



JUNEAU COUNTY
MASTER GARDENERS ✨
NEWSLETTER

December 2020

UW-Madison | Division of Extension
Juneau County



Greetings Master Gardeners and Master Gardener Friends!

As we reflect on 2020, let's try to find some positives to remember this time of our lives rather than the challenges that we have faced this year. I can say that 2020 has brought many ups and downs in my life this year. However focusing on the positives I have spent a lot of time in the outdoors more this year, spent time with family, and spent time with our new puppy we got in April. This year also brought an engagement for Cody and me after eight years together. I am sure many of you have had similar happiness brought into your and your family's lives as well and I look forward to the day we can chat and learn about all of the good news in each of your lives as well.

With Covid we might not have been able to do as many volunteer projects like we normally would, but offered the opportunity to work on your continuing education hours. With the actual volunteer hours relaxed this year it is allowing many to get certified or recertified as a Master Gardener Volunteer. If you are still working on completing your hours in the Online Reporting System (ORS) please feel free to reach out to me and I can gladly help walk you through the process. With the Master Gardener program slowed down a bit, Mike and Amy have been working hard in the State office to bring new ideas and to revamp the Master Gardener program in 2021. I hope you are just as excited as I am to hear what these new updates will be for the Wisconsin Master Gardener Program.

I think 2020 truly was a year of learning and finding new ways to reach out to our communities, family, and friends. What new tricks, tips, and techniques have you learned in this past year? Maybe you tried a new hobby or perfected a new recipe (which I am sure we are all looking forward to getting to try!). Maybe you tried a new technique in your garden and you are ready to share the news with all of your gardening friends! I think we can create many new opportunities from the various things each of us learned in this unique year.

I am offering an opportunity for us to come to celebrate the end of 2020 and the start of 2021 with a Juneau County Town Hall meeting. This is not a mandatory meeting or a regular monthly meeting, but rather one for us to all come together via Zoom to enjoy a chance to "see" and chat with our fellow friends. Let's discuss what made 2020 difficult and how we can make 2021 the best year yet in our lives! I understand that Zoom is new to many and can seem to be a hassle, but it can also be a gift to have to chat with others we have not seen in the past year. I am more than happy to help you figure out what is the best way for you to connect with us on the Zoom. I have scheduled this Town Hall meeting for Monday, January 25th at 6 pm. You can call in with your phone or join via a smart phone/tablet/or computer. I just look forward to the opportunity to chat with you! You will see the details below for how to join the Zoom.

Lastly, take time this holiday season to appreciate the memories, your loved ones, and good health. May you all have a very happy holiday season and know that my thoughts are with you all! We will pull through these difficult times through team work and compassion and strength.

Have a very happy, healthy holiday and see you in 2021!

Keep Smiling,

Alana Voss



Wisconsin Master Gardener Program

By Mike Maddox, MGP Outreach Program Manager



For the last several months we've kept things pretty quiet here. The pandemic has hit our volunteer programs pretty hard. When there is over 2600 volunteers who reach thousands of people each year, it's tough to do that when social distancing and small groups become the norm. It was our hope to safely and patiently wait this out.

Now, this year is quickly coming to a close, and, thankfully, I got the best gift last night to help get me through these upcoming weeks. BEE THE CHANGE. It's bright. It has a plant theme. It is my size. It's the optimism I need at this very moment to close out 2020 and welcome in 2021. I hope you can find your way through the next few weeks and have a fun and safe celebration to all the holidays and the New Year.

In the meantime, volunteers in our MG program have just a few things left to do before we can say hindsight is 20/20.

🐝 You have until noon, December 31, 2020 to report a minimum of 10 hours of continuing education. 🐝

You may report less than 24 hours of volunteer activity for 2020. Due to COVID-19, we have suspended the volunteer hour requirement.

Starting at noon on December 31 the ORS will ONLY allow hours for 2021 (January 1 to December 31) to be entered. Staff will be required to enter retroactive hours at this point.

Your volunteer hours are an important metric for our Master Gardener Program. Your continuing education conveys your commitment to continued professional development. When this is paired with volunteer activities (in non-COVID years) it demonstrates one way you help extend knowledge of gardening to all corners of the state through your efforts in answering gardening questions, educating others, and gardening projects.

We are on the home stretch of 2020! Though I was never a runner in track (I threw things instead), I do know not to let up at the finish line: 2020 was a year of many hurdles. We've done the best that we could and now all we have to do is finish. Thankfully, our finish now coincides with many opportunities to celebrate. Hanukkah. Christmas. New Years. Solstice. Please find a way to safely celebrate the year with your friends and family.

