

Southeast WI Master Gardeners

Annual Accomplishment Report 2010

SEWMGA has 577 members, primarily in Milwaukee and Waukesha Counties, including 125 who took general training in the spring (95 have certified already). A total of 415 members are certified for 2011.

In 2010 we volunteered 2,187 hours in youth education, 13,674 hours in community education 8,953 hours in support service and participated in 13,060 hours in continuing education. We offered nine educational programs and four bus trips to expand our members' gardening knowledge. A newsletter is published every other month, and a monthly email provides current information.

Major Accomplishments or Projects:

1. *Inspire by Example Team Award.* In April, our organization accepted this prestigious award from the Volunteer Center in Milwaukee. Collectively, our MGVs recorded over 22,000 hours of service (in 2009) to Milwaukee and Waukesha County residents.
2. *Endowments and MG-in-Training Scholarships.* Years of successful fund-raising and prudent investment allowed SEWMGA to establish endowments at two- and four-year colleges and universities (UW-Madison, UW-Stevens Point, Milwaukee Area Technology College and Waukesha Co. Technology College) this year. The \$115,000 investment will benefit horticultural students with financial need in perpetuity. We also gave partial scholarships (\$75) to ten people enrolled in January's MG General Training. We expect to offer twenty similar scholarships in 2011.
3. *Garden Projects.* MGVs care for over 50 approved garden projects throughout our two-county area. The projects are at historical sites, community performing arts centers, health-care and extended care facilities; in state, county and city parks; at libraries and schools; and at the grounds of TV6. We donated over 5,000 pounds of fresh produce to local food pantries from our six vegetable gardens.
4. *Annual One-Day Fundraiser.* The annual Perennial Plant Sale is a collaborative activity and encompasses a six-week effort of digging, dividing, potting and nurturing 25,000 perennials from our gardens and those of friends. On the day of the sale MGVs serve as subject matter experts for people buying the plants. Plant buyers learn about invasive species, try out enabling garden tools, and see live demonstrations on dividing plants and planting containers.
5. *Public Outreach.* Thousands of people learn and benefit from MGVs who share their knowledge at events such as the Home & Garden Show in March and April, the Wisconsin State Fair in August and the Milwaukee Co. Fair in Sept. Plant health advisors answer telephone calls, respond to emails and offer in-person diagnostics. Our speaker's bureau gave 57 presentations to various groups.
6. *Lifelong Gardening.* A team inventoried nearly 100 tools designed to help gardeners with physical limitations. An assortment of tools is being rotated among our many garden projects so MGVs can become familiar with the tools and help evaluate the tool's effectiveness. A lending program has also been established. The group also gives presentations and offers its display at many events.

Highlighted Project: The Garden Support Committee

This year, a Garden Support Committee visited over 40 (of the 50 plus) gardens supported by MGVs and mostly funded through SEWMGA. Two or three committee members visited each garden and met with the volunteer garden chairs or garden co-chairs. The intent is to ensure the gardens meet UWEX standards as well as assist the chairs/co-chairs in meeting challenges. The committee also holds spring and fall forums with garden chairs and co-chairs to share information and has provided uniform signage identifying the garden as a UWEX/SEWMGA-supported project, stakes and labels.