

WIMGA



November 2023

WISCONSIN MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION

Serving its members since 1992

WISCONSIN MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION

Inside this Issue

President's Message	1
Continuing Education Updates	2
WIMGA Member Dues	3
Establishing a Native Pollinator Garden	3
Award-Worthy Work	5
By Laws Update	7
Pumpkins vs Squash	8
2023 Terrific Tomatoes	10
A Walk in The Woods	11
End Notes	15

WIMGA Vision - The Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association will be the collective voice for local Master Gardener Associations and individual members in active support for their horticultural projects and services; build networks to enhance outreach, share ideas and promote projects; and help extend University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Horticulture, Division of Extension Master Gardener Program's educational role to the public.

Fall into 2024

By Marilyn Gorham, St Croix Valley MGV



The leaves have finally turned to autumn hues. It's clear that winter is around the corner and light snow is in the forecast. Fall brings thoughts of 2024 and planning for our gardens and for a new year of activities for WIMGA and its members.

Our 2024 Annual Membership Meeting will be held on January 16th and will feature Craig LeHoullier. His topic will be "Bring Your Garden to the Sun – Success with Containers and Straw Bales." We will hold our Local Representative and Presidents meetings again in 2024 due to their success in 2023. Better attendance comes with using ZOOM and it will be our meeting format again in 2024. Dates for those sessions will be announced soon. Our Continuing Education calendar is full for the first half of 2024. More in this newsletter and in January.

Local Associations faced challenges from declining membership in 2024 as did WIMGA. Expectations are this will continue in 2024 as additional Master Gardeners leave the program for a variety of reasons. The number of Local Associations declined as well. Please remember if you no longer have a Local Association in your county or close to you in a neighboring county, you can continue to be an individual member of WIMGA.

WIMGA members gathered by ZOOM in October to approve two bylaw changes. More information can be found in the article on page 7. Hopefully, with some stability with the Master Gardener Program. annual bylaw changes will not be required. Enjoy the Holidays and your gardening break.

See you in 2024!

Marilyn Gorham, WIMGA President



Continuing Education Updates

The next in our educational series will be **Craig LeHoullier** on January 16, 2024 (6:30pm) in conjunction with the WIMGA Annual Meeting. Craig's presentation, "Bring Your Garden to the Sun – Success with Containers and Straw Bales" connects us with gardening where the sun shines.



This colorful, info packed workshop demonstrates how gardeners can grow pretty much anything with great success in straw bales and containers. This allows those gardeners without the perfect sunny garden spot an opportunity to be creative with the placement of their gardens - decks, patios, driveways - even "septic fields" - taking advantage of where the sun shines best on their property. The workshop will be split evenly between containers and strawbales, showing a variety of crops, and how to make it all work. Bring your questions!

Craig LeHoullier lives and gardens in Hendersonville, North Carolina. A Rhode Island native, he caught the gardening passion from his grandfather, Walter, and dad, Wilfred. Craig achieved his PhD in chemistry at Dartmouth College, which resulted in a 25-year career in

pharmaceuticals that ended in 2009.

Craig's gardening obsession started the year he and Susan were married (and their first garden in 1981), is passing through several stages. In 2005 he added amateur tomato breeding to his garden resume and continues to co-lead the Dwarf Tomato Breeding project, responsible for creating 145 (and counting) new compact growing varieties for space-challenged gardeners. His writing career kicked off with a 2012 request from Storey Publishing to write a book on tomatoes resulting in *Epic Tomatoes* (2014). His second book, *Growing Vegetables in Straw Bales*, soon followed (2016). Book three, focusing on the Dwarf Tomato Breeding Project and should be completed during 2023 as a self-published creation.

Craig is a popular lecturer across the country at major gardening events, and via Zoom from his home office, as well as a frequent guest on podcasts and radio shows.

The Continuing Education Committee has several speakers lined up for early 2024 and is looking at another paid-for education series to be made available to members and non-members of WIMGA. This series will help with budget shortfalls and bring an in-depth level of learning to interested gardeners.

