



Good Earth News

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Summarizing the Season ...So Far by Sharon Morrissey *Consumer Hort. Agent, MCCE*

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This summer has been a wild ride. For that matter, so were last spring and winter. Mild winters aren't so unusual but having spring arrive 5 – 6 weeks early was a once in a lifetime experience for many of us. We could only speculate about the effects having nothing to base it on. Phenologically, we knew that both plants and other organisms were developing faster. But there were so many other variables to take into account. A lot of people asked if all the flowers would be done flowering early and there would be nothing later on. Everything probably would have just flowered longer, if it hadn't been for the heat and the drought. We expected insects that overwinter on plants like plant bugs and aphids to be more numerous and those that overwinter below ground to be less affected by the mild winter. For instance, Japanese beetles overwinter underground but only emerged 10 days early, not 30 or 40 like many plants did.

The mild winter

Many gardeners were thrilled to discover what it's like when butterfly bushes don't die back to the ground. The ones at the MGVs garden at State Fair Park were easily 10' tall. Curly parsley and pineapple sage survived the winter which they never do. I have a bronze fennel that is 8 feet tall. The Russian sage is monstrous and Knock-out rose bushes were 3' tall and wide in May since nothing died back. Unfortunately, they were also covered by rust fungi that also survived the unusual winter.

The early spring

Emerging earlier, plants had more time to grow. Insects also had more time to multiply and build-up unusually large populations. Seemingly, every species of wasp we've ever seen was present in large numbers this year. That's good when they are serving as pollinators and predators but not when they are thirsty and mad. Among the insects

found in higher numbers this year were flea beetles, white flies, aphids, and butterflies. Not only were Japanese beetles earlier, so were gypsy moths, emerald ash borers and earwigs.

Spring put on the brakes in early May with several hard freezes at inopportune times. Apples and cherries particularly had developed so early that they had tender flower buds which were frozen, killing the harvest for this year. The first set of leaves on some trees and shrubs did, too. The only consolation is that the young gypsy moth larvae froze, too.

The drought of 2012

Sometime around the middle of June it became apparent that moisture was "short to very short" in most parts of southern Wisconsin. The 1973 record for the driest June in Dane County was broken with a mere 0.31" for the entire month. Gardeners watered furiously until watering bans were put in place allowing us to only water our most prized plants. Lawns looked like they were way past dormant. We learned from Dr. Doug Soldat, UW Turf Specialist that they were a long way from dead since Kentucky bluegrass can tolerate 60 days with no water at all. If the crowns were ready to die, it would only take ¼ inch of water a week (or ½ inch every two weeks) to keep them alive.

Trees and shrubs always suffer the most from drought particularly young and recently transplanted ones. It was not uncommon this year to see green Gator Bags wrapped around the trunks of young trees. These devices sit on the soil and slowly disperse water over a long period of time. Even established trees should have 60 gallons of water per 100 sq. ft. per week in their rootzones. Dr. Laura Jull, UW Nursery Specialist wrote a factsheet on watering that explained how to measure the water

(Continued on page 2)



you're providing by a gently trickling hose or a root injector. Essentially, you time how long it takes to fill a 5 gallon bucket with that device and then do the math.

Drought stress this year will predispose many tree species to borers next year and to other maladies in years to come. Bronze birch borer will attack birch and two-lined chestnut borer will affect oaks. Other trees and shrubs sensitive to drought are spruce, linden, dogwoods, burning bush, bridal wreath and witchhazel.

Unfortunately, there are many plant pests that love dry conditions especially if it is also hot including two-spotted spider mites, lacebugs, aphids, and grasshoppers. Mites cause pale colored leaves, stippled with yellow feeding holes which progresses to bronzing and then browning and death. Lacebugs cause lacey leaves. Aphids deform leaves and stems plus they coat the plant (and sometimes everything below it) with sticky honeydew that turns black when sooty mold grows on it. They also carry viruses to many species of plants. All of this can be solved with a simple rain once in a while. This is one time when giving the leaves a good soaking with water can be very beneficial.

If there is an up side to drought, it is the reduction of populations of some insects like slugs, earwigs, mosquitoes and even those despised Japanese beetles. Diseases favored by high humidity and moisture are lessened, too, such as powdery mildew of vine crops and the leaf blights of tomato, namely, septoria and early blight. Do not wet the foliage of these plants since that will only help the pathogen, not the plant.

