

Master Gardener Update

October 2022

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Note: There are some graphic descriptions in this article that some may find disturbing.

How do you start your morning?

Let me suppose for a moment, that the first thing you do after your feet hit the floor is head for the bathroom where you relieve yourself of the urine that filled your bladder during the night. The urine that you pass is a light straw color and nearly odorless – a sign it is being expelled from a healthy, well hydrated human being. You flush the toilet and the urine tainted water is whisked away to be processed in a sewage disposal plant before returning to a river or other body of water that serves your community. The entire process takes only a few minutes and leaves you clean and unaffected.

It's likely the next thing you will do is wash your hands – or maybe you'll hop right into the tub or shower for a quick scrub before breakfast. You turn on the tap and clean, clear water gushes forth.

What's next? Most likely breakfast. Maybe pancakes, eggs and bacon, hot cereal, cold cereal, bagels with cream cheese, maybe some fruit, muffins, crullers - singly, or in combination. Featured prominently will be a hot water-based beverage. Coffee, perhaps, or tea. For the kids, hot chocolate or just a glass of juice, or milk. For those who



Websites

MGV Hours Reporting:

mastergardener.
extension.wisc.edu/
report-your-hours/

Canvas UW Online Classroom:

<https://canvas.wisc.edu/>

RPMGA Blog:

rpmga.blogspot.com

RPMGA on Facebook:

Hit control/click on this
link:

[RPMGA on Facebook](#)

Rotary Gardens:

[rotarybotanicalgardens.
org](http://rotarybotanicalgardens.org)

Wisconsin Master Gardener Program:

mastergardener.
extension.wisc.edu

Wisconsin Master Gardener Association (WIMGA): wimga.org

take medications or supplements, a large glass of water sits ready to wash them all down. Once everyone is full, the dishes are put into the dishwasher, or washed by hand in the sink.

While breakfast is being prepared and set on the table other family members are showering, shaving, washing their faces, and shampooing their hair. Again, as in other rooms in your home, they turn on the tap, and clean, safe water comes out.

The knowledge that an adequate supply of clean, safe water is readily available, is not top of mind. Most of us never give it much thought.

By the time you retire for the day, and you tuck your feet under the covers, you will have used about 60 gallons of water. You. Alone. The average American family uses about 300 gallons a day.

Now, let's travel to a third world country somewhere to the south and east of us.

A tall, thin woman rises from her pallet in her small mud-daub home and goes outside where she urinates in a trench a couple dozen feet from the rear of her home. The urine is dark in color, very pungent in odor, and highly concentrated. She is dehydrated, a condition that can cause significant physical illness if it becomes chronic. It can cause urinary tract infections, kidney stones, and even kidney failure. Prolonged dehydration can cause seizures, and in some instances, death.



A neat woman, she fastidiously covers the wet spot with soil. Quickly she returns to the little house where she washes her hands using a basin of water sitting on a small table near the door. She does not toss away the used water. Her children will need it to wash their hands before they eat their morning meal. She prepares a meal for herself and her kids. She mixes brackish yellow water from a battered Jerry can with pounded grain kernels. She lights a small wood fire and cooks a fragrant mush, flavored with the tiniest touch of cinnamon and a small amount of dense brown sugar. She divides one tiny piece of fruit between the children. A special treat. She doesn't take any of the sweet fruit, but she does suck the juice off her fingers.

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RPMGA October Program

Gardening and Climate Change: Introduction

Thursday, October 13, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Online

In our RPMGA education program this month, we'll work through an on-line module called *Gardening and Climate Change: Introduction*. In this Plants Plus module from the UW's Canvas website, you'll learn to define climate change (based on current data) and identify ways that it affects plants, people and plant-based industries in Wisconsin. This background information sets the stage for the other Gardening and Climate Change modules that you can pursue on your own if you are interested. (*Gardening and Climate Change: What You Can Do* and *Gardening and Climate Change: Growing Fruit Trees in a Changing Environment*)



Like all Plants Plus modules, this introductory unit includes some readings, some videos to watch and a quiz to complete. We'll be watching and discussing the videos and previewing the quiz. By attending this Zoom session, you can claim .75 continuing education hours. If you also read the written materials (about 9 pages) and complete the quiz under your own NetID login, you can claim 1.5 continuing education hours.

