



# Good Earth News

## State Fair 2022!

by MGV Mary Wolverton

Volunteers are back at the State Fair Garden. SEWMG has taken over from Extension and entered into an agreement with the State Fair to run the garden during the Fair this August. The dates are August 4 through 14. Watch for an email notice to sign up for a shift.

You might remember that we started a garden renovation in 2019. That year we created a new center bed, started the container contest and used the dead maple tree to illustrate the role a dying tree plays in the ecosystem. Covid kept us off the grounds in 2020 except for a couple visits to remove an overwhelming weed patch.

In 2021 we worked the garden but were not allowed to work during the Fair. The dead maple was removed and our team of Margie Lowe, Jan Gradisnik and Mark Bahr created a charming gnome garden around the tree. We continued to improve the center bed and started renovation of the new sun garden created by removal of the maple. A border of grasses illustrates what grass can do for a perennial bed. We added late blooming daylilies for color during the fair. The cactus/succulent bed was renovated by Belinda Brocker and Krista Mozina.

This year brings additional change. A stand of invasive grass has been removed so the natives garden can have a new patch of flowering natives. Two vines have been moved to an arch in the sun bed. Trees have been labeled – finally. Two shagbark hickory volunteers are being tended to replace our aging trees. We hope to have an educational exhibit on buckthorn and our 30th (Pearl) anniversary will be highlighted throughout the garden. Our Lifetime Service Award plaque will be displayed. Lifelong Gardening will be represented with the elevated beds and friendly tools. And – drum roll – the container contest is BACK! Fairgoers will be able to vote on their favorite.

The Fair has been a favorite with both MG volunteers and the public. It is now SEWMG's signature event. Plan to staff a shift and return with your family and friends to show off our garden.

*Volunteer Information on page 8*



# From the Board

by MGV Valorie Sangsland, Board Chair



## What we learn from composting

In our training as Master Gardeners, we all learned about composting. Perhaps you've even shared information about composting with members of the public. I know I have done so many times, especially at our Wisconsin State Fair Garden with its working compost pile we use to educate our visitors. Two immediate values come to mind when I think about composting: it is a great way to utilize garden waste and table scraps and it is a notable way to improve our soil so the plants in our future gardens are lush and bountiful. We recall the need to incorporate "browns" and "greens" in the compost mix. Brown content is organic matter that is rich in carbon. Plant waste that is dry and fibrous is generally recognized as brown, and tends to be more resistant to decay. Green content is softer, with higher moisture content, and contains more nitrogen. Typical compost recipes call for two parts brown to one part green. Also needed to complete the process are a little moisture and air. We gardeners work hard to turn our compost piles to make sure that they are consistently moist, don't become compacted, and that bottom layers are brought to the top to get a breath of fresh air. Mother nature adds the heat which is a byproduct of the decay process and after a bit of time, we have the black gold we all covet.

With your help, SEWMG is making Master Gardener Compost. We are taking the remnants of our old "Approved Gardens and Programs" that are no longer directly partnered with Extension, and our old ways of volunteering, getting memoranda of understanding, filling out annual reports, and reporting under

Extension rules and structure and they become the Browns in our MG Compost. Just like the fall leaves we add to our compost pile, all of those valuable programs exist, but not in their prior form. They are not abandoned or to be mourned: they are necessary to our recipe. Our membership still studies, learns, and reaches out by volunteering to educate the public or grow food to share with the needy. You, our members, are the Greens in our MG compost. When we combine all the many changes in Extension's rules, requirements and relationship with SEWMG, and we mix it with our enthusiastic volunteers, something remarkable happens. Given a little time, a lot of hard work turning our pile (managing our changes), some moisture from the sweat and tears that result from our hard work, and what we ultimately get is a highly coveted, extremely valuable new resource, our Master Gardener Compost!

The reason I share this allegory my fellow MGVs is that I want to encourage you to move forward with the hard work needed to build our Compost and make our Association lush and bountiful. I give a nod to the old ways, because they got us here. And I give a salute to you, our members, because you're the catalyst that will get us to where we want and need to be in the future. With your help, our MG Compost will help us Cultivate Communities well into the future!

