

# North Central WI Master Gardeners

The NCWMGA consists primarily of members from Marathon Co., with some from Lincoln and Langlade counties. This year there are approximately 125 dues-paying members, with 71 recertifying for 2008. General Training was offered in Wausau in 2007 with 26 completing the course and 13 of those certified already.



In 2007 we volunteered	86	hours in youth education
	623	hours in community education
	3,284	hours in support services
and participated in	2,143	hours of continuing education

Our Educational Programs consisted of 12 events, most of which were presented by our own MGVs. All of these programs were offered to the public, who responded very positively in both numbers and interest. In May, Don Kissinger, Urban and Community Forestry Co-coordinator, spoke on the importance of trees in our environment and how to care for them. We then helped Don plant a flowering crabapple tree. Also in May, we toured the commercial wildflower nursery of one of our members. *Gardenville*, an annual public sale of MGV plants, is our main fund-raising event.

## Major Accomplishments or Projects (by groups):

1. *Garden Clinic and Gardenline*: Every Wednesday from May through September, MGVs answered gardening questions from the public at the UW-Extension office. MGVs also fielded gardening questions called in to UW-Extension, researched these questions and got back to the caller with the solution. Many questions from both Garden Clinic and Gardenline were about emerald ash borer.
2. Our youth projects involved helping with 4-H, Boy Scouts, the HUG (Help Us Grow) program and other projects in elementary schools, and church youth groups. Our community projects included assisting with gardens at churches, elder housing, museums, municipal gardens, and other community gardens.
3. We worked on Fern Island, an island in the Wisconsin River near downtown Wausau, to reduce populations of invasive plants that have invaded the island. The first day was spent educating volunteer youth on how to identify and eradicate invasive species. The following day was spent putting their newly acquired knowledge to work by removing those species, especially buckthorn.
4. MGVs staffed an information booth and answered many questions from the public about gardening at the Cedar Creek Lawn and Garden Show. We promoted the sale of composting pails and bins, the MG Program, and gave out information on other upcoming educational programs.
5. Our annual *Gardenwalk* offers the public the opportunity to see several unique and beautiful area gardens. The excitement of those who visit the gardens is contagious and they look forward to next year's event.
6. We awarded grants to the HUG program at four local elementary schools; the Neighbors Place for a compost educational and demonstration site; and to the Robert W. Monk Gardens.

## Highlighted Project: Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum Gardens

The Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in Wausau, a "destination" for regional, national, and international visitors, cultivates a love for beauty in both art and nature. The Woodson's flagship exhibit is the internationally acclaimed "Birds in Art" which focuses on art inspired by nature. The gardens mirror this inspiration, not only through the natural beauty of flowers and foliage, but also by attracting birds, butterflies, and bees. For many years, MGVs have created and maintained these gardens, dedicating themselves to enhancing the sensory experience of the museum's visitors. MGVs are responsible from beginning to end, selecting plants to enhance the garden's sculptures, purchasing, and nurturing the plantings in the museum's various gardens. The MGVs have hosted tours of the gardens for local garden clubs, civic organizations and other local groups. Wisconsin Public Radio hosted "Garden Talk" from the museum location. The gardens have also been featured in our *Gardenwalk*.