



Sprinklings

ST. CROIX VALLEY MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

November-December 2019

REMINDER: Underlined words are active links

NOVEMBER MEETING

Grant money projects, survey results

by Carolyn Barrette

November's meeting begins with the annual business meeting when we elect officers and adopt the budget for the coming year.

In addition to the annual grant report by Grant Committee Chair **Jenny Brazzale**, Pat Jonas from the St. Croix Health and Rehab Center in New Richmond will talk about the healing garden that volunteers planted, and MGV **August Hoffman** will tell us about the vegetable garden at St. Patrick's Church.



Healing Garden

The meeting would not be complete without Diana's comments. This year she'll be summarizing the member survey sent out last summer, and expand on some of the suggestions for member activity and promotion of Master Gardeners.

There will be no December meeting.

November Meeting

Thursday, Nov. 21
6:45 p.m.

First Covenant Church

1374 N. Main St.
River Falls, WI 54022

(Entrance is on Quarry Rd. Go east at Kwik Trip corner.)

JANUARY MEETING

Challenges, joys of hotel gardening

The January 2020 meeting features MGV **Robyn Wefel** discussing Magnificent Gardens. Robyn is responsible for the St. Paul Hotel gardens, which rank among the top 25 "Historic Hotels with Magnificent Gardens" nationwide. Robyn will describe planning the gardens for the four seasons – paying attention to color and structure, and always creating new designs.

January's meeting serves as an invitation to the fall graduating class to join SCVMGA, featuring a pizza dinner and an opportunity to talk with current members about all of our activities this past year. The event will be at First Covenant Church, 1374 N Main St, River Falls and will start at 6 p.m. with the meeting at 6:45.



Meet our newest coordinators

by Deb Pederstuen

In mid-October, MGV **Nola Weber**, class of 2018, accepted her new role as Volunteer Coordinator. She replaces **John Ramstad** who organized our volunteer program for the past two years. John wants to devote his time to River Falls Grow to Share program among other activities.

Nola's mission is to ensure every new MG Intern is promptly notified after they sign up for a volunteer activity. As a recent 3M retiree with 31 years in marketing and business analysis, Nola, from Hudson, is experienced in Excel, an important skill for this position. For her MGV certification, she taught her first "Indoor Herb Gardening" class to a dozen Ellsworth residents in the Ellsworth Community Education Program. Not knowing enough about herbs, she did research, contacted Diana Alfuth for advice, and prepared a PowerPoint.

MGV **Annette Rios**, another skilled and talented 2018 MG class graduate, will operate the audiovisuals at our monthly meetings. She relieves **Trent Kowalchyk** of his

"Audiovisual Technician" job who retired last month after four years. As Railroad Manager in Administration for 33 years, Annette taught computer classes, gave presentations, and did her own troubleshooting. She traveled throughout the country and Canada, but is now happily retired in Hammond pursuing her woodworking and gardening passions. Annette is proud of her newly remodeled greenhouse-garden shed, raised beds, and completely refinished lower level. I love her motto "to learn as many skills as I can." That's why she signed up for Diana's MG Training class.

We're forever grateful for Trent's service and look forward to working with Annette behind the computer again!



Nola Weber



Annette Rios

President's Message

It was a difficult year for gardening. My patience wore thin as the days slipped by. It was a year when "plan ahead" was just a silly dream. Too much rain and too cloudy – that's what I told myself many times.



JoAnn Ryan

Here are some of the "benefits" of this season of gardening:

1. I never had to unreel my hoses. The soil was always wet.
2. I had lots of "goof off" days because it was always wet.

On the "not so good" failures in a wet and cloudy year:

1. Everything came up late.
2. Veggies were smaller than usual.

3. Tomato disasters. Late season blight – all the leaves fell off in one day. Within a few days, the tomatoes fell off as well.

4. Mud tracked into the house because it was always wet.

Being a "Master" gardener, I have already come to terms with all of the losses of 2019 and am looking forward to 2020. Surely, we couldn't have such a poor season again next year.

So, I ask myself: What new things shall I try next year? I will plant less zucchini and more squash. Get some extra seeds so that I can have a second crop of lettuce. And so it goes...

Good luck with your garden next year. May it be all sunshine and flowers!

3M "Volunteer Match" program

If you are a current or retired employee of 3M, you can apply your SCVMGA volunteer hours for 2019 toward the "Volunteer Match" program.

For every 20 hours (employee) or 25 hours (retired) of volunteer work, the 3M Foundation will donate \$500 to SCVMGA. The deadline is Feb. 28.

[Click here to sign on to the program.](#)

Placemaking course for Master Gardeners

Designing public spaces that promote healthy living, rehabilitate decaying areas, and foster community attachment are the basics of placemaking.

UW-Extension is offering a 6-credit continuing education course on planning and designing public spaces for Master Gardeners, using the placemaking objectives.

The course is online and runs January-October 2020, making it flexible to meet everyone's schedules. It includes readings and videos. Participants answer questions throughout the course; there is no final project or test.

The cost is \$25.

Deadline for registration is December 31, 2019. [Click here to register.](#)

Garden U preview

by Carolyn Barrette

Roadside flowers and pollinators will be the focus of our 2020 Garden U. The event's coordinator, Lisa Esselman, and I were fortunate to line up an array of experts on this popular topic.