Watch your email this week for the Zoom connection. Hope you'll join us!

RPMGA's Next Program: Thursday, November 3, 5:30 p.m., online: Easy-Care Native Plants

Next month's program features the UW-Arboretum's native plant expert, Susan Carpenter. We arranged the program through BadgerTalks, and they ask that we have a minimum of 30 people. So when you get the Zoom link later this month, feel free to share with any of your friends who might be interested!

Don't Forget This Month's Coffee Chat, Tuesday, October 11 at 1:00 p.m.

Volunteer Opportunities

Seed Collecting in the UW-Whitewater Nature Preserve, Wednesday, October 5, 6-7:00 p.m.

Over 100 acres on the Whitewater campus's northeastern border are being restored and actively managed as a native prairie and woodland. You will learn more about native plant species found in prairie and savanna ecosystems as you collect seeds for helping maintain and improve the prairie. Free, but registration required by noon on October 4. Go to

<https://www.uww.edu/ce/gardenlandscape/gardenlandscapetours/naturepreservetours>



Beloit Farmers Market, Saturday, October 15, 7:45 – 10:30 a.m. or 10:30 a.m. - 1:15 p.m.

Looking for one or two people to help staff a Master Gardener table at the Beloit Farmers Market. Conversations at the recent Janesville market covered native plants and prairies, plant identification, tomato problems, pollinators, and tree planting, but anything could come up. I will bring supplies and equipment and stay the entire time, but I'm hoping for some company for at least part of the morning. It would be a gentle introduction if you haven't done this type of volunteer work before. Sponsoring organization: RPMGA. If interested, please contact Ruth Flescher: yafello2@gmail.com.

Garden Cleanup Workday, Edgerton Hospital Healing Garden, Saturday, October 15, 10:00 a.m. – Noon

We'll be pulling annuals, planting bulbs, mulching, composting, etc. from 10 am until 12 noon (SNACKS AND BEVERAGES PROVIDED! PIZZA PARTY!). No experience necessary. New volunteers are invited to come at 9 am for a tour and orientation. Dress for the weather, bring gardening gloves, a shovel and prepare to have some fun! This special space needs your help as we wrap up 2022 out in the garden. RSVP to Mark Dwyer (mdwyer@edgertonhospital.com) or just show up!

**Kettle Moraine Land Trust Fourth Saturday Stewardship Workday at Divine Word Seminary,
near East Troy, Saturday, October 22, 1-3:30 p.m.**

Bring water and dress in long sleeves and pants with boots! More info at https://kmlandtrust.org/event/stewardship_october_2022/

Alliant Energy/Trees Forever Tree Planting in Janesville, October 20 or 21, 11:00 a.m.-?

Help expand Janesville's tree canopy! Grant money from Alliant Energy and Trees Forever allowed the city to purchase almost \$5,000 of new trees and we need to get them in the ground. Planting will take place on either Thursday, October 20 or Friday, October 21. We'll start at 11:00 a.m. at the new fire station on Milwaukee Street, then split up to other locations which include additional fire stations, the cemetery, the Rockport Pool, and the transit garage. No advance registration necessary. Just watch your email for the final date selection, then meet at the fire station that day. BYO shovel? Not strictly necessary, but you can if you really like your own.

Events for Fun

**Garden Produce Sale, Rock County Sheriff/Community Garden Site,
Janesville, Tuesday, October 4, 2-6:00 p.m.**

The Rock County Sheriff's Office RECAP Garden and Community Garden Outreach Program are hosting a garden sale. Vegetables will include leeks, potatoes pumpkins, squash, onions, beets, tomatoes, herbs and more. All proceeds go directly back to the RECAP garden.

**Giant Pumpkin Regatta, UW Memorial Union Terrace,
Madison, Saturday, October 8, 11 a.m.**

People paddling giant pumpkins in a race? No more needs to be said!