Thank you for all you do! Please consider adding your "greens" to our committees in need of additional volunteers or leadership, volunteering for a shift or two at the Wisconsin State Fair and enjoy your summer. Keep turning!

# SEWMG Picnic - Silent Auction

by MGV May Peterson

It's been time to get "down and dirty" in their gardens with lots of digging, planting, weeding, and mulching.

Take time on Thursday, August 11 to attend and enjoy SEWMG's summer picnic.

In the meantime, MGVs Deb Petersen, Mary Redlinger and Chris Slauson, who are on the Silent Auction Committee, are looking for "new or like new" garden-related items. Some items could be used for door prizes.

Please contact one of the committee members to arrange drop off or collection of any items you may have before July 31.

Deb Petersen [maypetersen@earthlink.com](mailto:maypetersen@earthlink.com)  
Mary Redlinger [maryered@juno.com](mailto:maryered@juno.com)  
Chris Slauson [cslauson11@gmail.com](mailto:cslauson11@gmail.com).



# Picnic



# SEWMG

## Annual Picnic

Thursday, 8/11/22



**Tour Jeff Trader's Garden:** 2pm-5pm  
**Rain or Shine/Indoor & Outdoor Spaces**  
**Appetizers & Beverages:** 5pm-6pm  
**Buffet Dinner:** 6pm  
**Raffle Prizes & Silent Auction Items:**  
Bring Checkbook!!

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### Tour Jeff Trader's Garden, 2pm-5pm

2490 Shelly Court

Brookfield, WI [2.5 miles from venue]

Drop Ins Welcome

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### Picnic held at Mitchell Park Pavilion, Brookfield

3140 Mitchell Park Drive

Brookfield, WI 53045

**Please bring:** Dish to pass  
Appetizer, Salad or Dessert  
[Label your container & lid with your name]

Gently used gardening magazines or books,  
Houseplants/cuttings to exchange.

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### Benefits to Attending Picnic

Meet new MGV members! Make new friends!!

Share gently used gardening magazines, gardening  
books, and/or Houseplants.

Relax from a night of gardening and enjoy this  
thank you event of socializing.

Our Picnic Committee is looking forward to  
celebrating SEWMG members.

# Working Together to Manage Invasive Plants

by Melinda Myers

Spring is a favorite time in the garden. Everyday something new sprouts through the ground, blooms appear, and leaves begin filling empty branches. As you enjoy spring and summer unfolding, keep a lookout for unwelcome plants in gardens, waterways, and natural areas. The more people watching for and helping to manage invasive plants the better chance we have for controlling these invasive plants.

As active gardeners and influencers in the gardening world, we need your help not only monitoring and controlling invasive species but also informing others about this problem. The [Wisconsin Invasive Species Calendar](#) from the University of Wisconsin-Madison First Detector Network is a helpful tool alerting us to the appearance of various unwanted plants. Just click on the calendar to enlarge. This timely reminder can help us watch for, manage, and report invasive plants earlier in the season. Knowing when these plants emerge also narrows down the list of plants, helping with identification. Use this calendar, the links to Invasive Plant factsheets and videos on the right-hand column of the webpage and the invasive plant profiles on the [Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources \(DNR\) website](#) for more information on identification and control of aquatic and terrestrial invasive plants.

As you hike, bike, or visit parks, green spaces, and natural areas this year, report invasive plant infestations to the [Wisconsin DNR](#). If you think you have found a prohibited species, even on your own property, it's especially important to report it to help DNR understand the overall spread of the plants and they can sometimes help with managing it. Visit their [web page](#) for tips on documenting what you have found, reporting invasives, and the links to other resources. Provide photos and specific locations using GPS points, street addresses or road crossings.

Expand your efforts and be a part of the Citizen Science based Wisconsin First Detector program. You'll find helpful information in the Wisconsin First Detector and Dane County Parks Handbook on [Monitoring Invasive Plants in Wisconsin](#).

