

# Eau Claire Area Master Gardener News



October 2014

## Todd Chwala Answers Questions Concerning Tree Health At September 16<sup>th</sup> ECAMGA Gathering...

On Tuesday, September 16<sup>th</sup> Todd Chwala, Superintendent of Eau Claire's Parks, Forestry spoke before the Eau Claire Area Master Gardener's Association (ECAMGA) about "What is Happening With Our Trees." The session was a question and answer presentation with Chwala fielding all questions from the MGs and from the members of the public in attendance.



Some of the insight offered included the fact that if a tree loses over 25-30% of it's active canopy it is very likely that the tree will be lost. With the drought of 2013 and the extremely long, cold winter following it, many of our trees came into the spring badly damaged resulting in a considerable loss of trees and shrubs.

Another bit of advice offered was to be sure, going into this winter, that our evergreens are well watered right up to the time the ground freezes. We often clean up our gardens and put away our garden hoses and forgets that those trees and shrubs, especially the evergreens, might still have a need for water. By watering them well they will go into the winter in much better shape and have a better chance of coming out in the spring with enough energy and vitality to survive.

When should we prune our evergreen shrubs? This came from an individual who had a considerable amount of die back on some of their evergreens. Chwala indicated to prune carefully and not do severe pruning. The best time to prune them is in spring right after the new growth comes – like about 3 weeks after. It is best to wait until this is well developed and then prune back and the latent buds will sprout. This should be done over a couple of seasons rather than a severe pruning back. Also, Todd cautioned, stay within the green zone.

Other questions included a discussion of what is a good tree to plant in urban areas with Chwala discussing some of the pros and cons of various species and indicating what trees the city was using in their plantings. He also said there are new disease tolerant elms coming on the market.

Chwala commented that this summer has been a good year for our trees but that it usually takes a couple of years for our trees to recover from a bad time.



After the presentation door prizes were Presented and everyone enjoyed the delicious treats that were served.

The next meeting will be held on October 7<sup>th</sup> at the Altoona Library (see article on page 2) where Erin LaFaive will be presenting. See you there!



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## Local Master Gardener News

### 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](mailto:c7w6c2200@charter.net)  
Or notify her by snail mail at 1908  
Hogeboom Ave., Eau Claire, WI  
54701 (or call her at 715-861-4495).



### Bulletin Board Postings Stories and Opportunities!!!!



### ECAMGA Board

ECAMGA BOARD MEMBER CONTACT INFO		
NAME/TITLE	E-mail address	Phone number
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Daria Hutchinson	<a href="mailto:dariahu@aol.com">dariahu@aol.com</a>	715-797-4793

**NOTE:** The ECAMGA Board minutes no longer appears in the newsletter. You may access them by going to the website at [eauclairemastergardeners.weebly.com](http://eauclairemastergardeners.weebly.com)

### Composting & Lasagna Gardening Workshop

The next ECAMGA educational meeting will be held in conjunction with a presentation that Erin LaFaive, Eau Claire County UW-Extension Horticulture Educator will be doing at the Altoona Public Library. The topic of her presentation will be composting and lasagna gardening.

The event will be held on Tuesday, October 7, 2014 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the Altoona Public Library located at 1303 Lynn Avenue in Altoona. (Go to the Extension Office, which is on First Street West, and proceed past the Extension Office. You will intersect with Lynn Avenue. Take a left and go about 1-½ blocks. The Altoona Public Library is on the right hand side of the street.)



Bring your questions on composting and mulching and bring a friend or two also. It should be an interesting evening.

If you have questions contact the Altoona Library at 715-839-5029 or call the

Extension Office at 715-839-4712. You can also contact Lori Kempen at 715-832-8088.

See you there!



### ECAMGA 2014 Calendar

*All meetings at UW-  
Extension Office  
unless otherwise noted*

**October 7** - Erin LaFaive at the Altoona Public Library at 6:30. Erin doing a program on Composting and Lasagna Gardening.

**November 8**— The November meeting will be a pruning demonstration by Daria Hutchinson on Saturday. (Rain date is November 16). Meet at parking lot behind the Davies Center.

**December 2** – annual potluck and election of officers

## PRAIRIE DAYS 2014

by Nina Logan with pictures by Sally Anderson

On September 6 the Chippewa Savannas Chapter of the Prairie Enthusiasts hosted their second annual prairie seminar. The daylong session covered a wide range of subjects: "Wildflower Art" with Jean Occola; "Gardening with Natives" presented by Douglas Owens-Pike; and Faye Jones teaching on "Making Swags from Native Plants."

In addition, Matt Kuchter, UW Stout geologist, discussed characteristics of prairie soils. Native prairie soils help retain carbon in the soil and hold



moisture thus preventing erosion. Kuchter says past farming methods such as plowing and tilling soil in preparation for planting actually released carbon into the atmosphere. It is extremely important for farmers to use no-till methods instead thus preventing the increased release of carbon.