"[Mountain of fall vegetables](#)" by [future15pic](#) is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](#).



Allen Centennial Harvest Folk Festival, Madison, Saturday, October 8, noon-6:00 p.m.

ACG's Harvest Folk Festival celebrates this year's abundant and diverse harvest from its kitchen gardens. This event will showcase performances of folk music, folk dance, and storytelling; hands-on learning opportunities in the Garden; displays of student research and a chance to learn about harvest traditions from Dejope (Madison) and around the

world. Harvest performances by Hmong, Indigenous, African American, Eastern European, and Scandinavian performers. Free. More info at <https://allencentennialgarden.wisc.edu/harvest-folk-festival/>

Autumn at the Arboretum, Klehm Arboretum and Botanical Garden, Rockford, IL, Friday Oct. 7 to Sunday Oct. 9. 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily

Klehm Arboretum's annual free fall community event, Autumn at the Arboretum, is back! Visitors will have the opportunity to explore our 155 acres with free daily admission, activities and entertainment. Autumn at the Arboretum will offer a self-led Fall Color Smartphone Tour, Smartphone Scavenger Hunt, guest presentation by author and Director of Reiman Gardens, Ed Lyon, Sunday Family Fun Day filled with kids' activity stations, live music, doggy costume contest, community activity booths and more all for FREE! More info at <https://klehm.org/autumn-at-arboretum/>



Full Moon Hike, Welty Environmental Center, Beloit, Sunday, October 9, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Walk in a moon-lit forest during this spooky time of year. We will practice walking silently, slowly, and observing the wonders of the park under a full moon. This is a guided hike. We will meet at the center briefly. We will start with a short Native American story, then hike in the forest. We will cover 1-2 miles. Flashlights will not be needed. If you bring one, you will be asked not to use it. Dress for the weather. All ages welcome. Fee: \$5 Welty members/\$7 non-members. Register/pay online at https://weltycenter.org/event/full-moon-hikes-2022-23/?instance_id=3689

"Full Moon" by [skochkarev](#) is marked with [Public Domain Mark 1.0](#).

**Fall Family Day, Nature at the Confluence, South Beloit, IL,
Saturday, October 22, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

We've got something for everyone! Storytime with South Beloit Public Library will take place 10:30-11am. Drop by anytime between 10am-1pm to try our scavenger hunt, build your own natural journal with [Welty Environmental Center](#), learn about mushroom cultivation with [Owls Roost Farm](#), and enjoy apple cider warmed by the fire. This is a free, all ages event, but \$10 donation appreciated.



**Sustainable Action through a Beloit Lens,
Welty Environmental Center, Beloit, Sunday, October 23, 1-4 p.m.**

On Sunday, October 23, Welty is offering a free special event with speakers (including Horticulture Outreach Specialist Julie Hill) on how climate change will affect gardens, housing transport, food, energy, etc. The event is held to draw attention to the exhibit ***Real People, Real Climate, Real Changes***, which takes you on an interactive journey through climate change and how it's affecting people's lives around the country and around the world. The exhibit was developed by the National Center for Atmospheric Research and the UCAR Center for Science Education to help share the science of climate change and how it impacts people's lives. The exhibit is traveling around the country and is coming to Beloit thanks to generous support from UW's Nelson Institute Center for Climatic Research. Admission is free to both the exhibit and the event. Exhibit hours: Weekdays 9am-3pm; Weekends from 12-4pm, through November 21.

For more info on the special event, go to: https://weltycenter.org/event/sustainable-action-through-a-beloit-lens/?instance_id=3895

More Training Coming Up in October and Beyond

Looking for Level 2 MGVI training--The Plants Plus modules? You can find them in the online classroom, Canvas, which you access with your UW NetID at <https://canvas.wisc.edu/> Check regularly for new modules!

