


# Master Gardener Update

## February 2021

<p><b>In this Issue</b></p> <p>Chicago Botanic Garden 3</p> <p>RPMGA Companion Planting</p> <p>MGV Program Notes</p> <p>2021 Garden &amp; Landscape Expo Goes Virtual</p> <p>Volunteer Opportunity/Ideas Wanted</p> <p>More Online Training Coming Up in February and Beyond</p>	<p><b>Virtual Visit</b></p> <h3>Chicago Botanic Garden, Part 3</h3> <p>In this, the final episode of our Virtual Tour of Chicago Botanical Gardens, we wanted to introduce you to the many Youth and Family Programs offered to the public through the gardens. These programs appeal to children ages 2 to 18 with investigative science, gardening, and career exploration. Together, adults and children can explore cool things about how plants connect to science, art, history, and culture.</p> 
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## Websites

### For Rock County

#### MGV info:

rock.extension.wisc.edu/  
upcoming-events-and-  
volunteer-opportunities/  
OR

fyi.extension.wisc.edu/  
mgvrockco/

#### MGV Hours Reporting:

wimastergardener.org/  
report-your-hours/

#### RPMGA Blog:

rpmga.blogspot.com

#### RPMGA on Facebook:

Hit control/click on this  
link:

[RPMGA on Facebook](#)

#### Rotary Gardens:

rotarybotanicalgardens.  
org

#### Wisconsin Master Gardener Program:

wimastergardener.org

#### Wisconsin Master Gardener Association (WIMGA): wimga.org

## Nature Pre-School - Where the whole child is shaped by the natural world

The first offering is the Chicago Botanic Garden's nature-based, developmentally appropriate preschool program which provides a unique learning experience for 3 to 5-year olds. The emergent curriculum focuses on exploration and discovery in nature each day. The curriculum promotes learning and prepares children for kindergarten as they develop an appreciation for the natural world.

How is a nature-based preschool different from a traditional preschool?

- The natural world is the catalyst for the curriculum.
- Daily time spent outdoors in all weather (approximately half of the class time) allows for discovery in



## What safety measures are in place?

CBG is monitoring [guidelines from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and other public health officials on safety measures to help slow the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19). We ask that everyone take the same preventive measures you take in any other public space.

### Please remember these important guidelines:

- Please practice social distancing and stay 6 feet away from people outside your own party, including Garden staff, and whenever inside buildings.
- Face coverings are required when 6 feet of social distancing cannot be maintained, including on congested pathways, whenever indoors, and when talking with Garden staff.
- A face covering is required at the Garden View Café, Garden Shop, the Model Railroad Garden, and Grand Tram Tours.
- If you are sick, or have been in contact with someone who is sick, please stay home.

an ever-changing environment.

*continues on page 11.*

RPMGA

## Companion Planting Discussion via Zoom, Thursday, February 18, 6:00 p.m.

Do carrots love tomatoes, as the book title claims? Can planting marigolds around brassicas or nasturtiums with cucumbers deter insects? Folk wisdom would tell us yes, but as master gardener volunteers, we owe people information based on science, not folklore.



The idea of companion planting—planting two or more different crops in close proximity at the same time in order to get greater yield or some other benefit—seems logical. But when scientists have tried to quantify the effects, the results have been questionable in many cases. To help us sort fact from fiction, our Horticulture Outreach Specialist, Julie Hill, has pulled together some articles from reliable sources. For our February program, she'll share those articles in advance so you can read them, then Julie will moderate a discussion of the articles and what types of information on companion planting are appropriate for us to share—in our role as MGVs—with the public.

You can log **continuing education hours** for this program in two ways: Each article you read from beginning to end counts for .25 hours. Attending the Zoom meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> and participating in the discussion counts for an additional hour of continuing ed.

So watch for an email from Julie in the next week or so. It will contain the articles to read before the discussion on the 18<sup>th</sup>.



**Next MGV Virtual Coffee/Tea Chat** Tuesday, February 9 at 9 a.m. (second Tuesday of the month). Julie will send out the Zoom link when it gets closer.

Congratulations to **Susan Wood** for reaching the milestone of 150 volunteer hours during 2020!



## WI Master Gardener Volunteer Program

### **ELEVATE: 2021 MGV Kickoff Event, Tuesday, Feb. 2, 6:30 p.m.**

As we begin 2021, the state program office is inviting all MGVs across the state to come together online to recap a challenging 2020, look ahead to reaching new heights in 2021, and be thanked for what we're doing for our communities.