Lots of important updates in the December Vibe including: Password issues, Annual enrollment, New volunteer opportunity, Larry Meiller CE update. We highly recommend you read this month! [Vibe12-2020 - Google Docs](#)

Mike Maddox



Congratulations Vada and Dwayne Olson



A Necedah Kindness Award was presented to Vada and Dwayne Olson at the Necedah Fire Station at a community celebration after the Christmas parade on December 12.

The winning nomination told of how Vada and Dwayne Olson recently retired after 13 years of dedicated volunteer management of the Necedah Food Pantry. And how the pantry grew and expanded thanks to their great leadership.

Vada and Dwayne are past member of the Juneau County Master Gardeners.

Congratulations to Vada and Dwayne Olson on your well-deserved award! Thank you for all that you do!

JUNEAU COUNTY MASTER GARDENER PROJECTS:

Anyone interested in helping on any of these, please contact person listed. This is a great way to accumulate volunteer support hours towards certification.

- Adopt-a-Highway – Maureen Fox, 462-4228
 - Cleaning trash along Highway 58 South of Mauston
- Boorman House – Margarete Hummelbeck, 562-3856
 - Garden renovation around the Juneau County Historical Society Boorman House
 - Watering and Shade Garden – Natty Kranz, 547-1884/Marion Koca, 847-4580/ Lutrelle Manna, 547-3213
- Buckhorn State Park Project –
 - Maintain plantings and gardens around the office and cabins
- Carl W. Nelson Animal Shelter – Jan Brendle, 565-7290/Rosemary Aney, 847-5558
 - Planting annuals and maintaining flower bed
- Elroy Fair – Bev Kozlowski; 608-853-0300
 - Manning booth for distributing MG information and plant sales
- Facebook Site – Beth Pusel, 547-6172/ Diane Hamm, 547-9404
 - Administrating and maintaining Facebook website
- Juneau County Fair – Marsha Lubinski, 847-5166
 - Entering an Open Class Booth with MG information
- Lyndon Station Veterans Memorial Park – Natty Kranz, 547-1884
 - Maintaining grounds
- Mauston Food Pantry Flower Beds – Marsha Lubinski, 847-5166
 - Planting annuals and maintaining flower bed
- New Lisbon City Planters – Arris Sullivan, 562-5181
 - Planting annuals and maintaining flower beds/planters
- Necedah Nat'l Wildlife Refuge and Butterfly Program– Audrey Traver, 608-427-3761
 - Planting annuals and maintaining flower beds/planters
- Stewart Chapel – Herb & Diane Dannenberg, 847-4395/Margie Miller, 847-5541
 - Planting annuals and maintaining flower beds/planters



Key pointers on poinsettias

- The poinsettia, a tropical shrub, grows natively in Mexico and Central America. The Aztecs called it cuetlaxochitl or "star flower." The red petals — actually bracts or modified leaves — were used for dye.
- The red or otherwise colored bracts frame the plant's actual flowers, which appear as yellow clusters at the center of the bracts. For the longest-lasting poinsettias, choose plants with little or no yellow pollen showing.
- Contrary to popular belief, poinsettias are not poisonous to humans or pets.
- Poinsettias are not frost-tolerant. They will grow outdoors in temperate coastal climates, such as Southern California beach communities even 10 feet tall.



Care for poinsettias

- Place your poinsettia in indirect light after bringing it home. Poinsettias need six hours of light daily (fluorescent light will work).
- Keep your plant away from cold windows, warm or cold drafts from furnaces or air conditioners, and open doors and windows.
- Poinsettias do best at daytime temperatures of 65 to 70 degree.
- Check the soil daily. Punch holes in the pot's foil cover so water can drain into a saucer then discard. Water the plant when the soil is dry.
- Don't fertilize poinsettias while in bloom. If kept past the holiday season, apply a houseplant fertilizer once a month.

Want to rebloom next year?

Poinsettias need at least 14 hours of complete darkness each night for six to 10 weeks to trigger bloom. If you manage to keep your potted poinsettia alive until next fall, you can trick it into bloom. Every night, place a lightproof bag over the plant or put it in a closet to force the bloom in time for Christmas.



December Gardening Tips

When thinking of your Christmas list, gifts for gardeners are plentiful but how do you decide? A garden journal or subscription to a gardening magazine or gift memberships to a local botanic garden or nature center, and/or even a gift certificate from a garden center might be a useful and thoughtful idea.