The heat

To compound the stress of the drought, there were long stretches with daytime temperatures in the high nineties. Several days it remained in the nineties well after dark with lows only in the eighties. In general, temperatures above 86 degrees cause plants to shut down. Respiration exceeds photosynthesis resulting in a net loss. Many stages of insects perish in high heat which is helpful when they are Japanese beetles but not when they are our beloved butterflies. Honeybees suffer in the heat and beat their wings until they collapse just to help keep the hive cool for their queen.

High temperatures have more drastic effects on vegetables than any other group of plants. Tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, squashes and beans all produce their crops from flowers but high temperatures blast the

blossoms and prevent fruit set. Fruit that is already developing will ripen poorly. In the case of tomatoes, ripening will be uneven at best. They may develop "yellow shoulders" where the skin has attained 86 degrees or white spots inside that are hard and tasteless. Blossom end rot (BER), the condition related to calcium uptake that causes the tomato bottoms to be brown and leathery, is much more likely when it's hot. Peppers can have BER, too. Cucumbers can become bitter especially just under the skin and more so at the blossom end. Fortunately, not every fruit will be affected and peeling and removing the ends generally removes the bitter bits.

Some more general effects of high heat are sunscald and scorch. Scalded leaves and vegetables such as peppers and tomatoes will have large areas that are bleached out initially and then turn brown and dry. Hostas are very prone to sunscald. Scorch is when leaf margins turn brown and crispy eventually moving into the leaf blade from the margin.

The fall

A lot more can happen yet this year depending upon what autumn is like. Another dry spell or high heat could finish off some plants and seriously compromise others for the coming years. Here's what we know.

Let the lawn heal before deciding to reseed dead spots but decide by September 1st or so. Remember that bluegrass and fescue rhizomes can fill-in areas several inches each year. Unless there is another drought, fertilize the lawn around Labor Day and again a month later. This recommendation is specifically for this year because of the unusual conditions.

Water trees well this fall, all trees, especially just before the ground freezes. Don't overdo it, however, only about once every week or two. Then mulch the rootzones of drought sensitive trees. Trees attacked severely by Japanese beetle or those already affected by borers or in compromised conditions (i.e. birches in sunny, dry sites) and young birches and oaks should be treated with imidichlopid this fall to protect them next growing season. Ashes can be treated with it, too, to prevent emerald ash borer.

Do not prune out seemingly dead branches or cut down entire shrubs whose leaves dried up and fell off. Wait and see what is truly dead as the buds begin to swell again next spring. Trees have an amazing capacity to survive stress especially if we give them some educated TLC.



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Stay Informed and Connected

Can't get to a business meeting? Did you know that the business meeting minutes are on our web site? Check out this link: <http://fyi.uwex.edu/sewmg/minutes/> Make sure your project or activity gets listed on the MGV calendar. Staying in the know just got easier.

In House Education Committee

by MGV's Peg Fleury & Kathy Hochevar co-chairs

DATE: Wednesday, September 19th, 2012

TIME: 6:30-8 P.M.

PLACE: MCCE Auditorium - Milwaukee County
UW-Extension Office Bldg.,
9501 West Watertown Plank Rd.,
Wauwatosa

SPEAKER: Matt Smith, Schlitz Audubon Nature
Center Arborist and Land Manager

TOPIC: "Forest Restoration at the Schlitz
Audubon Nature Center"

Matt describes his presentation as your way to "Discover Wisconsin's original forests, understand how they are being threatened, and acquire tactics to stabilize, restore, and protect these priceless natural resources." Moreover, he will help you understand your local area and how the techniques used at Schlitz Audubon Center apply to your yard and neighborhood. During Matt's hour program you'll be treated to beautiful photos of Schlitz Audubon Nature Center, as well as important and applicable information. Matt will also spend half an hour answering your questions. After this summer's drought, We're certain there'll be many.

Registration is September 5th-14th to Peg Fleury:
email pegfleury@att.net OR phone/answering
machine 414-476-1116. No registrations accepted
before September 5th.

DATE: Saturday, October 20th, 2012

TIME: 9:30-11:30 A.M.

PLACE: Boerner Botanical Gardens, Education
and Visitors Center Lower Level Multimedia Room,
9400 Boerner Dr., Hales Corners

SPEAKER: Marcia C. Carmichael, author of
*Putting Down Roots: Gardening Insights from
Wisconsin's Early Settlers*

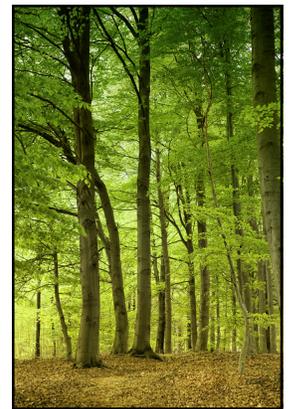
TOPIC: "Marcia Carmichael's Growth from Owner/
Operator of Herb Greenhouse to Historic
Gardener to Award-Winning Author"

