



Containers Shine at State Fair Garden

by MGV Mary Wolverton

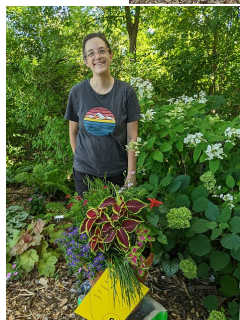
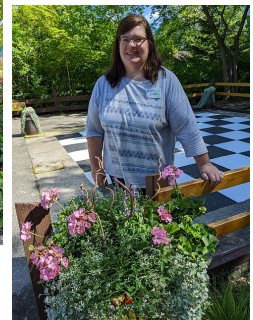
Our congratulations to Lisa Foley, winner of the 2022 State Fair Container Contest. Lisa's pot of Crazytunia "Blackberry Jam" Petunia, Archangel Raspberry "Balacasp", Superbells Blackcurrant Punch Calibrachoa, Pink Leaf Polka Dot Plant, Goldilocks Lysimachia and Sweet Potato Vine Lime took the \$25 Steins Gift Card for First Prize. Second place went to Deb Kopydlowski for a clever popcorn box of Sunsatia Coconut Nemesia, Bee's Knees Petunia and Superbells Calibrochoa. Third place was Nicki Hanley with Osteopermum, Coleus, Pansy, Sweetgrass, Salvia and Fan Flower. Both received \$20 Fruit of the Bloom certificates courtesy of MGV Geri Nelson

Over 3,000 votes were cast by our visitors throughout the fair. Eight other entries from Kelly Kramer, Jane Belanger, Connie Byrne, Amber Trapp, Karla Geiger, Margaret Krueger, Mary Bolyard and Susan Schlieve added interest to the garden. Contestants signed up in May, tended

containers at home through the summer and delivered them to the garden the week before the Fair. This activity counted as State Fair gardening hours for reporting.

This was the second contest. The first was held in 2019 to help out the garden team with a good show of annuals while the garden was being renovated. It was such a hit with both volunteers and visitors it was decided to continue to contest once we were back on the grounds during the Fair. A 2022 improvement was the addition of plant lists to the containers.

If you have time to garden at home but can't get to weekday work sessions consider entering a pot in 2023. The sign-up notice will go out in May. And, note to future contestants, in both 2019 and this year the container of purple flowers won.



From the Board

by MGV Valorie Sangsland, Board Chair



As I write this, we are on the cusp of the Wisconsin State Fair. On the last Saturday in July, I visited the garden to set up signage and literature and I must say, it looks absolutely amazing! SEWMG owes so many thanks to the talented and tireless team of volunteers who toiled at our State Fair Garden since Spring, led by co-chairs Mary Wolverton and Jim Fratrack. The center bed is maturing beautifully and the additions last year to the Sun bed and this year to the Native bed have all settled in showing little evidence of their newness.

Thanks to the unflagging efforts of Dawn Scherr, co-chair of Trade Shows/Special Event committee, all of the MGV scheduling was completed a few days before the start. All shifts are filled and one hundred two Master Gardener Volunteers will be interacting with tens of thousands of visitors, sharing the beauty of our garden, encouraging voting for one of the various Container Garden entries, helping children complete our Scavenger Hunt and providing solid university research-based

*"The team has thought of everything! I went through my notes from last night and made a list of everything I needed to cover to prepare for tomorrow. I read it to my husband and said, "a video would help for those who couldn't attend the orientation...I opened this e-mail, and there are the videos. This will take a lot of pressure off the shift captains if those working at the fair watch this. I will definitely go through my notes with those under my captaining, but I feel so supported because of the videos."
-Pat Roberts, MGV Shift Captain*

*The Master Gardener area at the State Fair "is awesome, the time and effort put in by everyone on their team sure shows. The Fairy Garden is unbelievable, the detail is awesome...It is amazing what can happen when people work together, to make it work."
-MGV Vi Reinert*

information in response to the many questions our visitors bring. Fresh signs and banners sporting the new SEWMG logo are in place, including QR codes linked to our website, Facebook and Instagram accounts. I couldn't be prouder of how professional and inviting our site looks.

After an absence of two years, it will be great to get back to what we do best: sharing our knowledge and encouraging our fellow gardeners. Since the Fair will be done by the time you read this, I will say I hope that you had the chance to visit in person and that you struck up some lively conversations with family, friends and visitors while you were there. After all, who can resist talking about plants!

The entire Board hopes you enjoy your late summer and fall gardens!

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SEWMG Holiday Party

by MGVs Patty Witt & Diane Thieme, Holiday Party Co-chairs

Save the Date

The 2022 Holiday Party for SEWMG members and guests will be Wednesday, December 7th at Alioto's in Wauwatosa. Looking forward to seeing all your smiling faces.



News from the County Extension Offices

by Ann Wied, UW-Madison Extension Waukesha County Outreach Specialist

Navigating the Master Gardener Program Changes

By now most of you have completed all the requirements for volunteering in 2022. Congratulations! I know it was not an easy task. BUT ...if you still are experiencing challenges regarding MG Onboarding Lite or the ORS, please reach out to me. I am happy to help. Remember, if you took the full MG Onboarding course to become a new MG in 2022, you do not need to take the MG Onboarding Lite course .

