



## Firefly Ridge and the Plant Sale

by MGV Diane Thieme, Plant Sale Team

Roughly three years ago, the plant sale committee began "healing in" plants at Firefly Ridge in a fenced-in plot that Dennis Lukaszewski, Urban Ag Program Coordinator, offered. Since then a dedicated group of SEWMG volunteers have worked to remove rocks, pull an endless supply of wild carrots and amend the soil. A dedicated group of plant sale committee members and "dig team" volunteers, including Patty Witt, Bonnie Paplham, Sue Ratkowski, Jan Gradsnik, Pat Adrian, Mark Pawlak, Phil Mainwaring, Sue Kubik, Ann Weronke, Laurie Keane and I have heeled in a couple thousand plants.

The plants, along with tubers and bulbs, were donated by SEWMG members and Groth's Country Garden in Cedarburg. In addition to the donated plants, hundreds of beautiful trees, shrubs, and perennials were purchased at cost from Song Sparrow Nursery. before the nursery was permanently closed in December. The volunteers have weeded, watered, fertilized, pruned, deadheaded and protected the plants from deer for two years (due to cancelled sales). Patty and Bonnie have mapped the garden and identified and photographed every plant. Phil, Mark, Sue and I mulched trails, laid plastic weed barrier and tended to potted Song Sparrow plants. The garden has been a lovely mélange of color and fragrances over the past

two summers as the plants have grown.

Sadly, the COVID pandemic once again has derailed our 25th anniversary sale for 2021. UW-Madison Extension has mandated that all public MG sales be cancelled for 2021. Pot-A-Thons and digs have been cancelled. Future plant sales also are questionable. The plant sale committee is considering options for the distribution of the Firefly Ridge inventory of plants in late spring or early summer. Members should watch for details to come via the ListServ.

In the meantime, you are encouraged to shop at Brent and Becky's Bulbs for your summer blooming bulbs and other plants. Brent and Becky's Bulbs will donate the equivalent of 25% of your purchase to SEWMG, if designated as your charity recipient. Therefore, a \$100 purchase will yield a \$25 donation. Simply go to [Bloominbucks.com](http://Bloominbucks.com), scroll down to SouthEast Wisconsin Master Gardeners, hit "GO", click on "YES", and begin shopping from their online catalogue. You also may call in an order at (877) 661-2852. Be sure to mention "Bloominbucks" and "SEWMG."

### Summer Blooming Bulbs and Other Plants

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# SEWMG Begins Work on New Strategic Plan: Your Participation is Needed!

by MGV Patrick Smith

As we all know, 2020 was a tough year. I hope that you and yours are safe and healthy as we look forward to better times ahead. I think that gardeners know as well as anyone that future good times don't come without tons of effort in the present, especially during times of change! Every season we plant seeds of hope for the coming years. In that spirit, beginning last year, the Board of SEWMG formed a committee to grow a new Strategic Planning process for the organization.

Times like these often are the perfect chance to explore new opportunities, identify new threats and capitalize on existing strengths, to forge a way through and beyond our current state. At the end of last summer, the Strategic Planning committee began reviewing existing and previous documents and data already collected by UW-Madison Extension and SEWMG for the purpose of understanding our current state. We thank Mary Wolverton and Mercedes Vega for helping us last year with these efforts.

We also adopted a Four-Stage Strategic Planning process that we hope will help the Board deliver a new Strategic Plan by the end of this year. In its simplest form, here is the Four-Stage Process of Strategic Planning and the planned timing for each stage:

Stage 1: Determine Position - Now and into Spring  
Stage 2: Develop a Strategy - Summer  
Stage 3: Build the Plan- Summer and into Fall  
Stage 4: Kickoff and Manage Progress - Late Fall and Winter

The goal of this process is to build a long term, sustainable plan that will help the organization better achieve its goals, with the intent of fulfilling the Purpose and Vision of Extension, all while modeling the Values of both. Let's explore Stage 1 in more detail to better understand this process. The other stages will follow as we work through them.