January 16, 2024

WIMGA Annual Meeting & Craig LeHoullier
Bring Your Garden to the Sun:
All About Container and Straw Bale Gardening
This program is scheduled to begin at 6:30 with
our presentation following the Annual Meeting

February 15, 2024, 6:30pm

Vanessa Mueller
Diversifying your Plant Palette:
New and underused plants for the landscape

April 11, 2024, 6:30pm

Mark Dwyer, Adaptive Gardening

The Continuing Education Committee is excited to provide these opportunities for free education to WIMGA members. We always check to see if speakers are willing to have a recording of their talk on the website for a short time for members who cannot listen live (not all are willing).

WIMGA Member Dues

By Roseann Meixelsperger, WIMGA Treasurer

WIMGA dues are \$5 per person. It is the responsibility of each Local Association's Treasurer to assure dues are paid by March 1 of each year and sent to WIMGA's Treasurer along with a list of current paid members, including email address for each member. The email address ensures members receive notifications from WIMGA including newsletters. The list may be emailed to the treasurer as an excel spreadsheet to be loaded into the WIMGA database.

MG volunteers not affiliated with a local association may send their dues directly to the WIMGA Treasurer. Roseann Meixelsperger, WIMGA Treasurer
204 Donovan Cove Rd, Shell Lake WI 54871

Please feel free to contact Roseann at treasurer.wimga@gmail.com for more information.

Establishing a Native Pollinator Garden:

A Project to Demonstrate the Value of Landscape Management

By Karen Smith, Door Co MGV

The \$400 WIMGA educational grant was used to support efforts to establish a new native pollinator garden at the entrance of the Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center at the Ridges Sanctuary in Baileys Harbor. Specifically, the grant funds have been used to rehabilitate primary garden entry spaces. While working with Ridges staff and local volunteers, native pollinator plants were selected and educational signage describing plant characteristics and environmental benefits were developed.

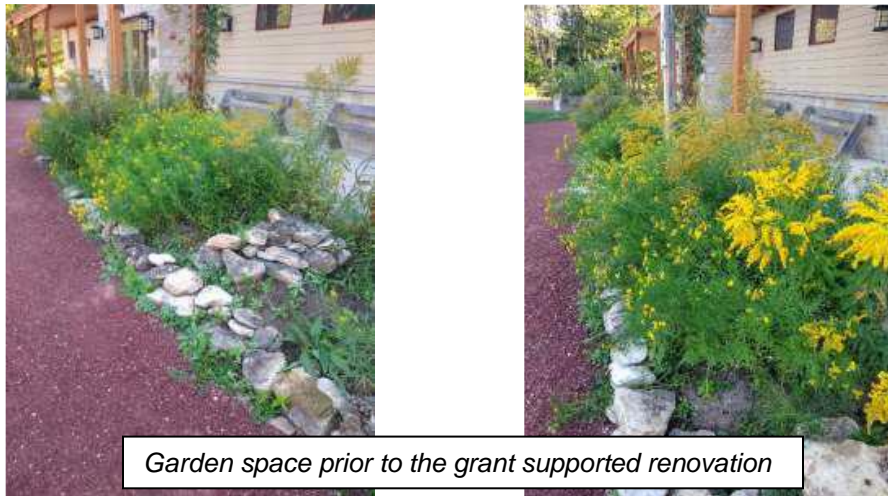


This new native pollinator garden established at the Ridges is in a central, highly visible, easily accessible public entrance to the sanctuary on the main street of Baileys Harbor.

This front garden area is routinely monitored by Door County Master Gardeners and supported by other Ridges volunteers.

Programs at the Ridges are year-round with a focus on protection of the natural landscape of the area, inspire stewardship and connect adults, children and families with the natural world. Having robust, native pollinator gardens supported by volunteers at the entry of the Nature Center provides a remarkable opportunity to engage the community in the benefits of natural landscaping practices by demonstrating restoration and establishment of native plant communities.