Participating counts as 1 volunteer hour. The program is free but registration is required ([https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_7PeGw7zDI1TG6P3](https://uwmadison.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_7PeGw7zDI1TG6P3)). The event will be streamed live to YouTube Video, with a link emailed to you shortly before the event. Questions? Contact Amy Freidig at [wimastergardener@extension.wisc.edu](mailto:wimastergardener@extension.wisc.edu).

### **Annual Enrollment Reminder**

If you plan to continue as a Master Gardener Volunteer in 2021, you must complete the annual enrollment process online at [wimastergardener.org/report-your-hours/](http://wimastergardener.org/report-your-hours/). You'll automatically be directed to the enrollment screens the first time you sign into the Online Reporting System in 2021. The deadline to complete the process is March 31, 2021.

During enrollment, you'll review and update your contact information, see if your background check and mandatory reporter training are current, review and agree to the Volunteer Expectations and Conditions of Service, and agree (or not) to the photo release. You aren't officially recertified for 2021 until this is done.

### **Volunteer Hours Declared Optional for 2021**

Once again, due to the pandemic, the state Master Gardener program office has declared that there will be no REQUIREMENT for volunteer hours during 2021. Volunteer safely if you can (from home, at approved-during-Covid sites) and report the hours you do get, but any number of volunteer hours--even 0--will be acceptable to recertify for 2022. The requirement for 10 hours of continuing education during the year remains in effect.





## Garden & Landscape Expo Goes Virtual! February 20-21, 2021

For 27 years, while February's cold, dry air ruled outside, Wisconsin Public Television's Garden and Landscape Expo has brought warmth, greenery and humid air inside Madison's Alliant Energy Center. But Covid changes everything and to keep everyone safe, the event has gone virtual.

While you'll undoubtedly miss the energy and excitement of the in-person event, there's good news on several fronts. First, you won't have to travel to Madison to attend this year. And second, there's no charge: No admission. No parking. **All the lectures, tours and related events are free**, though donations are appreciated. And third, most of the scheduled lectures will be live-streamed, which means you'll be able to ask questions of the presenters and get answers right away. You should also know that many of the presentations—though not all—count for MGVC continuing education hours. By all means, enjoy any presentation you like, but check out this list [to see what you can count for continuing education hours](#). For the complete schedule, and to sign up, go to [wigardenexpo.com](http://wigardenexpo.com).

# More Online Training Coming Up in February and Beyond

## Green Thumb Gardening Classes, Dane County UW Extension



Horticulture Educator Lisa Johnson and other experts from the Dane County UW Extension are offering a new set of Green Thumb Gardening Classes that started in January (February topics below). Each 2-hour session takes place online on a Monday evening from 6 to 8 p.m. The fee is \$12/session or \$70 to register for all of them. The link to the sign-up page on Eventbrite is <https://2021greenthumbgardeningwinter.eventbrite.com/>.

- February 1: Vegetable Diseases
- February 8: Vegetable Insects
- February 15: Cover Crops
- February 22: Weed Management in Vegetable Gardens
- March 1: Seed Saving/Harvesting and Storage

## Healthful Gardening Series with Melinda Myers

Melinda Myers started out as an Extension educator here in southeast Wisconsin, and has gone on to become an author and media expert on gardening. There's no charge for any of the sessions in this series, but registration is required. Webinars take place Wednesday evenings from 6:30-7:30 p.m. February's topics are below. Some of the earlier webinars in the series are available on demand. For details or to register for an upcoming class, go to [www.melindamyers.com/about-melinda/upcoming-appearances](http://www.melindamyers.com/about-melinda/upcoming-appearances) The on-demand webinars are listed at the end.

- Feb. 3, 2021 Organic Control for Houseplant Pests
- Feb. 10, 2021 Getting Started Growing Vegetable and Flower Gardens
- Feb. 17, 2021 Growing Nutritious & Flavorful Edibles Indoors
- Feb. 24, 2021 Low Maintenance Gardening for Loads of Beauty & Health Benefits



## Gardening In the Air! Saturday, February 6

This virtual conference, co-hosted by the University of Illinois Extension and Iowa State University Extension & Outreach, and featuring university experts, is already half over--but lots of sessions remain for the morning of February 6. Presentations will be hosted on Zoom at with three sessions each at 9 a.m., 10:15 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. **Registration deadline is February 3.** Sessions are free to attend, but a donation is appreciated. Access links and handouts will be provided upon registration. Topics for February 6 include ornamental grasses, indoor herbs and microgreens, blooming houseplants, sustainable landscapes, straw bale gardening, what's wrong with my houseplant, out-of-the-ordinary theme gardens, starting seeds indoors and succulent wreaths. For more detailed descriptions and the registration link, go to <https://extension.illinois.edu/global/gardening-air>



### Virtual Classes at Olbrich Botanical Gardens

There's lots going on at Olbrich Botanical Gardens in Madison. For a more detailed description of each class, go to the Education tab at [www.olbrich.org](http://www.olbrich.org) and select the Classes and Workshops option. Each class description also has a registration link to sign up. The prices listed are for Olbrich members/general public.

