



Stay in Touch ...

by MGV

As SEWMG continues to evolve as a completely independent Association, we need to make certain we don't lose contact with our members by having our communications accidentally end up in **Spam** or **Junk** folders. Many future communications from SEWMG will be coming from one of two email addresses:

sewmastergardeners@gmail.com
sewmastergardeners@googlegroups.com

In order to make certain that our emails don't end up in SPAM or JUNK folders, please take a moment to create contacts in your mail service for both of these email addresses. Please take a moment to create these contacts right away. In this time of accelerating change, we don't want you to miss anything!



Plectranthus "Cervesa 'n Lime"

Plant Profile: Cervesa 'n Lime

by MGV Kelly Kramer

After months of neutral colors in the landscape, to see the earth greening up is one of the great joys of spring. While I enjoy shopping for colorful annuals, there is one annual plant on my shopping list that has no flowers (well, not here anyway) or even multicolored leaves. It is an annual Plectranthus called "Cerveza 'n Lime". This plant not only smells great but feels great too. This annual has rounded chartreuse leaves that are very soft and fuzzy to the touch. Just touching the leaves brings up a strong scent of lime which I find really refreshing.

In the warm climate zones of 9 through 11, where summers stretch into forever, this plant is a perennial and will have small flowers – but for us this is a foliage annual plant. For me, I feel the lime fragrance more than makes up for a lack of flowers.

Websites

[SEWMG *sewmq.org/*](http://SEWMG.sewmq.org/)

This is the website of your local association: SouthEast Wisconsin Master Gardeners. This association provides support and networking for local Master Gardener Volunteers in the greater Milwaukee/Waukesha area.

[WIMGA *wimqa.org/*](http://WIMGA.wimqa.org/)

This is the website of the state association: Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association. This association serves as the interface between location Master Gardener organizations (like SEWMG) and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Division of Extension

[Extension *Master Gardener Program*](http://Extension.MasterGardenerProgram.mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/)

mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/

This is the website for the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Division of Extension Master Gardener Program. This organization trains Wisconsin's Master Gardener Volunteers via in-person or web-based curricula, and tracks volunteer hours and CE hours needed by Master Gardeners to maintain their certification. Extension communications, training materials, the CANVAS Classroom and the Online Reporting System (ORS) are located on this site.

I like to use this annual plant in containers. It has a mounded habit and makes for a great filler plant and pairs well with other container annuals. It gets about 12-14 inches tall and 12 inches wide. Well drained soil is a must with low to average watering. Too much moisture and the roots will quickly rot. Cerveza 'n Lime likes full to part sun and once established it is fairly drought tolerant. I haven't found it needs a lot of fertilizer either. When planting, I apply a slow-release fertilizer in the container and that is usually all it needs.

This plant is very easy to care for and has become a staple on my annual plant shopping list. It gets potted up in a container on a patio table where I can touch the leaves and enjoy the fragrance.

From the Board

by MGV Valorie Sangsland, Chair

The SEWMG theme for 2022 is most certainly Change. Extension has elected to make changes that impact nearly every aspect of SEWMG as we have known it until now. We don't have all the information yet to provide our members with a roadmap showing how our organization is going to adapt to these changes.

There will be no more "Extension approved gardens and projects" and no garden or project chairs. Members will need to join volunteer groups at the gardens they normally support, and will report through their structures in order to continue to volunteer at those sites.

On the other hand, if you have completed the 2022 Onboarding Lite, you know that you will now have the opportunity to volunteer at any location that interests you and report volunteer hours for your service, as long as the site meets the criteria set forth by Extension. This may prove to be an exciting change for many of you who have hoped to expand the scope of your volunteerism.

We need to investigate options in cases where there is not already a volunteer organization our members can join – Realtor's Home and Garden Show, Wisconsin State Fair, Lifelong Gardening presentations, Speaker's Bureau, farmers markets, etc. These make up SEWMG's primary educational outreach events. Rest assured that your Board is focused on determining how we best move forward while at the same time assuming no unnecessary liabilities.

