This topic is the 2012 educational focus for the SEWMGs. Sharon will have a presentation on this topic on Wednesday, March 7th from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. at the Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension office. Volunteers scheduled to staff the Home Show booth are strongly encouraged to attend.

The American lawn is a controversial issue that has people scattered across the entire spectrum of philosophies concerning how it should be managed or if it should even exist in the first place! As Americans, we insist on having the freedom to make our own choices about how we care for our lawns.

No matter what your personal view is, as a UWEX MGV, you have a responsibility to provide research-based information on all approaches to anyone seeking the information. Fortunately, we have some excellent new publications from our UW specialists that give us up-to-date recommendations for everything from conventional care that takes advantage of the many highly-effective synthetic fertilizers and pesticides to an organic program that only allows naturally derived ones that are approved for organic production. These publications also describe an in-between approach coined by the EPA as “reduced-risk” which combines the best of both.

There have been some significant changes to the UWEX lawn care recommendations. This article briefly explains the most important ones. To become well versed on them all, go to the UWEX Publications website at http://learningstore.uwex.edu/ and read the four publications: Organic & reduced-risk lawn care (A3958), Do-it-yourself alternative lawn care (A3964), Lawn fertilization (A2303), and Watering your lawn (A3950).

Fertilizer selection is also addressed in some detail in the publications. When using synthetic fertilizer for conventional lawn care, choose one in which 25 – 50% of the nitrogen (N) is water insoluble which is slow-release. Although the response to these fertilizers will be slightly slower, it will last for 8 weeks or more compared to 3 – 4 weeks for soluble nitrogen forms. In other words, the lawn will not green-up as quickly but will stay green longer.

For organic lawn care, animal manures, especially poultry manure, and other natural organic fertilizer products must be used in order to be considered organic. These all contain high percentages of slow-release N. Fertilizer products made from biosolids such as the familiar Milorganite also have a lot of slow-release N. Although they do not meet USDA organic standards, they can be used for reduced-risk regimes.

A big difference between using synthetic and organic fertilizers is that there is so much slow-release N in organic fertilizers that a smaller

(Continued on page 2)
percentage of N becomes available to plants within the first two years after they are applied. Therefore, it is recommended that for the first 3 – 5 years of a totally organic regime you need to apply 2 pounds of N per 1,000 sq. ft. per application to build soil N reserves. Thereafter, reduce it to the standard recommendation of 1 pound per application. This combined with the fact that these fertilizers have lower percentages of N overall means that much larger volumes must be used to provide the total N needed by the lawn.

Remember, the plants still need the same amount of N whether it comes from organic or synthetic sources. Here it is important to clarify that when we say “percentage of insoluble N” it is not the same as the percentage of total N which is indicated by the first of the three numbers on the bag. Total N in a fertilizer generally consists of several forms of N, some of which are water soluble and therefore fast-release and some of which are water insoluble or slow-release. On the label, the slow-release sources of N may be methylene urea, sulfur coated-urea or polymer-coated urea or they may just be called “water insoluble N.” Water soluble N, on the other hand, comes from other types of urea, from ammonium phosphate and ammonium sulfate.

**Healthy soil makes a healthy lawn**

Organic lawn care, like organic gardening overall, is based on intensive care of the soil. For lawns this means aerating 8” deep and topdressing with up to 1” of compost twice a year in the spring and fall. If this is done around Memorial Day and Labor Day and if composted manure is used for topdressing, you probably will not need to do any other fertilizer applications.

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**News from the Extension Offices** by Sharon Morrisey & Ann Weid

**Potential MG Volunteers**

For the first time in our program’s history, people who are interested in being a MGV but have not yet taken the Level 1 training will be allowed to volunteer. Their service will be limited to Plant Sale activities that do not involve public interaction. Furthermore, volunteering does not guarantee them a place in the upcoming training courses this fall; registration will still be on a first come, first served basis. If they do choose to volunteer some time and they enroll in this year’s course, however, they will be able to apply that time to their requirement for certification in 2013.

