Results of the 4th Annual ECAMGA Photo Contest Announced
By Carol Cox

The results are final and the judges have made their decision. The winners of the 4th annual photo contest are:

First Place goes to Ellen Terwilliger for her photo “A Foggy Morning.” She took this picture on a foggy July morning on a walk down to the Chippewa River. Ellen says of the picture, “I got back home and looked at my meadow of flowers and saw the sunflowers glowing out of the mist. The meadow had such a different quality in the fog versus the sunlight. Light has such capacity to change a landscape and this photo reminds of that.

Second Place goes to Lori Kempen for her photo, “Hosta” (How could it be of anything else!). The picture, taken right after a rain, shows the big hosta leaves sparkling as if imbedded with diamonds.

(Continued on page 3)
Changing e-mail? Moving?

If you do, please remember to notify the ECAMG and the newsletter editor of your new e-mail address and/or mailing address so you don’t miss any Eau Claire Area Master Gardener happenings!

Email you’re new Information to Carol Cox at c7w6c2200@charter.net
Or notify her by snail mail at 1908 Hogeboom Ave., Eau Claire, WI 54701 (or call her at 715-861-4495).

ECAMGA BOARD MEMBER CONTACT INFO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME/TITLE</th>
<th>E-mail address</th>
<th>Phone number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Erin LaFaive</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Erin.lafaive@ces.uwex.edu">Erin.lafaive@ces.uwex.edu</a></td>
<td>715-839-4712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Jane Griffin</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mgriffinhlaa@gmail.com">mgriffinhlaa@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>715-835-6979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dick Lienhardt</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dicklienhardt@yahoo.com">dicklienhardt@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td>715-286-9917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Spak</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nancyspak@gmail.com">nancyspak@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>715-835-6546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ede Strand</td>
<td><a href="mailto:edestrand@aol.com">edestrand@aol.com</a></td>
<td>715-8326775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy Boettcher</td>
<td><a href="mailto:myamybird@aol.com">myamybird@aol.com</a></td>
<td>715-577-9085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carla Pelzl</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jcpelzl@gmail.com">jcpelzl@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>715-835-6628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nina Logan</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ninalogan@centurylink.net">ninalogan@centurylink.net</a></td>
<td>715-878-4585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deb Spickler</td>
<td><a href="mailto:rvsrfun@aol.com">rvsrfun@aol.com</a></td>
<td>715-577-8500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lori Kempen</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lorikempen@charter.net">lorikempen@charter.net</a></td>
<td>715-832-8088</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: The ECAMGA Board minutes no longer appears in the newsletter. You may access them by going to the website at eauclairemastergardeners.weebly.com

Have we got a deal for you...
Are you concerned that you might be bored this winter with no gardening activities to occupy you? How about nominating yourself to serve on the ECAMGA Board? That will keep you occupied with garden ideas for the organization and also snag some volunteer hours for yourself. The term is for two years and the qualifications are that you need to be an ECAMGA member in good standing and willing to serve. If you are interested contact Amy Boetcher at 715-577-9085 (or email her at myamybird@aol.com).

The election will be held at the December meeting in conjunction with the annual potluck and Christmas party.

One of the worst mistakes you can make as a gardener is to think you’re in charge. ~Janet Gillespie

By the time one is eighty, it is said, there is no longer a tug of war in the garden with the May flowers hauling like mad against the claims of the other months. All is at last in balance and all is serene. The gardener is usually dead, of course.
Third Place goes to Jo-Ann Clark for her photo “Peony In My Garden.” She says of the peony (and perennials in general), “Perennials, how they make us wait in anticipation for their bloom each year. Then they bloom and we realize they really are worth the wait. We mark off the season as they bloom and we wait patiently for them to bloom again next year. Yes, that is what a perennial is.”

Honorable Mention went to Carol Losey for her photo “Monarch on Liatris.” Carol enjoys the birds and other creatures that come to her garden and often captures them on camera whenever they choose to be cooperative.

I want to thank everyone for all of the great pictures submitted. I will be putting the other pictures in the newsletter over the next month or two for everyone to enjoy. The prizes and certificates for the contest will be handed out at the December educational meeting. The winning photos will also be displayed at the Extension Office front meeting room as they have been for the last 3 years.