UW Division of Horticulture, Any Time, Online

In addition to the Plants Plus modules in Canvas, the Wisconsin Horticulture website has a list of online workshops and education sessions on a variety of topics. These video presentations feature research-based gardening and horticulture information. Increase your knowledge by joining UW-Madison experts. Some topics feature a single video, some include a series of videos on the topic. Running times vary, but all are free. Check out what's available by clicking here: <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/videos/>

Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison, WI

Classes are in person at the Gardens unless otherwise noted. Fees listed are for Olbrich Members/General Public. For more info, copy and paste this address: <http://www.olbrich.org/education/classes.cfm>

Registration for these classes has closed (or is about to), but try calling to see if they'll let you in at the last minute: 608-246-4550.

October 5, Seed Saving Workshop, 2-3:30 p.m., \$12/\$15. Register by September 28.

October 5, Managing Moths: *Lymantria dispar* (Spongy Moth), 6-7:15 p.m., **online**, \$12/\$15. Register by September 28.

Registration is open for these classes. If a class is shown as "filled," see if you can get on a waiting list. Cancellations do occur.

October 25, Fantastic Fall Colors Walk, 4:30-6:00 p.m., \$16/\$20. Register by October 18.

November 10, Growing Resilient Trees, 6-7:30, online, \$12/\$15. Register by November 3





Vertical Farming, Wednesday, October 5, 7:00 p.m., online

Johanna Oosterwyk of the UW's DC Smith Greenhouse and [UW Madison Department of Horticulture](#) will speak on Vertical Farming to the "Wednesday Nite @ The Lab" public science talk on October 5. Connect to the Zoom at go.wisc.edu/240r59

"Farm Wall Outside" by [Bright-Agrotech](#) is marked with [Public Domain Mark 1.0](#).

Faded Glory: The Autumn Garden, Klehm Arboretum, Rockford, IL, Saturday, October 8, 9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

Here in the Midwest, our floral displays often focus on spring and summer plants but often ignore fall beauties. In this program, Ed Lyon, author and Director of Reiman Gardens, will demonstrate plant materials that not only define and create a spectacular fall garden but might extend winter interest as well. If your autumn garden has the drabs, find out how to jazz it up! Ed is a true plant geek who gardens intensely through a self-proclaimed mash-up of love of plant collecting with something that he hopes resembles design. Free. Registration recommended. [Register online here](#)

Gardening in the Air Fall Series, Saturday, October 8, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., online

A virtual nine-session series held seasonally and co-hosted by University of Illinois Extension and Iowa State University Extension.

Track	9-10 a.m.	10:15- 11:15	11:30-12:30
Water	Make Every Drop Count--Xeriscaping	Water Features for Your Garden	Drought Tolerant Annuals & Perennials
Lawns	Troubleshooting Turf-grass Problems	Reimagining the Lawn	Getting into the Weeds of Natural Lawn Care
Nature	Trees for Fall Leaf Color	Owls of Iowa and Illinois	Gardening with Grasses: Native Grasses for the Home Landscape

Access links and handouts will be emailed to participants during the October. Online. Free, but donation appreciated. Register for up to one selection in each time slot at <https://extension.illinois.edu/global/gardening-air>





**Oaktoberfest at Petersen Island Woods Preserve, Elkhorn,
Saturday, October 8, 2 - 4:00 p.m.**

Kettle Moraine Land Trust invites you to enjoy the scenic and botanical beauties of the preserve (photo at left). Guided interpretive tours will be available, led by KMLT's Rory Klick. Snacks, fresh beverages, and surprises are to be found upon the trail. Learn about our glacial heritage and our native flora. Free. For more info and directions to the preserve, go to <https://kmlandtrust.org/event/oaktoberfest2022/>

**Conifer Garden Tour, UW-Arboretum, Madison,
Saturday, October 8, 1-3:00 p.m.**

David Stevens, garden curator, will explore the Longenecker Horticultural Gardens' pine-tum—the largest and most diverse conifer collection in the state. Located on a glacial drumlin, the collection presents a diverse array of conifers from around the world. Tours take place except in unsafe weather. Free, no registration required. Meet at the Visitor Center.

