



## Master Gardener State Newsletter

Spring 2008

### Inside this issue:

- *The Master Gardener Core Course 2008 Review*
- *Looking Ahead: The Master Gardener Core Course 2009*
- *Master Gardener State Conference 2008*
- *Save the Date! Events to put on your calendar*
- *State Advisory Board Update*
- *Update Training 08*
- *Meet the Plant Doctor Day*
- *Master Gardener Status: What does it REALLY mean?*
- *Update to Volunteer Online Tools: Updating your email address & contact information*
- *New Master Gardener Online Store!*



Photo: E. Bache

# Spring at Last!

If you look in the dictionary under the word "happy", you'll see a picture of a Minnesotan in spring.

Snow predications notwithstanding, there is smug satisfaction to gardeners like us when those bulbs we so painstakingly planted last fall started poking the first leaves through the soggy spring soil. Yet all we did is give them a place to grow—they are doing all the work. It is amazing that the smallest bulb or seed contains all the DNA, carbohydrates, and magic of Mother Nature to produce a lovely tulip, sunflower or mighty bur oak tree.

Like the plants we care for and teach about, the Master Gardener Program is growing as well. We welcomed 255 new interns into our program this year. Twenty-six students also took the course for University credit, and approximately 21 people took the course as ProHort students. Sixty-one of these folks took the class online. We utilized a new online registration system from Extension, and according to county coordinators, it cut down on the paperwork significantly. "Face-to-face" classes were held at the U campus in St. Paul, Rochester, New Ulm, and Willmar. Evaluations were great with interns expressing great excitement over the passion and knowledge of the instructors and the quality of course content. Thanks to all of you who served as mentors, hosts, greeters, and interviewers. A special thank you to the site coordinators for the various locations and to Linda Wasem for her assistance this first time around (for me). Everyone did a great job!

Lastly, welcome to all new Master Gardener interns! On behalf of my fellow Master Gardeners throughout Minnesota, I wish you many years of excitement in life-long learning, and the joy of volunteering! All my best ~ Julie



## Looking Ahead: Master Gardener Core Course 2009

The 2009 Master Gardener Core Course training will be offered at the Arboretum and online. Outstate, we are looking for locations in NW Minnesota. To download an application, go to the Master Gardener Program State website at <http://www.mg.umn.edu>.

The course will also be offered online, and we will offer it to ProHort students (interested in information only and no volunteering commitment) and to University students who want to take the course for credit toward their degree programs. Marketing kits will be made available for counties to help promote the course. The kits will include handouts, flyers, signage and press releases that the county can customize as needed and print for use at county fairs, information booths etc. to promote the core course in their area. One goal is to

test-drive a new core course learning package that will allow counties to teach the class any time of the year. Watch for more on that later.

### How to host the Core Course 2009

1. Your county is located in NW MN
2. Complete the application including a signature of support from your regional director, Extension Educator, or county coordinator supporting the core course in your area.
3. Submit your application to Linda Wasem at the Master Gardener State Office, 3675 Arboretum Drive, Chaska, MN 55318-9613. The State Advisory Board will review the applications and determine the sites.



# Save the Date!

## **2008 Midwest Master Gardener Conference “Gardening through the Continuum of Life”**

July 16-19, 2008

Milwaukee, WI

<http://sewmg.encampus.com/>

The theme of the 2008 conference refers to addressing the needs of gardeners of all ages and capabilities. It will be a entertaining and educational event, with tours, featured speakers that include Michael Weishan (PBS Victory Garden), Melinda Myers (WPT Great Lakes Gardener), Edward Lyon (Janesville Rotary Garden) and Gene Rothert (Chicago Botanical's Enabling Garden.Garden). Of course there will also be great tours available, terrific educational breakout sessions, a silent auction, vendors, and raffles. The Conference will be at the Wyndham Airport Hotel and Conference Center, Milwaukee.

## **2008 Minnesota State Fair, August 21—September 1, 2008**

Register through the volunteer online tools on our state website: <http://www.mg.umn.edu>

## **2008 Master Gardener State Conference**

September 12-13, 2008

Hutchinson, MN

Hosted by Meeker and McLeod Counties

## **2009 Int'l Master Gardener Conference “New Frontiers in Horticulture and Gardening”**

March 22-26, 2009

Las Vegas, NV

<http://www.unce.unr.edu/imgc/>

## **Visit Hutchinson “America’s Hometown”**

# **2008 Master Gardener State Conference**

**Never been to Hutchinson?**

**Find out more:**

<http://www.explorehutchinson.com/>

The 2008 Master Gardener State Conference will be held in Hutchinson, Minnesota., September 12-13, 2008. The conference will be hosted by Master Gardeners of McLeod and Meeker counties.

