



**Sandy Manning**

sandymanning@gmail.com

**Janet Wintersberger**

jwintersberger@wi.rr.com

**Ann Weronke**

aeweronke@earthlink.net

*Inside this issue:*

<i>News from the County Offices</i>	2
<i>Plant Sale Committee Shares</i>	3
<i>Volunteer &amp; Education Report</i>	4
<i>Stay Informed</i>	4
<i>2012 Officers &amp; Board</i>	4
<i>In-house Program Committee</i>	5
<i>Trips &amp; Tours</i>	5
<i>President's Corner</i>	6
<i>A Garden for All Seasons</i>	7
<i>2012 Budget</i>	8
<i>What Counts for Continuing Ed.</i>	8
<i>A Bee in My Ear</i>	9
<i>Holiday Party Photos</i>	10



*Indoor Flora & Fauna* by Sharon Morrissey

*Consumer Hort. Agent, MCCE*

For most gardeners, the craving to fondle plants is as strong in January as it is in June! In winter we need houseplants to fulfill this longing. How many and which ones depends on your space, time and the depth of your desire. It is also affected by the size and orientation of your windows, your roof eaves, your thermostat habits and your furnace. Combine this with the wide variety of conditions required by the spectrum of plants you are trying to grow in that light, air temperature and humidity; it is little wonder that we can succeed with any plants at all. Not surprisingly, insect pests seem to thrive when the plants are least able to defend themselves. Let's look at each of these variables, one at a time.

First, however, let's review a couple of basic concepts about plant growth. Plant growth increases with higher light levels and warmer air temperatures because photosynthesis is increased. These same conditions cause an increase in water usage due to transpiration which pulls water from the soil, through the plant and out of the leaves. Dry, windy air causes even more water loss. Nutrients are dissolved in that water so they are transported, too. In summary, plants grow more, use more water and need more nutrients under the following conditions: high light, warm, dry and windy.

Compare those conditions to your home environment in winter: low light and cool, dry air with no wind. Therefore, growth and water usage are both very much reduced. Since water is not being moved through the plant, any fertilizer applied to the soil is not being taken up by the plant plus the plant doesn't need fertilizer if it isn't growing. Furthermore, the soil in the pots stays wet much longer. People tend to water the same year around so in winter, when less water is needed, they frequently overwater. This causes roots to rot. As a result, overwatering in winter is the number one reason for plants to die.

**Dormant or simply surviving**

Most of the plants we keep indoors are

tropicals that do not really have dormant periods because they don't need to go dormant in the tropics where it is warm and humid all year around. What we call the dormant period for houseplants here in the northern latitudes is that time of year when the growing conditions indoors are so poor that indoor plants are just hanging on until conditions improve. This period is loosely November through March. During this period, water less, reduce fertilizer, and don't prune or transplant. Wait to do the last two procedures until growth speeds up in the spring when new roots and shoots can develop as the growing conditions improve.

**Light your mother wouldn't let you read by**

Winter light is lower in intensity and shorter in duration than summer light. Granted, the lower angle of the winter sun does allow slightly more light to reach below the eaves of the house. Furthermore, the deciduous trees are leafless and allow a little more light into your windows. Unfortunately, neither of these adds much additional light. Some people move their plants closer to the windows thinking they can capture more light, but the cooler air temperatures offset the advantages of doing so. Add to all of this the fact that there are fewer sunny days in winter than summer and you can see how even a sunny, southern window doesn't provide enough light in winter for a plant to do anything more than just survive.

**Temperatures are definitely not tropical**

Most modern homes are cooler in the winter and programmable thermostats allow us to raise and lower the temperature several times a day depending on whether or not you are home during the day. The ideal temperature range for plants is 65 – 75 degrees during the day and 55 – 65 degrees at night. Households where no one is home all day might keep the temperature around 60 all day and all night with brief periods of 68 degrees in early morning and during the evening. Remember, temperatures close to windows will be 5 to 10 degrees colder so be careful.

*(Continued on page 2)*

**Humidity is hopeless**

We all know from the static electricity we generate and the dry noses and throats we get in the winter that the air in our homes is desert dry despite our efforts to humidify it. The advantage for our plants is that the soil dries out a little faster both from the surface and through transpiration. The disadvantage is that many of the insect pests that can be minor infestations on our houseplants during the summer can become full blown epidemics in the winter.

