State Master Gardener Program Updates

What’s New On the Horizon?
by Dave Moen, State Master Gardener Manager

2014 Tentative Extension Master Gardener Core Course Dates
- On-line 2014 EMG core course sessions will run Jan. 13—May 9. One module is presented weekly.
- In-classroom 2014 EMG core course sessions will begin Jan. 14—Feb. 8, Tues. & Thu. 5:30—8:30 p.m. and Saturdays 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Classroom instruction will take place on the U of M St. Paul campus.
- The cost for the course is $275 for a volunteer. If you don’t finish the classes or do your volunteer hours you will need to pay the additional $300 as a pro-hort student.
- Core course registration opens up October 1 and closes December 1, 2013 for the 2014 classes.

Revised Extension Master Gardener Application Form
- There is now only one version of the application form. It can be submitted either electronically or downloaded and sent as a hard copy.
- Application forms are available from your local county Extension offices through your master gardener coordinators.

Food Safety in Sampling and in the Garden
- Earlier this year there was an Extension Master Gardener food serving policy to address questions related to serving food to the public.
- The new food policy is that all food products served at U of M Extension Master Gardener events hosted for and open to the public audiences will be food products purchased or donated from a reputable vendor (caterer, bakery, grocer, etc.) or products prepared in approved kitchens under supervision of a person trained in food safety.

Plants for our Native Bees and Other Pollinators

Our native bees are the most important group of pollinators we have. They move pollen between flowers and ensure the development of seeds and fruits we depend upon for food.

Ligularia “the Rocket” is one of the best ‘bee’ plants around in mid-summer.

It is estimated that every third bite of our food is a result, directly or indirectly, of an insect transporting pollen.

While, native plants are great for pollinators, there are also some cultivated garden plants that work well for our bees and other pollinators as well. Some tips from the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation include the following:

(Continued on page 4)
Carlton County Master Gardeners

15 Years + 1376 Hours = 3 Carlton County Master Gardeners

by Sarah VanderMeiden

Carlton County Master Gardeners Dianne Barkos and Bob and Jean Port are being recognized this year for 15 years of service to the residents of Carlton County. Collectively, these outstanding volunteers have given 45 years and 1376 hours of their time serving fellow Carlton County residents, while also completing 319 hours of continuing education. Though all three have similar motivations for participating in the Master Gardener program, their lives as gardeners have followed somewhat different paths.

Obviously, all three of these Master Gardeners share a love for gardening. Bob has been gardening since he was “knee high to a grasshopper,” and back in those days, it was a necessity for his family to grow their own vegetables. Jean’s family also had many flower and vegetable gardens and she was particularly inspired by her Aunt, who was an active gardener. As a couple living out in the country, Bob and Jean had a huge garden with veggies, flowers, berries, grapes and numerous fruit trees. Since moving to town 3 years ago, they have established similar gardens on a smaller scale at their new home. Jean noted that once they became accustomed to eating their own produce, they didn’t want to go back to store-bought so they have established a hydroponic garden in their basement. Currently they are harvesting tomatoes and lettuce! An experienced vegetable gardener,

Bob has established a successful raised bed garden at his new home and is also knowledgeable about growing iris. Jean’s area of expertise is flowers, particularly African violets, roses and lilies.

Dianne was also exposed to gardening at an early age, as her grandparents had flower and vegetable gardens. However, she personally didn’t garden until she had an opportunity to move to the country as an adult. She “inherited” some daylily and wild asparagus gardens with her new property and thus began her life as a gardener. She considers perennials and shrubs her area of expertise and her beautifully landscaped yard was showcased during a recent garden tour sponsored by the U of M Master Gardeners, Carlton County.

Though these three gardeners have diverse gardening histories, their motivation to become Master Gardeners and remaining with the program for 15 years is the same. They love to help people learn more about gardening! Dianne commented that one of the benefits of living in a smaller community like ours is that people have opportunities to share their knowledge and skills with others. Serving as a Master Gardener has been a way for her to give back to the community by sharing her passion for gardening to educate those who want to know more. Dianne really enjoys helping others learn and get excited about gardening. Her greatest reward is seeing how proud people are when they show her the gardens they’ve created.

