



# Digging in Dodge

Dodge County Master Gardener Association

Issue 28

## A Note from our President

Happy 2012! The start of a new year is an opportunity to reflect back and think about what changes or improvements can be made in the year ahead. Here's a look back on 2011 and what is ahead for 2012 for the Dodge County Master Gardener Association.

Looking back on 2011, the Dodge County Master Gardeners volunteered 1,880 hours and participated in 1,439 hours of Continuing Education. You provided educational presentations and demonstrations to a variety of organizations, wrote articles, worked with schools, group homes, churches, libraries, public parks, and so much more.

Other highlights for 2011 include a successful plant sale, the "Solve a Landscape Problem" Workshop, a trip to Allen Centennial Gardens and Olbrich Gardens, the second annual photo contest, and the many outstanding speakers at our monthly meetings.

As we move ahead into 2012, you can look forward to our annual plant sale, summer bus trip, photo contest, and interesting educational speakers at our meetings. The board members are excited about the possibility of expanding the photo contest by producing a calendar of the winning photos. We

continue to look at ways to increase our profile within the county and our local communities and how to encourage a younger generation to become involved. The board also strives to improve Master Gardener attendance at monthly meetings, state conference, Madison Garden Expo, and with local projects and events.

At our April business meeting, there will be an election for two positions on the board. If you are a certified or intern MGVA you are eligible to be an officer. Even though there is some extra commitment, you will find it well worth your time and effort.

You should be proud of what was accomplished in 2011 and look forward to a great 2012.

*Chris*

## 2012 Projects

Master Gardeners will be working on various projects in Dodge County this year. Projects are underway in Beaver Dam, Horicon, Juneau, Mayville, Neosho, Watertown, and Waupun. Each project has a Master Gardener who coordinates the work. A complete and updated list of projects with contact person information is available from our website or from Carol Shirk (920) 387-5105.

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## Upcoming meetings

Anyone with an interest in gardening is welcome to attend the following free programs. Master Gardener meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of the month. Unless otherwise noted, the meetings are at 6:30 p.m. in the Administration Building, 127 E. Oak Street, Juneau, WI 53039.

### January 26

#### Project Review

#### Master Gardener Volunteers

A review of the projects that the Dodge County Master Gardener Volunteers participated in during 2011, complete with photos and discussion.

### February 23

#### Gardening For Bees

#### Carla Oestreich

A presentation about which plant varieties that will attract both wild and domestic bees to gardens. The participants will learn about flowers, shrubs, and trees that are bee attractors, how to maintain a 'Bee-Friendly' garden, with an emphasis on sustainable garden practices, diversity, and blooms that are 'season-round'. Each participant will leave with several useful hand-outs including a copy of the power point presentation, lists of tried-and-true bee attractors and much more!



### March 22

#### Gardening and Physical Therapy

#### Seamus Garvey

Seamus Garvey of Back in Action Rehabilitation, Mayville will present a program on body mechanics and stretching as it relates to gardening

### April 26

#### 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 24

#### Chickens in the Garden

#### Ron Kean

In addition to egg production, garden poultry may assist in insect control, provide fertilizer sources, and give endless hours of entertainment. Ron Kean, UW-Extension Poultry Specialist will discuss the many aspects of raising healthy chickens in our home gardens.

### June 28

#### Butterfly Gardening

#### Dorothy Legler

Dorothy, from the Southern WI Butterfly Association, is a Master Gardener with many years of doing butterfly surveys, butterfly photography, and an extensive knowledge of Wisconsin butterflies.

