

President's Message September 2025



In a past newsletter, I likened the month of May to the start of a race with a Ready-Set-GO vibe. Here we are at September and it sure seems like the race was fast! One more hurdle this month and the finish line will be in sight. The cool sunshine we had at the end of August was a taste of things to come as the harvest slows down, birds and bees start their transition to new accommodations, and our focus turns to collecting, cutting back, preserving,

I had a fountain installed in my garden a few days ago. Ordered in July, circumstances prevented its installation until now, when the summer is winding down. Still, I filled it with water so I could enjoy the sight of its smooth curves and the gentle trickle that provides a soothing soundtrack to my little gardening oasis. As I check the long-term forecast for freezing nighttime temperatures, I am aware it's my attempt to keep the summer here a little longer. On one hand it is a symbol of the lushness of summer; on the other a bridge to the restful, reflective days of autumn. Let's hope Mother Nature gives us a few more days of summer, especially for our Plant Sale weekend in Marshfield, a perfect way to transition from one season to the next. Hope to see you there.

—Chris

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August Meeting Minutes

**Wood County Master Gardener Association
General Membership Meeting
August 26, 2025 - 5:30 pm
Rudolph Grotto Garden - Rudolph, WI**

Program: Self-guided tour of Grotto Garden

Total Present: 21 in person

Business Meeting: Called to order 7:00 by President Chris Grimes.

Secretary's Report:(Stacy) Minutes from July 22, 2025 were reviewed and put on file.

Treasurer's Report:(Famia) Report put on file.

WIMGA Report:(Karleen) No update.

Old Business:

Project Education Signs: (Chris) Signs are done and ready to pick up tonight. Contact Chris if you need a different stake.

New Business:

Bylaws approval: Lil made a motion to accept, Jill seconded, motion passed.

Committee Reports:

Garden Walk final report: (Lil) group had a follow-up meeting and talked about what went well and what could be changed. Final financials were given.

Fall Plant Sale: (Jill) Passed out flyers and quarter sheets. Volunteer sign-up was sent around. Jill needs to know what everyone is bringing and what to charge. We are in the same place as last year. We need tables and wagons.

Socialization Plans: (Chris & Diane) September 9th - Food & Farm visit

Fair: (Bea & Jill) Spinning wheel with questions was a hit to draw people into the booth. Overall went well.

Adjournment: M/S/P to adjourn at 7:59 PM.

Next Meeting: September 23, 2025 - 6:00 pm at Marshfield Library - Composting with Donna Streiff.
Respectfully submitted,
Stacy Musch, Secretary

September Meeting Information



Composting: Turning Waste into Black Gold

September 23 6pm

Everett Roehl Marshfield Public Library

Our September meeting of the WCMGA will be held on [September 23rd](#) at the Marshfield Library. Donna Streiff will be sharing her expertise on Composting. As the end of the growing season approaches and the leaves begin to fall, this is a very timely topic. As you can see above, composting can take many forms and be as simple or complicated as you want. Please plan to attend. The library is on the corner of Hwy 13 (Veterans Parkway) and Maple Ave. Turn left on Maple at the stop light and the library parking lot is on the left. Occasionally, it is full in the evening, but additional parking is directly across the street (turn right to city parking lot instead of left to library lot).

LABOR DAY



Thank you to all employees and former employees. Hope you had a good one!

Education Opportunities for C. E. Hours

From UW Extension Horticulture

UW Extension Horticulture [Wisconsin Horticulture – Division of Extension](#) This site has a plethora of resources to explore. It is a great source for getting Continuing Ed credits. It has print and video resources for free use. Sign up to receive their monthly newsletter with pertinent topics: [Sign up](#) If you need Continuing Education Hours, go to [Online Program Archive – Wisconsin Horticulture](#) to view many of the recorded programs This is a good way to get your Ed hours before you get too busy gardening this spring..

From the Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic

The Clinic will sponsor a Zoom presentation on a plant disease-related topic each month. To register for one or more talks, go to [2025 PDDC Monthly Disease Talk Registration Form | Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic](#)

The Bad and the Ugly: Ten Plant Diseases Not to Compost September 24 6:30 – 8:30pm
Certain plant diseases are so horrible or so deadly that composting is not an appropriate way to get rid of affected plants. Learn about some of these diseases and their proper management.