Bob and Jean Port’s love for meeting new people and helping them with their gardens drives their desire to participate in the Master Gardener program. They particularly enjoy seeing other people’s gardens and figuring out how to help them with any issues they may be having. Through the process of sharing their knowledge they usually end up learning something themselves. One of their most rewarding projects was overseeing a lakeshore restoration project at Island Lake in Cromwell. Working with this project helped them learn more about this specific method of gardening and the plants used to effectively restore the lakeshore. Another project required them to identify each wildflower on one county resident’s acreage. Jean remarked that although this was a difficult project, it felt good to accomplish it.

(Continued on page 6)
Fire is one of the greatest concerns of people who live in the north woods. Careless cigarettes, dry summers, and standing dead forest wood can be a recipe for disaster.

Ray Block, a local resident from Cook County, decided that an irrigated apple orchard could serve as a fire block while providing a cash crop of apples. He is in the third year of growing the apple trees and has about 160 trees that are part of his *Firewise* system.

Ray is designing a hexagonal system, planting his dwarf apple trees around the outside of his homestead. He uses an irrigation system for watering the trees and for fire retardation. A vegetable garden, chickens and small home can be located inside the hexagon, protected by his apple producing fire break. The fence used to protect and train his apples also prevents deer and other critters from accessing the homestead area awhile providing space to grow additional fruits and vegetables. His chickens have the run of the orchard area to help with pest control and provide eggs and meat.

He uses an apple training system developed at Cornell University around the late 1990’s called the tall spindle system. This planting system achieves the goals of very high early fruit yields, high sustained yields and excellent fruit quality, while keeping the initial dollar investment modest.

Dwarf apple trees are planted about 3 to 4 feet apart and spaced along a three-wire trellis. Each tree has a 1/2” bamboo stake that the leader is trained on with the bamboo stake attached to the trellis wire. The height of the mature trees is at about 8 to 10 feet.

The components of this system contain the following:
1. High apple planting densities
2. Using dwarfing rootstocks
3. Highly feathered (1 year old side branches) nursery trees
4. Minimal pruning at planting time
5. Bending the feathers and branches below horizontal
6. No permanent scaffold branches
7. Limb renewal pruning to remove and renew branches as they get too large

*Firewise is a national program that encourages local home owners and community leaders to find solutions to wildfire safety.*

The caliper of the trees that are planted in the tall spindle system should be a minimum of 5/8” diameter with 10 – 15 well positioned feathers with a maximum length of 1 foot that start at a minimum height of 30” from the base of the tree.

Most common apple tree nurseries don’t provide this type of apple tree. Before you purchase your apple tree, understand whether you can adapt the apple tree you are planning to purchase to the tall spindle growing system.

Most apple trees are produced by grafting the kind of variety you want like Honeycrisp (called a scion) to a root stock. The root stock will determine how tall the tree will become. A semi-dwarf root stock will ensure the height of your tree at between 12 to 18 feet tall. While a dwarf root stock will usually mean your tree will be 8 to 10 feet tall. Some of the different root stocks that Ray is trialing along Lake Superior are as follows: Geneva 11, Geneva 41, Geneva 935, Budagovsky 9, East Malling 26—all considered dwarf rootstocks.

He is also using some semi-dwarf rootstocks that are as follows: Geneva 16, Geneva 30, East Malling 7.

Some of the scions he is using include the different apple varieties: Honeycrisp, Zestar, Chestnut Crab, Sweet 16, Kerr Crab.

The tall spindle system includes pruning out any branches that are 1/2 the diameter of the tree leader. The remaining feathers (young branches) are then tied below horizontal to your wire trellis.

*(Continued on page 7)*
Local Plants for Pollinators ...

(Continued from page 1)

- **Use some local native plants in your garden.** If you want to attract specific butterflies or bees to your garden, find out exactly what their favorite host plants are. For example, the Baltimore checkerspot butterfly relies on turtleheads (*Chelone*) for one of their host plants.

- **Choose several colors of flowers.** Flower colors that particularly attract native bees are blue, purple, violet, white and yellow.

  - **Plant flowers in clumps.** Larger clumps of flowers (4’ wide +) attract more pollinators than single plants.