**Flourishing Fauna**

Mealybugs, scales, whiteflies, fungus gnats and mites - but most of all mites - thrive in low humidity.

Signs of an infestation are miniscule, yellow speckles on the leaves or webbing around the leaves. Raise the humidity by bathing or showering the plant weekly for 4 weeks or with a portable humidifier near the plants. Spritzing leaves with water and gravel-filled trays of water are minimally effective at raising humidity. If these vermin persist, insecticides are necessary. Fortunately, insecticidal soap and ultra-fine oil are effective against all of the above but persistence is required. For severely infested plants, it is probably best to "put them to sleep," so to speak, for everyone's sake.



*News from the County Offices by Sharon Morrissey & Ann Weid*

To respond to any of the following, e-mail Sharon at [sharon.morrissey@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:sharon.morrissey@ces.uwex.edu) unless otherwise noted.

**No General Training This Spring**

Just in case you missed it, General Training (Level 1 Training) for SEWMGs has been shifted from spring to fall. It will begin the week of September 10<sup>th</sup> and run for 13 sessions over 14 weeks. Two classes will run concurrently, one on Monday afternoons from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. at the Waukesha County courthouse. The other will be held from 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. in Milwaukee County but the day and location are not yet confirmed. Registration information will be available in mid-July. If people you know are interested and not yet on our mailing list, they can call or e-mail volunteer coordinator, Nancy Lehrer at (414)-256-4661 or [nancy.lehrer@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:nancy.lehrer@ces.uwex.edu).

**Chairs to Recruit from Within**

Because there will not be a class of new, enthusiastic MGVs-in-Training this spring and if you need volunteers for your projects, gardens and activities, you will need to recruit from within, so to speak. It also means that all MGVs will need to pitch in a few more hours to make up for the person power the "newbies" usually bring.

We are working on ways to reach out to current and inactive MGVs to get them more involved. There will probably still be a Volunteer Opportunity Fair sometime in March. Projects with booths at the Fair can focus on recruiting more volunteers from the rank and file. The "Mixer" which has traditionally been a special program meeting intended to welcome the new MGVs and help everyone get to know each other, could be done differently with a focus on recruitment. Door prizes and food always provide incentives. **We would love to hear your ideas.**

**Speakers' In-Service Ideas**

Another side effect of the change in training is that

there will not be new MGVs who need a Speakers' Workshop to learn how to make public educational presentations. Therefore, I will not schedule one unless there is demand for it. ***If there are certified MGVs who are interested in participating in a workshop for presenters this spring, I will be happy to conduct one.*** Please let me know if you would like to attend (possibly on Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup>).

Otherwise, I would be willing to provide an in-service program for MGV speakers on a topic to strengthen speaking skills and/or knowledge. How about a hands-on or interactive session? ***I welcome your ideas.***

**Want to Hone Your Pruning Skills?**

Without any new MGVs-in-Training in the spring of 2012, we are wondering if there are enough certified MGVs who have not participated in a pruning workshop in the past and would do so if we offered it. Hands-on pruning workshops have been an annual event for SEWMG since 1994! For the last 8 years, two to three sessions have been offered each year.

If there were enough interest, a workshop(s) would be scheduled in late March or early April on a Saturday morning or a Wednesday afternoon for about 3 hours. ***Please e-mail me if you think you would like to sign-up.***

**Volunteer Celebration and Graduation**

It is our pleasure to invite ALL MGVs to the volunteer/graduation event of the season! Mark your calendars for ***Wednesday, February 29<sup>th</sup> (Leap Day!) from 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at the First Congregational Church on Church Street in Wauwatosa.*** Graduates from 2011 General Training will receive their certificates and nametags. There will also be service recognition and appreciation awards. Find out which worthy MGV will win the coveted "Glutton-for-Punishment" award? Watch for the invitation in early January.