These Potential MG Volunteers will have colored temporary nametags to identify them. So, if you are working beside one of these enthusiastic people, please be sure to welcome them and help show them what a great group we are. Who knows, they could end up being the next top hours earner or an officer or committee chair. Or just a dedicated and educated volunteer. That is, if they like us enough to join us.

**Milwaukee Hort Help Line & Lobby Makeover**

Over the winter, changes to the HHL office and the lobby right outside the door have made the entire area more attractive and better organized. Better yet, it is also more educational which is what Extension is all about anyway. Now, every visitor to our office can’t help but notice the glass display case and 3-panel display board that will have a fresh display and props every month. This is thanks to none other than the MGVs who have volunteered to take this on as volunteer service.

**Custom PowerPoint Template on Website**

MGVs who make PowerPoint presentations now have access to a template designed specifically for SEWMGs, thanks to one of our MGV speakers. It is a lovely, fresh, green leafy design that includes the SEWMG logo on every page. Please use this template if you are creating a presentation to deliver to any group. The continuity and logo identification are good marketing tools that lend credibility to our programs. The template is available on the SEWMG website Volunteers page under Speakers Bureau (http://fyi.uwex.edu/sewmg/volunteers/).

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**Conventional care** takes advantage of the many highly-effective synthetic fertilizers and pesticides; **organic care** only allows naturally derived products that are approved for organic production.
Are SEWMG (and other) e-mail messages cluttering up your inbox? Do you miss important messages because of “e-mail overload”? If you do, there is help in the form of “filters” available in most e-mail programs. (I am familiar with Outlook, Outlook Express and Thunderbird which all have filtering capability as does server-based Yahoo e-mail.)

A filter works by checking each e-mail message as it arrives and applying rules to the message. The rules can vary, but the most common rule is to place messages in other, user-created folders based on something in the subject line of an incoming message. A sample rule might be (Outlook Express format):

Apply this rule after the message arrives
Where the Subject line contains '[SEW-MG]'
Move it to the Master Gardeners folder

The underlined portions of the rule above are the user-provided expressions for the rule. This rule would place all incoming messages from the SEWMG ListServ (which all contain the phrase “[SEW-MG]”) and move them to a folder named “Master Gardeners.”

With this in place, you can deal with the SEWMG e-mails separately from all others in your Inbox, perhaps at a later, more convenient time.

Folders are usually created in a Files menu:

File / New / Folder (Outlook Express example)

The filter mechanism can normally be accessed from a Tools menu (or use Help to learn about filters in your e-mail program):

Tools / Message Rules / Mail (Outlook Express example)

Give this a try! It may just simplify your online life a bit and help solve the problem of too many e-mails.

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The 17th Annual SEWMG Perennial Plant Sale, our only fundraiser, will be held Saturday, May 19th, 2012, at State Fair Park from 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Planning started last June with the post sale get together. The 2012 Planning Meetings are now underway. The first meeting was January 24th with a second to follow in March.

The storage units will be cleaned out and the trailer will be configured to Pot-A-Thon status on Monday, March 26th. Supplies are being ordered and will be delivered to Pot-A-Thon sites on Monday, April 2nd.

A "Kit Day" will be held at Eble Park on Saturday, April 14th at 9:00 a.m. with the rest of the Pot-A-Thons to start on Monday, April 9th. A Pot-A-Thon Schedule will be ready in late March on the Master Gardener web site (http://fyi.uwex.edu/sewmg/perennial-plant-sale/) and via the listserve.

Help is welcomed at every Pot-A-Thon; no sign-up is required. Pot-A-Thons usually start at 9:00 a.m. and last until about noon. If you are unable to stand for long periods of time or feel you can’t do the “digging,” please don’t let that stop you from joining us. There are many tasks that can be done sitting and very few people do the actual digging.

This is a great opportunity to learn about different perennials, see great gardens and meet fellow MGVs, especially the new volunteers, all while putting in required hours and supporting SEWMG.
Volunteer & Education Report by Nancy Lehrer
MG Volunteer Coordinator, MCCE

As spring approaches, we all start to wonder how we will get our required 24 volunteer hours. Remember you can make presentations, work at shows and community events, participate in our plant sale and digs, garden with children and volunteer at all the approved gardens. Office work is also requested on occasion.

