



Master Gardener News

2019 Officers:

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



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Columbia County MGV Activities

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
Nov 19	MGV Meeting, HHS Meeting Room #2 & 3, Potluck
Dec 15	Send MGV & WIMGA Dues (\$15.00) to Linda Haddix
Jan 28	MGV Mtg—6:00pm, Election of Officers, "Journey North" Presentation
Feb 25	MGV Meeting, 6:00pm
Mar 28	Let's Get Green and Growing, Rio High School

President's Report

Hello Friends,



What season is this? Fall? Winter? I'm not really sure anymore. Mother Nature decided she needed to snow on the pumpkins and Christmas arrived in the stores even before Halloween. As pretty as it is, I'm just not ready for it. I still haven't finished my work in the gardens or put my flower pots away. I'm hoping there is still time, but I'm doubtful.

The program after our last meeting was Cal Bouwkamp. He talked about how and why we should keep our annuals year after year. He has been quite successful with Geraniums, Begonias, Dahlias, Cannas, and Petunias. He said to let them freeze to kill the foliage, cut back, store in a cool space, limit watering, and then when temps start to warm up, increase light, water and temperature. He recommends using LEDs on the blue or red spectrum which can be purchased inexpensively at Wal-Mart or Menards. He also said that planting white geraniums will attract and kill Japanese beetles. Keep Rosemary and Lavender dry and in full sun, and make sure they are planted in 50% sand. He showed us pictures of his property and the beautiful flowers that surround it. His secret to such beauty...horse manure. Don't be afraid to use it, he claims! Overall, it was a very informative program. I know I enjoyed listening to him and hope to have him back in the spring to talk about fair displays and judging.

Our next meeting has been moved up a week to November 19 because of Thanksgiving. This is our annual pot luck, so please bring a dish to pass. Plates, silverware, napkins, and water will be provided. We are also going to do a garden theme White Elephant gift exchange. DO NOT BUY anything! Think of it as a silly way to get rid of the garden "treasures" you have lying around! Wrap it up if you'd like, or not is fine too! Let's have some fun with this!

Happy Thanksgiving Everyone. Hope you all have a great time celebrating with your family and friends, and safe travels if you are out and about.



Best Regards!
Leah Stark

The Myth of Hedge Apples

By Jane Considine

I remember going to a local grocery store a few years ago where I saw “hedge apples” that were promoted as a product to keep spiders out of the house. I never bought one of those items, but I wondered what made them effective and where they came from.

I learned last week-end about these “hedge apples” when I visited my sister and her husband who live about 30 miles south of Rockford, Il. They have a few Osage Orange trees on their 5-acre rural property, and this year had a bumper crop of the fruit of the trees. The hedge apple in the photo below is the size of a small grapefruit (or large navel orange) and weighs about 15 ounces. The botanical name for the tree is *Maclura pomifera*, and it belongs to the Moraceae family, the same as the mulberry tree.



The Osage Orange tree was often planted by early settlers on the Texas, Arkansas and Oklahoma frontier, according to a USDA scientist writing in a 1973 publication. When the 30-40 ft. tree with thorny branches was pruned it created an impenetrable fence or hedge to protect crops from livestock, thus the name “hedge apple.” The arrival of barbed wire stopped the widespread planting of the Osage Orange tree. The bumpy yellow fruit is also referred as mock orange, horse apple, bodark, and Osage apple. The range of the tree has expanded to favorable conditions in the west, north and east, but other sources report that Minnesota, the Dakotas and Wisconsin are

beyond the range for Osage Orange to survive the harsh winters.

The 1973 USDA-Forest Service publication does not mention the role of the hedge apple as an insecticide, but says that the wood from the Osage Orange



tree was favored by Native Americans for making bows, and later used for fence posts, rims and hubs for wheels on horse-drawn equipment, and other manufactured products where a hard, strong wood is needed. The fruit is unpalatable to birds and other animals, though the tree provides nesting and cover for wildlife.

