

## WPT Garden Expo brings a little bit of springtime to Wisconsin

By Moira Harrington

Winter-weary Wisconsinites, how does your garden grow—with silver bells and cockleshells?

Naw, none of that outmoded stuff. In several weeks, when it's sunny and spring-like outside, the gardening hardy will be thinking of dwarf conifers and native prairie plants, tended and trimmed with state-of-the-art backyard irrigation systems and razor-sharp pruning shears, enhanced by whimsical new garden sculptures and creative landscaping.

All of this, and more, is available for viewing, testing and purchase at the eighth annual Wisconsin Public Television (WPT) Garden Expo, Feb. 9 through 11, in Madison.

University of Wisconsin-Extension agents will be on hand to offer advice and tips on a wealth of gardening and environmental issues. Five booths will be devoted to the departments of Soil and Plant Analysis, Plant Disease Pathology, Entomology, Horticulture and Plant Health Sciences.

Additionally, participants in the University of Wisconsin-Extension Master Gardener Program will be in attendance to talk about their



Shelley Ryan of *The Wisconsin Gardener* will answer your questions at the WPT Garden Expo.

service to communities through leading tours, helping to restore or clean up public lands, working with 4-H groups or lending advice to anyone with a gardening question.

Shelley Ryan, producer/host of WPT's *The Wisconsin Gardener* program and a master gardener, will be available at the WPT booth to answer questions.

Visitors can enjoy 300 exhibits by florists, garden suppliers and any

of the many gardening associations in the state, such as the Hosta Society. More than 70 seminars and 30 demonstrations will focus on topics including home landscaping, vegetable gardening, backyard pond construction, sensible herbicide and pesticide use, and more. There will also be a 1,200-square-foot custom garden display created by the Wisconsin Landscape Contractors Association.

A new feature this year is the Friday cooking demonstrations sponsored by Prairie Oak Press, with food sampling and cookbook sales. The three sessions feature Marjorie Snyder and Suzanne Breckenridge, authors of *The Wisconsin Herb Cookbook*; the Madison Herb Society; and Colleen Lace of Colleen's Tough Times in Neenah discussing vinegars.

Special highlights include an 8 a.m. Saturday broadcast from radio station WIBA, Madison, featuring WPT's Ryan and recently retired Dane County UW-Extension horticulture agent Jim Schroeder.

All proceeds from the event, which is presented by the Friends of WHA-TV, benefit WPT programming.

### WISCONSIN PUBLIC TELEVISION



**Feb. 9 - 11**

Alliant Energy Center  
1919 Expo Way, Madison

Friday, 4 - 8 p.m.  
Saturday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sunday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

At the door: \$5  
Advance tickets:  
\$4, one day  
\$8, two days  
\$10, three days  
Children 12 and under are free. Admission does not include parking.

Call (800) 253-1158 for advance tickets (Visa or MasterCard), or send a check or money order payable to "Garden Expo," to:  
Garden Expo  
821 University Ave.  
Madison, WI 53706-1412

For more information about Garden Expo and advance ticket sales outlets:  
[www.wpt.org/events/garden\\_expo2001.html](http://www.wpt.org/events/garden_expo2001.html)

## Multiculturalism the focus of program impacts workshop

By Jo Futrell

"Unless we can show how and to what degree University of Wisconsin-Extension programs positively impact our society," says Marv Van Kekerix, UW-Extension provost and vice chancellor, "we will not be able to persuade the public to continue to provide us with resources."

The third annual program impacts workshop, to be held at the Kalahari Conference and Resort Center in the Wisconsin Dells March 5 and 6, will focus on the theme "Evaluating Impact in Our Multicultural Environment." The workshop is sponsored by the Program Impacts Initiative, with funding and support from the vice-chancellor's office.

"It is a professional development opportunity for faculty and staff in all divisions," says Ellen Taylor-Powell, associate program leader and evaluation specialist. "It is designed to build evaluation capacity among faculty and staff so that we can effectively document impact and tell our Extension story."



**"If we are to have a positive impact on our increasingly diverse society, we must incorporate the value of multiculturalism into our efforts. If we fail to do so, we run the risk of losing our relevance to society as a whole."**

—Marv Van Kekerix  
UW-Extension vice chancellor and provost

"The two-day workshop always combines best practices and skill development, enabling participants to improve their responsibilities for programming and evaluation," Taylor-Powell says.

Evaluation and accountability are important to UW-Extension's future. The workshop's focus on multiculturalism reflects UW-Extension's commitment to serving our diverse constituents throughout Wisconsin.

