



January 2019

2018 Officers:

- Carol Ziehmke, President
- Jean Damm, V.P.
- Lori Nadolski, Secretary
- Linda Haddix, Treasurer
- Donna McElroy, Reporter

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President's Message

2019 Hard to believe!

This is the time of year for resolutions. What do we want to change in our lives? For example, Weight Watchers has changed their focus to wellness. In the past their message was weight loss but now they are stressing wellness with an active lifestyle and healthy eating. I believe we Master Gardener Volunteers already fall into this area. In fact, we do even better because we grow and consume a lot of our own produce and I would bet most of it is organic. Another health area that is popular now is fermentation. One of my goals for the year is to do more with this topic. I just had a favorite Korean pork sandwich from a small restaurant in Brooklyn, New York. What makes it so special are the vegetables they have in the sandwich, which is a mixture of cabbage and carrots that have been quick pickled for a few days. The vegetables remind me of the sweet baby dills my mother-in-law used to make (just a hint of sweetness).

Fermented foods are the hot new items to a healthier gut. It is believed that beneficial bacteria found in fermented foods may promote gut health by increasing the number of healthy bacteria. Most of us eat the popular fermented foods like yogurt and sauerkraut. Another popular food is kefir, a fermented milk beverage. I have to admit, I do not drink this, but I believe it is in all our local grocery stores. More popular items are kombucha, kimchi and tempeh, made from fermented soybeans. A Pan-Asian restaurant, Sujeo, on East Washington in Madison carries dishes that use fermentation.

Tory Miller, a popular local chef known for his support of cooking with local produce and meat, was just on the Wisconsin Foodie Show. In that episode he was hunting wild turkey and then cooking the meat. He's elevated the culinary scene by founding the Madison Area Chefs Network, an organization that aims to strengthen connections between local farmers, producers and restaurants.

Instead of eating less in the New Year, we could try eating something different and healthy, and trying some new restaurants which offer different dishes.

And that same thought carries over to our vegetable gardens. What are some vegetables or flowers to add to our gardens that we have not grown before?

Happy eating,
~Carol



Columbia County MGV 2018 Activities

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
Jan 22	MGV Meeting, Election of Officers, 6pm, HHS Room #2-3
Jan 30	Marquette County MGV - Open House, Westfield Village Hall, 124 E. 3rd Street, 6-9pm
Feb 26	MGV Meeting
Mar 26	MGV Meeting
Mar 30	LGGG—Rio High School, 8:45am



Wild Rice

By Jane Considine



I recently wrote an article for the Portage Historical Society newsletter, compiling writings from half a dozen travelers who described the approach to the portage near Ft. Winnebago, starting with Jacques Marquette in 1673 to Peter Stark, writing in 2014. I noticed that four of the writers mentioned the thick stands of wild rice in the Fox River. Here's what they said:

... but on the way [on the Fox River] was so cut up by marshes and little lakes that it would be easy to go astray, especially when the river was so covered with wild rice that you could hardly see the river ... *Jacques Marquette, 1673*

The wild rice was so thick that the Indians could hardly get one of their small canoes into the rice to gather it. Vast numbers of wild ducks fatten there on the wild rice every fall. When they rise, they make a noise like thunder. *Peter Pond, fur trader 1825*

The Fox River is serpentine, almost without a parallel; it winds about like a string that doubles and redoubles, and its channel is choked with fields of wild rice, from which rose, continually, immense flocks of blackbirds." *Henry Schoolcraft, Explorer, August 26, 1825*

"... The wild rice abounds to the extent in many places, that it almost completely obstructs the progress of even a moderate-sized boat, so that a passage through its tangled masses is with difficulty forced by the oars. *Juliette Kinzie, 1854, in Wau-Bun: the Early Day in the Northwest*

Those comments prompted me to wonder: what happened to the wild rice? We know that wild rice is gathered in northern Wisconsin, but I've never heard of wild rice harvesting in southern Wisconsin. I sent an inquiry to DNR Wetland Habitat Specialist Jason Fleener who responded that central Wisconsin was historically the range for both species of wild rice *Zizania Palustris* (Northern Wild Rice) and *Zizania Aquatica* (Southern or River Wild Rice). He said the northern variety is largely absent from southern Wisconsin now. The main difference is that the southern rice is much taller and robust, how-

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ever it has small seeds. The small seeds mean it's difficult to thresh, and therefore most people don't make the effort. He speculates that the shift in range could be due to a combination of factors "including changed land use (associated with declining water quality), changing hydrology (damming), invasive species (carp, cattail, etc) and a changing climate have made the central watersheds in Wisconsin less conducive to the persistence of northern wild rice."

