



SEWMG's Annual Perennial Plant Sale by MGV Janet Wintersberger

What was known as our Annual Plant Sale had humble roots. In 1995 the sale was held in MGV Ann Olmsted's backyard in Wauwatosa. An interim location was the parking lot of the old Miller Park and then the State Fair grounds

The sale was a logical fundraiser for SEWMG because perennials need dividing every three years or so. Plus Master Gardeners tend to introduce newer perennials to their backyards.

In the last ten to fifteen years, the Plant Sale Committee honed preparing and staging the plant sale. Procedures were modified as

"jumping worms" appeared in many of our donors' gardens and at the State Fair. COVID presented a gap year, and ultimately an on-line sale this year. In more recent years, 200+ master gardener volunteers took part in some aspect of the plant sale.

The plant sale helped SEWMG support itself, offered education, funded many projects, social activities, and other outreach. Congratulations to everyone involved in the sale.

*Plant Sale Team and frequent volunteers
L to R Row1 Pat Szopinski, Pat Adrian, Jan Gradisnik, Phil Mainwaring, Marilyn Cech
Row 2 Bea Stoll, Patty Witt, Sue Ratkowski
Row 3 Diane Thieme, Laurie Keane, Bonnie Paplham, Ann Weronke
Row 4 Pat Varick, Carol Mainwaring, Judy Williamson, Dan Cummings, Deb Chapman
Row 5 Lawrence Paplham, Ed Kraus, Bill Shaffer, Tom Biddick, Kay Shaffer*



Plant Sale Dig Team



*Plant Sale Committee
Diane Thieme, Ed Kraus, Sue Ratkowski, Bill Shaffer, Patty Witt, Bonnie Paplham, Pat Adrian and Dan Cummings.*



Looking to 2022

by MGV Karla Geiger

As Past President and member of our Leadership Committee, I am working to secure two new additions to our leadership board: Board Member at Large and VP/President Elect.

I have been proud and honored to be part of the amazing group of committed individuals that work to lead our organization and I want to take this opportunity to thank them for their time and passion.

Our board has an exciting new year planned next year with anniversary celebrations, and educational opportunities that align with our mission. As a final duty as a board member, I ask that you thoughtfully consider serving as Board Member at Large or as Vice President/President Elect.

The **Board Member at Large** attends all member and board

meetings and shares the board activities and long-term vision with MGVs. He/she also serves on board committees.

The **Vice President/President Elect** supports the President while learning the duties of that position and preparing to become President. Throughout the year the Vice President (VP) should start working on plans for their year as President. The VP attends member and board meetings and serves on board committees. He/she also shares information about board activities and long-term vision, and policies and procedures with MGVs.

Thank you in advance for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you to discuss these opportunities.
karla.geiger@greendaleschools.org



Strategic Planning Update

by MGV and Board Member Patrick Smith

The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) has been very busy this summer! Here are our most recent updates:

- The Committee has completed collation and analysis of the membership survey. MGV participation exceeded our expectations, with a high response rate of 51%! A 25-40% response rate for this type of survey is considered good. Thanks to all who answered our survey! Survey results will be shared in a future update.
- As a follow up to the survey, the Strategic Planning Committee will be conducting listening sessions this fall on several topics that were highlighted in the survey. We are currently seeking moderators for our listening sessions and plan to announce the schedule and details by late August/early September.
- The Committee recently completed a Strategic Planning workshop with the Board, where we shared trend research, our SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats), preliminary results of our Survey, and the key strategic issues facing SEWMG. It was a very productive day, and we thank the Board for their hard work.

- We also discussed next steps for reviewing the Purpose, Vision and Values of SEWMG and creation of the Strategic Plan. The real work of creating the plan now begins!

The survey results are in, and the Strategic Planning Committee plans to hold listening sessions in late August/early September. Moderators need to be objective and have strong listening skills. If you're interested in serving as a moderator, please contact Patrick at <mailto:patrick2gmail.com>



SEWMG's Summer Annual Picnic a Success!

by MGV Claire Bergquist

While we had to cancel last year's summer picnic due to the pandemic, Master Gardeners came out in force for this year's picnic. We had about 125 people attend the picnic. The second largest number of attendees we have had in recent years.

The picnic is a thank you to us for all the hard work we do throughout the year. The Master Gardener Annual Picnic was held at the Mitchell Park Pavilion in Brookfield for all SEWMGVs and their spouses/significant others. A garden tour of Jeff and Patty Trader's Brookfield as-seen-on-TV garden was a pre-picnic attraction. The picnic featured great food (entrees, appetizers, salads, and desserts), beverages, door prizes and a garden book/magazine exchange. We also held the silent auction at the picnic; traditionally it has been held at the plant sale. The silent

auction raised quite a bit of money for our group and may continue to be held during the picnic.