Kristina Beuning Sweetens Up The October ECAMGA Meeting… by Carol Cox

On October 25th, at 6:30 p.m., Kristina Beuning from Sunbow Farms (a local CSA enterprise) spoke to the Eau Claire Area Master Gardener Association (ECAMGA) members and guests on “Prairie Plantings for Honeybee Habitat”. The presentation ranged all the way from where honey bees originated (Europe, and the Middle East - not the U.S.) to a micro-CT of a bee’s brain (figure that one out!).

Interestingly there is also a fly (the Drone Fly) that mimics the honeybee much like the Viceroy butterfly mimics the Monarch butterfly. The difference is that the honeybee has 4 wings and the fly only two. Also, the fly has very short antennae compared to the bee.

We hear about how important honeybees are for pollinating crops. Actually, Beuning says, the honey bee is not a particularly efficient pollinator. They were brought to this country, not as pollinators, but for their honey production. That is not to say that they are not involved in pollination but just that there are other insects and pollinators that are considerably more effective than the honeybee.

When gardeners look at providing a prairie planting for honeybees, be it large or small, some of the things that are key to doing this successfully are, providing a high quality source of nectar and pollen and providing water.

A honeybee has two stomachs. One is the “honey stomach” and the... (continued on page 6)
Upcoming Events

Classes:

Saturday, November 5th, 10:00 a.m.: Winter Wonderland Miniature Garden Workshop: Make your very own Winter Wonderland Miniature Garden! These miniature gardens will have a special twist just for the holidays! With a unique container, a few plants, festive holiday décor, and a touch of elfin magic, you'll have a wonderful new miniature garden to add to your holiday décor! Bring your own container or purchase one here. Cost: Build your own; only pay for what you take home.

Saturday, November 12th and 19th at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. and Thursday, November 10th and 17th at 5:00 p.m.: ‘Spruce’ Up Your Porch Pot Workshop: Learn how to create unique containers for this Christmas season! Bring in your own containers and design your own porch pot during the class! Let us help you transform your porch pots for this season. Please make sure to call ahead to reserve your spot. These workshops fill up quickly. Cost: Build your own: only pay for what you take home.

Saturday, November 26th at 10:00 a.m. and Thursday, December 1st at 5:00 p.m.: Winter Wreath Workshop: Design your own winter wreath this Christmas season. When it comes to creating wreaths, we thing outside the traditional “Red Bow.” We will start with a base wreath and go over different ways you can ‘spruce’ it up. Cost: Build your own, only pay for what you take home.

6025 Arndt Lane, Eau Claire, WI 54701
715-833-1234 or email home@downtoearth.com
Website: http://www.downtoearth.com

Winter Porch Pot Classes

Dates:
Nov. 12th at 10:00 a.m.
Nov. 15th at 6:00 p.m.
Nov. 19th at 10:00 a.m. and again at 1:00 p.m.
Nov. 26th at 10:00 a.m. and again at 1:00 p.m.

Adorn your front porch with a fresh evergreen winter porch pot. We will help you create one that matches your style and Christmas décor. Invite your friends and make it an outing. It’s a fun way to socialize and decorate all at the same time. You will get the basic materials and pot to create a porch pot for a fee of $30. Decorations are extra. Sign up today.

Register online at Maysfloralgarden.com or call 715-836-8220.
May’s Floral Garden Inc.
3424 Jeffers Road
Eau Claire, WI
Phone: 715-836-8220
http://www.Maysfloralgarden.com

Larry Bennett To Speak At November ECAMGA Meeting by Lori Kempen

On Tuesday, November 15th the Eau Claire Area Master Gardeners (ECAMGAs) will welcome back Larry Bennett as the speaker for the November educational meeting.

A certified bird bander and lifetime birdwatcher and birdfeeder, Bennett will speak about Winter Bird Survival and Feeding. Challenges the cold weather brings to the birds. He will suggest the necessary changes needed in feeding for the different seasons.

Information on feeding stations, bird habits, migratory birds and the best foods for our "feathered friends" will be discussed.

This program is open to the public and will start at 6:30 p.m. at the UW Extension Office in Altoona.

Refreshments will be served and door prizes awarded. Bring a friend and join ECAMGA for an evening of fun and useful and interesting information about one of our favorite Wisconsin Winter hobbies – watching our feathered friends. So bring a friend and we will see you there!!

