

## Master Gardener News



### 2019 Officers:

Leah Stark, President  
Deb Buechner, V.P.  
Lori Nadolski, Secretary  
Linda Haddix, Treasurer  
Donna McElroy, Reporter



### In This Newsletter

CCMGV 2019 Activities	1
President's Message	2
The Overstory	3-4
MGV Officers	4
LGGG Recap	5
Fun April Facts	6
MGV Meeting Minutes	7-8
To Prune or not to Prune	9-10
Recipes from the Garden	11
WIMGA	12
The Report	13-14
MGV Meeting Agenda	15

### Columbia County MGV 2019 Activities

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
Apr 22	Earth Day
Apr 23	MGV Meeting, HHS #2-3, 6:00pm
Apr 26	Arbor Day
May 15	4H Container Gardening @ Links Greenhouse
May 28	MGV Meeting, HHS #2-3, 6:00pm

# President's Message

Hello Friends,

Spring has sprung and it is so nice to watch everything come back to life! I've been trying to get in some yard work amongst the busy days of life, and although it doesn't feel like I get much accomplished, it sure does feel good to be out.

Today while the sun was out, hubby and I worked on raking leaves off the flower beds, pruned back a rose bush, and dug out a few scrub trees until the rain chased us away. The rest of the work will have to wait yet another day. I have a Spider plant that I call the "cat plant with 9 lives" because since we moved into our current house 5 yrs ago, it has died and came back to life 5 times! I've come to the conclusion that it must be the water. It is the only house plant that I have that requires special water. After babying it along all winter, it can finally get the water it really needs with this spring rain.

Congratulations to the LGGG team and volunteers on another fun and educational event. I think we all learned something new that day. Thank you to everyone for making the day a success.

A have a few ideas that I would like to pass around... I would like to see our monthly newsletter re-vamped a bit. I know most you could have something to report on whether it is a MGV project that you have been working on, a related book report, gardens that you have visited, or any fun garden fact that you have found, etc. Even a few sentences would suffice. Let's make it worth the time to keep our newsletter going. I would also like to start "Recipes from the Garden" featuring seasonal produce. So if you have a tried and true favorite recipe, please submit to Jennifer, George, or myself.

Also this week April 7-13 is National Volunteer Week. THANK YOU to each and every one of you for all the volunteer work that you do for the Master Gardeners. Please join us at our April meeting for light refreshments as a token of our appreciation! Hope to see you there!

Stay tuned for our Calendar of events, not everything has been finalized just yet!

Happy Spring,

Leah Stark, leahlynn3@yahoo.com



## *The Overstory* by Richard Powers (2018)

A book report by Lila Waldman

What is the value of trees? If the trees of this earth could speak our language, what would they tell us? This book of fiction begins with the stories of nine individuals whose lives have been affected by trees. A Vietnam Air Force veteran's life was saved by a tree when he was shot out of the sky. A migrant farmer in Iowa in the 19<sup>th</sup> century plants chestnuts that he carries from the Eastern U.S.; one of those trees becomes a lone survivor of the blight that wiped out American chestnuts in the rest of the country. A high school senior falls from a tree and is relegated to a wheelchair for the rest of his life. A married couple decides to plant a tree on their suburban acreage on each of their anniversaries.

The stories of these people and the others merge as activists attempt to save the few remaining patches of old-growth forest left in North America. Peaceful protests and minor misdemeanors are met with violence from loggers and the police, and the Federal government is selling national forests for logging and development. The next step the activists perceive necessary is eco-terrorism and the destruction of property. Despite their efforts, the destruction of trees continues.

A scientist discovers that trees are able to communicate with each other. All life on earth is interconnected and that humans can destroy an entire ecosystems with the felling of one large tree. A main theme of *The Overstory* (502 pages) is the loss of our forests and humanity's current separation from the rest of creation. As an environmentalist, I found the book somewhat depressing. Although a work of fiction, the story mirrors what is actually happening in our world and what is confirmed in the 2016 non-fiction book, *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben.. One quote that I found particularly memorable is "Earth will be monetized until all trees grow in straight lines, three people own all seven continents, and every large organism is bred to be slaughtered."