Heather Holm, author and nationally sought-after speaker on pollinators, will be the afternoon speaker. Her expertise includes interactions with native bees and native plants, including the types of bees in cultivated areas.

Our morning speakers, Kelly Povo and Phyllis Root, have a new book, "Searching for Minnesota's Native Wildflowers," which would fit right in with native bees and pollinators. Books from both speakers will be available.

Our other speaker is John Hager, Northern Wisconsin Hosta Society president. John grows a number of hostas at his Eau Claire home and has a garden full of varieties of lilies, as well. The bees like cultivated plants too.

Mark your calendar now for **Saturday, March 21** at the Hudson House, 1600 Crest View, Hudson. The cost remains the same at \$40. We hope to have a fine selection of vendor and informational booths at the event.

Monthly programs for 2020

by Carolyn Barrette

St. Croix Valley Master Gardeners has a reputation for excellent and knowledgeable programming at our monthly meetings. But, we couldn't do that without the suggestions from our membership. Sometimes just a comment in passing will trigger a suggestion. Volunteer activity reports are appreciated too.

In February, Prof. Sonja Maki in the UW-River Falls Horticulture Dept, will talk about planning and planting techniques. In March, MGV **Debby Walters** will share her visit to the monarch butterflies in Mexico. April will feature Diana Alfuth about how to answer garden questions from our neighbors. June's speaker Matthew Swank from Lupine Gardens will share his passion for native plants. In July the first 'field trip' will be to MGV **Bridget Kelley's** home to see her raised bed and hügelkultur (*hoogle-culture*) gardens. The May speaker will be announced soon.

SEPTEMBER MEETING NOTES

by Deb Pederstuen

Our Sept 26th meeting drew 51 members for Sandy Madsen's "Healthy Gardening for Kids" program. Sandy outlined how Houlton Elementary Garden Club progressed the past eleven years since its first meeting in 2009.

Thirty-seven members renewed their memberships. We sold 4 cookbooks, from Janet Jones' Hudson Farmers Market collection, at \$5 per book for \$20.



PHOTO BY DEB PEDERSTUEN

Program Summary

by Sandy Madsen

For each of the last 12 years the Houlton Elementary's Garden Program has grown through support from students, staff, parents and Master Gardeners. Financial support has come from SCVMGA, and various community and state grants. The philosophy keeps safety as its priority. Participants follow organic principles, wear gloves, emphasize safe tool usage and encourage hand washing before returning to class.

The garden areas supported by this program include a 2-acre restored prairie, beautiful perennial flower beds, a rain garden, a pollinator garden, a butterfly garden, 5 raised beds, one 12' x 70' bed, a 3-section compost bin and a new 12' x 20' greenhouse.

The program includes 5 activities. Each classroom has one greenhouse planting project and one outside planting project. A Thursday Garden Club meets during noon recess with 3 rotating students from each of the 11 classrooms to do maintenance and harvesting. Every student participates in composting their fruit and vegetable scraps from the cafeteria. The after school program assists in flower bed maintenance. Families come weekly all summer to weed and harvest.

Our perennial crops include asparagus, rhubarb and lots of fall-bearing raspberries. The annual crops planted by classrooms are: K- pumpkins, 1st- lettuce, spinach, carrots and snap peas, 2nd- cantaloupe, watermelon and cucumbers, 3rd- pizza garden(tomatoes, peppers, onions, garlic, basil, parsley and oregano), 4th- Three Sisters(corn, beans and squash), 5th- SCVMGA seed trials. We also grow sunflowers, marigolds, zinnias, coleus, alyssum and portulaca. The greenhouse planting projects are K- zinnias for Mothers Day, 1st-houseplant cuttings, 2nd- bean plant experiments, 3rd- tomato and pepper transplants, 4th- marigolds for 60 Parent Appreciation pots, 5th- transplants for Gathering Space.

A special project began in January when a landscape architect started meeting with the 4th and 5th graders to create a Gathering Space to be located on the new Loop Bike Trail across the street from the school. The students created the design, chose the trees, shrubs and forbs for the space and assisted in the planting. The Garden Club grew Lamium and Creeping Thyme for the space.



OCTOBER MEETING NOTES

by Deb Pederstuen

Mike Kroll's "Compost - the What and How" presentation drew 59 members and 2 guests. Mike described several methods of composting and the importance of the brown to green ratio to increase nutrients for decomposition.

Thanks to Trent for operating First Covenant's sound system for the past four years. Let us know if you know of someone to replace him.

Nola Weber was introduced as our new volunteer coordinator. John Ramstad is retiring in December 2019. Nola was the first 2018 MG Intern to join SCVMGA in December 2018. She presented her first Indoor Herb Gardening class in September 2019 to a dozen residents for the Ellsworth Community Education program.



PHOTO BY DEB PEDERSTUEN

Fall Workshop attendees make their own medicine

Sixty people discovered the healing qualities that lie hidden in their backyard gardens at the 2019 Fall Workshop on Sept. 28.

Barb Mager and Heather Mashuga, both with master degrees in Holistic Health Studies from St. Catherine University, presented an overview of common plants used for medicinal purposes. The hands-on activities included making one's own salve and tincture.



PHOTO BY PEG WASTELL

From left: SCVMGA President and workshop coordinator JoAnn Ryan, Barb Mager and Heather Mashuga.