  - **Include flowers of different shapes.** Since bees come in different sizes, have different tongue lengths, the more variety of flower shapes you have, the more bees you can serve in your garden.

  - **Have plants that flower throughout the season.** If you have several different kinds of plants blooming at the same time and throughout the season, bees and other pollinators can come to depend upon your garden as a source of food. It is especially critical to have blooming plants early in the spring and late in the fall when nectar and pollen is scarce.

Some Spring Blooming Plants

*Pussy willow* (*Salix spp.*) When these bloom, the weather may be too cold for many bees in some areas.

*Juneberry* (*Amelanchier spp.*)

*Spiderwort* (*Tradescantia spp.*)

*Plums and cherries* (*Prunus spp.*)

*Wild roses* (*Rosa spp.*) Fragrant, single petal, light colored flowers are the best.

*Ornamental crabapples and apple trees* (*Malus spp.*)

*Crocus* (*Crocus tommasinianus*)

*Dandelions* (*Taraxacum officinale*)

Some Summer Blooming Plants

*Prairie clover* (*Dalea spp.*)

*Bee balm* (*Mondarda spp.*)

*Lavendar hyssop* (*Agastache foeniculum*)

*Beard tongue* (*Penstemon spp.*)

*Blazing star* (*Liagris spp.*)

*Catmint* (*Nepeta spp.*)

*Milkweed* (*Asclepias spp.*)

*Raspberries* (*Rubus spp.*)

*Globe thistle* (*Echinops ritro*)

*Fireweed* (*Epilobium angustifolium*)

*Alsike clover* (*Trifolium hybridum*)

*Crimson clover* (*Trifolium incarnatum*)

*Red clover* (*Trifolium pretense*)

*White clover* (*Trifolium repens*)

*Viper’s bugloss* (*Echium vulgare*) Considered to be invasive so you need to control it if you plant it.

Autumn Blooming Plants

*Aster* (*Symphytonichum spp.*) These are major food sources for bees in the fall.

*Sneezeweed* (*Helenium autumnale*)

*Goldenrod* (*Solidago spp.*)

*Sunflower* (*Helianthus spp.*)

*Joe Pye Weed* (*Eupatorium purpureum*)

*Sedum* (*Sedum spectabile*)

As master gardeners we need to encourage homeowners to use their landscapes to feed local bee populations. By planting flowers that provide bees with nectar and pollen—we support their nutritional needs and ensure the next year’s population of pollinators.
St. Louis County Master Gardeners have never formally mentored their interns. Informal mentoring has always occurred as Master Gardeners and Interns become acquainted. Often, interning master gardeners would pose questions, ask about projects and hours, and solicit advice from more experienced master gardeners. In this informal way, newer master gardeners found themselves incorporated into the larger group. Several years ago, a few of the master gardeners suggested some form of organized mentoring should occur to ease the interns into our mission and to foster a sense of inclusion. The suggestion to mentor arose from conversations among the newer master gardeners who often mentioned feeling lost or even unwanted, especially at first. To them, there seemed to be no way to get practical information about counting hours, how to set up a project, how to join an existing project . . . Whether these ‘lost’ feelings were real or imagined, they did leave the newer master gardeners feeling isolated.

In February 2013, a decision was made to mentor a group of nine interns. All would be taking the training on-line at times convenient to them. Because not enough master gardeners volunteered to assign a mentor to each intern, Plan B was implemented: A series of group meetings including interns and master gardeners were held at local restaurants. Attendance was voluntary for both interns and master gardeners. Over the past few weeks, I interviewed most of the interns about both the on-line training sessions and the group meetings. Everyone I spoke with seemed eager to discuss the combined experience.

On-line training experience: The response was overwhelmingly positive. Interns liked the flexibility that allowed them to listen at their convenience and to listen more than once to a session. They found the presentations clear and well-presented. The manual received only praise. The one thing lacking in the training experience was contact with other interns. They did know they were members of a St. Louis County group, but they knew nothing about one another.

Group meetings: These were scheduled in between the on-line training sessions and held in restaurants central to most of the interns. Only one remarked that distance kept her from attending. None attended all the meetings. Most attended three.