## **Stage 1: Determine Position, or What is Our Current State?**

This is the stage we are in now and, in many ways, is the most critical. The key components of this phase are to a) gather member insights, b) get member and partner input and c) review external trends, opportunities and challenges. All this data goes into the creation of a S.W.O.T. document - a document that summarizes our internal Strengths and Weaknesses and our external Opportunities and Threats. This, along with a summary of strategic issues facing the organization, would be presented to the board this summer

for them to begin Stages 2 and 3.

We need your feedback even before we can begin to complete this work. First, we will be preparing a membership-wide survey that we hope to have out to you by April. We are in the process of structuring the survey right now. We do hope that you will choose to share your insights and observations by taking the survey!

Second, we will follow up the survey with a series of virtual "Listening Sessions", whose subject matter will largely be determined based on the feedback we collect in the survey. The more participation and feedback we get, the better we can respond to the unique opportunities and challenges this group will face.

The Survey and the Listening Sessions are the two FORMAL steps of gathering feedback, but please remember: Every day is an opportunity to share your wisdom, insights and opportunities for improvement in whatever way is comfortable for you. No matter how you choose to share, it is welcome and encouraged. We want to hear from you. This is the only way that we can have a clear-eyed vision for where we truly are at as a group and where we might hope to go in the future.

Finally, we are requesting you let us know if you have specific skills in marketing analytics, communication, facilitating groups or strategic planning and would like to help support our efforts.

Ultimately, the completion and rollout of the Plan is targeted for our Annual Meeting at the end of this year. Stay tuned for ongoing updates regarding Stage 1 and our progress towards completing all four stages and creating The Plan.

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Strategic Planning Committee:  
Patrick Smith  
Erin Napier  
Jennifer Lazewski  
Angeline Koch  
Kat O'Connell Valuch  
Board Chair: Mary Wolverton  
SEWMG President: Jim Fratrack

### ***Stage 1: Determine Position, or What is our current state?***

We need your feedback before we can begin to complete this work. Every day is an opportunity to share your wisdom, insights and opportunities for improvement in whatever way is comfortable for you. No matter how you choose to share, it is welcome and encouraged.

- A membership-wide survey (April)
- A series of virtual "Listening Sessions"

Please let us know if you have specific skills in marketing analytics, communication, facilitating groups or strategic planning and would like to help support our efforts.

# Who's Who in SEWMG

Compiled by MGV Janet Wintersberger

## Mary Wolverton, Board Chairman

Mary was in the fall 2016 master gardener class after retiring from the practice of law that spring. She worked at the Fox 6 Garden for the first two years and, after assisting in closing that up in May 2019, switched to the State Fair garden where she served as co-chair. She also has volunteered at the Zoo Butterfly garden and worked the Home Show. This is Mary's third year on the Board of Directors.



## Patrick Smith, 2nd Year Board Member

He started MG classes in 2017. Patrick retired from Harley-Davidson in 2013 and moved to a 5-acre plot of invasive plants, thereby leading him to the SEWMG program. He has worked at the Lynden Sculpture Garden since graduation and, until recently, worked the Plant Sale each year. Passionate about native perennials, shrubs and trees and how plants live in community with one another.

It is his second year as a board member, with a focus on Strategic Planning. "I also volunteer for the Milwaukee Repertory Theater and serve on the board of Florence Eiseman, a Milwaukee based children's apparel company. On those rare occasions that I am not in the garden, or planning new gardens, I am with our three rescue dogs, Penny, Max, and Cody. My husband Ed and I love food, wine and travel and can't wait to get back out into the world again!"



## Carolyn Colwell, At-Large Director

Carolyn took Master Gardener training in Milwaukee in 2014. She volunteers with Lifelong Gardening and Kradwell School Learning Gardens. Carolyn also volunteered for three years with the Healthy Soils project. She is interested in being on the board at a time when the organization is changing.