This year's Picnic Committee was chaired by Clare Bergquist with the crackerjack team of MGVer's including Pat Conole, Karla Geiger, Bernita Hile, Roger Kocher, Lou O'Campo, Karen Sidders, Diane Thieme and Betsy Wellenstein. Deb Petersen chaired the silent auction team.

Ted Haasch summed it up perfectly in an email to the group list "To all those who planned, donated their time and even had a small hand in the Fantastic picnic, thank-you. It was a wonderful gathering of like-minded people."



News from the County Extension Offices

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

MG State Fair Garden

Due to the pandemic we did not have MGVs staffing our garden area at State Fair's Exploratory Park this year. We had to make that decision in early April due to the work and time that is involved with that project. I still feel good about that decision. A lot of time and energy was spent by the MG State Fair team this year to get the garden ready for State Fair visitors. Since MGVs will not be at the gardens during State Fair week, additional signage was made to connect visitors to Extension gardening resources and share some educational tips. I hope if you visited the State Fair, you took the opportunity to visit the beautiful gardens our master gardeners prepared and cared for this summer. Thank you MG State Fair team! You are appreciated!!

Volunteer Opportunities

As a reminder ... due to the pandemic instead of having our annual Volunteer Opportunity Fair (VOF) to connect MGVs with approved volunteer opportunities, several MGVs (Jennifer Lazewski and Susan McDonell) worked on developing a virtual volunteer opportunity fair.

There is no pressure to volunteer this year since there is no volunteer hour requirement. If you are curious about a volunteer project, check out the link below. It will provide a few photos and some project facts. This VOF does not cover every possible way to volunteer but it covers a majority of the ways. There is also a "project list" that includes contact info for all of the chairs of the projects. That was sent with an email on May 7th. If you cannot find that document, please contact me. Here is the link to the VOF:
<https://waukesha.extension.wisc.edu/files/2021/05/Volunteer-Op-MG-Milwaukee-Waukesha-Co-May-2021.pdf>

Thank You Plant Sale Committee

I wanted to extend a BIG thank you to the Plant Sale Committee. Their work over the years has been incredible. It has been amazing to watch this project grow, change, and improve over the years. The money raised from this super

successful fund raiser has supported many projects and gardens. I realize we do not know the future of this committee but I do know that for many if not all of the plant sale committee members, this was their last plant sale. Thank you for the time and energy you have put into this project. Also thank you to all of you who have helped with the plant sale one or more years in any capacity. I appreciate all of you!

Foundations in Horticulture Course

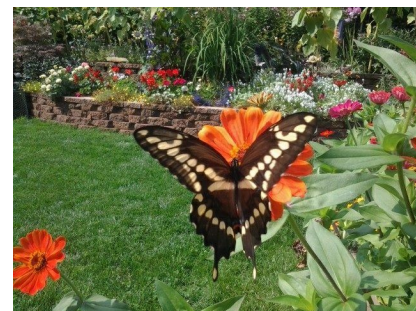
By now you should be aware that Master Gardener Level One Training is no longer offered. Master Gardener training was turned into two different courses – Foundations in Horticulture (FIH) and Master Gardener Onboarding. If you want to learn more about the different trainings, check out the FIH website and read the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document that is linked to the FIH website. If you have friends or family taking the FIH course or getting questions about the course, this website and FAQ document will answer your questions. Registration ended in mid-August for the fall FIH course. The website also has a link to a wait list for anyone interested in taking the course in 2022. The FIH course is offered each year in fall. It is an online course. Here is the link: <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/foundations-in-horticulture/>

MG Onboarding Lite

As you recall, it was strongly recommended that all MGVs take the "MG Onboarding Lite" course by the end of 2021. This new, free online training course for MGVs teaches all about the MG program. All MGVs were offered 10 hours of CE for completing the course. If you do not have a computer and need this course in a printed version, contact me. (Please note ... I cannot make this print version available to everyone. It is cost prohibitive.)

Do You Have Questions?

Not sure about something? Need clarification? I am just a phone call or email away. I am happy to help you navigate being a master gardener volunteer. Please reach out to me. ann.wied@wisc.edu



From the Desk if the President

by MGV Jim Fratrack

Hello folks.