Ask the Experts September 22 1:30-2:30pm

Join our monthly online programs in 2025 for an opportunity to connect with plant health experts from the UW-Madison Division of Extension. Each session, held on Monday afternoons from 1:30 to 2:30pm, is your chance to ask questions about your trees and shrubs, garden vegetables and ornamentals, and lawns, insects, disease, etc. Registration link: [Free Online Gardening Programs – Wisconsin Horticulture](#)

Melinda Myers

Fall Landscape Planting and Care Sept. 4 6:30pm

Keep pollinators in mind as you manage fall leaves, prune shrubs, and clean up and prepare your landscape for winter. Fall is also a great time to add trees, shrubs, and perennials to your landscape. Melinda will share tips for taking care of your new and established native and non-native plants, flowerbeds, rain gardens, and lawns. She'll cover proper watering, fertilization, winterization, and protection from wildlife to get them through our challenging winters and ready for an eye-catching spring display!

Marshfield Public Library Garden Guru Programs

September 18 6pm Putting Your Garden to Bed: Best Practices for the End of the Season

Now that we are nearing the end of the growing season, join us for a look at how fall yard and garden work can help your landscape plants best prepare for the cold weather ahead. Fall garden work can also set the stage for a better landscape next year. Learn how to get veggie gardens, flower gardens, lawns, shrubs and trees ready for winter and plan for the best start for next year.

Events will be led by Master Gardener Educators at the Lester Public Library of Rome unless noted.

ROME GARDEN CHATS

2025 EVENTS



April 16, 2025
9:30-11:00

Designing Hanging Baskets*

Discussion/Hands-On/Registration Required/Held at Foss' Garden Center



May 21, 2025
9:30-11:00

Tackling Wildlife Damage

Discussion/Led by Janell Wehr, UW-Extension Educator



June 18, 2025
9:30-11:00

Sand-Casted Bird Bath Make-and-Take*

Hands-On/Registration Required/Led by Laurie Francis and Boots Stolt



July 16, 2025
9:30-11:00

Home-Grown National Parks

Discussion/Led by Barb Herreid



Aug. 20, 2025
9:30-11:00

Propagating with Cuttings

Discussion/Led by Linda Beck and Laurie Francis



Sept. 10, 2025
9:30-11:00

Bulbs and Tubers and Corms, Oh My!

Discussion/Led by Ardyce Piehl and Becky Gutzman, Retired UW-Extension Educator



Oct. 15, 2025
9:30-11:00

Growing Lettuce Indoors with the Kratky Method

Discussion/Led by Jennifer Fane

*A materials fee will be charged.



Garden Walk Update- The Search Is On

The Garden Walk selection team has been busy hunting for showcase gardens to be featured in 2026. These do not necessarily need to be located within the boundaries of Wood County but can also include neighboring communities just beyond our borders. If you have spotted a beautiful garden while on a walk, bike ride, or an evening drive that should be considered, reach out to a Garden Walk selection team member (Deb Rokke, Cathy Schutz, Chris Grimes, Jan Meyer, Diane & Jim Nickel, or Lil Schotten). We hope to have 6-7 gardens selected by the end of September and notify all garden hosts of their selection in the first week of October. This gives future garden hosts plenty of time to start planning and working on a list of their perennials, trees, and shrubs before things dry up or get covered by snow.

Additionally, the fall season entices us to get out and enjoy a variety of craft fairs and festivals held in communities far and near. These events offer a variety of arts and crafts and delicious eats. Our team would love to hear if you come across any unique vendors that could appeal to our Garden Walk audience. Ask the vendors about their product, grab a business card with contact information, and if allowed, snap a few pictures of what you see. Tell them about the Garden Walk and with their permission we will get in touch. Thank you all in advance for any assistance you can provide.

After the 2026 gardens have been selected this team will take a well-deserved break! It will be reorganized after the holidays and looks forward to working with all members indicating an interest in participating on the Garden Walk Team.