The meetings seemed most useful as social opportunities for the interns to get to know one another. During them, they explored one another’s interests and potential projects. They were also able to voice their feelings about the overwhelming amount of information made available to them on-line and in the manual. The group meetings helped them relax about it all. The on-line coursework was not really an item of discussion because all were at different stages of completing it.

The information about hours and projects given by the master gardeners in attendance was considered helpful. The master gardener who was available for e-mailed questions responded promptly, all but one agreed.

Several commented that they were unsure who was in charge and thought the meetings could be better focused and more organized, a problem the St. Louis County Master Gardeners will address. Few undertakings go perfectly the first time.

More disturbing is that three interns commented that the master gardeners in attendance did not seem to want to be helpful. One said little was learned from them, so the interns largely taught themselves.

When asked about a preference for group or one-on-one mentoring, the response was mixed. Two felt one-on-one would be difficult to manage in terms of time. Two said they would like to have an assigned ‘go-to’ person to receive their questions and to help them. One mentioned that working at the DECC one-on-one with an experienced master gardener was most helpful.

(Continued on page 7)
All three of these experienced gardeners noted that there have been many changes in gardening practices over the years. It seems as though new methods, materials, and plants are constantly being developed. Bob observed that it used to be that people felt they needed a big yard or acreage in the country to have a garden. Now, with raised beds, container gardening, hydroponic gardening and even vertical gardening, anyone can have a garden, anywhere. The vital, constantly evolving practice of gardening satisfies Dianne’s love of learning and lately she has really enjoyed the movement toward heirloom gardens.

Despite all the improvements to the field of gardening, these Master Gardeners still rely on some tried and true gardening methods. Dianne’s favorite gardening tool is a regular garden shovel. Bob relies on a rear-tined rototiller while Jean prefers a hand held weeding tool. All three gardeners favor more natural forms of pest management. Bob and Jean usually avoid commercial products and Dianne uses her powers of observation to catch pests early on to prevent major infestations. Bob’s favorite method for managing slugs is to spread freshly cut grass clippings in his garden. Not only does it make a great mulch, the slugs won’t cross the clippings as it will shred their bellies. Jean protects her roses by planting garlic in between each rose.

Many gardeners list deer among garden pests. Bob and Jean have had success using Liquid Fence to keep deer out of their gardens. Diane protected her hostas by tucking the hair she combed out of her dog down into the plants. The deer won’t touch them!

Dianne, Bob and Jean agree that anyone who is interested in becoming a Master Gardener should definitely consider this an amazing opportunity to learn more about horticulture and help fellow county residents of Carlton County. We thank these three outstanding volunteers for all they have done for both county residents and fellow Master Gardeners!

**Crops in Pots, a Reader’s Digest Book, by Bob Purnell**  
by Eleanor Hoffman

With more people wishing to grow plants on patios and in small outdoor spaces, Crops in Pots fills the need for both useful horticultural information and plant suggestions, including appropriate varieties.

Container gardening, Purnell posits, has advantages over in-ground gardening because it allows the gardener to adapt the growing medium to the plant. Thus, gardeners can grow a wider variety of plants by grouping pots, and by grouping pots, can grow in proximity plants that would not ordinarily thrive side by side. Container gardening also allows the gardener to optimize light and water to minimize pests and disease. Pots can also be brought into a garage or home, thus avoiding the effects of adverse weather conditions.

Early chapters address pot material and size, planting mediums, and how to plant a pot or basket. Attention is given to starting plants from seed. Information is clearly written and accompanied with photographs demonstrating a particular point. These photographs are especially useful to illustrate plant care: pruning, misting dead-heading. Moreover, the discussion of pests and disease is accompanied by photographs of the most common ones.

The bulk of the book describes fifty different containers. Each container holds one or more vegetables, a flower and/or an herb, which, together, produce an attractive container. The “ingredients” for each container (seeds, starter plants, mix, pot size) are set off in the left hand column. The right hand column presents an inviting description of the pot. Instructions for growing the plants follows. A box, usually at the bottom of the page, gives a recipe which includes the vegetable, herb, or flower as an ingredient. For example, “Fish Lovers Bouquet” is a 24 “x 8” window box containing French tarragon, parsley, lemon thyme, and dill. All the plants are bought from the garden center. However, except for the tarragon, the plants could be started from seed. A picture of such a box shows how appealing the mature plants could be.

