



# Sheboygan County Master Gardener



## President's Message

**H**ello Master Gardener Volunteers,

I am trying to think of positives for the cold weather we are having...hoping we will have fewer garden pests during gardening season. The snow cover will help insulate the perennial plants, too. And I have taken some beautiful pictures when we had recent accumulating snow. *[Editor's note: Thankful we are not Texas!]*

One of my interests is winter gardening. I have a couple cold frames, one low tunnel and one high tunnel. I have been picking Swiss chard, green onions, and kale and actually picked some romaine lettuce just before the frigid temperatures began. The only heat source I use is the sun. Some years I have a better harvest of winter greens than others, just depending on the amount of sun and temperatures. Today, with a temperature of 12 degrees, the low tunnel was a balmy 49 degrees when the sun was out.

Eric Coleman, author of Four-Season Harvest, is a great resource for anyone interested in extending your vegetable harvest. Megan Cain will be doing a virtual presentation for our Sheboygan County Master Gardeners on May 3. Her presentation is titled "Harvesting Veggies in the Snow." You might think May is too early to think about winter gardening, but the information she will share will help you prepare if you want to extend the season.

On behalf of our MGV board, I want to thank Pat Mersberger for her many years of service representing our Sheboygan County MGV organization as representative to the Wisconsin Master Gardener Association (WIMGA.) Connie Gross is our new WIMGA representative.



## Mark Your Calendar

» UPCOMING EVENTS

### March 2021

**March 8 - "Beyond the Herb Rack: Using Herbs Creatively in the Vegetable Garden", Megan Cain, Virtual Zoom Meeting, 6:30 pm**

### May 2021

**May 3 - "Harvesting Veggies in the Snow", Megan Cain, Virtual Zoom Meeting, 6:30 pm**

Don't forget to sign on to the online reporting system at the UW-Extension Master Gardener Site by March 31<sup>st</sup> to activate your account so you are able to add volunteer hours and education hours.

At this time, I have no new information regarding project work. Any meetings must be held virtually for now, so our recognition meeting and project sign up will be scheduled at a later date. As we get closer to spring, I will keep you updated with any new information.

Marty Steinbruecker  
MGV Board President



# Options for Membership in our Sheboygan County Master Gardener Organization

By Marty Steinbruecker

**T**here are a number of ways you can be a member of the Sheboygan County Master Gardener Volunteers.

**Certified Master Gardener Volunteer** is a volunteer who is certified by the UW-Madison Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program and is in good standing.

Annual dues are \$20.00.

## Requirements

- Completed MGV Certification Training
- Completed Criminal Background Check
- Completed Mandated Training Requirement
- Completed 24 hours of volunteer work and 10 hours of continuing education.

**Inactive Master Gardener Volunteer** is the category for Master Gardener Volunteers who have not completed their volunteer hours and education hours. This could be due to a number of events in a volunteer's life that prevents them from the ability to work on projects and/or continuing education.

## Requirements:

- Completed MGV Certification Training
- Completed Criminal Background Check
- Completed Mandated Training Requirement

While able to join our local organization, participate in local events and receive digital communications, inactive members do not have voting rights until they complete the requirements for volunteer and education hours. Annual dues are \$20.00.

**Honorary Life Member** is a new category for our local chapter. There are two ways to qualify for this membership.

## First Option

- Active membership as a Master Gardener Volunteer for 20 or more years.
- Provided outstanding service to the Master Gardener organization and the community.

## Second Option

- Age 70 or more years.
- Maintained active membership as a Master Gardener Volunteer for 15 or more years.

If you meet the requirements of either option one or two, the next step is to complete the "Honorary Life Membership Application" on our Sheboygan County Master Gardener website. Send this to Tammy Zorn at the UW-Extension Office. The current board will review the application to determine if the applicant meets the criteria above and if a majority of board members agree, you achieve the Honorary Life Member designation.

Honorary Life Members only receive digital information from our local Sheboygan Master Gardener Volunteer Organization and can participate in education events and programs, but are not part of the state organization. As an Honorary Life Member, you do not have voting rights, but you can participate in projects when working in cooperation with Certified Master Gardener Volunteers. Annual dues are \$15.00.

I hope this helps to clarify the kinds of membership choices available for our Sheboygan County Master Gardener Volunteers. If you have any questions, please contact Tammy Zorn or Marty Steinbruecker.