The registration deadline for the first four classes is past, but if you're really interested, you could call and ask if you can still get in: 608-246-4550

Feb. 3, Fantastic Ferns & How to Grow Them, 6:30-8:00 p.m. \$13/\$16

Feb. 6, Tools of the Trade, 1:00-3:00 p.m. \$12/\$15

Feb. 9, Edibles in Every Garden, 6:00-7:30 p.m. \$13/\$16

Feb. 10, 150 Ways to Create a Fantastic Yard Totally Tailored to You, 6:00-8:00 p.m.  
\$13/\$16

Feb. 16, A Seasonal Guide to Caring for Trees, 6:00-8:00 p.m., \$12/\$15 Register by Feb. 7

Feb. 23, Structure to Seedheads: Winter Interest from Large to Small, 10-11:30 a.m.  
\$13/\$16 Register by Feb. 14

Mar. 4, Proper Pruning of Deciduous Trees, 1-3:00 p.m., \$13/\$16 Register by Feb. 22

Mar. 4, Designing with Foliage, 6:30-8:00 p.m. \$13/\$17 Register by Feb. 22

Mar. 9, Functional and Funky Ways to Conserve Organic Matter for a Healthier Garden,  
6-8:00 p.m. \$13/\$16 Register by Feb. 28



### **Strawberries, University of IL Extension, February 5, noon to 1:00 p.m.**

This 1-hour webinar covers the basics of selecting varieties, planting and caring for a home strawberry crop this season. For both new growers and those who may have already grown the fruit for several years. Fee: \$5. Get info and register at <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=22910>

### **Winter Sowing Webinar, Klehm Arboretum, Tuesday, Feb. 9, 6:00 p.m.**

It may be winter but the time to start seeds for your spring and summer garden is fast approaching. Learn an easy way to start seeds this year with Winter Sowing. Start saving empty plastic bottles and join Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden for a webinar on Tuesday, February 9 at 6 PM to learn how to try Winter Sowing at home! Pre-registration is required for this live Zoom webinar. If you cannot attend this webinar live, a recording will be available on the Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden website and Youtube page within a week after the webinar date. To register, go to [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_eYHMyxBARhOkbjQT0Ok6Rg](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_eYHMyxBARhOkbjQT0Ok6Rg)



### **UWW Workshops with Mark Dwyer, Starting Saturday, Feb. 13, 9:00-10:30 a.m.**

This winter, the UW-Whitewater will again be hosting some online workshops featuring Mark Dwyer. Classes will use the Webex platform, which is free to download and use. February topics will be **Elements of Beautiful and Functional Landscape Design** (2/13) and **Sensational Shrubberies and Small Trees** (2/27, 9-10:30 a.m.). A third workshop, **Container Gardening Basics and Beyond** takes place March 20, 2021, also from 9-10:30 a.m. Fees are \$25/workshop or \$60 for all three. Sign up at [www.uww.edu/ce/personal-enrichment/gardenlandscape/gardeningworkshops](http://www.uww.edu/ce/personal-enrichment/gardenlandscape/gardeningworkshops)



## **Therapeutic Value of Nature, Tuesday, February 16, 1:30 p.m.**

Are you stressed from having to practice social distancing? Can't go anywhere? Do anything? Spending time in Nature can help soothe and heal. Join University of Illinois Extension horticulture educator, Mary M. Fischer, as she presents research-based studies to support the healing powers of Nature. <https://extension.illinois.edu/four-seasons-gardening-webinar-series>

*Note: Julie Hill has reviewed the description of this class and will allow CE credit for this program.*

## **25<sup>th</sup> Annual Stateline Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Conference, Thursdays and Fridays, Feb. 12-26**

Hosted by the University of Illinois Extension. Live, via Zoom. Speakers are drawn from University of Illinois Extension Specialists. (Note: the Feb. 12 session on hard cider production sounds interesting—feel free to listen in!—but it does not count for CE hours.) The cost for the entire program (Thursday and Friday sessions) is \$20. Participants may also register just for Thursday sessions (\$10) or Friday sessions (\$15). Participants will receive access to the live presentations, handouts, and YouTube recordings of the sessions. Register at <https://web.extension.illinois.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=22871>

