

2016 Dodge County Master Gardener Association Monthly Educational Program Schedule



DODGE COUNTY
Master Gardener
ASSOCIATION

All meetings are held in the Administration Building in Juneau at 127 East Oak Street on the 4th Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. and are free and open to the public. Gardeners of all stages of expertise are invited! Come and bring a friend.

January 28 – *Project Year-in-Review* by Master Gardener Volunteers of projects participated in during 2015, complete with photos and discussion.

February 25 – *Windy Drumlins Aquaponics* by Mark Krause. Mark Krause will present an overview of his new business, Windy Drumlins and how it all started. The focus will be a discussion of a relatively new agricultural technique – Aquaponics. A simple explanation of what aquaponics is, how it works, and some of its key characteristics as well as “seeing what matters” relative to activities that impact our environment. Integral to the presentation will be suggestions to each participant for a more “sustainable” lifestyle.

Mark and his wife Fran own Windy Drumlins and are natives of Wisconsin. He grew up in Wausau and graduated from the University of Wisconsin. He spent nearly 30 years in the food industry working for a number of companies including Nestle, ConAgra, and Anchor Food Products. After working with these companies, he consulted for a number of years focusing on process improvements. Today he spends his days developing a small 80 acre site just south of Horicon.

March 24 – *Growing Sweet Potatoes in a Northern Climate* by Noel Valdes. Noel Valdes is a long time hobby gardener living in Cambridge. He grows a significant amount of food using a system of open raised beds which offers the home gardener an opportunity to grow a lot of food in a relatively small space. Sweet potatoes are considered one of the most all-around nutritious foods that can be grown in the home garden. Plants can produce large yields, store very well, and can be used in a wide variety of recipes. Propagation of starts, culture from start to harvest, tips for soil preparation, protection from pests, and storage will be discussed. Noel has been growing sweet potatoes for almost 30 years in southern Wisconsin and he will show you that it is pretty easy to achieve success.

April 28 – *Annual Business Meeting*. Association business, including presentation of certification cards, updates on all projects, the annual potluck plus finalizing plans for the annual plant sale.

May 26 – *Attracting and Raising Monarch Butterflies* by Gae Bergmann. Gae Bergmann has been a Master Gardener for nine years and has been raising Monarch butterflies for nearly all of that time. She has raised more than 500 of these butterflies on her Fox Lake property. She has four varieties of milkweed plus a variety of flowers planted to nourish them, which has resulted in her homestead being certified as a Monarch Waystation. She will share the reasons it is essential to begin raising these beautiful insects, the life stages of the butterfly, the procedures to follow for success, why it is necessary to plant milkweed, and how each participant can become more involved.

June 23 – *How Do I Manage Weeds in My Spaces* by George Koepp. George Koepp, Columbia County UW-Extension Agriculture Educator will discuss and share tips on dealing with weeds. He will help develop a plan of attack to deal with weeds in the lawn, flower and vegetable gardens, and sidewalks and driveways. George encourages people to use an integrated approach by using mechanical, biological, cultural/mulching, and if all else fails, chemical weed control methods. George grew up on a farm and lived most of his life in the eastern part of the Baraboo Bluffs, near Cascade Mountain in Portage. He taught High School Agriculture and Biotechnology at Baraboo High School for 26 years and then joined the UW-Extension team in Columbia County in August 2011. He has worked with farmers to develop Nutrient Management Plans, grazing plans, and has trained Master Gardener Volunteers each year. He also advises the Columbia County Corn Growers, Master Gardener Volunteers, and works with several Community Garden groups. George always encourages people to use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques in response to insect, weed, and disease challenges with plants.

July 28 – *Tour of Kirschbaum Strawberry Acres, Beaver Dam by Stan Kirschbaum.* Stan Kirschbaum owner/operator of Kirschbaum Strawberry Acres (KSA) will give a tour of his farm. KSA started as a hobby farm on County Road W between Beaver Dam and Juneau in 1980 with a 1/3 acre strawberry planting. It expanded to its current location on Highway 151 with 15 acres of fruiting berries each year and about 40 acres of winter rye for weed free berry mulch. What started as 99% u-pick has evolved into 50% u-pick and 50% already picked strawberries, most which is sold as fresh production on the farm. Recently KSA joined with the only licensed winery in Dodge County, Edwin Brix Vineyard in Juneau. The second bottling of Wild Stan's Strawberry Wine was done August 24, 2015.

Although not an organic farm, sustainable agriculture and a system of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is used that is based partly on organic farming principles but recognizes that well researched technological tools can be incorporated to enhance sustainability, production, worker, consumer, and food safety. More information along with a summary of management tools and practices will be provided at the farm tour.

Stan is a 1970 graduate of Beaver Dam High School with a degree in Biology and a Chemistry Minor from UW-Oshkosh. He is a member and past president of the Wisconsin Berry Growers Association and has been growing strawberries since 1980.

August 25 – *Plant Pigmentation: Where Beauty Meets Science by Amy Freidig.* Imagine that first zing of spring color in the landscape or the wild mix of blooming flowers in a cottage garden. Plant colors are a vibrant part of the gardening experience and there is some fascinating science behind the beautiful display. Come learn about five common plant pigments that are in your garden. We'll cover a range of topics from what red lobster shells have in common with many garden plants to the relationship between plant pigments and human health. A Madison area native, Amy has recently completed MS degrees in horticulture and plant breeding and researching beets, her favorite plant. She is now employed part-time in with the Wisconsin Master Gardener Volunteer program where she is responsible for developing interactive educational materials, assisting with outreach programs, and helping to start a therapeutic horticulture program in conjunction with an area health care facility. Personally, Amy and her family are new homeowners wrestling with the joys of establishing their own home garden and landscape.

September 22 – *Plants on the Frontier by Kate Redmond.* In 1492, an exchange of plants began between the Old World and the New. What plants did the Native Americans and later, the Europeans use in a time before drugstores, grocery stores, home improvement, and department stores? How did they know what was safe to eat? Kate Redmond will answer those questions and more. Kate is a Wisconsin interpretive naturalist/environmental educator. She is excited about wetlands, prairies, writing, insects (especially dragonflies), carnivorous plants, native orchids, and photography. She served for 10 years as a founding board member of the Friends of the Cedarburg Bog, wrote the on-line field guide to the Mequon Nature Preserve and as the Bug Lady, has written more than 350 essays about local insects, and other invertebrates.

October 27 – *Alternate Lifestyles: Plants that Eat Animals by Erica Young.* Erica Young is an Associate Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences at UW-Milwaukee. She will present a profile of these charismatic plants who not only capture insect prey to supplement their nutrient uptake, but 'farm' a range of invertebrates and bacteria to support their nutrient requirements to thrive in nutrient-poor wetland ecosystems. The talk will include natural history and some great pictures of the plants as well as some emerging frontiers in scientific research on these organisms. Erica grew up among amazingly diverse plants of Western Australia and has since lived in Sweden, Ireland, and now Wisconsin. Her scientific research has focused on photosynthetic phytoplankton, intertidal kelps, nitrogen-fixing symbioses, and invasive species. Her current research focuses on nutrient cycling in freshwater ecosystems - from the Great Lakes to micro-ecosystems within carnivorous pitcher plants.

November and December – *No meeting.* Happy Holidays!