***Beginning in 2012, General Training (called Level 1 Training now) for the SEWMGs will be held in the fall instead of the spring as it traditionally has been. Classes will begin in early September and run for 13 weeks through mid-December.***



**Help Design & Build the Booth**

Volunteers are needed to help design and create the MGV exhibit for our booth at the annual Realtors' Home & Garden Show scheduled for March 23<sup>rd</sup> – April 1<sup>st</sup> at the Expo Center at State Fair Park (closed on Monday and Tuesday). The educational focus for our booth this year is "Lawn Care: new research, new recommendations, new results." Educational display boards will be produced, along with an accompanying brochure and a PowerPoint presentation. If you would like to work with a committee to brainstorm ideas that will make our space at the show both educational and attractive, e-mail me. We will begin meeting in early February.

Volunteer sign-up to work shifts during the show will be coordinated by MGV Faouzi Kablaoui. Watch for his e-mails.

**Educational Focus Training**

The turfgrass scientists of the UW-Madison have conducted research that has led to important changes to our current recommendations about lawn care. Please plan to attend a training session on "**Lawn Care: new research, new recommendations, new results.**" Open to all MGVs, it will be conducted by Sharon Morrissey on **Wednesday, March 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the MCCE** (Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension) office.

Booth volunteers will learn the answers to questions they may receive from show goers. MGVs who give public presentations will see the new PowerPoint. Plant Health Advisors will learn the new recommendations. And any MGV with a lawn - or a neighbor with a lawn who asks them questions, will learn how to change their practices for better results.

**Yard Care Workshop for Habitat for Humanity Homeowners**

MGVs are needed to staff display booths, talk to homeowners and assist with children's programs.

Scheduled for **Saturday, March 10<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 a.m. – noon at Havenwoods State Forest in Milwaukee**, this annual workshop is a partnership with DNR at Havenwoods State Forest and the Milwaukee District Garden Clubs, too. If you would like to be involved, please contact me.

**SEWMGV Office Help Appreciated by Waukesha County UW Cooperative Extension**

Over the past few months, SEWMGVs have assisted the Waukesha County UW Cooperative Extension in numerous projects. One project was a large commercial horticulture mailing. About 12 SEWMGVs came to our office to stuff envelopes and put on mailing labels over the course of a few days. It was a big, last-minute project and we know we could not have completed it without your help! SEWMGVs have also assisted our office with front desk receptionist duties help while our entire staff attended numerous meetings and all-staff educational programs. While staffing the desk, SEWMGVs often helped us by tallying evaluations results from past horticultural educational programs. Your assistance has been appreciated! Thank you!

**Waukesha County UW-Extension Budget Update**

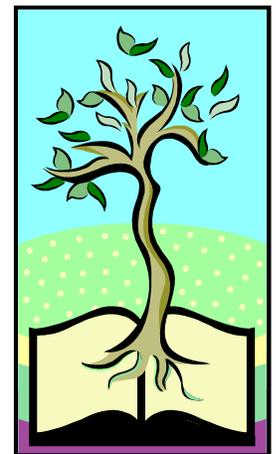
Our office was fortunate that we did not receive any cuts in next year's budget. On the other hand, we received no additional funding. Due to the increase of some office expenses (i.e., computer maintenance, etc), we will come up a bit short. As in the past, our office will continue to implement cost-cutting measures. This will involve re-evaluating programs and program costs. We may need to address shortages by increasing fees for some of our programs and pursuing grants. If you have any questions, give me a call. As always, thank you for your support.



*Plant Sale Committee Shares the Wealth of Knowledge by MGV Ed Kraus*

The Lake County, Illinois Master Gardener organization recently contacted our Plant Sale Committee to arrange an information-sharing meeting. Their plant sale was not held last year and in prior years has been relatively small (certainly compared to the SEWMG sale). Lake County MGVs wanted to tap our expertise to help manage and expand their plant sale. The SEWMG Plant Sale Co-Chairs and a group of about eight Lake County

MGVs met on November 14<sup>th</sup> at a local restaurant for lunch and discussion. This event was a very successful sharing of experiences which the Committee will be happy to arrange for any other MG group. We invited anyone from the Lake County planning group to attend our sale but, unfortunately, it is on the very same day as ours. Some of them might show up for the Friday pre-sale to see the setup (and maybe buy some plants as well).



## *Volunteer & Education Report* by Nancy Lehrer

*MG Volunteer Coordinator, MCCE*

Winter in Wisconsin is a great time to get started on next year's plans for your garden!

