

Wisconsin Gardens



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Gardening Thoughts

*"I love spring anywhere,
but if I could choose
I would always greet it
in a garden."
— Ruth Stout*

Looking Ahead to WGCF Convention.....

Spring for a Basket !!

**Nancy Mancusi and Marge Hass,
"Tiscket a Tasket" Coordinators**

We encourage you to take action and "Spring for a Basket" for the "Tiscket a Tasket" drawing at our spring convention, May 20-22. Anyone, individuals or clubs, is invited to bring a basket of goodies or an item for this fun event. All proceeds will be given to WGCF to use for a cause within our organization that will be chosen by the WGCF Executive Committee.

The donor's name should be attached along with an itemized list of the contents, especially if the basket is wrapped in cellophane. Some ideas are food baskets, fresh flowers or plants, garden art, kitchen items, personal and spa products, wine and entertaining items, quilted items, jewelry, books, gardening aids, entertainment packages, dinner gift cards, etc.

We need you to make this a successful event so please start springing into action!

WGCF Convention Exhibits

Lucy Valitchka

Every WGCF Convention includes an area to display educational exhibits from our committee chairs. A review of our current committees shows that we could have at least 32 different exhibits. These exhibits show convention attendees the many educational opportunities in our federation. WGCF Committee Chairs are invited to bring a display to our May 20-22 convention at the Best Western Premier Waterfront Hotel and Convention Center in Oshkosh. Handouts, or activities relating to the exhibit, are an added attraction for all who view the exhibits.

Six foot tables will be provided. Each exhibitor will have one half of the table. These tables will be in room Athearn AB. Names cards will be placed on tables to identify exhibitors. Educational exhibit set-ups will be from 1-5 p.m. on Tuesday, May 20th.

Please notify Lucy Valitchka at Lmvalitchka@new.rr.com or 920-733-0568, by April 22, if you will have a display.

Tri-Council Tour Information & Additional Convention Information on Page 3

*For the Convention Schedule and Registration Information,
refer to the Winter Issue of Wisconsin Gardens.*



WGCF is a not-for-profit educational organization founded in 1928. It is a member of National Garden Clubs, Inc.

MISSION: WGCF PROVIDES EDUCATION, RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ITS MEMBERS TO PROMOTE AND SHARE THE LOVE OF GARDENING, FLORAL DESIGN, CIVIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY.

WGCF 2013-2015 OFFICERS:

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ADVERTISING RATES

Size	WGCF	Other
Full page	\$150	\$200
Half page	\$75	\$100
Quarter	\$37.50	\$50
Bus. Card	\$20	\$20

Notes from our President.....



Visiting the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore ice caves in February, I marveled at the beauty of the ice formations. They were beautiful regardless of the fact that it was a snowy day. While looking at the ice caves, it struck me that planning and effort, on my part, went into that experience—much like belonging to an organization or gardening.

Our planning begins with the daily arrival of seed catalogs which helps me dream about and plan for the best garden I will ever have. That is until 2015 rolls around, at which time the next garden will be the best. Websites have also gotten into the act by

providing us with information on seed catalogs. Cyndi's *Catalog of Catalogs* found at (<http://freebies.about.com/od/homegardenfreebies/tp/seed-catalog.htm>) will provide you with names of even more catalogs. But, you may wish to check out www.pinterest.com/finegardening/seed-catalogs/ for reviews of seed catalogs, first. In her review of *Jungs Seed & Plants* catalog, Jodi Torpey writes that the catalog contains "witty narratives" about the seeds. So, these catalogs have entertainment value too. Aside from being educational as well as giving us another thing to share with fellow gardeners, seed catalogs let us know that Spring is really coming!

Several other events are coming, too. The Environmental Studies School and the Landscape Design School will be taking place March 21-22, 2014 and April 15-17, 2014 respectively, followed by the Flower Show Symposium in September. Don't miss the knowledgeable speakers that have been scheduled for these events.

And, the 2014 WGCF convention, "*When It's Springtime in the Valleys, the Valleys of the Fox and Wisconsin*", will take place May 20-22, 2014. Members of the Fox Valley have put together speakers and breakout sessions sure to entertain and educate us. In addition, the Tri-Council has organized a tour to the Paine Art Center and Gardens. Come ready to learn and have some fun—even in a meeting to conduct the business of WGCF. Bring someone who has not attended a convention but make sure that I get to meet them.

Planning and effort has been very significant by the WGCF committees too. Changes are on the way so it is an exciting time to be a member of a WGCF committee. Both Organization Studies and Finance will need a new committee member by convention time. If you have served on the greater WGCF Board and have an interest in serving, please contact me.

Lastly, I want to thank all WGCF members for your educational, environmental, and financial contributions to your garden clubs, WGCF and NGC.

*Working together we make it possible for everyone to
"Flourish in a Garden of Change".*

Sylvia

*"My garden is my most beautiful masterpiece."
— Claude Monet*

Member Services Needs You

Wendy Kramer, Chair



WGCF Member Services Needs You....

- To Support Member Services (Ways and Means) at the Environmental Studies School in Mequon on March 21-22
- To Support Member Services (Ways and Means) at the Landscape Design School in Madison April 15-17
- To Support Member Services (Ways and Means) at the 87th Annual Convention in Oshkosh on May 20-22
- To Support Member Services (Ways and Means) at the Flower Show Symposium in West Salem on September 12-13
- To Support NGC Member Services by visiting the website, www.gardenclub.org, and purchasing merchandise directly from NGC or NGC Shopping Partners. Check it out!

Your financial shopping support goes to fund WGCF programming. "Shop early and shop often." (Gerianne Holzman, WGCF First Vice President).

Member Services will have some new handmade items this year provided by yours truly and my close associates to sell at these upcoming events. Some new items include card purses, pillows, pot holders, wood design structures, bud vases, and other gardening and design supplies. Available merchandise can also be mailed upon request.