## Upcoming Events

- Tropical Orchids for Beginners. Tuesday, February 7, 6:30-8 pm Green Bay Botanical Gardens, 2600 Larsen Road, Green Bay. This class will give you the know-how to grow any of the amazing varieties of orchids in your own home. Learn about the supplies and fertilizers needed to help this exceptional plant blossom, as well as the pests and diseases that could foil your best efforts. All class participants will receive a discount coupon for The Orchid Bug in Green Bay. Class fee:\$14, preregistration required. For more information call (920) 490-9457 or see:

[www.gbbg.org](http://www.gbbg.org)

- 2012 Wisconsin Garden Expo February 10-12 at the Exhibition Hall, Alliant Energy Center, Madison. Hours are Fri 4:00-9:00, Sat 9:00-6:00, and Sun 10:00-4:00. Seminars, demos, workshops, and hundreds of exhibitors. Entry fees vary. More information available at:

<http://www.wigardenexpo.com/>

- Bonsai Silhouette Show at the Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory (The Domes) 524 S. Layton Blvd., Milwaukee. March 4, 2012, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Admire a variety of bonsai, plants that have been grown and pruned to resemble very old trees as part of a natural landscape. Growers will answer questions and offer information on this Japanese art. Hours and admission fees available at (414) 257-5611 or see:

<http://county.milwaukee.gov/HoursAdmissionMap10117.htm>

## Window Boxes

Window boxes are a delightful way to dress up your home and add a dash of color without breaking your wallet. Each window box is custom made to fit a particular window and is basically a u-shaped trough with ends. The wood should be something that can withstand the elements, preferably pressure treated lumber or cedar. A depth of 7-10 inches will give roots ample room to spread out. If you are going to use a plastic planter as an insert rather than plant directly in the box, get the insert first since that size will determine the size of the wooden boxes.

The design of your box can be as fancy as your imagination allows or as simple as a rectangular box. However, do not neglect to add some holes in the bottom to allow for drainage. Once the planter is complete, some type of finish is necessary to prevent the wood from rot. Use care when mounting your window boxes. Brackets in the middle and at the end of each box will generally provide adequate support for the weight of the box, soil, and flowers.

Lastly, add soil to your box and plant. Alternatively, you can simply add potted plants. Either put some landscape fabric over the drainage holes or even a small stone to prevent the soil from falling through. Adding some peat moss to the soil will help retain moisture and reduce the frequency of watering. Topping off the soil with some light mulch will also reduce moisture loss.

Happy Gardening!



## Master Gardener Volunteer Training

Are you interested in learning about a wide variety of horticultural topics including preparing soils for optimum plant growth, plant propagation, backyard wildlife, landscaping, insect identification & control, annuals & perennials, fruits & vegetables, native prairies, turf grass management, plant pathology and weed control?

The Dodge County UW-Extension Office is offering the Master Gardener Volunteer training program to provide education and training for individuals who are interested in expanding their knowledge of horticulture. The 12-week educational program will meet from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday evenings beginning February 7 and conclude late April 2012 at the Administration Building in Juneau. Deadline for the class is Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup>.

This year's program will again feature a variety of University of Wisconsin specialists and other guest speakers with expertise and knowledge on a wide range of different topics each week.

The cost of the program is \$140. This fee will cover the cost of the program which includes a comprehensive set of UW-Extension publications that will serve as a valuable resource to help you find answers to the questions that may come your way. Before becoming a certified Master Gardener Volunteer, participants must complete 24 hours of community service. This can easily be accomplished in a variety of ways including working on projects within your local community, providing educational assistance and training for other homeowners, or answering horticultural questions that are referred to you. The Dodge County Master Gardener Association is involved with many projects throughout the year that could use additional assistance, so the possibilities are nearly endless.

If you are interested in learning more about the Dodge County Master Gardener Volunteer program or would like to register, please contact the UW-Extension Dodge County office at (920) 386-3790. A Master Gardener informational meeting will be held at 6 pm on Thursday, January 12 in the Administration Building in Juneau. Program details, course agenda, and volunteer service opportunities will be discussed at the informational meeting. There is no cost or obligation to attend this informational meeting. Registration will be on a first come, first served basis and the class size will be limited to 40 participants. This program is only offered every other year, so the next opportunity may be the year 2014 in Dodge County. Neighboring counties also offer the Master Gardener program if this one does not fit your schedule.

—Matt Hanson

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*"The wise gardener  
anticipates June in  
January."*

### Dodge County Master Gardener Association

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<http://wimastergardener.org/>

<http://dodge.uwex.edu/master-gardener/>