Planning is underway for great workshops, speakers and tours. This year, we are working on setting up Friday tours and a day-long hands-on rain garden class as well as Saturday classes in landscaping for wildlife, stormwater mgmt for residential properties, restoration, a propagation lab, organic growing, etc.

It will be a busy time in Hutchinson

with the Taste of Hutchinson and the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Hutchinson Arts & Crafts Festival scheduled that weekend. Watch for upcoming conference and hotel/motel information!



*Master Gardeners at the 2007 State Conference in Fergus Falls,*



## Master Gardener Status:

# What does Active, Temporarily Inactive, Emeritus, and Permanently Inactive REALLY mean?

Did you know that there are five different status categories that Master Gardeners may hold at various times of their volunteer career? They are:

- Intern
- Active Master Gardener
- Temporarily Inactive
- Emeritus
- Permanently Inactive

Master Gardeners **Interns** are in training during their first year of the program. **Active** Master Gardeners complete a minimum of 25 volunteer and 5-12 continuing education hours annually and turn in these hours to the State office. Master Gardeners who don't turn in their hours are converted to Temporarily Inactive.

**Temporarily Inactive**, or "TI", is a status approved in 2001 by the State Advisory Board. A TI Master Gardener is someone in good standing who has completed the Core Course, and at least one year of volunteer service. TI allows a Master Gardeners to still remain in the program but have a temporary leave from volunteer hours. While not encouraged, TI allows for a major change in lifestyle, such as a baby, an illness, or other circumstances that make it unrealistic for a volunteer to fulfill their volunteer hours. To be classified as TI, the local county Extension Educator or Master Gardener coordinator should approve the change and notify the state MG office. The TI

status is issued for one year only. During the second year, TI Master Gardeners are excused from volunteer hours but must complete the required hours of continuing education in their county. The maximum length of time for TI status is 2 years: 1 year with no volunteer or education hours, the second year with education, but no volunteer hours. By the third year volunteer hours must be completed or the participant will be moved to Permanently Inactive (PI) status. The year (s) of inactive status will not count towards state awards, such as 10, 15, 20 and 25-years. Temporarily Inactive Master Gardeners can still subscribe to MASTGAR and have access to educational information.

**Emeritus** or "E" is a semi-active status for Master Gardener volunteers who have made a significant contribution to the program, but now must limit active participation **usually due to health reasons**. Emeritus Master Gardeners continue to serve as a resource to other MG volunteers, and participate in Master Gardener activities and report hours if possible. Note that Emeritus is NOT an award, but a status change.

To be considered for Emeritus status, a volunteer must be an active Master Gardener with a minimum of 10 years or 1000 hours. Emeritus status may be changed to PI upon request of the volunteer or county. Requests must be initiated by the county coordinator, Extension

Educator or a Master Gardener colleague, and must be approved by the State Advisory Board.

**Permanently Inactive** or "PI" Master Gardeners are no longer active and are not completing volunteer hours. They remain in the database for record keeping purposes only. After three years in the PI status, Master Gardeners must re-take the Core Course and purchase updated materials in order to become active again. Those not continuing in the program will not be re-certified and should be aware that if they represent themselves as Master Gardeners, they are violating their original commitment to Extension.

**2007**  
**Master Gardener Stats**  
**1826 Master Gardeners**  
 1477 Active status  
 276 Interns  
 73 Emeritus status

218 Temporarily Inactive status  
**Total volunteer hrs: 106,549**

**Total Continuing Ed hrs: 30,130**

## Good Stuff:

# New Master Gardener Online Store!

Master Gardener apparel and other items is now available online! Hats, shirts, bags, pens, pencils, - even gardening gloves—can be purchased by clicking on the Master Gardener Shop on the state website. The website was created by vendor Frontier Business Forms & Promotional Products. Prices are about the same and even less in some cases than the previous items we used to offer. In addition,



*Eco friendly bag made from post-consumer recycled mate-*

items you used to have to order in quantity can now be ordered individually and delivered in about 2-3 weeks. Frontier also offers many items that are made from recycled materials. Individuals can order and pay online by credit card, or print

off the order form and mail it to Frontier with a check. County groups can also be billed for the items when ordered by a county coordinator.



*Fleeced-lined hooded jacket*

## **New Members, Subcommittees Formed**

### **New Chair, Vice Chair, & Members**

The April 18th meeting of the U of MN Extension Master Gardener State Advisory Board voted in a new chair and vice chair, welcomed several new members and thanked the outgoing members. Ken Schropfer (Isanti) was elected chair for 08-09, and Maren Christopher (Carver/Scott) was elected vice chair for 08-09. Congratulations Ken and Maren!