Through planning discussions, it was determined that this area should provide a clear example and demonstration of how any individual could effectively create a native pollinator garden at their own home. This focus was incorporated in the selection of plants for the area along with describing common gardening tools, principles and maintenance needs included as part of signage language.



Annually, over 50,000 documented visits are logged at the Center. Individuals who participate in Ridges programming, engage in guided hikes, or stroll the landscape, will benefit from this pollinator garden improvement funded by the WIMGA grant initiative. Any visitor to Baileys Harbor benefit from this grant impact, as they are able to simply walk or drive by the Center and enjoy and view the pollinator garden improvements free of charge.



The development of signage has facilitated visitors to engage with local Master Gardener Volunteers. While the volunteer group has been working on this project, many visitors have been asking questions regarding plant selection, garden design and maintenance and plant monitoring. Until the Ridges staff has prepared and developed and installed final signage, current signage includes:

- Steps to Create a Pollinator Friendly Garden
- Design Plan
- Current Garden Plant List

The new native pollinator demonstration garden has been well received by members of the Baileys Harbor Ridges community and visitors. Some challenges encountered during the project included limited, local availability of desired plants, drought conditions at time of installation and deer browsing newly installed shrubs.

We appreciate the funding from WIMGA and would like to extend our thanks to our Door County Master Gardener Volunteer colleagues for support of this project.



Award-Worthy Work

By Becky Gutzman, Columbia Co MGV

The Columbia County Master Gardener Association received a second place in Youth Programs award in the David Gibby Search for Excellence (SFE) Awards, which recognize the outstanding volunteer work of Extension Master Gardeners (EMG) throughout the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, and South Korea. SFE includes seven categories in which EMGs can demonstrate meaningful contributions to their communities. All SFE applications must show that significant learning took place, whether by the EMGs or the general public. The award was presented at the International MG Conference last June 2023 in Overland Park, Kansas.



While looking at the posters and videos of the award-winners, we realized that many of the projects Wisconsin MGs work on could be contenders for these awards! SFE is designed to recognize outstanding group projects (not individual work.)

Now is the time to think about projects to submit for the next round of awards in 2025. Here is a summary of what you need to know.

1. Choose the single category that best fits the project.

Only one project may be submitted by a group per category:



- Community Service
- Demonstration Gardens
- Innovative Projects
- Research (Applied Scientific Methodology)
- Special Needs Audiences (Senior, Disabled or horticultural therapy)
- Workshop or Presentation
- Youth Programs

2. Projects will be judged on their merit from work done between the years 2022 to 2024. Projects currently in progress may be used but must include and will be evaluated and judged on work that was carried out for at least one full year during this period.

3. Simple to Replicate One goal of SFE is to share excellent ideas and programs so they can be replicated by other MG groups.

4. Practicality An award-winning SFE program is one that is easy to use and fits well in its intended situation.

5. Original and Creative

6. Compatible with Extension and Master Gardener Missions. Make sure to link your project with these specific goals:

- Projects should have an educational component.
- Projects must be available to all persons without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, political beliefs, sexual orientations, national origin, and marital or family status.
- Projects should extend the resources of the University to the public wherever they live, helping them use knowledge to solve problems at work, at home, and in their communities.
- The information provided should be university research based.

7. Program Impact

- How many people were reached?
- Did you distribute an evaluation?
- Based on the evaluation, was there an increase in the knowledge level of the participants?
- Based on the evaluation, did the program result in behavioral changes of the participants?

We encourage associations to consider submitting a project to the SFE. In the next issue of WIMGA News, there will be more information on how to apply (late 2024) and lessons the Columbia County Master Gardeners gleaned from this experience.

Bylaws Update

By Marilyn Gorham, St Croix Valley MGV

Over the past several years, WIMGA has found it difficult to find Local Representatives to serve as District Directors on the WIMGA Board. The 2022 approved Bylaws required District Directors be chosen from Local Representatives in each District. This meant District Directors could be serving simultaneously as the Local Representative, District Director, and in other leadership positions in their Local Associations. That's a lot to ask of a volunteer.