PHOTO BY DEB PEDERSTUEN

Deadline for Membership Dues is approaching

Deadline for renewing your SCVMGA membership for 2020 is **Dec. 31**. A late fee of \$10 will be added to all dues received after the deadline. You can pay by cash or a check: \$15 for individual or \$25 for family. Payments will be accepted at the November meeting or through the mail. Please mail to: Deb Pederstuen, 470 Green Mill Lane, Hudson, WI 54016

A form is available on our [website's home page](#).

NOTE: WIMGA revised its membership qualifications. All Inactive Members must have both Criminal Background Checks (CBC) and Mandated Reporter Training (MRT).

Postcards from Ireland

by Colleen Callahan

My husband, Peter, and I spent two weeks on the west coast of Ireland in late September. Four days were spent on Inishmore, one of the Aran Islands off Galway Bay. We then toured the Burren along the Wild Atlantic Way south of Galway and the Connemara region north of Galway. Here are some samples of what we saw.



Late summer blossoms

Although we missed the spring wildflowers, we found a variety of late bloomers on the island. The top left photo is Hedge Bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*), a perennial native species found along the coastline. It blooms from July through September. The upper right photo shows red hot pokers (*Kniphofia*), which are native to South Africa. Commonly called "torch lilies," their bright colors last until mid-fall. Fuchsia (*Fuchsia*), in the bottom photo, decorates the miles of stone walls meandering throughout the Inishmore villages. Originally from South America, Fuchsia was introduced to Ireland in the late 1700s. It blossoms from May-October. If we venture back, we will time our vacation for the beautiful wildflower season in May or June. The European Union credits centuries-old farming techniques and the farmers' careful management of habitats for "creating the rich diversity of flora" on Inishmore, home to 450 plant species. Delicate orchids are among the more prominent ones. [Click here for a glimpse of what we missed.](#)



Coastal habitats

Because Ireland is a member of the European Union, it receives funding for conservation efforts. Inishmore is only 16 square miles, yet the EU has designated 11 distinct coastal habitats as protected areas. Two types, Coastal Lagoons (above) and Fixed Grey Dunes, are listed as priorities. Coastal habitats on Inishmore support several rare plant species, including Purple milk-vetch, Hairy Violet, Autumn Lady's tresses, Dodder, and Bee Orchid.



'Palm' trees

Found along Irish coasts, this imposter palm is a woody flowering plant (*Cordyline australis*), or Cabbage palm, brought to Ireland from New Zealand in the late 1800s. Due to the warm Gulf Stream, Ireland has a blend of three climates: arctic, Mediterranean and alpine.



Thorny neighbors

Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) is a prickly shrub with strangleholds on village stone walls. Its blackberries mature in fall. Despite the plant's control issues, one can find all sorts of surprises protruding through, such as a yellow rose.

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Grazing diets

Wild herbs, flowers, heathers and grasses create sweet, tender lamb meat. Connemara and Wicklow mountains are known for the best lamb. Ireland highly regulates commercial meat products, prohibiting GMOs, unnecessary antibiotics and many other additives. Because farmers share grazing fields, they color-code their sheep for identification.



Seaweed fertilizer

Mixing seaweed with sand continues to be used as a fertilizer by farmers on Inishmore for vegetable gardens. Made of photosynthetic marine algae that are dragged ashore by the ocean, seaweed is full of nutrients. The soil is only 4-5 inches deep and getting to it wasn't easy because the island is made of limestone. Centuries ago, farmers moved the top stones and formed walls (see photo below), creating over 1,200 miles of them on Inishmore. What one does to reach the soil!



Sprinklings



Wet soil

Thanks to abundant rainfall, bogs (wetlands) are found throughout Ireland. This one is on the lowland beneath the Connemara Mountains. Bogs were lakes that filled with partially decayed plant material over thousands of years. The result is called peat, which is low in nutrients and highly acidic. For centuries, bog soil was sliced, dried and cut into bricks for heating homes. Only a small percentage of country homes still use peat. But it's the draining of bogs for forests and commercial peat extraction for Sphagnum moss that concern environmentalists. Exporting Sphagnum moss is a growing business. The [Irish Peatland Conservation Council](#) manages five sites for conservation and urges gardeners to use alternatives to Sphagnum moss.



Ferns

They seem to grow everywhere – inside limestone crevices, poking through ruins and stone walls, hanging off cliffs. I was hoping to find the Sea Spleenwort (*Asplenium marinum*), a fern in sheltered crevices along the sea that craves salt water. Maybe next time.



Mt. Vernon

A home built in 1788 near Flaggly Shore south of Galway was named after George Washington's plantation, thanks to a long-distant friendship between him and the owner, William Persse. It's believed that the three cypress trees were a gift from Washington. Persse sent Washington various seeds, including gooseberry seeds.

EXCERPT FROM A LETTER TO GEORGE WASHINGTON FROM COL. WILLIAM PERSSE, OCT. 11, 1788
... plant the gooseberries in a rich deep soyle; put a good Deal of rotten Dung in each hole...keep them open in the Middle, dont allow to many Branches on a Tree & the fruit will be very Large & fine. I have them as Large as Wallnuts, give them a North Aspect & as Little sun as you Can, but not the shade of Trees...