Until next time! Your Garden Walk Committee



It was Spinning Fun at the 2025 Central Wisconsin State Fair

We added a new activity to the booth this year. Fairgoers could spin a wheel and answer the corresponding numbered horticultural question. This new activity at our booth was to attract more fairgoers. Education was the goal. If the answer or terminology of the question was unknown to the fairgoer, the game switched from a Q & A to an information/lesson format.

We estimated between 462 – 760 adults and children spun the wheel. The lower number is based on tally sheet and the higher is based on the number of gifts and candy pieces available. We might want to get a handheld clicker for a more accurate count. Since the wheel activity was a last-minute addition, next year we will be able to source more age/experience appropriate questions, and we may want to have prizes that carry our logo on them.

In addition to many resources, we had Lego flower kits available for fairgoers to assemble as a hands on activity. Joyce also was at the demo gardens, with its updated gazebo to answer fairgoers' questions about the gardens.

Thank you to all who took time to work at the fair!

Fall Plant Sale Buzz

We know the drill – Brief points on the FALL Plant Sale.



Maple Fall Fest at Marshfield's Wildwood Park—Sept. 13th & 14th.

In Sept you/we have only ten days to prepare. **We need more perennials.**

Members should prepare their donations and promote the event through paper and electronic notices. Visitors travel from over 30 miles away to attend. **Please inform Donna and Jill about your donations so that promotional materials, signage, and price tags can be ready for the setup on Sept. 12th.**

Friday – After a quick orientation, we set up 3-4 tents and 25 tables. The 10'x20' tent is the first to go up, requiring everyone's help. Once set up, donations are placed in designated areas with signage. Members then divide into groups for pricing and preparing plants, dry-goods, and non-plant products. **Each plant is labeled, priced, and tallied. The more preparation done by donors, the easier it is for the team.** Clean up plants and pots before bringing to the sale. Some sample dry-arrangements and products need to be made. Most weekend sales are personal requests by buyers. Lastly, we need to squirrel-proof the plants and close-up the canopies.

Sat. & Sun – The park opens early for breakfast so customers will be hovering over us as we get ready. So, we need everyone to uncover, put out secured products and ready our stations.

Our customers will seek out plant information and help with transporting purchases to their cars parked up to a half a mile away. We need five wagons for transport.

During the day we will take a tally of plant counts to see what is selling and how our stock of dry goods is holding up.

There is a food truck court, that can have long lines, so bring a lunch and take breaks as you need them. I will provide water and a snack.

After 5pm we squirrel proof, and tally.

Sunday we can consolidate products to help with cleanup that starts at 4pm. Price reductions are dependent on product availability and customer flow. We do not want to create a “wait to buy at lower prices”. With input I will make the decision. Natives will have special options.

Clean-up – Remaining plants and products need to be tallied and divided up into four categories - return to donor, winter-over, donate to goodwill, and compost/toss.

All equipment is cleaned and returned to where it is stored at either the courthouse or Ann's shed. Ten of the tables are Park and Rec's.

Members and project leaders are allowed to purchase products during the sale and at the Sept. Membership meeting. Let Jill or Donna know ahead of the meeting so they can bring the plants you want. Thank you for [your](#) continued support.

We need 5 wagons and extra tables. Let Jill know if you can bring any.

