October Meeting Dates

The Advisory Board meeting is Wednesday, October 3, at 5:30 pm at the Crawford County Administration Building.

The next regular Master Gardeners’ meeting is Wednesday, October 10, at 6:30 pm at the Crawford County Administration Building.

The subject for this month’s meeting will be Fall Harvest. Bring your favorite recipe for a fall dish (appetizer, main dish, side dish or desert). Maybe using something from your garden or orchard or a friend or neighbor’s garden. Please bring a written copy of the recipe to the meeting so that it can be posted in upcoming newsletters to share with the group.

We will also be sorting seed packets during the meeting. You can earn volunteer hours for this activity AND enjoy some tasty treats from fellow MGVs.

Calendar of Events

For October

Oct. 3: Executive Board Meeting-5:30pm at the County Administration Building.

*Oct. 7: Celebration of Life for Eric Brey-noon until 3:00pm at St. Feriole’s Memorial Gardens in PdC, WI

Oct. 10: Regular MG Meeting-6:30pm at the County Administration Building.

Oct 20: Oktoberfest 9:00am—3:00pm at St. Feriole’s Memorial Gardens in PdC, WI

*more details on page 2
Save the Dates

Celebration of Life
Sunday, October 7
St. Feriole Island, Prairie du Chien, WI

One of our MG members, Eric Brey, passed away on Tuesday, September 4th. He recently passed the level 1 training and will be awarded his MG Volunteer status posthumously at a Celebration of Life being held at the St. Feriole Island’s Memorial Gardens on Sunday, October 7th at noon until 3:00pm.

Please join our MG Intern, Lori Brey (his wife), friends, family and MGVs to honor Eric and share memories of him.

Snacks and beverages will be supplied.

Crawford County MGV Level 1 Training Starts
Tuesday, February 12 (orientation)
Tuesdays, February 19 thru April 9 (classes)
Administration Building, Prairie du Chien, WI

Memorial Gardens Plant Sale
Saturday, May 11
St. Feriole Island, Prairie du Chien, WI

2nd Annual Crawford County Master Gardeners’ Fund Raiser
Saturday, May 25
Lucky Park, Prairie du Chien, WI
From some of our members

From Cathie Nelson:
FLOWER GARDEN AVAILABLE ON ST. FERIOLE ISLAND. Located on the corner of Villa Louis Road and Roulette Street, next to the Roulette House. Water is available from an outside water spigot on the house. It has been taken care of by Betty Frydenlund for many years and she has decided to pass it on to a new gardener. Contact me if you are interested in taking this on as a project.

From the Advisory Board:
We are planning to have a spring county fairgrounds cleanup next year. The date is yet to be determined. There will be mulch delivered and we will need MGVs to help with weeding, laying down mulch and, in general, prettying up the gardens. This includes the Birds and the Bees Pollinator Garden and the landscape gardens around the main office.

We would like to make this a fun experience and therefore plan to have a potluck or BBQ for anyone helping out. This is intended to help with getting a head start on maintaining the gardens rather than spending hours under pressure right before the fair starts.

Any hours spent helping are volunteer hours you can earn.
From some of our members (continued)

From Julie Hazen:

A new suggestion for next year’s MGV Mobile Garden (displayed at the Crawford County Fair and then at the County Administration Building) is “Garden in a Box” (or pot in our case). Different types of gardens can be divided up for teams (i.e. shade garden, sun garden, pollinator garden). Teams will work together to put plant a garden pot with 4-5 (or more) plants. They will then create a sign that explains what plants were used and why.

This is one of many ideas that have been presented and we will have a list during one of the late spring meetings so that we can vote on which idea we would like to do for next year’s county fair.

So don’t hesitate to forward any ideas you may have to me so we can add it to the list.

From Julie Hazen and Donna Teynor:

LAWN CHAIR LEARNING. This was presented at September’s monthly meeting. May thru Sept, one day a month at the same time every month (TBD) we would like to introduce Lawn Chair Learning to be held at the Memorial Gardens. The public will be invited. They will bring their own lawn chair, bottled water and bug spray. MGVs will do a presentation. It will start at a designated place (same place each month) and then will move to another location in the garden if it makes sense for the presentation. Anyone who is interested in giving a presentation (either on your own or jointly with someone else) please contact one of us to get you on the list. You can log volunteer hours for any time spent researching your presentation, preparing for your presentation and, of course, giving your presentation.

