

President's Message



The Tulip.

SHE slept beneath a tree
 Remembered but by me.
 I touched her cradle mute;
 She recognized the foot,
 Put on her carmine suit, --
 And see!

—Emily Dickinson

I saw this little poem and thought how true it is. We are so excited about the longer days with warm sunshine. Trees are awakening with signs of life in their swelling buds. Tulips and crocuses are poking up through the cold ground. Yet, our excitement is tempered by the chance of another snowfall or the cold, dreary days. We know April as a bit of a transition month.

WCMGA is experiencing its own 2026 Spring transition. Donna Streiff kicked off our March meeting with a presentation on extending the growing season and other garden hacks. Our work on the strategic plan was rolled out to the membership with some excellent comments and suggestions. This will be an ongoing process and feedback is welcome. Committee reports on the Garden Walk, community education, plant sale and socialization provides evidence that even in the cold, winter months, this group is NOT dormant. (But we might slow down a bit!) There's much happening in the Wood County Master Gardeners and I am excited to be part of the things to come.

Terrie

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April Meeting Information

Hosta Care and Diseases

April 28 6pm

McMillan Library WI Rapids

Kelly Giese, presenter



Tentative Educational Programs for Membership Meetings

- ♦ **April** Hosta Care and Diseases Kelly Giese, owner of Hosta Shop will present at McMillan Library
- ♦ **May** Trevor Frank will present on vegetable gardening tips and tricks at McMillan Library
- ♦ **June** Ann Rozner will present on edibles in the flower garden and backyard at McMillan Library
- ♦ **July** Mill Creek Gardens tour with meeting at Mill Creek Gardens
- ♦ **August** Tour of Powers Bluff with Friends of Powers Bluff including retired UWSP botany professor. Arpin Town Hall reserved for inclement weather.
- ♦ **September** Kendra Wilhelm on native and invasive lookalikes at Marshfield Library
- ♦ **October** Would like to find someone to present on care and sharpening of garden tools
- ♦ **November** Program needed with meeting at Alexander House in Port Edwards

March Meeting Minutes

Wood County Master Gardener Volunteer Assoc.
General Membership Meeting
March 24 2026 6 pm
Chestnut Center for the Arts, Marshfield & Zoom

Program: Extending the Gardening Season

Donna Streiff

Total Present: 19(17 + 2 on Zoom)

Business Meeting:

Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 6:48pm by President Terrie Brown.

Secretary's Report: Minutes from November 2025 meeting were not available.

Treasurer's Report: Famia reported and will submit a written report for the record.

WIMGA Report: No report

Old Business:

Strategic Plan: Terrie presented the work of the Strategic Planning committee for feedback from the membership. She reviewed the analysis of our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats as well as proposals for new mission, vision, and values statements. Suggestions from the group will be integrated into the Team's analysis documents for consideration as the team proceeds with further action.

Committee Reports

Programs: Still looking for speakers for October and November

Plant Sale: Decided to forgo the Spring Plant Sale this year.

Garden Walk: Plans are going well. Favorable response from sponsors again this year and should be getting at least \$1000 towards expenses again. Working on finalizing vendors and musicians. Raffle committee sent around note cards with raffle basket donation ideas to create some of the baskets. Hope to have a new promo posted every month on Facebook featuring some aspect of the Walk. Members asked to share these with their online friends. Owner's Social at SWCHM on April 18.

Community Ed: Apple Tree Demo event went very well with a dozen or so people in attendance. Speaker was very good and people were enthusiastic about the lesson.

Social Committee Report: Planning for four events this year is in process, but working on a trip to Madison on May 12 to Allen Centennial Garden, lunch at the Babcock Dairy Store, and then UW Arboretum. Options being reviewed are hiring a bus for 35 vs driving ourselves; paying for a guided tour at the Arboretum or self-guiding. Other plans being considered for later in the year are Food + Farm visit w/lunch in Stevens Point in June, Green Bay Botanical Garden in August; Feltz Farm Dairy Store fall trip in October.