I am writing this article in late July. My garden is growing well; I hope yours was/is doing well. It seems this year has been a continuous pattern of water and weed for me. I do use straw for mulch for my tomatoes, but beans, carrots, zucchini onions and kale are not mulched. Luckily, I have raised beds which have a top board I can sit on while planting or weeding.

As a kid, weeding was much different for me in my grandfather's garden. He had no raised beds and all his crops were in long straight rows. His vegetable garden took up about a quarter acre. That didn't include the flower gardens or the couple hundred feet of raspberry plants! Anyway, during my youth weeding Grandpa's garden, I became very familiar with a hoe and how to use it. A poem by John Updike captures the essence for me of using this simple tool.

HOEING

I sometimes fear the younger generation will be deprived
of the pleasures of hoeing;
there is no knowing
how many souls have been formed by this simple exercise.

The dry earth like a great scab breaks, revealing
moist dark loam--
the pea - root's home,
a fertile wound perpetually healing.

How neatly the green weeds go under!

The blade chops the earth new.

Ignorant the wise boy who
has never performed this simple, stupid, and useful wonder.

From the Board...

by MGV Mary Wolverton, Chair of the Board

The Bylaws Committee has met five times. The committee will do a final review at the next meeting in late August. The committee's draft will go to the Board for review at its September 30 meeting. The Board's proposal will be sent to the members in early October. A Zoom meeting to review the proposal with the membership will be held in late October. A Zoom invite will be sent to the Listserve for that meeting. The Board's proposal will be submitted to the membership for a vote following final review after the Zoom meeting.

The 2022 budgeting process has started. Chairs are asked to get their 2022 budgets in by September 10. The finance committee will meet immediately after the budget deadline to review the requests. The committee will complete a budget proposal for board consideration at the October 28 board meeting. The

Lastly I would like to remind you to put on your calendar 3 upcoming SEWMG events:

- The next **Member Meeting** will be an in-person meeting on **September 23, 2021 6:30 PM** in the Community room at the New Berlin Public Library, located at 15105 W. Library Lane, New Berlin, WI. 53151.
- The **Annual Member Meeting** will be an in person meeting on **November 13, 2021 1:00 PM** in the Community room at the Retzer Nature Center located at S14 W28167 Madison St., Waukesha WI. 53188.
- **Annual Holiday Party December 1, 2021** at Aliotos Restaurant located at 3041 N. Mayfair Rd., Wauwatosa WI. 53222. More details about this event will be sent closer to the date.

Please plan to attend all of these events.



proposed budget will be sent out to the members and a Zoom meeting will be held in early November to review the budget with members. The Budget will be submitted to the membership for approval at the annual meeting on November 13. We anticipate that Zoom option and proxy voting will be available for that meeting.

The Finance Committee developed a reimbursement policy which has been sent to all committee and project chairs.

The entire board held a full day strategic planning session on Saturday, July 24. Extensive data regarding the program was reviewed as well as the results of the recent survey. Issues were identified and prioritized. Listening sessions focused on those issues will be scheduled soon.

State Fair

by MGV Mary Wolverton, co-chair

The 2021 Wisconsin State Fair took place without Master Gardener Volunteers in the garden. We created new signs to provide information on the gardens in our absence. The Gnome team of Margie Lowe, Jan Gradisnik and Mark Bahr created a charming space around the trunk of the deceased maple tree. Belinda Brocker and Krista Mozina renovated the cactus and succulent garden to include a rock garden which expanded the range of plants in the bed.

With the loss of the maple tree the former shade border has a sunny end. A row of grasses was added along the north fence to show options for using grasses in the garden. Late and re-

blooming daylilies were added for color. New Perennials – waxbells, giant goatsbeard, hosta and ferns were added to the shade section to increase variety. Work started on the natives bed with removal of invasive silver grass and unwanted trees. We discovered two shagbark hickory volunteers, one in the shade bed and one in the natives bed. Both will be preserved to fill in as older trees are lost. The center bed is now in its third year and our perennials are filling in. New annuals were added for color, especially in the shady quadrants.



Last Plant Sale

by MGV Diane Thieme

A while ago, I watched a classic movie, *The Great Escape*, a true story of a successful American prisoner escape from a Nazi prison camp. Each leader of the plan had a specific role, the forger, the tunnel king, the scrounger, the intelligence officer, etc. Picture a wheel with spokes. Each spoke has to support its share of the weight to allow the wheel to roll. Every man in the escape plan was a spoke in the plan's wheel and had to do his specific duty to ensure success. As I watched the movie, it occurred to me that our plant sale leaders and volunteers were spokes in our sale plan wheel.