Ms. Carmichael delights in sharing the joys of plants and gardening with everyone she meets in both her private and professional life. Her knowledge of heirloom plants and herbs is outstanding. Her style is fresh and tantalizing because of her down-to-earth nature. Marcia's 90-minute presentation will include her contributions to Old World Wisconsin where she is the historical gardener who supervises and works alongside a dedicated group of volunteers to create period-appropriate gardens. In addition Marcia will share overviews of her book. The Wisconsin Historical Society Press announced that *Putting Down Roots* was one of only five books selected for the American Horticultural Society's annual Book Award. Judges' comments included: "an outstanding template for what other regionally oriented, historical gardening books should aspire to," "a fascinating window into the courage, resourcefulness and adaptability of our immigrant past," and "it is both fun to read and authoritative, with interesting illustrations, terrific recipes and informative notes." Marcia will spend time answering your questions as well as signing books. All in all, you will enjoy every moment with Ms. Carmichael. She may even bring herb cuttings to share.

Registration is October 1st-17th to Kathy Hochevar:
email khoch_15@hotmail.com (an _ is between
the h and 15 of the address) OR phone/answering
machine 262-538-4189. No registrations accepted
before October 1.

These are the last two continuing education programs for 2012. The In-House Education Committee has enjoyed being at your service for your needed education hours. The committee **needs** a new chairperson for 2013. Please consider performing SEWMG volunteer hours by heading and developing the committee.

The In-House
Education
Committee needs a
new chairperson
for 2013.



Summer is almost gone and it's time for all MGVs to be working on submitting their volunteer hours for this year which need to be submitted to the UWEX office by September 15th. It's also a good time to save a stamp and mail your dues for 2013 at the same time.

The 2013 dues application is included for your convenience. Please use this form when submitting your dues, so we have all your latest information.

Membership Chairperson
Patty Witt

**SouthEast Wisconsin Master Gardeners, Inc.
Annual Dues Application
2013 DUES**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone: [home] _____

Telephone: [cell] _____

e-mail address: _____

New Membership _____ Renewed Membership _____

Please share with us your skills, special talents, or areas of interest:

- Graphics/Displays
- Finance/Accounting
- Computer Skills
- Teaching/Education
- Project Management
- Administrative Support
- Event Planning
- Writing/editing

Other: _____

SEWMG DUES: \$10.00 PER YEAR

(Includes membership dues for WIMGA)

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: SEWMG

PLEASE MAIL TO: SEWMG

P.O. Box 26453

Wauwatosa, WI 53226-0453

Dues are payable by November 1, 2012



President's Corner by MGV President Dan Cummings

Our SEWMG organization has some outstanding garden volunteers and dedicated committee members that keep things rolling along. Occasionally positions open up on these committees or there is a need for other volunteers to step forward and help out. I would like to draw your attention to three positions that will need to be filled in the near future. If you are interested in becoming more involved in our organization, you might consider becoming a **chair or co-chair** of the **In-House Education Committee**. You are all aware of the educational requirement of ten yearly hours, which is usually satisfied by attending programs set up by this committee. We all benefit from this hard working group and it might be the time to help out. There is also a need to help **co-chair** Mary Thiele with the **Garden Support Committee**, which works directly with the gardens we support with our annual budget. Finally, we will also be in need for someone to step into Mary Redlinger's job of **Hospitality**, which entails setting up the coffee and treats for our meetings.

Please contact any of the current chairs or our SEWMG officers for additional information or answers to any questions that you might have regarding these positions.

The summer of 2012 will be recorded by all of the Master Gardeners as hot and dry. Like you, I have been kept busy watering, watering, and doing more watering. Unfortunately I had to give up on watering all my plants and concentrate on those that I could save. I'm sure many of you had the same hard decision and we can only hope that we will see them next year.

As we move into the dog days of summer, one activity that might take your mind off the hot weather for a time is our annual Master Gardener picnic. This year it will be held at the Program Center of Ten Chimneys in Genesee Depot on Saturday, August 18th from Noon to 5:00 p.m. Ham sandwiches will be served about 2:00 p.m. Water, soda, tea and adult beverages will be available. We ask that you bring a dish to pass so this is your chance to be creative. Parking will be somewhat limited because Ten Chimneys tours continue through 4 p.m. (separate admission fee). Please car pool if you can. The Program Center will be open when you arrive and you might want to visit the Clagget Wilson display (the artist that painted all the murals in the house) or the gift shop. The elevator to the ground patio level will be available and is located near the side exit. I hope to see many of you there.