Steve Betchakal, a reporter for the Leader Telegram, presented demonstrating the songs of different song sparrows found in a prairie setting. There are 19 song sparrows in our area, "little brown birds," as we often call them. They are difficult to identify because of their similar size and color, but their songs are all different.

Bill Hogseth from the DNR discussed prairies and wildlife in our Chippewa Valley. He explained how this area is the dividing line between cold zones and warm zones. We have areas that were glaciated and also areas that were part of the drift less zone (areas not covered by glaciers). As a result, many different plants, many of which are rare species, are found here. The DNR has come up with a method of charting these species on a scale of 1 to 10. For example those plants that would grow almost anywhere such as ragweed would be rated as 0. Those plants, which can only grow in a specific area such a pitcher plant, would be rated as a 10

The best part of the day in the writer's opinion was the visit to a remnant prairie at Dunnville Wildlife area between Durand and Menomonie. It is a managed DNR prairie and savanna of 4200 acres, some of which is a remnant (land that has never been farmed or disturbed by man). We walked through stands of grass above our heads. Bill Hogseth, Mark Leach, a botanist and Paula Kleintjes-Neff helped identify grasses, flowers and insects. We saw hawks and eagles but none of those 19 songbirds showed up. What got the participants really excited was finding a stand of Blue Gentian, a beautiful little flower that flourishes in dry prairies. We even were able to identify a Bottle Gentian which usually is only found in wet prairies. It's flower does not open so bees must pry the flower open to extract the pollen.

Thank you Prairie Enthusiasts for a very enjoyable day. For more information on prairies in our Chippewa Valley area a recommended reading is "Wildflowers of Wisconsin and the Great Lakes Region" by Black and Judziewice from UW Press.



## FARM CITY DAYS by Nina Logan

(photo by Andy Heren)

On September 20th Andy Heren, Gary Mathis, and I managed a kid's table for Master Gardeners (MGs) at Farm City Days, which was hosted by GJ Jerseys owned by Gary and Josh Olson.

At the Master Gardener table kids identify flowers and vegetables, and then could dig into a bucket of shelled corn and find toys hidden there. Attendance at the MG table was great and kept us all busy. Lots of adults also took the quiz. Many questions were asked and we were able to inform them about Master Gardeners. There were several people who had questions about starting a garden, as they had never gardened before.



Farm City Days offers a wonderful opportunity for people to attend a working farm. This particular farm located near Strum was a dairy farm with Jersey cows. A tractor pulling a hay wagon was used to haul people through the farm to see cattle being fed at long bunk feeders. They also toured the milking facility. Kids enjoyed the petting zoo and played in the shell corn sandbox. There were information tables throughout the area and plenty of food. The Farm City Days event is held annually on farms chosen from Dunn County, Eau Claire County and Chippewa County on a rotating basis. Next year a farm from Chippewa County will be chosen as the host site.

After talking with people who visited our table, we came to the conclusion that a lot of people are totally unaware of our organization or of the programs that the County Extension has to offer. We need to get the word out there more.



A Little Red Truck  
a/k/a Garden Art

A little red truck  
From by-gone days  
Scuffed and scratched  
From my childhood ways.

A little red truck  
Chock full of plants  
Contrasts nicely  
In present day way.

Little red truck  
You look so nice  
In my new playground  
Blending old with the new!

## Upcoming Events



### Upcoming Classes

Registration is not required **for most** classes but is appreciated.

**Thursday, October 2, 5:00 p.m. Terrarium Miniature Garden Workshop:** Make something ordinary, extraordinary! Simple glass containers provide another unique setting for a miniature garden scene. With just a few plants and a selection of miniatures you can have your very own miniature terrarium garden! Whether you create a tranquil forest scene or a secluded secret garden you will have the perfect indoor garden that can be enjoyed all year long. Bring your own container or purchase one here. Cost: Build your own; only pay for what you take home.

**Saturday, October 11th, 18th, and 25th - 10:00 am - 4:00 pm: Playin' with Pumpkins** Fall Family Fun! Bring the kids for FREE miniature pumpkin painting. Plus, free pumpkin cookies and hot apple cider in the café. We will have pumpkins in a variety of shapes and sizes, straw bales, mums, gourds and cornstalks for all your fall decorating! Larger pumpkins available to be purchased and painted too.

**Thursday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 5 :00 p.m.:** A thorough fall cleanup will give your garden a healthy start in spring! Come learn what you need to do before winter arrives to have the best success in your garden. We will discuss how to clean up your vegetable garden, what to do with perennials and trees, how to overwinter tender plants, and all the odds and ends you should do now to save yourself time and energy in the spring. We will also provide you with an easy to use checklist you can reference each fall and spring.