WGCF 87TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

Waterfront Hotel
Oshkosh, WI

TRI--COUNCIL TOUR AND LUNCH REGISTRATION

THE PAINE ART CENTER AND GARDENS
www.thepaine.org

All WGCF Members Welcome!
Tuesday, May 20, 2014

COST: \$30.00

(Includes tour, lunch, tax & tip)

- 9:30 a.m. Meet & carpool from the lobby of the Waterfront Hotel
- 10:00 --12:00 a.m. Tour of Art Center followed by tour of display gardens
- 12:00 --1:00 p.m. Buffet lunch
- 1:00 --2:00 p.m. Business Meeting

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

E-MAIL _____

Buffet Lunch Includes:

Choice of One Sandwich or Wrap:
Turkey, Ham, Beef, Chicken Salad,
Tuna Salad or Vegetarian

Choice of Two Side Dishes:
Italian Pasta Salad
Szechuan Noodle Salad
Bleu Cheese Potato Salad
Cucumber Salad
Classic Caesar Salad

Soup: Flavor of the Day

Beverage: Decaf, Iced Tea, Lemonade

Make check payable to: WGCF Tri-Council and mail completed registration & check by Monday, May 12, 2014 to:

Carole Hopp
2509 North 114th Street
Wauwatosa, WI 53226--1229

News from around the State.....

Wisconsin River Garden Club

Loretta Schoechert, Club member

WRGC members met at the home of Mary Lou Wangen on Lake Arrowhead recently. Prior to the business meeting, each member was invited to sit at the dining room table graced with beautiful vibrant-colored table settings. Each place setting included cream-cheese frosted cupcakes nestled in beautiful china tea cups. The cupcakes were adorned with exquisite pastel-colored fondant flowers waiting for members to enjoy. The dessert flowers were artistically prepared by Mary Lou's daughter-in-law, Tonya.

In addition to the business meeting, committee reports were given. Bert Jagodzinski reported that the current Library Terrarium exhibit, "Chinese New Year", was well received by library visitors; Nancy Mancusi authored the theme.

The other report, "butterflies", was presented by Mary Lou Wangen. She highlighted the plants that attract butterflies and shared information and photos on the "Painted Lady", a butterfly that can be found in all fifty states. She also recommended the new magazine, "Our Wisconsin", for keeping abreast with information relative for our state.

The day's special program on NGC President's project was given by Mary Lou and she suggested how we could incorporate President Linda Nelson's project ideas into our club activities. "Making a World of Difference—Choices Matter" encourages all of us to be better stewards of our earth in order to preserve, replenish, and enjoy these gifts.

Proposed ideas for our club to follow include: wild-life incubators; attract Mason bees via a device sold at NGC; and utilizing the Library Terrarium to advertise these programs and to promote butterfly growth as pollinators. Members left the meeting enthused and ready to take action.



Wisconsin River Garden Club members enjoyed the cupcakes which were adorned with fondant flowers.

Membership in a Federated Garden Club

Mary Beth Mahoney,

President, Whitefish Bay Garden Club

When I became a member, I had no idea that our local garden club came with this great infrastructure of support -- from Milwaukee District, to state to Central Region, national and even international affiliations! With WGCF, we have one member who has been active in the past, but it is a great resource that has been largely untapped by our organization (club). We will definitely be taking advantage of the schools, conventions, and networking opportunities going forward.

Botany Belles and Beaus Garden Club

Anita Voiles, Club President

This long stretch of bitter cold weather has played havoc with many plans for most club members this winter, I am assuming. We had to postpone our January meeting due to the blowing and drifting snow in this area. Our speaker, Dale Wolf of Wolf Honey Farms, was able to make it the following week. The meeting was held in the president's home due to the fact the town hall was booked for that evening. All worked out well and we had a very informative and well-received meeting.

Our February meeting was also postponed, and then the re-scheduled date was cancelled due to icy roads and cold temps. We will make sure to reschedule our speaker Carolyn Craig for early 2015. She will present a program on how the structure of the NGC, WGCF, Districts and local clubs all tie together.

Our Flower Show Committee gathered in February and built upon an idea our member, Vicki Lee, presented at a meeting and we planned a Standard Flower Show to be held in July. Putting five heads together makes for quick and satisfying results.

In March, our program touched on "What's New for Spring Planting". April will find us learning about African Violets and planting baskets and containers at the Baldwin Greenhouse for the Village of Baldwin. They are hung on the Main Street and main highway through the Village of Baldwin.

Future plans include planting annuals at Windmill Park and our annual plant sale on May 31st at the park and an overnight trip in June to Sheboygan to visit the Bookworm Gardens. And, of course, plans to attend the WGCF Convention in May are underway.

We wish all members a very Happy Easter on April 20th. May it be a Blessed Day for everyone and one of sunshine and promise for a beautiful, warm and much-anticipated Spring!

Habitat for Humanity Plantings

Barbara Wesley, Chair

Each year Milwaukee District Garden Clubs sponsor a plant share in conjunction with Habitat for Humanity Milwaukee. In 2013, girl scouts led by Girl Scout Troop 1111 donated annuals and planted more than 100 containers of pink and white flowers for the event.

This was in support of the National Garden Clubs' Plant It Pink Project. The pink and white color scheme helps to promote the importance of breast cancer screening. Habitat homeowners found small hand made gift cards with pink ribbons tied to the containers, giving more information about the project.

To witness the selection of containers by Habitat homeowners and their families was rewarding. Choosing a favorite container was the highlight of the day for many of the homeowners. Containers were carried off with smiles and directions for their care. The neighborhood will be filled with beauty thanks to the many new containers.

Lake Shore Garden Club Celebrates 65 Years of Service

Fran Teunissen, Club member

A luncheon was held at the Blind Horse Restaurant on February 27, to celebrate the 65th Anniversary of the Lake Shore Garden Club. The Club's objective is to promote friendship among members and share our horticultural knowledge; to provide educational opportunities in the field of horticulture and landscaping; to beautify our community with donations of plantings and financial support.

The Lake Shore Garden Club was organized and Federated in 1949, and has been educating and serving the Sheboygan County area ever since. The Club is not only a member of the Sheboygan County Garden Club District, but also Wisconsin Garden Club Federation and National Garden Clubs, Inc. Membership is also maintained in the Sheboygan County Historical Society, Elwood H May Environmental Park and Bookworm Gardens. There are club members that represent the Lake Shore Garden Club at these various entities.

There are currently 44 members in the Club, and new growth is steady. Meetings are held every month, most with speakers on topics of interest to gardeners. There is an education committee to plan these topics. Some meetings are held at local greenhouses, with special demonstrations and discounts for that day. Club members assisted with sponsoring the Gardening Study School, and have also attended classes on Landscape Design, Environmental Studies and Flower Show Studies Schools.