Thursday, Feb. 19, 1-3:30 p.m.: Apple Insect Pests & Control Options + Apple & Cherry Disease Observations and Recommendations

Thursday, Feb. 25, 1-3:30 p.m.: Cucurbit Insect Pests, Conventional & Cultural Control Techniques + Outcomes of the Recent Research  
Studies on Cucurbit and Tomato Diseases

Friday, Feb. 12, noon – 1:00 p.m.: Diversifying Your Farm with Hard Cider Production

Friday, Feb. 19, noon – 1:00 p.m.: Pumpkin Production: Variety Selection and Weed Management

Friday, Feb. 26, noon – 1:00 p.m.: High Tunnel Tomato Production: Variety Performance and Basic Production Practices

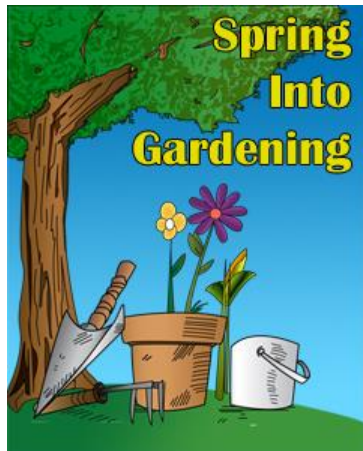


## **Confessions of a Black Thumb, Brian Hudelson, Thursday, February 25, 6:00 p.m.**

Brian Hudelson, head of the UW's Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic, shares his own experiences as a gardener and talks about plants he's killed—or at least seriously maimed! This will be a virtual presentation open to the public, February 25, 6:00 p.m. Watch your email for registration information coming soon!

## **Diversifying your Garden Design, Thursday, February 25, 7:00-8:30 p.m**

Fergus Garrett, head gardener at Great Dixter in Northiam, England and holder of the Royal Horticulture Society Victoria Medal of Honour, discusses how to combine plants of differing habits, allowing for plants to help one another thrive. Join us to learn how to create intimacy, movement, and balance in your garden. 60-minute presentation on ZOOM, followed by 30 minute Q&A with the presenter. \$12 members/\$15 General Public. This lecture is part of Olbrich Botanical Garden's lecture series, A Gardener's Call. Register at <https://olbrich.doubleknot.com/event/lecture-by-fergus-garrett-zoom-webinar/2765308>



## **Racine/Kenosha County Spring Into Gardening Seminar Saturday Mornings in March**

Instead of a one-day conference, this annual Spring event has been moved to Zoom and will include two morning sessions on each of the four Saturdays in March. Registration remains open till March 2. The fee for all four dates (8 topics) is only \$25. To see the topics and the excellent line-up of speakers, go to <https://kenosha.extension.wisc.edu/horticulture/spring-into-gardening/>.

## Chicago Botanic Garden, *continued*

- Discovery-based learning includes a hands-on approach to education.
- Time is built in for children to observe, explore, discover, and reflect in learning activities.

Three-year olds in the nature preschool focus on seeds. Four-year-olds focus on seedlings. Three- to five-year-olds explore stems.

### Camp CBG

The gardens offer a variety of day camp experiences each summer. Half- and full-day, week-long camps currently have a maximum of ten participants per age group, and programs have been modified to take place fully outdoors and allow for social distancing. Masks are required.

Instructors are highly qualified, and many have been teaching with Camp CBG for more than five years. All staff members participate in annual training, are first-aid certified, and love teaching. Science, nature, art, ecology, and cooking camps draw kids from Chicago and the North Shore suburbs.



### School Break Camps

CBG also offers day camps for children during winter, spring, and summer school breaks. These camps are accredited by the American Camping Association. Children explore the Garden with nature and plant investigations, science and art activities, and outdoor discoveries all year long. Each camp is led by highly qualified staff. Children in the Spring Break 2021 camp for grades K – 4, for example, will dissect seeds, discover fragrant herbs, watch migrating birds, look for emerging plants on a nature hike, and perform some simple experiments. On a daily basis, the schedule looks like this:

Monday, March 29, 2021: Signs of Spring  
Tuesday, March 30, 2021: A Visit to the Woods  
Wednesday, March 31, 2021: Seed Investigations  
Thursday, April 1, 2021: Let's Go Camping  
Friday, April 2, 2021: Garden Adventure

## School Day-Off Camps

When the Chicago school system schedules a day off, the garden schedule a "day on" for grades K-4. Recent topics for the Day-Off camps were snow art in January and Wild Winter coming up in February.