The author leaves us with a bit of hope at the end of the book. The scientist spends her time and money collecting seeds from trees around the world to store in a seed bank, but then questions if the trees will survive without their current support systems (insects and other plants). Also, who will plant the seeds. The wheelchair-bound computer whiz gets rich developing an artificial intelligence system which models human acquisition and then switches to artificial intelligence that shows the power of nature and what humans are doing to destroy the world.



## Meet your new Officers!!



Pictured L to R: Lori Nadolski (Secretary), Deb Buechner (Vice President), Linda Haddix (Treasurer), Leah Stark (President), Donna McElroy (Reporter)

## Let's Get Green and Growing 2019 – By The Numbers!

There was a definite chill in the air on the morning of March 30<sup>th</sup> as the vendors began to fill the gym at 7:00 am at Rio High School, but inside the air was warm (the heat was ON!) and full of thoughts of spring and all of its promise as we launched “Let’s Get Green and Growing” 2019. Six months of planning, numerous meetings and countless emails came to fruition as 182 registered attendees joined volunteers, presenters, vendors and Rio High School staff and students to learn, network and share their love of gardening.

Twelve vendor booths lined the perimeter of the gym offering an array of garden related items. The Master Gardener Swap table offered FREE books, magazines and seeds along with compost pails and gloves for sale. Announcements were made and our keynote speakers, Ben Futa and Elin Filbey from Allen Centennial Garden in Madison challenged listeners to think about gardening in a different way, looking at possibilities for opening up gardening and public spaces to others. They asked listeners to think about gardening “WITH” not “FOR” their target audience, a basic principle of the Master Gardener program.

The day unfolded with the possibility of 29 breakout sessions with 26 different speakers, including numerous Master Gardener Volunteers and many others giving of their time and sharing their passion for their subject area. Lunch and more shopping time rounded out the day. At the end of the day 136 attendees completed and turned in their evaluation forms – a whopping 75% return rate and 44 lucky people went home with door prizes.

How is all of this possible? Countless Columbia County Master Gardener Volunteer hours were shared to help plan, advertise, set up, host, photograph, sell, welcome, clean up and prepare in the days/weeks prior to the event and on that day. It is “volunteer powered” and couldn’t happen without YOU! This is in addition to the unending support of the UW-Madison – Extension office personnel.

In the evaluations, attendees shared incalculable amounts of learning, their appreciation for this economical learning opportunity and the effort and planning that went into it! Another “Let’s Get Green and Growing” educational event is on the books and as one attendee wrote on their evaluation, “See you in 2020”!

## The Month of April 2019: Holidays, Fun Facts, Folklore (taken from the Old Farmers Almanac)

**April 2019** is the first full month of spring! We hope that your sky is bright and clear and your grass is growing green. **April Calendar**

This month’s name came from the Latin word *aperio*, meaning “to open [bud],” because plants begin to grow now.

**Birthstone:** Diamond.

**Birth Month Flowers:** Daisy and Sweet Pea.

### Wacky Days

- Apr. 1: Sweet Potato Day
- Apr. 6: International Pillow Fight Day
- Apr. 7: National No Housework Day
- Apr. 17: Blah, Blah, Blah Day
- Apr. 21: Go Fly a Kite Day
- Apr. 26: National Richter Scale Day
- Apr. 27: National Sense of Smell Day



### Rhyme Time

*April cold with dripping rain  
Willows and lilacs brings again,  
The whistle of returning birds,  
And trumpet-lowing of the herds.  
–Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–82)*

*Oh, how fresh the wind is blowing!  
See! The sky is bright and clear,  
Oh, how green the grass is growing!  
April! April! Are you here?*

*–Dora R. Goodale (1866–1953)*



# Columbia County Master Gardener Volunteers

March 26th, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Leah Stark called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Meeting was hosted at HHS #2 & 3

**Secretary's Minutes:** There were no minutes from the February meeting to approve.

**Treasurer's Report:** Current balance: \$6,347.87. Sending to audit. It's time to perform book keeping for the 2018 reports. Linda Haddix, Lori Nadolski, Jean Damm and Carol Ziehmke volunteered to be on that committee. Sue Bradley volunteered as a back-up if needed.

