

# North Central WI Master Gardeners

This year there were 110 active members, with 75 certified or recertified during 2004. The Basic Master Gardener course, given in the fall of 2003, was attended by 37 people, of whom 35 took and passed the test. Of these, 22 fulfilled certification requirements during the year.



In 2004 we volunteered	41	hours in youth education
	740	hours in community education
	2995	hours in support services
and participated in	2097	hours of continuing education

From May through September, NCWGM held weekly garden clinics. We offered some 2-day trips during the year, including to the Chicago Home and Garden Show and the Green Bay Botanical Gardens. Our annual dinner/educational meeting, the *Fall Social*, was well attended. Our newsletter, *Fertile Ground*, is now distributed electronically!

## Major Accomplishments or Projects:

1. GardenVille, our annual public plant sale of MG donated plants, was a financial success.
2. We distributed information about the MG program at the Cedar Creek Lawn and Garden Show, and answered lots of gardening questions.
3. GardenLine is a toll free telephone hotline for the public to call with gardening questions. The questions are then researched by one of our MGs, and answers are presented to the caller within a few days.
4. Festival of Trees is a fundraising event for the community hospital. MGs participated by donating two decorated trees for auction to the public. This year, our trees were dedicated to loved ones.
5. During the past year NCWGM made significant cash grants to Lincoln Elementary school for their *HUG Program* (Help Us Grow), and to one of our members for an *Enabling Garden* project.
6. One of our members is creating a garden design for the entrance to UW-Extension offices in Wausau.
7. NCWGM has been asked by Portage County MGs to become a co-sponsor of their annual spring conference, *Garden Dreams*.

## Highlighted Project: GardenWalk 2004

Our annual weekend event featured walking tours of five outstanding gardens in the Wausau area, of which three were MG's gardens. These ranged from a corner urban lot transformed into all garden, to spacious rural rolling landscapes. One gardener took an ingenious organic self-sowing approach, with vegetables and self-seeding flowers, such as foxgloves. Another garden featured zany zinnias, cosmos, marigolds, in a free form of plants and flowers along a sweeping vista, with water cascading over rocks, falling to a pond below. Multiple textures of stone and plants were featured in another garden, with thoughtful repetition of wispy coral bells, hostas, Jacob's ladder, shrubs, native plants and choke cherry bushes for the birds. One garden was set in cathedral-like pines, featuring voluptuous plantings of various hosta species, ligularias, and coral bells and a dry/wet streambed lined with fieldstone woven thru the landscape. And walkways, decks, formal and informal courtyards, all adorned tastefully with wooden benches, obelisks, gates, arches, and fully packed with plants, trees, and shrubs created a private domain in the small urban corner lot garden.

The event was attended by over 500 people, over two bright sunny days in mid July. Each garden was hosted by several MGs working in shifts to greet the public, and facilitate their tour. MG program information was distributed, and lots of gardening questions were answered. We received a great deal of positive feedback, and interest in the program. This event was a successful and profitable venture, thanks to the extensive preparation and excellent execution. A large majority of NCWGMs participated in the planning, preparation, execution of GardenWalk 2004.