## Valorie Sangsland, First Year Board Member

Val took Level One training in 2013. Since then, she has served on many committees: Lifelong Gardening Committee and developing Train the Trainer materials; gathered data for the SEWMG Website; co-chaired the Special Events Committee; Realtors Home and Garden Show; worked at State Fair; did the Perennial Plant Sale; and served on the Finance Committee and as Assistant Treasurer.

Val also helped Extension provide one-on-one training on the ORS (Online Reporting System). She has taken several Level Two training sessions.

Val looks forward to being part of the board's decision-making and helping strengthen our organization.



## Janet Barthel, At-Large Director

Since taking the Master Gardener training in 2012, Janet has worked with community gardens in Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties. "My first project was with Sharon Morrissey in an East African immigrant community youth garden. Such a sweet experience getting to know the kids, teaching them about gardening while being mentored through Sharon's leadership. I have worked with Ann Wied in a community garden...sometimes just weeding, and sometimes working with the youth." Janet consistently works the State Fair and joined the Pollinator Group to learn about pollinators and do some outreach and bumble surveys related to it.

"Although I had never really considered serving as an officer until I was personally asked, I absolutely love this organization and its purpose to the community, so I hope I can contribute to leadership."



# WIMGA and our Representative

Compiled by MGJ Janet Wintersberger

Dawn Harl, SouthEast Wisconsin Master Gardener representative to WIMGA (the state organization)

Dawn took MGJ training in 2012, and since then primarily has worked at the FOX 6 Garden and the Wisconsin State Fair.

As an Air Force nurse, Dawn was stationed at eleven different bases during her 29-year Air Force career. Her background is in Med-Surg nursing, administration, and education and staff development, which makes her a good match with the WIMGA organization.

Dawn returned to Cudahy, Wisconsin, and is now rooted near her family. She's looking forward to continuing with her small raised vegetable beds and perennials in her yard, getting back to the State Fair Garden and representing our local organization at the state level.



## The Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association

WIMGA Vision - The Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association will be the collective voice for the 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 Division of Extension's educational role to the public.

MGJ John Hahn, Taking it Easy

John Hahn has been an MGJ and WIMGA mainstay. He became an MGJ in 1995 and has been contributing to our organization ever since.

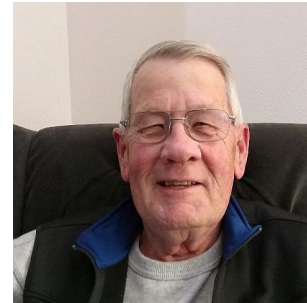
He's served in several leadership positions and has represented SEWMG on the state Wisconsin Master Gardener Association since 1997 or 1998. In recent years he served on WIMGA's Advisory Committee.

John has been involved intrinsically with the Plant Sale since its inception. It started in an MGJ's backyard over 25 years ago. Working on the plant sale and being active in WIMGA have been his favorite activities.

John has now decided to take it easy and focus on staying healthy.

Mike Maddox, Wisconsin Master Gardener Program Manager, said, "John will always be the program historian to me! I always valued his reflections on the program. It's important to know where we started and where we've been to better understand our present and future."

We are grateful, John, for everything you have accomplished!



## Save the Dates

**February 25** is our first SEWMG Member Meeting of 2021.

Although Dr. Brian Hudelson (Director of UW Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic), also is giving a presentation on the same date, attend the member meeting and hear Dr. Hudelson's presentation on June 24.

### June 24 Member Meeting

Dr. Hudelson will present "*Confessions of a Black Thumb: (Plants That I Have Killed or Seriously Maimed.)*" at our June 24 member meeting.

More details, and an invitation to attend the presentations will arrive later.

## Continuing Ed Opportunities

- The "Plants Plus" series (<https://mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/plants-plus/>)
- In spring, state-wide Level 3 Training on the diagnostic process and how you can use it in your own garden. More information to come in the Volunteer Vibe.
- Other MG programs/conferences listed in the WIMGA newsletter, the Volunteer Vibe and/or e-mails from Ann Wied.
- On-line talks by Melinda Myers

What counts as continuing ed?