**Introductions:** We shared our name and something that made us smile today. In attendance were: Lori Nadolski, Ardyce Piehl, Becky Gutzman, Robin Abbot, Craig Robson, Ann Marie Fuerst, Don Meyer, Sheryl, Carol Ziehmke, Bill Damm, Jean Damm, Kelly Tomko-Ewing, kPhyllis Peterson, Deb Buechner, Donna McElroy, Linda Haddix, Leah Stark and George Koepp.

## Old Business

### LGGG

Registration is currently at 187 and everything is all set. Tips on photo-taking: consider lighting, seek to tell a story, go for close-ups, action shots, people interacting, etc. Try to visualize how it will turn out. The more we have, the merrier. However, go through your total to select the best before emailing them to both Carol and George. Set up is Friday at 4PM. Doors open to vendors at 7:15 AM Saturday morning. People volunteering for the registration table should arrive by 8:00 AM. Please bring magazines and books for the donation table. We will be selling gloves and compost pails.

### Microgardens

We had a successful microgarden program with the Kindergarteners in Pardeeville this year. We began (planted) a microgarden with the third graders at John Muir in Portage. Currently, John Muir is the only microgarden still out. We aim for 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> grade, but have also worked with High School special ed departments in the past.

### Online Reporting System

Has everyone logged into the new system? The next step is to begin defining qualifying projects for MGV hours. Two check lists were passed around tonight's meeting. One was to verify currently registered trainees and qualifying volunteers. The other was to verify and update our list of email contacts. We discussed the progressive transition that is happening in all MGV associations across the state, in accordance with needs of the state, in directing the MGV program. We will be working towards all programs being identified and documented clearly, with clear goals and outcomes. After discussing what exactly the program directors would like to see down the road, George began composing a master list of our current, local programs.

### Ladies Night Out

This April 4<sup>th</sup>, Portage Lumber will host its Ladies Night Out again. MGV's will have a table and several of us plan to run a "make and take" activity for attendees. Attendees are supposed to register in advance, but all are allowed inside. There is a long line annually, and first arrivers receive a gift. Attendees who stay to the end are eligible for five, large door prizes. Anyone wishing to volunteer at our table should arrive between 5:30 and 6:00PM. Program begins at 6:30 PM.

### Spring Fling

On Saturday April 6<sup>th</sup>, Ace Hardware in Portage will host its Spring Fling event. MGV's will have a table for attendees (kids) to plant seeds in pots to take home. Linda Haddix and Lila Waldman have the seeds and are looking for more volunteers to join them. Last year's event went very well despite icy weather. The event runs from 11 AM – 2 PM. If you wish to join and help, please arrive before 11:00 to help set up and learn the activity.

### 2019 MGV Scholarships

We have two applicants for scholarships this year. Names will be revealed when winners are announced. Winners will receive \$500.00. Becky Gutzman moved to pass and Ardyce Piehl 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Motion passed.

## New Business

### 2019 County Fair

Our association received a letter from the fair, offering a booth space for free this year inside the Flower Building. Carol Ziehmke stepped forwards to be responsible for the judging portion of this program/event with help from Jean Damm and Robin Abbot. This year's theme is "Celebrate Wisconsin". Linda Haddix and Leah Stark volunteered to lead the Booth Committee. Becky Gutzman and Ardyce Piehl also volunteered to help, although they have a schedule conflict the day of.

### 4-H Container Gardeners

We host it sometime in May. The date needs to be finalized, but attendance is usually good. We invite kids of all ages. 4-H is also wondering if we would like to "beautify" the flower beds around the flower building. Are we interested in doing that?

### Lincoln Park Gardens

Our application of the FoodWise Program grant was successfully completed and turned in and we are waiting to hear back. Anticipated contact is for the end of March. There were a few amendments to the program expectations that were communicated after we sent our application. For example, harvested food will need to go through a food pantry before it can be distributed. This may change a few things, but first we need to see if we are grant recipients.