"Multiculturalism is an important principle for sound evaluation and programming practice," Van Kekerix says. "In today's environment, we need to show evidence

of impact for the programs and services we provide."

Bringing a multicultural focus to the evaluation workshop will provide participants with an opportunity to:

- increase their ability to conduct culturally appropriate evaluation;
- increase their skills in using different evaluation methods;
- learn about multicultural evaluations;
- extend their understanding of the institutional program impacts initiative; and
- engage in cross-divisional sharing and learning.

**To learn more about program impacts, see page 2**

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## Message from the Chancellor

As University of Wisconsin-Extension employees, partners and friends, you help make the benefits of education and research available to all Wisconsin residents. Your efforts today continue a proud tradition of excellence in extension education, one that long ago placed Wisconsin at the forefront of university outreach and service.

In 1885, the University of Wisconsin Regents introduced the Short Course in agriculture, and secured \$5,000 in state funding to establish educational institutes for farmers. An estimated 50,000 farmers attended those first winter sessions.

By the time Charles Van Hise became president of the University of Wisconsin in 1903, this groundbreaking effort had been so successful that an appropriation of \$20,000 per year passed both legislative houses by a unanimous vote.

Twelve years later, Van Hise was the keynote speaker at the first meeting of the National University Extension Association (now known as the University Continuing Education Association) in Madison. He opened that address by proposing that the university embrace an idea of public service, "to carry to the

people knowledge which they can assimilate for their betterment along all lines."

"Carrying out knowledge to the people," he said, "requires the highest grade of experts. It involves comprehensive knowledge of the more recent advances along all lines. The work of carrying knowledge must be organized at some center. What other organization can meet these specifications better than a university?"

Van Hise concluded his address by challenging universities to assist every individual in her or his efforts to pursue learning and develop natural gifts. "This then is the purpose of University Extension - to carry light and opportunity to every human being in all parts of the nation; this is the only adequate ideal of service for the university."

Theodore Shannon, dean of UW's University Extension Division, echoed Van Hise's interpretation in 1965, saying, "the primary role of extension is to help lift the life of the state to higher planes."

Today, our budget process is a bit more complicated than in Van Hise's day, and the importance of our commitment to lifelong learning has increased in the information



Charles R. Van Hise, extension education pioneer

age. In county offices, on UW campuses and in broadcasting studios, the service of UW-Extension employees and our educational partners help bring a positive influence to the lives of Wisconsin residents.

By supporting in the delivery of modern university extension programs, you help carry on a proud Wisconsin tradition, fulfill the dreams of educational pioneers and demonstrate your continuing dedication to the Wisconsin Idea. Thank you.

Kevin P. Reilly  
Chancellor  
[reilly@admin.uwex.edu](mailto:reilly@admin.uwex.edu)

Bouquets to UW-Extension faculty and staff who helped make the State Employee Combined Campaign of Dane County a success. Jennifer Grondin, Dane County SECC coordinator for Extension, reports that \$43,505.37 was contributed by Dane County-based Extension staff, an increase over last year of \$5,776.47. The average gift increased by \$28, and 29.4% of you participated, a 7% increase.



John Kunz, UW-Superior Continuing Education/Extension, received a \$45,000 grant from the Metropolitan Life Foundation to support a

yearlong project to produce a videotape and booklet to educate people about writing their life stories.

University of Wisconsin-Madison Professor Harv Thompson has received the 2000 Robert E. Gard Wisconsin Idea Foundation Award for



Excellence. Thompson, a professor of Theater Arts, Division of Continuing Studies, Department of Liberal Studies and the Arts, accepted the award in Appleton Nov. 18.

Thompson is founder of the Wisconsin Theater Association. He co-produces the Wisconsin High School Theatre Festival, produces the annual Theater Auditions in Wisconsin and serves as director of the School for the Arts in Rhinelander. Thompson is chair of the Liberal Studies and the Arts department at UW-Madison. He also oversees the Arts Seminars Abroad program.

The Wisconsin Public Television documentary "Water Rich, Water Poor" took top honors in the category of feature-length documentaries in a statewide competition conducted by the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association. Producer Art Hackett drew on the expertise of University of Wisconsin-Extension hydrogeologists, agricultural specialists and others for the film that assesses the state of Wisconsin's historically rich water resources, which recently have registered some troubling signs.