But what about the effectiveness of hedge apples that you may see at a farmer’s market, garden center or grocery store? Is it true that hedge apples along the foundation of your house or in the basement will keep spiders and cockroaches away? According to a University of Iowa Cooperative Extension report from 1997 by Richard Jouron, “there is no scientific evidence indicating that the hedge apples are an effective means of keeping pests out of the house. Although insect deterrent compounds have been extracted from hedge apples in laboratory studies, these do not provide a logical explanation about why hedge apples would work as claimed. At this time, there is nothing to recommend the use of hedge apples for pest control.” A 2012 newsletter from the University of Missouri Cooperative Extension issues the same caution, adding that the hedge apples are a nuisance in residential neighborhoods because they are too large to mow over, and can be “a huge temptation to young children who want to throw them.”

Perhaps the best use for a hedge apple is part of a decorative autumn display that includes Indian corn, gourds and pumpkins.



Registration Open for Level 3: Placemaking Lite



A version of Placemaking for Master Gardener Volunteers (offered previously in 2019) that has all of the good information and a more relaxed timeline. Course start date: January 2020. In the meantime, the Program Office is working on a new training for 2021... *soon to be announced!*

To register for Placemaking Lite: Visit the [registration website](#). Registration will be open October-December 2019.

What will I learn?

- What placemaking is and how MGVs can be/are placemakers
- How placemaking is being used in communities
- How to think about MG projects in a new way to connect them to research, goals, and community needs

What stays the same?

- Class is totally online = flexibility! Do the course when it works with your schedule
- Watch videos, read, and answer questions using Google Forms (no Google account required)
- Starts January 2020
- Technical assistance provided by the state program office and Extension

What is different about this course?

- NO GOOGLE ACCOUNT REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE
- Earn 6 hours of Continuing Education
- No final project or discussion questions. (There are questions to respond to but you don't have to reply to a classmate's answer.)
- Course runs January-October 1, 2020... that's a 9 month window to complete it whenever you can with your schedule. No scheduled online meetings or due dates.

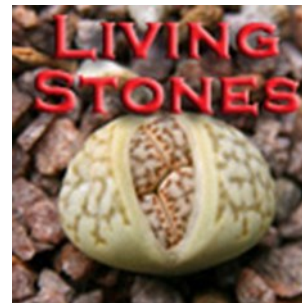
Cost: \$25 per person

Learn at Wlmastergardener.org

Read these articles and more at wimastergardener.org. We turned the comments section off, but you can still get ½ hour CE by reading the articles.



With finely cut foliage that remains attractive through the growing season and conspicuous fruit which provide ornamental interest into the fall, red baneberry and white baneberry are two similar woodland plants that can be great additions to shady gardens. These species do have poisonous fruit, so need to be used with caution. Learn more about these native perennials at <https://wimastergardener.org/article/baneberry-actaea-spp/>



Plants that look like rocks? Those would be living stones, in the genus Lithops. These are small succulent plants that survive in their harsh environment by having much of the plant body below ground, and only the wide leaf end visible above the rocky ground. To learn more about these fascinating plants that make good houseplants, read this article at <https://wimastergardener.org/article/living-stones-lithops/>



Not all maples are created equal. For dependable, bright, long-lasting fall color, Autumn Blaze® Maple, is a sure bet. A hybrid of red and silver maple, this popular and proven performer combines the best attributes of both parents – fast growth, drought tolerance and good fall color. Learn more about this vigorous, stately, and adaptable shade tree at <https://wimastergardener.org/article/autumn-blaze-maple/>

 WISCONSIN PUBLIC TELEVISION

GARDEN & LANDSCAPE EXPO

*Wisconsin Public Television Garden and Landscape Expo,
February 7-9, 2020, Madison*

“Garden Expo” continues to evolve as a major event for Wisconsin Master Gardener Volunteers. These three days offer a plethora of continuing education and volunteer opportunities. Folks from all across the state join us for one or more of the days. Volunteer opportunities are available through WPT (ticket takers, room hosts, more) and often with our Extension booths (Garden Q&A). Check in with WPT now if interested in volunteering with them <https://www.wigardenexpo.com/volunteer>. And, save the date to visit Garden Expo 2020.