Spring is always filled with volunteer activities, so please keep informed. Where can you find the opportunities? Please check:

- e-mails from the listserv
- the web site (http://fyi.uwex.edu/sewmg/volunteers/) or
- the ring binder marked “listserv.”

The listserv binder is kept in Room 211, at the Wauwatosa Extension office. The binder is updated weekly with all the e-mails that are sent via the listserv. I include volunteer service hours and continuing education opportunities.

Introducing Our Officers

Dan Cummings, President, has been a longtime Master Gardener and volunteers at Ten Chimneys – both as a docent and a MGV. An affable soul, Dan was our president elect last year. You’ll see him at many committee meetings and at the Plant Sale activities.

Kris Jensen, President-Elect, has been “a serious perennial gardener for 15 years, with a particular interest in providing attractive city habitat for butterflies, birds, beneficial insects, and small wildlife.” She retired in 2010 from a career in information technology, shortly after completing her Master Gardener training. Now she spends her time in her extensive Wauwatosa garden and working as a SEWMG volunteer at the Zoo Butterfly Habitat and on various SEWMG projects and committees.

Patty Witt, Treasurer, took General Training in 2007 and has “been enjoying all my volunteer work ever since.” She retired from Allen-Bradley/Rockwell in spring of 2006 after working as a management assistant for 40 years. “I’ve always loved gardening. Coming from a farm, I think it’s in your blood. My mother loved gardening and had many perennial beds on our farm. Maybe it’s inherited.”

Linda Ziebell, Secretary, is a graduate from the 2010 class. She is an avid gardener, interested in learning and volunteering. “And, I am always trying to improve my dry shade garden, which has an additional challenge of many black walnut trees.” Linda’s previous work life was in the telecommunications industry for 30 plus years, working mostly in the information technology field.

Jan Schumacher, Assistant Treasurer. Jan attended Master Gardener training in 2011 because she “wanted to round out my experience after having taken many horticulture classes in the Milwaukee area.” Jan’s professional experience includes 30 years as Accounts Payable Manager or Supervisor at three of the largest Corporations in Milwaukee.

Jan is pictured, with Kathie Foti, a first-year board member. You’ll learn more about Kathie and our other board members in the next issue.

Currently I am working to fill several speaker presentations; topics include rain gardens, general vegetable gardening and small space, small budget gardens.

I still have several school gardening projects that need volunteers for assisting the children with planting and maintaining the gardens throughout the summer. Because you would be assisting the organizations with their gardens, the hours do count for Youth Volunteer service. Contact me at nancy.lehrer@ces.uwex.edu or at 414 256-4661.

Eagleville Elementary School (Eagle) (charter school with environmental education emphasis)
S101 W34511 Hwy LO, Eagle, WI 53119 (just west of LO & E)
Capital West Academy
3939 N. 88th Street
Emmaus Lutheran Child Care
2210 W. Hadley (Near 22nd and Center)

Thank you for all your support.
Program Committee News by MGV’s Peg Fleury & Kathy Hochevar

The In-House Educational Program Committee, co-chaired by Peg Fleury and Kathy Hochevar, has delightful programs scheduled for March and April. Check the details carefully because we will have programs at both UW Extension office 9501 W. Watertown Plank Rd. (It is now known as Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension or MCCE) and at WCCE (Waukesha County UW Cooperative Extension).

**Tuesday, March 27, 7:30-8:30 p.m.** Heidi Hornung of Shady Lane Greenhouse presents an education program. Topic will be announced in a SEWMG broadcast e-mail. This program will be held during the Volunteer Opportunity Fair which starts at 6:30 p.m. at MCCE (Milwaukee County UW Cooperative Extension Bldg). **Registration required.** Registration begins March 5th.