New Business:

Requests for speakers from two community groups: A church scout group from Arpin is requesting someone to talk about gardening related to the troop's merit badge on May 5. Stacy has volunteered to work with them. A group at First Congregational Church in WR is seeking a speaker at their May 14 meeting to discuss WCMG history and mission. Contact Terrie if you are available for this.

Newsletter Computer Program Help: Donna states Microsoft Publisher will no longer be supported in October and she is seeking recommendations for a good alternative program or advice on using Word, if people have experience with this in other organizations.

Adjournment M/S/P to adjourn at 8:15

Next meeting: April 28, 2026 Hosta Care and Diseases at McMillan Library 6pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Chris Grimes, Substitute Secretary

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.

Ask the Experts is back!! Now renamed **Ask Your Gardening Question Live**, it will be on Wednesdays at either 1:30—2:30pm or 6:30—7:30pm, not both in one day. The March session is on April 15 at 1:30. To register for the zoom invite go to: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#).

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 [2026 PDDC Monthly Disease Talk Registration Form | Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic](#)

Plant Disease Management by Design: Preventing Plant Disease Problems During the Landscape Design Process April 22, 2026, 6:30 – 9:00 pm

Learn about common diseases in landscape settings and strategies in site evaluation, plant selection, plant installation, and post-installation maintenance that will help you design and establish landscapes that will have long-term sustainability.

Marshfield Public Library Garden Guru Programs

Thursday, April 16 6pm Planning and Planting Your Vegetable Garden

Wood County Master Gardeners will be here with tips for planning a vegetable garden, how to get the most out of your space, and general planning guidelines for landscape gardens. This program is great for new and experienced gardeners alike to help avoid common pitfalls and to gain new ideas to improve your gardens.

Programs at the Pittsville Library

Program begins at 1pm Taught by Janell Wehr

April 14 Weed Wise! (Practical Strategies for a Cleaner Garden)

Melinda Myers Webinars

Growing a Bountiful Harvest Even When Your Time, Space & Budget are Limited April 1 6:30pm

Learn some tips and strategies that will help you to maximize your harvest in any available space. Whether you have a dedicated garden, grow in containers or squeeze fruits, vegetables, and herbs into your other garden beds, we will help you grow lots of produce no matter what your limitations. We will discuss plant varieties as well as planting and harvesting techniques to help increase your vegetable gardening success! [On Demand Webinars :: Melinda Myers](#)

7 Steps to Managing Water on Your Property April 9 6:30pm

Presented by gardening expert Melinda Myers. Put the water that falls in your yard to work supporting the plants in your landscape while helping to reduce the risk of sewer backups, basement flooding and sewer overflows. Develop a water management strategy that works best for you by implementing some or all seven steps we'll discuss. These include improving the soil, maintaining a healthy landscape, installing rain barrels, creating rain gardens, planting trees, adding native plants to your gardens and growing a water-friendly lawn. Sponsored by Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District and hosted by Milwaukee Public Library. [On Demand Webinars :: Melinda Myers](#)

Adding Native Plants to Any Size Gardening Space May 6 6:30pm

Whether gardening on a balcony, small city lot or larger space, Melinda will help you select the right native plants to include in gardens and containers. Including native plants provides many benefits such as capturing and helping clean and manage stormwater and supporting pollinators and other beneficial insects and songbirds. They add enjoyment and seasonal beauty to your landscape. Growing even a few native plants in a container can help support pollinators and songbirds and boost your enjoyment. [On Demand Webinars :: Melinda Myers](#)

WCMG Educational Materials Library (Handouts)

Karleen Remington

Because we have minimal storage space at the extension office and no system that documents print materials which we own, I have taken on the responsibility of coordinating the materials so they are housed in one space. Materials include tri-fold paper brochures and flat handouts of horticulture information on various topics.

