

Southeast Wisconsin Master Gardener Association

Annual Accomplishment Report 2007

There are 429 current members of SEWMGA; 291 are certified for 2008. Ninety five new members took general training in the spring and 111 certified MGVs took the fall specialty course.

In 2007 we volunteered 796 hours in youth education 10,273 hours in community education 8,131 hours in support services and participated in 11,010 hours of continuing education.

SEWMGA was started in 1992 as a non-profit organization serving Waukesha and Milwaukee Counties, and currently has about 30 formally identified committees, including garden projects, and many other informally organized community support activities. We staff booths at both the spring Home Show and summer State Fair. Our fund raiser is the Plant Sale held in May at State Fair Park. We hold monthly business and committee meetings with educational programs and trips conducted throughout the year. Our newsletter, *Good Earth News*, is published six times during the year. Visit our web site at milwaukee.uwex.edu/mg/.

Major Accomplishments or Projects:

1. Milwaukee County Fair. SEWMGVs participated in the first Milwaukee Co. Fair in September 2007 by both staffing displays and demonstrations and by entering produce and other items for judging.
2. Plant Sale Education Component. SEWMGA's May perennial Plant Sale fund raiser attracts a large crowd of bargain-hunting gardeners. This year, a formal education component was added to the sale, which included a display of invasive plants (with live samples), a display for the new UWEX Horticulture Center at Boerner (see below) and MGV "specialists" who provided advice on the specific plants being sold. There were many favorable comments from the buyers, thus education will be expanded for the 2008 sale.
3. Plant Health Advisors at the UWEX Horticulture Center at Boerner Botanical Gardens. The PHA program was expanded to include a regular schedule at Boerner Botanical Gardens staffed by SEWMGVs and MGVs from Racine, Kenosha and Ozaukee Counties. We have contributed over 500 hours of service since the center opened on May 1st, 2007. Over 2,800 pieces of literature were distributed. A reduced schedule continues over the winter.
4. Champion Tree Project. A group of 13 MGVs attended a DNR sponsored workshop and began locating, measuring and confirming Champion Trees in Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties. MGVs have located (often a hard task in itself) and evaluated over 80 trees so far in 2007. SEWMGA purchased measurement equipment for the project.
5. New Member Activities. SEWMG held a Project Fair at our New Member Social in conjunction with an evening educational activity.

Highlighted Project: Lifelong Gardening Exhibit at the Wisconsin State Fair

This exhibit was developed by a committed group of volunteers and staff in an unused, formerly buckthorn- ridden portion of the Department of Natural Resources Area at State Fair Park adjacent to the existing SEWMGV's Model Backyard. The area was designed to demonstrate several aspects of enabling gardening including a hands-on tools display, a wheelchair accessible garden cart, a planting table, raised beds and several displays of planters and planting techniques which provide greater access to gardening for people with limitations. SEWMG staffing was increased during the State Fair to accommodate visitors to this new area, which numbered about 45,000 during the 11 day run. Comments from the public were highly favorable and enhancements are planned for 2008.