**Wednesday, April 18, 9:30 a.m.** Teresa Monaghan (MGV) of NuGenesis Farm shares a PowerPoint presentation on “Your Health and Gardening - How What You Eat and Grow Affects Your Good Health”. Location is the WCCE (Waukesha County UW Cooperative Extension) located in the Waukesha County Courthouse. This is a SEWMG education program. **Registration required.** Registration begins March 26th.

Questions e-mail us; Peg - pegfleury@att.net, or Kathy khoch_15@hotmail.com

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/](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.

LifeLong Gardening by MGV Kay Costello

The LifeLong Gardening Committee will be presenting programs on March 3rd at the Greendale Health Fair, and on April 17th for the Waukesha County Employees. The themes for both will be Gardening for Life. These programs will give gardeners tips on how to protect their joints and minimize injuries, so they can continue to enjoy gardening throughout their lifetime. We will bring an assortment of ergonomic tools for the audiences to experience.

The Lifelong Gardening Committee welcomes new members. Our next meeting will be on Wed. March 14th, at 6:30 p.m. in the Linden Grove Health Center in New Berlin. We will be planning future programs for the public, and displays for the SEWMG Plant Sale and State Fair.
President’s Corner by MGV President Dan Cummings

How many spring seed catalogues have you received? A friend recently asked me that question and I responded by saying quite a few but I didn't know the exact number. Well, I counted today and it turns out to be 38 so far this season. If you are like many of the gardeners I know, you have been pouring over all the colorful pictures in these catalogues and visualizing all those new plants that you could add to your garden. I already have a series of post-it notes sticking out from their pages listing the possible new seeds that I would like to try in 2012. I collect over 100 different seeds from my garden every year but I’m always willing and eager to try new varieties. I’m interested in possible new plants that will fill my containers or brighten up a new flowerbed. It is nice to plan ahead for new possibilities such as new flower seeds or new garden activities. Planning ahead seems to make those long winter days a bit more tolerable.

For those planning ahead on these winter days, I would like to mention some programs that you will want to jot down on your March and April calendars. Some coming education programs are scheduled for the Chicago Flower Show March 16th. The Spring Garden Forum is scheduled for March 15th followed by The Volunteer Fair held on March 27th. The annual Home Show will also be starting on March 23rd. And finally, the March 14th MG Business Meeting will be held at Waukesha Courthouse and not at the MCCE Office.

The annual Master Gardeners Celebration Party for our new members and honoring others who made outstanding contributions in 2011 will be held on February 29th.

Many of the scheduled programs fill up quickly so check the web site for the most recent calendar of events for the times and locations.

Many of our standing committees become very active as spring approaches and they are always looking for new volunteers. The Garden Support Committee has been busy working on the Volunteer Fair and the Garden Forum and, if you would like to be involved with these committees, contact Mary Thiele or Ruth Marshall. The first Plant Sale Committee meeting for 2012 was held on January 24th and attended by over 30 interested and eager MG volunteers! Thanks for the great turn out. Plans are underway for the Pot-A-Thons and a schedule of events will be posted shortly.

Many of our other committees become very active as spring approaches and they are always looking for new volunteers. Once again, check the web site for meetings and dates and plan on attending some of these events. Remember, your input is always welcomed.

SEWMG Dates to Remember

How many spring seed catalogues have you received? A friend recently asked me that question and I responded by saying quite a few but I didn't know the exact number.”

Business meetings, programs, and Newsletter deadline:

March 7th at 6:30 p.m. Educational Focus presented by Sharon Morrisey at MCCE office.

March 14th at 9:30 a.m. SEWMG Business Meeting at WCCE (Waukesha County UW Cooperative Extension).

March 15th at 6:30 p.m. SEWMG Garden Chair Forum at MCCE office.

March 16th at Chicago Flower Show Trip pre-registration required.

March 22nd at Orientation for Home Show Shift Captains and all volunteers encouraged to attend.

March 27th at 6:30-8:30 pm Volunteer Opportunity Fair with Education program presented by Heidi Hornung of Shady Lane Greenhouse. Pre-registration required.