Master Gardener Picnic

Ten Chimneys
Program Center
Genesee Depot
Saturday, August
18th 12:00 to
5:00 p.m.

(Ham
sandwiches at 2
p.m.)

*Please bring a
dish to pass*

Volunteer & Education Report by Nancy Lebrer MG Volunteer Coordinator, MCCE

Hello MGVs,

As I write this article, the weatherman is forecasting another dry 90° day for tomorrow. I must admit that I am ready to drop the hose and just stop watering! Hopefully as you are reading this newsletter, it is cooler with a steady drizzle.

I would like to take this opportunity to bring attention to the "program request and report form." You can find the form at the SEWMG website <http://fyi.uwex.edu/sewmg/documents/>. Find the document tab. The form can be found with the Volunteer and Hours related forms. Please download this document and use this form anytime that you are doing a presentation or planning an event. Please include the contact information and any requests for displays, laptops or handouts. Return the document to me at the Extension offices so that I can compile your handout requests and reserve any displays for your event. It is also important to complete the program report portion after the event.

Events & Volunteer Opportunities:

September 6th or 10th Starting dates for Level1 MG training
September 8th & 9th Family Farm Weekend
September 12th Business Meeting 9:30 A.M. at Waukesha County Cooperative Extension Office.
September 14th - 15th WIMGA Conference in Ashland, WI
September 28th - 30th Milwaukee County Fair
Coming Soon ... Clean up requests from the approved gardens.

As the days get shorter and our gardens begin to fade, the approved gardens will be sending out e-mails looking for volunteers for clean up. Please try to assist. Many hands make light work.

I would like to remind everyone to get volunteer hours in to Kathy Reese by September 15th. You can certainly complete the forms now and hand them in early if you are not going to be volunteering in the next few weeks. Forms can be found on the SEWMG website.

Thank you,
Nancy 414 256-4661



2013 Budget Request Due by Sandy Manning Finance Committee Chair

Budget! With all the horror and dismay this word invokes, you would think it is a four letter swear word. Apparently, it's not and we all at some time or another have to deal with either a personal or professional budget. What is a budget and how is the SEWMG budget created?

From Wikipedia - A **budget** (from old French bougette, purse) is a financial plan and a list of all planned expenses and revenues. It is a plan for saving, borrowing and spending.

A budget is an important concept in microeconomics, which uses a budget line to illustrate the trade-offs between two or more goods. In other terms, a budget is an organizational plan stated in monetary terms.

In summary, the purpose of budgeting is to:

1. Provide a forecast of revenues and expenditures, that is, construct a model of how our business might perform financially if certain strategies, events and plans are carried out.
2. Enable the actual financial operation of the business to be measured against the forecast.
3. Establish the cost constraint for a project, program, or operation.

Budgets for SEWMG have gone through many changes over the years. Before the plant sale, our income came from membership dues and a very small amount of fundraising. Then we didn't have much money or much that we were spending it on. Our plant sale started and our budgets became more complicated, but for years, a budget was passed as long as the bottom line did not exceed the total we had made in the last plant sale. Years have come and gone and today our requests and our income have reached a point where we all must think long and hard about what we are spending funds on. One of the important policies that were put into place with the earliest plant sale was to keep the income from the current year's sale for the next year's budget. That way we are always budgeting with known

income. This year, in an effort to make that next step in the budgeting process, we are asking those committees that have both income and expenses to budget for both. Having all the numbers for the equation will help everyone to understand the process. One of the most common responses for just an expense budget is "but we charge for the program so we should not have to budget the expense." Trips and clothing most often come to mind for this, but for both we have expenses that come due before the fees for the program come into the treasury. The bottom line for these committees will be zero with the income matching the expense.

Everyone is part of this process. Those of you who work in gardens or on the plant sale or with the display committee may have a great idea for next year's committee. Tell the committee chair so funds can be budgeted for it if funds are available. Committee chairs, talk to your workers, look for the projects that the group feels need to be done, find the costs for the desired projects and fill out the budget request by September 15th. The budget request form can be found at <http://fyi.uwex.edu/sewmg/documents/> this is a Word document. The Garden Annual Report can be found at <http://fyi.uwex.edu/sewmg/documents/> as well in word or PDF format. Those garden projects that are not asking for funding, only needs to turn in the Annual Garden Report.

Please make sure the Finance Committee receives the annual report and the budget requests in the same envelope. Any budget request that lacks an annual report will cause delays.

Copies of these reports should be sent to:
The Finance Committee
Milwaukee County Extension Office, Building A
9501 W. Watertown Plank Road,
Wauwatosa, WI 53226-3552

Printed copies only, please.