If you need any of the following titles for a WCMGA sponsored activity or the Ask a Master Gardener tote I can get them to you. Give me enough lead time so that if additional copies need to be printed, there is time to do that.

Tri-fold Brochures

Using Native Plants in Your Garden
Monarchs in the Garden
Successful Container Gardening
Wood County Master Gardeners

Flat Handouts

Composting: The Basics
Growing Hostas
Houseplant Succulents for Beginners
Planting Your Native Perennial in the Fall
Planting Guide/Native Pollinator Garden
Protect Pollinators/Read Pesticide Labels
10 Common Plant Diseases/Diagnose by Eye
Home Vegetable Garden Fungicides
Square Foot Vegetable Gardening
Pollinators/English Garden Style
Supporting Our Monarch
Bee Identification
Gardening With Young Children Helps
Their Development

We also have Extension and DNR materials on invasive species (mostly vegetative). Some are for handout and others are for reference. Let me know what your needs are (by phone or e-mail)

If you discover a need for other print resources beside the titles above, let me know and I can help with research and getting the materials printed.

Rome Area Garden Chats 2026 Events

April 15
9:30-10:30



Growing Rhubarb and Asparagus
Discussion Led Becky Gutzman

May 6
9:30-10:30



***Design and Plant a Container**
Make-and-Take at Foss's Garden Center

June 17
9:30-10:30



+Crafting Outdoor Wind Chimes
Make-and-Take with Laurie and Boots

July 15
9:30-10:30



Grow, Harvest and Preserve Herbs
Discussion Led by Donna Streiff

August 19
9:30-10:30



Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
Discussion Led by Janell Wehr

Sept. 16
9:30-10:30



Designing a Landscape
Discussion Led by Janell Wehr

Oct. 21
9:30-10:30



+Forcing Bulbs for Christmas
Make-and-Take with Laurie Francis

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



*Participants will purchase plants for their containers from Foss's Garden Center. Containers may be brought from home or purchased from Foss's. Please register in advance at the library.
+A small fee will be charged. Please register and pay in advance at the library. Payment upon registration is required.

Proper Planting Produces Healthy Trees

Trees are a long-term investment in landscapes that will pay dividends for years to come. Celebrate Arbor Day 2025 by planting a tree. Following some key planting process guidelines will help ensure the successful planting of your new tree.



Selecting trees to properly fit site conditions initiates the process. Take time to consider all factors involved with the landscape location and research into trees making a good match. Once a planting location is determined, check for any overhead utility lines and call diggers hotline to mark any underground utilities in the vicinity.

When the time comes to purchase trees, choose vigorous stock free of any signs of damage. Make sure root balls are solid. Trees may be purchased as bare root, container, or balled & burlap (B&B) stock. For each type of stock, look for the natural root flare, which is a widening where the stem meets the roots. This assists you in planting trees at the proper depth.

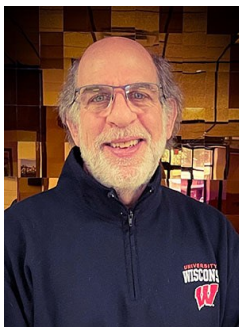
Proper depth and width when preparing planting holes plays a crucial role in successful transplanting of trees. Proper depth should be the same as growing in the nursery; measure (and use) the distance from the root flare to the bottom of the root ball or root mass. Avoid digging holes too deep and refilling, as tree root balls often settle after planting. Root balls should sit on firm soil. Ideally make planting holes 3 to 5 times the width of the root ball and roughen the sides.

Carefully place trees into properly prepared holes. Always support root balls when handling trees; do not just lift by trunks alone. Remove containers before planting and cut any circling roots. Burlap, twine, and wire associated with wrapped root balls (balled & burlap stock) should be carefully cut away after trees are secure in the planting hole. Always avoid any burlap extending above the soil surface after planting.