The Club holds two plant sales in May, the only fundraisers that provide the means for the many special projects supported throughout the year. Club members plant and care for the gardens at Bridge Way House and Trisha's House, as well as several gardens at Maywood Park. The design and plants for the pots at the Sheboygan Historical Museum are provided and planted by the Club. The Christmas Holiday decorating and take down at the Museum is another project. The design and planting of the landscaping for the new Salvation Army addition was done by Lake Shore Garden Club and we will be consulting on the care of the gardens for the first three years. The Club donated one garden, "Sarah Plain and Tall" for Bookworm Gardens, but one of the biggest projects of the year is the planning and participation in the annual Garden Walk which is held every July in conjunction with other Sheboygan Area Garden Clubs.

It is not all work, but there are several events for fun as well. An annual summer picnic and white elephant auction brings lots of laughs and the funds to cover our speakers for the education at each meeting. Another delight is the annual bus trip that takes us out of the area to enjoy the fruits of others' labors at public gardens, private gardens and a greenhouse or two as well. The cargo area of the bus is always filled to capacity for the trip home after the greenhouse stops!! Lake Shore Garden Club won the WGCF "Garden Club of the Year" award two years in a row, 2010 and 2011.

The Lake Shore Garden Club makes donations to the National Audubon Society Scholarship Fund, Sheboygan County Conservation Association scholarship fund for the Trees for Tomorrow Camp, NGC World Garden Club Global Partners, Maywood Endowment Fund, Sheboygan County Historical Society Endowment Fund, and WGCF's President's Project. Bookworm Gardens regularly receives donations of items to enhance the garden, such as a pair of statues and two chairs, to supplies and treats for their events.



Lake Shore Garden Club members that have been members for 15 or more years are: (pictured, left to right) Nancy Lemkuil, Joan Hollander, Gladys Shaw, Nancy Lorenz, Claudette Forss, Ginny Schreiber; and (not pictured) Barb Schneiderhan, Marilyn Freye, and Gerry Bangen.

LAKE SHORE GARDEN CLUB WELCOMES SPRING



With spring comes many events planned by this garden club. It is by far the busiest time for this club.

- April 22 - Sheboygan District Spring Meeting
- April 24 - Honeybees and Mason Bees-Pollinators for our Gardens.
Presenter-Rev. Keith Weiland Beekeeper/
Sheboygan Cty. Beekeeper Association/
6 hives at Christopher Farms
- May 16 - Lake Shore's annual set-up for next day sale
- May 17 - Lake Shore's Plant, Tag, Treasures & Bake Sale
8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (featuring Tree Lily Bulbs)
- May 23 - Plant and Bake Sale at Morningside Nursing Home
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- May 29 - Lake Shore's annual Spring Breakfast, 9a.m. to noon
- June 10 - Lake Shore's annual Bus Trip/Madison area and private garden in Lomira

Celebrate National Garden Week

Doris Weber, National Garden Week Chair

The first full week of June, beginning with Sunday, has been proclaimed NATIONAL GARDEN WEEK by National Garden Club, Inc. This year the National Garden Week Celebration will be June 1-7, 2014. This is a special week designed to focus public attention and new garden club members on programs, garden tours, luncheons, garden walks, plant sales, garden teas and other garden related projects. Invite them for any or all of these events! Hopefully this will ensure gardening and garden clubs for future growth!

Whatever the activity, keep area newspapers and other media methods informed and get maximum publicity for the goals, projects and objectives of garden clubs! Try these and see if our local garden clubs can promote membership and more gardening awareness.

Posters (shown at right) proclaiming this special celebration are available from the NGC website, NGC member services or contact Doris Weber, email at doris@johnweber.com.



National Gardener

Doris Weber

The *National Gardener* Magazine is the official publication that communicates the ideas and goals of National Garden Clubs, Inc. Every garden club president receives a complimentary copy and shares copies with her members and friends. Many of the articles and suggestions are educational sources to better inform members and should energize those around them. All WGC members are encouraged to submit articles to this publication. Many WGC clubs include a subscription as part of their membership dues. But, if not, then do consider a subscription to the *National Gardener*, which is published quarterly. Subscriptions can be made on line at www.gardenclub.org or by calling (800) 550-6007. A yearly subscription is \$6.50 or a 3-year subscription is \$18.00.

Horticulture - -Rex Begonias

Nancy Gotham, Horticulture Chair

Begonia Rex is among some of the most beautiful houseplants. They are sometimes called pointed-leaf begonias or fancy-leaf begonias. They are tropical plants and are shade-tolerant. Known for their showy, sometimes jaw-dropping, leaf colorations, Rex Begonia frequently have large leaves 6-9" long and can be brightly colored in various shades of green, red, silver, brown and even purple. Leaf shapes can be round, smooth, jagged and hairy. Leaves are asymmetrical. "They range in size from miniature to giant" according to one of my sources.

Blooms are small and not very showy. Many growers actually pinch off the flowers and let the plant's energy showcase only the foliage. Most flowers of the Rex are usually pink.

Growing Conditions

Light: Bright, indirect light year-round. They tolerate less light because they are not aggressive bloomers. Rexes will thrive under fluorescent lights, but it is not necessary. They do not like direct hot sun if placed outdoors.

Water: Rex begonias require even watering, but be careful not to overwater. They like humidity but resent being misted. This could cause powdery mildew.

Temperature: Average to warm room temperature suits them. They cannot tolerate freezing when set outdoors for the summer season. Some Rex begonias go dormant when fall arrives; they resent temperatures below 60 degrees.



Soil: Soil needs to be airy and light, fast draining.

Fertilizer: Use liquid fertilizer weekly at quarter strength.

Propagation: The vast majority of rexes cannot be propagated by seed. Rhizomes may be divided when repotting. Most leaf-tip cuttings will sprout in a container of water. Using a rooting hormone could be helpful.

Pinning a leaf down into the potting mix and making small cuts in the leaf vein sprouts roots also. Inserting a leaf with a stem directly into the potting soil works as well.

Rexes like to be potted in a shallow pot where the rhizome can spread, as they have a shallow, knobby rhizome. Do not overwater when repotting, as the rhizome will rot.

Pests and Problems: Bacterial leaf spot can occur if the leaves are kept too wet. Root rot can be a problem in wet areas or locations. Mealy bugs can cause problems, especially indoors.