The responsibilities of the District Directors include:

- Represent the Master Gardeners and Associations in their districts.
- Serve on at least one WIMGA Board committee.
- Attend WIMGA Conferences as a WIMGA Board member and host.
- Share the work of WIMGA with their respective local associations.
- Bring to the attention of WIMGA any issues or concerns from the associations they represent.
- Contact Local Representatives and officers of member associations to make them aware and request a response when there are time sensitive items. Communicate regularly by e-mail, phone calls, district meetings, newsletters, or personal visits with associations they represent.

During 2023, the WIMGA Board spent significant time reviewing the reasons why it is not finding new District Directors under the current system. It brainstormed various options for resolving it. In the end, the Board determined that the best solution would be to amend the WIMGA Bylaws to allow for a broader pool of candidates.

Prior to the amendment to **Article V Board of Directors, Section 2B** approved at the October 16th meeting, selection of the District Directors was done as follows:

- B. The twelve (12) District Directors shall be elected by and from the Local Representatives of each District (not the full WIMGA membership). Each District shall elect, from among themselves, two (2) District Directors by a date set by the WIMGA Board. District Directors shall be seated on the WIMGA Board at the Fall Face-to Face Board Meeting. Terms shall be for three (3) years and be staggered on a three-year schedule. The Secretary

shall notify Districts by a date set by the WIMGA Board each year when terms are about to expire.

The approval of the amendment to the bylaws added the following language immediately following paragraph “B” above:

If a qualified candidate for the position of District Director is not identified from among the current Local Representatives, the Board will solicit candidates from among WIMGA membership of that District. The Local Representatives for that District will then vote to elect the District Director from the candidates for that District.

A second bylaw amendment was approved for Section 13: Ex-Officio Members. This change better reflects the new relationship between the Program Office and WIMGA. The existing Section 13 stated that the “Extension State Horticulture Outreach Program Manager shall participate as an Ex-officio member at Board meetings.” The approval was amended from “shall” to “may” given that the Program Office is no longer an active participant with the WIMGA Board after the recent separation.

These bylaw changes were approved by the membership in attendance at a Special Membership Meeting held on October 16, 2023, by ZOOM. Prior 30-day notice was sent electronically to all WIMGA members informing them of the proposed changes and inviting them to be present at the meeting. WIMGA Bylaw changes are approved by the majority of those present at the membership meeting. The vote that evening was 82 “yes” and 4 “no”. Since the majority of those in attendance voted to amend the bylaws, the changes were approved.

Thank you to all the WIMGA members who participated in the meeting. WIMGA will email a detailed call for candidates to the members in each affected Districts in early November.

Pumpkins vs Squash

by: Donna Mae Stohlmann, St Croix Valley MGV

How many pumpkins have you carved in your life? WOW!! I bet a bunch, because you had children, and you probably love the spookiest holiday around. Let us investigate this holiday and learn more about pumpkins and squash.



Pumpkins, which are a type of squash, were first found in the Americas, primarily around Central America and Mexico. Native Americans carried pumpkin seeds into other parts of North America. They cut pumpkins into long strips and roasted them over a fire. They also wove dried strips of pumpkin into mats. The oldest evidence is pumpkin fragments found in Mexico that are dated

between 7,000 and 5,500 BC. Pumpkin fruits are a type of botanical berry known as a pepo. The word 'pepita' is consistent with this heritage, since it comes from Mexico, where the Spanish phrase 'pepita de calabaza' means 'little seed of squash.

www.pbs.org/food/the-history-kitchen/history-pumpkins-recipes

Halloween's origins can be traced back to the ancient Celtic festival known as Samhain, November 1 in contemporary calendars. It was believed on that day, the souls of the dead returned to their homes, people dressed in costumes and lit bonfires to ward off spirits. In this way, popular Halloween tropes such as witches, ghosts, and goblins became associated with the holiday. In the 7th century CE, Pope Boniface IV created All Saints Day, originally celebrated on May 13. A century later, Pope Gregory III moved the holiday to November 1, likely as a Christian substitute for the pagan festival of Samhain. The day before the saintly celebration became known as All Hallows Eve, or Halloween.