"Delicious autumn! My very soul is wedded to it, and if I were a bird I would fly about the earth seeking successive autumns."
-George Eliot
BCR Volunteer Opportunities

Holiday Crafting for Kids
Looking to use your creative spirit? Look no further. We want your help in coming up and preparing themed crafts for the holiday season. If you're free on Saturday, November 19th from 10:00 a.m. to noon, you can also help with a kids craft event: guiding children through making the crafts and handing out snacks.

Ongoing volunteer positions:
From bird banding to being a Nature Center host, there's something for everyone to get involved with and we can work with a variety of schedules. Come photograph our events and programs for us. Clock in some time in the forest while improving the conditions on our trails for all to enjoy. If you haven't been active with us in awhile, maybe now is the time to start thinking about it again.

How to get in touch with us: Have a question? Want more information on something? Do you have a great idea of something you'd like to do as a volunteer at Beaver Creek? Want to sign up for something you've seen here?

Reach out to AJ at 715-877-2212 ext 113, or email: aj@beavercreekreserve.org, or come visit in person.

Wow! What one can do with an old piece of driftwood and some imagination. Item found on pinterest.com at: https://www.pinterest.com/pin/525443481507840018/.
Kristine Beuning, continued from page 1…

other is their normal digestive stomach.

The honeybee can carry up to 70 mg of nectar. Amazingly for the bee to collect that much nectar takes somewhere between 100 and 1500 flowers. The collected nectar goes into the bee’s honey stomach for transport back to the hive. That nectar is used to make honey and royal jelly to feed the baby bees. The ideal for the bee is that the nectar is 20% protein.

So, when we are planning to plant our prairie garden we want to maximize pollen production in our prairie plants. It is also important that the plants in the prairie are plants that the honeybee can access easily (i.e., the pollen structures of the plant must match the nectar collecting structures of the bee).

In addition, the planting should provide plants that will be in bloom from early spring to late fall.

Kristina went over some of the plants are ideal for a planting meant to attract honeybees. Milkweed, fireweed, smartweed, goldenrod, the sweet clovers, asters and the dandelion are all great nectar producing plants. The dandelion and the Trifolium clovers are good pollen producers.

Interestingly many of the wildflower seed mixes sold are put together more for human eye appeal than for the needs of the honeybee. For instance, red flowers do not matter to a bee, as they cannot see that part of the light spectrum. Bees see things differently than we do and are into the ultraviolet light spectrum.

The first step is to buy the seed. One source Beuning recommended was the “Pollinator Palooza” mix from Prairie Moon nursery. This is better for the honeybees than the mixture that is actually advertised for them. It provides for them from the early spring until late summer. A good mix will have at least a 50% mix of wildflowers as well as some grasses. Many nursery mixes have a high percentage of annuals and are low in the plants that will actually give you a long-term prairie planting that will attract honeybees.

Next one must prepare the site. The best scenario is to plant on bare dirt without tilling. This avoids bringing weed seeds to the surface. There are two different ways this can be accomplished. One is to use an herbicide to kill all the vegetation. The other is to use a tarp to cover the area (obviously this would apply to a smaller tract). The tarp will need to be left on for at least two months and possibly six months.

Step three is to plant the prairie. Kristina recommended using a filler (some inert and light colored material such as sand or sawdust) and then drilling or hand broadcasting the seed on the plot. The wildflower seed is small and dark and a filler makes seeding easier and with better coverage. She suggested getting a big tub and mixing the seed and filler in it.

The time of seeding is important with very early spring being the best time when everything is wet. Interestingly the seed can be sown right over the snow (don’t do this on a slope – instead plant when you can roll it in or the seed will wash off the slope. On a really steep slope, plant oats to help maintain the planting after seeding).

The final step is maintenance. The first year the site should be mowed every time the plants reach 8 inches tall (cut back to 4-5 inches). The second year mow near the end of the season (optional) and when 12 inches tall mow back only to 5-8 inches. The fourth year spring burn, if possible. Thereafter do this biennially.

Trees, particularly willow and apple and cherry are also good pollen sources for the honeybees and should be utilized on the perimeter of the prairie.

If you can’t plant a prairie, you can still plant some of these plants in your yard to attract honeybees. Even dandelions can be managed by allowing them to blossom but mowing every 2 days.