We are hoping to get more visibility to the general public and potentially new recruits.
From Marla Cameron and Caprice Ellefson:

Crawford County MGV Grant Money Accounting: $500.00 (as of 10/01/2018)

This is part of the money earned from our fund raiser at the PdC farmer’s market this past spring. Please submit requests for a grant via the form. There is a link to this form at the bottom of the first page of our website.

https://crawford.uwex.edu/master-gardener-program/

There is a $100.00 limit per MGV, per year. The grant request should be submitted in writing to the advisory board and once reviewed you will need to present your request in person at one of the regular monthly meetings for approval, a vote and payment.

Rules for the grant are on the form.

From Cheryl Frazier:

My husband, Dan, and I just got back from a road trip vacation to Yellowstone National Park. And it is definitely fall in Yellowstone. The Fireweed (Evening Primrose family) is in seed with lots of fluff in the air. If you have the space and don’t mind a slightly invasive native species, this plant has both summer and fall interest...as well as being edible, medicinal and very attractive to pollinators!
From Sandy Vold:

WIMGA Conference in Eau Claire, WI

The conference was excellent, and so was the food. I did the walking tour on Friday which went along the river way and across the river to the Mayo Hospital complex and all the plants and shrubbery on their grounds. It was cold and windy, but the trek was worth it. I attended 3 breakout sessions: one on harvesting and drying herbs, one on GMOs, and one on dealing with plant disease. All were very good. The GMO speaker gave an excellent presentation on what a GMO is and the good and bad effects.

We were lucky with the weather. The big storm hit just as we entered Eau Claire and by the time we pulled into the parking garage the tornado sirens were going. Fortunately there was no major damage and no tornado.

The evening speaker Friday was the director of the Rotary Gardens in Janesville. He talked about all the different kinds of trees and shrubs that add color and texture to a landscape. The director of the Allen Centennial Gardens spoke after lunch on Saturday and talked about the elements of designing a perennial garden.

From Julie Hazen:

HOW PLANTS WILL SAVE THE WORLD

Seminar by Ben Futa: Director of Allen Centennial Gardens, UW Madison campus

GARDENS ARE MORE THAN THE SUM OF THEIR PLANTS! Wow think about it. We need to demonstrate the value gardens bring to our cities. Make your gardens a meeting place for YOUR people.

Plants give us many things: clean air, water, textiles, building materials and food. THANK YOU PLANTS! But you’ve probably heard of the term "plant blindness". People are not having meaningful experiences with plants. We need to show our people why plants are cool and why they matter, show them that a garden is a place you want to hang out in and you can come back to.

Start by building awareness, then move to meaningful events. At this point Ben covered the many events they held in the garden to draw the "college student" population to the garden. He also gave examples of how some cities are connecting people to gardens. Some of these ideas may be incorporated into our gardens this year. Some of the ideas fit nicely into "Lawn Chair Learning", a meaningful, purposeful way to connect people with plants. Some of the ideas will be just things people will happen upon as they visit a garden. Ben’s success story at Allen Centennial: in his 4 years as director they have held 130 events and have 12,000 people visit the garden for those events! Wow! He is now seeing "college students" hanging out in the gardens on a regular basis.

We need to put CULTURE into Horticulture. We need to let people find belonging here in our gardens. We need spaces and invitations to rediscover our humanity and our connection to nature. Public gardens can play this important role in our communities. Public barriers can break down barriers between people and plants.
Highlighting MG Volunteers for October

Cindy Gordon: Cindy was highlighted in a news article in the Courier Press on August 13th (reprinted with their permission).

Self-proclaimed 'cat lady' raising over 100 caterpillars to butterflies

Three years ago, Cindy Gordon started a new hobby, with the inspiration from local Master Gardener Donna Teynor and her classes at the Memorial Gardens. It would change her life for the better, allowing for a learning and bonding experience for her and her daughter, Savannah.