<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/sewmg/documents/>.

# News from the County Extension Offices

by Ann Wied, UW-Madison Extension Waukesha County Horticulture Educator

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## Volunteer and CE Hours for 2021

As stated in the January state-wide MG newsletter Volunteer Vibe, due to the uncertainty of the impact of COVID-19 on 2021 volunteer opportunities, a decision was made to extend the 2020 volunteer hour requirement, so no volunteer hours are required for 2021. BUT ... 10 hours of Continuing Education (CE) is required for 2021. Not sure what counts for CE? Review the CE policy. It can be found at <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/sewmg/documents/>. Please review the policy prior to contacting me to find out if something can count or not. Thank you.

## The MG Enrollment Process

At this point all of you should have completed the annual state-wide MG Enrollment Process. This process will need to be completed annually to confirm that you still plan to continue in the MG program and will follow the MG rules and guidelines. Thank you for completing this process!

If you fail to enroll, you will be moved out of the MG Program, your ORS account will be deactivated, you will be removed from our local MG Google E-mail Group, and SEWMG will be notified.

If you enrolled in 2020 and enroll again in 2021 but did not input CE hours for 2020, you will be considered exempt vs.

certified during the 2021 calendar year. Contact me if you have questions!

## Congratulations to the Recent MG Graduates!

Congratulations to the graduates of the fall 2019 MG Level One Training class. They will be honored during the February SEWMG member meeting. They will receive their official MG badge and graduation certificate in the mail.

## Local Level 2 Training and State-Wide Level 3 Training

Our local MG Program (Milwaukee/Waukesha County) will not be offering Level 2 Training this spring. I had hoped to offer this training but am unable to for a number of reasons. In spring, the State MG Program will be offering a Level 3 Training on the diagnostic process and how you can use it in your own garden. Watch your e-mail. The state MG Program will advertise this CE opportunity in the Volunteer Vibe (MG state-wide newsletter) with ample time to register.

The "Plants Plus" series – found on the state-wide MG website (<https://mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/plants-plus/>) also offers opportunities to learn at your own pace. In addition, there have been ample opportunities to gain approved CE hours through online programming from both Extension and other presenters.

# The President's Letter

by MGV Jim Fratrack

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Hello Folks! We have made it through the two most wintry months. The good news is Spring is only a few weeks away. The bad news: it is Spring in Wisconsin and we all know what that means!

I would like to mention a change to our Board. John Hahn, our longtime Wisconsin Master Gardener Association (WIMGA) Board Representative, has retired from that position. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to John for serving SEWMG in this capacity. Over the decades John has given freely of his time to improve SEWMG. Thank you John for a job well done. John's replacement as representative to WIMGA is Dawn Harl. Dawn graciously has accepted this position and is looking forward to representing SEWMG. Please see additional articles in this newsletter about Dawn and a tribute to John. Another change, Assistant Treasurer, a non-Board position, will be filled by Jennifer Lazewski. Jennifer brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to this position, which will be helpful to the Board.

I would like to congratulate the graduates from the class of 2019. Because of the pandemic, we were not able to congratulate them in person as we have done with past classes. I was happy we were able to congratulate and recognize them during our February member meeting. They represent the future of our organization.

We volunteers in the Master Gardener program are required to enroll in the program each year. For those of you who have not done this for 2021 please use this link:

<https://mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/2021/10/12> to complete your enrollment. If you already have enrolled in 2021, no additional action is necessary and thank you. Unfortunately if you don't enroll by March 31, 2021, you will not be able to work as MGVs this year, you will not be able to enter your hours in the ORS, you won't be eligible to be certified and you will be removed from the ListServe. PLEASE complete your enrollment ASAP.