We ask for your patience while we research options, consult with WIMGA and other MGV associations, and enter discussions with insurance professionals. We cannot change or influence the decisions made by Extension as relates to the Master Gardener program. We can, however, choose to react with a positive attitude and optimistic energy as we make this journey together. Your Board stands ready to guide SEWMG as we evolve.

I leave you with a positive thought:
"Change is the law of life, and those who look only to the past and present are certain to miss the future" -John F. Kennedy

Letter from the President

by MGV Erin Napier

Dear Members: It is with great excitement that I begin this year as SEWMG's President. I look forward to working alongside the other Board members and SEWMG members in a year sure to bring change and innovation for 2022 and beyond.

Behind the scenes, I've been working with others to organize the calendar for SEWMG Membership Meetings and additional member events. Be sure to check <https://sewmg.org/calendars> for up-to-date information on the SEWMG Calendar.

SEWMG Member Meetings for 2022 (Location & Format pending):

- Tuesday, February 22, 2022 – 6:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 25, 2022 – 6:30 p.m.
- Thursday, August 25, 2022 – 6:30 p.m.
- Saturday, November 12, 2022 – SEWMG Annual/Member Meeting – 10:00 a.m.

SEWMG Events for 2022 (Time and Location pending)

- Sunday, June 12, 2022 – Open Garden Social (Co-Chairs: Jim Schleif and Leslie Davis)
- Thursday, August 11, 2022 – Member Picnic (Chair: Karla Geiger)
- Wednesday, December 7, 2022 - Holiday Party at Alioto's (Co-Chairs: Patty Witt and Diane Thieme)

In addition, the SEWMG Strategic Planning Committee has an injection of new committee members that will join Kat O'Connell-Valuch, Mary Wolverton, and I in 2022 and provide additional perspective. A warm welcome to Eileen Quinlan (1st Year Director), Janet Barthel (Director at Large), and Karla Geiger (past SEWMG President). We look forward to reaching out to SEWMG members to engage in aspects of our planning process soon. Look for additional details on e-mail and on SouthEast Wisconsin Master Gardener's website!

Save the Dates

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Help Stop Invasive Plants

by Melinda Myers

“For many of us, winter is the start of the gardening season. We are busy browsing catalogs, reading garden articles, and looking for sources of new plants. As the planning process continues, the plant wish list keeps expanding. Once your list is complete and before placing any order online, be sure to check your list for any invasive plants that are prohibited or restricted in Wisconsin.

According to the Invasive Species Rule NR40, prohibited plants are those that are not currently found or occur in isolated areas in the state. If introduced into the state, these plants are likely to cause significant economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. Restricted plants according to NR40 are already established in the state causing harm or have the potential to cause significant harm.

Although regulations for the sale, purchase and possession of invasive species are in place, some online sellers are not aware, up-to-date, or concerned with following existing state and federal regulations. Just because you can purchase a plant does not mean it is allowed in Wisconsin. So, it is up to us, the individual gardener, to protect our gardens, natural spaces, and waterways.

Many of us purchased plants in the past unaware they would eventually become a problem for native plants, wildlife, and beneficial insects when food sources and nesting sites disappear. Many also negatively impact our waterways, recreational use of spaces, and the economy. Now, we are tasked with paying for and personally eliminating the problem. More research and precautions are being taken to manage existing invasive species and reduce the risk of future problems.

As we learn more by observing what is happening in our own and other states, the list of prohibited and restricted plants keeps changing. It is important to visit the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources website and make any needed changes before placing your plant order.

Growing even one or two invasive plants in your garden, shoreline planting or pond can have an impact. Invasive plants tend to be vigorous growers, reproducing faster than our native plants, and more tolerant of adverse conditions. This allows them to quickly spread, take over and cause harm.