Here are a few of the top aquatic invasive plants to watch for and remove on your property. Please watch for and report infestations of these and other invasive species in your landscape and other spaces.

## Lesser Celandine

This plant's bright yellow flowers in April and May are often mistaken for our native marsh marigold. The plant spreads rapidly, crowding out nearby native plants but the leaves die back mid-season, resulting in soil erosion.

## Yellow Iris

A beautiful, but invasive plant that easily spreads by seeds floating in water, rhizomes, and floating mats, infesting areas beyond the garden where they were planted. Watch for yellow flowers in May and June and strappy leaves throughout the growing season.

## Yellow Floating Heart

This plant has yellow waterlily-like flowers held above heart-shaped leaves in May through October. This water plant forms dense patches that exclude native species and creates stagnant areas with low oxygen levels.

## Water Hyacinth

Water hyacinth forms a dense mat of leaves over the water surface, making boating, fishing, and other water activities difficult. Its presence also degrades water quality. Watch for circular leaves to begin appearing in May and lavender blue flowers from June to September.

## Purple Loosestrife

This plant seemed to have a banner year in 2021. It invades wetlands, disrupting the habitat and crowding out native plants that birds, insects, and waterfowl depend upon for food and shelter. Many homeowners spraying for mosquitoes may be inadvertently killing the beetles that are being used to manage this plant. Watch for the spikes of purplish pink flowers that open from the bottom up in July through September.

## Japanese Knotweed

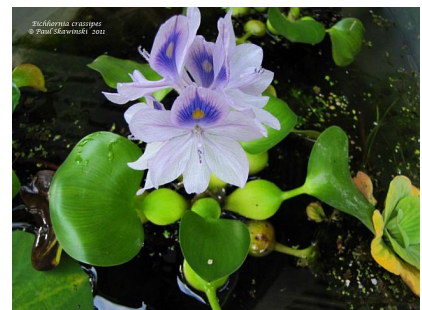
Look for the bamboo-like stems and plumes of creamy flowers that appear in September. It quickly spreads, creating an impenetrable thicket in gardens, natural spaces, and shorelines.

## Water Lettuce

As its name implies, this plant resembles lettuce. The leaves appear from June through October and can form a dense covering, degrading water quality and reducing habitat diversity.

These plants and other aquatic invasive plants are covered in the Top Invasive Plants to Avoid video. You'll find recommendations on good plants to include and those to avoid in the "Top Plants for Rain Gardens, Water Gardens & Shoreline Plantings and Those to Avoid" webinar available on demand. To watch it, click here & enter passcode: &#x9hPU^ You can also download the webinar handout.

Thanks for helping us spread the word. Together we can make a difference



Water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) is an invasive plant that forms a dense mat of leaves over the water surface, making boating, fishing, and other water activities difficult. Photo credit: Paul Skawinski

# News from the County Extension Offices

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

## Wisconsin Horticulture Extension Website – Continuing Education Opportunities

If you have not visited the Wisconsin Horticulture Extension Website recently, I encourage you to check it out. This site lists upcoming continuing education opportunities with most of them being free. Click on the “Menu” for “Learning Opportunities.” Most are on-line webinars and allow you to watch the recording if you are not able to view it live. Check out the archived webinar videos. All count for CE. Go to: <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/mini-webinars-for-gardeners/> This is a great place to pick up a few CE hours. I think on-line (virtual) educational opportunities are here to stay!

## Master Gardener On-line Reporting System (ORS) Tips

I am still getting questions about the on-line reporting systems (ORS) and how to input organizations and report hours.

Just a few reminders ...

- Before inputting a new organization in the ORS, check to see if the organization is already listed.
- You no longer report Projects. Organizations are listed instead.
- When inputting something new, list the “Who” – the organization – you are volunteering for,
- Contact person listed for the organization must be someone employed by or on the board of the organization
- There are distinct categories to input hours – Gardening, Educating Others, Administration, and Citizen Science. Be sure to choose the right area to report hours. Each are explained in the MG Onboarding course.