When backfilling planting holes, return the same soil that was removed. Do not heavily amend backfill with organic material. Also avoid putting gravel, sand, or fertilizer on the bottom of planting holes. Lightly tamp or water to settle air pockets when placing soil back in the hole. Refill planting holes in thirds rather than all at once.

Mulch root zones after planting but keep mulch away from direct contact with the trunk. Water thoroughly after planting and then as needed to avoid drought stress. If staking trees is necessary, only do so for the shortest time needed. Make sure stakes are outside planting holes and protect bark from rope, twine, or wire. Inspect and readjust as needed.

Happy Arbor Day!



About the Author

[Bruce Spangenberg](#) is a Horticulture Outreach Specialist with UW-Madison Division of Extension. Get answers to your lawn, landscape and garden questions anytime at [“Ask Your Gardening Question.”](#)



Early Spring Lawn Care Agenda

While recent weather brought more snow to parts of Wisconsin, as we advance through March snows melt away to reveal lawns underneath. Once lawn areas are bare, the temptation is to get out and start working on them. There is a sequence to follow as spring advances for best results.

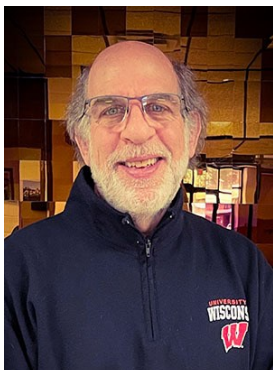
Lawns need to thaw out and dry out; it is best to stay off them until this occurs. As weather conditions allow, clean up debris such as leaves and sticks. Lawns that had snow cover for considerable time this winter often experience vole (or field mice) damage. This is visible in spring as winding trails on the lawn surface and small piles of grass. Raking lawns will remove all these types of loose surface materials but does not remove thatch. Thatch management calls for practices such as core aerating.

When to apply preemergence crabgrass herbicides, or crabgrass preventers, in a timely manner is a common question each spring. Temperatures of soil, not air, need to warm to near 60 degrees and stay there for several consecutive days before crabgrass will germinate. This does not happen in March or April on Wisconsin lawns, so you have plenty of time before applying crabgrass preventers this spring. Early May is a good target for application for lawns where crabgrass has been problem in the past.

Fertilizer application timing is the other common lawn care decision of spring. As with crabgrass control, hurry up and wait. Lawns do not need fertilizer as soon they thaw out. Ideally wait until grasses resume growing and mowing has resumed, then fertilize. Depending on where you are in Wisconsin, this usually is not until early May (or later) in an average year. While it may be tempting to fertilize early to get lawns greener, excess nitrogen fertilizer in spring sets lawns up for multiple problems as the season progresses. Moderation in lawn nitrogen fertilizer applications is important.

Reseeding lawns in spring is best scheduled for late April or even later further north. Once again, do so as conditions allow. Lawns like cool weather but hard freezes are unwelcome news for seedlings. Major lawn renovation is better to schedule in late summer, but you can still do it in spring. Rake away debris and roughen the soil surface before broadcasting seed. Slit-seeders are great for overseeding thin lawns.

While we welcome mild weather in early spring, patience is the key ingredient for spring lawn work. Good things come to lawns when homeowners wait. Watch for more details on lawn care practices, including fertilizing and managing crabgrass and thatch problems in this column very soon.



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Changing Weather Patterns, Changing Plant Diseases

Over the last decade or more, we have seen shifting weather patterns in Wisconsin. Winters, in general, have been milder. Precipitation of all forms (winter and summer) have been quite variable, with some years wetter than expected, others drier, and this variability dependent on geographical location within the state. Also, the frequency of severe storms seems to have increased. What does this variable weather mean in terms of plant diseases? It is hard to say exactly, but the following diseases are ones I tend to wonder about as our weather patterns evolve.

