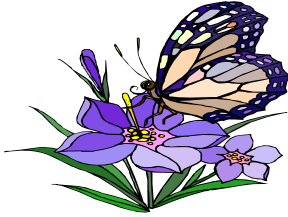


WHAT'S COMING UP?

Volume 3

March, 2009

The Newsletter of the Polk County MG Association



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PCMGA March 16, 2009 Meeting Minutes

The March meeting of the Polk County Master Gardeners Association was held at the Polk County Justice Center in the Multi-Purpose Room and was called to order by President, Fritz Coulter.

TREASURERS REPORT:

Our balance is \$1141.14. Jim reissued the check to the Sportsman Club for the show from last year. \$150 was received from the county for dues for the new Master Gardeners class. Linda Leef paid her dues to Jim for this year.

OLD BUSINESS

Garden U in Hudson this weekend-Saturday March 21st-agenda was attached to minutes from last year. \$30 fee includes seminar and lunch at Valley House.

Garden Journals – 140 are still available in Madison-Fritz will take orders tonight at our meeting and will be at the Master Gardeners class on Tuesday, March 17th to take any additional orders from our new members. Anyone who would like one after these dates will have to order from Madison directly-\$10.00 plus \$2.50 shipping & handling.

“Share the Bounty”-Andrea Sieffert is having a meeting Thursday, March 19th at 4:00 PM if anyone would like to sit in at the Polk County Health Department. She has 3 groups organized to help make seed packets but can volunteer to help.

St. Croix Falls is having their community garden and anyone interested in working can contact Sarah Muntz at 715-483-3542 or SAR.MUNTZ@gmail.com.

Good Samaritan Nursing Home-St. Croix Falls has their raised garden beds in back of home. Anyone interested in working contact Georgeann at 715-483-2718.

Home & Garden Show-Osceola Saturday, March 28th. Fritz will be teaching a 45 minute class on vegetable gardens.

Amery will be having a Home & Garden show April 4th & 5th at the Amery Hockey Rink.

Sportsman Show sign-up sheet was sent around-please sign up for either Saturday or Sunday for an hour or two. Julie has marigold seed, jiffy pots in bags ready to hand out to the kids. Tootsie rolls will also most likely be purchased. There will be a display for “Share the Bounty”, the Plant Sale on May 10, Mason Bee Nesters and the group in general.

NEW BUSINESS

Mason Bee Nesters-Fritz purchased a Mason Bee nester and found they were pretty easy to make ourselves. He found nesting tubes in the KINSMAN catalog and will purchase some. He will also pickup some PVC pipe with Jim West and get them cut to correct lengths. We will put together the nesters after our speaker on Monday, April 20th meeting. Motion was made by Julie to spend the money to purchase supplies and seconded by Sally. Motion carried.

EDUCATION

Vegetable Garden And Selections

Onions-grow from sets or plants. Walla Walla, Texas 1015 and Super Sugar Hybrids are some of the best for Northern gardens. Super Sugar do not keep well after harvesting. Bulb is comprised of freshly basal leaves-contains fructose & sucrose-no starch, which contributes to its storage keeping value after harvest. Keep at 42 degrees in the dark for longest storage. Walla Walla's are the best for our area.

Walking onions (winter onions) plant like regular onions. They grow tall and fall over setting another bulb and root where they fall, hence their name. Interesting to grow and kids would have fun with these. They do not store well.

Plant onions between May 1st & June 1st., depending on weather. If wet & cold should wait because onions won't do anything then-wait for warmer & drier. Onions need at least 14 hours of sunlight a day to grow-another advantage to June days.

Harvest when greens are 6" tall and 1-1 1/2" in diameter and bulbs fall on 50-75% of the crop. Cure onions at 85-90degree for 10 days. Store at 35-40degrees for 3 to 4 months.

Leeks

Non bulbing unless 14 hours of sunlight.

Garlic-if want information go on www.Garlicman.com

Potatoes

Get seeds potatoes which are genetically designed and certified. Plant Memorial Day and watch the long grass as potato bugs winter over in the long grasses. Plant 2 potatoes per hill 1" below soil. Plant 3 ft apart -like lots of light. If using your own potatoes or buy sets that are larger and you cut make sure you let air dry for a couple of days to scab over.

You can also plant in tires planting 1 inch below soil and continuing to put dirt or layers of straw on top of plants as they grow. Ready to harvest when potato plants begin to die back. Yukon Gold, Kannabec & Red Pontiac are the best potatoes for our area. You can also go on the University of Minnesota extension office website to find more information on any of these garden crops.

Next meeting Monday, April 20th at the Polk County Justice Center beginning at 6:15PM.

Educational Opportunity at Next Meeting: Diane Patras will be teaching our class on Sweet Potatoes.