6025 Arndt Lane, Eau Claire WI, 54701  
715-833-1234 or E-mail - [home@dwntoearth.com](mailto:home@dwntoearth.com)  
Website: <http://www.dwntoearth.com/index2.html>



### CLASSES:

**Thursday, October 2, 6:00 p.m.:** Learn some fast fix tips in welcoming warm fall color to your front steps. We will teach you how to do a porch pot makeover, decorate with pumpkins and other fall harvest items. You will have the opportunity to create your very own porch pot to take home. Make and take porch pot fee \$30.00

*For more information or to register for the classes go to: <http://www.maysfloralgarden.com/contact> or call 715-836-8220 or 1-800-422-6297.*

MAY'S FLORAL GARDEN, INC.  
3424 Jeffers Rd., Eau Claire, WI 54703

## L. E. Phillips Memorial Public Library to Feature Series On Homesteading...

The modern homesteading movement is about becoming more self-sufficient and not relying solely on commercial goods for everyday needs. While some homesteaders live a completely self-reliant lifestyle, many simply choose to focus on one or two areas that they can reduce their impact on the environment and stretch their budget. Discover some homesteading basics by attending one, two, or all five sessions. The sessions will be held on Thursday evenings, October 2, 9, 16, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> in the Eau Claire Room (The library is located at 400 Eau Claire Street in downtown Eau Claire.) The program will begin at 7 p.m.

Topics for the 5 sessions will be: Homesteading 101 (October 2); Home Remedies (October 9); Gardening (with Erin LaFaive presenting on October 16); DIY Cleaning (October 23); and Fermentation (October 30). For more information contact the library at 715-839-5004. Registration is not required.



*Plants give us oxygen for the lungs and for the soul.*  
-Linda Salegato

### **Booya & Fall Festival - October 4** from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m.

At the Youth Camp Side of Beaver Creek Reserve.

Our 8th annual Booya & Fall Festival is a family event with fun activities and an all-you-can-eat booya meal (\$6 for adults and \$3 for children). Festival activities and food will be held near the Main Lodge on the Youth Camp side with additional family activities at the Nature Center. In case of rain, event will be held inside the Main Lodge and Nature Center.



S1 County Road K,  
Fall Creek, WI 54742  
[bcr@beavercreekreserve.org](mailto:bcr@beavercreekreserve.org)  
Phone: 715-877-2212

Activities include Naturalist hikes, children's games and crafts, Hobbs Observatory solar sightings, raffle opportunities, and a visit from Paddy the Beaver. Live music will be provided by the Bellinger Bluegrass Band, Duffy Duyfhuizen, Billy Krause, Chuck Roll and the Ukulele Klub of Eau Claire.

If you'd like to volunteer for this event, please contact the Reserve at [bcr@beavercreekreserve.org](mailto:bcr@beavercreekreserve.org) or call 715-877-2212. (Thank you to Scheels, WIPFLI and Xcel Energy for sponsoring this event and thank you to Mayo Clinic Health System for sponsoring the naturalist hikes.)

### **Hike For Elder Explorers**, October 9 from 9:30 a.m. until 12 p.m. at the Wise Nature Center

Cost: \$3 for Friends, \$5 for Nonmembers -- 9 spots available.

This program is targeted for our older nature lovers. This hike of an hour or so is led by a Beaver Creek Reserve naturalist and takes place on the Reserve trails. Explorers can document the changes taking place in the Reserve's woods. The walk will be capped off with coffee and a treat and further discussion about the changes and things seen on the trails. The program is geared for adults 55 and older. Hikers should expect about a mile long hike with uneven terrain and stairs to negotiate. To register call the BCR or go online to register at:

[http://www.beavercreekreserve.org/explore/events\\_and\\_programs.phtml](http://www.beavercreekreserve.org/explore/events_and_programs.phtml).

## Bits and Pieces



### Ghost Flowers

What an interesting creation found on Pinterest. It comes from an interesting website you may want to visit:

[http://fabulousfifi.typepad.com/chez\\_fifi/2010/02/my-blue-1.html](http://fabulousfifi.typepad.com/chez_fifi/2010/02/my-blue-1.html).

This lovely creation, is made with window screening, clear glass bottles and tea lights. You could also use just led tea lights.



Another Pinterest find!

The child in me can't help being intrigued by such a "fairy" house. Check out the "15 Cool Garden Sheds found at:

<http://www.shelterness.com/more-cool-garden-sheds/>



*Eye  
Candy...*



*Chamaecyparis obtusa 'Aurea'* – Golden Hinoki Cypress. The outer, open fans of 'Aurea' are golden yellow while the interior is darker green. It is slow growing and is a Zone 4 cultivar with a mature height of 8-10 feet and about 8 feet wide.



Log gate made to look like pencils. Neat idea off Pinterest for an entry into a children's garden.



Gorgeous hibiscus from this past summer.



*If you have never  
experienced the joy of  
accomplishing more  
than you can  
imagine, plant a  
garden.  
-Robert Brault*



**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/eauc claire](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/eauc claire)  
Phone: 715-839-4712  
Fax: 715-839-6277  
M-F 8AM-5PM



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**Eau Claire County  
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227 First Street West  
Altoona, WI 54720**