- Be sure to record the MG Onboarding course into the ORS to claim your CE earned for taking this course. It does not automatically get recorded. If you are a brand-new MG and took the full MG Onboarding course, you earned 10 hours of CE after completing it. If you are a “seasoned” MG and took the MG Onboarding Lite – 2022 version, you earned 5 hours of CE after completing it.
- As a back-up, record all volunteer hours and CE hours in a notebook or some place other than the ORS and make a note when you input it in the ORS. You will then have it recorded in two places – ORS and someplace else for your reference. At the time of writing this column I do not have access to the ORS so I cannot check anything for you.

## MG FAQ

The MG FAQ should be your “go to” place for questions about the 2022 changes for the MG Program. It can be found on the state MG website at: <https://mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/> It is updated regularly.

## MG Onboarding Lite – 2022 Version

If you are having problems completing the MG Onboarding Lite course, reach out to me after referring to the MG FAQ. I am very willing to help you.

### **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](mailto: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”.

# Using the Online System (ORS)

by MGV Janet Wintersberger

Some seasoned Master Gardeners remember the old system of reporting volunteer and continuing education hours: it was all done on paper and mailed to the Extension Office or dropped off. Then all the information was entered into a database. All in all, it wasn't an eco-friendly system. A few years ago, we began using our computers to provide the same volunteer and continuing education hours. That was a vast improvement for MGVs who were computer savvy. There was a learning curve.

Now we're facing another learning curve with the ORS system. ORS is a much larger database and certainly expedites information gathering. So let's look at it from that perspective.

Somewhat confusing is that ORS requires one username and a password, and Canvas requires another username (NetID) and password.

The university issues the username and NetID. MGVs need to remember the two usernames and passwords. In both cases the help desk (DoIt) can remind you of the usernames in case you forgot. You can phone them or complete an online form. But to access your passwords, you need to speak to a staff person directly.

Because of the new model the Extension adopted this year, more information needs to be entered into ORS. This in itself is a new learning curve. In this issue Ann Wied explains the steps we need to follow to enter our volunteer hours. Videos are available at <https://mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/report-your-hours/>

## Stay informed

by Susan McDonel, MGV

Members should check the SEWMG website regularly. Updates are made as they become available, including education opportunities and calendar of meetings.

# Let's Get Social

by MGV Margaret Krueger



Did you know SEWMG is on Facebook and Instagram? It's a great way to let the public know what we are doing! Help us share the SEWMG community influence by sending us your stories and photos of the projects you're working on. We love featuring our volunteers in action, either working in gardens or speaking to community groups. Your efforts are making an impact so let's share those moments! Send photos along with a brief description to Margaret Krueger, [margaret.l.krueger@gmail.com](mailto:margaret.l.krueger@gmail.com) And don't forget to join us by liking our FB page and following our Instagram account.



Find us on Facebook:  
SouthEast Wisconsin Master Gardeners



Follow us on Instagram:  
[sewisconsinmastergardeners](https://www.instagram.com/sewisconsinmastergardeners)



# Garden Walk - Sunday, July 17, 2022

by MGV Janet Wintersberger

There's a hidden gem in Brookfield that you and others will enjoy. It's just six blocks north of Brookfield Square. Named after the family who built it in 1843, the 'Dousman' Stagecoach Inn is cared for by the Elmbrook Historical Society. The building is fully restored and authentically furnished as it was once.

All visitors to this historic site have admired the beautiful cottage, butterfly garden, raised bed, kitchen garden, prairie and the new boundary gardens which have expanded every year. Here's your chance to enjoy the gardens and tour the Inn on Sunday, July 17, from 1 pm to 4 pm. Master gardeners will highlight the gardens they lovingly care for. Each tour of the Inn will be led by a costumed docent familiar with life during the mid- to late-1800s. Light refreshments will be served in the dining room.

This special event is a fundraiser for the Elmbrook Historical Society. A \$10 admission fee (for adults) helps the new non-profit support the gardens.