For 2 ½ decades, SEWMG has had an extremely successful plant sale. For the last half of those sales, I have had the privilege and honor of working with hundreds of incredible volunteers at sale events. All those volunteers comprise a huge spoke in our wheel. Without them, the wheel collapses. It was amazing to see MGVs teaching each other, laughing, sharing, and chatting up a storm while happily playing in the dirt and plants no matter what Mother Nature threw at them – sun, rain, cold, heat, wind, and, yes, even snow. Camaraderie was evident as they worked toward a common goal.

My greatest joy, however, has come from sharing work with my phenomenal co-chairs. Each was an essential spoke in the wheel with their unique skill sets.

Bill Shaffer (along with Ed Kraus before he moved) was our liaison with all our community resources: State Fair, Carlin's supplies, Habitat for Humanity, etc. Bill has great charm, wit, and intelligence and is a real people person. He has the perfect "schmooze" factor needed for the role.

Patty Witt knows perennials, really KNOWS perennials! She recruited donors, visited gardens to identify and select plants, and scheduled where, when, what, and how the dig team would collect donations. She did all the planning for Pot-A-Thons, and, sadly, had to schedule jumping worm inspections for the last few years.

Bonnie Paplham constantly awed me with her uncanny ability to keep track of every plant in our inventory. She could laser focus on a plant count for labels while dozens of people were talking to her at Pot-A-Thons. She kept exact inventory spreadsheets of our 15,000+ plants, created botanical to

common name cheat sheets for volunteers, and made laminated pictures of every plant in bloom.

Sue Ratkowski was our creative mind. She designed our State Fair layout, deciding the best location for every plant and volunteer. She also did the beautiful chalk designs that greeted customers every year.

Tom Hallett, Phil Mainwaring, Tom Biddick, and Mark Pawlak did the actual physical work of staging the grounds. Pat Adrian was our communicator. She was responsible for getting Pot-A-Thon and other general information out to volunteers. She greeted volunteers and reviewed jumping worm protocols at Pot-A-Thons. Her warm, welcoming, gentle demeanor made everyone comfortable, especially newbies at their first sale event.

Our transportation kings were Bill, Mark, Tom B., Phil, and Lawrence. They hauled trailers loaded with supplies or plants to wherever we needed things. It takes an awful lot of trips to prep for and transport 15,000+ plants!

Mary Redlinger, along with Deb Petersen, managed our member silent auction. They solicited donations of items, created packages, and ran the auction at the sale. Husband Fred Redlinger was an able-bodied helper and the sale gatekeeper. The auction raised hundreds of dollars every year! As for me, I have been accused of being extremely organized and detail oriented. Guilty as charged. As co-chairs, we brainstormed and tweaked after every sale to create our vision of the next sale. My job was to pull everything together to try and create a positive experience for volunteers and customers.

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge John Hahn. John started the sale 25 years ago and has been to every sale since. He wielded a mean machete when dividing plants. A Sawzall replaced the machete in practice, but it is still in the box of tools! Everyone should thank John for his long-time support of SEWMG and the sale.

Each spoke of our wheel was invaluable and needed to allow us to roll smoothly for 25 years. Thank you to all who have helped over the years. Time has come for a new wheel. Our hope is that new "spokes" can be found, so that the sale can continue to roll.



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Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

UW-Madison Extension Milwaukee County

6737 W. Washington St. Suite 2202

West Allis, WI 53214

SouthEast Wisconsin Master Gardeners

Editors:

Sandy Manning | sandymanning@gmail.com

Janet Wintersberger | jwintersberger@wi.rr.com

Deborah Black | debsjardin51@gmail.com

Kathy Heinrichs | athyk61@hotmail.com

Victoria Robison | verobison@gmail.com

Laurie Baker | Seasonal Photography

Grow with us

Check out our website

<http://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/sewmg>

Contact Information

For more information:

On the Web

<http://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/sewmg/>

Ann Wied (Consumer Hort. Educator, Waukesha)

262-548-7788; ann.wied@wisc.edu

Susan Taylor (Diagnostic Services Coordinator)

414-615-0516; susan.taylor@wisc.edu

UW-Madison Extension Milwaukee County

6737 W. Washington St. Suite 2202, West Allis, WI 53214

UW-Madison Extension Waukesha

Waukesha County Administration Center,

515 W. Moreland Road, Room AC-G22, Waukesha, WI 53188

Our Mission Statement

To support and assist UW-Extension in community horticulture programs through volunteerism, education and environmental stewardship.