Not only do these invasive plants disrupt the ecosystem; they have a negative impact on our economy, personal budgets, outdoor recreation, and health. In 2001 an estimated \$137 billion dollars were spent in the United States to manage the ecological damage and to control invasive species. These costs have continued to increase each year and many of the

expenses are passed on to consumers.

It is easy to see the impact of some of the thugs, like Japanese knotweed, that have overrun gardens, landscapes, shorelines and our waterways. New infestations usually occur when soil containing rhizomes of this invasive plant are moved to a new location or washed downstream. Even small root segments only a couple inches long can start a new infestation.

The yellow flag Iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) is an invasive plant masked as an adaptable and beautiful perennial. This beauty seems harmless growing along the shoreline, in the garden or pond. Its ability to spread and vigorous growth habit have made it a threat to our waterways. Seeds or pieces of the rhizome can float away from the planting or be accidentally moved into natural spaces. It quickly adapts to a wide range of growing conditions and forms dense clumps or floating mats that can alter wildlife habitats and the diversity of species.

I have teamed up with the UW-Madison Extension Aquatic Invasive Species Outreach Program to help spread the word about aquatic invasive plants. As an influencer in the gardening world, I need your help to reach more gardeners. Many people are not aware of this threat and need our help to make wise plant decisions.

Thanks to all of you who are already spreading the word and actively trying to manage invasive terrestrial and aquatic plants. If you are interested in volunteering or need advice to help control invasive plants, email DNRAISinfo@wisconsin.gov.

As we work together sharing our passion for gardening and our concern for Wisconsin's natural spaces, lakes, and waterways, we can make a difference.”

Melinda Myers is the author of numerous gardening books, including The Garden Book for Wisconsin, Small Space Gardening and The Midwest Gardeners Handbook. She hosts the “How to Grow Anything” DVD series and the Melinda’s Garden Moment TV & radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine. She offers free gardening webinars on her website at www.MelindaMyers.com.

News from the County Extension Offices

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

Complete MG Onboarding Lite - 2022 Version

By now I assume most of you have completed the course: MG Onboarding Lite – 2022 Version. Due to significant updates to the program, you are required to complete this course before you start volunteering. You can claim 5 hours of Continuing Education although they estimate it will take you less time than this. Taking this course is also a requirement of the terms and conditions of continuing to be a master gardener in 2022. There is still time to take it. Even if you took it in 2021, everyone is required to take the 2022 Version.

Questions About the Statewide Master Gardener Program Changes

Extension could no longer continue operating the Master Gardener Program as they once did. Continuing with the old model was no longer an option. I am hopeful that with time, we all can adjust to these new changes. I realize that all the changes continue to generate additional questions. Please continue to visit the Wisconsin Master Gardener Program website for updates. Feel free to also reach out to me with questions. Go to: <https://mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/2021/12/08/changes-to-wisconsin-master-gardener-programs/>

Extension Horticulture New Gardening Webinar Series

Extension Horticulture has a new gardening webinar series. These engaging mini-webinars are 30 minutes long including Q & A. The audience for these webinars is the public but you can attend as you might find these helpful and interesting. Please help us promote these mini-webinars by sharing registration information with family and friends. These mini-webinars are free, but registration is required. Everyone can register for one or all. These will count for Master Continuing Education (CE).

The first series is at noon; future mini-webinars may be held at a different time. By the time you receive this newsletter, it may have already started. More are planned for this summer and into fall. The first webinar series, "Planning for a Fruitful Season," will cover three fruit topics on three different dates. Dates: February 23, March 2, and March 9 at noon. Topics are

pruning apple trees, apple pests, and growing strawberries in containers. Find additional details and registration at https://uwmadison.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_wMLIPz1oQKq8XLG3jDHu5w

Watch the Wisconsin Horticulture website for updates and information about future webinars and mini-webinars. Go to <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/> and then click on "menu," then "learning opportunities."