Our next member meeting will be another Zoom meeting on April 8, 2021. Another member meeting is scheduled for June 24, 2021 and you should have received an email about the June meeting on February 5. A continuing education component will be included in each of these meetings. More details about these meetings will be sent to you via the ListServe nearer the dates.

I have heard some concerns from members about changes occurring within and to our association. As in all organizations, change is a constant, neither all good nor all bad.

Let's hope for an early Spring!

# The Wisconsin Idea

by MGV Jennifer Lazewski

As someone who grew up in Wisconsin but went to school on the east coast, I've been called a cheesehead, asked about the cows I surely must have in my backyard (even though I grew up in Milwaukee) and questioned as to what the heck is a "bubblor". I have to admit, however, that I had not heard of the Wisconsin Idea until a few years ago, although its fame extends worldwide. With some extra time on my hands last year, I decided to figure out what the Wisconsin Idea is and why it matters to the Master Gardener Program.

Many people understand the Wisconsin Idea as being "the boundaries of the University are the boundaries of the state". The knowledge and influence of the University of Wisconsin extends throughout the state, rather than being confined to the campus. The people of Wisconsin should benefit from the academic research, knowledge, commercial gains, and other improvements created by the University.

What does this mean for us as volunteers who support the UW-Madison Division of Extension? We connect people to UW and its knowledge base to promote positive change in their lives. Master Gardener Volunteers do this specifically with plants and gardening. Through our outreach to state residents, we help improve human well-being, build healthy and vibrant communities, support healthy and safe food systems, and protect valued natural resources.

While the Wisconsin Idea is associated with the progressive movement in the early twentieth century, this illustrates only one example of public service given by the University. The close proximity of the Capital and University with their overlapping social circles allowed former classmates University President Charles Van Hise and Governor Robert M. La Follette to forge a new type of partnership between the university and state government. University faculty in the emerging social sciences advised state commissions and the Legislative Reference Library. This led to the development of new legislation on worker's compensation, utility and railroad regulation, and tax reform. Wisconsin became known for its combination of academic knowledge with legislative action and economic impacts (see <https://www.wisc.edu/wisconsin-idea/>).

The University's service to state residents, however, is much broader and also includes research that is focused on Wisconsin's particular concerns and outreach activities throughout the state. UW research also has resulted in funding for the University and added economic impact for Wisconsin farms and other businesses. For example, University scientists created corn hybrids and other plants that grow best for Wisconsin conditions and thus improved agricultural yields. County Extension Agents spread the word about these state-specific hybrids and advocated their use. Corn became one of Wisconsin's leading crops as seed companies grew and expanded in the state. The Plant Pathology Department researched disease problems in commercial crops, explained their findings during winter meetings, and performed field demonstrations to show and discuss results with farmers during the growing season to

improve crop results (see "The Wisconsin Idea: The University's Service to the State" by Jack Stark, Wisconsin Blue Book 1995-96).

Extension has long been a part of these influences through county Extension agents, agriculture institutes, correspondence courses, and other practical instruction to the general population. Extension in Wisconsin also took its courses and knowledge to the airwaves in radio and, eventually, television broadcasts. In the late 1970s, Master Gardener Volunteers joined these public outreach efforts.

With Consumer Horticulture and Master Gardener Volunteers, Extension activities have expanded to interactions with home gardeners too. Extension staff and MGVs meet Wisconsin residents for diagnostics and science-based explanations at county fairs, botanical gardens, community gardens, and farmers markets. We demonstrate and talk about the benefits of Wisconsin native plants for people and wildlife at nature centers and pollinator gardens. We explain which fruit and vegetable varieties grow best in Wisconsin gardens, as well as the best trees and shrubs for residential yards.

While I still don't have a cow in my backyard, I am a cheesehead and proud to volunteer in service of the Wisconsin Idea, which helps forge bonds between the University and Wisconsin residents. MGVs are an important component of that connection for consumer horticulture in Wisconsin. We use unbiased, research-based, scientific information to help people make good decisions about plants, gardening and the environment. We help people understand the many benefits of plants and how to better care for their yards, ecosystems and communities. We extend the University off campus to the boundaries of the state plant by plant, yard by yard and community by community as we connect people with plants and help improve their lives.



