

North Central WI Master Gardeners

In 2008, there were approximately 112 dues paying members, with 81 recertified for 2009.

In 2008 we volunteered	110	hours in youth education
	688	hours in community education
	4,202	hours in support service
and participated in	2,252	hours in continuing education



The majority of our members receive weekly FYI's via email, although a few still receive this by regular mail. It has proven to be an excellent way to keep the membership informed! We presented 10 educational programs open to both members and (for a small fee) the public. All were very well attended, with lively Q & A following. Most used PowerPoint presentations created by our own MGVs. Topics included *Seed Starting: from Packet to Garden*, *Wildflowers and Butterflies – Naturally Together*, *Using Trees and Shrubs in the Landscape*, and a special program in the spring by Susan Mahr *Getting Started with Orchids*. The Board again spent many hours reviewing and revising our by-laws.

Major Accomplishments or Projects:

1. *Garden Clinics*. From mid-May thru mid-September, NCWMGA held weekly garden clinics. This is a learning experience as well as a teaching experience, of value to both our community and us.
2. *GardenLine*. This is a hotline for the public to phone, e-mail, or send e-photos, with gardening questions. In voluntary rotation, a NCWMGV takes the question, researches the answer, and responds within a few days.
3. *Cedar Creek Lawn & Garden Show*. NCWMGVs staffed an information-packed booth, answering horticultural questions and informing attendees about the MG organization.
4. *GardenVille*. Our annual plant sale of MG-grown plants was an educational and financial success.
5. *Festival of Trees*. A community fund raising event for a local hospital's hospice program. NCWMGVs participated by creating and donating a Christmas tree and mantel for auction to the public.
6. *GardenWalk 2008*. Our annual tour of gardens, this year's proceeds were donated to the Robert Monk Gardens, a botanical garden being developed on land donated by retired realtor Robert Monk. Although this major community project is several years from opening, steady progress is being made. One of the featured gardens was The Neighbors Place community garden which provides goods and food from donations, and from their gardens, to those in need in the Wausau area.

Highlighted Project: Garden Visions

Garden Visions is a mid-winter gardening conference sponsored by NCW and Portage Co. MGAs. This event was the successor to a previous mid-winter conference sponsored by Portage and Wood Co. MGAs. A joint steering committee was created, with the result being an outstanding conference attended by over 400 people on a very cold day in January. The opening keynote speaker was Don Engebretson, noted author, whose special interest is gardening in the upper Midwest. His topic was *The 10 Gardening and Landscape Blunders... and How to Avoid Them!* MGVs prepared approximately 2 dozen exhibits and displays for the conference. There were six breakout sessions, with many topics including Soil Feeding, Organic Gardening, Fruit Tree Care, Roses in a Northern Climate, Garden Photography, Rain Gardens, and Cold Climate Grapes. The closing keynote speaker was David Cavagnaro, a noted garden photographer, speaking on *Fork to Fork – Garden Fork to Kitchen Fork*. Proceeds from the 2008 Garden Visions raffle were donated to the Wausau Area Empty Bowls project. This organization brings together artists, students and community members to raise money for local food pantries.