Congratulations to Recent MG Graduates!

Congratulations to our new crop of MGs for completing the 2022 MG Onboarding and Foundations in Horticulture courses. We welcome all of you. Congratulations on being a Certified Master Gardener!

- *All MGVs need to complete MG Onboarding Lite - 2022 Version due to changes in the MG program.*
- *Continue to visit the Wisconsin Master Gardener Program website for updates on changes to the statewide program.*
 - *"Planning for a Fruitful Season" is the Extension's first mini-webinar series on February 23, March 2, and March 9 at noon. Register for this free series.*
 - *Future webinars and mini-webinars will be found at <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/> and then click on "menu," then "learning opportunities."*
 - *Congratulations to the recent MG graduates who completed the Onboarding and Foundations in Horticulture!*



2022 SEWMG Board of Directors

Elected on November 13, 2021



Erin Napier, President

I trained to be a MGV in 2019. Last year's "proposal of becoming a SEWMG board member was inviting to me as it is an excellent opportunity to positively affect change and support an endeavor that I'm passionate about. I look forward to utilizing a host of professional capabilities cultivated in the Fortune 500, consulting, higher ed, and nonprofit leadership roles. I look forward to working alongside other passionate MGVs in the years to come!"



Mary Holtz, Vice President/President Elect

Mary was a student in the Level One training class of Fall 2019. Since then, she worked primarily at the Franciscan Gardens project in South Milwaukee, as so many projects were on hiatus. She is particularly interested in native plant varieties, especially woodland ephemerals, though she's learning to appreciate prairie natives & grasses and plans to install a "pocket meadow" in her backyard. She's also interested in plant diagnostics/diseases and insects (beneficials and pests), both disciplines that appeal to her professional science background.

Mary looks forward to getting more involved with SEWMG, and to working closely with other board members as the organization navigates its way through significant change.



Betsy Vokac, Secretary

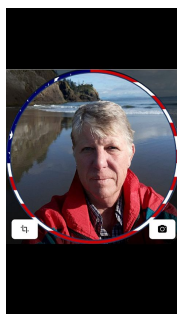
Betsy took the Level 1 training in 2012 and was certified in 2013. She says, "My mainstay activities were volunteering at the FOX 6 Demonstration Garden until that project was closed in 2019 and in providing administrative support to the UW Extension office in Milwaukee County. I have also enjoyed popping in for the odd workday at Lynden Sculpture Garden and North Point Lighthouse, and in serving as a garden mentor for the Victory Garden Initiative."

"By volunteering as a MGV, I show what matters to me and what kind of community I want to live in. SEWMG is full of dedicated and enthusiastic members, and I love that the organization's projects allow us to connect in many ways to community needs. I see the officer roles as aiding future success for a well-established organization. It is exciting to be part of that!"



Val Sangsland, SEWMG Chair, and Second-year Director

I enjoyed working with a group of dedicated individuals in 2021 who brought a multitude of work and gardening experiences together to gain consensus in support SEWMG's goals. I found it remarkable how all the diverse opinions could be melded into a cohesive strategy and action plan, based on our common desire to ensure the association's success.



Ellen Grissom, Treasurer

Ellen became an MGV in 2017 and has been involved with the plant sale, Waukesha's community gardens and at State Fair. Her interest in gardening was fostered by her parents, and from her grandfather, a farmer.

She accepted the role of treasurer because of her love of math. Ellen also wants to meet more MGVs and learn more about SEWMG.

2022 SEWMG Board of Directors

Elected on November 13, 2021



Carolyn Colwell, Third-year Director

What I enjoy most about being a MGV is talking to people who are interested in learning more about gardening. I especially like working with Lifelong Gardening showing people options for continuing to garden as they get older.

Being on the Board for the past year I have learned how many dedicated and hardworking members there are who contribute to the Association in many ways.

Janet Barthel, Director-at-Large

Since taking the Master Gardener training in 2012, Janet has worked with community gardens in Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties.