Southern Blight

As the name implies, this disease has been traditionally considered more of a problem farther south in the US, where warmer temperatures are more favorable for the causal fungus (variously called *Agrothelia rolfsii*, *Athelia rolfsii*, or *Sclerotium rolfsii*) to survive and thrive. During my tenure at the Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic (PDDC), I have occasionally encountered this disease, and the cases that I have observed have been devastating. The pathogen is extremely aggressive and has a wide host range (particularly among herbaceous ornamentals), so damage has tended to be widespread and severe. My first encounter with Southern blight was back in the 1990s at the Allen Centennial Garden (ACG) on the UW-Madison campus. The fungus was likely introduced via transplants produced in warmer climates and then brought into Wisconsin for sale. By the time I was called to make a diagnosis, the Southern blight fungus had wiped out every plant in a roughly 40 square foot area in a prominent annual bed. The disease was relatively easy to diagnose, as the fungus produces copious numbers of small, spherical, tan resting structures (called sclerotia) that coat the stems of dead plants and the surrounding mulch. The staff at the ACG were diligent in removing the dead/dying plants, as well as soil in the affected area, to manage the disease. I think that our more bitterly cold winters at that time also helped in suppressing the pathogen, but even so, ACG continued to have issues with the disease for several years thereafter, likely due to spread of sclerotia to other areas in the garden. With the warmer winter temperatures that we have experienced in recent years, I expect that the Southern blight pathogen will more readily survive in Wisconsin from year to year, which likely will lead to longer-term infestations and more severe outbreaks of the disease that are more difficult to manage.



The Southern blight fungus produces large numbers of spherical, light tan to dark red resting structures called sclerotia.

Oak Wilt

Oak wilt colonizes the water-conducting tissue (i.e., xylem) of oaks and leads to blockage of water flow in the trees. This results in branch wilting and eventual tree death. Historically, in Wisconsin, the oak wilt fungus has been moved around by sap beetles. These insects visit infected trees where they feed and mate. After acquiring the oak wilt fungus, the insects are then attracted to healthy oak trees that have been wounded in some way (e.g., by storm damage, by pruning), and they drop off the fungus as they feed in the wounds. Further spread of the fungus can occur in oak groves via root grafts that form between the root systems of adjacent oak trees.



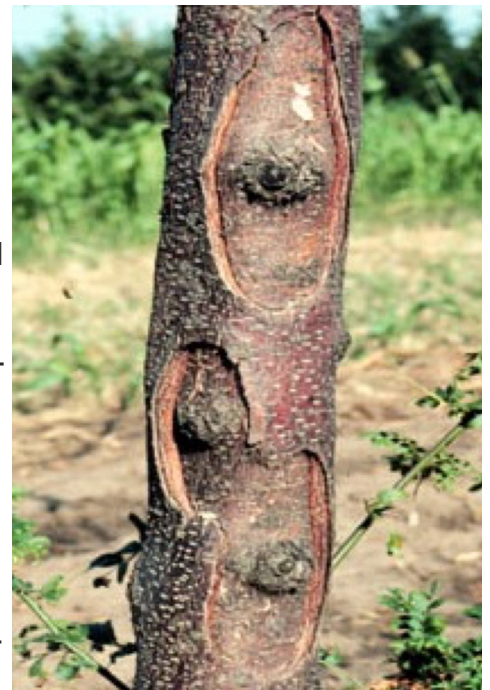
In more southern areas of the US, the [oak wilt](#) fungus has also been moved from tree to tree by certain types of oak bark beetles. These insects were not historically found in Wisconsin, because Wisconsin's cooler conditions (both in the summer and winter) were not favorable for their survival and reproduction. More recently, however, certain oak bark beetles (in particular *Pseudopityophthorus minutissimus*) have been more consistently reported in the state. It is unclear exactly what impact oak bark beetles will have on the number of cases of [oak wilt](#) in Wisconsin, but their presence opens up the possibility of an increased number of infections and thus a greater impact of the disease in the state.