More Notes and Reminders



- We are selling the same items that we have sold in the last two years.
- The fall plant sale is again early, Sept 13th & 14th. Set-up is Fri. Sept 13th.
- You can earn your 24 volunteer hours by helping during the three-day fall plant sale. It takes about 25 hours in total, including 14 hours over the weekend, 2 hours for opening and closing, 3 hours for Sunday clean-up, and 6 hours for Friday set-up and pricing.
- Sign up to help Fri, Sat and/or Sun.
- Label plants with the WCMG labels or use that format to make your own.
- All plants need to be grown in potting soil. Remember **we are still not digging up plants** because of possible invasive jumping worms and cocoon transferences.
- Print pictures of your non-native plants in bloom to go with your label. Having a photo with the label and a photo board of all plants helps increase sales.
- **Pease, please clean up your pots and potted plants before dropping them off.**
- Finish collecting and packaging mature seeds to sell. Include planting instructions and plant information from our WCMG label.
- Collect materials from your garden or your neighbors' gardens for dry arrangements. Every bit counts! OUR BEST MONEY MAKER!!
- If you have not done so, email photos, names and quantity of plants. Native plants to Donna and all other plants to Jill.
- Please invite former or retired MGs to help at the plant sale for a few hours. They enjoyed reconnecting with their gardening friends.
- Drop-Off Location for **non-plant items**: Sept 8th to the 11th. Please call before you drop off. (Note: Tuesday Sept 9th is Food & Farm).
 - Marshfield – Jill Becker 715 387-8040
 - Rudolph – Ann Rozner 715 435-3804
 - WI Rapids - Bea Kohl 715 423-8908
- Continue to care for your plants until **plant drop off** on Thursday the 11th, or bring to set up day, Southern county plant donations can be left at the South Wood County Historical Museum | 540 3rd Street South, Wisconsin Rapids by 6pm by the back door (NW corner of the building). Placing plants in boxes helps with transporting vs single pots.

Now is the time!! As in “ASAP”!

Please let Donna know if you have not already done so, what native plants you have grown for the sale. Please let Jill know of any other plants you are bringing and any garden treasures. We need to plan advertising, signage, and space.

WIMGA Corner

As we move out of the busy time of the gardening year, it seems like a good time to review what WIMGA is all about. New members, especially, have found the existence of both WIMGA and the Master Gardener program out of Madison a confusing situation.

WIMGA stands for Wisconsin Master Gardener Association. It is a collection of locally organized Master Gardener groups from around the State of Wisconsin. Some are county-based groups such as ours. Others are area or regional groups. Membership in WIMGA is a decision of each group's leadership. It also allows a representative from each group to communicate back to the general membership. In Wood County, \$5 of each member's annual dues goes to support WIMGA.

The official Master Gardener program with its training, volunteer expectations and required continuing education is organized as a part of UW Extension out of Madison. It is the source of all kinds of horticulture information and expects members to share that information with the general public.

As the structure of the Master Gardener program out of Madison has changed and with horticulture educators no longer directly in charge of local groups, WIMGA has become an important channel of communication with Madison and the far-flung statewide membership. It is actively involved in providing continuing education programs that count toward your required 10 hours of annual education. It also supports local projects through a grant program. WIMGA does not have any role in developing and administering the Madison based program. Instead, it serves as a connector with and supporter of UW Extension, Master Gardener groups and individual members.

Continuing Education Program Kick-off

The first continuing education program sponsored by WIMGA is on September 17 at 6:30 via Zoom. The topic is **Seed Saving and Sharing** with Bevin Cohen. Watch for details and the invitation for the Zoom connection.

Karleen Remington, WCMGA Representative to WIMGA



Logo Wear!

Creative Designs at 540 E Grand Ave in Wisconsin Rapids is now authorized to embroider our logo on apparel items. Bring in your own clothing item or purchase from a wide variety of styles and colors of t shirts, sweatshirts, jackets, fleece, hats, tote bags, etc. at their store. Embroidery charges are based on the size of the logo, but our logo in the standard size for a shirt, 2 1/2 by 3 1/2, is \$9 for an item bought from them and \$13.50 for an item you bring in yourself. Choose from a large selection of thread colors for the wording on your logo to best coordinate with your clothing item.

Social Events



Our last Road Trip of the year is to the **Food+Farm Exploration Center in Plover**. The goal of the center is to educate about agricultural innovation and sustainability and they do it in an interactive, hands on way. You could add another F to their name: "Fun".

We are scheduled to have a guided tour, but that requires at least 11 participants, so please RSVP to Chris Grimes via email by Sunday September 7. After touring and exploring the center, we'll have lunch in their **Colorful Plate Cafe**, which uses locally sourced and seasonal ingredients.

Tuesday September 9

10am-12noon for tour of the building, greenhouse, review of adult programming.