Growing season

Many veggies grow well into December. Lettuce, cabbage, cauliflower and mushrooms grow year-round. [Click here for the season calendar in Ireland.](#) Rain is abundant and temperatures fluctuate between 40-65 degrees. January and February are the coldest with average temps in the low 40s. These photos were taken Sept. 26. A stall nearby sells veggies and eggs, using the honor payment system.



Year in Review

by Karen Jilek and Deb Pederstuen

JANUARY

OPEN HOUSE cancelled due to extremely cold wind chills. Sandy Madsen's "Healthy Gardening with Kids" presentation was postponed until September.

TEN OF 38 ORIGINAL members are still participants since mid-1997-98. Our appreciation to Carolyn Barrette, Deb Barron, Jim Barron, Jill Berke, Marilyn Gorham, Wendy Kramer, Kathleen Oss, Betty Schultz, Margaret Smith, and Peg Wastell. In Dec., 2018, Daphne Brackley did not renew her membership.

THREE NEW BOARD members for 2019-2020: Board President JoAnn Ryan, a 17-year SCVMGA member; Peg Wastell, returning to treasurer position (1998-2000); and Sue Klatt, returning as St. Croix County Rep (2003-2004). Pierce County Rep Matthew Schmitz chose two-year term after filling 2018 board-appointed position. Accepting a second 3-year term, 2019-2021, was WIMGA Rep Paul VanDenMeerendonk. Much appreciated!

SPECIAL THANKS to seven retiring coordinators: River Falls Farmers Market Coordinator Elaine Baker (2014-2018); Hospitality Assistant Janet Bliven (2017-2018); Pierce County Fair Coordinator Leroy Clark (2015-2018); Hospitality Coordinator Trina Frank (2011-Feb 2019); Used Garden Book Project Leader Joni Garbe (2015-2018); Fall Workshop Coordinator Vickie Kittilson (2017); Volunteer Coordinator John Ramstad (2017-2019); Audiovisual Technician Trent Kowalchuk (2015-2019); and Plant Sale Coordinator Corky Weeks (2008-2018).

2018 FINANCIAL REVIEW, completed on March 14, 2019. All records found accurate and in good order. A list of assets was recommended. Committee: Diane Wright (Board member), Julie Walsh, (Treasurer), LeRoy Clark (Pierce Co. Rep), Julie Weinberg (St. Croix Co. Rep), and Jackie Daharsh (former Treasurer).

WIMGA ADVISORY COMMITTEE: Proud of 2018-2019 Representative Marilyn Gorham, active in relaying information from MG volunteers and UW-Extension staff to the MGV Program Office.

FEBRUARY

MEETING/OPEN HOUSE Party on Feb. 28. 4th Year Open House at First Covenant for 76 members and 4 guests. Kristina Beuning, Plant Ecology professor at Sunbow Farms Soils Management, presented "Sustainable Vegetable Gardening" addressing water conservation, soil prep, planting for

pollinators, and permaculture principles. Seven 2018 MG Interns joined; one in Dec. 2018 and six at Feb. meeting. Three of 21 pizzas awarded for door prizes.

3 MILESTONE AWARDS and nineteen certificates for cumulative volunteer hours were presented by Diana Alfuth at Feb. 28 meeting. Susan Reese and Deb Pederstuen (2500-certificate and desk plaque); John Ramstad (1000-hour certificate); and Heather Lacke (750-hour certificate). Five MGVs earned 500-hr., seven earned 250-hr., and seven MGVs earned 150-hr. certificates. Congratulations to all 2018 Rock Star Volunteers!

USED BOOK COLLECTION (2015-2018): Board dissolved four-year project due to outdated books and no replacement for Project Leader Joni Garbe. Members had last chance at Feb. meeting, donating \$59; recycled other books. Thanks to Joni for her service as the entire project collected \$244 in donations.

7th VARIETY PLANT TRIALS: Project Leader Peg Wastell held Nov. 6th 2018 mtg for 2019 Trial Selections. Selected were celery, long-burpless cucumber, mini romaine, garden shelling peas, non-bell sweet pepper, elongated French radishes, and 2'-3' mixed snapdragons. Fourteen MGVs sorted 10,520 seeds Sat. Feb. 23, at St. Joe's Town Hall. Twenty-five MGVs participants from 5 counties, St. Croix, Pierce, Polk, Barron, and Dunn, for 152 total trials. Sprinklings May issue includes Peg's "Benefits of Reading about Plant Trials" and 2018 trial results.

NEW LOGO: Apparel Sales Manager Liz Whitchurch got board approval for 'triple leaf' logo designed by Ellsworth's Designs by Jill for \$50. First 1998 Sprinkling-Can logo, designed by MGV Daphne Brackley, was modified in 2011.

MARCH

MEETING on March 28: Joanna Klukas of New Richmond's Garden Expressions emphasized soil composition in her "Container Gardening" presentation for 64 members and 2 guests. Trina Frank's last day of hospitality after 8 years. Six MG Interns joined at the meeting.