The holiday began in Celtic regions of Ireland, the United Kingdom, and France. The first American colonists in New England were forbidden to celebrate it for religious reasons, though it enjoyed some popularity in the Southern colonies. By the 1800s, fall festivals marking the seasonal harvest incorporated Halloween elements, and Irish immigrants escaping the devastating Potato Famine brought with them many Halloween traditions that remain today.

The jack-o-lantern has its origin coming from an Irish myth about Stingy Jack, who



tricked the Devil for his own monetary gain. When Jack died, God didn't allow him into heaven, and the Devil didn't let him into hell, so Jack was sentenced to roam the earth for eternity. In Ireland, people started to carve demonic faces out of turnips to frighten away Jack's wandering soul. When Irish immigrants moved to the U.S., they began carving jack-o'-lanterns from pumpkins, as these were native to the region. The folklore about Stingy Jack was quickly incorporated into Halloween, and carving pumpkins, squash, or turnips.

We are in the pumpkin-pie-spice-everything season. This year, aside from the regular contenders, we have pumpkin spice roasted almonds, coffees, English muffins, Pop-Tarts, SPAM, dog bones and deodorant, to name just a few. The progenitor of all things pumpkin spice is pumpkin pie. Pumpkin pie is generally made with a can of pumpkin puree. But here's the irony: canned pumpkin is generally not even pumpkin, rather a combination of other winter squashes that deliver a rich flavor and good texture. The FDA labeling requirements allow other squashes to be called pumpkin.

Using canned pumpkin is easy and consistent, but if you would like to explore the magic of turning a big, gorgeous gourd or a squash into dessert, try these.

1. **Sugar pumpkin** These are widely used for jack-o'-lantern carving and a popular pumpkin for making pie.
2. **Cheese pumpkin** They are great for pie – they have a lovely smooth texture, a moderately thick puree – silky, sweet, and floral but earthy with a nice medium depth of flavor.
3. **Butternut squash** It is sweet and earthy and has a dense flesh that is neither fibrous nor grainy nor watery.
4. **Acorn squash** This squash may not be the best option for pie. The flesh bakes into a more-brown-than-orange pie and the flavor loses a bit in pie.
5. **Kabocha squash** This beautiful Japanese pumpkin, has flavor, texture, and versatility. It's sweet and earthy, has a lovely thick yet fluffy texture and the color, a deep rusty orange.
6. **Red kuri squash** This squash is a combination of aesthetic, texture and taste that makes it unique. It has a rich red-orange color, thick creamy consistency, and deep sweet flavor.
7. **Sweet potatoes** Bake, steam, or boil and mash and use in place of pumpkin puree in your recipe.



“Libby’s uses the Dickinson pumpkin variety, Libby’s Special Seeds. Libby’s proudly uses nothing but 100% pumpkin in Libby’s solid pack pumpkin. We do not use Hubbard or other types of squash.” www.verybestbaking.com/libbys/faq/pumpkin/

2023 Terrific Tomatoes & Baraboo Community Gardens

By Gladys Proctor, Sauk Co MGV

The Terrific Tomatoes Committee, in cooperation with the Baraboo Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department, presented a free workshop on “Growing Tomatoes in Wisconsin”. The workshop included a tomato plant sale and proceeds from the sale support the workshop, tomato tasting expenses, and community garden expenses.