Varieties: Begonia Rex 'Boston Cherries & Chocolate' with red and silver spots on dark leaves; Begonia Rex 'Fireworks' with wing-shaped silver leaves that are etched with purple. Begonia Rex 'Snow Queen' has silvery leaves with a good disease resistance; Begonia 'Gryphon' has green leaves that turn red even when grown indoors only. Many of our grandmothers grew Begonia 'Iron Cross' that displayed a green leaf with a dark brown "cross" in the center of the leaf.

The Easter season prompts stores to sell begonias for homes and churches. Do consider acquiring a Rex begonia, as they last for years and brighten many a spot outdoors or in a home.

Happy Gardening!

**Corrections to the Recommendations
as printed in the Winter Issue of *Wisconsin Gardens*
to be voted on by the Membership
at the Annual Meeting at the 87th Convention
of the Wisconsin Garden Club Federation**

WGCF BYLAWS

**ARTICLE IV
MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Change to: **LIFE MEMBERSHIP:** Wisconsin Life Membership reflects donations to designated scholarship funds. This fee is not in lieu of payment of annual dues.

ARTICLE VII

Duties of Elected and Appointed Officers

Section 5. (c) To serve as Marketing Co-ordinator.

**ARTICLE X
CORE TEAM**

Section 1. The Core Team is comprised of the President, First-Vice President/ President-elect, Second Vice-President, and the immediate Former President, and the Recording Secretary. The Parliamentarian shall serve as ex-officio (non-voting) member.

**ARTICLE XI
STANDING COMMITTEES AND DUTIES**

Section 8. The Strategic Planning Committee shall be comprised of the First Vice-President, who shall serve as chairman and three additional voting members, one of whom shall be a Former President. The President shall serve as an ex-officio (non-voting) member of this committee.
Please delete: (and Second Vice-President)

Add a new b) The committee shall focus on a vision for the future, utilizing the WGCF Mission Statement as its foundation, exploring all possibilities without limitations, including the expenditure of money for purposes other than budgeted expenses.

**ARTICLE XII
NOMINATION AND ELIGIBILITY**

Section 2. b) The slate of officers shall be sent to *Wisconsin Gardens* by the Chairman of the Nominating Committee for publication in the Winter issue **in the odd-numbered year.**

A Note from the Advertising Manager

Anita Voiles

As Advertising Manager, it is my job to receive ads and the reimbursement for ads for each issue of *Wisconsin Gardens*. Upon request or when needed, I send out a blank contract to prospective advertisers or garden club members, who, in turn, send back a completed contract to me along with the proper payment. The actual ad copy is to go to Carla Von Haden; but if it is sent to me, I will forward it to Carla. By me handling the contract and reimbursement, it frees Carla up to just do the editing and preparation of the ads and newsletter. She doesn't have to also worry about getting the contract to the proper advertiser.

Those wishing to advertise in any issue can contact me at: anita.voiles@ymail.com. That is the email I check for any advertising materials.

Upon receipt, I send a completed contract receipt back to the advertiser and I forward the checks to the WGCF Treasurer. This way, I can keep detailed records of all transactions and ads.

Upon publication, I then send a copy of the *Wisconsin Gardens* newsletter to the advertisers in the publication for their records.

I hope this helps clarify the workings of the Advertising Manager. If you have any questions, please contact me at anita.voiles@ymail.com. Thank you.

The Advertising Contract is included in this issue on Page 16.

Operation Wildflower "Color me blue"

Diane Powelka, Chair

What native plant stands out more than others?

I think that plant is, Gentians *Gentiana*. They are not all blue but most of them are.

Depending on the type of soil you have, you should be able to grow one of the gentians in your garden. They grow in wet-mesic, sand savanna, to dry-mesic. For lighting they grow in full sun to part shade.

Unfortunately they are also considered uncommon or rare. But if you can find one to plant from a nursery, it would be worthwhile to look into it. Now comes the hard part knowing what one to buy for your site. Do your research and then decide.

What else comes in the color blue?

Virginia Bluebells *Mertensia virginica* that blossom early but a very good choice as they don't become invasive and are ephemeral. (They disappear in the summer.)

Wild Petunia, *Ruellia humilis*, is one of those flowers that sometimes moves around the garden but it is not invasive. It blooms later in the summer.

Blue Flag Iris *Iris versicolor* - likes it wet around ponds, lakeshores and grows in sand, loam or clay soil.

Prairie Blue-Eyed Grass *Sisyrinchium campestre* - very short but it is easy to grow and takes up very little space.

Blue Cohosh *Caulophyllum thalictroides*, woodland plant that will grow in partial sun to shade and has on outstanding blue color.

Wild Blue Phlox *Phlox divaricate*, a native phlox that has five petals. Don't plant Dames Rocket by mistake!

Blue Vervain *Verbena hastate*, another water-loving plant that can grow in sand, loam or clay soil.

Jacob's ladder *Polemonium reptans*, are some of the neatest plants with the leaves that resemble a ladder.

Blue False Indigo *Baptisia australis* reminds me of sweet pea plant and blooms in late spring.

Lupine *Lupinus perennis* is a beautiful plant and is supposed to grow in only dry sandy soils. Maybe I will plant some by the sand box this year.

Great Blue Lobelia *lobelia siphilitica* is related to the *Lobelia cardinalis* the beautiful red cardinal flower.

For the fall don't forget to plant Sky blue asters *Aster azureus*, they are a real treat for fall coloring.

The most important part I want to mention is know your plant before you buy it. Not all books that say Wildflowers in the Midwest are native. They can become a real pest in your garden and don't put them in your prairie unless you know they are native in your area. Also it would be a good idea to pick up a book called, "Guide to Terrestrial Plants In Wisconsin". WGCF sells them, check it out.

Green Thumb Garden Club

PLANT SALE

Perennials, herbs & surprises!

Friday & Saturday, May 9 & 10, 2014

8:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Rain or Shine

Home of Jim & Sandra Smet

552 Vermont, Fond du Lac, 923-6085

**Hwy. 41 to Hwy. 23 East, north on Peters Ave.,
east on Scott St. then north on Vermont**

Enjoy a free tour of

Sandra's Gardens as you SHOP

Green Thumb Garden Club is a nonprofit organization

The Markesan Gardeners Invites You to Join us for Springtime in the Valleys

WGCF Convention 2014
May 20 – 22, 2014

Best Western Premier Waterfront Hotel
Oshkosh, WI



WGCF Strategic Planning Wants YOU!