20th GARDEN U held on March 16: "Prairies, Berries, & Trees" at Hudson House Grand Hotel organized by Carolyn Barrette & Lisa Esselman with Donna Davis and Peg Wastell assisting during Carolyn's leg recovery. Presentations: "Prairies" by Alex Bouthilet, Star Prairie Seed Farm; "Fruit Trees" by Rachel Henderson, Menomonie's Mary Dirty Face Farm; "Berries" by Jerry Clark,

Chippewa County Agriculture Agent. Of total 126 lunches served, 77 were SCVMGA members and 8 vendors. \$40 fee included lunch. Proceeds- \$4,840; profit of \$2,108.

QUESTION AND ANSWER cards provided by President JoAnn Ryan at monthly meetings were not as effective as Oct. 24 meeting's Suggestion Box with a suggestion to "increase publicity for SCVMGA Grants."

EMERGENCY Notification Committee's 2015 description, was revised by Deb Pederstuen after Jan. meeting cancellation. Membership changes require annual committee revisions.

NEW COORDINATORS: New Hospitality team Helen Heggernes and Bev Schomburg replaced Trina Frank and Janet Bliven; Laura Milano replaced Elaine Baker for River Falls Farmers Market Coordinator; Kevin Ballman replaced Leroy Clark for Pierce Co. Fair Coordinator, and new Plant Sale Team Managers, Leroy Clark, Renee Clark, Cindy Gleason, Marilyn Gorham replaced Corky Weeks. Christine McGinnis continued as team manager. Bridget Kelley volunteered for Assistant Program Director. No Fall Workshop Coordinator replacement for Vickie Kittilson, so President JoAnn Ryan accepted the challenge.

REIMBURSEMENT Policy: March 12 Board approved Trent Kowalchuk's recommendations, all requiring a receipt and a signed Request for Payment form to the Treasurer. Less than \$100 requires Treasurer approval. \$101-\$500 requires Treasurer and Board Member - President or Vice President's approval; and \$501 and up requires Board of Director's pre-approval prior to purchase. No pre-approval required for state membership dues, speaker fees, grant distributions, or meeting site rentals.

WIMGA NEWSLETTER contributor MGV Peg Wastell's report, "State Conference Inspired Milkweed Variety Trials Outcome" was published in the March 2019 issue. A must-read to learn native milkweed best for our area.

SPRING EXPO: Board decided not to participate at the St. Croix County Home Builders Spring Expo (Mar. 8-9). First time no complimentary booth offered, and 4-year Coordinator Barb Peterson was not available. Too many changes in venue locations and dates!

APRIL

MEETING: April 28. President JoAnn Ryan explained different evergreens, care & pruning in her "All About Evergreens"

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program to 73 members and 2 guests. Five non-member grant recipients attended for grant distributions.

19th ANNUAL GRANTS: 2nd year Coordinator Jenny Brazzale and her team, Cindy Gleason, Amanda Lawrence, Karen Nork and Nita O'Connell, requested \$2,810.34 for 15 project applications representing 9 cities in St. Croix and Pierce counties. Eleven and Pierce counties. Eleven projects were coordinated by MGVs. Twelve projects were for Youth Education and benefited students in 3 different schools. Thanks to Jenny Brazzale and her team. Unused \$254.81 funds returned from 4 grants.

4th SCVMGA SCHOLARSHIP: UW-River Falls biennial \$1000 Scholarship (since 2012) was awarded to Sierra Hau, a Senior Horticulture Major from Brandon, WI in Fond du Lac County for 2018-2019. Hau's part-time high school job as a floral clerk, her love for floral design and desire to learn about plant science drew her to pursue a UW-RF Horticulture degree.

15th EARTH DAY at Hudson's YMCA Camp was postponed to May 5 at Lakefront Park in Hudson: Carol Marnell, Colleen Callahan, Corky Weeks, Donna Davis, and Amanda Lawrence staffed a SCVMGA booth. Children planted Teddy Bear sunflower seeds, made pasta shell necklaces to resemble life stages of the Monarch, and took home "Raising Monarch Kits."

APPAREL: 2nd year manager Liz Whitchurch got board approval to order light grey shirts with new logo from Designs by Jill. Reasonable pricing with minimum 12-order purchase. Screen-printed logo on womens' V-neck T-shirts (\$11.00), unisex crew neck short (\$11.00) and long sleeve T-shirts (\$12.50), and embroidered logo on polo shirts (\$14.00). In Sept., \$25 denim shirts offered. To date, 55 new shirts sold for \$816.50 and leftover 2013 logo shirts sold @ \$5.00 each. Profit was \$487; costs were \$558 including inventory. Previous logo shirts designed in 1999 and 2013.

MAY

MEETING: May 23 with Tammy Traxler, Conservation Planner for St. Croix Co. Community Development, on "Water Quality and Quantity," well-water testing and sources of nitrate contaminations in St. Croix, Polk, and Pierce counties. Tim Stieber, Resource Management Administrator for the Community Development Department helped 30 members (52%) get free nitrate screening of their private well-water samples. Attendees: 57 members, 2 guests, and Diana.

COMMUNITY GARDEN: In its 19th year, the New Richmond Community

Garden moved to a new location at 1752 Dorset Lane, St Croix County Services Center. Same 42'x30' plot created in 2015 by MGV Sharon Reyzer, St. Croix Public Health Supervisor. Maintained by 4th Year Coordinator Donna Cadenhead, MGVs (283 hrs.) & students & their advisors (126 hrs). MGV contact with 19 students at May 17th NR Student Service Day and 12 students (3 adults) with St. Anne's Summer Stretch's 3 days. NR Public Health Services, Five Loaves Food Shelf, Hudson Food Shelf, & NR Convalescent benefited from 639 lbs. produce. On Aug. 3, three Faith Community Church volunteers (28 hrs) moved garden shed. Received \$250 SCVMGA grant.