Throughout this section, a wide variety of containers are described and pictured, allowing the gardener’s imagination to flourish. The book concludes with a listing of varieties suitable for container gardening. This book is not only packed with clear, useful information, it is a beautiful book whose pages are sure to arouse interest and fuel the drive to try container gardening. The heavy paper ensures, that although a paperback, the book will last a while. I would recommend the book to anyone, but especially a novice gardener, wishing to try container gardening.
2013 Calendar of Events

Carlton County Upcoming Events
Fall Plant Sale on Saturday, August 24th at the Carlton Munger Bike Trail Pavilion. The sale starts at 9:00 a.m. and goes until plants are gone!

St. Louis County Upcoming Events
The Hortus Club is planning a plant sale on Sat., Aug. 3 from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at the corner of 46th Ave. West and 8th Street in Duluth.

Other Educational Opportunities
Growing Squash, Cucumbers and Pumpkins with IPM Webinar: This will be held on Friday, August 2 from 11:30—1:00 p.m. Free registration for HOST sites, $10 for individual registrations. All information on-line at: http://learn.extension.org/events/1126.

Horticulture Day at North Central Research & Outreach Center in Grand Rapids: The open house will be held on Wednesday, August 28. It begins at 2:00 p.m. with tours continuing until 6:00 p.m. Tours will include: apple orchard, blueberries, strawberries, high tunnel development, healthful gardening / phytonutrients, research plots of annual flowers, chrysanthemum, hydrangea trials, asparagus disease research, cherry and honeyberry varieties.

Wanted: Wild American Hazelnut Seeds  Research is being done on hybridizing American hazelnuts. We need people to send us ripe seeds from wild American hazelnuts. Label with information about location and mail 10—50 nuts per sample to: Lois Braun, U of M Dept. of Agronomy and Plant Genetics, 1991 Upper Buford Circle, 411 Borlaug Hall, St. Paul, MN 55108

Mentoring New Master Gardener Interns  (Continued from page 5)
To sum it up, while St. Louis County Master Gardeners’ first attempt at mentoring was not a complete success, the group experience did provide what the on-line training lacked: an opportunity for interns to become acquainted with one another and with a few of the master gardeners. It did help relieve the interns’ anxiety about information overload and it did address some practical questions about hours, projects, etc.

Our next group of interns can benefit from this group’s experience, which may lead us to serve them better with more focused sessions. Perhaps they can help find ways to better encourage interns and the master gardener volunteer mentors to attend all the sessions, allowing consistency. Finally, the interns experience does suggest that the group approach is likely the best way to approach mentoring.

Homesteading With Apple Trees ...  (Continued from page 3)
This will reduce the vigor of the tree and promote the production of fruit buds for the following growing season. Fruiting is essential in the second and third year of the tree to keep a low tree vigor while maximizing early fruit production.

Annual apple cropping varieties should have 15—20 apples per tree the second year and 50—60 apples in the third year, with up to 100 apples in the fourth year. Slow growing apple varieties like Honeycrisp or biennial bearing apples should be about half that number.

Ray says, ‘Originally I wanted to do something that would protect the property from wildfires. Firewise shows how to install a sprinkler system that has to be checked every two weeks. I decided there should be a better return for your labor. The installation of the sprinkler system for the trees and clearing the land for the orchard provides more for my labor. It has also become a hobby I enjoy very much.’
What does the State Extension Office expect from Master Gardeners?

“We expect that Master Gardeners understand they represent University of Minnesota Extension, not just themselves, when serving in the role as an Extension Master Gardener (EMG) and that they use University and other research-based, sound information when interacting with the public, recognizing that on occasion this may vary from personal philosophy or opinion. Ext. Master Gardeners should also enjoy their volunteer experience, demonstrating a positive attitude and enthusiasm; they are not required to be experts but be able to research questions; their primary role is education of others through formal or informal methods; and because some level of volunteer leadership is expected in local programs, they are encouraged to share in leadership roles.