**Relationship and Connection—Community and Ecological Restoration,
UW-Arboretum, Madison, Tuesday, October 11, 7-8:30 p.m.**

Kate Morgan, senior public engagement specialist, Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD). From micro-local to larger landscapes, integrating people and community with ecological restoration is critical for success and restores not only ecosystems but also the relationships of people to those ecosystems. This presentation focuses on MMSD efforts to foster these relationships. Free, no registration required. Meet at Visitor Center.

Tips for Getting Landscape Plants Ready for Winter, Thursday, October 13, Noon - 12:30 p.m., online

Even though the days are getting shorter and winter is around the corner, your gardening tasks are not done yet! Join us to learn about how to protect susceptible plants from snow and cold damage. We will also talk about proper mulching and watering to help your plants get through the fall and survive the winter. Speaker: Lisa Johnson, Dane County Horticulture Outreach Specialist. Free, but registration required. Go to https://uwmadison.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Fdx11AaAQrardFPsBGjzJw



Lettuce Romain Friends Salad Bowl Workshop, Klehm Arboretum, Rockford, IL, Saturday, October 15, 10:30 a.m. to noon

Join Amanda of Mindful Blooming to create a LIVING salad bowl! Learn about planting a variety of greens and how to keep your salad growing all winter. Practice mindfulness while planting and learn about the benefits of getting your hands dirty! All supplies will be provided including a planter, custom soil blend, started chives plant, and salad seeds. \$45/person. Pre-registration is required by October 10th. [Register here.](#)

The Colors of Fall Garden Tour, UW-Arboretum, Madison, Saturday, October 15, 1 – 3:00 p.m.

Join David Stevens, garden curator, for a stroll through Longenecker Horticultural Gardens highlighting sensational seasonal colors and exploring the science behind this natural phenomenon. Tours take place except in unsafe weather. Free, no registration required. Meet at the Visitor Center.

Right: "[Oak trees in autumn glow](#)" by [Eric@focus](#) is licensed under [CC BY-ND 2.0](#).

Reading the Landscape – Woodlands, UW-Arboretum, Madison, Saturday, October 15, 1 – 3:30 p.m.

Explore Gallistel and Wingra Woods during peak fall colors. Learn to identify plants, distinguish the characteristics of different woodlands, and find out about the restoration and management of these communities. Instructor: Sylvia Marek, Arboretum naturalist. Outdoor class, takes place except in unsafe weather. Make-up date: October 22. Meet at the Visitor Center. Fee: \$25; Register by October 11 at <https://arboretum.wisc.edu/classes/reading-the-landscape-woodlands/>



Protecting Young Trees from Animal and Other Damage Over Winter, Thursday, October 20, Noon – 12:30 p.m., online

In winter, young trees are prone to a variety of hazards. Be prepared to mitigate that damage by learning how to protect young trees from potential wildlife damage and how to effectively protect trunks from winter sunscald damage. Speaker: Diana Alfuth, Horticulture Outreach Specialist for Pierce and St. Croix Counties. Free but registration required. Go to https://uwmadison.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ma1k392fTYeaoB7Sj_Cp0w

Maintaining Your Festive Houseplants, Thursday, October 27, Noon – 12:30 p.m., online

Festive houseplants are a common gift that you may give or receive. Learn how to keep a poinsettia, Norfolk Island Pine, Christmas cactus, and other favorite gift plants thriving. We'll cover requirements including light, watering, fertilizer, and humidity. Speaker: Janelle Wehr, Horticulture Outreach Specialist for Wood and Marathon Counties. Free but registration required. Go to https://uwmadison.zoom.us/join/register/WN_0-1kRfTsREaUKp28yfY--w



"Poinsettias" by [Martin LaBar](#) is licensed under [CC BY-NC 2.0](#).



"Our Christmas Tree--a living Norfolk Pine" by [Pixel Drip](#) is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).



"Christmas Cactus" by [Sky Noir](#) is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](#).

Green Thumb Gardening Series, online, Days of Week as noted, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

The Green Thumb Gardening class series gives you the practical knowledge to keep your home garden thriving! Dane County Extension educators and local horticulture experts will provide in-depth and accessible information for everyone from the novice to the experienced gardener. Register for individual classes at \$12 each. Attend virtually from home. [Click Here to Register](#) or to see the full schedule. Zoom links will be provided after registration.