## Program Impacts

# Q&A

News and Ideas asked University of Wisconsin-Extension evaluation specialist Ellen Taylor-Powell to explain some of the topics to be covered in the upcoming program impacts workshop.

**Q: What do we mean by "impact"?**

**A:** Impact refers to the difference we are making for Wisconsin's people, families, businesses, communities and the environment. Impact is the results, the effect, the outcome of the Extension educational effort. We see these words a lot these days. They are part of the accountability vocabulary where we are responsible for results that matter to our stakeholders. It is not just about numbers who participate or what we do, it is about the difference our educational effort makes for people. Impact is the answer to the question, "So what?"

**Q: How do responses to our programs translate to impacts?**

**A:** Impacts usually signify improvements or changes that are made in awareness, knowledge, skills, understanding, motivation, behavior, practices, decision mak-



Ellen Taylor-Powell

ing or policies that ultimately result in social, economic, environmental and civic improvements. The number of people who attend an Extension program would not be an impact; the skills gained by those participants and their ability to function differently as a result of the program would be an impact.

**Q: Why does the workshop this year focus on multicultural evaluation?**

**A:** Not only is UW-Extension committed to diversity and Plan 2008, but many of us are also working in new situations with different clientele groups. It is a changing world. Often our perspectives and ideas are challenged or seem inadequate. In these situations, what is good or reliable evaluation? How do we know what difference we are making? What is appropriate evaluation and how do we conduct it? What biases and prejudices do we hold that may be determining how we evaluate and the information we collect?

As we move forward with our diversity and multicultural agenda within UW-Extension, it seemed

### GWETC applications due March 17

Applications to present at the Governor's Wisconsin Educational Technology Conference (GWETC) 2001 will be received online at [www.gwetc.org](http://www.gwetc.org) mid-February through March 17.

This year's conference will be held Oct. 29-31 at the KI Center and Regency Suites in Green Bay.

GWETC presentations will be divided into six tracks: Curriculum Integration; Distance Education; Emerging and Future Technologies; Policy/Administration; Professional Development; and Technology Infrastructure.

GWETC is co-sponsored by the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, Department of Public Instruction, Educational Communications Board, TEACH Wisconsin, Wisconsin Technical College System and University of Wisconsin-Extension.

appropriate to begin focusing on building our competencies in culturally appropriate evaluation.

For more information:  
[www1.uwex.edu/impacts/](http://www1.uwex.edu/impacts/)

# Home Garden Project builds communities

By Amy Pikalek

As a young girl, Marie Simpson loved tending the family garden. She maintained her own vegetable garden for many years, until recently when the heavier physical work became too difficult for her. Then, last summer, she got a special gift. A group of volunteers from the Madison Home Garden Project came to her home and built a raised-bed garden for her and planted a variety of vegetable seeds.

"I loved it. It was just like old times," Simpson says. "I spent a lot of time out there in my garden."

Rick Brooks, outreach program manager, Professional Development and Applied Studies, Division of Continuing Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison, explains that a small grant from the Kellogg Foundation in 1997 got the project started. Brooks says he initiated the project because he sees gardens as one way of building a sense of community for people with developmental disabilities. Last year, the program was expanded to include senior citizens like Simpson.

"Our philosophy is to build a sense of community around food," Brooks says. "There's a natural sense of community created when people break bread together—this is particularly true for people who live in isolation. We need reasons to bring people together, and food has always been one of the best ones."

According to Brooks, individuals living in low-income households frequently have very poor diets. One goal of the Madison Home Garden Project is to teach the value of a high-grain, high-protein diet. The program emphasizes that gardens are a source of healthy, affordable vegetables, and the participants learn where the food they eat comes from. The program also helps foster a sense of sharing, knowledge of gardening, and awareness of personal abilities and limitations, adds project director Audrey Lesondak.

"This project is aimed at letting individuals with developmental disabilities experience the growing of their own flowers and vegetables. We teach them how to grow, prepare, serve and enjoy their own food," says Brooks.

Each spring, Brooks and other volunteers construct four-by-eight-foot raised-bed gardens for their gardeners. The Madison Home Garden Project also provides seeds and compost, much of which is donated by area businesses. Volunteers plant the seeds, and many come back to visit the gardeners.

Since the inception of the Madison Home Garden Project, volunteers have built approximately 35 garden beds that have served more than 150 people. According to Lesondak in follow-up surveys, more than half the gardeners

## How to contribute to the Madison Home Garden Project

- Donate two hours of time on a Saturday during the spring to help build a garden
- Organize a group of volunteers to put in one of the beds
- Serve as a liaison with a new gardener by answering questions and connecting him or her to appropriate resources
- Donate money, supplies or gardening tools

For more information: [Audrey Lesondak](mailto:Audrey.Lesondak@uwex.edu), (608) 242-9202.