The same is true for MG Garden partners. Recently I have received a request for garden planning support. Please consider joining them in their planning meetings.

Planning Meeting: January 18<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 p.m.  
Location: Capital West Academy 3939 N. 88th Street.

Park in back of the school and then enter the building on the east side. Proceed to the office and staff will direct you to the garden planning meeting.

Helping this group in the planning stages does not commit you to gardening in the spring. Please consider joining them.

If you plan on attending, please notify me and Zuwena Cotton at Capital West Academy. Contact information: Zuwena Cotton 414-514-1132 E-mail [zcotton@cwacademy.org](mailto:zcotton@cwacademy.org)

**This is an approved youth garden for volunteer hours.**

Come and expand your horticulture knowledge by volunteering on the Hort Helpline at Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension (MCCE). Suzy Orth is not as busy in winter and can help you get acquainted with the Helpline. Call Suzy at 414-256-4664 for more information. **This is an approved volunteer opportunity.**

**Mark your calendar...Remember you need 10 continuing education hours every year.**

January 25<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 a.m., MCCE Office, "Birding/ Birdscaping in Wisconsin"

February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 9:00 a.m., Behind the Scenes Tour of the Domes

February 25<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 a.m., MCCE Office, Two programs "Updating your Landscape" and "Transitioning into Low Maintenance Gardening"

**Looking forward to spring...**

March 16<sup>th</sup>, Trip to Chicago Flower Show

Home Show is March 23<sup>rd</sup> thru April 1<sup>st</sup> (Closed March 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>)

*"The shortest day has passed, and whatever nastiness of weather we may look forward to in January and February, at least we notice that the days are getting longer. Minute by minute they lengthen out. It takes some weeks before we become aware of the change. It is imperceptible even as the growth of a child, as you watch it day by day, until the moment comes when with a start of delighted surprise we realize that we can stay out of doors in a twilight lasting for another quarter of a precious hour."*

*-Vita Sackville-West*

## *Stay Informed and Connected*

Can't get to a business meeting? Did you know that the business meeting minutes are on our web site? Check out this link: <http://fyi.uwex.edu/sewmg/minutes/> Make sure your project or activity gets listed on the MGV calendar. Staying in the know just got easier.

## *2012 Officers and Board of Directors*

MGVs attending the Annual Meeting approved the slate of officers recommended by the Nominating Committee. The new leadership team brings a wealth of experience to our organization. We hope you'll take time to meet and work with them throughout the coming year.

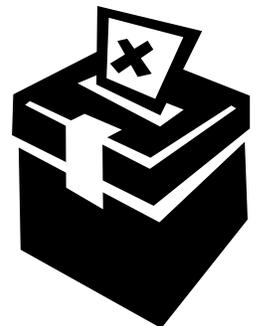
Officers include: Dan Cummings, President; Kris Jensen, President-Elect, Patty Witt, Treasurer, and Linda Ziebell, Secretary.

Board Members include Sandy Manning, Board

Chairman; Fred Redlinger, Second Year Board Member; Kathie Foti; First Year Board Member; and Betty Polycn and Carla Magnus, our Members at Large.

We will be sharing more information in the next edition.

MGVs Janet Wintersberger, Patty Witt and Joy Towell SEW Nominating Committee





## *Program Committee News* by MGVs Peg Fleury & Kathy Hochevar

The In-House Educational Program Committee, co-chaired by Peg Fleury and Kathy Hochevar, has delightful programs scheduled for January, February and March. Check the details carefully because we will have programs on Wednesday mornings and evenings and Saturday mornings. These educational programs will be held at the UW Extension office 9501 W. Watertown Plank Rd. (It is now known as Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension or MCCE).

**Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m.** - "Birding/Birdscaping in Wisconsin" presented by Mariette Nowak author of "Birdscaping the Midwest". Mariette Nowak landscapes her property in Troy Township for wildlife of all types. Mariette is starting an area chapter of Wild Ones and was pleased to hear our in-house education committee was focusing on natives in traditional landscapes and volunteer gardening. Because she is a retired director of Wehr Nature Center, MGVs should enjoy a fine presentation.

**Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup> - 9:00 a.m. – Noon**, two morning programs scheduled back-to-back at the MCCE Office. "Updating Your Landscape; What's Hot,

What's Not" and "Transitioning into Low Maintenance Gardening." Learn how your landscaping can be adapted to travel, lack of time or possibly lack of energy that interferes with your gardening. The experts are Dave Wanninger and Carrie Hennessy.

Dave Wanninger is the horticulturist-in-charge at Boerner Botanical Gardens and will provide tips on having an attractive, but less demanding, landscape. Carrie Hennessy is a Horticulturist/Landscape Designer & Retail Sales Manager at Johnson's Nursery.

*This free Saturday morning program will have limited registration (on a first come, first served basis) so that we can provide a comfortable site. Watch for registration information after the holidays.*

Finally, our annual mixer is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m.** The speaker will be announced soon.

Questions e-mail us; Peg - [pegfleury@att.net](mailto:pegfleury@att.net), or Kathy [khoch\\_15@hotmail.com](mailto:khoch_15@hotmail.com)

### **New Dates, Times, and an Acronym**

Check the calendar carefully. Our educational committee is scheduling programs for Wednesday mornings, evenings and on Saturdays to meet the needs of our members.

Plus, the University Extension office in Milwaukee has adopted a new acronym, **MCCE**. It's the Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension. It's still at 9501 W. Watertown Plank Road.

## *Trips and Tours* by MGV Doris Fons

The Trip and Tour committee is pleased to announce our first two offerings for 2012. Please join us for a behind the scene tour of the Mitchell Park Domes on **Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2012 at 9 a.m.** The cost will be \$7.50 and transportation is on your own. This is the trip we tried last year and had to cancel due to a blizzard. There have been many requests to try again so we will hope for better weather this time around. There is a limit of 50 people so register early. Registration will start at the meeting and by e-mail or phone on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012. My e-mail is [dorisann@wi.rr.com](mailto:dorisann@wi.rr.com), use TRIP for the subject so I don't lose anyone, and my phone number is 414-425-6072.

On **Friday, March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2012**, we will be going to the Chicago Flower Show at Navy Pier. This is a Friday trip

by request of working people that take off and would like to have a long weekend. Registration for this trip will begin at the program on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012 which will be at the Milwaukee County Extension Office and also by e-mail and phone. My e-mail is [dorisann@wi.rr.com](mailto:dorisann@wi.rr.com), use TRIP for the subject so I don't lose anyone, and my phone number is 414-425-6072. We will be leaving from the State Fair Park and Ride at 7:30 a.m. with a stop at the College Ave. South West Park & Ride at 8:00 a.m. The fee for the bus and your entry ticket will be \$30. Lunch is on your own. If you are one of the 55 people receiving a confirmation letter after registration, your payment will be sent to Sharon Roy at W171 S7200 Lannon Dr. Muskego, WI 53150-4315.

Join us for these great trips to welcome spring.



## President's Corner

Welcome to 2012. The New Year brings with it not only new expectations and new gardening possibilities, but also a time to reflect back on 2011 that was likewise filled with expectations and activities of the Master Garden Program. The first thing that comes to mind is how impressed I am with all the dedicated Master Gardeners who gave so much of their time to make this organization successful this past year. The hard working officers, committee members and dedicated volunteers would be difficult to beat in any organization. This dedication is reflected in over 23,000 volunteer hours and over 13,000 continuing education hours submitted by our members for 2011.

Two SEWMG activities, among many more, stand out in my mind as reflecting how well this organization runs: the Annual Perennial Plant Sale and the Program Committee's bus trips and continuing educational programs for the year.

The spring got off to a great start with all the garden digs (now officially called Pot-A-Thons) with thousands of plants being offered at our 16th Annual Perennial Sale at the end of May. The volunteer turnout for these Pot-A-Thons was outstanding with some locations attracting over 20 hard working members. Not only was a great deal of work accomplished, but it was also a good time to meet new Master Gardeners and renew friendship with others. Unfortunately, our plant sale in May was not as successful as in some of the previous years. The economy and the weather were not conducive to matching the money totals for the two previous years and we, therefore, had to make some cuts to the 2012 budget. With the belt tightening of the garden chairs and strategic cuts to some other areas, we were able to reduce the total 2012 budget by 20 percent. Our goal in the coming years will be to work within the confines of the monies generated for that year. The Plant Sale Committee has made plans for new ways of promoting the 2012 plant sale and has generated a list of acceptable plants that can be donated to the plant sale. This list will help us save valuable time and effort that can then be used to emphasize plants that are sure to sell and hopefully keep our revenues strong.

