.

Peg used rhubarb leaves to add texture to a hypertufa bird bath (photo) and then stained it. Hypertufa is rock made from various stones bonded together with cement.

Working with cement is a no-brainer for Peg. After all,



she cut and laid all the tile in her kitchen and basement.

Some of her favorite MGV activities are working with the Flower Garden Design Group, helping with the annual Plant Sale, coordinating Seed Sorting Day for the seed trials, creating various presentations for MGV projects, volunteering on the Audit Committee, and overseeing the seed-trial plot at the St. Croix Valley Community Garden in New Richmond.

In winter, she nurtures herbs and two phalaenopsis orchids along her west windows. Sage, rosemary, thyme, lemon verbena, parsley, basil

and mint soak up the light. One of her orchids, a yellow one, has been thriving for eight years (photo at left).

Among her seedlings this year are four tomato varieties (Sun Sugar is the largest), kale, nasturtiums, fox glove, lupines, salvia and coleus.

All this while working as a reader at Data Recognition Corp.

Through the years, Peg’s been active in many associations, but SCVMGA “is the best group I’ve ever belonged to,” she says. “The neat thing is the synergy. Everyone pitches in and things just fall into place. It’s wonderful to share our interests. We all have this love of plants and great ideas.”

Ideas. That’s where it all begins.



Seedlings for the Seed Trials, Plant Sale and Peg’s backyard need light, fresh water, and a gentle breeze.



PHENOLOGY: What’s happening in May?

Karner blue butterflies emerge from their cocoons.

Frogs sing at dusk.

Trilliums blossom on forest floors.

Whooping cranes return to Wisconsin.

River otter pups scamper along riverbanks.

Fruit trees flower.

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 5** for the June issue. Please email submissions or inquiries to giverny@me.com.

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