Watch for some new communications from UW-Madison for 2020

Again, with our move to UW-Madison all MGV's will need to annually:

- Agree to all conditions of volunteer service (same as when you took the class)
- Be issued a position description
- Receive a volunteer Agreement Letter
- Register prior to volunteer service (Oct thru Dec 2019 will be an exception for this year)

I hope to share more details and info at our next MGV meeting. I just wanted to warn you incase a letter comes out from Madison to all MGV's so that you are not surprised. It will be very easy to complete on your part and is supposed to be linked to the On-Line Reporting System (ORS).

2018/2019 Hours Reporting

Congratulations for getting your hours in on time! State wide over 2600 MGVs have reported over 164,000 hours of volunteerism for the period for 10/01/2018 to 09/30/2019.

Our Columbia County 2018-2019 numbers are as follows:

- * 37 out of 49 Certified MGV's and Trainees reported hours
- * 2155 Volunteer hours
- * 655 Continuing Education Hours
- * 8728 Contacts

We are very pleased with these numbers and shows significant contributions by volunteers as we still move through a period of change in the program. This was new, sometimes frustrating and stressful, yet you worked together, helped each other and persevered. Thank you!!!!

In the near future we'll be able to tell the story of how many hours MGVs put towards the Environment, or working with kids, or community gardens, or at the farm markets. We'll have a sense of the ripple effect with the impacts reported. And, with these numbers combined with awesome images of MGVs in action and the narrative stories of highlighted projects, we will be better able to articulate the impact of the program to our local, state, and national stakeholders.

If you still have hours to report for volunteerism and continuing education, you may continue to add those hours to the last cycle. We are also now in our new reporting cycle of 10/01/2019 to 09/30/2020 and you may enter now enter your hours as you complete them. October 1st will continue to be our annual reporting deadline, but don't wait until the last minute! Report your hours as you get them done.

Thanks for all you do as Master Gardener Volunteers to make our Communities a better place to live and work.

Mike Maddox and George Koepp

Columbia County Master Gardener Volunteers Minutes - October 22, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. by President Leah Stark.

In attendance were Leah Stark, Carol Ziehmke, Lila Waldman, Sherryl Stolte, Ann Bisping, Ardyce Piehl, Linda Haddix, Marie Rohrbacher, Marcie Reed, Deb Buechner, Kate Rietmann, Anne Marie Fuerst and Pat Trapp .

The Secretary's minutes from last month were approved. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Marie, with a second by Deb.

A discussion was held about the Online Report System (ORS), and most felt the program worked sufficiently.

The Treasurer's report was provided, with a balance in the checking account of \$5,227.51. One check remains outstanding from one of our fair awards, in the amount of \$25.00. There was no banking activity this month.

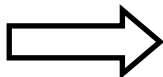
Annual dues for members are being collected, with checks in the amount of \$15.00 made out to CCMGV, and can be sent to the UW-Extension office at 112 E. Edgewater Street, Room 212, Portage, WI 53901.

John Muir Elementary School in Portage has requested the micro-garden for April 2020. The Rio Elementary School micro-garden project is going well.

Pauquette Park in Portage recently had some work done there by high school honor students, which also donated several plants. There was also some work done by a traveling church group for two days in October. This group visits several gardens in the area and donates their time every few years.

Ardyce gave an update on "Let's Get Green and Growing" for next spring, which will feature as the keynote speaker Zannah Crowe . She will speak about, among other things, to create gardens with a four season interest. A planning meeting is scheduled for October 23rd at 4:00 p.m.

The November meeting will be moved ahead by one week due to the Thanksgiving holiday, and will be held in rooms 2 & 3 of the HHS Building on November 19th. There will not be a business meeting, but a potluck. Bring your favorite dish to share! It was sug-



gested that we have a white elephant gift exchange – bring a gift, take a gift. This can be something you have that you no longer want or need. No need to purchase anything!

