

Southeast WI Master Gardeners

Annual Accomplishment Report 2008

There are 475 current members of SEWMGA, 337 are certified for 2009. One hundred and four new members took general training in the spring and 111 certified MGVs took the fall specialty course. In 2008 we volunteered 1,057 hours in youth education 6,603 hours in community education 14,372 hours in support service and participated in 11,437 hours in continuing education

SEWMGA was started in 1992 as a non-profit organization serving Waukesha and Milwaukee Counties, and currently has about 44 formally identified garden projects including youth opportunities, 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 and have 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. *Updated by-laws.* As of October 2008, we have voted and approved updated by-laws. The original by-laws were written for a much smaller organization, and thus were very out of date. We updated sections where the organization methods of operation had changed and the by-laws were out of date; simplified by reducing/removing sections not appropriate by-law material; simplified to a single governing body; assured necessary controls in the areas of finance, insurance and organizational purpose; assure compliance with IRS-501(c)(3) regulations and WIMGA guidelines; and kept changes simple. This was a very important step to move our organization forward.

2. *Milwaukee Co. Fair.* MGV's participated in the Second Annual Milwaukee Co. Fair in September 2008 by staffing displays and demonstrations, and by entering produce and other items for judging. In addition, we were proud to be the Grand Champion Sponsor of the Milwaukee Co. Fair.

3. *Continued support for our Community projects.* We continue to enhance educational portions of our Plant Sale and the State Fair, including the Model Backyard and Life Long Learning at the State Fair. Specially trained Plant Health Advisors volunteer at the UWEX office and Boerner Botanical Gardens, and MGVs staff a booth at the Garden and Landscape Show. MGV's also assisted in the new Pot Recycling held at Boerner Botanical Garden this fall, with 17 tons of plastics collected, ground and kept out of our landfills.

Highlighted Project: The Midwest Regional Master Gardener Conference, *Gardening Through the Continuum of Life*

The conference (July 16-19) at the Milwaukee Airport Wyndham Hotel and Conference Center was a great success! It truly was a team effort – from the committee heads, who coordinated and planned registrations, hospitality, and meals, their teams, and the MGV's who worked a shift, were bus monitors, guides at a garden, staffed the auction room or gave directions at the Conference. Coupled with UW-Extension's (local and state) help and support, and WIMGA allowing us to be the host, the Midwest regional Conference became a reality. This great project was a tremendous effort from 2005-2008, requiring many hundreds of volunteer hours. Many of the over 250 attendees expressed their appreciation and thanks for SEWMG's obvious great efforts and attention to details in hosting the conference. Attendees came from all over the Midwest and as far away as Hawaii. The 3 day conference boasted over 40 speakers, hundreds of vendors, many auction items and 6 fantastic bus tours.