

2012 Fond du Lac Master Gardener Volunteer Accomplishment Report

The Fond du Lac County Master Gardener Association has 56 active members. In addition, 17 gardening enthusiasts enrolled in the fall Level 1 Training and we are hoping they will all go on to become Certified Master Gardener Volunteers. We meet on the second Tuesday of the month from January through June and August through November. Please visit our website for further information and our calendar of events.

In 2012 we volunteered:	160.5	hours of Youth Education
	304.0	hours of Community Education
	3,883.5	hours of Support Services
And participated in	1,604 .0	hours of Continuing Education

New in 2012:

- We purchased a computer and projector to assist in our community presentations and to use for on-line access to research questions from folks at our plant sale and at other events.
- We received a request from KFIZ radio to help with their "Landscape Smart" live call-in program on Saturday mornings from 8:00 to 9:00 a.m. from the middle of April through the middle of November. Patty Percy and Dolores Braun were the primary radio hosts, with other members taking a turn, including Lin Morgan, Doug Kindschuh, Sharon Rasmussen, Bill Behnke, and Tina Weiss. The sponsor of the program, Rademann's Stone and Landscape, appreciated our input.
- We donated \$500 to the YMCA toward the installation of a Woolly School Garden which was used by about 75 children in the Headstart program. The children filled the pockets with dirt, planted seeds as well as some transplants, watered, and made two scarecrows to watch over the garden. They made salads from their produce, learned a lot, and have cleaned out the pockets to reuse next spring.

Continuing Projects Update:

Fond du Lac Public Library – Members of the FDL MGA have been hard at work sprucing up landscaping at the Library. Along with refreshing front planters, the group overhauled planting areas around the main entrance, including creating a rock garden with succulents and gravel and planting drought-tolerant decorative grasses. The committee volunteering their time to improve library grounds included Julie Toshner, Ken Campshure, Alice Dann and Vel Hynek.

School Gardens - The **Chegwin Nature Center at Chegwin Elementary School** came a long way in 2012. After clearing out ditch lilies and yellow irises, we now have four beds to plant vegetables. Together we planted carrots, potatoes and pumpkins. Also, with the PTC in a special Earth Day in May event, we planted popcorn, prairie seeds, and flowers. Families and staff were invited to make little wind chimes for the trees which they had to identify for prizes. Other activities included an invasive species not-so-treasure hunt. The teachers and PTC are looking forward to another year of education and hands on learning in the Nature Center. Anna Toman is in charge of this project.

The **Riverside School Garden project** for 2012 started in the classroom in March when MGVs talked to students about "How vegetables grow and why they are good for you." We then proceeded to plant the seeds in the classrooms with the help of the students. The seed trays were kept in a warm place so the students could watch them germinate and grow. The seedlings were moved to the high school greenhouse until they could be transplanted by MGVs and students. Seeds were also directly sown. When school was not in session, the Boys and Girls Club tended the garden, watering, weeding and harvesting vegetables which they would take back to the YMCA to prepare. The corn grew over ten feet tall. In the fall the students popped the corn, decorated with the Indian corn, and harvested the pumpkins. Bill Behnke is the project leader for Riverside School gardens.

Pier School Gardens - The courtyard and front entrance berm in spring had an exceptional bulb bloom. Crocuses, daffodils and tulips took turns showing off. The relentless care it took Eileen Blackburn to maintain the

gardens through the summer rendered some rewards and some disappointments, but everyone seemed to be grateful and impressed. The children continue to play the I Spy game and are calling it their favorite part of school.

In 2012, **Rosenow School** contacted MG asking for help in growing a school garden. Sharon Rasmussen and Master Gardener Intern Mary Williams responded to this request. The students helped plant the garden seeds. They took full responsibility for growing the seeds to plants to transplant in their garden. They set up a seed growing station in their cafeteria where the students got to watch the plants grow. They even had some extra plants that they sold to help fund their garden and they also donated some plants for the MG plant sale. The children made colorful plant markers. One of the fun projects was Mrs. Green Beans who was a pole bean trellis with the beans for her skirt, flower pot for head and an old shirt for the rest of her body. The parents and students did an awesome job of maintaining the garden and are looking forward to next year.

Horticulture Helpline - The year started off with a bang as the early spring advanced the growing season by at least two weeks and the number of incoming calls for April far exceeded the previous two years. After that, most calls related directly to the drought and its effect on vegetables and trees, with a corresponding increase in insects and disease. Lin Morgan is the coordinator for the Helpline and was assisted by Sally Boatman, Susan Jones, Anna Toman, Sherry Freiberg, Bobbi Thomma, Ellen Flynn, Linda Armstrong, Dolores Braun, and Tina Weiss.