My first project was 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 Morrissey's leadership. I have worked with Ann Wied in a community garden...sometimes just weeding, and sometimes working with the youth. I have consistently worked the State Fair and joined the Pollinator Group to learn about pollinators, do some outreach and bumble bee surveys related to it."

"I absolutely love this organization and its purpose to the community, so I hope I can contribute to leadership."

Mercedes Vega, Director-at-Large

Mercedes has been a Master Gardener Volunteer for three years. Previous opportunities with SEWMG began with training provided by Lifelong Gardening committee, and a part of the Ten Chimney committee.



As a voting Board Member working to secure our transition to a community impact program model, advancing diversity and inclusion essential to SEWMG's Mission, and its relevance in the 21st century.

I look forward to being a Liaison with Public Events, paving the way for our Youth to be a part of our diversity and inclusion.

Jim Fratrack, Past President

Jim has been an MGV since 2013 and was our President in 2021. He said, "I learned a lot about our organization, but know I still have much to learn. I have worked at the plant sales and the home show, and my favorite activity is working State Fair."



Jim was proud of everyone's commitment who created the 2022 budget for the betterment of the organization as the priority, and everyone's generosity of time and effort."

2022 will be a year of many changes for our Association. The Board is embracing this opportunity to strengthen the organization's commitment to the members we serve.

"We will continue to follow the directions from UW Extension on opening gardens, in-person meetings and training. "

Another Board Member, Eileen Quinlan, will be introduced in the next newsletter.

My Favorite Tool

by MGV Ann Loper

Welcome to 2022! I completed master gardener certification in 2011 and worked in the Franciscan Villa Gardens since they were close to my home. It was rewarding creating and maintaining beautiful gardens for others walking by and for the residents to enjoy. I have also served as director-at-large on the SEWMG board and was a member of the audit and by-laws committees. This was a great way to learn more about the workings of the association.

My biggest commitment as a master gardener has been with the Lifelong Gardening Project (LLG). In about 2012, I attended a LLG meeting, and when I heard their mission was to help those with arthritis or other limitations learn or continue to garden using tools to assist them, I was all in! LLG has gone through a big transformation, organizing and labeling tools, creating a "toolbox" of information and PowerPoints for presentations. As a result of our growing project, LLG wrote for and won First Place in the National Master Gardeners Search for Excellence Award in the Special Needs category in 2017. LLG receives more than a dozen requests each year for presentations.

Being involved with LLG has given me access to some great tools to make gardening much easier on the body. My favorite garden tool/equipment is the elevated garden. About six years ago as I

harvested onions and carrots from the ground I had an "ah ha" moment asking myself, "Why am I on the ground harvesting all these vegetables when I could be standing instead?" So that winter, I order two elevated gardens . . . and now I have five elevated gardens in my backyard! To go along with the elevated gardens, I use a dial seed sower that allows me to sow carrots, lettuce, kale, and other tiny seeds evenly.

If you are not familiar with LLG and all the wonderful tools to assist us to make gardening easier, please check out LLGs page on the new website sewmg.org Happy Gardening!



Elevated garden, Amazon

Approx. \$150

Dial Seed Sower, Home Depot

Approx. \$5

Water trough, Farm & Fleet

Approx. \$100

Your favorite garden tool
by MGV Janet Wintersberger

Ann Loper initiated the column your favorite garden tool. We would like you to share the device that helps make gardening easier with all our MGVs. It's simple. Just tell us what the tool is, how, why and when you find it helpful. It's approximate cost and, if possible, a photo. Our next deadline for articles is May 1.

Please send your article to jhw53045@gmail.com and sandymanning@gmail.com.



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

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

Laurie Baker | Seasonal Photography

Grow with us



Contact Information

For more information:

On the Web

sewmg.org

Ann Wied (Outreach Specialist, Waukesha)
UW-Madison Extension Waukesha

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