Through gardens created by Madison Home Garden Project volunteers, senior citizens like Marie Simpson (second from left) and people with developmental disabilities can experience the satisfaction of growing their own vegetables and flowers and reap important nutritional benefits as well.

reported that they continued to use their garden after the first year and continued to request seeds, materials and assistance.

"We want to continue the program in Madison and actually spread it out to surrounding communities,"

Brooks says. "What we really need, more than anything right now, are volunteers to help us."

"I would recommend the project to others," Simpson says. "It's so heartwarming. It's really a lovely experience."

## Virtual reading room promotes "book club" discussions

By Joel Bradtke

When was the last time you had a "book club" type discussion about an important title that you and your colleagues had read?

If you're scratching your head, you're not alone. Few people today find the time.

Faculty and staff at University of Wisconsin-Extension's Center for Community Economic Development (CCED) are out to change that. With help from Cooperative Extension's Web designers, the CCED's Bill Pinkovitz has created a Web-based reading room as a professional development tool.

"It came out of a New Year's resolution to read more books appropriate to our field," says Pinkovitz. "Now we have about 20 agents who want to participate in our online discussions. Anyone who wants to take the time to read can join."

Pinkovitz says that while the books selected for discussion have good interest, it is difficult to find a time when everyone can participate in a teleconference-type discussion. A virtual reading room, with 24-hour availability for contributing to the discussion, was the logical solution.

Each book has a volunteer online discussion moderator with about a six-week window for discussion.

The Web site has a local review of the title and a link to another published review, if available. Participants can click on a "forum" icon to gain access to the room where they can post their comments.

Pinkovitz says the CCED staff would like to arrange for about eight book discussions a year.

## Join the Discussion

The Center for Community Economic Development has a "reading room" Web site for online discussions of relevant books for professional development.

**Book through Feb. 28:**  
*Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* by Robert D. Putnam

**Moderator:** Gerald Campbell, CCED

**To join the discussion:**  
[extra.uwex.edu/ces/cced/readingroom2/index.cfm](http://extra.uwex.edu/ces/cced/readingroom2/index.cfm)

## Tech tips

By Dana Burmaster

### Viruses, hoaxes and legends, oh my!

Do feel like Dorothy in the Land of Oz when determining what is really a dangerous virus and what is a hoax? Follow these tips and you'll be on your way to skipping virus-free down the yellow brick road to computer knowledge.

- **Don't, as a matter of course, forward virus announcements.** First check the following links to determine whether there really is a virus, and what you should do about it.  
Vmyths.com: [www.Vmyths.com/](http://www.Vmyths.com/)  
About.com: [urbanlegends.miningco.com/science/urbanlegends/library/hlhoax.htm](http://urbanlegends.miningco.com/science/urbanlegends/library/hlhoax.htm)  
CIAC Hoax Pages: [HoaxBusters.ciac.org/](http://HoaxBusters.ciac.org/)
- **Keep your virus software up to date.** Virus software requires periodic updates, usually available at the manufacturer's Web site. Check with your IT staff if you're unsure about your software package.
- **Play it safe with e-mail attachments.** Don't open e-mail attachments that aren't from a reliable source. You won't infect your system as long as you don't open the attachment.
- **Be skeptical.** There's lots of valid information out there on the Internet. There's also a lot of *misinformation* as well. Don't forward chain letters, which tend to be time-wasting hoaxes and could spread a virus. Remember the Love Bug virus before you click!

Have a computer-related question? [burmaster@admin.uwex.edu](mailto:burmaster@admin.uwex.edu)  
Look for an answer in a future issue of *News and Ideas*.

Dana Burmaster is webmaster for University of Wisconsin-Extension's Web site: [www.uwex.edu](http://www.uwex.edu).



## Extension horticultural advice counts

By Mary Ellen Bell

University of Wisconsin-Extension has many faces: the professors who teach continuing education courses for adults; the county-based faculty who offer local programs for youth, families, businesses and farmers; and the broadcasters and engineers at Wisconsin Public Radio and Television. But Extension's best-known face may be the face of the gardener.

