

# The Tiller

The Gardeners Club of Green Bay, Wisconsin



March 2023  
Volume 41, No. 3

## What's New in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Production Systems Dillon Weist, Bounty Garden Manager at NWTC Organic Gardens

Saturday, March 25, 2023, 10 a.m.  
Green Bay Botanical Garden  
2600 Larsen Road, Green Bay, Wisconsin



Dillon Weist will present what is new in sustainable agriculture and food production systems. Dillon is the Bounty Garden Manager and Lab Assistant for the Sustainable Agriculture program at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College. He is a graduate of the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems program at NWTC. He received his Permaculture Design Certification from the Tui Community, Golden Bay, Aoteroa (New Zealand). Dillon has been a volunteer for Garden Blitz for a number of years.



Co-Presidents: CJ Janus and Patti Nellis

### From our Co-Presidents ...

Hello Gardening Friends!

As I write this on March 9th, it's fun to see my alliums are 2" high AND mums are up! Only along the east side of my house where I think it never freezes.

Not so good news—the celery plant and variegated fuchsia I'm overwintering have some aphids on the new growth but not too badly. I'm keeping them in check by smooshing them and running the affected parts under water in the laundry sink (gently with the fuchsia) every few days instead of using insecticide. Luckily most of my other plants I'm overwintering are immune to aphids—coleus, succulents, plectranthus (an exotic variegated foliage annual plant I discovered last summer). I think it's important to check your plants,



especially the undersides of the leaves, every day or two this time of year to catch the bug problem early.

I showed the February meeting attendees how to get Wisconsin Public Radio's *The Larry Meiller Show* "Garden Talk" show downloaded to listen to the podcast on your phone anytime. I've been listening to it over 12-15 years—it's how I've learned the majority of my horticultural knowledge. The main reason I like it so much is I'm not a sitter—I don't like reading books or sitting with my laptop. So this is an alternative way to learn—you can listen and learn while you're working in the kitchen, driving, working in your garden! And you can back up the recording a few seconds at a time if you want to catch

continued on p. 6

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

February 25 Minutes Our Advertisers—Schroeder's and Ivy Trails	2
Officers and Chairpersons Club/Member News	3
Seed Starting	4
How to Test Seed Germination Planting for a Purpose	5
Lacewings—Heroes of the Garden Lighten Up!	6
Travel to the Gardens of the Lakeshore <i>Plectranthus</i> 'Gaucamole'	7
Events of Interest to Gardeners	8



## Meeting Minutes - 2/25/2023

Our meeting was held at the GBBG at 10 a.m. with 12 members and four guests attending. Our guest speaker, Cory Groshek from Greener Bay Compost, gave us a presentation on turning food waste into compost. He explained how anyone can get on board to have their food waste picked up. He had sample bags for members to take home.

Patti Nellis explained and demonstrated how to grow sprouts in our kitchens. She had samples of alfalfa sprouts for everyone to try. She also showed us how to start sweet potato plants from a sweet potato.

Shirley Winnes demonstrated how to get on our website ([gardenclubgreenbay.weebly.com](http://gardenclubgreenbay.weebly.com)) and view all that we have to offer and have done in the past. CJ Janus spoke to us about the Larry Meiller garden talk show on WPR (Wis. Public Radio) on Saturdays 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

CJ then opened our business meeting. The Pulaski Polka Days website will be advertising our garden walk. Members joining our club after July first will be paying half price. After their second year of joining, they will receive a name tag. A thank you went out to Ritalyn Arps for her year of service as treasurer. Jill Leisgang will be doing the remainder of this year. Jill gave

this month's treasurer's report. Veronica Geurts passed a sheet around to sign up for what days and times that we can help out at our plant sale. A sheet was also passed to put down what members can donate. Patti had seeds available for annual vegetable plants for the plant sale, and if not sold will go to Planting for a Purpose gardens. Ritalyn Arps, Carl Christensen, Veronica Geurts, and Jill Leisgang were in the drawing for the seed table donated by Maxine Cashman. Jill was the winner. Jackie Johnson, an herbalist for 30 years, and her friend, Paddy, were welcomed to our club. Once a month she will do an article in the **Tiller** on an herb. Her crystallized ginger was passed around for all to try. The January minutes were approved as printed in the **Tiller**. Jill made a proposal to do five updates on the bylaws. CJ is making a flyer to put in locations around town to expose the public to our club.

CJ made a motion to adjourn and Rob Geurts seconded it. Agnes Schussman won the door prize, and refreshments were served. Thank you to Barb Kamps for bringing muffins.



Agnes Schussman  
Secretary



Schroeder's and Ivy Trails have renewed their advertising in our **Tiller** this year. When shopping there, please let them know how much we appreciate their support!