JUNE

MEETING: June 27 field trip to Star Prairie Seed Farm cancelled due to probable thunderstorms.

NEW BANNERS: Sprinklings Editor Colleen Callahan designed two vertical pull-up banners (\$158.25 each), two large 72"x24" (\$56.97 each) and two small 34"x24" (\$29.90 each) table banners purchased at Hudson's UPS.

SPRINKLINGS: 6th year editor Colleen Callahan and 2nd year proofreader Maria Sanocki created eight fun & informative issues. Special thanks to all contributors, especially to JoAnn Ryan's President's Corner, Karalyn Littlefield's recipes, Peg Wastell's Variety Plant Trials, Heather Lacke & Marilyn Gorham's Plant Sale Updates, Donna Cadenhead's NR Community Garden, Paul VanDenMeerendonk's WIGMA updates, Deb Pederstuen's Member Updates, John Ramstad's Volunteer Opps, Debby Walter's Tours, and Carolyn Barrette & Bridget Kelley's Programs. Wonderful to see Book Reviews by Pat Angleson, County Fair Coordinators' Updates, and Maria Sanocki's profile of JoAnn Ryan.

15th ANNUAL PLANT SALE: June 1 at Hudson's Octagon House. Gross proceeds of \$5,920 broke previous records! Net profit of \$5,806 compared to \$4,600 in 2018 and \$5,000 in 2017. \$100 donation for St. Croix Historical Society. Huge thanks to Board President JoAnn Ryan's recruiting of 2019 Plant Sale Managers: Cindy Gleason and Marilyn Gorham for pre-sale; Renee Clark and Christine McGinnis during sale; Leroy Clark, after sale; Heather Lacke for advertising; and Corky Weeks' mentoring from her 10 years as sole Plant Sale Manager. Over 50 MGVs participated. YMCA and Habitat for Humanity's Plant Sale held at My Sister's Garden, took leftover plants.

5th JUNIOR GARDEN U "Superhero Theme" at River Falls' Demonstration and Learning Garden, July 29 (first time held in the evening): Diana Alfuth and Gale Gaard,

Helen Heggerness, Barb Kolpin, and Corky Weeks. Nine 6-9-year-olds, with superhero masks, learned "superpower defenses" of plants against insects/pests, insects' food sources/nesting places, and nutritional values of different-colored vegetables.

TOUR COORDINATORS Debbie Walters and Anita Justen arranged 3 fabulous tours in their third year as coordinators: June 6 at Tavis's Wild and Exotic Mushroom Farm, Cumberland (9 members, 3 guests); July 21 at Barbara Burgum's Home, Wayzata (14 members, 2 guests); and Aug. 14 at Audrey & Eske Bennetsen's River Road Honey Farm, Prescott (11 members, 2 guests).

"HELPING HANDS" 2nd project year leader Cindy Gleason and 3 MGVs did spring clean-up and 8 MGVs did fall clean-up for one grateful member. MGVs received gratification, volunteer hours, and the enjoyment of working with others.

JULY

MEETING: July 25 with 40 members and three guests attending the Great River Road Visitor and Learning Center. GRRVC Volunteer John Hollenbach provided an excellent park history and a snack buffet with drinks. Earlier, about 20 members checked out unique trees and perennials at Matthew Schmitz' home gardens. Plus, 2018 Grant Recipient MG Carol Ahlgren proudly showed Pine Glen Cemetery's perennial entrance, lined with pavers purchased with her grant money.

ST. CROIX COUNTY FAIR: 19th year. July 17-21. 2nd year Fair Coordinator Amanda Lawrence and 23 MGVs featured "Healthy Gardening with Kids" in our first indoor 12' x 10' Commercial Building space (\$180.00). Successful fair despite heat, humidity, stormy Friday eve/Sat. Pizza, Salsa/Taco, and Snacking demo gardens and Scarecrow & Peter Rabbit 2018 face-in-the-hole boards, popular for kids' photos, displayed around HCE building. Amanda's cookbooks (\$265/100 color copies) for smoothies, salsa, and dips were given to 62 kids. Stickers and suckers awarded for "Are you Smarter than a Rutabaga" game, plus Amanda's Rutabaga fact sheets. Debuted vertical banner and green fitted tablecloths. Peg Wastell's Variety Plant Trial display and Bailey's donated Astilbe Visions and Endless Summer Bloom were a bonus. Costs: \$379

AUGUST

MEETING: August 22. Garden tour at New Richmond Community Garden on Dorset Lane. MGV Sharon Reyzer, retired Public Health Supervisor from St. Croix County Public Health Dept., explained to 39 members about the garden she created

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and its benefits to WIC program. Donna Cadenhead reported on amount of produce harvested.

MEMBERSHIP DUES: Board voted to return single memberships from \$20 in 2019 to \$15, but kept families at \$25. Decision was based on adequate funds.