# New Master Gardener Certification Training in Development

By Marty Steinbruecker

**T**he UW-Madison Extension is in the process of revising the initial training for those desiring to be Master Gardener Volunteers. Below are some of the tentative changes. The certification class will be divided into two parts. The majority of the course work will be in an on-line format, with lab workshops scheduled at the Extension County office.

## **Part I - Fundamentals in Horticulture**

This is the first step in becoming a Master Gardener Volunteer. The change is that this course will also be open to the general public. Many who participated in past MGV certification classes wanted the education component, but were not interested in volunteering. The new format recognizes that and provides this quality education for anyone interested..

## **Part II - Onboarding New Master Gardening Volunteers**

This class will be for those who complete the Fundamentals in Horticulture class and want to continue on to be a Master Gardener Volunteer. The class will cover a variety of topics specific to Master Gardener Volunteer expectations.

Please note this is preliminary information and more specifics will follow as the new MGV certification process is finalized.

## Activate Your Online Hours Reporting Account...NOW

**Y**ou may not have any volunteer hours to report yet as there hasn't been much time to get out into project gardens or do other volunteer activities. But I hope you have been taking advantage of the many online continuing education opportunities available to us all.

You can report these hours online. But you must activate your old account by March 31.

Go to the [UW Extension Master Gardener Program](#). Click on "Toolbox" then "Online Reporting System". Read and approve all the disclaimers, click SUBMIT, and you are good to go for 2021.

If you are a member in good standing and haven't used the online reporting system before, you should be able to sign up as above.

Many projects saw fewer volunteer hours in 2020 and there will be some catching up to do. Hope to see you at a project this summer.

## 2021 Volunteer Hours Requirements Due to COVID

**I**n 2021, you may report less than 24 hours of volunteer time at 2021 COVID approved projects (this may be zero hours). Only volunteer at approved projects if you feel you can do so safely.

We continue to require the minimum of 10 hours of continuing education. The 10 hours of

continuing ed plus completing all the volunteer mandates will be required to certify next year.

You have until December 31, 2021, to complete and report your hours.

# Continuing Education Hours

By Sue Mathews

There are a multitude of opportunities for gaining your continuing education hours. The pandemic has forced everyone to go on line and most programs are open to everyone, anywhere...free of charge or for a modest fee. Some are available on YouTube or a presenter's website. But most use Zoom presentation software.

If you have never used Zoom...don't be put off by a new technology. It's really quite simple. [Zoom has online tutorials](#) that you can look at. Or send me an email and I will try to talk you through it.

Sue (sukarma2@yahoo.com)



**Megan Cain**, a Madison gardener, is a friend of Sheboygan County Master Gardeners and will be presenting two Zoom programs for us this spring. On **Monday, March 8, at 6:30 pm** you can tune in to [Beyond the Herb Rack: Using Herbs Creatively in the Vegetable Garden](#). Register for this free program at the link.

Then on **Monday, May 3, at 6:30 pm** Megan will return to talk about "Harvesting Veggies in the Snow." It may seem an odd time to talk about winter gardening techniques, but you will need time to gather your materials and seeds and prepare to do the planting work that needs to get done in late summer and fall. More details on this program will be available later.

In the meantime, you can catch Megan, The Creative Vegetable Gardener, on her [YouTube](#) channel or her [website](#) where you can sign up to receive timely tips delivered to your email inbox.

One of our favorite presenters, **Rob Zimmer**, is doing a day long series of Zoom talks on Saturday, March 6 (9:00 am-4:00 pm). There is a \$35 fee for the daylong event which will cover Retro Gardens, Tomato Tips & Tricks, Year of the Sunflower, Natives of all Seasons, Monarch Oases, Spirituality and Healing in the Garden, and more. Check out... [Awakenings: An All-Day Virtual Gardening Experience](#)

One of my new favorite garden YouTubers is Erin of [The Impatient Gardener](#). Erin gardens just down the road a bit along Lake Michigan in zone 5b...just like us. Learn what plants worked for her and what plants didn't, new plants of 2021, why it's time to plant poppies now (outside in the garden) and much more.

Did you miss **Melinda Myer's Winter Series** of free Zoom webinars? Well, no you didn't; because they are [still available on demand](#) at her website. Before you start, download the handout and you won't need to take notes. And while you are there, spend a few minutes or half hours exploring her website. It's full of lots of useful gardening information...including podcasts, videos, monthly gardening checklists and much more. The time you spend exploring a website counts for continuing education credits.