There will be no meeting in December.

Sherryl reported that she visited the Monk Botanical Gardens <https://www.monkgardens.org/> and encouraged the group to do the same, mentioning how beautiful it is.

We will have a speaker for our January meeting from the Journey North group. <https://journeynorth.org/>

Please submit articles for our monthly newsletter soon!

A motion to adjourn was made by Marie and seconded by Deb, and was concluded at 6:28 p.m.

Cal Bouwkamp was the guest speaker, and talked about how to over winter plants. Cal taught at Pardeeville High School for several years, and is a UW Alum with a degree in Horticulture.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Haddix

Columbia County Master Gardener Treasurer's Report

October 22, 2019

Balance September 30, 2019 \$5,227.51

No deposits were made in September, 2019

Outstanding check 1547 Taylor Savich +\$25.00

Ending balance October 22, 2019 \$5,227.51

Respectfully submitted by Linda Haddix, Treasurer

Columbia County MGV Potluck Meeting Agenda

November 19, 2019—6:00 PM

Rooms 2 & 3 HHS Building, 111 East Mullett St., Portage

Please bring a dish to pass. We have use of the kitchen next to room #3, so we have the ability to keep hot things hot, and cold things cold!



Call to order

Load your plate

Minutes of October 22, 2019 Meeting

Treasurer's Report

LGGG 2020 Update

Micro-Farm Update

2018/2019 Hours Update

Celebration of New MGV Activities

Lincoln Park Raised Bed Gardens

Columbia County Fair Flower Dept. Superintendent

Tomatopaloosa

Celebration of Continued MGV Activities

Micro – Farm

Let's Get Green and Growing

4-H Planter Night at Link's Greenhouse

Spring Fling and Ace Hardware

Columbia County Fair Booth

Community Garden Support, Portage, Poynette

Teaching at Libraries and Public Events

2020 Hours Recording

2020 WIMGA Dues \$15.00

Please pay Treasurer Linda Haddix by December 15

Officer Elections in January

Other items

No meeting in December

January 28, 2020 Meeting Education event on "Journey

North – Monarchs and Hummingbirds"

Nancy Sheehan presenting

Adjourn

Growing African Violets

How to Care for African Violets, from the Old Farmer's Almanac



African violets are small houseplants that produce clusters of white, blue, or purple flowers over fuzzy leaves. Here's how to care for African violets in your home!

African violets will bloom with lower light, though medium to bright indirect light is best. They can be a bit fussy, so check out more tips on how to make sure your African violets bloom.

How to Plant African Violets

- You can use an actual African violet potting mix or an all-purpose potting soil. [Here's how to create your own mix.](#)
- Keep them planted in small pots and re-pot once a year to mix in fresh soil.
- The soil should be loose and well-drained, and high organic matter content is beneficial. [Learn about organic soil amendments.](#)

How to Care for African Violets

- Keep the soil lightly moist and use room-temperature water.
- Leaves are susceptible to rot if kept in high humidity, so water African violets from the bottom to avoid getting excess water on the leaves.
- Dust dirt off the leaves with a small, soft brush.
- Fertilize every 2 weeks with a high phosphorous plant food, but only during the active growing season (spring and summer). Only start to fertilize when the plant appears to need an extra boost. Over-fertilizing is a more common problem than under-fertilizing.
- Many varieties prefer warm conditions (65°F / 18°C or warmer) though some can tolerate cooler conditions. Keep away from drafty windows in winter.
- Thin, dark green leaves and leggy stems tell you that the plant is getting too little light; light green or bleached leaves indicate too much light.
- Plants should be shifted to larger pots as they grow, but keeping African violets slightly root-bound can encourage



them to bloom. The optimal time for repotting is after some leaves have wilted a bit.

For more information on African violets, visit the website for the African Violet Society of America at www.avsa.org.