### **Welcome to new Board members!**

Larry Tarnow (Olmsted), Cindy Borgen (Clay), Pam Hartley (Anoka), and Larry Cipolla (Hennepin). Staff member Shirley Kooyman (Hennepin) serves in a new position as Arboretum Liaison. Sarah Jaycocks (Ramsey) as county coordinator representative. Karl Foord joined the Board, filling the Extension Educator seat. A regional director (TBA) will also be joining the Board.

### **Many thanks to outgoing members!**

Many thanks to our outgoing Board members for their great service and guidance: Tom Hutsell (outgoing chair; Rasmey), Lynne Hagen (outgoing vice chair; county coordinator rep), Colleen Wall (Washington), Nancy Hall (Cass/Crow Wing), and Sue Gooch (Stevens). You will all be missed!

### **State Subcommittees Formed**

Master Gardeners have always presented a wide array of talents and creativity, and the Board members are no exception! In an effort to increase their input and apply their ideas, three subcommittees were created by the state director, and focus on three major initiatives: Master Gardener education, financial resource development, and marketing communications. A state staff member has been assigned to each of these as a contact person: Julie Weisenhorn (Education), Dave Moen (Financial Resource Development), and Linda Wasem (Marketing Comm). Karl Foord, who, as an extension educator, focuses his efforts on horticulture marketing, will work with the marketing communications. Shirley Kooyman, who is head of adult education at the Arboretum, will work with the Education committee. The regional director will be asked to work with the financial resource development committee. The subcommittees may include non-Board Master Gardeners as participants as well.

The activities of the subcommittees include planning, fact-finding, surveying, exploration, discovery, reporting, and recommending. Members may provide information and assist the state program in implementing plans and projects that

will benefit all Master Gardener volunteers and MN citizens, and help to advance and improve the overall state program. The objectives of each subcommittee will have to match those of the state program, and fit the needs of volunteers, the program and MN citizens, and to match those of the state Program. Subcommittees may work together or may call on each other to assist in areas common to the two groups' goals.

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*The purpose of the State Master Gardener Advisory Board is to provide consensual advice and constructive input to the State Master Gardener Office in order that the State Master Gardener Office can formulate governing policies for the Master Gardener Program that conform to those of the University of Minnesota Extension Service.*

### **Calling all MGs! Volunteer for Ask A Master Gardener**

Are you pretty good with the ol' computer and enjoying digging in to find answers to people's horticulture questions? Find out how you can volunteer on the national e-Extension program *Ask A Master Gardener!* Contact Julie Weisenhorn for info on training: [weise019@umn.edu](mailto:weise019@umn.edu)

### **Many thanks to the past and current Ask A Master Gardener volunteers**

A group of MN Master Gardeners have been playing a very important role in eExtension, the national website resource for Extension in America. The extraordinary efforts of these MN Master Gardeners have paid back to MN citizens and Master Gardener a dozen-fold. They were essentially the guinea pigs and put software to the test, reporting back to eExtension on the AAMG software while answering the questions of clients in Minnesota and nearby (sometimes) states.

Please join me in thanking these people for a difficult (and unusual) volunteer job

## **The Plant Doctor is in ...**

### **American Phytopathological Society comes to the Arb**

Come to the Minnesota Arboretum on July 26<sup>th</sup> for a unique event sponsored by the American Phytopathological Society, the Minnesota Arboretum, and the University of Minnesota Extension. Plant doctors from across the country are coming together in Minnesota this summer for the American Phytopathological Society national meeting. On July 26<sup>th</sup> you will have the opportunity to meet with real plant doctors (plant pathologists) and learn the best strategies for keeping your garden healthy. Bring a sample or ask a question about your plant problem. Hear plant doctors share their expertise and diagnose plant ailments. Learn what other gardeners are concerned about and how to avoid similar problems. Find out what a plant doctor is and what they do. Hear how plant doctors make a diagnosis. UMN Extension Master Gardeners will be on-hand to explain the best way to avoid disease problems, and will teach you which diseases can be tolerated, and which should be treated. Go home with a prescription for a healthy yard and garden.

# Update Training Opportunities for Master Gardeners

Update trainings are designed to give Master Gardeners the latest info in a particular subject area. They differ from *advanced trainings* which is designed to provide more in-depth training in a particular area.