Gerianne Holzman, WGCF 1st Vice President

The WGCF Executive Committee recently decided to move forward with a formal Strategic Planning Retreat (SPR). This is the first time our organization has ever undergone this process. The goals of the Strategic Planning Retreat are to answer the following questions.

- Where we are as a group?
- How we can best serve our members and the community?
- Where do we want to be in three years?

We also want to hear from EACH OF YOU – THE MEMBERS. Please take a few minutes to complete the following survey. Information gathered from this survey will help Retreat attendees plan for the future of the WGCF and make this a better organization for everyone. When completed, you can:

- Complete the survey on-line (**preferred to ease statistical analysis**)
- Send survey back to me
- Scan and send via email
- Complete the survey at your local garden club meeting and mail all responses back in one envelope
- **Addresses provided at end of survey**

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

Internal strengths and weaknesses of the WGCF are identified, along with its external opportunities and threats. The analysis of these four elements, known by the acronym SWOT, is very useful in clarifying the conditions within which an organization operates. A SWOT analysis provides valuable clues about probable strategies, since every strategy builds on strengths and takes advantage of opportunities, while it overcomes or minimizes the effects of weaknesses and threats.

Instructions: Take some time to think about internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats as they relate to the WGCF (local, district and state level). Definitions and examples are included for your reference. Please record your ideas in each category.

Strengths: Strengths are internal resources or capabilities that help the WGCF to accomplish its mission or mandates (requirements) (examples: adequate resources, leadership, personnel, etc.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Weaknesses: Weaknesses are internal deficiencies in resources and capabilities that hinder the WGCF's ability to accomplish its mission or mandates (examples: lack of resources, lack of a clear vision or plan, poor communication, etc.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Opportunities: Opportunities are outside factors or situations that affect the WGCF in a favorable way (examples: political support, public support, grant funding, etc.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Threats: Threats are outside factors or situations that affect the WGCF in a negative way (examples: loss of grant funding, lack of public or political support, new mandates, etc.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Demographics: Please provide some information about yourself. Check the best answer.

Age: under 30 30 - 40 40 - 50 50 - 60 60 - 70 70+

Years in the WGCF: under 5 5 - 10 10 - 15 15 - 20 20+

Have served in leadership capacity: Club District State CR NGC

Employment Status: Full time Part time Retired Other _____

WGCF District: _____

All responses must be postmarked by May 1, 2014 to be included in the Strategic Planning Retreat process. Please use the on-line survey (at wisconsinclub.org and click on NEWS at the top of the Home page, then 1. Go to the bottom of the screen and click on "WGCF Strategic Planning Wants You". 2. The survey will show up so that you can read it, however, to fill it out online, you must click on the http address), or return paper copies to Gerianne Holzman, WGCF 1st VP, 7437 Terrace Av, Middleton, WI 53562 or geriannewgcf@charter.net (Members are NOT to complete the Stakeholder Survey.)

The Retreat is planned for June 12, 2014 at Olbrich in Madison following a very short Executive Committee meeting. Members involved include the Executive (Officers, District Directors and Parliamentarian), Strategic Planning and Marketing Committees. Each District Director will invite one additional member from his/her area. This person should NOT be someone currently serving in a leadership role, as we really want to hear the voice of the general member. We will also need a few people to observe and take notes of the proceedings but not be formally involved in the discussion. (Volunteers are welcome to contact me for this opportunity.) Thank you for your participation in creating a WGCF for everyone!

WGCF Scholarships for 2014-2015

Mary Ellen Sedlachek, Scholarship Selection Chair

Scholarship applications were due at the beginning of March. Last year I had received only two before the due date, so this year we extended our scope of schools notified to six. Prior years' applications were received from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, River Falls, and Madison. This year Concordia University, University of Wisconsin-Platteville and Oshkosh were also included for anticipated participation. Schools have been notified three times since November of 2013.

Scholarships include the National Garden Club Federation Scholarship of \$3500 each, awarded to 35 states; the Central Region Scholarships, 3 @ \$500; the Della Balousek Scholarships of \$2500 each; Carolyn Craig Scholarship of \$1,500; Irene Straus Scholarship of \$1,000; and our Wisconsin Garden Club Federation Scholarships of \$1,000 each.

The Scholarship selection committee is comprised of Joyce Beth, Marcia Topel, and me. Our deadline for the National and Regional Scholarships was March 15, 2014. The other scholarships will be announced at the end of March.



Plant Sale

Saturday May 17
8:00 – 4:00
1718 S. Kernan Ave
Appleton
(East side of Reid Golf Course)

www.PaperValleyGardenClub.com



Plant It Pink Projects Receive Awards

Barbara Wesley, Chair

Two clubs received awards for their Plant in Pink projects from Central Region.

Mound Vue Garden Club

Gloria Davies and Mary Hull of the Mound Vue Garden Club designed a Plant It Pink Garden. It was planted at Grundaha Park in Mount Horeb to raise awareness of breast cancer screening and to honor former club member Mary Lehner, who died of cancer.

The garden was planted with the aid of the village forester. It beautified the space surrounding an existing flowering crab apple tree. Perennials and annuals in shades of pink were added to enhance the garden with continuous color.

Botany Belles and Beaus

The Botany Belles and Beaus decided to follow the request to Plant it Pink in 2013. The club planted 45 hanging baskets that are displayed on Main Street and the main highway running through the Village of Baldwin. They also planted large containers that were placed on certain street corners.

Windmill Park is a quaint little park on Highway 63 that runs through Baldwin where the club plants annuals and perennials every year. In 2013, baskets containing pink wave petunias and containers sporting pink geraniums and fillers enhanced the park entrance. Plantings in front of a working windmill in the park consisted of pink begonias and pink impatiens annuals.

The club said they were happy to bring Plant It Pink to the foreground to remind women how important it is to be aware of the danger of breast cancer and to have annual mammograms.

Plant It Pink was added to National Garden Clubs, Inc. list of projects worthy of support.

Consider it and please report your successes to me.

Pictures will be a wonderful addition when sharing your efforts.

Membership Promotion

Donita Bruder, Chair

Garden Club members can attest that the rewards of belonging to a garden club go beyond the pure pleasures of growing things and being part of a network of fellow gardening gurus. Garden Club members belong to one of the largest volunteer organizations of its type in the U.S.