PIERCE CO. FAIR: August 7-11. 1st year Coordinator Kevin Ballman staffed 31 MGVs, primarily three/shift, without Sign-upGenius. Kevin's pre-fair meeting for fair tickets inspired fair participation. Seasonally warm 70 to 83 temps. Outdoor canopy embellished by Seyforth Bldg beautiful perennials, tended by O'Brien's MGv team, new pop-up and table banners, Peter Rabbit and Scarecrow cut-outs, "Are You Smarter Than a Rutabaga" game, and Peg Wastell's Variety Trials Display board and trial plants. Portion of Pierce Fair's \$150 budget used to print extra Amanda Lawrence's "Kids' Cookbooks." Total costs: \$61.00.

RIVER FALLS FARMERS MARKET: Dick's Fresh Market Lot. Saturdays 8 a.m.-noon. June-October. First-year Coordinator Laura Milano and 5 MGv's averaged 4-6 questions per week on deer, moles, Japanese beetles, mildew, non-blooming zucchini, hydrangeas and lilacs, eradicating plume grass and buckthorn, crumbly raspberries, tomatoes, grapes, rhubarb, celery, indoor seed-starting, plant recommendations for specific areas, and plant ID. Promoted SCVMGA and Diana's MG class. 15 to 20 produce vendors/week with bi-monthly live music was a highlight. Thanks to Laura Milano and Deb Barron for transporting table and information box.

HUDSON FARMERS MARKET: Plaza 94, bimonthly on Thursdays 9 a.m.-noon, early July-early September. Third-year Coordinator Maria Scheidegger and 4 MGv's staffed table under new Farmers Market Manager, Dave Weiss. Frequently asked questions were about grass, hydrangeas, mums, crabapples, onions, pests, and pollinators. Many inquiries about MG classes and SCVMGA/monthly meetings. New canopy at \$63.29 from Fleet Farm and weights at \$32.12 from Dick's Sporting Goods replaced a heavy-to-transport second-hand umbrella and stand.

IN MEMORY: Jerry Weinmann of Polk County MGA, who passed away on Aug. 29 at age 80 at his Amery home. He played an important role in setting up/working at the NR Community Garden and starting plants from seed.

SCVMGA DONATION: \$230 on Sept 17 to the Annual Celebration of Friends of the St. Croix Health Center Healing Garden.

SEPTEMBER

MEETING: Sept. 26. MGv Sandy Madsen reviewed 11 years of "Healthy Gardening for Kids" with Houlton Elementary Garden Club since their first 2009 meeting. Diana Alfuth encouraged members to use WIMGA's first year Online Reporting System (ORS) before Oct. 1 deadline. Four "Garden-to-Table" Cookbooks, found in Janet Jones' Hudson Farmers Market storage, sold for \$5 each. Fifty-one members attended.

RURAL and FARM SAFETY DAYS: Ellsworth's Pierce Co. Fairgrounds, Sept. 25-26, 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. UW-Ext Hort Outreach Specialist Diana Alfuth and 5 MGv's Sue Galoff, Tom Kujawa, Amanda Lawrence, Carol Marnell, and Margaret Smith held 15-20-minute sessions about the "Dangers of Perilous Plants" for 460 fourth graders.

FALL CONFERENCE: First time WIMGA offered in 3 locations. Sept. 12 at Wausau; Sept. 14 at Madison; and Sept. 20 at Eau Claire. Topics involved learning how to do presentations and social-media networking. Five MGv's, Doris Krautbauer, JoAnn Ryan, Peg Wastell, Liz Whitchurch, and Dianne Wright attended.

NOMINATION Committee members for 2019: Barb Peterson, Past Board Member; Pat Angleson, St. Croix Co. Representative; President JoAnn Ryan, Current Board Member; and Leroy Clark, Current Pierce Co. Representative.

FALL WORKSHOP: Ellsworth's Seyforth Bldg. Saturday, Sept. 28, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. "Medicinals in Your Backyard" presented by Barb Mager, JoAnn Ryan's daughter, and Heather Mashuga, both with master degrees in Holistic Health. Sixty attendees learned about herbal tinctures, salves, and syrups. Fees of \$15/MGv's and \$25/Guest (\$1003 income), included "Medicinals in the Garden," 21 pg. booklet and Subway sub/chips (\$202). Other expenses: \$246 (printing by JoAnn's son), and \$964 speaker fees. Thanks to Coordinator JoAnn Ryan, 4 MGv committee, and Donna Davis for tree peony door prize. First net loss of \$410.

DEMONSTRATION AND LEARNING GARDEN: 8th year. River Falls' Hoffman Park. Diana Alfuth & MGv's impressed kids with a "Superhero Garden" sectioned off by color, to learn different vegetables that contain different vitamins. Mr. Scarecrow was "Spiderman"!

OCTOBER

MEETING: Oct. 24. Mike Kroll, Organic Gardening Agricultural Engineer of Somerset's Kroll Farms, explained "Composting - the What & How" to 59 members and 2 guests. Introduced 2018 MGv Nola Weber, Volunteer Coordinator, who replaced John Ramstad. Members shared their garden successes & failures.

3M VOLUNTEER MATCH program: Each year 3M Foundation donates \$500, as of 2018, to an approved non-profit organization for each 3M current employee (20 MGv hrs.) or retiree (25 MGv hrs.) who volunteer at an organization. MGv's can apply on "3MGives" website and select where they want to make the donation before Feb. 28, 2020 deadline for the 2019 year. TO date, SCVMGA received \$1,000 in 3M Volunteer Matches from two MGv's.