# Sorrel: An Underestimated Herb

by MGV Victoria Robison

It may not seem like much of a plant, but sorrel deserves a chance in any garden. This easy to grow perennial herb requires little maintenance and produces tasty leaves useful in cooking. You may be surprised to learn about the varied uses of this plant and its interesting relatives.

## Quick Facts

Sorrel is a member of the Buckwheat (*Polygonaceae*) family, a relative of rhubarb in the *Rumex* genus, consisting of the docks and sorrels. Perhaps you are familiar with Curly dock (*Rumex crispus*), a common roadside “weed” that is deadly to animals, but edible by humans. Traditionally the seeds are ground into flour or roasted into a coffee-like drink, while the leaves are used as a nutrition-packed spring herb, much like other sorrels.



Common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*)

Sorrel is easy to grow and propagate, as its basal growth form is easily divided at the roots. It has no major insect or disease problems and even can be grown in containers. The plant prefers shade and the leaves produce all season long. Cutting back in spring or when the flower stalk emerges stimulates growth, as does clipping the leaves regularly throughout the growing season. Many cultivated varieties are available.

Sorrel has the unusual trait of being dioecious, which means that male and female flowers grow on different plants. This trait is rare in flowering plants, only 10% of which are dioecious. The rest produce male and female flowers on the same plants.



Sorrel, which is pollinated by wind, is a fun, interesting flower for the garden.

## Uses for sorrel

Sorrel is among the many wild green herbs long harvested for food and medicine throughout history. The sour, lemony-tasting and nutritious leaves are used in cuisine applications spanning Europe and parts of Asia and Africa, often in combination with other greens. The acidic flavor comes from the presence of oxalic acid, which is toxic at high doses. This same high oxalic acid content is what makes rhubarb leaves toxic. Cooking or blanching sorrel leaves reduces the oxalic acid considerably. Mature leaves are best cooked, and young raw leaves are tasty (in moderation) in salads or sandwiches.

Sorrel has many applications: herbal preparations, dyes, salads, soups (particularly sour soups), sauces, pastries, and stuffed grain rolls, akin to stuffed grape leaves. The leaves quickly lose freshness and should be used soon after harvesting – yet another reason to grow it in your garden -- because you will not find it at the grocery store. The roots have been used in folk medicine preparations. For example, “Drinking sorrel water flavored with a bit of honey was believed to bring down a fever and help clear sinus infections (Bello et al. 2019)” (Korpelainen & Pietiläinen, 2020, p. 240). Research studies have identified compounds within sorrel and related species with antioxidant and other biologically significant properties. **(We do not endorse or recommend using any of these folk medicine remedies. As always, talk with your doctor.)**

## Sorrel relatives

Other close relatives of common sorrel:

- Sheep sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*) usually considered a weed, but the small leaves are edible
- Red-veined sorrel (*Rumex sanguineus*) considered more of an ornamental because the leaves are not considered tasty
- Spinach dock or patience dock (*Rumex patientia*) has a good flavor similar to spinach
- Spinach rhubarb (*Rumex abyssinicus*) leaves can substitute for spinach and ribs can be used like rhubarb; native to tropical Africa where it is used for medicines, as a wild potherb, and for dye
- French sorrel (*Rumex scutatus*) used as a spinach substitute and in salads and soups; preferred by some over common sorrel



Red-veined sorrel in my garden. I have used the leaves in cooking and salads. The taste was good in moderation.

## References

Korpelainen, H., & Pietiläinen, M. (2020). Sorrel (*Rumex acetosa* L.): Not only a weed but a promising vegetable and medicinal plant. *The Botanical Review*, 86, 234-246.