### Edgewater Greenhouse

Edgewater Greenhouse donated large amounts of 2018 seeds. Discussion can happen as to what to do with these. How do we want to thank them? Jim Lavine would like to partner with the MGV's for a tomato/pepper program that would involve the distribution and growing of tomato, peppers and/or more, followed by a tasting party/event. Carol Ziehmke and Lori Nadolski volunteered to contact Jim and coordinate/organize this. The idea of holding the August MGV meeting at Edgewater's tasting party was presented.

### Newsletter

Any and all inspiring journalists are encouraged to send materials to George and Jennifer for the newsletter.

Jean Damm moved to adjourn, Lori Nadolski 2<sup>nd</sup> it. Meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Educational Hour: "WIMGA & MGV Program – Who's Responsible for What? -Becky Gutzman and George Koepp

# To Prune, or Not to Prune, That is the Question

APRIL 4, 2019 DDLANG



As warmer weather has spread through much of Wisconsin, I have talked with more and more gardeners who are chomping at the bit to get into their yards and start the 2019 gardening season. One of the activities these gardeners are contemplating is the pruning of their trees and shrubs. They often ask me whether spring is a good time to prune from a plant disease perspective.

The answer is: It depends.

Overall, I am a proponent of winter pruning. Typically there is a slight warming at the end of January or at the beginning of February where it's warm enough to prune and not freeze to death, but not warm enough that disease-causing organisms are likely to be active. In my mind, pruning during this window reduces the risk of pathogens infecting through pruning wounds. There can be exceptions to this rule of thumb however. There is some research that indicates that pruning honey-locust trees in the summer (during hotter, drier periods) can reduce the risk of Nectria canker compared to pruning in the winter.

When pruning in the spring, the trees that I have the most concern about are oak trees. In particular, I worry about transmission of the oak wilt fungus, *Bretziella fagacearum*. This fungus can be moved from tree to tree by sap beetles that become active as temperatures warm. These insects are attracted to wounds, including those caused by pruning. Some municipalities restrict pruning of oaks after April 1 in anticipation that temperatures will shortly be warm enough that sap beetles will be active. Use of a calendar date as a cut off for pruning oaks can be problematic however if spring arrives early. For that reason, I really ONLY recommend winter pruning for oaks. If for some

reason, you really need to prune an oak at another time of the year, paint over any pruning wounds. You can use a commercial pruning paint if you like, but left over latex paint (from painting a room in your home) will work just as well. The paint provides a physical barrier that makes a wound less attractive to sap beetles. Be sure to paint wounds on oak trees IMMEDIATELY. There is research that indicates that sap beetles can visit wounds in as little as 10 minutes.

In general, when pruning trees other than oaks in the spring (or any time other than the winter), always be sure to prune when it's dry and when there is dry weather predicted for several days post pruning. Dry weather is less favorable for fungal spores (which might land on a pruning cut) to germinate and infect. Also be sure to prune properly based on the type of tree or shrub. Laura Jull of the UW-Madison Department of Horticulture has authored several excellent fact sheets on how to prune evergreens, deciduous trees and deciduous shrubs. Check these out!! When pruning out diseased branches, prune four to six inches below obviously diseased areas if you suspect a fungal disease and 12 inches below obviously diseased areas if you suspect a bacterial disease. In the best of all possible worlds, you should decontaminate your pruning tools between every cut to limit possible movement of pathogens via your tools from branch to branch or from tree to tree. You can use a 30 second dip in 70% alcohol (e.g., rubbing alcohol) or in a commercial disinfectant for this. Alternatively, you can use a spray disinfectant, spraying your tools until they drip and then allowing them to air dry. Except in situations where oaks are pruned during the growing season, I do not recommend using paint on pruning cuts. Paints tend to slow down the formation of callus tissue, the tissue plants produce to naturally cover over wounds.

Finally, avoid what I tend to try to do when I prune, which is to prune off my fingers. OUCH!!