Garden club members also have a voice that can be heard to promote the love of gardening, floral design, and civic and environmental concerns. Tell others about it. Invite them to a meeting.

Grow your club's membership in creative ways, local outreach activities and programs. So dig in and get a membership drive going. Good Luck!!

Generations Park: “Let’s Get Personal”

Diane Powelka, President’s Project Chair

I hope I got your attention! Joe and I were at Generations Park with Tim Glennon, a Boy Scout, and were wallowing through the tall grass outlining a new trail for the park. Yes, we then got very personal as we greeted the ground and then quickly stood ourselves up to continue on only to have the same experience again. The tall grass was very soft to land on, but it also hid logs and large stones. We were at an all-time high to be on a mission of creating a new path that Tim was laying out for his Eagle Scout project. The path is located in the northeast corner of Generations Park, a portion that gets wet during the spring thaw.

Later Tim had members of his Swim team come out to clear the path. What a difference it has made! Another time Tim and his Scout troop came out to do more clearing and put down wood chips on the path. We lined the trail with rocks and sections of trees removed from the path to identify the edges of the trail. The trail has a variety of light exposures, from full sun to dappled shade to full shade. That is where we found some Jack-In-The-Pulpits growing (they were setting those red seeds so they were very obvious). We are waiting for spring to see what other ephemerals might be growing in this area.

Jake Bolgihn, another Boy Scout from the same troop and working on his Eagle, raised the funds and built three picnic tables for Generations Park. He poured concrete post footings and then bolted the tables to the footings to prevent them from being moved. Check this out, it is great. This was Jake’s Eagle Scout project.

The Boy Scouts have been immensely helpful in completing major projects and helping with maintenance in the park (photos below).



Girl Scout Troop #2598 came out to weed, walk the trails and learn more about native plants. Girl Scout Troop #2886, a younger group, came to the park to hike around, learn more about native plants and clean up the park. Both earned the Native Patch from National Garden Club.

What is next for Generations Park? Completion of the entrance pillars with the WGCF plaque is scheduled for later this spring. Last fall we installed the interior gate and poured the foundations for the pillars. We have been working with the International Masonry Institute to have apprentice masons complete a service project by erecting

the pillars. We will let you know when we get the rest of the crew together. Sometime this summer the Township will be installing gravel on our entrance road and in our parking lots.

We will be adding a Geo Cache this summer. I heard you can get a lot of people coming to the park to find the cache. It will be fun to see how it goes! Come on out and see if you can find it. We also welcome ideas for the park. Yes, let’s get personal with all your wonderful suggestions.

I have been rereading the NGC and Central Region magazines lately and they have had some excellent articles on Native Plants and youth participation. Generations Park has had numerous young people helping out at the park and the focus of the park is native plants.

All of this would not have been possible without the generous support of the WGCF. Getting Personal again, we are requesting that you continue that support for our efforts to implement projects for Generations Park! Future projects include adding native plants to the park, signage and equipment to maintain the park. Funds donated by your Clubs and Districts for the “WGCF President’s Project” can be sent to Lynnette Rakun at 6622 County Rd. V, Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085. Thank you so much for your donations and your support!

Income so far that has been donated for Generations Park is \$5,557.80. Expenses to date include \$737 for the plaque, \$570.56 for the steel posts for the interior gate, \$72.42 for a chain to span between the steel posts, \$274 for the concrete foundations, \$200 for a truckload of mulch to be placed on the paths for a total of \$1,853.98. To be purchased yet are the concrete blocks for the understructure of the pillars and the precast concrete caps for the same. When we finish the pillars we will work on signage and plant materials with the remaining funds.

Directions to Generations Park:

•East from Madison on I-94

Take Sun Prairie/Cottage Grove exit.

Turn north on roundabout at the bottom of ramp toward Sun Prairie and proceed on Hwy N, approx. 2.5 miles.

Turn right (east) on T. Proceed 3 miles and turn left onto Twin Lane Rd. Generations Park is after the Town Hall building on your right at the bottom of the hill. Address is 5640 Twin Lane Rd.

•West from Milwaukee on I-94

Take Sun Prairie/Cottage Grove Exit. Follow above directions.

From the Bookshelf

Kay Villa



Bringing Nature Home: Floral Arrangements Inspired by Nature,
By Ngoe Minh Ngo
Rizzoli International Publications,
Inc., 2012

This book is an inspiration for floral designers and gardeners too. It clearly demonstrates how to create stunning floral designs using flowers, shrubs, and foliage found in your garden. The book layout is

based upon the plant seasons starting with spring through winter. In total, there are 175 stunning photographs with many elegant floral arrangements. The book also has sections on how to care for cut flowers, tools & vase selection, and the art of arranging floral designs. One of my favorite features is the author's three step approach to design: basic structure; points of focus; and gestural finishes; and there are photos to visually demonstrate what the composition looks like during each of the design phases. Also included in the book is a list of suggest plant material readily available during the seasons of the year. This book will inspire and help each of us to create stunning floral designs from materials found in our gardens.



Garden Tour with a Passport (Ticket)

*Sun Prairie Garden Club
will be having a garden tour*

Saturday, June 21st, 12:00 - 4:00 p.m.

&

Sunday, June 22nd, 12:00 - 4:00 p.m.

No Rain Date

Join the fun and see all five gardens on the tour.
The price is \$7.00

*Pick your Passport up from any Sun Prairie
Garden Club member
or start your tour at Ann Broehm
418 Blankenheim Lane, Sun Prairie*

Contact: Diane Powelka (608-837-6308) with questions



Bring Back the Monarchs!

Carol Bessler, *Butterfly Chair*

We need to bring back the Monarchs. Real estate development is consuming 6,000 acres a day. The overuse of herbicides along roadsides and elsewhere is turning diverse areas that support Monarchs, pollinators, and other wildlife into grass-filled landscapes which only support a few species. If this trend continues, the Monarchs are certain to decline.

There are now over 5,000 certified Monarch Waystations—mostly habitats created in home gardens, school yards, parks, and commercial landscapes. Let's see if we can do our part to promote the Monarch and other pollinators.

For more information, see "Bring Back the Monarchs" at <http://monarchwatch.org/bring-back-the-monarchs/>

Your Website

Susan Johansen, *Web Master*

Calling on all Committee Chairs: I need your assistance in keeping the website up-to-date and interesting. This is a reminder that entries on the pages are only as good as the information that is sent to me.