The multitude of tools and supplies that are out there are often a personal choice. Anything that looks like a nifty new twist on a tool or technique are always a good bet that a gardener would be itching to try. However almost any gardener would still appreciate the basics: gardening gloves with reinforced or rubberized fingers, by-pass blade type pruners and loppers and pruning saws; tools with single piece construction from the humble trowel to the long-handled spade; ergonomically designed tools to reduce physical strain on wrists, backs and knees; kneeling pads; wheel barrow; mowers.

There are three surefire suggestions: Holiday gift plants such as poinsettia and Christmas cactus or an amaryllis already potted and ready to grow. Finally your garden might also provide gifts to give such as grapevine creations, dried arrangements and baskets of homegrown herbs, oils, vinegars and potpourris.

With winter, the weather we have been having is very cold and windy already with the snow coming. Just some reminders for all that cold and snow:

- ❖ Shovel heavy snowdrifts off low-lying perennial beds, small shrubs and trees to prevent damage.
- ❖ Don't shovel snow onto perennial beds: disturbed snow is compacted and denser and can reduce oxygen to the soil.
- ❖ After severe weather inspect plants for damage. Immediate repairs can save them rather than be irreparable if neglected until spring.
- ❖ Inspect stored vegetables for signs of spoilage. Use immediately if possible or discard.
- ❖ Houseplants should be watered as needed and a shower with tepid water will give them a boost as well as a bit of fertilizer.
- ❖ Soon the spring garden catalogs will be coming in the mail. You can begin planning your gardening projects for next year. Begin by reviewing this past year's projects and revise as needed adding and changing as needed. Think about what you want to do differently and what you will do the same.
- ❖ After Christmas, the discarded tree can benefit wildlife. By moving your Christmas tree to the yard, you can provide a protection for birds; a place where they can congregate and feed.
- ❖ Another idea is to take the limbs from the tree and place them over plants to protect them from winter winds or use these limbs to hold mulch in place.
- ❖ And if you have the equipment, you could grind up your tree. Use the ground-up mulch around plants or you can compost it for future use.

❖ **And think Spring !!!!** We don't need a winter that lasts forever and that seems to just hang on and on and on.



Gifts for Gardeners

Submitted by Lutrelle Manna.

Checked with other gardeners and searched the internet to find the perfect gifts for gardeners. Included are gifts in many price ranges and levels of activity.

- State Park season passes
- Memberships to public gardens
- Gift certificates to area nurseries, greenhouses, and garden centers
- Donations in the recipient's name to public gardens
- Tools
- Hats, aprons, gloves, totes, bandanas
- Bird feeders, bird houses, bird baths
- Butterfly and bee houses
- Compost bins
- Trellises
- Grow lights
- Planter boxes
- Aromatic hand lotions
- Garden clogs or boots
- Day trips to public gardens –this is a great gift to bring people together as a group

And of course Christmas plants - to name a few:

- Poinsettia
- Christmas Cactus
- Amaryllis
- Cyclamen
- Paperwhites



how to identify CHRISTMAS CACTUS THANKSGIVING CACTUS & EASTER CACTUS



Christmas Cactus

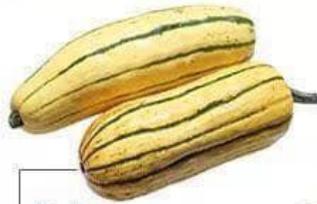


Thanksgiving Cactus



Easter Cactus

Winter Squash



Delicata

Cut into rings, brush lightly with olive oil, season & roast on a baking sheet at 425F; use as a base for a pretty salad.



Acorn

Halve, bake at 425F cut side down for 30 mins; turn, add butter, salt, lots of pepper & maple syrup, then roast for 20 mins more.



Buttercup

Transformed by steaming! Halve & steam cut side down for 20 mins. Then mash with cream or olive oil & stir in sauteed onions, garlic & thyme.



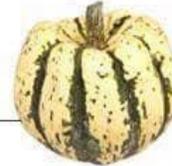
Pie Pumpkin

Small but just enough for a pie! Or cookies or muffins or pancakes or ... Halve & roast cut side down for 1 hr.



Spaghetti

Halve, bake cut side down in 1 inch of water for 30 mins at 350F. Use a fork to tease out the noodly goodness - toss with pesto.



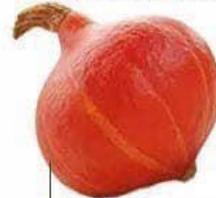
Sweet Dumpling

Cut off the top, scoop out the seeds, add butter, olive oil or cream, put the lid back on & roast for 1 hr.



Kabocha

Cut into large cubes & use in stews, chunky soups or curries. The skin is edible & nutritious!