# Recipes from the Garden

## Recipe

### Rhubarb Dump Cake

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
From: Becky Gutzman



#### Ingredients:

4-6 cups cut up rhubarb  
1 cup of sugar  
1 3-oz pkg. strawberry  
gelatin (sugar-free is fine)  
1 pkg. white or yellow cake  
mix  
1 cup water  
1 stick of butter (or less if  
you wish)

#### Directions:

1. Grease a 9x13" cake pan or spray  
with cooking spray (I use a glass  
baking dish).
2. Spread rhubarb in bottom of dish  
or pan.
3. Mix sugar and gelatin in small  
bowl and sprinkle over rhubarb.
4. Sprinkle cake mix over sugar mix-  
ture.
5. Pour water over cake mix, then  
either dot with butter, or melt the  
butter and pour evenly over.
6. Bake at 350° F. for one hour.

Made by Kathy @ Engineering A Home

## Rhubarb Crisp

From the kitchen of: Leah Stark

#### Ingredients:

6 c. diced rhubarb  
1 1/2 c. sugar  
6 T. flour  
1 c. brown sugar

1 c. oatmeal  
3/4 c. flour  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
1/2 c. butter melted

#### Directions:

Combine rhubarb with sugar and 6 T. flour; place in a 9x13 cake  
pan. Combine remaining ingredients and sprinkle over rhubarb.  
Bake at 375 degrees for 40 - 45 minutes.

Always good ala mode!!

foodstorageandbeyond.com

## Wisconsin Master Gardeners Association – WIMGA

By Becky Gutzman

WIMGA is the state-wide collective voice of Master Gardeners and their associations. We support their horticultural projects and services through:

- \* Networks to enhance outreach
- \* Extending UW-Madison's educational outreach to the public
- \* Sharing ideas and best practices
- \* Providing resources and opportunities such as the Speakers' Bureau, website, conferences, newsletters, grants, mentoring, awards and recognition.

All Columbia County Master Gardeners are members of WIMGA; \$5.00 of our \$15.00 dues goes to pay WIMGA dues.

WIMGA's governing body is a 15 member Board of Directors comprised of two directors elected from each of six districts and three at-large directors. Each association has a "Local Representative" from whom the district directors are elected. These Local Reps join the Board at two meetings during the year.

Check out the website: [www.wimga.org](http://www.wimga.org), to see more information about your state organization. Some documents are password protected, so that only members can access them; the current password is wimga19. Right now we are looking for more members to join the Speaker's Bureau. Speakers submit a description of topics, presentations and maximum travel time for consideration. Speakers work out all details with the host group.

This fall instead of a state conference, we are going to be hosting a "road show" of continuing education topics designed to help all members promote the MG program and become better community educators. Watch for details soon!





## The Report

*Donna McElroy, Reporter*

It was a busy day, but I hope our members had the time to take at least a class or two at 'Let's Get Green and Growing'. I enjoyed the ones I sat in on and thought I would write a bit about them since, unfortunately, we can't attend them all.

In session one with Lloyd Ravet of the Madison Peony Society, we saw beautiful photos of different types of peonies: Herbaceous, Tree (or Mountain) peonies, and Inter-sectional (or Itoh). He talked about peony breeding and some of his seedlings and how he finally had one that was special enough to be named for his wife.

In session two, I was room host for George Koepp for his presentation on 'Terrific Tomatoes'. He covered types of tomatoes, growing requirements and methods, along with how to prevent and control diseases and insects. (Now if we could only control the rain!)

Then it was on to session three, 'Seed Saving for the Novice' with Sauk County MGV Doreen Hamburg, who got her seed saving start as a youngster when she was told that she could save the seeds from the pumpkin she was carving and grow them. So, the next year she took the seeds she had saved, dug a hole and put all the seeds in it. Oops! She doesn't remember harvesting any pumpkins from that first attempt at seed saving.

She talked about the history of seed saving in our country and how people saved their own garden seeds from year to year until the 1800s when the first pamphlet style seed catalog was published by Grant Thorburn in 1822. By 1850, 45 seed companies were in existence. With hybrid seeds becoming popular after 1940, people didn't save as many seeds and bought the new strains on the market. As they did that, though, many heirloom seeds were lost when the seed companies stopped offering many of them as customers bought the newer varieties and people no longer saved their old varieties. However, as plants are bred for greater vigor and disease resistance, many times the results are vegetables that don't taste as good as the heirlooms.