Update trainings also rotate around the state. The rotation schedule for update trainings 2008 is:

- SW MN Fruit and Vegetables
- SE MN Woody Ornamentals
- NE MN Herbaceous Ornamentals
- NW MN Turfgrass

Counties are encouraged to host update trainings and we are still seeking sites this summer and fall. To-date, the following update trainings are scheduled / pending:

September 27—Winona, MN  
Woody Ornamentals

October 4 – Pine City, MN  
Herbaceous Ornamentals

Pending dates for Turfgrass in NW MN; Sites under consideration are Moorhead, Thief River Falls and Park Rapids

Date TBA—Mankato, MN  
Woody Ornamentals

Counties interested in hosting update trainings should contact Julie Weisenhorn at [weise019@umn.edu](mailto:weise019@umn.edu)



*Up North: Lake of the Woods Master Gardeners during their summer tour '07*

## Volunteer Tools New Personal Info page, Lawn Care CD for Minnesota Landscapes

### New Personal Information Page

One of the biggest hindrances to reliable and timely communications throughout the state Master Gardener Program has been the quality of the main database of volunteers. Our access rate to Master Gardeners via our email listserves, MGSTATE and MASTGAR, has been an abysmal 42%. One reason is the fact that maintenance of email addresses has been a very inefficient process because there was no relationship between the emails in the database and the listserves. This meant a lot of manual update work. We needed automation and the Master Gardeners needed to have control for their email addresses, ensuring they were on the receiving end of web communication. State staff put their heads together with programmers and the CFANS IT staff. A new Personal Info page was created and the MGSTATE and MASTGAR listserves are being set up to pull email data from main database in real time. This means that even if an email was updated minutes before, the listserve would be as accurate as possible because it is constantly tapping the main database for email addresses.

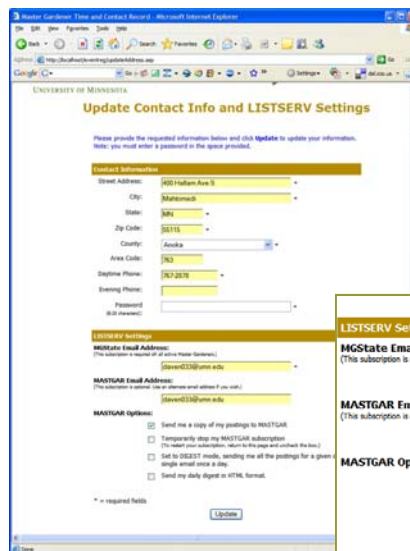
*New tool for Master Gardeners makes lawn care fun to teach!*



### “Minnesota Home Lawn Care”

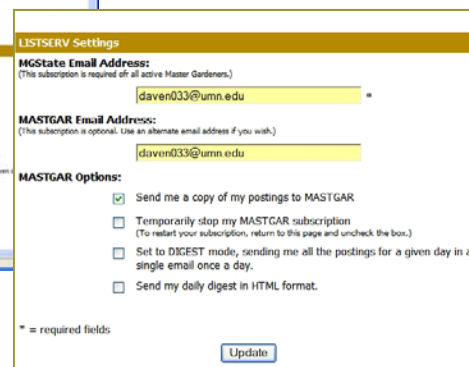
is designed as a teaching tool for Master Gardeners and Extension staff to use for presenting information on lawn care for homeowners. Developed by Bob Mugaas and Same Bauer with input from Turfgrass Science faculty, 1-2 copies have been distributed to each Master Gardener county coordinator / contact person making it available to all Master Gardeners. Additional copies will soon be available through the Extension Store at [www.shop.etxension.umn.edu](http://www.shop.etxension.umn.edu) for around \$15.00.

The CD includes six Powerpoint presentations with one being a general home lawn care presentation and the other five focusing on specific topics such as mowing and watering. There are also accompanying handouts and instructor’s notes to help Master Gardeners in their presentation.



*Close-up of the new email & listserve options*

*Left is a screen capture of the new “Update Contact Info and LISTSERV Settings” page soon to be available on the Volunteer Online Tools website.*



## University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener State Staff

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## Master Gardener Program Mission Statement & Core Values

*The mission of the University of Minnesota Extension Master Gardener Program is to support Extension by providing volunteers trained in horticulture to educate the public with research based information on the best practices in consumer horticulture and environmental stewardship.*

*The Master Gardener Program is committed to providing an environment for its volunteers that is friendly and supportive so their training, experience, and enthusiasm will produce maximum benefits to their communities. Teaching research-based information is Extension's purpose and mission. This is an important core value of Extension and Master Gardeners are expected to uphold this value.*

*Thank you for all your great work, Master Gardeners!*



### State Program Website

<http://www.mg/umn.edu>



**Master Gardeners at Macy's FLORANOVA** Macy's Department Store paid homage to the Latino culture, artists and plants during their annual flower show. Plantings were incorporated throughout jewelry, shoes and cosmetics. Hennepin County Master Gardeners volunteered as tour guides and had an "Ask A Master Gardener" booth, reaching over 1600 individuals during the event. Great job everyone!