Canker diseases

With an increase in severe weather (e.g., hail, high winds), I am also concerned about eventually seeing an increase in a range of canker diseases on trees and shrubs. Canker diseases are caused by fungi and bacteria that locally infect branches and eventually girdle these branches causing branch dieback. Often these pathogens take advantage of compromised or wounded tissue to gain entry into a plant.

As an example, fire blight is a common bacterial canker disease of apples, crabapples, and pears. The causal bacterium (*Erwinia amylovora*) is most typically introduced into trees by honeybees. These insects acquire the bacterium from infected trees and then drop the bacterium off in the flowers of healthy trees as they pollinate. Alternatively, *Erwinia amylovora* is known to gain entry into susceptible trees via branches that have been damaged by hail or other storm-related damage.

Amongst the fungal canker diseases, *Diplodia* shoot blight and canker is one where storm-related outbreaks have been documented. In May 2017, a tornado traveled 83 miles through Polk, Barron, Rusk, and Price Counties causing severe damage in many areas. In the years that followed, red pine stands that were in the path of the storm began to develop outbreaks of *Diplodia* shoot blight and canker. Physical damage to the trees due to the storm likely provided entry points for the fungus, with the accompanying rain providing the wet conditions optimal for spores of the fungus to germinate and infect.



As our current weather pattern continues to generate more, and more violent, storms, I suspect that outbreaks of canker diseases will likely become more prevalent and cause increased damage in our forests, landscapes, and orchards.

At this point, my conjectures on potential plant disease changes are speculative, but I'll be watching to see if any of my predictions are supported through the diagnostic samples that are submitted through the PDDC. However, as I have joked in the past, if I truly had accurate predictive abilities, I would be on a beach somewhere, with drink in hand, having made millions on the stock market. All of this said, if you would like to keep abreast of my findings, and other PDDC-related resources and activities, consider following the PDDC on Facebook, Twitter (X) or Bluesky (search for "UWPDDC"), or subscribe to my clinic listserv, UWPDDCLearn (just email me at pddc@wisc.edu to get on the list). I provide routine updates on all of these platforms. Finally, you can always contact me directly for information by email or by phone at (608) 262-2863.

Have a great 2026 growing season!



Supplementing the Walk . . .

After gardens are selected for the Garden Walk, our team considers enhancements that might add to the Garden Walk experience without taking away from the beauty that each garden holds. We like to focus on and promote local talent whenever possible. This year we have an amazing variety of talent to share!

Artist Bonnie Schneider of Wisconsin Rapids will showcase original paintings along with prints, cards, and tiles made by using watercolors, acrylics, and alcohol ink. Her work was extremely popular last year, and in 2026 she will partner with -

Joe Gasch, a wood carver and origami artist, who's craftsmanship is truly one of a kind, This will be Joe's "premiere debut", and a lot of excitement is being generated by his unique designs.

Laurie Kosmalski of Concrete Creations Plus is returning from 2024. She will feature birdbaths, fountains, unique outdoor furniture, signs and colorfully crafted birdhouses. Laurie is from Rosholt, WI.

"Wisconsin River Metal Works and Signs" is a new locally owned business by Shannon Finnessy. Shannon uses her welding skills to create unique yard art like flowers, birds, cattails and bugs. Her custom signs for the home and unique jewelry pieces are already being enjoyed by many locals in the community.

Local watercolor artist Connie Henke will be performing plein air painting in one of the gardens. This has always been a fascinating feature in the Garden Walk. We hope to have some of her art on display in the garden as well.

Finally, Wildlife Photographer Bob Stoil's work will be displayed in another garden. His beautiful photographs capturing native birds and animals in their element are quite extraordinary.

In addition to all the above, a few intermittent musicians are scheduled to provide joyful background music. On April 18th we will host a get-acquainted event called "Ready, Set, Bloom" for garden hosts, artists, vendors, and musicians to help everyone prepare and plan ahead for our big day on July 18th.

At the **April** WCMG meeting Garden Walk Posters and Save the Dates will be shared with the membership. Please help us to circulate information about this major fundraising event. Meanwhile, if you or someone you know is a member of a community group that would be interested in knowing more about the Garden Walk let us know. We'd be happy to provide them with information or a presentation that promotes this event.