Our bus trips in January and March to Chicago and the August Ball/Morton garden tours were great successes. The high level of interest in the garden tours by our members was so great that a second bus was needed. SEWMG also scheduled some educational programs for three Saturdays throughout the year to give our Master Gardeners more opportunities for education hours. The first was so well attended that we literally had standing room only. Our last program in November was limited to prevent crowding and brought many of us up to date on web site offerings. Thanks to those members who made these programs so successful.

I hope that most of you were able to attend or participate in these two highlighted programs or attend some of the others that were scheduled throughout the year. If you were unable to, I would encourage you to set aside some time in 2012 to do so. Gardening, as we well know, is fun but to share with others brings about a whole new dimension to our lives. I would also like to encourage you to become more involved in committees and in leadership roles of the Master Garden Program. Please feel free to contact your committee chairs or your officers. Your ideas, comments and time are always welcomed. You are also invited to attend our monthly business meetings that are scheduled for the second Wednesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. at the Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension (MCCE) office on Watertown Plank Rd. We will continue to hold three meetings in Waukesha during March, June and September. The minutes for those meeting can also be found on our web site.

And finally, I would like to extend a BIG thank you to our outgoing President, Mary Thiele, our Secretary, Mary Redlinger and our Treasurer, Joy Towell. They have done an outstanding job in these positions and will be missed.

Wishing all a great New Year and successful gardening in 2012.

Dan Cummings  
SEWMG President 2012

**Gardening, as we well know, is fun but to share with others brings about a whole new dimension to our lives. I would also like to encourage you to become more involved in committees and in leadership roles of the Master Garden Program. You are also invited to attend our monthly business meetings that are scheduled for the second Wednesday of the month at 9:30 a.m. at the Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension (MCCE) office**



## SEWMG Dates to Remember

Business meetings and Newsletter deadline:

**January 11<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m.** SEWMG Business Meeting at MCCE office.

**February 1<sup>st</sup>** Newsletter Deadline

**February 8<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m.** SEWMG Business Meeting at MCCE office.

# A Garden for All Seasons

by MGV Ann Weronke

Many gardens are a beautiful, spiritual experience. This is true of the Witt garden tended by Patty Witt MGV and her husband Greg. There are many facets of their space and many features for all to feast their eyes upon regardless of the time of year.

Even in the dead of winter, the Witt garden is dotted with stems and dried flowers, remainders of a previous growing season. Beautiful furry seed heads waft in the winds of winter. Those seed heads can become the food for the birds. Also welcoming those birds is the heated birdbath.

Two bird statues remain within the confines of the space. Adjacent to a waterfall, a pond that was dug by Patty and Greg is a focal point of their secluded space. While ice may cover the pond, there is still life beneath that ice. Within its waters, goldfish can be found—fish which survive the cold because a hole in the ice ensures that the fish will survive a Wisconsin winter.

Eventually, even winter gives in to the warming of the spring in Wisconsin. The crocuses poke their heads through the snow. Then daffodils and tulips emerge. Soon splashes of yellow, red and white are everywhere. Then Virginia bluebells paint the garden with a lovely hue. Peonies join the color parade along with many iris plants. Many are the glorious spring colors at the Witt residence.

Summer warms the pond and the soil. In the goldfish home, water lilies begin to flourish with the emergence of white, hot pink and even yellow blooms. The clematis start to climb the trunks of trees and twine up the

obelisks. There are 33 different varieties and colors of clematis, a favorite of the Witts. Besides these, many Asiatic lilies begin to blossom in late June. Various labeled daylilies also flower. Once the Asiatics are finished, Oriental and Orienpet lilies take their place. Lavender Wisteria climbs up the outside chimney. Elephant ear plants add interest and have become pieces of “yard art” that add to the flowering display and furnish water for the birds and butterflies. Patty herself has made many of these sculptures.