## Programs Currently On Hold Due to Covid

- Birthday Parties
- Books and Cooks
- Family Campouts
- Japanese Garden Family Programs and Festivals
- Little Diggers
- Nature Nights
- Weekend Family Classes
- Story Time
- Scout Badge Programs
- Scout Campouts
- Seasonal Workshops
- Off-site Programs for Schools and Community Organizations





**Regenstein Learning Campus**

Many of CBG’s youth and family programs take place on the Regenstein Learning Campus. This area of the garden is advancing the Chicago Botanic Garden’s influence as a science, horticulture, and education institution as it serves more than 125,000 people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds each year. The centerpiece is the new Learning Center, a 26,700 square-foot facility that includes indoor and outdoor classrooms, a nature laboratory, Grainger Wing, Astellas Atrium, and ITW Kitchen. The new Nature Play Garden, with its rolling hills and series of multisensory gardens, provides areas for learning, gathering, and hiding.

**Windy City Harvest**

While not solely a youth program, Windy City Harvest does have a major emphasis on involving young people. It’s the Chicago Botanic Garden's education and jobs-training program that helps bring food, health, and jobs to the urban community. Food: More than 180,000 pounds of produce is grown every year on 15 farms, including four Youth Farms. Most of the produce stays in the neighborhoods where it’s grown. Health: Windy City Harvest offers cooking

and nutrition classes as well as affordable or free produce for more than 500 community health center patients with diet-related diseases every year. It supports a network of more than 60 family-run community garden plots, empowering families to grow their own healthy

food. Jobs: The program provides paid, on-the-job training for more than 200 people every year, with a higher than 80 percent placement rate in food systems jobs post-training. Since 2013, Windy City Harvest has helped to grow 20 small farm businesses.

Windy City Harvest is also an outreach program involving a number of components:

### *One-Day Intensive workshops*

Perfect for small-scale urban farmers or adult learners with an interest in gaining experience. Whether it's a backyard, community plot, porch, rooftop, or school garden, participants learn sustainable techniques to get the most production out of their small space. Workshops are taught by Windy City Harvest staff or industry experts, and are open to the general public. They balance lecture tie with hands-on experience.

### *Certificate Courses*

Ten-week courses in Sustainable Urban Agriculture offer a variety of industry-specific certificates designed for individuals who already have a firm foundation in sustainable urban growing techniques and who are looking to expand their knowledge in specific areas. Each course combines hands-on training with classroom education.



### *Aquaponics - Water + Fish + Plants*

Aquaponics has become an integral part of sustainable urban agriculture. This ecologically efficient system uses water, fish, and plants to maximize growing space, water, and fertilization. Experienced aquaponics professionals show how to set up and maintain a flourishing aquaponics operation firsthand at the [Farm on Ogden](#), a state-of-the-art facility in Chicago. One-day fundamentals workshops and three-day intensive courses look at system design, function, construction,



and fabrication methods for aquaponics systems for groups that include professional growers, entrepreneurs, teachers, and students.

### *Youth Farms*

This thriving youth development program educates and employs 80 to 90 teens from under-served communities at three farm sites in Chicago and one in Lake County each year. Youth



Farm teens work in all aspects of sustainable farming and food systems— from planting a farm to

managing a beehive, from cooking with the food they grow to selling it at local farm stands and markets. Teens are paid a stipend for four hours per week in the spring and fall, and 20 hours per week in the summer, but the benefits far outweigh the wages they earn. By the end of the season, they have gained valuable job and teamwork skills, discovered a whole new way to look at the food they eat, and grown their support system to include supervisors, program coordinators, legislators, and their fellow participants. In addition to actual farming and farm-based workshops, each Youth Farm season combines field trips, nutrition education, and entrepreneurship to create a richer educational and life experience for each of the participants.



## **If You Go...**

Chicago Botanical Garden is 385 acres of landscaped gardens displaying millions of plants and flowers in a variety of settings. The garden is located at 1000 Lake Cook Road in Glencoe, Illinois, 60022.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the gardens have modified their hours. To determine hours visit the garden's website at:

<https://www.chicagobotanic.org/visit/hours>

To speak to a representative of the gardens contact them by phone at one of the numbers below.

Customer Service: (847) 835-6801

Main: (847) 835-5440

Member: (847) 835-8215

Entry to the garden is free, but parking is \$25 unless you're a member.

An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title VI, Title IX, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.

Mailing Address: UW-Extension Rock County, 51 S. Main Street, Janesville, WI 53545

Physical Address: 3506 North Highway 51, Building A, Janesville, WI 53545

Phone: 608-757-5066 Fax: 608-757-5055