Tickets payable at the door \$11 for seniors

Meet at about 9:45 am in the lobby to congregate for our tour.

Calendar of Events*

Sept. 9 Food+Farm Exploration Center Road Trip*

Sept. 13-14 Fall Plant Sale Set up on Sept. 12*

September 23-Membership Meeting—Composting

October 28 Membership Meeting—Indoor Plant Lighting

November 18 Membership Meeting-Winter Social

*Refer to separate articles for more information about most of these listings, including times and links to register.

September Garden Guide

Taken from Portage County Master Gardener Website

- Allowing September rose blooms to stay on plants aids in winter protection. Watch for black spot on roses and remove infected leaves.
- Lift gladiolus corms when leaves begin to brown. Dry in sun a few days.
- Divide most perennials except asters and mums, which haven't bloomed.
- Divide and replant peony roots. Avoid planting too deeply.
- Bring coleus, geranium, caladium and begonias indoors.
- Place amaryllis in cool basement for a 3-month rest period.
- To set buds, Christmas cacti require a rest period and cool nights (55 degrees.)
- Sow snapdragons, cornflowers and other hardy annuals a few weeks before the first frost date. Mark where planted to avoid damaging seedlings in spring.
- Carefully inspect spring flowering bulbs before planting. Discard soft bulbs.
- Remove newly set tomatoes, blossoms and new growth five weeks before expected frost because they won't have time to mature.
- Sow annual ryegrass or oats for winter cover and green manure in beds that won't be planted until late in spring. Keep watered.
- Remove all weeds from garden before they go to seed.
- Pinch out the growing points at the top of Brussels sprout stems so bottom sprouts will reach maturity.
- Watch for early frosts. Cover the garden when frost is predicted to obtain up to another month of growth. Water plants well for greater frost protection and maximum growth.
- Cut back perennials after frost.
- Dig and pot parsley, chives and tender herbs for transfer indoors to sunny window.
- For better keeping, harvest carrots, beets and turnips before first frost kills foliage.
- Gather squash, pumpkins and gourds when ripe and before frost damage. Leave 2-inch stem on vegetable for better storage.
- Clear garden beds immediately after harvest. Destroy any diseased plants by burning, composting in a hot pile or sealing in container for disposal.
- Early September is the latest time to plant spring-flowering shrubs.
- Aerate lawn when temperature is 60-70 degrees.
- Stop planting evergreens by mid-September.



- Harvest pears when light green. Separate from branch with slight twisting motion.
- Harvest grapes. Fertilize with one-cup bone meal per plant.
- Harvest apples. Rake leaves and fallen fruit from apple trees to control disease and inspect problems next year. Be careful not to injure long-lived fruiting spurs when harvesting.
- Cut out spent raspberry and blackberry canes after fruiting.

2025 WCMGV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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The Wood County Master Gardener Association is a non-profit organization with a mission to educate and share information with its members and the community alike. In addition, it is our charge to promote the UW Extension from which we are founded. We are a diverse group interested in the latest research-based horticultural information.

Future Article Submissions

Please send items for inclusion in the newsletter by the 25th of the previous month to: streiffonclay@tds.net

Wisconsin Master Gardener

Website: <https://mastergardener.extension.wisc.edu/>

Wood County Extension

Website: <https://wood.extension.wisc.edu/>

Wood County Master Gardener Association Website:

<https://wood-county-master-gardeners.org/>

WIMGA Website: <https://www.wimga.org>

Reminders

Sign-up with Jill for the days and times you can work at the plant sale.

Keep the Fall Plant Committee advised of your anticipated contributions so advertising and resources can be prepared before the sale.

Please clean up plants and pots before bringing to the sale.

Consider what you can grow to contribute to the plant sales next year. Start propagating plants, planning what you might winter sow, collecting seeds for next spring, and if any bulbs you dig this fall that can be saved for the sale. Succulents, bulbs, and house plants are always the first to go, Collect dried plant materials this fall for dried materials for our bouquets.

Thank you to all who made the Garden Walk a success.

Thank you to all who made the CWSF a success.