Cindy defines herself as a “cat lady,” but upon entering her house, visitors quickly realize there is not a feline in sight. Inside, there is a bunny, along with more butterfly containers than most people would even take the time to count. Caterpillars make their homes within the containers, varying in size based on their stages of development. These wondrous insectsonly have a life expectancy of 10 percent when eating milkweed outside. However by raising them in containers on a milkweed diet, Cindy and Savannah help improve their life expectancies to over 90 percent.

In the beginning of her hobby, she only cared for and released a few caterpillars. This year, though, her goal was to release at least 30 caterpillars, yet this goal has been far exceeded. Currently, in her home, Cindy cares for 104 caterpillars and 67 eggs.

“My favorite part is probably going out hunting them. I have a really hard time driving down the road, passing a patch of milkweed and not stopping. I usually have a bucket or something in my car to collect them,” she noted. The caterpillars go through four stages, Cindy explained. She prefers to collect the caterpillars when they are still in their eggs, leaving a smaller chance for disease and problems. For example, if the caterpillars are hatched, there is often the chance of flies laying eggs on them and killing them. When they are collected at a larger size, she quarantines them before adding them to the regular habitats, because she doesn't really know what happened to them in their first couple weeks of life.

The eggs will hatch after four days. Then, caterpillars start their growth at just a quarter of an inch. In the 14 days after the egg stage, the caterpillars grow to two inches or larger, approximately the size of a pinky. Eventually, they hook into a shape of a J in their containers for a day. Next, the caterpillar forms a chrysalis, which takes about 10 minutes. If not watching the holding container closely, Cindy explained, it is far too easy to miss the moment when the important event occurs. For roughly 10 days, the caterpillar is in its chrysalis turning into a majestic butterfly. The chrysalis will turn black before it hatches. “All butterflies are born in the morning, roughly around 9 o’clock,” Cindy said.

After this point, the butterflies are ready to go for their adventure outside. According to Cindy, tragically, only about one in a hundred monarch butterflies will be able to survive predators once in the wild. “My daughter and I spend a lot of time together outside, instead of her sitting in front of a television or electronic gadgets,” she noted. She explained that her daughter takes part in every stage of care for the caterpillars. She collects the eggs, cleans the cages, and gives them fresh milkweed every day. “She loves to release the butterflies,” Cindy added. “She loves to tell people about it.”
Highlighting MG Volunteers for October (continued)

Away from this hobby, Cindy loves her career. She explained, “I’m a nurse by day, cat lady by night.” Growing up, she always wanted to be a neonatal nurse, a dream she achieved. She worked in La Crosse, driving back and forth from Prairie du Chien, for 11 years. Eventually, she decided to simply be on call for La Crosse, while changing positions so she could work in Prairie du Chien instead. Her coworkers are thrilled by her hobby. Once, she brought one of the eggs, approximately the size of a pinhead, she collected into work. She remembered her coworkers barely being able to see the egg, which they named Fred, questioning where it was on the leaves. A week later though, she returned with a caterpillar, shocking her coworkers with how fast the creature had grown in the short period of time. The coworkers continued to be able to see the aging of the little caterpillar into a beautiful butterfly. “I have sparked the interest of [some of my coworkers]. Actually a couple of the girls were hunting butterflies during lunch the other day,” Cindy noted. She enjoys being able to see the looks on their faces when they find an egg, along with having the opportunity to answer any questions that they may have. She often brings the caterpillars to show her neighbors, who ask her questions about growing milkweed.”

“I want to get the word out that the monarch population is hurting. It doesn’t cost a lot of money, any container will work for an egg. You release one, it will be one more for the population,” enthused Cindy.

**UPDATE on Cindy’s monarchs:** Cindy and Savannah have released over 600 monarchs in 2018!

Way to go “Cat Lady”.

Crawford County’s MG Association’s Mission Statement: We TEACH, LEARN, LEAD and SERVE, connecting with the University of Wisconsin and engaging with them in transforming lives and communities.

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