Red Kuri

Also known as Hubbard. Makes a lovely fluffy mash.



Butternut

Perfect for soups because of its size & density. Saute with onions, garlic & tomato paste before simmering in stock.

For all of the cooking suggestions, scoop out the seeds.

off the mark .com

by Mark Parisi



CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Juneau County Master Gardener Town Hall Meeting - Jan 25, 2021 06:00 PM

Let's start 2021 off on a positive note and join together for a Town Hall meeting where volunteers and staff can join to hear updates on the Master Gardener program and discuss plans for 2021. The Town Hall meeting will be hosted via Zoom. It is recommended that you join Zoom via a computer or smart phone by downloading the Zoom application. You will be able to see visuals and many missed Master Gardener Friends if you connect via Zoom. Otherwise you can dial by phone with the unique meeting ID for each Town Hall meeting. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to reach out to Alana Voss at 608-477-3945 or alana.voss@wisc.edu prior to the event. Register to join Zoom Meeting <https://uwmadison.zoom.us/j/97354415905?pwd=WWNxOUxYZmFsREZaekZmaDFHVWVIdz09>

Listing below a number of Virtual Healthful Gardening series with Melinda Myers - 6:30-7:30

registration required at <https://www.melindamyers.com/about-melinda/upcoming-appearances>

Registrants will receive a link to the handout in a webinar reminder email one hour before the webinar

January 13, 2021 - Improve Your Indoor Environment with Houseplants - Tips for Indoor Gardening Success - Add a bit of greenery and color to your home's décor while improving your indoor air quality and elevating your mood. Whether you are new to indoor gardening or considering giving it another try, Melinda will help you select the right plants for your indoor growing conditions, interior design, and busy schedule. She will provide tips on watering, fertilizing, transplanting and more to help you keep your indoor plants looking their best.

January 20, 2021 - Grow Flavorful and Nutritional Herbs Indoors - Fight the winter blues and boost your winter meals flavor and nutrition with homegrown herbs. Plant a windowsill herb garden filled with your favorites. Melinda will tell you how to start your garden from seeds or transplants. She'll also share tips on proper care, harvesting and more.

February 17, 2021 - Growing Nutritious and Flavorful Edibles Indoors - Bring your edible garden indoors for fresh, flavorful, and nutritious additions to your winter meals. Learn how to grow microgreens on the counter, herbs on your windowsill, and how about a few fresh limes and lemons? These are all fun homegrown projects that will add flavor and nutrition to your meals, cocktails, and desserts. Melinda will also tell you how to convert kitchen scraps such as pineapple tops, avocado seeds, ginger root, and other edibles from kitchen scraps into indoor plants. Then once you have your list of edibles to grow indoors, she will share tips on how to successfully care for them and keep them producing.

February 24, 2021 - Low Maintenance Gardening for Loads of Beauty & Health Benefits - Build your physical, mental, and spiritual strength as you burn calories planting and tending your garden. Melinda will share strategies and techniques to use that will help you incorporate wonderful plants that provide nutrition, fragrance, and beauty throughout your landscape. Melinda will also discuss space and energy efficient garden design tricks to keep you gardening even when time, energy and space are limited.



Garden Visions 2021 Virtual Event - Conferences, Seminars, and Workshops | Northcentral Technical College

Visit <http://www.gardenvisions.info> for more information on speakers and presentations.

Agenda: 8:30am - 12:00pm

8:30am - 8:45am - Welcome

8:45am - 9:45am - Transitional Seasonal Containers, Mark Dwyer

9:45am - 9:50am - Break

9:50am - 10:50am - Urban Trees in the Landscape, Briana Frank

10:50am - 10:55am - Break

10:55am - 11:55am - All dressed up and nowhere to grow: Landscape Design 101, Janell Wehr

11:55am-12:00pm Wrap up

This event will be presented online via Zoom. A link will be provided prior to the event on Saturday. No Zoom account is needed to participate. Cost \$5

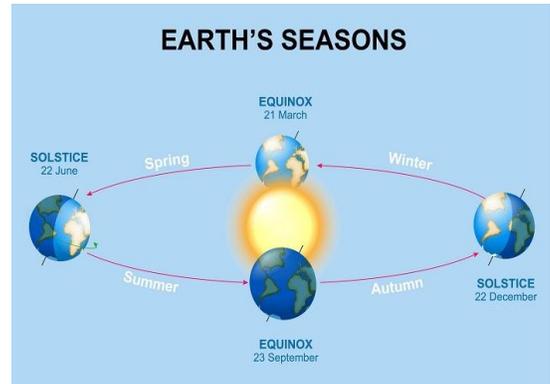
Celebrate the Winter Solstice and the Planetary Conjunction

by [Melody Rose \(melody\)](#) December 19, 2020

Monday, December 21st is the winter solstice in the Northern Hemisphere and the start of our winter.