Beans, leaf lettuce, peas, peppers, pumpkins, spinach, and tomatoes are good plants for the beginning seed saver. Before saving your own seed, you need to know your plant. Is it a hybrid? If it is labeled F1 or VF, seeds will not produce plants that are true to the parent plant. Patented seed cannot be saved, replanted or shared. When

will your plant pollinate and will it cross with other varieties or plants? You can isolate them by planting time, distance, bags or row covers and hand pollination.

When is the seed mature and ready to harvest? "Just because a fruit/vegetable is ripe for eating does not mean the seed is mature". Select the best seeds from the best plants. Seed harvesting methods include threshing, screening, winnowing with air, fermentation (used with tomatoes and cucumbers to break down the gel around the seed), and electrostatic. In electrostatic harvesting, which works well for very small seed, rub the inside of a plastic cup with a synthetic cloth such as a nylon stocking, pour the seed in and rotate it around the cup's side. The chaff will cling to the sides as you pour out the seed.

Record the seed you harvest and store after it is completely dry. Keep it out of direct sunlight and store the labeled seed in air tight freezer bags, canisters, or jars and put in a desiccant packet, such as those that come in pill bottles. Store in a cool location and check the seed with a germination test before planting.

If you have more seed than you need, share the extra with gardening friends or take the seed to a seed library, such as the one at the Baraboo Public Library. You can check out heirloom seeds with the intention to replace the seeds with new ones that you've saved.



## Columbia County Master Gardener Volunteers

### Meeting Agenda - April 23, 2019

Call the Meeting to Order (Leah)

Secretary's Report (Lori)

Treasurer's Report (Linda)

Introductions

Old Business

- LGGG Evaluation

- Ladies Night Out - April 4th

- Spring Fling - April 6th

- Edgewater Greenhouse Tomato Project

- Lincoln Park Gardens

New Business

- Columbia County Fair Display Booth Committee

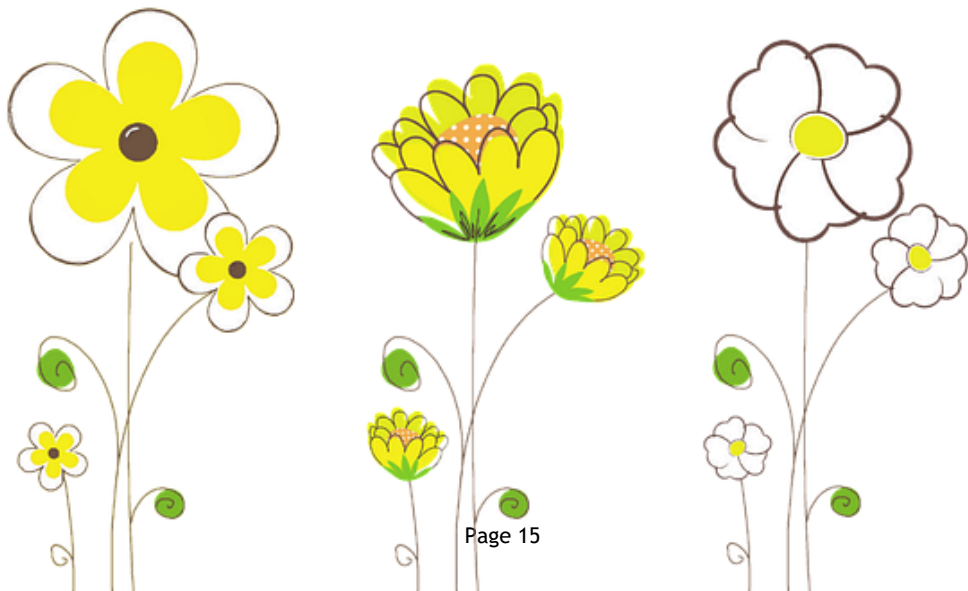
- 4H Container Gardeners @ Links Greenhouse - May 15th

- Other

Next Meeting : May 28, HHS #2 & 3

Program: TBD

Adjournment



Page 15



Master Gardener News  
112 E. Edgewater Street  
Room 212  
Portage, WI 53901  
Phone: 608-742-9680  
Fax: 608-742-9862  
711 for Wisconsin Relay