

FEATURED SPEAKERS FOR THE MASTER GARDENER STATE CONFERENCE

October 13th and 14th, 2017

Friday Night

6:00 to 7:00 pm – Susan Carpenter is part of the University of Wisconsin – Madison Arboretum. She will speak to the group on how Wisconsin prairies provide inspiration and a diverse native plant palette for our gardens and landscapes. This presentation will highlight versatile, sustainable, and beautiful prairie gardens. It will also cover practical tips for creating and maintaining appropriate plantings in these sunny spaces.

7:15 to 8:15pm – Edgar and Martine Anders are the proprietors of Fragrant Isle, known as the Midwest's largest lavender farm. Their discussion topics will include: the creation of Fragrant Isle; lavender in Wisconsin; conditions needed to grow lavender, such as varieties, climate, and soils; pests and disease control; and harvesting, processing and distilling.

Saturday Break Out Session

Rob Charlier-Anglim will speak on succulents. Many folks are hesitant to try these delightful plants. Rob will show how easy it can be to grow them. Rob is an Ozaukee County Master Gardener and is a member of the Southeastern Daylily Society (AHS).

Zannah Crowe of ZC Creations will speak on how pollinators are a critical component of a healthy ecosystem. What can the home gardener do to help our struggling pollinators? Garden design, plant selection and maintenance practices all play a role. This presentation will offer ways to transform your garden into a refuge for our all-important invertebrate and vertebrate pollinators. Zannah works for Johnson Gardens as a staff horticulturist.

Dr. Julie Dawson will address a concern we often have in Wisconsin: how to extend the growing season, especially for tomatoes, and how to select varieties for flavor. Wouldn't we all like some extra time to enjoy the freshness of our garden produce? Join the group to discover some ideas. Dr. Dawson is a Professor in the Horticulture Dept. at UW Madison.

Benjamin Futa will discuss how late fall and early winter are not typically considered a time of excitement in the garden. Yet there is still so much to see and experience. This presentation explores inspirational plant combinations and maintenance methods for enhancing your garden in November and beyond. Remember: brown is a color, too. Ben is Director at Allen Centennial Gardens located on the grounds of UW Madison.

Carrie Hennessy works at Johnson's Nursery. Here is what Carrie has to say about her topic: "The wild and majestic deer: King of the Forest, Enemy of the Yard. Isn't it frustrating to spend money on making the yard beautiful, only to create a salad bar for the deer that wander through? If you aren't ready to commit to a 10 foot tall fence around your property, horticulturist Carrie has tips for deterring deer, and plant suggestions that are not as tasty. It's time to take back your yard and fear the deer no more!"

Laura Kahles will cover the intriguing topic of growing mushrooms. This is quickly becoming a very popular pastime. Laura will speak on growing mushrooms on a log or in the garden. Laura works at Field and Forest in Peshtigo, WI

Mike Maddox, a well-known name amongst Wisconsin Master Gardeners, will speak on using social media to enrich county Master Gardener groups. Are you a manager of a Facebook group or page for your local MG group? Are you questioning the validity of information floating out there in social media and concerned about the appropriateness of materials to share? Are you curious about alternative ways of communicating the happenings of your MG work? This session will offer suggestions on how to improve your Facebook presence as a MG and offer best practices to promote MG related programs. (This session is targeting active Facebook users)

Amy Mae Miller owns an herbal business and is well versed in the many uses of herbs and how to grow them. Today she will focus on which herbs can be used to enhance everyday brain health. Amy Mae is the owner of Thymely Herbs of Grafton and a Master Gardener.

Jamie Patton is part of the Shawano County UW-Extension. Jamie will discuss how healthy soil is the key to a healthy garden. Jamie will cover (pun intended) how to transition to a no-till or low till garden and utilize cover crops to improve your soil's productivity, while reducing the need for inputs, such as fertilizer, water, and weeding!

Bryce Ruddock's workshop will address permaculture: a toolbox of design techniques. It is becoming widely recognized that permaculture is an essential part of revitalizing areas back to a less energy draining use. This workshop will look at how to begin using permaculture to restore habitats and provide for the needs of all species.

Kathi and Michael Rock will present a program on hummingbird gardening. Gardeners are always thrilled to see these little winged jewels darting in and out of the blossoms. Learn which plants are most attractive to this species, and which can give them the most nourishment bang for their buck! Kathi and Michael live in Madison, WI

Noel Valdes is the owner of Cobra Head Tool Company. He will give sage advice on how to grow sweet potatoes and garlic. It is easy to do so in Wisconsin – you just have to make the plants think they are in Louisiana! Noel will teach how to start, grow, and store sweet potatoes in northern climates. He will also include a brief discussion of growing garlic, and easy to grow and ideal plant for northern gardens.

Rob Zimmer will make two presentations. The morning session will cover the topic of the "Incredible Beauty of Hostas". Rob is a hosta and shade garden expert, and he will showcase the characteristics and versatility that make hostas the most popular perennial plant in the United States. You will learn new ways to garden with these breathtaking plants and be inspired to collect and grow the hosta garden of your dreams. His afternoon session will address how to create a lasting memory with a photo. How many of us have had a bounty of beautiful blossoms all at the same time, and silently wished we could freeze the moment. Using photography can help us do just that. Hear suggestions on how to capture the most in a photo, and how to arrange and preserve the pictures.