# Hats Off to All the MGVs Who Achieved a Volunteer Hour Milestone

by Ann Wied, UW-Madison Extension Waukesha County Horticulture Educator

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A volunteer hour milestone is quite an achievement and statement to your passion and interest in the MG Program. As your local coordinator, I appreciate you and all your efforts to make the MG Program what it is!

For those who have not hit a volunteer hour milestone, you are appreciated too! Without all of you we would not be able to make the difference we have made in both Waukesha and Milwaukee Counties. Thank you!

## In Their Own Words

### *Patty Witt*

I went through the MG training in January 2007. I was very excited to be able to play in the dirt at any of the approved garden projects. That first summer I volunteered at 10 Chimneys, the Zoo Butterfly Garden and Eble Veggie garden.

In 2008 we held the Midwest Regional Conference and I helped Judy Williamson with the website work and generally helped with whatever was needed. That year I contributed 568 hours.

I also became the Membership Chairperson, co-chair of the Holiday Party committee, and started volunteering for the plant sale.

I was Treasurer for one year and served as Board Director-at-Large for three years, was a member of the garden support committee for nine years (co-chair for three of those years), helped with invasive removal for five years, was co-chair of the Lynden Grove garden for three years, did pot recycling at Boerner Botanical Gardens for three years (2009–2011) until they stopped the event, volunteered for the Home & Garden several years, staffed the State Fair Butterfly Garden during the fair, and I've been a weeder at Boerner Botanical Gardens since 2012.

Being a member of the plant sale committee, especially with all the garden checks for jumping worms, I average 200+ hours per year just on the plant sale.

The best part of being a master gardener is being able to play outside whenever I want, pretty much wherever I want. There will always be weeds and I love weeding, being outdoors and listening to nature.  
5000 hours

### *Gail Morgan*

I became a Master Gardener after I retired. That's more than a few years ago! I worked at County Hospital and later at Froedtert Memorial Lutheran Hospital in radiology -- for many years in the catheterization lab and later as a clinical instructor. While working I loved gardening, but in retirement I had so much more time to spend and thought the program of master gardeners would be right up my alley.

I worked for a very short time at Ten Chimney's and then for a few years at Eble Gardens. I also participated in several digs and helped at the plant sale as well. When I heard about the Ronald McDonald Secret Garden, I thought I'd give it a try. It was closer to my house and I really liked the idea of volunteering there. Well, I've been there ever since and have loved every minute of it.

While I enjoy all the education and knowledge I receive from the program, by far the best thing is the wonderful people I've been blessed with while working at the Secret Garden. The group of ladies (now we have one gentleman) that I am with at the Secret Garden are the best! Everyone does their share, doesn't ever complain and just are a joy to work with. Our leader, Ann Phillips, is the glue that keeps us all together. I can't say enough about her and the great organizing skills she has. We liked getting together so much that in winter, when we are not gardening, we get together as a book club with books somewhat related to gardening. All in all, it's the best people and place to garden and to give the families who stay at the house a place of quiet and peace while they deal with all their other troubles.

So, I'm thankful for the program and all the great people and times it's given me.  
1000 hours

### *Val Sangsland*

I began my Master Gardener journey with my level one training in Fall 2013.

I've enjoyed volunteering with many groups and at many events: Realtor's Home & Garden Show, State Fair, Pot-a-Thons, Perennial Plant Sale, Volunteer Opportunity Fair, and Lifelong Gardening, to name a few. I've also enjoyed working behind the scenes helping others learn to navigate the ORS, providing input on test questions for the new Foundations in Horticulture class, and helping organize the SEWMG website. I am beginning my third year as a member of the SEWMG Board, and for the first time will be a voting board member.

I have enjoyed collaborating with my fellow volunteers and am in constant wonder at their creativity and generosity of spirit, whether we're working to design a Home Show booth, revamp a garden design, or develop training materials. The diversity of experiences and talents brought to our group by our many members is inspiring. Assisting at various events that allow me to interact with the public and share University research-based information is extremely satisfying and I never fail to learn something new from my fellow volunteers.