Free Webinars for Continuing Education (CEU)

Take advantage of free webinars. These mini-webinars are 30 minutes long including Q & A. The new, upcoming series runs August 24 -September 7. All are recorded. Registration and recordings can be found at <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/mini-webinars-for-gardeners/> Upcoming topics are: Yard and Garden Cleanup with Diseases and Insects in Mind, Fall "Lawndry" List, and Bringing the Garden Inside. This website also houses recordings of past webinars. Earn .5 hours of CE for each that you view. This is a great way to earn approved CEU.

New Plants Plus – CE Opportunity Offered by State MG Program

There is a new Plants Plus course, offered by the State MG Program, available free called "Gardening and Climate Change: Growing Fruit Trees in a Changing Environment". This module focuses on the challenges of and strategies for growing fruit trees in a changing climate. Earn 1.5 hours of CE if you listen to the podcast, watch the video and complete the practice exercise. Login to Canvas and go to Plants Plus: Continuing Education Opportunities. Scroll down on the page to find it.

Questions?

If you have any questions, please reach out to me. I am happy to help you. If I am not the person who can help you, I will help connect you with someone who can. Reach me at ann.wied@wisc.edu or 262-548-7788

Congratulations Picnic Planners

by MGJ Janet Wintersberger

Beautiful weather, lots of people, happy faces, plentiful food and enthusiastic auction bidders. More details in the next issue of 'Good Earth News.



Share to the MG E-mail List for Milwaukee/Waukesha County MGs: by Ann Wied

In the "To" section of your email put your email address, then click on BCC (blind carbon copy)

In that space, put in:

MGVs-MilwWauk-Counties@g-groups.wisc.edu

Using BCC; if the reader hits "reply all" it will only come to you.

If you cannot find the "BCC", then put the e-mail address for the MG e-mail list after the word "To".



Coming soon – Logowear

Our new logo clothing will be available soon.

Verbena bonariensis in the garden

by MGV Kelly Kramer

Earlier this year I wrote an article on growing *Verbena bonariensis* from seed. Here's an update on the seedlings which are now plants in my garden. To recap, *Verbena bonariensis* is an annual with tall airy stems and clusters of purple flower tops. At four to five feet tall they add a lot of height without a lot of space.

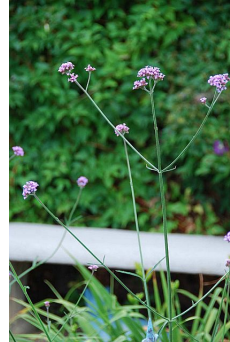
Seeds were sown in early March and the first seedlings appeared at the end of March. The seeds sowed in a flat container showed the best root growth. It took until the end of April for the plants to be big enough to be potted up in individual containers. The plants were planted out in the garden in early June with hopes that the rabbits would leave them alone (and they did) to grow tall. I think the heat we had in June helped give them a growth spurt and by early July the plants in full sun were easily 4 feet tall.

Since these are tall airy plants, it can be hard to see them in photos. Many of the *Verbena* were planted near my tall yellow spider daylilies. I also planted some in various places in the garden to see what would work best. The ones planted in part

sun are not as tall and flopping over, and the blooms are smaller. The plants in full sun are doing their best.

I like how the flowers move in the wind and love watching the butterflies. I've seen Monarch butterflies on the flowers but they've managed to elude my camera so you'll have to take my word for it.

And yes, I realize they self-seed. A lot. But for me that's ok. I can look forward to seeing *Verbena bonariensis* in my garden next year.



State Fair 2022

by MGVs Laurie Baker and Mary Wolverton



[Your team has] done an amazing job with the garden and organizing us volunteers. I feel we are back after COVID even better than before. Thank you for your efforts. It is appreciated."
-MGV Linda Witkowski



"The State Fair MGV Garden orientation was superb. This will be my first year volunteering in the garden; I found all the information presented very helpful. Both Mary and Valorie's in-person talks on Tuesday night were carefully planned. Knowing where to find information to answer visitors' questions is especially valuable to first-time volunteers... With the orientation, shift captains will only have to reinforce the information presented at the orientation."
-MGV Jane Brown



Letter from the President

by MGV Erin Napier

The Strategic Planning Committee has completed the “Build the Plan” phase of the SEWMG strategic plan for three of the five strategy categories. These will be implemented in 2022-2023. Members of the Strategic Planning Committee are Mary Wolverton, Karla Geiger, Janet Barthel, Katharine O’Connell Valuch, and Eileen Quinlan. I would like to personally thank them for stepping up and volunteering their time to this thoughtful process.

Details around the completed focus areas will be shared at our upcoming Membership Meeting on August 24 (6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.) at the Schlitz Audubon Center. More details about this upcoming meeting will be sent out by Mary Holtz in the next few days so please watch for the invite in your email box. This is a hybrid meeting so you can attend either by Zoom or in person.