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Grow Shitake Mushrooms: Class will be held April 25th in 2 sessions. Mike Bauer will teach from 10-11:30 am or 1:00 to 2:30PM. Bring your own log, freshly cut 36-40" long and 4-6" in diameter . Mushroom spawn, sealing wax and tools will be provided. Session limited to 20 participants each. Contact Luck Community Education at 472-2152 x 103. This class is a fundraiser for Natural Alternative Food Co-op in Luck.

With the ever-increasing awareness of environmental issues, the Chippewa Falls Public Library has designated the entire month of April to Environmental Awareness. A combination of documentaries and presentations by the Chippewa Valley Master Gardener Association will touch on local, national, and global issues.

Chippewa Falls Public Library

<http://www.chippewafallslibrary.org/>

Free. No registration required. For more information stop by the Information Desk, call 715-723-1146, or email cfplref@ifls.lib.wi.us

An Inconvenient Truth– Al Gore

Thursday, April 9, 6:00 PM

A passionate and inspiring look at former Vice President Al Gore's campaign to expose the myths and misconceptions of global warming, and to create public awareness on the subject.

Building Healthy Soil– Jerry Clark, UW-Extension Crops and Soils Educator

Thursday, April 16, 6:00 PM

Soil is the backbone of any productive garden. Learn about what makes a soil healthy. Nutrients, microorganisms, and organic matter all contribute to a healthy garden. Come and learn about soil structure, texture and how nutrients interact with your garden plants. Find out how simple home composting can add to your garden’s well being!

King Corn- Curt Ellis & Ian Cheney

Monday, April 20, 6:00 PM

Fueled by curiosity and a dash of naiveté, college buddies Ian Cheney and Curt Ellis return to their ancestral home of Greene, Iowa, to find out how the modest corn kernel conquered America.

With the help of real farmers, powerful fertilizer, government aid, and genetically modified seeds, the friends manage to grow one acre of corn. Along the way, they unlock the hidden truths about America's modern food system.

Starting a Vegetable Garden– Brian Hefty, instructor

Thursday, April 23, 6:00 PM

If you’re a new gardener and would like to learn how to start a vegetable garden this is the class for you! We’ll talk about the best location for your garden, a variety of garden layouts, what vegetable plants to grow and maybe even a little about some garden pests. We will also talk about the exciting new opportunity for community gardening being offered in Chippewa Falls.

Shoreland Landscaping: A View from Across the Water– Mary Jo Fleming and Linda Stockinger

Thursday April 30. 6:00 PM

Shoreland landscaping involves more than just choosing plants that suit growing conditions. The presentation will offer basic information about zoning laws for buffer strips and viewing corridors, planting methods that control erosion on sandy slopes, and appropriate native plants for a variety of vegetative layers.

Interested in **growing fruit in your backyard?** Have an apple tree that's in need of pruning but you don't know where to start?

On Wednesday, April 1, we are fortunate to again have state horticulture specialist Bob Tomesh here for his fruit tree management and grafting workshop! This year we have an added bonus of a hands-on fruit pruning demonstration!

The **pruning workshop** will be held at 4:00 p.m. at Maple Leaf Orchard, which is located west of Spring Valley. Maple Leaf has agreed to let us use some of their plants for this pruning demonstration. Bob will show how to prune apple trees, grape vines, raspberries and maybe even currants! The orchard will also be in the midst of maple syrup production, so if you'd like to take a peak at syrup cooking down, you'll probably have that option.

Then, at 6:30 p.m., at nearby Spring Valley Banquet Center (formerly the Red Barn), we'll be indoors for the fruit tree management and grafting workshop. The workshop covers everything you need to know to grow fruit trees (apples, plums, pears . . .). Then Bob teaches how to graft fruit trees. Bob will have apple, plum and pear rootstocks and cuttings (scions) from many varieties available. You'll learn how to graft and try your hand at grafting three fruit trees, that you'll get to take home and plant in your yard. You can bring cuttings from your own favorite heirloom apple tree if you'd like, and Bob usually also has some extra rootstocks available to purchase.

You can attend one or both of these sessions, but attendance is limited. There are still a few spots available, so if you are interested, call our office at 273-6781 asap and our secretaries can tell you how to reserve your spot! The pruning session is \$5, and the grafting class is \$15, which pays for your rootstocks and materials. This is always a fun class.



THERE IS STILL PLENTY OF ROOM FOR ADDITIONAL HELP ON COMMITTEES. THIS GROUP IS ONLY AS GOOD AS ITS VOLUNTEERS. WE WILL BE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO HELP WITH CLASS IF THERE IS ENOUGH INTEREST.

Club Volunteer Opportunities.

SEE MINUTES FOR ST. CROIX SPORTSMEN'S SHOW AND MOTHER'S DAY PLANT SALE.

If you are looking for volunteer opportunities think about hitting one of the project gardens we have done and do a little weeding. If you don't know where they are, send a quick email and we will let you know. A couple to remember: Golden Age Manor in Amery, the Polk County Fair Grounds, the Polk County Government Center and Garfield Park on Lake Wapo.