Peter David of the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission concurs with his DNR colleague, adding that "changes in hydrology (damming and water level management) probably had the biggest impact initially, coupled with some wetland loss – or perhaps conversion to deeper wetland – being part of the problem." He says if people are interested in restoring southern (river) wild rice, it is still great for wildlife.

However, there are challenges in getting seed to plant. There is some limited growing and harvesting of southern wild rice.

Here are a few points to ponder:

- Were food resources for the Native Americans – especially those that could be gathered and stored over winter – so valuable that the effort it took to gather the small-seeded southern wild rice easily worthwhile?
- Were developers of another era (the mid 19th century when the Fox-Wisconsin waterway was on the drawing board) required to produce something similar to today's "Environmental Impact Statement" before damming the Fox River?
- Are there other plants that were plentiful in the wetlands associated central Wisconsin watersheds that are now gone, or at least not abundant? (Such as watercress that thrives in cold, running water)

This painting from 1853 depicts a group of Native American women harvesting southern wild rice on an unnamed river.



I was also curious about the comments from a 20th century writer (David Levander, 1964, *A Fist in the Wilderness*) who referred to the tall rushes that the Native Americans harvested and wove into mats. That comment reminded me that I had seen an old plat

map of Fort Winnebago township a few years ago that showed a property owned by a mat company. So with a little digging I

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found an image from a plat book dated 1918-1925, and there it was in section 11: the Deltox Grass Rug company with a 120 acre parcel. With a little more research I learned that the company was based in Oshkosh and their grass rugs were distributed nationally. Production of the grass rugs was discontinued with 1929. A book about Oshkosh history "We Shall Never Pass this way Again: Stories from Oshkosh's Historic Past" reports that the company at one time owned 15,000 acres of marshland in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Canada, and leased another 10,000 acres. A majority of land in section 11 of Ft. Winnebago township is now owned by the DNR.



The painting on pg. 4 depicts a group of Native American women harvesting southern wild rice. At right, a photo of southern (river) rice from DNR website.

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MGV Election of Officers



Terms of officers are one year. Elections will be held at the annual meeting in January. Officers shall be active or intern Master Gardeners. Nominations will be taken from the floor prior to election. No officer shall hold an office more than two (2) consecutive terms. Voting may be by secret ballot or show of hands, as determined by the President. A majority of votes is required to elect an officer.

President	Carol Ziehmke has served two consecutive terms
Vice President	Jean Damm has served two consecutive terms
Secretary	Lori Nadolski has served one term
Treasurer	Linda Haddix has served one term
Reporter	Donna McElroy has served one term

Columbia County Master Gardener Volunteers

Meeting Agenda - January 22, 2019

Call the Meeting to Order (Carol)

Secretary's Report (Kelly)

Treasurer's Report (Linda)

WIMGA Dues

Introductions

Old Business

LGGG

Microgreens in the Classroom

New Hours Recording System



New Business

Election of Officers

Growing Together WI - MGV & FoodWise Project Mini-Grant

Suggestions for Programs

Other

Next Meeting Date, Location and Program

Adjournment

Program: Comfort Food Demonstration, by Darcy Miller

About Darcy: I grew up wanting to be a teacher and in 7th grade decided to be a Home Economics teacher because it encompasses a lot of my interest and also teaches people practical life skills. I graduated from UW-Stout in 2000 and have been teaching Family and Consumer Sciences ever since. Making food is one of my favorite things to do Baking bread is my favorite because it makes people happy and there are so many things you can do with a few simple ingredients. Looking forward to sharing some comfort foods with you all.

Master Gardener Association Open House, Featuring Melinda Myers

The Marquette County Master Gardener Association will be hosting an Open House on Wednesday, January 30, in the Westfield Village Hall, located at 124 E 3rd St. Doors will be open from 6 pm until 9 pm.

The featured speaker will be Melinda Myers, a nationally known gardening expert, TV/radio host, author & columnist with over 30 years of horticulture experience. She has a master's degree in horticulture and was a horticulture instructor with tenure. Melinda has written over 20 gardening books and some will be available at this event for purchase. Melinda will be signing books at the end of the evening. You might have heard or

seen her on PBS and WPR or at the Garden Expo in Madison. She is also a contributor for the Wisconsin Gardener magazine. More information on Melinda can be found at <http://www.melindamyers.com/>.



This event will include time for you to bring your garden questions to Melinda Myers for answers. Garden centers will be attending with booths showing their wares, giving you time to chat with local businesses in the area. Master Gardener Volunteers will be on hand to share information on what it means to be a volunteer with the Master Gardener program.

Door prize drawings and refreshments will be part of the evening fun. There is no charge to attend and reservations are not required. Mark your calendars and tell your friends! Call Joni at 608-369-0625 or Scott at 541-921-5806 with questions.

**This event would count for Continuing Education Hours.*



Columbia County

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