



**December 2017**

**2017 Officers:**

- Carol Ziehmke, President
- Jean Damm, V.P.
- Kelly Tomko, Secretary
- Jane Considine, Treasurer
- Lori Nadolski, Reporter



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<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
DEC	NO MEETING
DEC. 22	OFFICE CLOSED
DEC. 25	OFFICE CLOSED
DEC. 29	OFFICE CLOSED
JAN. 1	OFFICE CLOSED
JAN 23	MGV MEETING—6:00PM, ADMINISTRATION BLDG. MTG. ROOM 115

**President's Message**



This is the season for giving and receiving, for parties, good cheer and to start planning for the next years gardens. The gardening catalogues will start arriving any day. It is always fun to see what new varieties are being offered!

The UW-Extension has articles posted that can be used for CE credit (0.5 hours each) if approved by the local County Coordinator. To get CE, you must note in the comments a specific thing you learned.

There are also gardening shows on TV that are both educational and entertaining but cannot be used for continuing education. One that I have been watching lately is P. Allen Smith's. He combines gardening, decorating and cooking. My brother and his wife live in Arkansas where Smith is located. As a boy P. Allen Smith lost his father and his mother raised him and his 3 siblings. P. Allen Smith became active in 4-H and raising chickens was his big project, which he continues with today. He considers 4-H a very important part of his childhood and part of who he is today. He is supportive of their State Master Gardening Organization. One of their fundraising items is usually a private lunch with Smith. He also opens up his own gardens for tours.

Blogs are also a popular way to learn and connect to a wider gardening world. A blog is an online journal where writers post articles about their choice of topic. Blogs are usually connected to other blogs and authors creating a community of people interested in the same subject. Blogs are full of personality making them not only informative but a good read too. It is not hard to find blogs to read or listen to. The hard part is finding one that you relate to.

Some blogs to try:

**A Way to Garden** A highly rated blog with tons of information.

**The Creative Vegetable Gardener** Written by Madison resident Megan Cain. Megan has been a presenter at our local Garden Expo. Her blog encourages and educates people to successfully grow their own food and get the most from their gardens.

**Green Talk** A blog focused on organic gardening and related health. A conversation on how to live a greener lifestyle.

**Good Enough Gardening** Produced by two women from the Chicago area. One is a master gardener volunteer and the other woman is currently taking the training. They have a funny dialogue discussing the MGV program.

See you next year,

*Carol*



## Mighty Vine *by Jane Considine*



“Root for your local tomato” was the sign that greeted us when we arrived at the MightyVine facility in Rochelle, IL., for a tour pre-arranged by my sister who lives near Rochelle and who knew about the tomato-growing operation. In production for just over two years in Illinois, the company is one of a growing number of hydroponic facilities that hope to capture a portion of the market for locally grown tomatoes that have a fresh taste even when cold days descend on the upper Midwest.

Danny Murphy, marketing spokesperson who provided the tour for our group of eight, said that he spent a year learning the process in the Netherlands where growing under glass is a well-developed form of agriculture. The plants destined for Rochelle get their start at a facility in Ontario, Canada, where a stem from one tomato variety is grafted to the root system of a different variety. This labor-intensive step helps assure a hardy plant with consistent results. When the seedlings arrive in Illinois, they are tended for about two months in a 7.5 acre “glasshouse” and it’s there that workers make the first “twists,” training the tender vines to climb a thin strand of twine. When the plants have reached approximately 3 ft. in height they are then transferred to the second 7.5 acre glasshouse. Rockwool, an inert product spun from volcanic rock, is the soil substitute, and nutrients are delivered via a drip irrigation system. Bees and beneficial bugs are introduced, and workers (there are approximately 70 production employees) continue to carefully twist the vines that are now sturdy enough to support the elongated fruit cluster bearing 10-12 large cherry tomatoes with the proprietary variety name Robinio. The other variety grown in the glasshouse is Forticia, a peach-size slicing tomato.



When the plant reaches approximately 6 ft., the vine will be lowered a bit every week, and the lower leaves removed. Workers use carts that roll quietly on rails between the long aisles; the carts are equipped with lifts that allow the workers to easily tend

## Mighty Vine *continued....*

and harvest the vines. All workers and visitors wear long, disposable jackets and disposable booties to reduce the possibility of contamination or introduction of pathogens that could jeopardize the entire crop.

Rainwater and snowmelt from the glass roof is collected and stored in a large tank outside the building, and nutrients added to the irrigation system. Waste water is recaptured, filtered, and reused. Each of the glasshouses is totally emptied yearly and the growing areas are sanitized with ultraviolet light.

Production drops off in late summer when garden tomatoes are plentiful, but many customers still prefer the consistent quality of the MightyVine products. Approximately 900,000 lbs. of tomatoes are produced monthly during peak production. MightyVine concentrates its marketing efforts on the Chicago restaurant and grocery distributors, with penetration into southern Wisconsin, especially the Madison and Milwaukee markets. The food distribution business seems to be very competitive, with contracts constantly won and lost. Stakeholders in the Rochelle operation are optimistic that large-scale growing under glass has a bright future. Customers appreciate the flavor of locally grown food, and growers appreciate that they are somewhat removed from the extreme weather conditions brought on by climate change.

## MGV Logo Shirts



Denim shirts, knit polo-style shirts and t-shirts have all been suggested, and it sounds like members would like a consistent color to promote our association. The previous logo seems to have been lost in the shop ownership transition; we are working on getting a new one digitized for the embroidery, so we only have an estimate of the cost of the logo; probably less than \$10/shirt.

Denim shirts will come in men’s and ladies styles, long sleeve and short sleeve and will run about \$20 each. Short sleeve polo shirts will also come in men’s and ladies sizes, for about \$15 each. Dry-blend T-shirts will be less expensive, but I don’t have a price yet on those. Polos and T-shirts will be a medium blue to coordinate with the denim.