Every year more than 25,000 people in the Milwaukee area alone call InfoSource to hear taped answers to their gardening questions. Another 10,000 call the Milwaukee area Dial-a-Garden-Tip, and 3,500 call to talk to a horticulturist or master gardener volunteer in person. In other cities, like Madison and Green Bay, horticulture agents and volunteer Extension master gardeners answer thousands more questions each year.

"Horticulture is something that interests almost everyone, whether they have a big garden or just a plant on the window sill," says Sharon Morrissey, UW-Extension

horticulture agent in Milwaukee County.

Many people who call for horticultural advice might have no other reason to contact Extension, Morrissey says. But when they have a tree that looks sick, or they'd like to try to keep this year's poinsettia plant and make it bloom again next December, they call the county Extension office for advice.

"We don't even have to publicize much," Morrissey explains. "People come to us wanting our services. And when they come, they are ripe for learning. We get them at 'The Teachable Moment.'"

In addition to assisting homeowners and amateur gardeners, Extension horticulture specialists and agents help horticulture industry, professional gardeners and grounds-keepers.

"Most people don't realize that horticulture is a major sector of this state's economy. It's a multi-million dollar business," Morrissey says. A large number of people are employed in horticultural businesses, garden centers and seed



The estimated 70,000 people who stopped at the Milwaukee County UW-Extension exhibit at the Wisconsin State Fair last summer had a chance to pick up gardening tips and talk with master gardener volunteers like Manley Hurst (left). Hurst was one of 130 master gardener volunteers who staffed the exhibit during the fair.

### Extension answers the calls

Every year, gardeners pick up the phone to find out why the lilies are listless or the flowering crab tree is in a bad mood. Here are some tallies from some of the state's gardening hotbeds:

- In the Milwaukee area, Extension fielded a total of 38,500 questions in 2000 from home gardeners through an automated tape service, prerecorded gardening tips and one-on-one consultations either by phone or in person.
- Dane County's Ann Munson received 3,300 calls last year from home gardeners looking for information.
- Last year Paul Hartman in Brown County answered 4,000 home gardening questions. Three years ago, when the county had more staff in the horticulture program, 7,000 questions were answered.
- In Brown County, the annual Botanical Fair in June 2000, run by Extension master gardeners and the Landscape Contractors Association, attracted about 10,000 visitors.
- At the Wisconsin State Fair last year, southeast Wisconsin master gardener volunteers answered gardening questions and staffed a demonstration garden that attracted over 70,000 visitors.

For gardening information:

[www.uwex.edu/ces/wihort/](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/wihort/)

For information about becoming

a master gardener: [www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener/](http://www.hort.wisc.edu/mastergardener/)

companies, or work as professional gardeners and horticulturists caring for public gardens, golf courses, parks, sports venues and other land owned or used by the public.

This spring, UW-Extension's professional horticulturists and volunteer master gardeners begin another season of garden shows, leading up to major exhibits next summer at county and state fairs. Last year, more than 70,000 people stopped at the Milwaukee County Extension horticulture exhibit at the Wisconsin State Fair, an exhibit staffed throughout the event by 130 Extension-trained master gardener volunteers.

"Most garden shows are in the larger cities, with Milwaukee, Madison and Green Bay holding the biggest shows," Morrissey says.

In addition to helping both the horticulture industry and individual gardeners, Extension horticulture educators also address some important public issues.

- In several communities, Extension works with neighborhood groups to develop community gardens where volunteer gardeners grow vegetables and donate them to food pantries, where gardening space is made available for low-income families, and where children who live in the city learn about nature and the joys and rewards of gardening.
- In a Milwaukee County park, Urban Gardening Coordinator Dennis Lukaszewski developed an "accessible garden" where he offers weekly gardening sessions with clients from Easter Seals and Goodwill.
- Extension horticulturists teach homeowners, naturalists and land managers to identify and control the spread of invasive plant species that threaten the environment.
- They teach homeowners who live in urban areas how to co-exist with urban wildlife, while keeping the rabbits and deer out of the vegetable garden.



Don Schutt

### Career planning tips on ETN Feb. 12

Learn how you can become the architect of your career through professional planning and development at this year's all-academic staff Educational Teleconference Network (ETN) session Feb. 12, noon – 12:50 p.m. "Planning for Professional Development" will be lead by Don Schutt, director of human resource development at UW-Madison.

To find the nearest ETN site location: [www.uwex.edu/ics/etn/siteinfo.htm](http://www.uwex.edu/ics/etn/siteinfo.htm)

To set up a dial-in procedure in advance: Michael Heinrichs, (608) 262-1598

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