Finally, I'm sending out a few SHOUT OUTs to the following outstanding Master Gardeners & Staff who work behind the scenes to make this all happen:

Ready, Set, Bloom Team: Chris Grimes, Judy Miller, Cathy Schutz, Jim & Diane Nickel

Plant Label Makers: Deb Rokke, Judy Miller, Bea Kohl

Garden Host: Micky Erickson, Judy Miller, Terrie Brown, Karen Shirek

Garden Education: Stacy Musch, Karleen Remington, Donna Streiff, Diane & Jim Nickel

Basket Raffle: Barb Herreid, Jan Meyer

30th Anniversary Event Coordinator: Chris Grimes

Garden Walk Ticket, Promotions: Karli Tomczyk, UW Extension

Garden Host and other "Appreciation" Items: Deb Rokke, Jan Meyer, Judy Miller, Famia Marx, Ann Rozner

To all of you, my sincere thanks!

Lily Schotten

HELP US WITH THE RAFFLE BASKETS AT GARDEN WALK 2026!

Due to the great success of the Raffle Baskets that were introduced at the Garden Walk two years ago, we would like to offer this to attendees again this year.

But, We Need Your Help!

We will build raffle baskets based on themes with suggested items for each one. Sign up to donate *new items* for any of the featured baskets. You'll be able to sign up at the March meeting. If you're unable to attend, just email Jan Myers or Barb Herreid to let us know what you can contribute.

Here are the basket themes and suggested items:

| Theme of Basket | Suggested Ideas for Items for Basket |
|---|---|
| Birds in the Garden Due to their popularity last year, we'd like to offer 2 baskets this year | Birdfeeder, Deck Birdbath, Birdseed, Humming-bird feeder, Suet. birdhouse |
| Garden (use canvas bag as the basket?) Due to their popularity last year, we'd like to offer 2 baskets this year | Rain Guage, Thermometer, Kneeling pad, Garden Gloves, Hand Tools, Slow-release Fertilizer, Garden Art, Book for inspiration, Watering Can, Flower Pot |
| Cookbooks Basket | Diane has already provided some cookbooks, but we're looking for complementary items |
| Italian Due to their popularity last year, we'd like to offer 2 baskets this year | Pasta, Wine, Italian Cookbook |
| Picnic | Checkered tablecloth, Blanket, Picnic tableware, Wine, Gift certificate at a deli or Sub shop |
| Wisconsin Badgers Basket | Items to show our pride in the teams! |
| Green Bay Packers Basket | Items to show our pride in the team! |
| Coffee Basket | Mug, coffee samples/bags |
| Spa Basket | Soaps, candle, lotions, etc. |
| Packers Tailgate Basket | Packers-related picnic items |

We are

also looking for donated baskets to put the items in – let us know if you can help with this. All items can be turned in at the monthly meetings or to Jan or Barb – we need them no later than the June meeting. Thank you for your support!

Do you have an item of higher value that you'd like to donate for the Silent Auction? Just contact Jan or Barb with your idea.

PLANT SALE BUZZ



Things To Do Now

- Look for sales on potting soils and let others know.
- Donate 4-, 5- and 6-inch **CLEAN** pots. Members doing winter sowing and propagations can always use them. We are trying to use uniform size pots to make sale pricing easier. Bring them to the membership meeting to share.
- Check on overwintering plants. With our goofy winter weather, you may need to water them during warm dry spells to keep the soil from drying out. As the weather warms in April, remove some of the heavier mulch.
- Have you considered incorporating plants with distinctive seed heads suitable for dry arrangements into your garden design this year? If so, it is advisable to begin planning for seed propagation or researching potential plant acquisitions soon. A list of plants that do well in our arrangements was also in last month's newsletter.
- Continue to propagate houseplants, succulents, etc. so there is a large assortment to purchase at the fall plant sale. Hand off plants to friends, etc. to continue raising while you propagate more. We can also use interesting potted plants at our August fair booth and flower beds.
- Winter Sowers – Let Donna know what seed jugs you have prepared. We understand that not all of them may make it to market. She is willing to provide advice or answer questions you have about the process. As weather warms jugs may need to be vented more by removing the tape and tipping covers back. Keep on top of watering as the temperatures rise and tops are opened.