To ground you in how the Strategic Planning Committee got to this point, I would like to remind you about the robust and intentional process that has been shared regularly in membership meetings 2021-present along with requests for additional members to participate in the formalized planning process:

- **Determine Position phase:** Included a comprehensive SEWMG current state review, a trend study, incorporation of data from a membership survey (50%+ response rate), and a SWOT [strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats] analysis was completed in 2021. We also added three well-attended member listening sessions in Q1-Q2 2022 that validated much of the information that was collected in 2021.

- **Develop Strategy phase:** Wrapped up in June 2022. This portion of strategy development included finalization of SEWMG mission, values, vision, and positioning. This phase also included the development of organizational strategies, and the board began the process of developing objectives that aligned with individual strategies.

At the June 2022 SEWMG Member Meeting, our progress to date was shared with members and made available on SEWMG.org. We also asked for additional volunteers to participate in this process.



- **Build the Plan phase:** This phase included a reflection on all the information collected and assembled to date and tactics were formed at the committee level spearheaded by Betsy Vokac (Chair, Membership Committee), Mary Wolverton (Chair, Education Committee), and Eileen Quinlan (Chair, Communication Committee). Special thanks to the hard work of these chairs and their committee members that participated in bringing the strategies into 1–3-year action plans that will be implemented between 2022-2024.

We have a few finishing touches yet to organize some details of the plan before presenting it to members in the upcoming membership meeting for Q&A. In the meantime, the Committees mentioned above will be putting together budgets that support the strategic tactics for 2023. We are eager to again lobby for volunteers to serve on committees that will implement and manage the performance of the tactics moving forward.

I will remain as the Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee moving forward. And I look forward to not only taking members through a review of the Strategic Plan later this month, but to also assemble members to serve in key areas to support our long-term plan. Details around the completed focus areas will be shared at our upcoming membership meeting.

Membership Meeting
August 24 (6:30 p.m – 8:30 p.m.)
Attend either in person or by Zoom
Schlitz Audubon Center
1111 E. Brown Deer Road
Milwaukee, WI 53217
(414) 352-2880

Please consider sharing your talents to serve in key areas to support our long-term plan.

Look around you
See a space outside that could use a MGVs help? Does it meet Extension’s guidelines, such as a non-profit with public access, a park, city or county owned? Talk with the ‘owner’ or responsible party and it just may become your new project.

Green Power Garden's Transition to a Non-profit Organization

by MGV Molly Llanas

I am currently the paperwork Mom of the Green Power Garden whose food is donated to the Supporting Partner, the Hope Center Inc., of Waukesha. Sharon Morrisey and Ann Wied introduced me to the project, and it fits everything I believe about teaching others to grow food while learning from each other and the byproduct goes to help those less fortunate in our community.

Our partner did not change with the UW Madison-Extension “switch over” but we lost the land we farmed all these seasons (since 2010) as it was sold, and the new owners are building a house. We were blessed that one of our regular volunteers offered the land behind her home for us to use and so in November 2021, we hauled everything we owned about a mile away from our original spot. We are almost done rearranging everything as we are using items in the field. We went from farming 2-4 acres to about 1. It’s a little weird but we are figuring it out.

At our original site (on Lawnsdale) we struggled to haul water to the plants when needed, at our new location (on Glendale), the soil is very rocky and sandy in huge portions and the ground doesn’t hold the water very well. We have a pole barn to store some supplies in, and huge gutters and downspouts to collect water from. We plan to build a water station so we can store more at one time, but we are okay so far. We also plan to plant cover crops and compost to rebuild the soil. Our plants are grown by some of the team, some friends, and others are donated from greenhouses before they compost them at the end of their season. It creates great diversity in what plants and varieties we grow each season. Sometimes it’s something we have never had before.

We have volunteers from ages 2-92, all sorts of players throughout the community including some SEWMGs, schools, scouts, churches, and companies. United Way is a big advocate and likes to place groups with us in the field. “Littles” [younger children] are fun as usually we can convince them to come two or three times – once to plant (how deep and far apart), once to water and harvest (how to know it’s ready), and maybe once to remove the plants (building the compost pile). It’s nice for them to see what happened to the seeds they planted. We talk through all of it before we get started with any group and sometimes, we have some serious gardeners in the groups that teach us tips and tricks that have worked for them. Our average annual harvest is 3700 pounds.

We send a weekly email during the growing season and monthly in the off season with a matching message on Facebook (which includes pictures). The garden is open 24/7, come for a ten-minute tour and learn where everything is and you are free to work whenever you choose. Our team hopes to see you in the field!

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We Need You to Help!
by Erin Napier, President

Whether or not you have already found a gardening volunteer opportunity on the ORS (or registered a new qualifying organization), please consider volunteering for a SEWMG committee as well. We need you. We welcome your participation. And you can earn volunteer hours for serving on various committees. More information on how to volunteer with SEWMG can be found on <https://sewmg.org/committees> Or feel free to contact me directly at erinn521@gmail.com to chat at a mutually convenient time.



Find us on Facebook or Instagram



Facebook



Instagram

Master Gardener - Information/Contact Information

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Our Mission Statement

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