As soon as we get the final costs figured we will put out an order form.

Thanks for your patience.

- Becky Gutzman

## Treasurer's Report

### COLUMBIA COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION

Treasurer's Report—Dec. 10, 2017



**Income:** 10-24-17 – 12-10-17  
\$255 dues

**Expenses:** 10-24-17 – 12-10-17  
\$15.27 reimburse Leah Stark micro garden supplies

#### Checking account balances:

\$5307.70 CCCMG  
\$842.04 Community Garden sub-account



## Let's Get Green and Growing - 2018

Mark your calendar for Saturday, March 24<sup>th</sup> to attend "Let's Get Green and Growing" at Rio High School. We are excited to have Dave Wanninger, horticulturist in charge at Boerner Botanical Gardens, as the key note speaker. The LGGG committee has been busy working to create a varied and interesting array of speaker and session options. The next planning meeting is on Tuesday, January 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 at the Extension Office and any member is welcome to attend. We plan to have the registration brochures ready for distribution at the January 23, 2018 Master Gardener meeting. LGGG provides many volunteer, as well as learning opportunities - we look forward to seeing you!



## Election of Officers:

Officers shall be: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter



Terms of all officers are one year. Elections will be held at the annual meeting in January. Officers shall be active or intern Master Gardeners.

**President** shall provide leadership for the organization and preside at regular monthly meetings. The president shall develop an agenda for such meetings.

**Vice President** shall perform duties of the president in president's absence. The vice-president shall work with the treasurer and the UW-Extension office to encourage active member participation.

**Secretary** shall record and keep minutes of all proceedings. The secretary will publish the minutes from the previous meeting in the newsletter and have them approved at next monthly meeting.

**Treasurer** shall receive and safely keep all funds of the association and pay out the same on the order of the President. The treasurer shall make monthly reports at each regular meeting of receipts and disbursements.

**Reporter** shall write and send articles/photos of association news to local media; submit articles to association newsletter.

Nominations will be taken from the floor prior to elections. No officer shall hold an office more than two (2) consecutive terms. Voting shall be by secret ballot or show of hands, as determined by the President. A majority of votes is required to elect an officer. (Note – Active MGVA is a certified MGVA who has paid their \$15 dues.)

Notes: Kelly Tomko is not eligible to serve as Secretary in 2018. She may serve in any other office. Likewise, Lori Nadolski may not serve as Reporter in 2018, but may serve in any other office. Jane Considine does not wish to continue as Treasurer. Officers may count meeting planning time and time spent performing officer duties toward their 24 hours of community service requirements for each year. It is recorded in the Support Services Column.

Please think about serving your MGVA organization as one of the officers. Try it for a year, we have elections each year, so it is very nice that this organization does not treat becoming an officer like a "life sentence" as in many other organizations.



## 2018 MGVA Dues

Thanks to the following people who have already paid their dues:

Sue Bradley, Jane Breuer, Jeff Breuer, Jane Considine, Bill Damm, Jean Damm, Anne Marie Fuerst, Becky Gutzman, Linda Haddix, Suzanne Huber, Curtis Niglis, Phyllis Peterson, Ardyce Piehl, Marcie Read, Lorra Rhyner, Sherryl Stolte, Rita Socha, Terry Socha, Kelly Tomko, Lila Waldman.

You may still take care of this. Please mail a check for \$15 payable to Columbia County Master Gardeners by January 5, 2018. We need to send our check to the State WIMGA by January 10. Please send your check to: George Koepp, Columbia County UW-Extension, 112 E Edgewater St., Room 212, Portage, WI 53901. You may always stop into our office with your check as well.

# MGV Timesheets for 2018 - Remembering the Past and Learning What's New for 2018!!

## Requirements for being a Certified Master Gardener Volunteer

1. Complete a Criminal Background Check (every four years)
2. Complete a UW-Extension Volunteer Behavior Expectations Form (once)
3. Complete Level 1 training (once)
4. Complete a Mandatory Reporter Training session (once)
5. Complete and report a minimum of 24 hours of approved volunteer hours by Oct. 1
6. Complete and report a minimum of 10 hours of Continuing Education by October 1

## May only use the MGV title when:

1. Certified
2. Performing volunteer tasks for UW-Extension
3. May accept a small gift, but not money or remuneration
4. May accept reimbursement for travel and expenses

Things to record: Date, Project Name, Work accomplished, Continuing Education Topic, Time spent on a project in half hour increments.

## Record service hours in the following categories (need 24 hours per year):

1. Youth Education – working with people < 18 years old
2. Community Education – Adult/Community Education
  - Work at CC Fair Booth
  - Teach at a Library, or other adult gathering
3. Support Services – Dedicated to County approved service projects
  - Must be MGV related activities
  - Must be community related
  - Includes officer meetings and responsibility time
  - Includes MGV committee, newsletter, LGGG work
  - Work for other Garden Clubs does NOT count (Note change here)

## Record Continuing Education hours (need 10 hours per year)

Presentations after meetings  
Level 2 MGV trainings  
Public Radio/TV shows with Extension Specialists  
Guided Garden Tours, (just visiting does not count)  
UW-Extension sponsored conferences and activities  
“Plants Plus” articles on MG website  
LGGG Keynote and breakout sessions

## Changes for reporting on the horizon

- MGV Will be adopting the VMS –Volunteer Management system
- hours will be reported electronically
  - May be up and running by mid 2018
  - Will use drop down menus
  - We will need to list all our approved activities
  - We will help those without computer skills or knowledge
  - We will share more details as they become available
  - Please be patient, this is a work in progress



Columbia County

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