I look forward to once again being able to interact in person with my fellow MGVs and the public as soon as we are able.  
750 hours

### *Kitty Schaefer*

I have been a Master Gardener since 2004. I got my training in Racine. I think I have worked at the gardens at Franciscan Villa in South Milwaukee for 12 years, usually there once a week from May to October. I enjoy sharing gardening ideas with others at the Villa besides my garden club and at the Bay View library, which our garden club sponsored until 2020. My daughter says my Indian name would be "Hands in Dirt" as I spend so much time in the gardens.

I am looking forward to gardening again.  
750 hours



# From the Board

by MGV Mary Wolverton

Your 2021 SEWMG Board held its first meeting January 28. Board committees of Finance, Audit and Leadership were formed.

*Finance Committee* is chaired by me and includes Erin Napier, Valorie Sangsland, Janet Barthel and Susan McDonell. The committee's primary charge is drafting the 2022 budget for board and member approval. However, given continuing financial challenges, the 2021 budget will be reviewed as well as the entire budgeting process - income, expense and donations.

*Audit Committee* is chaired by your VP/President-Elect Erin Napier. Valorie Sangsland and Carolyn Colwell will assist in the audit. They will recruit a non-board member to work with them.

*Leadership Committee* is chaired by your past president, Karla Geiger, working with Janet Barthel and Carolyn Colwell. They will be looking for candidates for the 2022 board.

### Ongoing projects include

*Strategic Planning* chaired by Director Patrick Smith and

VP/President-Elect Erin Napier. Patrick's article in this newsletter details the planning process.

The *bylaws rewrite* will continue. In February everyone was sent a copy of the proposed changes which included an explanation as to the reason each change was proposed. Feedback was requested from the entire membership and those who want to work on bylaw drafting were invited to join the committee. That committee will probably begin work in April following receipt of member comments.

Ann Wied is forming committees to work on a *website* overhaul as well as updating the *Speakers' Bureau*. Director Janet Barthel has agreed to be the board liaison to the Speakers' Bureau committee and to education projects generally. Director Valorie Sangsland will be liaison to the website committee and other communication activities.

Any member who has any question about any facet of SEWMG work is encouraged to contact any board member at any time.



# Plant Profile: Pansy

by MGV Kelly Kramer

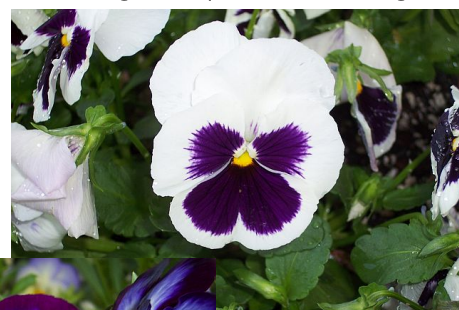
Pansies are the annual of choice for color-starved gardeners in spring.

The modern garden pansy (*Viola x wittrockiana*) and its cousin Johnny Jump-Up (*Viola tricolor*) are among the earliest annuals to show up at garden centers in the spring. Both are native to Europe. In France, the word pansy can be traced to the French word "pensée" meaning "thought".

These cool weather annuals are tolerant of light frosts and low temperatures. Pansies prefer well drained soils and like part sun to sun. They tend to wilt and stop blooming when the summer heats up, but the blooms can be extended by moving the plants into part shade. I've found they don't need a great deal of fertilization, but do benefit from a slow-release fertilizer or light application of a liquid fertilizer every few weeks.

There are many varieties of pansies, including many hybrids for heat tolerance and larger flower size. Different series of pansies are based on number of colors, patterns, and size. Pansy blooms can be single or bicolor. Blooms with a dark center are said to have a "face". Almost all the colors of a rainbow can be

found with pansies, even blooms that are black. I've seen them in the ever-elusive blue flower color that many gardeners crave. Perhaps the hardest thing about pansies is deciding what colors to buy.





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