Specifically, EMGs will complete the internship requirements of taking the core course and completing 50 service hours the first year, and thereafter, complete at least 25 hours of volunteer service and a minimum 5 hours of continuing education annually. A record of these hours and the audience that was reached will be reported by December 31 each year. In addition, EMGs will maintain their updated profile on the database, will stay familiar with the current volunteer handbook and communications from the local and state programs, and will adhere to the program codes of conduct as described in the EMG volunteer manual.”

What changes have occurred and evolved as you have restructured and streamlined the MG program?

“A primary change occurred in all Univ of MN Ext. programs about ten years ago with the restructuring of the Extension system. One result was that many county partners no longer funded local educator positions, of which many had coordinated EMG programs. In the absence of staff, EMG volunteers needed to assume most of the coordination and leadership for the local program. Those EMG volunteer leaders have done an outstanding job.

Prior to that restructuring, the progression for accountability of the program went from EMG volunteer to local staff to state office. The state office’s primary role was providing educational opportunities and resources. It set the overall scope of program structure, but the day to day management and coordination was done by local staff. With many of the local coordinator staff positions gone, the progression for accountability has become more direct between EMG volunteers and the state office. The increased level of administration resulting from this at the state office has to some extent been at the expense of providing educational resources.

During the last few years, staff at the state office has worked to streamline program processes and administrative tasks. Efforts continue to be made to simplify and standardize the program, so no matter which region of the state you volunteer in, the expectations and procedures of being an EMG are the same.

Technology advances have not only changed the way society functions, it has changed the way we operate and deliver the EMG program. Sometimes the transition presents challenges, but we have worked to identify alternatives to accommodate those situations. Today, most Extension information is found in online documents and websites rather than on paper copies. One factor in the decision to close the Extension Store on July 1 related to decreased demand for printed Extension materials. Online access is the way most people in 2013 find the information they seek. Communicating has also changed from paper correspondence to email, facebook, and live chats. Webinars and online classes have become the preferred method of delivering formal educational content. The Extension Master Gardener program has incorporated many of these technologies because they do increase our ability to reach people statewide in a timely way, but also because of the demand to deliver in this way. This is what most people are asking for and expect.”

What are you working on that can help support the rural programs across the state or in counties that have no paid staff leaders?

“We recognize that there are differences, not only in plant zones, but in distance, population distribution, and access to resources across the state. We are one University of MN EMG program with a state office and local county units. There are two staff positions (total 1.75 FTE) directing and overseeing the program from the state office (Julie Weisenhorn and David Moen). At the local unit level, coordination and management is led by either county paid staff positions (total equivalent of 6.5 FTE across the state), county support staff with EMG coordination in that role, or by EMG volunteer leaders.

Currently and in the coming year we are working on ways to address needs and build local capacity in order to increase access to resources and support. These include increasing continuing education updates via webinars (live viewing or recordings), holding monthly EMG webinars for local leaders in management roles, expanding tools and training in leadership, increasing regional visits with local EMG leaders to discuss program sustainability and growth, and building better opportunities for EMG State Advisory Board members to interact with local program units within the region they represent.”
What tangible benefits do individuals receive from the state as recognition for their accomplishments?

“Interns receive a name badge and a certificate upon completion of their internship year. Active EMGs receive certificates and pins for their name badges for benchmark years of service and hours of service (see the EMG volunteer manual). Recognition and opportunities to say “Thank You” through stories and pictures are incorporated into the state annual report, Extension publications, and state website (dependent on local programs making us aware and/or submitting county reports).

We desire to increase recognition of EMG volunteers and have asked the EMG State Advisory Board for guidance. What is important is to understand what EMG volunteers perceive as appropriate as recognition and the state staff and State Advisory Board are open and eager to hear your opinion.”

Do you know of any unique examples of how intangible benefits have improved some MG’s lives through their volunteering?

“EMGs tell us they value the education in horticulture that they receive and the opportunity for lifelong learning; they want to give back to their community; they have a passion for gardening/horticulture; and they gain satisfaction from helping people solve problems, sharing information and teaching others. They also take pride in representing the University of Minnesota in their community.