Members of the Terrific Tomato Committee with our display for the Tomato Tasting

In August we had a Terrific Tomato Tasting at the Baraboo Civic Center. Participants tasted and voted on their favorite tomatoes. First place went to Sungold; second place, Sweet Hearts Hybrid Grape Tomato; and third was Mint Julep. Master Gardeners and Friends provided dishes prepared from tomatoes, door prizes and produce for sale. A cookbook of tomato recipes used in the tasting is being compiled. We asked for a donation of \$2.00. Six professionally created signs and lots of social media contact improved the participation.

MG Volunteers planted a large tomato test garden at the Baraboo Community Gardens. Old carpet, wool with a hemp backing, was used as walkways and cardboard as a base for planting. These two items really controlled the weeds. We used part of the tomato garden to plant a “three sisters” display of Indian corn, beans, and winter squash. The tomato crop is used with our Tomato Tasting event. We also had a square garden plot and an edible flowers plot, supplied free of rent by the city.

Honoring a request from the city, we had four garden talks held on four Saturdays during the growing season.

They were “Planting Potatoes on Top of the Ground”, “Pest Management and Companion Planting”, “Square Foot Gardening” and “Tomato Diseases”. These were poorly attended so we need to find a better way to advertise them.



A WALK IN THE WOODS

A Photo Journey

Photos and article by: Donna Mae Stohlmann, St Croix Valley MGV

Autumn is a wonderful time to appreciate nature. With nature all around us, a walk in the woods will help see what we can learn about autumn! I started my walk at Carpenter Nature Center in Hudson. CNC has 300 acres of beautiful woods and prairie land. The land was donated by the Hein family in the late 80’s and now the center holds environmental classes and helps to preserve this wildlife habitat. The trails are open seven days a week for hiking and enjoying nature. The St. Croix Valley Master Gardeners meet at the Carpenter Nature Center for our meetings when not Zooming.

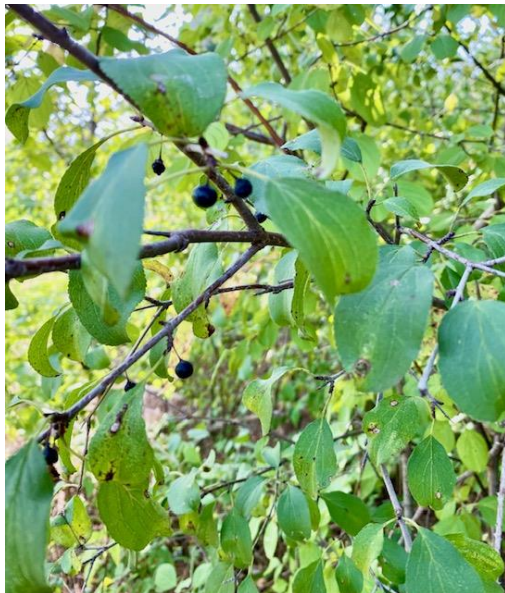




Sneezeweed - *Helenium autumnal* is a North American species of flowering plant in the Asteraceae. The name is based on the use of the dried leaves in making snuff. It was inhaled to cause sneezing that would supposedly rid the body of evil spirits.

