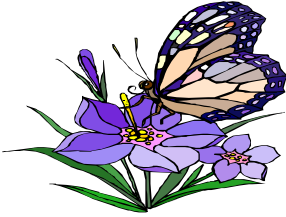


WHAT'S COMING UP?

Volume 4

October 2008

The Newsletter of the Polk County MG Association



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PCMGA OCTOBER 2008 Meeting Minutes

The October meeting of the Polk County Master Gardeners Association was held at the Polk County Government Center. The meeting was called to order at 6:45 by President Fritz Coulter.

CORRECTION

The September meeting minutes had a correction by President Fritz that he had gone back to meeting minutes from 2007 and we are electing a new treasurer and secretary this year. He had checked the by-laws and Jackie Whitcomb has served 2 terms so she cannot hold the treasurers position again. Secretary position is currently held by Maggie Swiontek and Bonnie Corcoran. Therefore in November meeting elections will be held for these positions. If interested or have nominations please get this information to Fritz.

Treasurers report: Was not read at this months meeting. Jackie collected money for garden journals and WIGMA dues. Journals are \$15 for 2009 and WIGMA dues are \$15-\$10 going to WIGMA and \$5 remaining locally in our group. Dues are due by January 2009 meeting and journals can be ordered directly from WIGMA.

Old Business:

Master Gardeners class to be held in January 2009. Ryan Sterry had 2 people interested so far but one only wanted to garden was not interested in volunteering. Ryan needs to have names in by December 1, 2008, cost is \$120. Diane Alfuth held a live master gardeners class in Baldwin this year.

Diane Alfuth has a list of all master gardeners certified from last year. We will try to get that list and compare to our current list. Hopefully we can have an updated list to try attract more gardeners to our meetings & volunteer projects.

Rain Barrels: Jackie had found plastic barrels on line from an Amery location. Barrels were only 8 gallons so they are too small for us to purchase and make into rain barrels. Del had found some at Turtle Lake Creamery that were good size and was able to get them for free. If we can find a space to store them we may possibly be able to prepare to sell at Sportsman show. We will see what happens. Could possibly take prepaid orders at the show and have ready for delivery at a later date.

Project List:

List is due by November 1st to Susan Mahr at University of Wisconsin.
We have tried to make our present members more visible and attract more new members.
This will continue to be a project for the coming year.

Classes held at Clear Lake Library taught by Fritz on tomatoes & soil in spring. During the fall he held a class on Herbs. Some of our members were involved in the planting the community garden in Clear Lake also.

Sportsman show was held April 26 & 27th with booth manned. We gave out seeds for Share the Bounty program to try to get community to share produce with the communities hungry and food shelves.

Polk County Fair with booth manned to answer questions, held the Biggest Weed contest and Fritz entered flowers for judging and won ribbons.

Good Samaritan Nursing Home (St. Croix Falls). We extended and prepared the 3 gardens in front of the building. New perennials were brought and donated from our members along with some annuals from Balsam Lake Nursery. We planted the gardens and cleared out the old peony garden in another section of the building. We will check back with them next year to see how garden made it through winter and what other new plants or work maybe needed.

Golden Age Manor Nursing Home (Amery) Garden started last year was finished with planting, barrels put in garden for annuals were planted. The garden was weeded a couple of times and mulch was finished in the garden. Golden Age had mentioned last year having another small garden planted by their sign. We will check on that when status of nursing home is complete next spring to see if still wanted.

Held plant sale on Mothers Day, May 11, 2008. Weather was cold and windy and a few plants were sold. We will try again next year as it was in conjunction with the Wanderoos Pancake Breakfast.

Planted gardens around Polk County Government Building, Polk County Library, Polk County Adult Detention Center and Polk County Justice Center.

New Business:

St. Croix Falls looking at planting projects for next year along with volunteers for 2009.

Fairground gardens needed to be done for 2009 around buildings we use and have our booth by for the Fair. We are also looking at discontinuing the biggest weed contest at the fair and have a possible most unique plant or vegetable. Fair will begin their planning in January, 2009.

EDUCATION:

Dan Raether, Amery beekeeper came in and spoke to us regarding the keeping of bees and collection of honey. Dan is a retired shop teacher and coach who spent 36 years in the public school system. He brings much knowledge to our area in the area of beekeeping which he has now done for 12 years. He brought in a hive to show how it is put together and boards used to have bees attach to for honey making. Types of flowers in area is important for pollen collection and the varieties are what dictate the flavor of the honey harvested. You can tell what plants are in bloom by color of pollen collected by your bees and deposited in the hive. Dan brought a tape to watch called the HONEY FILE: A BEES LIFE. It presented in pretty simple terms the life cycle of a hive and the bees. It explained how the process is done from the beginning when a Queen is brought to the hive and how the workers & drones go about their business of everyday life. Worker bees only live a total of 45 days so they must work very hard in a short time. The queen lays 2-3,000 eggs in her lifetime and is good for about 2 years. Guard bees can smell nectar and don't allow entrance by bees who don't belong in the community. Wax is made on top of the honeycomb by the bees flapping their wings. Bees flap their wings over 11,000 times a minute.

First man-made hive was used in 2500 B.C. by the Egyptians.

It has been discovered the bees won't bother you if you don't bother them. When working in the hive they do not like to be pinched or pushed. If that is done you will get stung. Removing the stinger as soon as possible will result in less venom being released as the stinger has 3 barbs. Bees are hairy and hornets are not-one way to tell which is really flying around you. African killer bees and American honey bees are not compatible. Bees need to visit 2 million flowers for 1# of honey to be produced. An average hive must have at least 80# of honey left in order for bees to survive the winter. If more is left they will most likely be able to survive an extremely cold & hard winter.

A huge portion of a humans diet is benefited by an insect, but without our bees pollination would not occur and we would starve. Honey production begins generally in March or April when first flowers & dandelions bloom. Honey is harvested between September & October and takes about 3 weeks depending on how many hives you have. Extraction system is used to remove honey from the boards from the hive. Smoking sometimes used to contain bees so you can work in hives. Dan has honey available for sale and sells his honey in our local supermarkets.

Next meeting:

Monday, November 17 with elections and a potluck dinner to finish out our year. Fritz will check to see if we are to move to the Polk County Justice Center or remain for the year at the Polk County Government Center.



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.

Amy Klein from St. Croix Falls Parks and Recreation Committee is in the process of reviewing their planting schedule and volunteer opportunity list for 2009. If anyone is interested in helping out please contact Amy at kevmy@centurytel.net.

If you are looking for volunteer opportunities think about hitting one of the project gardens we have done and do a little weeding this next spring. 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.

If you have any ideas for projects send them to us or bring to a meeting.

Remember a large part of our goal as a group is doing community projects and volunteering. This can be anything from actually working a garden, giving a demonstration, working with young people on garden and growing ideas or serving as an officer or chairing a committee.

NOVEMBER TASKS

Now is the time to prepare those perennial beds for spring planting.

Once the ground freezes it is time to mulch azaleas, rhododendrons and perennial beds.

Make sure to keep those trees and shrubs well watered until the ground freezes.

Make sure to clean all pots and garden tools with a 10% bleach solution. Coat metal parts of tools with vegetable oil before storing to prevent rusting.



**WE'LL SEE EVERYONE AT THE LAST MEETING FOR
THIS YEAR –NOVEMBER 17TH.**

REMEMBER THIS IS A POTLUCK AND VOTING TIME.