October 3 (Monday): Intro to Insects

October 6 (Thursday): Shade and Ornamental Tree Planting and Pruning

October 20 (Thursday): Fundamentals of Plant Disease (*Note: this class runs till 9 p.m. rather than 8:00 p.m.*)

October 24 (Monday): Lawns and Turf Management

November 1 (Tuesday): Planning/Techniques for Organic Vegetable Gardens

November 3 (Thursday): Weed ID and Management

Water, continued

She breastfeeds her youngest child, and gives the older children small portions of the yellowish water to drink with their mush. After carefully scrubbing the pottery dishes with sand to clean them (water is far too precious to use for cleaning dishes), she puts away the bowls and within a few moments she is ready to do what she does every day – gather water. She kisses her children goodbye, admonishes them to get to school on time, then walks anywhere from 4 to 6 hours one way to the nearest water source where she fills the Jerry can with water.

A Jerry can holds 20 liters or 5.2 US gallons. It is likely that the water she finds is contaminated with fecal material from animals or humans or both. It may come from a river contaminated with industrial waste or a stream containing insect larvae, parasites, or even bacteria, but it is the best she can find.



She hoists the can onto the padded fabric circle that she sits on her head, then turns and with her baby sound asleep in her arms, heads for home. She, her baby, and her other children survive on about 5 gallons of filthy water a day. Not individually. Together.

Today, and every day, a silent army of women around the world will spend 200 million hours collecting water. Their search for this vital commodity cuts into employment opportunities, educational opportunities, and basic family care.

So, what is my point, you ask? Simple. We can give these women back their lives

simply by donating to any one of the growing number of charities or foundations that are dedicated to bringing clean water wells to people in poverty-stricken villages and towns around the world.

- The Stella Artois Chalice and Water.org – The purchase of a Limited-Edition Stella Artois Chalice helps provide 5 years of safe drinking water to someone in the developing world. This new chalice features Stella Artois branding in gold and Stella's signature star. Stella Artois donates \$3.13 to Water.org for every Limited-Edition Stella Artois Chalice sold in the U.S. between 11/1/21 and 12/31/22. \$3.13 helps provide 5 years of safe water to 1 person in the developing world.
- Charity Water - Launch a Fundraising Campaign and donate the proceeds to Charity Water. 100% of the funds will be used to build wells in the field. Funding for administrative costs and operating expenses is raised through other income streams. None of the donated funds are touched for anything other than the installation of wells.
- World Vision/Clean Water – World Vision develops the most appropriate safe water source for each community it works in. Some of the technologies they use in communities, wells with a high water yield, can be mechanized with solar pumps to reach more people. When fresh spring water is available, WV can protect and cap the spring to provide water to nearby communities. WV often uses rainwater-harvesting systems to provide clean water at schools. WV's model contributes to community ownership and training in maintenance of water points so that water continues to flow long after the work concludes. Because they invest an average of 15 years in a community, local people take ownership of the water points and learn how to repair them when they break down. WV establishes water management committees to maintain and operate water points. These committees collect small fees to pay for repairs as needed - an approach that helps ensure communities have the knowledge and financial resources to keep their water points working smoothly.
- Generosity.org – Because of donations, Generosity.org has been able to build over 800 water wells in 20 different nations that deliver clean and sustainable water to over a half million people.



- WaterIsLife – Their goal is to provide 1 billion people with safe drinking water. With the help of New Age Beverage Co. and other partners, WIL can pull the funding together to bring safe water to the world. They know that what they're asking for is a huge number, but the world needs a huge change, and it's not such a hard goal when you break it down. It takes only \$1 to provide 23 people with clean drinking water for a month.

These are just a few of the many organizations here in the U.S. and around the world that have zeroed in on the fact that clean water is no longer something we can take for granted. It must be carefully preserved and equitably shared with others.