If you would like to [Spring into Gardening](#) join the **Kenosha County Extension 2021 virtual workshop series** on four Saturdays in March, the 6,13,20 & 27 from 9:30 am to 11:45 am. This Zoom webinar will have two sessions each day. The registration fee is \$25 per person. The topics include seed starting, annuals for containers, sustainable lawn care, new trends in perennials, trees and shrubs for pollinators, dwarf fruits and berries, no till gardening techniques, and new, improved or underused shrubs.

**Let's Garden Organic Together...**From the editors of *Garden Gate* and *Horticulture* Take your sustainable gardening skills to the next level with the help of knowledgeable and experienced instructors. This **FREE online, on-demand [Organic Gardening Course](#)** offers 6 lessons, downloadable course materials, quizzes and book club discussions to help you learn new techniques and test your knowledge. Course topics include: healthy soil, seed saving, pollinator gardens, native plants, designing an ecologically vibrant garden, and attracting birds, bees, butterflies, and other wildlife to your garden. The site is a little clunky, but don't give up.

# Tidbits from My Reading

By Sue Mathews

## What's new with Coneflowers?

### Fine Gardening, August 2020

Every year there are new coneflowers displaying exciting new colors and petal forms. More than a few of the new hybrid introductions have been duds and your experience with them may have put you off the whimsical in coneflowers. Richard Hawke, plant evaluation manager at the Chicago Botanic Gardens has recommendations for top-forming coneflowers. Worth seeking out the entire article for a lengthy discussion on coneflowers.

*Milkshake*...a double white pom-pom that opens green and turns cream or white. Like other whites it tends to show blemishes quickly and obviously.

*Pixie Meadowbrite*®...charming and bountiful pixie-like bright pink flowers on a compact 2-foot plant with up-turning petals

*Firebird*...masses of vivid red-orange flowers that fade to a pleasing reddish purple on a vigorous strong-stemmed plant.

*Glowing Dream*...florescent watermelon pink rays with large red/orange cones are striking that is still beautiful as they fade. Purple stems.

*Sombrero*® *Salsa Red*...3-inch blooms with slightly droopy, vibrant scarlet red rays. Burgundy red stems on compact well-branched plants.

*Pica Bella*...a reliable long-lived traditional purple coneflower with deep pink (canoe shaped) rays and orange cones.



*Snow Cone*...diminutive white coneflower with chartreuse cones. Top-rated at CBG and a visitor favorite.

*Tennessee coneflower*...upturned pink rays are unique on a long-lived plant. The hairy leaves and stems give the plant a lighter green look than usual.

*How long does it take for a flower to replenish its nectar supply?*

### Smithsonian, Dec 2020

That depends on the creature it evolved to attract. Nectar attracts pollinators so that they move nutritious and fertile pollen from one flower to another. Plants adjust their nectar production to the needs of the pollinators. Small borage flowers that

attract bees and butterflies can replenish their nectar in two minutes. Agave plants that attract night flying bats, produce nectar only at night. Evening primrose can detect the sound frequencies of its bee pollinators and produce fresh nectar in three minutes.

*Lemongrass from an Asian grocery instead of a nursery.*

### Fine Gardening, August 2020

If you are a fan of Hmong or Thai, food you are familiar with lemongrass since it appears in so many recipes. Did you know that it is easy to grow in your garden? You can start it in a jar of water after trimming off the bottom of the stalk. In 3 or 4 weeks they will root. After your last frost date plant outside in a pot with annuals. By late July they will be the thriller in your planter. Before the first freeze, cut down the stalks, grind them up with a food processor and freeze for winter cooking use. Endless lemongrass for \$2 a bunch from the Asian grocery store. [Editor's note: My neighbor does this very successfully.]



*Making Plants from Plant Parts.*

### New Gardeners Handbook: Everything You Need to Grow a Beautiful, Bountiful Garden.

Spring is nearly here and it's time to decide what plants need division.

#### Perennials to Divide in Early Spring

agave	daylily
aster	elephant ears
bee balm	hosta
black-eyed Susan	lamb's ears
bugbane	monkshood
caladium	ornamental grasses
canna	primrose
Christmas fern	rhubarb
coneflower	wild ginger
dahlia	anemone (fall blooming)

#### And a few more from The Perennial Care Manual: A Plant-by Plant-Guide, What to Do...

artemisia	yarrow
astilbe	bergenia
campanula	chrysanthemum
delphinium	Joe-Pye weed
filipendula	helenium
helianthus	ligularia
salvia	sedum
goldenrod	