In addition to its beauty, this has become a haven for hummingbirds and butterflies. The Witt yard is a certified butterfly habitat and they have the sign posted on an arbor. This garden is the birthplace of many migrating monarchs and Patty nurtures the emerging butterflies, often bringing the chrysalis within their home to be able to tag each butterfly for records of migrations.

Fall brings another colorful array. The Giant Golden Amaranth and the burgundy amaranth color the area. The yellow lantern-like blooms of the Tangutica clematis join in as the Echinacea and Rudbeckia erupt into their varied colors with purples and yellows. Even the hot pink Texensis clematis resists the onslaught of the cold approaching winter. Only in late September and October does the garden settle into a place still housing the pond fish awaiting another season.

Indeed, the Witt garden is a year around treasure with each season providing sights to enjoy.



## 2012 Budget Approval

SEWMG's 2012 budget was approved by master gardeners who attended the Annual Meeting on December 14<sup>th</sup>. Finance committee members Ruth Marshall, Sandy Manning, Fred Redlinger, Dan Cummings, Kris Jensen and Janet Wintersberger (with the help of Joy Towell, treasurer) prepared the budget for the year. It had previously been reviewed by members on Saturday, November 12<sup>th</sup>.

The committee considered the SEWMG's mission of the organization (To support and assist UW-Extension in community horticulture programs through volunteerism, education and environmental stewardship) and established its philosophy and guidelines - to work toward matching budget to revenues; maintaining a cash reserve; supporting the mission and prioritizing expense requests

SEWMG's four funding categories and priorities have guided decision-making over recent years: They are: (A) Approved Gardens and Approved Projects; (B) SEWMG Administration; (C) Donations and (D) Discretionary Programs, Projects, and Donations. The priorities establish *relative* importance to our organization's ability to support the mission. Category A, for example, is most critical and category D is the least critical.

A conservative, yet prudent, approach was taken to maintain our organization's financial strength. MGVs and extension staff responsible for budgets are reminded that any budget overruns must be approved by the board prior to incurring the expense. These added expenses will be reviewed, but may not be reimbursed.

MGV Ruth Marshall - Finance Committee Chair 2011



## What Counts for Continuing Education Hours for Annual Recertification by Ann Wied

*Consumer Hort, Educator, WCCE*

We hear this question a lot! I hope the following information will clear up any questions you may have regarding what counts for the required "continuing education" hours. (from "Volunteer Service Policy" document on SEWMG website at <http://fyi.uwex.edu/sewmg/documents/>.)

**Any UW-Extension sponsored educational program such as:**

- ☞ Level 2 and 3 MGV Training courses
- ☞ DVDs of MGV Training sessions (contact MCCE office)
- ☞ Speakers' Workshops
- ☞ Pruning Workshops
- ☞ Educational focus programs
- ☞ Master Composter Training course
- ☞ Plant Health Advisor Training courses & sessions (on-line & face-to-face)
- ☞ Plant Health Updates (at Hort Center)
- ☞ Podcasts of educational teleconferences:
  - MG Brown Bag Programs (archived on web)
  - Wisconsin Hort Updates (conducted weekly during

growing season)

- ☞ Field days, in-services, etc.
  - ☞ WIMGA Annual Conferences
  - ☞ Midwest & International MG Conferences
- Any educational program offered by:**
- ☞ SEWMG's Education Committee
  - ☞ MGV presentations for other organizations
  - ☞ Local botanical gardens & nature centers
  - ☞ Technical colleges, colleges or universities
  - ☞ WI Dept. of Natural Resources
  - ☞ Governmental agencies
  - ☞ Trade shows (educational portions only)
  - ☞ Garden Expos (educational portions only)
  - ☞ Garden related tours and trips (educational portions only)

**Public radio programs and television programs featuring UW-Extension personnel** (excluding Fox6 Garden segments – too short)

- ☞ The Milwaukee/Waukesha MGV program only allows Continuing Education credit for television programs that feature UW-Extension personnel.

**This information can also be found on the "Volunteer Service Policy" on the SouthEast Wisconsin Master Gardener website.**

## *A Bee in my Ear* by Rosalie Robison, MGV

I want to give up gardening. Just kidding. Or am I? The heat and drought-like conditions of this past summer took the edge off my growing efforts. Made my vegetables a stalemate, a bitter memory. A jump start with seed grown indoors gained no ground, no early growth, sparse yields. Birds scratched the dry ground and stole seeds. Seedlings were continuously chomped no matter my preventive tactics. Critters looking for greens to munch found little and still attacked the gardens. I watered in vain. The cool, cool spring pushed growing time back, and then the heat devastated making the all-too-short season come to an end. Heat singed leaves, stunted growth.