Day in the Garden – Our annual educational event was well attended as usual. We had speakers on Stunning Plants for Dazzling Effects; Growing Orchids; Wildlife in the Landscape – pros and cons; and Traditional and Native Perennials – gardens designs emphasizing balancing plant relationships to maintenance strategies and costs. Many members helped to make the day a huge success, but the committee in charge of the event was Dolores Braun, Patty Percy and Beth Howman-Combs. The silent auction committee of Alice Dann, Vel Hynek, Julie Toshner and Sherry Freiberg, with help from other members, supplied some beautiful items. This was a good fundraiser for the association. Diane Soffa provided the door prizes. Our next DIG will be March 23, 2013.

Plant Sale – Almost all of our members participated in our annual plant sale, with Dolores Braun as the Committee Chair, and Jim Johnson as the project leader for the digging crew. We divided and potted plants from our gardens, started annual flowers and vegetables from seed, and propagated herbs, perennials and houseplants from cuttings for the sale. We partnered with Haentze Floral this year, purchasing some annuals from them and receiving a portion of their profits for sales at their shop that weekend. Our plant sale provides the working capital for most of our projects. The 2013 plant sale will be held on May 25 at the UW-FDL Campus from 9:00 to 3:00.

Free Spirit Riders – Kathy Erickson and other volunteers, including Pat Birschbach, Mary Filion-Zuelsdorf, Renee Bruins, Larry Lamont, Jo Heinkel, Noreen Zimdars, Maggie Meyer and Cindy Boudry, again had a very busy season. In the spring they applied over two loads of mulch, planted annuals in the meditation garden and color therapy garden, and replaced some butterfly bushes in the butterfly garden. The center had some issues with the well, so they weren't able to water as much as needed, but despite that they had many compliments on how beautiful the gardens look.

UW Flower Beds - A lot of additional work was required of our devoted Master Gardener Volunteers to keep the flower beds watered this summer in the extreme drought and heat. Shirley Frieler is the project leader for Sunset Garden, one of the largest on campus. This garden is divided into three sections, one with lilies and annuals, the center section is largely annuals with sedum, and the north section is perennials with a bench and some grasses. The work consisted of weeding, planting, dividing perennials, adding compost and fertilizer, deadheading and cutting back as needed. Shirley's work crew consisted of Pat Birschbach, Lane Chapman, Mary Ditter, Jim Johnson, Janet Tess and Vel Hynek.

Two other UW gardens, Crane's Nest and Shady Rest, are right next to each other, so Dolores Mick and Jane Ketterer worked on them together. They planted two forsythias to add some structure in the spring, and had to work hard to keep them watered. They have plans for next year to add more "woodies" for structure and focal points, and to fill three large plastic pots with annuals to form a colorful backdrop to hide the bare wall.

We again donated \$500 to the City of Fond du Lac for planting flowers at Lakeside Park and the Fairgrounds Pool. We also donated \$1,000 to the Gottfried Prairie to support their monthly educational classes.

Janet Tess and Gail Williams organized two exceptional bus trips again this year, with another planned for December. The first was a fun shopping trip to Monches Farm, Shady Acres, and Northwind Perennial Farm. The second was a tour of West of the Lake Gardens in Manitowoc and Christopher Farm and Gardens in Sheboygan, plus a stop at Restoration Gardens in Kohler.

Dolores Braun and Marilyn Faris provided twelve door prizes for the UW-Ext. "Smart Money for Women" presentation, using decorative pots and donated plants for this project. They also put together twenty pots of the same design filled with herbs, perennials and house plants for table decorations/door prizes for "Coalition Against Underage Drinking" in May which was a Marian University function. Both groups gave Plant Sale fliers to their attendees.

Junior Master Gardeners – Base group came in for after-school sessions in March, April and May to help get the garden planned and planted. The rest of the summer, the Boys and Girls Club sent a bus with 10 to 12 kids to help with garden maintenance once a week. There were so many who wanted to attend, they took turns and had to earn their participation in our program. They love being able to harvest and prepare their own healthy snack while attending the program. On July 31, the Junior Master Gardeners toured UW Madison to learn about plants and gardening. They visited an outdoor collection of plants, the horticulture greenhouse, took a hike at the Arboretum and enjoyed a visit to Babcock Ice Cream Plant. The Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program and 4-H partnered with JMG during the field trip. The Junior Master Gardener Program is run by Patty Percy.

Community Gardens – The drought was a challenge this year. Patty Percy received calls about empty water tanks almost every week. It takes at least three hours every day for the water tanks to fill since the water source is one small hook-up with hundreds of feet of hose to connect to three huge tanks. We are looking into getting another water hook-up installed. Patty has contacted the county board to find out what our options are. Even though there was a shortage of rain for the summer, some of the gardeners took Patty's advice to mulch their produce and had a good harvest.