One unique example that demonstrates the intangible benefits of being an EMG is of a volunteer in Ramsey County who started and continues to lead a Master Gardener project with St. Paul Children’s Hospital. Each week he and a team of EMG volunteers visit children who are patients at the hospital, some with critical and terminal conditions. They plant up a plant, talk about the plant and care it needs to live. They use syringes to water and tongue depressors to make holes, all as a way to demystify the hospital environment. It is heartwarming to see this in action and hundreds of children are reached each year. This EMG had a purpose for starting the program. Leonard said that when he experienced a heart attack about 20 years ago, he told ‘his maker’ that if he survived, he was going to give something back. He says that once he started this project, he knew this was the way he would fulfill that promise. He’s led the program for more than 17 years and clocked more than 22,000 hours as an EMG. He continues to volunteer several times a week, despite some current health issues. As his coordinator has said, “This program has become his life.”

Are there issues or concerns that the state has that may affect the future of the overall MG program?

“The EMG program is strong and highly respected by U of M Extension, by counties and the public. It is a valuable and valued way in which the majority of Extension horticulture education and information reaches the Minnesota public. There is always a concern with local budgets and support for the EMG program and there is also long-term concern about the capacity of the volunteer leadership base to sustain the local program unit. For 2014 I don’t foresee any significant changes and we will continue to streamline the program, listening to comments and suggestions from our volunteers across the state.”

Are you curious about the financial structure of the state program?

The following chart is from page 11 in the EMG volunteer manual. Julie Weisenhorn, State Director, manages the EMG budget and according to Dave Moen, “it goes through accounting systems in Dept. of Horticulture. Primarily there are four funding sources for specific areas of the program. Except for staff positions and some operations, facility, etc. both the state EMG office and the local county programs have to generate their own revenue to support their operations and programs.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding/Revenue Source(s)</th>
<th>How These Funds Are Used</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Minnesota Extension: from Federal and state funds</td>
<td>EMG state director and program manager positions; state extension educators and faculty positions supportive of EMG; operational expenses for the above positions including facilities, IT, communications.</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Extension Master Gardener office: from core course fees; ProHort class fees; continuing education class fees; saleable items; conference fees; grants; donations.</td>
<td>Operational expenses for state EMG office/state director including production of educational materials for volunteers; volunteer continuing education classes, conferences, events; volunteer recognition; program promotion and marketing; Arboretum Yard &amp; Garden desk activities; EMG core course support; EMG Annual Seed Trials; some state director travel costs; support for selected educational programming activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>County Extension: funds from county administration (may be tax levy dollars or other); vary based on county Extension budget allocation.</td>
<td>Local extension educator; EMG coordinator staff positions; county extension support staff positions; county extension office operations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Master Gardener Program: from local program generated fees through classes; horticulture events; saleable items, gifts, grants, donations.</td>
<td>Local Master Gardener educational events, classes, etc.; local EMG operations; in some counties, local EMG revenue share toward local Extension staff position and/or operations.</td>
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How These Funds Are Used:

- Operational expenses for state EMG office/state director including production of educational materials for volunteers; volunteer continuing education classes, conferences, events; volunteer recognition; program promotion and marketing; Arboretum Yard & Garden desk activities; EMG core course support; EMG Annual Seed Trials; some state director travel costs; support for selected educational programming activities. 

- Local extension educator; EMG coordinator staff positions; county extension support staff positions; county extension office operations. 

- Local Master Gardener educational events, classes, etc.; local EMG operations; in some counties, local EMG revenue share toward local Extension staff position and/or operations.
The University of Minnesota is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and employment without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, or sexual orientation.

Would you like to receive a printed newsletter in the mail?

The cost for us to mail out 4 colored issues a year is $10. Please make a check out to: Cook County Extension and mail with your name and address to:
NE Master Gardener Newsletter
317 W. 5th Street, Grand Marais, MN 55604

Kit Sitter, MG with Lake County has been accepted as one of the northern representatives on the State MG Advisory Board. She has been a Master Gardener since 2007 and her 3 year term began June 2012. She will bring you news from the Board in future NE Regional Newsletters.

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We are looking for more people to help with the newsletter. If you are interested, please contact the above folks from your county.

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