1075 Pilgrim Park Road\*  
Brookfield, WI

Its location is marked by a large white sign west of the road.

\*The street name changes at Bluemound Road. South of Bluemound it's Moorland Road. North of Bluemound it's Pilgrim Park.

## Opening our Garden Gates

by MGV Jim Schief

Join us for an afternoon of friendship, hospitality and garden idea sharing. Introduced in 2019, SEWMG will host our Open Garden Social on Sunday, June 19, 2022, from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. at fellow SEWMG's personal gardens throughout the region. This purely social event has been wonderfully received, allowing members to build friendships outside their normal gardening efforts while visiting other volunteer's gardens for an opportunity to sit and chat gardens without having to weed or work.

This is not a garden tour, and the only expectation is that you have fun and have passionate discussions on the plants we all love. We have nine fabulous garden hosts and gardens throughout Milwaukee and Waukesha counties. With the opening of the Master Gardening program this year, this event may also help you gain insight and fresh ideas while discussing where others are volunteering.

- Jane Belanger  
3452 South 18th Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53215  
414-331-3146
- Virginia Geraghty  
W145N7579 Northwood Dr.  
Menomonee Falls, WI 53051  
414-303-3700
- Laura Nankin  
5048 N. Idlewild Ave.  
Whitefish Bay, WI 53217  
414-405-8714

- Erin Napier  
521 Park Ave.  
South Milwaukee, WI 53172  
414-294-8910
- Valorie Sangsland  
12580 W. Weatherstone Blvd.  
New Berlin, WI 53151  
414-791-2082
- Jim Schief  
2634 N. Summit Ave.  
Milwaukee, WI 53211  
414-313-3346
- Karen Sidders  
11111 W. Mequon Rd.  
(Look for mailbox)  
Mequon, WI 53097  
262-352-4524
- Jeff Trader  
2490 Shelly Ct.  
Brookfield, WI 53045  
414-651-9997
- Melanie Worthy  
7058 Lindner Drive  
Franklin, WI 53132  
414-588-0879



### **Open Garden Social**

**Sunday, June 19, 2022, from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.**

**Purely social**

**SEWMG members and guests or those interested in becoming members**

### **Jumping Worms**

**If you are visiting the gardens and have jumping worms in your own gardens, please be sure to wear clean shoes. Or you are hosting a garden social and have jumping worms in your gardens, please let your guests know.**

# Letter from the President

by MGV Erin Napier

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Brighter, hotter, longer days are here to enjoy and for us this means one thing: more time to spend outside with the plants we love. The season is a great time to get involved.

At May's SEWMG Member Meeting, the Board and various committee chairs discussed the great progress happening within SEWMG to not only adapt to changes with our partners at UW-Extension, but to push SEWMG forward into 2023 and beyond. We fielded some great questions from members eager to hear more.

The Membership Meeting attendance did not reach 20% of our total membership even though members could attend in person or virtually over Zoom. I invite members that did not attend the meeting to locate the meeting recording on SEWMG.org and get up to speed with our organization's

progress, challenges, and appeals. While we appreciate the commitment of our regular attendees, we really want all of our members to engage with SEWMG.

I'm asking members to step up and show up more now than ever. 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](mailto:erinn521@gmail.com) and we can chat at a mutually convenient time.

## Our New Logo

by MGV Jim Fratrick, Past President

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*And the winner is ... Annie Mergel.*

SEWMG Members were invited via e-mail this past March to submit Logo design entries to Board Chair Valorie Sangsland to be considered for judging by a panel of three SEWMG, two of which are also Board members. This arrangement provided for anonymity of the submitters. After the April 15, 2022, deadline, Valorie forwarded all the entries to the judges who met and chose Annie's design. The Logo was later approved by the SEWMG Board with very minor changes.

Our new Logo was introduced at the May 25 Member Meeting. Annie received a \$100.00 gift certificate for her winning design. Annie relocated to Wisconsin to take a job here. Her educational background includes graphic arts training; Annie uses graphic arts as part of her job.