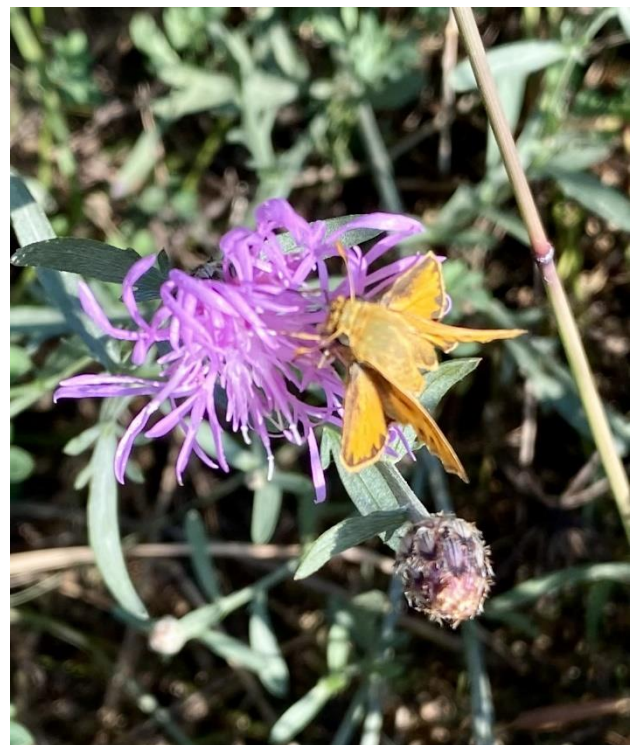


Black-Eye Susan - *Rudbeckia hirta*, found in 48 states and the state flower of Maryland.



Buckthorn - is a species of small tree in the flowering plant family, Rhamnaceae and very invasive.

A **skipper butterfly** - reaching about 1 inch in length.





White Snakeroot - is a poisonous perennial herb in the family Asteraceae.



Bird's-Foot-Trefoil - also known as Eggs and Bacon, is a flowering plant in the pea family Fabaceae native to grasslands.



Yellow Toadflax - also known as Butter and Eggs, is a species of flowering plants common in North America.



Spotted Knapweed - is considered an invasive species, it forms a tumbleweed to help reach seeds out. **Red-Legged Grasshopper** - on stem of weed.

Autumn, also known as fall in North American English, is one of the four temperate seasons on Earth.

Outside the tropics, autumn marks the transition from summer to winter, in September (Northern Hemisphere) or March (Southern Hemisphere). Autumn is the season when the duration of daylight becomes noticeably shorter and the temperature cools considerably. Day length decreases and night length increases as the season progresses until the Winter Solstice in December (Northern Hemisphere) and June (Southern Hemisphere). One of its main features in temperate climates is the striking change in color for the leaves of deciduous trees as they prepare to shed.

As Greek philosopher Heraclitus once said, "The only constant is change."

Autumn is a reminder that the summer is gone and we get ready for the next step, AUTUMN!

So, put on a sweatshirt and take a walk-in nature!



Purple Prairied Clover - It blooms in the summer with dense spikes of bright purple flowers that attract many species of insects.



View of the Wisconsin River from the Ice Age Trail near Merrill, Wisconsin.



Editor, Donna Mae Stohlman and Juju enjoying the fall in their kayak.

We welcome your 'snaps' for our newsletter and website. Please add a few words regarding the subject. Article ideas and contributions may be sent to **Hali Dessecker** at halirenee@yahoo.com

Please send any WIMGA related questions/concerns to news@wimga.org.

Visit the WIMGA Website at
<http://www.wimga.org/>

Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association (WIMGA)

Serving its members since 1992



Contacts

November 2023 Newsletter

Wisconsin Master Gardener Association President

Marilyn Gorham
wimga.president@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor & Vice President

Hali Dessecker
halirenee@yahoo.com

Wisconsin Master Gardener Association Secretary

Diane Kachel
wimga.secretary@gmail.com

Master Gardener Program – Division of Extension

<http://wimastergardener.org/>
wimastergardener@extension.wisc.edu

Wisconsin Master Gardener Association Treasurer

Roseann Meixelsperger
treasurer.wimga@gmail.com

Jay Dampier, Ph.D. ISA Certified Arborist
State Horticulture Outreach Program Manager
jay.dampier@wisc.edu

The Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association Newsletter is published six (6) times a year (January, March, May, July, September and November). Articles, artwork and ideas are welcome, final selection and editing are the responsibility of the editorial staff. The opinions reflected in this publication are expressions from individual master gardeners or associations and not necessarily the viewpoint of the UW-Madison Department of Horticulture, Division of Extension Master Gardener Program Office.

The Wisconsin Extension Master Gardener Program supports a network of individuals dedicated to horticulture education, service, and lifelong learning. Through unbiased university research-based horticulture training they are equipped to address needs and opportunities in their community and throughout the state. An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin-Madison provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title VI, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act requirements.