March 31st Pruning Workshop see article on page 8. Pre-registration required.

April 1st Newsletter Deadline

April 11th at 9:30 a.m. SEWMG Business Meeting at MCCE office.

April 18th at 9:30 am at WCCE (Waukesha County UW Cooperative Extension) Teresa Monaghan of NeGenesis Farm, her topic is “Your Health and Gardening.” Pre-registration required.

For more program information see the article on page 5.
The Garden Support Committee is working on two important March events - the Garden Chair Forum and the SEWMG Volunteer Fair.

**Spring Garden Chair Forum** - March 15th from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Targeted to garden chairs, co-chairs or other representatives, past garden forums have allowed garden chairs to share ideas, learn how to attract volunteers and receive signage and plant stakes and labels for their gardens. It provides two-way communication, and those attending have given the committee many ideas of topics of interest.

At the March forum,
- Sharon Morrisey will talk about the Garden Partners Memorandum of Understanding. She’ll offer suggestions about establishing an understanding with partner agencies.
- You will be able to order more plant stakes or signs for your garden.
- There will be an open discussion about which new garden plants have had success, and the possibility of sharing the “too many plants” with gardens that need them. Please think about this now because, if you can “give and get” some plants, your budgets will go farther and MGVs will feel better knowing that all those plants are used.
- Kris Jensen will be available to answer any questions about loanable SEWMG tools and where they are located.

The Garden Support Committee is planning a garden walk this year showcasing gardens that wish to be on the walk. We do hope to have the gardens in close proximity if possible. Let us know by March 15th if your garden is interested.

MGV Susan McGrath has created a map of both counties showing the locations of all of the SEWMG Approved Gardens. It is on the wall outside Room 211, the Volunteer Workroom at MCCE.

**Volunteer Opportunity Fair and Educational Program** - March 27th from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

All MGVs are invited to this event. The purpose of the volunteer fair is to help our MGVs find volunteer opportunities at locations that are convenient (or inspirational) for them. Many gardens will provide a trifold display (or something else) and handouts about the garden. MGVs can find the perfect fit for their volunteer service. It will be followed by an educational program at 7:30 p.m. The program needs to be preregistration see the Program Committee article on page 5.

Both of these events will be held at Milwaukee County Cooperative Extension (MCCE) on Watertown Plank.

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**Master Composter Training in Waukesha Co.**

A **Master Composter Training Workshop** will be held on Saturday, March 24th, 2012, in Waukesha. The UW-Extension Solid & Hazardous Waste Education Center (SHWEC) and Waukesha County UW Cooperative Extension will be offering this workshop to provide Master Composter Certification to individuals who want to share their knowledge of home composting with others.

The goal of the Master Composter (MC) program is to empower local composters to organize and teach home composting workshops and offer compost demonstrations in their communities. The training will take place at the Retzer Nature Center, S14 W28167 Madison St., Waukesha on March 24th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Registration is required. There is a $30 fee for the program, which includes the home study and March 24th workshop.

After registering for the course, you should pick-up the Master Composter Home Study Course and review prior to attending the March 24th, 2012 workshop. Lunch is not included. For more information including registration information, see the workshop brochure found at: [http://waukesha.uwex.edu/horticulture/consumer-horticulture/](http://waukesha.uwex.edu/horticulture/consumer-horticulture/) or call Ann Wied at 262 548-7788. Space is limited.
UW Extension Pruning Workshop by Ann Wied
Consumer Hort, Educator, WCCE

A University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension Hands-On Pruning Workshop will be offered on Saturday, March 31st, 2012, from 9 a.m. to noon, at Mount Mary College, 2900 North Menomonee River Parkway, Milwaukee (http://www.mtmary.edu). Workshop will begin in Helfaer Hall.

A map to this location can be found and downloaded at the “Events” link at the Southeast Wisconsin Master Gardener website at: http://fyi.uwex.edu/sewmg/. (If map is not found there now, it will be there shortly.)

Registration will be taken on a first come, first serve basis. Act fast if interested. Space is limited. Registration could close early if classes are filled.