Come visit the website, www.wisconsin-gardenclub.org to view the information in your areas of expertise and help by providing news, photos, links and any suggestions. You may contact me at h23j19@frontiernet.net

Thanks for your help with our website!!

Wisconsin Gardens online

If you wish to view the full color version of Wisconsin Gardens, you may view it at the WGCF website at www.wisconsin-gardenclub.org

The Great Passenger Pigeon Extinction

Dorothy Legler, Bird Chair

2014 is the 100th Anniversary of the extinction of the Passenger Pigeon. Many people are unaware of this catastrophe and its historical significance. The Passenger Pigeon was half again the size of a Mourning Dove. It was not a rare bird. On the contrary, it was the most abundant bird in North America! When Europeans arrived here, the Passenger Pigeon *made up 25% to 40% of all the birds in North America!* Its population numbered in the billions.

In the 19th century, enormous flocks migrated northward each spring in search of nesting areas that had their basic food, tree nuts. They nested in enormous concentrations. The largest recorded nesting area occurred in 1871, in west-central Wisconsin, covering an area of 850 square miles! In winter the flocks flew around eastern and southern U. S. congregating at sites with a large crop of nuts. When they traveled around the country, it was in enormous flocks of 100's of millions of birds. *It often took days for the flock to pass overhead and they blocked out the sun, darkening the sky.*

Hunters killed Passenger Pigeons for food and sold them to markets. In the second half of the 19th century the killing accelerated as U. S. population doubled in 30 years, the Telegraph was established which allowed commercial pigeon hunters to know where the flocks were located, and the rapid expansion of railroads allowed hunters to follow the flocks. Nesting concentrations were ruthlessly slaughtered. Huge numbers of dead birds were sent to city markets by railroad. There were no restrictions or regulations on such hunting and nearly 1,000 professional pigeon hunters, and numerous other citizens, continued to shoot, net, capture and kill the pigeons. By 1900 there were virtually no wild pigeons left. A few remained in zoos, until the last of her species, "Martha", died on Sept. 1, 1914, at the Cincinnati Zoo, at the age of 28 years. *Now, a hundred years later, there's no one living that personally experienced the days of the great flocks.* Today many people are unaware of this monumental wildlife tragedy. The Passenger Pigeon



was a huge resource that could have been sustained indefinitely. Instead, thoughtless avarice uses up a resource until it disappears and then moves on to the next resource to exploit to destruction, and so on.

Fortunately, people learned from this catastrophe, and scientific naturalists, sportsmen's associations and Audubon chapters united in getting laws passed to protect our natural resources. The first federal bird protection law was the Lacey Act of 1900. Others followed in ensuing decades down to our own time.

Today, we have birds and other wildlife in Wisconsin and on our property and in our garden, thanks to state and federal laws and international treaties that protect birds and other wildlife. It's what kept Egrets from being transformed into hat decorations! But despite protective laws, most scientists agree that we are currently in the early to mid-stages of the planet's sixth great episode of mass extinction, this one due to man. The culprits are loss of wildlife habitat, pollution (and one of its consequences, climate warming), illegal killing of wildlife, and introduced species. 30% of amphibians are at risk of extinction, 21% of mammals, reptiles and fish, and 12% of birds. We all need to redouble our effort to protect the planet's biodiversity, and we can start with native plantings on our wildlife-supportive property, minimize or eliminate pesticide and herbicide use, educate ourselves and others about wildlife, and support environmental/wildlife organizations that seek to preserve biodiversity.

This year, there will be many events and activities remembering the Passenger Pigeon nationwide. The website that will provide information on events is www.passengerpigeon.org. A monument and plaque, dedicated to the Passenger Pigeon, can be seen at Wyalusing State Park. It was erected by Wisconsin Society for Ornithology in 1947. This year we expect to see a new documentary film on the Passenger Pigeon, *From Billions to None*. To learn more, I recommend an outstanding book just published in 2014, *A Feathered River Across the Sky: The Passenger Pigeons Flight to Extinction* by Joel Greenberg.

(Editor's Note: During a recent Executive Board meeting, it was noticed that there was an error and omission of ByLaws which had been passed at the 2013 Convention. The following ByLaw changes should be added to your WGCF Handbook. My apologies for this error.)

ARTICLE XI STANDING COMMITTEES AND DUTIES

Section 8. The Strategic Planning Committee shall be composed of the First Vice-President, who shall serve as chairman; and four additional voting members, one of whom shall be a Former-President. The President and Second Vice-President shall serve as ex-officio members of this committee.

One member shall be appointed annually by the President/Elect in the odd-numbered years and by the President in the even-numbered years to serve for 3 years on the Strategic Planning Committee. Beginning in 2014, two (2) members are appointed every third (3rd) year.

"Beauty Across America"



A Standard Flower Show

Presented by

The Botany Belles and Beaus Garden Club
Baldwin, Wisconsin

Friday, July 11, 2014 - 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm

and

Saturday, July 12 - 8:30 am - 11:00 am

First Bank of Baldwin
990 Main Street
Baldwin, Wisconsin

IN MEMORIAM

MERLE KLUG

Merle Klug, age 90 of River Falls, passed away on March 8, 2014. Her husband, Lawrence, died six days later.

A talented and knowledgeable gardener, Merle was a member of the Spooner Garden Club, and received the Lydia Schafer Award from WGCF in 2003.

Members of the Spooner Garden Club offered the following comments about Merle. Nancy Newman wrote "Merle devoted a great deal of energy to local, district, and state Garden Club activities; and she encouraged the same from her fellow Garden Club members. She regularly shouldered leadership roles with enthusiasm, dedication, and an eye for detail. Her love of gardening radiated out from her own beautiful garden to the conviction that gardeners can be lifelong learners who make horticulture contributions to their communities."

Lois Miller said "that the first time she met Merle, she went home and told her husband she had just met the guardian angel of gardening. Merle took everyone under her wing, by offering her advice and insight into all forms of gardening". Georganne Behn summed up everyone's thoughts by saying "Merle was our 'go to person'! We will all miss her greatly! She was just the best!"

An avid reader, Merle taught for several years in Hudson and St. Croix Central schools, and volunteered for many community organizations, including local libraries.