Pests/Diseases

- Cyclamen mites can occur. They are nearly impossible to remove completely, so disposal of the infected plant and isolation of nearby plants is recommended.
- Powdery Mildew
- Various forms of rot and blight

Recommended Varieties

There are hundreds of varieties and hybrids, from miniature violets to trailing varieties! They differ mainly in the colors of their flowers, which range from white to purple, though some varieties have variegation in their foliage and flowers as well.

African violets are typically classified by size, based on how wide they grow:

- Miniature: less than 8 inches across
- Standard: 8–16 inches across
- Large: more than 16 inches across



Wit & Wisdom

- Violets (*Viola*)—though unrelated to African violets—are one of the February birth flowers, so a potted African violet can make a bright gift for a February birthday.
- African violets originally come from Tanzania, in East Africa. Find out more about these dainty flowers here.
- The violet symbolizes loyalty, devotion, and faithfulness. Find out more flower symbolism here.

Best Indoor Plants for Low Light

The Top Low-Light Houseplants to Add to Your Home, from the Old Farmer's Almanac

Less water, less light, and less care. If you're like most people, you have little time to fuss with plants yet you love the character and style that houseplants bring to indoor settings. Perhaps you don't have that perfect sunny window? Not a worry. Plants with foliage color or those that flower in low light are the most carefree way to get a lush effect.

Low-Light Favorites

Numerous common houseplants are easy to care for and can be exotically colorful; in fact, some foliage can often be dazzling. Take dieffenbachia, which produces abundant leaves in variegated patterns of cream, yellow, or white. Its upright habit makes it ideal for any setting, from kitchen to bath to corner office or office corner.



Whitespeckled leaf, whitestemmed 'Star White' dieffenbachia is one of numerous cultivars, each equally attractive, not to mention deceptive: Did you know that this eye-catcher is related to skunk cabbage, goes by the common name dumbcane, and has a defense system that can cause stinging and burning? Handle with care: Avoid touching eyes after touching the plant and keep pets and small children away.



Ferns are another favorite for low-light settings, and none so much perhaps as the **Boston fern**. Its discovery was a happy accident: The plant came to the attention of Fred C. Becker, a florist in Cambridge, Massachusetts, when, in 1894, a nurseryman in Philadelphia shipped 200 fern plants to Becker. (Victorians

loved ferns!) He noticed that one fern was distinctly different from the rest. He began to propagate it, and soon thereafter, botanists identified it and proposed the name.

Light needs aside, the Boston fern can be fussy in winter. In northern climes, it survives best in a room that's kept cool (50° to 55°F) and has a south-facing window. Water only occasionally until you see new fronds appear (sometime in February), then increase water.

Love plants that bloom? Flowering plants such as **spathiphyllum** and **anthurium** have been bred to produce flowers nearly all year long.

Spathiphyllum, aka peace plant or peace lily, is native to rain forests. Is it any wonder, then, that it thrives in warmth, humidity, and low light? Filtered light and fluorescents are fine; direct sun should be avoided. (Yellow leaves are a sign of too harsh light.) Keep soil moist, not wet, and the environment between 68° and 85°F. You will be doubly rewarded for your care: NASA found peace lily to be one of the top 10 natural air cleaners.



Mark Your Calendars for March 28, 2020

March 28, 2020 has been selected for our next “**Let’s Get Green and Growing**” education event at Rio High School. The committee has been working feverishly to identify our Keynote Speaker and put together a list of 30 excellent breakout sessions for next spring. If you have a topic or presentation you would like to share, please contact Ardyce Piehl, Becky Gutzman, or George Koepp so that we can build the matrix of breakout session.



We will also have vendors as in past years, if you know of someone we should invite, please share that info as well. If you would like to be “in the room where decisions are made”, please join us at 4:30 pm on Tuesday, November 19, in Room #1 of the HHS building. Enter through the West end doors on Mullett Street. Our November MGv potluck meeting will take place in Rooms 2 & 3 next door at 6:00. Hope to see you there.



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