It was a great evening with a full house in attendance. Door prizes were awarded and treats were served. If you missed it be sure to plan to attend the November 15th meeting when Larry Bennett will be informing us on winter bird feeding and care. See you there!
Mulch Your Spring Flower Bulbs in the Fall for a Beautiful Spring Display by Michael J. McGroaty

Flower bulbs need a good, long, winters sleep. Like some people we know, if they wake up before they are fully rested, they get kind of cranky, and then they don’t bloom well at all.

Actually what happens is during a mild winter, the soil stays too warm, and the bulbs begin to come out of dormancy early. They start to grow, and once the tips emerge above the soil line, they are subject to freezing if the temperatures dip back down below freezing. And that’s usually what happens. After the bulbs have emerged, they freeze and then don’t bloom at all, or if they do it’s a very sad display.

Another reason this happens is because the bulbs are not planted deep enough. They may have been deep enough when you planted them, but as the soil goes through the freezing and thawing process, the bulbs can actually work their way up in the ground. One way to keep your flower bulbs sleeping longer, which will protect them from freezing, is to mulch the bed.

In the fall, just apply a 3-4” layer of well-composted mulch. This layer of mulch will do a couple of things. It will maintain higher moisture content in the soil, which is good, as long as the soil isn’t too soggy. Well-composted mulch also adds valuable organic matter to the planting bed. Organic matter makes a great natural fertilizer.

A 3-4” layer of mulch also acts as an insulator. It will keep the soil from freezing for awhile, which is good because you don’t want the bulbs going through a series of short cycles of freezing and thawing. Then, when the temperatures drop below freezing and stay there for a while, the soil does eventually freeze. Then the mulch actually works in reverse and keeps the soil from thawing out too early. Keeping it in a frozen state is actually good because the bulbs remain dormant for a longer period of time.

When they finally do wake up it is springtime, and hopefully by the time they emerge from the ground the danger of a hard freeze is past and they will not be damaged. If you can keep them from freezing, they will flower beautifully. The extra organic matter will help to nourish the bulbs when they are done blooming, and the cycle starts all over again.

We also plant annual flowers in the same beds with our spring bulbs. By the time the danger of frost is past and it’s time to plant the annuals, the top of the bulbs have died back and are ready to be removed. The mulch that is added in the fall also helps to nourish the annual flowers, as well as improve the soil permanently. Anytime you add well-composted organic matter to your planting beds, you are bound to realize multiple benefits. The key words here are “well composted.” Fresh material is not good.

ECAMGA Board Looking For Nominations For The Digger Award

This award is given annually to a person or persons who have exhibited continual and substantial work and effort on behalf of the ECAMGA and the promotion (through the ECAMGA) of horticultural education. The award was first given in 2001 and went to Bill Hunt. Last year’s winner was Andy Heren. Lori Kempen and Nina Logan jointly received the award in 2014 for their work on the Winter Garden Seminar Committee. In 2013 the Winter Garden Seminar Committee won the award (that year the ECAMGA Winter Garden Seminar received an international award) and, in 2012, the award went to the Expo Landscape Committee for all of their efforts at the Expo Center. So send your nominations to Amy Boetcher (or any Board member) at myamybird@aol.com. The Board will be meeting on November 10th to consider this.

Eau Claire Area Master Gardener Newsletter
A newsletter for the Eau Claire Area Master Gardener Association members.

Unless otherwise noted, articles for this newsletter are submitted and/or written by ECAMGA members or the newsletter editor, Carol W. Cox. Unless otherwise noted, graphics are from clipart. Newsletter layout by Carol W. Cox.

For more Eau Claire County UW Cooperative Extension information go to our website:
www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/eauclaire
Phone: 715-839-4712
Fax: 715-839-6277
M-F 8AM-5PM

The University of Wisconsin Extension provides affirmative action and equal opportunity in education, programming and employment for all qualified persons regardless of race, color, gender/sex, creed, disability, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital or parental, arrest or conviction record or veteran status.” If you need an interpreter, materials in alternate formats or other accommodations to access this program, activity or service, please contact Erin LaFaive at 715-839-4712 as soon as possible preceding the scheduled event so that proper arrangements can be made in a timely fashion.

Eau Claire County
Extension Office
227 First Street West
Altoona, WI 54720