Plant Sale Team's Next meeting is on April 20, 2026, at 12:30 via Zoom to discuss plans for Fall plant sale at Marshfield Maple Fest on September 19-20.

WIMGA CORNER

April appears to be "hosta month" for WCMGA. The continuing education topic for our April 28th meeting is hostas. It will be preceded a week earlier by the spring WIMGA continuing education feature on the same subject: **Hostas: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow** with Glenn Herold. Date and time: **April 22, 2026 at 6:30**. Watch for a zoom link from WIMGA. Glenn's background includes biology and horticulture degrees from UW-Madison and teaching at Central Illinois College. He lives in Cedarburg and writes a blog titled The Cottage Gardener. Take a look. This will most likely be the last WIMGA continuing education program before the gardening season is in full force. There will be more later in the season.

If you are on Facebook.....

Don't forget to check the WIMGA Facebook page. You can join the **WIMGA GROUP** since you have paid WCMGA dues.

Karleen Remington
WIMGA Rep

Calendar of Events*

April 14 Weed Wise, Pittsville Library*

April 15 Rome Library, Grow Rhubarb and Asparagus*

April 16 Garden Guru Mfld Library, Plan and Plant Veggie Garden*

April 18 Note early deadline for May newsletter articles

April 22 Ask Your Gardening Question Live*

April 22 PDDC Zoom, Preventing Plant Diseases*

April 22 WIMGA Education Program via Zoom*

April 28 April Membership Meeting WI Rapids*

May 12 Road Trip (more info by email)

May 26 May Membership Meeting

June 23 June Membership Meeting

July 18 Garden Walk

July 28 July Membership Meeting

August 25? August Membership Meeting

August 25-30 Central Wisconsin State Fair

Sept 19-20 Fall Plant Sale

Sept 22 September Membership Meeting

Oct 27 October Membership Meeting

Nov 17 November Membership Meeting

*See other articles in this issue for more details.



April Garden Guide

Taken from Portage County Master Gardener website

- Start tomato seeds indoors. Research shows seven-week old transplants produce earliest fruit and best overall results.
- Cut back over-wintered geraniums to six to eight inches.
- Start fast-growing annual flowers indoors.
- Start seedlings of eggplant, okra, peppers and broccoli.
- Set out lily of the valley clumps with pips just even with the ground.
- When annual beds can be worked, turn over green manure crop such as annual rye in beds for annuals and vegetables. If none was planted, top-dress with compost or rotted manure.
- Remove mulch from spring flowering bulb beds.
- Container grown or balled and burlapped trees and shrubs can be planted at any time during the growing season. Bare root trees and shrubs need to be planted within a day or two. Soak roots before planting.
- Divide houseplants and pot for the WCMG plant sale by the end of the month. This will provide roots time to get established.
- Start seeds of perennials that do not need cold period.
- Prune and fertilize all bush fruits and grapes. Fertilize fruit trees as soon as possible after ground thaws but before blossoming.
- Plant rhubarb and asparagus as soon as ground can be worked.
- Remove rose cones when soil thaws. Gradually remove soil mound from around rose plants.



2026 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

Log your hours in ORS.

Review the changes to the Master Gardener program in Canvas classroom while the weather is too cold to do anything outside.

Make your plans for growing plants or other materials for the plant sale.

If you know of someone who is able to grow plants for a plant sale, please let a member of the plant sale committee or the board know.

See the list of items needed for the raffle baskets and let a Jan or Barb know what you can bring.