The workshop will include an indoor presentation on pruning techniques and tools followed by an outdoor, hands-on pruning component where participants will be given the opportunity to practice what they have learned. The workshop will be team taught by Ann Wied, Waukesha County UW Cooperative Extension Consumer Horticulture Educator and Sharon Morrissey, Milwaukee County UW Cooperative Extension Consumer Horticulture Agent.

Pruning tools will not be provided. Participants should bring their own hand pruning tools and gloves and dress for the weather including comfortable shoes or boots. Workshop will be held regardless of weather. In case of extreme weather, call 414-256-4660 on the day of the workshop, one hour before the scheduled time, to confirm that the workshop will be held. Questions about workshop should be directed to Mary at 262 548-7775. Confirmations to this workshop will be done by e-mail or phone call. We prefer e-mail. If you do not have e-mail, you must have voice mail with your phone number so we can leave a message.

Cost of the workshop: $17.00 for UW-Extension Master Gardener Volunteers and $32 for the General Public. No telephone registrations will be accepted. Fill out the registration form on the bottom of page and mail in with your registration fee.

Mail registration form and check (Payable to University of Wisconsin Extension) to: UW-Extension Waukesha County, Pruning Workshop, 515 West Moreland Blvd AC G22, Waukesha, WI 53188

University of Wisconsin, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Wisconsin counties cooperating, UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming including Title IX and ADA

Pruning Workshops Registration Form

Did you attend our UW-Extension Pruning Workshop in 2011? ___Yes ___No
(If you attended a pruning workshop in 2011, your name will be placed on a waiting list. You will be contacted if space becomes available.)

Fee: $17=UW-Extension Master Gardeners $32=General Public (Check payable to University of Wisconsin Extension)

Saturday, March 31st 2012 – 9:00 a.m. to noon, Mount Mary College, Milwaukee

Are you a Master Gardener Volunteer? ___Yes ___No
If yes, ___Milwaukee County, ___Waukesha County, ___Other ________________________

Name _________________________________________ County Where You Reside ________________________

Address _________________________________________ City_______________________ WI ZIP_________

Phone (_____) _______________ Email _________________________________

Mail registration form and check to: UW-Extension Waukesha County, Pruning Workshop, 515 West Moreland Blvd AC G22, Waukesha, WI 53188

Registration will be taken on a first come, first serve basis. Act fast if interested. Space is limited.
MGVs Judy Williamson and Kathy Reese have been working on an easier form for reporting volunteer hours. After many design meetings and discussions, the new Volunteer Hours Reporting Form is a reality. The new form is available on the Web site http://fri.uwex.edu/sewmg/documents/

You are not obligated to use the new volunteer hours form but, if you do, we hope you will find it so much easier than the existing form.

Please note that you will need to have the Excel program on your computer. If not, you can still use the old forms.

The new form only requires summary of the hours you spend on each garden or project.

Each entry of hours will accommodate up to 999 hours.
The form will decide for you if your hours are Community Education, Youth or Support.
The form also adds up all your hours and puts them in their proper category.

Please do not attempt to add any rows or columns to the worksheet.

If you need additional space to enter hours, please print another page.

You will still need to print out your finished document and send to Kathy Reese as you do now.

Your name and the year you are reporting for are located in the Page Header of the document. You do not see it on your screen but, when you print the form, you will be able to fill in your name and the reporting year.

It would be a good idea to print the form so you can see an overview of how things will be reported and totaled.

Please be aware that there are two sheets to the workbook. The tabs on the bottom of the workbook indicate on which sheet you wish to enter hours. The first tab is for the volunteer hours. The second tab is for education hours. Just click on the tab you choose to enter hours.

When you are ready to print, click print.

When the print box appears, look in this box near the bottom left.

You will have the choice to print only the Active Sheet or you can print the Entire Workbook.

Please feel free to contact Judy Williamson jwilliamson13@wi.rr.com with questions or comments.
Spring

For more information:

Calendar Hotline (MGV Hotline) 414-256-4660
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.