The tilt of the Earth causes the seasons

"Winter is Coming" are the words of House Stark and it is only fitting that we say them today. However, do we really know what that means? The solstice is a word created from Latin. *Sol*, meaning sun and *stitium* meaning to stand still. The sun reaches its lowest point in the sky at noon on the winter solstice and its highest point in the sky at noon on the summer solstice. The change in the height of the sun is because the Earth is tilted on its axis 23.5 degrees, so is either that much closer to the sun for summer or further away on the winter. Whatever we are experiencing in the northern hemisphere, the southern hemisphere is experiencing the opposite. The ancients were well aware of this and they used the sun's path across the sky as a calendar that told them when to plant and when to harvest.



The solstice was important to the ancients

Our ancestors were expert astronomers. They were able to calculate the solstices and equinoxes and accurately plan for them. Their calculations were so accurate that testaments to their knowledge still stand today. The sun still rises between the sarsen stones at Stonehenge on the solstice mornings even today and the stones in this monument are believed to be between four and five thousand years old, with evidence pointing to wooden markers going back even further. This is also true of the passage grave in Newgrange, Ireland. The sunrise floods the ancient chamber at sunrise on the solstice. We have the temples at Chichen Itza and Tulum, Mexico that also have special windows aligned with the rising of the sun on the solstice. The ancient peoples not only were able to predict the day, but they were also capable of constructing buildings and temples aligned to capture the moment as well. It proves to me that they weren't uneducated savages, even though they had no written language.

Celebrate the solstice



I have my own solstice ritual that I love to do each year. As the sun sets each evening further and further to the southwest, I watch its track along the horizon. I know that once it sets to the left of the big oak tree in my neighbor's field, that it will soon head back in the other direction. Like the ancients, this gets me excited for the coming spring and I'm sure it is no coincidence that the seed companies know this too. Catalogs start arriving in my mailbox about this time and I love to spend time drooling over the offerings and planning my gardens. It is also the time that I overspend and overplant in my fantasy garden mind, however I do tend to see reality when it actually comes time to place my order and pay for my seeds. There's just something about those glossy color images of new-to-me vegetables and flowers that makes me want to grow them all.

The conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn happens on this winter solstice

The 2020 winter solstice is going to be extra special. That's right, with everything that has gone wrong in this crazy year, we're actually getting an end of the year treat. We definitely deserve it, don't we? We are getting a rare, celestial event that hasn't happened in nearly 800 years. It will be visible around the globe and you don't have to have any special knowledge of astronomy or equipment to view it. The conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn happens on the evening of the 21st and is a special phenomenon. Some are even calling it a Christmas star, even though they are planets and not stars. A conjunction is when two or more of our planets or the moon come in close proximity to each other and this one is going to be very close. They will be so close that they will appear as one to the naked eye. We have five visible planets and the moon that grace our skies and we can usually see at least one or two every night. They travel through the sky, appearing in a different place each evening. This is not like the stars that stay stationary in relation to each other. The Big Dipper looks the same every night, however our planets will move against this background and be in a different place. The ancients knew this as well and they called the planets 'wanderers'.





Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
JUNEAU COUNTY

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Send articles or other ideas for the Master Gardener Newsletter to:
Irene Klingemann, W5805 Brown Rd, Mauston WI 53948 or email
iklingemann.mstn@gmail.com

An EEO/Affirmative Action employer, University of Wisconsin-Extension provides equal Opportunities in employment and programming, including Title VI, Title IX and ADA requirements.

Season's Greetings

*From the
Juneau County Master Gardeners
We wish you all
Very Merry "Green"
& Blessed Christmas
And
Safe & Healthy
& Happy New Year*



2021 JUNEAU COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME			
ADDRESS			
CITY			
STATE	ZIP		
PHONE	()
CELL PHONE	()
E-MAIL			

If you would like to host a garden meeting, list two months of your choice:
 1st choice _____ 2nd choice _____

If you are a current Master Gardener, list the year you took your training:

If not, would you like information on becoming a Master Gardener?

ANNUAL DUES: **\$12.00** from January thru December 2021

FILL IN THIS FORM AND MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: **Juneau County Master Gardeners** AND MAIL TO:

Irene Klingemann, W5805 Brown Rd, Mauston WI 53948