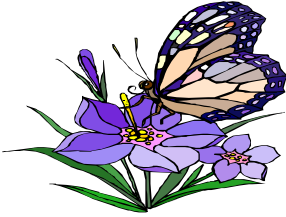


WHAT'S COMING UP?

Volume 4

October 2008

The Newsletter of the Polk County MG Association



In this Issue:
PCMG Meeting Minutes
2008 Committees/Ideas
Volunteer Opportunities

PCMGA September 15, 2008 Meeting Minutes

The September meeting of the Polk County Master Gardeners Association was held at the Polk County Government Center in Balsam Lake. The meeting was called to order at 6:45 PM by Vice President, Sally Pritchard .

TREASURERS REPORT:

\$966.14 by bank but per our books \$816.14. Sportsman Club and Share the Bounty checks have not cleared the bank.

OLD BUSINESS

Masters Gardeners classes-We are still waiting to hear whether a class will be held and if so help will be needed each week. It is a good way to receive credit and we will be helping the class with material handouts & any questions that may be asked. Class will begin in January and will be offered for \$120. Master Gardening dues to WIGMA will be taken from the fee plus cost of the background checks which is mandatory this year on participants of class.

Good Samaritan Nursing home sent us a Thank you card. They were pleased with their gardens and they will be in contact in the spring to see what else they may want in the garden. If anyone has any extra time please do a check and see if any weeding is necessary.

Hours were to be turned into to Ryan Sterry by September 26th so he can have into WIGMA by October 1st. If you have not turned in your hours please contact Fritz or Ryan to see how you would go about getting them in on time to WIGMA.

Autumn Fest-St. Croix Falls garden & art show running September 27 & 28th from 9-5. Information will be found in the county papers or www.scfwi.com. Polk County Master Gardeners will not be able to have a table this year at the show.

NEW BUSINESS

Elections will be held in November but nominations will take place at next meeting in October. We need to vote on President & Co-Vice-Presidents for a 2 year term. If you

know of anyone who would like to run please let Fritz know. We will take the nominations at our next meeting.

Bergmann's Nursery-Clayton, WI has a workshop on "Perennials" scheduled for Wednesday, September 17th at 6:00PM. Registration started at 5:00pm and discounts will be available that evening.

Wednesday, October 1st they will have another workshop on the "How To's on Trees & Shrubs for the Fall. Workshop will be taught by Sales Representative Rick Stemmann, Baileys Nurseries. Any questions contact Bergmanns in Clayton for details.

Autumn Fest-September 27th & 28th, 2008. If master gardeners want a table at the event to publicize our organization it will be manned Saturday the 27th from 9-5PM. Contact Bob Kazmierski or www.scfwi.com for more information. Festival is emphasizing arts, nature and sustainability. Let Fritz know if interested in a table. using donated. We could save the donated plants for projects where money was not available.

EDUCATION

Gail Peavey, extension agent arranged for GERALYN KARL & JODI –Master Gardening food preservers. GERALYN & JODI shared their expertise on canning many foods and offered us publications from the University of Wisconsin extension office. These recipes are tested in U of W kitchens and therefore can be endorsed and recommended for our use. If you would like more information or additional help you can contact Gail Peavey at the extension office. Handouts can be purchased thru the extension offices on Tomatoes, Salsas, Freezing Fruits & Vegetables, Jams & Jellies.

GERALYN & JODI shared with us the fact that canning procedures have changed in recent years due to changes in our food grown. With development of more disease resistant and shorter growing season varieties along with PH level & acidity levels the handling of foods has changed. Polk County is 1000-3000 ft sea level.

Before canning or freezing your foods you have to decide & measure whether it is cost effective to preserve by taking into account:

How much energy it will take to preserve & process;

How much time do you have to get food ready

How much time to process

How does it look when done

An example was in tomatoes-25 minutes at 11# for Pressure Canning is recommended and in Water Bath canning it is recommended to process for 90 minutes, including the addition of lemon juice or citric acid to bring up proper acidity level.

Water bath jams & jellies for at least 5 minutes for proper seal-no longer is it recommended to turn your hot jelly upside down to seal.

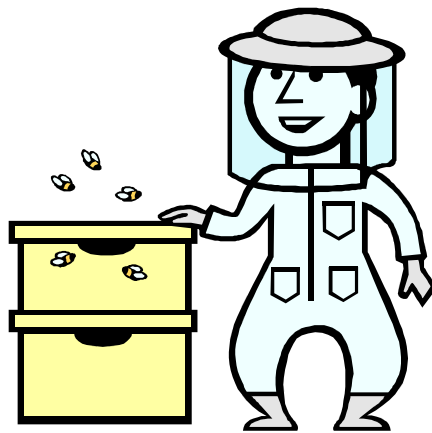
If any food is processed for 10 minutes or longer no matter which process used-water bath or pressure canning sterilization of jars is not necessary as long as washed in hot soapy water beforehand and kept hot until placing food item to be processed.

Dishwashers are NOT recommended for cleaning jars before hand since temperature of water vary and food fragments can be left as residue on jars.

Both Jodi & GERALYN recommended the new edition of Ball Canning Book which has the newest canning & freezing recommendations & is full of recipes. It is not endorsed by U of W because all recipes have not been tested but has been a long standing and trusted company of canning information and materials. Another publication was SO EASY TO PRESERVE by University of Georgia.

Information is also available for freezing & dehydrating foods and recommended containers. Frozen food retains more nutrients especially in our foods. It is also no longer recommended to puree your squash & pumpkin but leave in chunks with water. The bioavailability of orange foods are kept higher with canning. New standards say bacteria & microorganisms can grow when food is so tightly packed. Don't boil lids just bring to a simmer so sealing of lids are not compromised. They also recommended when using any type of hot peppers no matter how mild to always use gloves. The peppers contain oils and heat is in the seeds but those oils can make your skin burn and the oils transfer to eyes, nose or mouth if touched without washing thoroughly. Any part of your body can have the oils transferred which can be quite uncomfortable.

Next meeting Monday, October 20th at 6:45PM at Polk County Government Building, NW conference room. Education topic will be Dan Raether from Amery on beekeeping & honey and how important bees are to our society.





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

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.

MAKE SURE TO TURN IN YOUR HOURS TO KEEP YOUR CERTIFICATION.