- Clean Water Fund
- Lifewater
- Water is Life
- WaterLex
- World Water Council
- The Water Project



- Save the Water
- The Last Well
- World Water Reserve

It's said that America is a giving nation. Among us there are those who have a highly honed sense of community. Volunteerism is (or once was – current trends indicate it's slowing a bit) a skill that American citizens have employed with great regularity since the Great Depression, the second World War, the Dust Bowl. We have shown we like to work together to improve life for those who are down on their luck, hungry, homeless, or destitute, but rarely do we get called upon to provide clean water for someone in need. Even the poorest among us have access to water. Most communities have public water fountains, free for drinking. Public bathrooms have sinks where, in some of the larger cities, the sinks provide the homeless with drinking water, or water to bathe in. Access to water is just not something we worry about.

So why should we worry about the water needs of people we'll never meet in countries we can't pronounce? The simple answer is – because we're Master Gardeners. We have proven we are volunteers just by signing up.

That being the case, what can we do to help?

First, we can educate ourselves to the problems of water shortages. Around the world there are droughts and water shortages that impact millions of people, but here in Wisconsin, we are relatively sheltered from the realities of water shortages. That being said, however, there is growing evidence that Wisconsin, damp and green as it is, may be showing signs of water shortages. On the latest drought information map published by the National Weather Service for Wisconsin, which was updated on August 4, parts of southeast Wisconsin were in moderate drought, which developed in early July. Although we are not experiencing severe drought, we need to be aware of climatic changes that could result in drought and water shortages. In the meantime we might want to consider that the price of building water wells, when shared among many, is small. Without help, the plight of the millions of women who walk for water is constant. We spend money for subscriptions for music on our phones, or favorite programs on television. Ten dollars here, twenty dollars there. Consider becoming a contributor to a water charity that has monthly subscriptions. We can help stop this human tragedy simply by donating an affordable amount of money to those who need it so desperately.

Written by Mary Kay Thompson

Commentary by Ruth Flescher In my early twenties, my hubby and I purchased 24 acres of completely undeveloped land in south central Kentucky. As we worked to build shelter and get a handle on life there, we got our water from a spring that flowed out of the side of the hill. Larry cemented in a small catch basin with a pipe leading to a 50 gallon barrel. From there, we filled 5 gallon buckets and hauled it up the hill. And as anyone who's hauled a bucket out to the garden can tell you, water is *really* heavy. (That 5.2 liter jerry can? It weighs over 40 lbs. when full. I can't imagine walking for 15 minutes with it, much less 4-6 hours.) The water from our spring looked clean, but all cooking or drinking water had to be boiled if we didn't want to get sick. And hot water to clean ourselves? That required a big pot on the stove before we could bathe. So I don't take clean drinking water for granted and I continue to believe that hot water on demand is one of the great luxuries of civilization.

And no, Wisconsin is not immune to water problems. In addition to shortages, there are water quality issues. Waukesha needed special permission to draw water from Lake Michigan because it grew beyond the capacity of its water sources. The water from my home well is contains herbicide breakdown, so all my cooking and drinking water gets filtered. And as I look at the reality of stronger storms as part of climate change, I struggle with what to do for an alternate water source if my power goes out for an extended period (because the pump, of course, is electric). Many people in Milwaukee continue to deal with lead and/or sewage bacteria in their water. According to UW-Division of Extension, Wisconsin's fresh water lakes and streams have become noticeably more saline. And those are just the issues that popped into my mind with a moment's thought.

Helping others gain access to clean, reliable, water close to their homes is a life-changing thing to do. We may not (yet?) be seeing dry riverbeds like they are in the Southwest or Europe, but we could learn a lot from places where water is scarce. Hopefully what we learn will help us with our own water management issues.

The **Master Gardener Update** is developed by and distributed online monthly by the Rock Prairie Master Gardener Association, Incorporated, for master gardener volunteers and other interested people who have ties to Rock County, Wisconsin. Current officers of the association include Ruth Flescher, president (yafello2@gail.com); Mary Kay Thompson, vice president (mastergardenermary@gmail.com); Sue Wood, Secretary (wood-slibrarymedia@gmail.com) and Deb Grams, treasurer (debgrams@yahoo.com).

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