An attempt at container gardening turned me into a watering fool, but the fresh greens were enviable. To dig and divide perennials in the fall--useless; a pitchfork or shovel might break in half like the cracked earth. Lawns are straw yellow as they are in the rolling hills of southern and central California in the heat of summers.

Dried fruiting flowers dropped; raspberry bushes bore near zero fruit; roses that bloomed once in the spring went to sleep for the fall show. I saw a lone Monarch hovering on the butterfly bush. The turtle flower died. Iris borers attacked bulbs like they were at a seven-course meal. Rugosa rose bushes, the hardest of roses, ordered from a catalog, remain the stick-lings they arrived.

Am I a bad gardener? No--other years provided happy results. But, like the recession/depression era we're experiencing, gardens are small victories. We want to grow our own local food, want to grow without pesticides and insecticides but, hey, Mama Nature isn't cooperating. What is she so mad about? Is it the way we've abused the environment years on end? Punishment for our bad habits? Or, are we being tested to see how tough we are if we choose to return next year to brave a new set of elements,

the critters, the favorable or unfavorable conditions. Is there a perfect climate? Yes, it's in San Diego, California, where the average temperature is 70 degrees and the weather sunny.

The hills are alive with growing fever. We have a lake effect, short growing season, and irrational, erratic weather patterns. These are the challenges we brace ourselves against every year. And each succeeding year, we return for reward and punishment. It's a crapshoot anyway you look at it and why we get hooked, are trapped, and cannot give it up. The fever to grow expands as winter progresses. We begin the dream; we pine for starting anew aiming for the ideal garden, the one seen in all the perfect garden magazines with glossy color photos. Not. It's no reality show contest. Those pictures often inspire us. We must merely stay earthbound in garden reality.

One of my neighbors lets anything that seeds grow in his yard. A tree towers from the middle of a peony bush blocking sunlight plants struggle for in raised beds. Another tree shoots out of a bridal veil shrub. Yet another commands attention above a lilac bush.

Oh no, it's the end of summer and the neighbor, who lets seeds plant wherever they like, has an electric saw in hand. He's single handedly slashing every tree, shrub and green matter taller than grass in his yard! And now he's digging deep holes, way bigger than chipmunks need. Eventually posts for a porch will fill these holes. The porch roof will extend ten to twelve feet from the back of his house and, yes, block the remaining sun my plants need.

Maybe I'll tear down the garage and erect a greenhouse. Maybe I'll have a roof top garden on the garage. Maybe I'll rent a community plot with full sun, no trees or barriers in sight. Maybe I'll take up bingo and forget about growing. Not.



# *Master Gardener Volunteer Holiday Party*



Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension Office  
9501 W. Watertown Plank Rd. Building A  
Wauwatosa, WI 53226

Phone: 414-256-4600

Fax: 414-256-4646

---

## CHECK OUT OUR WEB SITE

[HTTP://FYI.UWEX.EDU/SEWMG/](http://fyi.uwex.edu/sewmg/)

---



Mailed with this issue:

- January/February Events

# Winter

*For more information:*

**Calendar Hotline (MGV Hotline)**

414-256-4666

**On the Web**

<http://fyi.uwex.edu/sewmg/>

**Sharon Morrisey** (Consumer Hort. Agent, Milwaukee)

414-256-4660; sharon.morrisey@ces.uwex.edu

**Ann Wied** (Consumer Hort. Educator, Waukesha)

262-548-7788; ann.wied@ces.uwex.edu

**Kathy Bosetti Reese** (Program Assistant)

414-256-4600; kathy.reese@ces.uwex.edu

**Nancy Lehrer** (Volunteer Coordinator)

414-256-4661, nancy.lehrer@ces.uwex.edu

**Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension Office**

9501 W. Watertown Plank Rd. Building A, Wauwatosa, WI 53226

**Waukesha County Cooperative Extension Office**

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.*