ONLINE REPORTING: First year of reporting volunteer and education hours online.

NOVEMBER

ANNUAL MEETING: Nov. 21. Election of officers, budget approval, Financial Review Report, and recognition of four outgoing Board Officers. Two 2019 Grant Recipients' project presentations and Grant Coordinator Jenny Brazzale's 20-minute slide show of 2019 projects. Diana Alfuth's fun Plant Game and Member Survey results about SCVMGA.

SPECIAL THANKS to retiring Board of Directors: Vice President Dianne Wright (2018-2019), Secretary Carrie Rogney (2018-2019), St. Croix Co. Rep Phyllis Jaworski (2018-2019), and Pierce Co. Rep. Leroy Clark (2016-2019) for their awesome service and dedication.

2019 MASTER GARDENER CLASS INVITATION- Nov. 13. President JoAnn Ryan and MGv Karen Jilek attended class.

2019 MEMBERSHIP - 171 members includes 158 renewals (86%) and 13 of 17 (76%) 2018 MG Interns. Current SCVMGA member Patricia Cahoon was in the 2018 MG Class. For 2019, 116 MGv's were certified. In Dec, 2018, 25 MGv's discontinued (14% of 183 members). To date, Online Reporting System (ORS) shows SCVMGA provided 5,097 hours of volunteer service with 11,258 "individual contacts" with people; and completed 1744 hours of Continuing Education.

For 20 years, Diana Alfuth, UW-Extension Horticulture Outreach Specialist (2019 new title), has graciously provided us with her support, expertise, and friendship. As an instructor, her annual Fall MGv training class has contributed significantly to our large membership, providing us with new and talented MGv's every year.

Our apologies if we failed to include your event or accomplishment in this Year in Review.

Cranberry season is here

by Karalyn Littlefield

Cranberries, *Vaccinium macrocarpon*, are native to North America. They were a staple for Native Americans, who harvested wild cranberries and used them in a variety of remedies, foods, and drinks. They made poultices to draw poison from wounds and used them in pemmican, a dried deer meat, fat and berry mixture. The rich red juice was used as a natural dye.



The current name derives from early American settlers that called the fruit "craneberry" because the small, pink blossoms that appear in spring (see photo) resemble the head and bill of a Sandhill Crane.

Cranberries were first cultivated in the United States in 1816 when Captain Henry Hall, a Revolutionary war veteran, came across a cranberry vine thriving in some sand on Cape Cod. Captain Hall used sand to spread on the vines and the cranberry industry was born. Cranberries were picked by hand and the excess was sold locally. A more efficient dry harvesting technique was developed and later the wet harvesting technique revolutionized cranberry harvesting. In 1912, Marcus Urann bought a cranberry bog and started to can cranberries in Massachusetts. He eventually formed a cooperative that renamed itself Ocean Spray, that

Cranberry Cake Dessert

adapted by Karalyn Littlefield

- 2 c. flour
- 1 c. sugar
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 egg
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 c. milk
- 3 Tbsp melted butter
- 2 c. whole raw cranberries (or frozen, thawed)

Put all ingredients in the bowl, except cranberries, and beat well.

Fold in cranberries and pour into a buttered 9" x 13" buttered pan. The batter will be thick.

Bake in a preheated 350° oven for 35 minutes or until a pick inserted in the center comes out dry.

Serve with hot butter sauce.

Butter Sauce

Put the following in a saucepan and bring to a boil.

1 c. sugar, 2 Tbsp. brown sugar, ¾ c. cream and ½ c. butter. Remove from heat and stir in 1 tsp vanilla. Pour hot over pieces of Cranberry Cake.

today, is a household name.

Drying, freeze-drying, infusing with sugar and flavors are recent developments that continue to grow the cranberry industry. Currently, researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison have an experimental variety of fruit that tastes sweet instead of sour and does not require sugar. The "Sweetie" cranberry is the result of decades of research and could turn the mouth-puckering tartness into a convenient snack.

The scientists at the [Cranberry Institute](#) in Massachusetts are exploring new ways for cranberries to influence human health. They have conducted over 600 studies and continue to grow the database. For more information on growing, harvesting and using cranberries, including several recipes, visit [oceanspray.ca](#) or [Wisconsin State Cranberry Growers](#).

As a perennial, cranberries grow on low running vines in sandy bogs and marshes. In Wisconsin, cranberry marshes are flooded with water to aid in harvesting. Because the tart, tiny berries contain a pocket of air, when the marsh is flooded, the berries float to the surface to be picked up by harvesting equipment.



WISCONSIN STATE CRANBERRY GROWERS ASSOCIATION PHOTO

Cranberry harvesting in Wisconsin

Cranberries are harvested each year from late September through October.

Enjoy this cranberry cake dessert. My Aunt Ardala Littlefield "got it from a lady at church." It must have been many years ago as this cake has been a family favorite for as long as I remember. Happy Cooking.

Sprinklings

[SCVMGA Website](#)

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. All SCVMGA members are welcome to contribute articles on any horticultural topic. Please email submissions or inquiries to the editor.

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