SEWMG developed a new Logo because of the disassociation of UW-EXT with the statewide Master Gardener program. Extension no longer wanted Logos to include any reference to them.





# Volunteer for the State Fair

Thursday, August 4 through Sunday, August 14 by MGV Dawn Scherr

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As in the past SEWMG will staff our garden in Exploratory Park, just northwest of the Exposition Center and we are looking for volunteers to answer questions from the public who visit our area throughout the day. We ask for one shift captain and four volunteers in each time slot. There will be mandatory training/orientation session for Shift Captains, but all MGs volunteering at the event are welcome to attend. The orientation sessions will be Tuesday, August 2 at 6:30 p.m. and Wednesday, August 3 at 10:00 a.m., which are the days just prior to the start of the Fair. Parking will be limited with all the vendors setting up, so plan to arrive early to allow time to walk to the site. Even if you have been a Shift Captain in prior years or at prior events, attendance is mandatory due to the many changes the MG program and our site have undergone in the past year.

Both the orientation session and your shift hours count as volunteer hours in the ORS. Shift Captain responsibilities can be reviewed at (<https://bit.ly/ShiftCaptain>).

Priority shift registrations for SEWMG members who have paid 2022 dues will run from June 3 – June 17. Registration for other MGs not currently a member of SEWMG, or late-deciding SEWMG members will begin June 18 and run until all shifts are filled. We also need volunteers to be on stand-by for last minute shift cancellations due to unforeseen circumstances. If there are additional days that you can be on standby, please let us know when you register. You must have completed the Onboarding Lite course prior to attending orientation or volunteering at a shift.

Your volunteer hours should be loaded on the ORS under Southeast Wisconsin Master Gardeners (SEWMG), and in the comments say Wisconsin State Fair and estimate the number of contacts you engaged with during your shift.

Shifts are scheduled as follows, Tuesday August 4 – Sunday, August 14:

Morning: 9:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

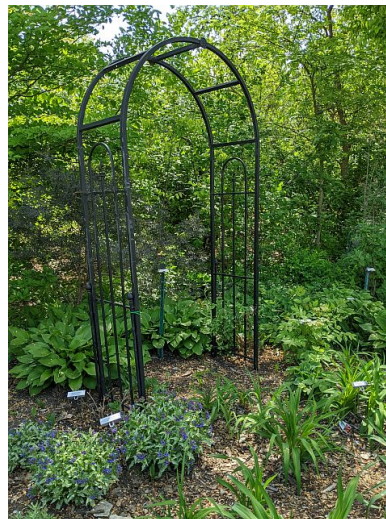
Mid-Day: 12:30 p.m.- 4:30 p.m.

Evening: 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Scheduling requests will be processed in the order they are received. Initially, we will offer a maximum of two shifts per individual until all requests are reviewed and scheduled. If any shifts remain, we will allow three or more shifts per person. Please list the shifts you are able to work, in order of preference.

As in past years, volunteers will receive an admission ticket to the Wisconsin State Fair so you can enjoy the Fair before or after your shift as a bonus perk. Parking is your responsibility. We encourage carpooling, drop-offs, or taking the bus (which drops off in the parking lot just outside our area).

Thank you for your time and effort making our return to the Wisconsin State Fair a success!



UW-Madison Extension Waukesha County  
Waukesha County Administration Center  
515 W. Moreland Road, Room AC-G22  
Waukesha, WI 53188



## Master Gardener - Information/Contact Information

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### *For more information:*

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Laurie Baker, Seasonal Photography	
On the Web	sewmg.org

#### *State:*

Master Gardener Program - University of Wisconsin Extension      [mastergardener.extension@wisc.edu](mailto:mastergardener.extension@wisc.edu)

#### *Local:*

UW-Madison Extension Waukesha      Waukesha County Administration Center,  
515 W. Moreland Road, Room AC-G22, Waukesha, WI 53188  
Ann Wied, Outreach Specialist      262-548-7788; [ann.wied@wisc.edu](mailto:ann.wied@wisc.edu)

#### *Our Mission Statement*

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