Sandy Manning

Finance Committee Chair



Budget Request Forms and Garden Annual Reports are due by September 15th.



News from the Extension Offices by Sharon Morrissey & Ann Wied

Timesheets due September 15th

Report all of your volunteer service and continuing education hours on a SEWMG Timesheet and turn them into the Milwaukee County office by September 15th. Please send them to the attention of Kathy Reese. Excel and Word versions of the timesheets are available at <http://fyi.uwex.edu/sewmg/documents/> or can be picked up at the Milwaukee County Extension office or mailed to you. Please submit hard copies only, do not e-mail timesheets to us. Everyone needs a minimum of 24 hours of volunteer service and 10 hours of continuing education. If, for some reason you have not been able to complete all of your hours, contact Kathy, Nancy or Sharon to discuss a plan for you to do so. Don't just drop out – we can work with you.

Milwaukee County Fair September 28 – 30th

SEWMGs are sponsoring the Fair again this year. We also would appreciate help from MGVs for staffing an educational booth on “Your Lawn, Your Choice”, to answer plant questions, to make presentations and demonstrations and to staff the ‘Model Backyard’ in the DNR park. We also need help setting-up and dismantling the

display. We'll set up on Wednesday and Thursday the 26th and 27th and take it down on October 1st, the Monday after the Fair. Please contact Sharon Morrissey to volunteer to help and to schedule a time.

Level 1 Training Starts September 6th

Registration was completed within 4 business days this year, likely due to the pent up demand since we postponed class from January to September. I am looking forward to meeting all the new kindred spirits. Look for new faces and “temporary” nametags at events and then introduce yourself and take them under your wing. Now we know how much we miss having all of those enthusiastic “newbies” around.

To recruit them for volunteer projects, SEWMGs will be holding a Volunteer Opportunity Fair in January. Watch for details about that event. In the meantime, they will be on the ListServe by late September so you may target them when sending out requests for assistance with fall projects.

Report all of your volunteer service and continuing education hours on a SEWMG Timesheet and turn them into the Milwaukee County office by September 15th.

State Fair 2012

Thank you to everyone who helped make this a successful event. From the volunteers who worked behind the scenes to the state fair staff that watched over our garden during the fair and especially to all the volunteers that worked at the garden during the fair.

Here is a brief run down of the numbers for 2012. Volunteers: Of all the volunteers who signed up only five did not show up for their assigned shift. Visitors: Total number of visitors for the run of the fair was 51,756 based on five minutes counts every hour. Last year's total was 61,181.

The difference may be due to the DNR cancelling the passport youth activity.

Youth Activities: The DNR curtailed this last year and this year cancelled it all together I feel we

should have some thing new for our area for next year, ideas anyone?.

Brochures: We distributed 6,379 brochures, less than last year's number of 9,213, The most popular brochures were: Butterfly gardening, the Gardening resource card, and composting Points of Interest: Visitors spent most time in the following areas: Butterfly garden, Composting , Cactus garden, Life long gardening.

General Comments and Questions: This is a Beautiful Garden, Japanese Beetle reporting, Drought Management and requests for the Creeping Charlie brochures that was not available this year.

Faouzi Kablaoui MGV and Event Chair



Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension Office
9501 W. Watertown Plank Rd. Building A
Wauwatosa, WI 53226

Phone: 414-256-4600

Fax: 414-256-4646

CHECK OUT OUR WEB SITE

[HTTP://FYI.UWEX.EDU/SEWMG/](http://fyi.uwex.edu/sewmg/)



Mailed with this issue:

- September/October Events



For more information:

Calendar Hotline (MGV Hotline)

414-256-4666

On the Web

<http://fyi.uwex.edu/sewmg/>

Sharon Morrisey (Consumer Hort. Agent, Milwaukee)

414-256-4660; sharon.morrisey@ces.uwex.edu

Ann Wied (Consumer Hort. Educator, Waukesha)

262-548-7788; ann.wied@ces.uwex.edu

Kathy Bosetti Reese (Program Assistant)

414-256-4600; kathy.reese@ces.uwex.edu

Nancy Lehrer (Volunteer Coordinator)

414-256-4661, nancy.lehrer@ces.uwex.edu

Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension Office

9501 W. Watertown Plank Rd. Building A, Wauwatosa, WI 53226

Waukesha County Cooperative Extension Office

Waukesha County Administration Center, 515 W. Moreland Road,
Room AC-G22, Waukesha, WI 53188

Our Mission Statement

To support and assist UW-Extension in community horticulture programs through volunteerism, education and environmental stewardship.