MYRTLE OGILVIE

Myrtle Ogilvie, age 88, of Appleton, passed away on March 9, 2014. Being the mother of seven children and the wife of a very active businessman, Myrt still found time to become very active in countless community and church organizations. One of her greatest joys was her involvement in WGCF and Paper Valley Garden Club. She held various offices in the local garden club, was a District Director, a nationally accredited environmental studies consultant, a nationally accredited Gladiolus Council judge, and a master gardener. She had Emeritus standing as a nationally accredited landscape design consultant, gardening study consultant, and Flower Show Judge. She was the recipient of the WGCF Lydia Schafer Award in 1985.

Julie Schoenike, who gave a testimonial at Myrt's funeral, shared these comments, "Myrt was a person who would look for an opportunity to either help someone or to improve something. She helped people by teaching them and showing a good example. Plant societies and Garden Clubs from all around the state have benefited from her wealth of knowledge. She judged gladiolus, roses, designs and all horticulture as a true teacher, not a critic. Myrt organized the scholarship program for WGCF with the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region. This was not an easy task."

Julie also said, "Myrt planted good seeds with everyone she met. In her unpretentious manner, she believed in people. She leaves us with a loving garden of knowledge, integrity, discipline and always unconditional praise."

18th Annual Sheboygan Area Garden Walk

Saturday, July 12, 2014

9 a.m. -- 4 p.m., Rain or Shine

No children under 10, no strollers & no pets

Featuring 9 Private Gardens

Admission: \$10

Contact: Susan Steinpreis for details





Advertising Contract

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Issue Desired:

- Spring: due March 1, publication first week of April
- Summer: due June 1, publication first week of July
- Fall: due September 1, publication first week of October
- Winter: due December 1, publication first week of January

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Page Size	Dimensions	Non-member Cost	WGCF Member Cost (25% discount)
Full page	9½”H X 7½”W	\$200	\$150
Half page – vertical	9½”H x 3½”W	\$100	\$75
Half page – horizontal	5½”H x 7½”W	\$100	\$75
Quarter page Vertical only	4½”H x 3½”W	\$50	\$37.50
Standard Business Card – Camera Ready	2”H x 3½”W	\$20	\$20 (no discount)

Will you supply your own ad copy? Yes No

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 608-462-5239 wisconsingardens@centurytel.net

DATES TO REMEMBER

APRIL

15-17 Landscape Design School, Madison
April 30 - May 4 NGC Convention, Norman, OK

MAY

20-22 WGCF Convention, Oshkosh

JUNE

12 WGCF Board Meeting, Madison
12 WGCF Strategic Planning Retreat, Madison

SEPTEMBER

12-13 WGCF Flower Show Symposium, West Salem
27 NGC Fall Board Meeting, Des Moines, Iowa

OCTOBER

1-2-3 Landscape Design School, Madison
Series V, Course 2
9-11 Central Region Meeting, Oak Ridge Con. Cen.
Minneapolis
16 WGCF Executive Meeting, Barney Comm. Center,
Sparta, WI

NOVEMBER

14-15 Environmental Studies School, Mequon
Series V, Course 2

Directory Update:

Email address for Pat Ritchie: peritchie48@gmail.com





Memorial Scholarship Fund Donations

**Please make checks payable to
WGCF Scholarship Fund
c/o Community Foundation for the
Fox Valley Region, Inc.
P O Box 563 Appleton, WI 54912**

The enclosed donation of \$ _____ is designated for the
WGCF Scholarship Fund.

CLUB NAME _____ DISTRICT _____

DONOR NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

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DONATION TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS

DONATIONS APPLIED TO PRINCIPAL

INDIVIDUAL/CLUB DONATION

WISCONSIN LIFE MEMBERSHIP

IN HONOR OR IN MEMORY OF:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

SEND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO:

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____



Weather or NOT

A Standard Flower Show

Presented by 

Floral Designers of Wisconsin
Garden Club

 Member of
National Garden Clubs, Inc.
Central Region

Wisconsin Garden Club Federation
Milwaukee District Garden Clubs

Thursday, August 7, 2014 through
Sunday August 10, 2014
During State Fair Hours
9 am—10 pm

State Fair Park - Horticulture Building
640 S. 84th Street, Milwaukee, WI

Entries open to all members of WGCF



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Sheboygan Falls, WI 53085

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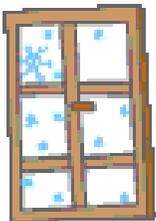
wisconsinclub.org

Deadline for Summer Issue: June 1, submissions Welcome

Publication approximately July 1, delivery by July 15

Due to the variability of bulk non-profit postage delivery, WGCF and *Wisconsin Gardens* takes no responsibility of late delivery of event announcements. Please plan accordingly.

Coming in the Summer 2014: Awards, Convention Report, Judges' Council, Memorials and Tributes, Tri-Council, Landscape Design Schools, Web Page, Books, Horticulture, Membership Promotion. Articles also needed by general members, please consider writing about your garden, activities, club projects, etc. Tell us how you spend your summer days.



As I look out my window I'm reflecting on the possibilities of what I might want to change about my flower gardens and yard this year - Are some of you doing that same thing?? More berry bushes? More or less annuals? Adding perennials in certain areas? Change some of the edging?..... and the list goes on and on. It would be easy to spend my time/waste my day "kicking myself" for the things I didn't clean up last fall, but I'm choosing not to let that interfere with these new ideas. I am trying to think

about all of the options I have. Each new spring is like a new canvas, and we can create whatever we wish with our space. Actually each new day gives us the chance to consider our own internal garden of attitudes and what effect we are having on others and the world.

During the past several weeks I often heard conversations about the weather, which makes me think of a recent "message from God" that I received on Facebook: "God wants you to know that every day you are choosing either to be grateful or to be disappointed. You can worry to no end about what you don't have. Or you can marvel at God's breathtaking gifts: the morning dew, the sun, the clouds, the trees, the flowers, the birds. Could you create any of these? These miracles of life are always around you, ready to be celebrated, ready to be welcomed into your life."

These miracles of life are part of a gardeners' world - it's hard to understand why everyone doesn't embrace this experience!

I'm trying to implement thoughts of gratitude into how I deal with gardening and spring, as well as health concerns that are new for me. As I make daily trips to LaCrosse for radiation treatments, I'll choose to spend that time on watching the "greening" of the Coulee region, rather than questioning "why is this happening to me?" I am choosing to be grateful for the blessings and the possibilities that each new spring brings to me. Won't you join me in this endeavor? What a difference we can each make if we remember to be grateful, rather than disappointed.

Carla

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