**Schroeder's**  
**FLOWERS**  
1530 SOUTH WEBSTER  
GREEN BAY, WI 54301  
(920) 436-6363  
FAX 920-433-9685  
1-800-236-Grow  
[www.schroederflowers.com](http://www.schroederflowers.com)  
[info@schroederflowers.com](mailto:info@schroederflowers.com)

The Plant Doctor



Where customer service  
comes *naturally*

3200 Main St. 406-1645  
2 miles east of Fleet Farm East



## The Gardeners Club of Green Bay Officers and Chairpersons

### Co-Presidents

Patti Nellis, 920-288-7166  
pattinellis@gmail.com  
CJ Janus, 920-362-5609  
cj.janus@gmail.com

### Vice President

Veronica Geurts, 920-471-8649  
vageurts48@yahoo.com

### Secretary

Agnes Schussman  
920-327-1138

### Treasurer

Jill Leisgang, 920-883-9437  
jmleisgang@gmail.com

### Past President

Jill Leisgang, 920-883-9437  
jmleisgang@gmail.com

### Membership and Public Relations

Rose Borowitz, 920-632-2068  
rborowitz@gmail.com

### Sunshine

\_\_\_\_\_Open\_\_\_\_\_

### Tiller Editor and Website Manager

Shirley Winnes, 920-499-4441  
sawrrw@hotmail.com  
saw301@att.net

### Photographer/Historian

CJ Janus, 920-362-5609  
cj.janus@gmail.com

### Civic Projects and Fund Raising

Veronica Geurts, 920-471-8649  
vageurts48@yahoo.com

### Silver Trowel

\_\_\_\_\_Open\_\_\_\_\_

### Inventory Control and Education and Plant Records

\_\_\_\_\_Open\_\_\_\_\_

### House and Program

\_\_\_\_\_Open\_\_\_\_\_

## Club and Member News ...

Welcome to a new member:



Corey Behnke  
1213 Shadow Lane  
Green Bay, WI 54304  
917-912-6066  
corey@livex.tv

Please bring 14-16" pots to the March meeting. Veronica and Rob Geurts will be preparing these for the trellis-making workshop that we will be doing in April. Also, please save cardboard boxes for customers to use at our plant sale in May.



### From Last Month's Meeting:



Patti Nellis demonstrated how to grow sprouts at our February meeting. She had alfalfa sprouts for taste testing.



Cory Groshek displayed the bucket which is used to contain food waste to be composted by his company, Greener Bay Compost.

## Refreshments at Club Meetings

If you wish to have refreshments at our meetings, please volunteer. To simplify carrying in quantities of liquid refreshment, we ask you to bring your own, be it water, coffee, soda . . . which you can enjoy while visiting with members and guests.

Articles for the April issue of the Tiller are due by April 10.  
Send to Shirley Winnes at saw301@att.net  
or to sawrrw@hotmail.com.

## Seed Starting

Select from a good source.

Consider what you are going to use it for and look for disease resistant varieties.

Check for maturity date and harvest dates. We have about a 110-day growing season.

### WHEN TO START

Cool season crops like broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage start indoors 6-8 weeks before the last spring frost, usually mid to end of May. Direct seed lettuce, spinach, beets, peas, radish, potato tuber, carrot.

Tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, and okra require a long growing season and need a head start indoors 6-8 weeks before transplanting date.

Pumpkins, watermelons, sunflowers, and beans are best to be directly seeded outdoors after the last frost.

### MATERIALS

Clean, good quality potting or germination mix, NOT garden soil. Dampen before use.

Tray, peat pot or compost pots, egg carton, etc. Be sure to sterilize with 10% bleach solution, dry well. All must have drainage.

Seed starting mat, clear plastic cover, plastic film, or bag.

Grow light or mixed bulb light, two 40w florescent bulbs, one warm white, one cool white. A sunny window will work, but plants tend to lean toward the light and become tall and thin.

Keep light source no more than 6" above the plants; 16 hours on, 8 hours off each day. Timer helps!

### SEEDING

Dampen the potting mix. Plant seeds to the depth listed on the package or 2-3 times the diameter of the seed.

Cover lightly with soil and gently press down.

Water the tray from the bottom, letting the water wick up into the soil only until moist but not wet. Can also mist from the top.

Cover the container with the clear plastic lid, bag, or film. Place in a warm area, 70-80 degrees F under a light source.

If you see condensation building up, take the cover off for a short time or off-set the lid.

### GERMINATION

When seeds emerge, remove the cover. Keep temp at 60-70 degrees F.

One week after germination, water with a liquid fertilizer diluted to about 1/2 normal strength.

Transplant when second set of leaves develop and plants are 4-6" tall. Use 3-4 in. pot.

One week after transplanting, fertilize with soluble nutrients following package directions.

Keep plants under the lights, maintain no more than 6" above.

Toughen the seedlings by brushing lightly with a broom handle or hand.

### HARDENING PLANTS

Seven days before planting outside, set the seedlings outside in a sheltered, part sun area. Gradually move into full sun.

Watch the moisture level. Pots dry out quickly.

Gentle wind is good.

Watch frost warnings and cover plants as needed.

Plant on an overcast day or early evening if possible. Try not to handle roots too much.

Contributed by Patti Nellis



May the road rise up to meet you.  
May the wind be always at your back.  
May the sun shine warm upon your face.

## How to Test Seed Germination

1. Select 10 of the same seeds you are interested in planting.
2. Fold a paper towel in half and place the 10 seeds along the inside of the fold.
3. Moisten the paper towel by spraying lightly with a spray bottle of water.
4. Label a small zip lock bag with name of seed and the date.
5. Fold the moistened paper towel and seeds inside the labeled plastic zip lock bag and zip tightly closed.
6. Place bag in warm place, like on top of your refrigerator.
7. Start checking the seeds inside the bag in about three days and continue checking daily for sprouting of the seeds.
8. When no more seeds seem to be sprouting, count the number of seeds that successfully sprouted. (Example: 7 of the 10 seeds sprout, so  $7/10$  or  $0.7 = 70\%$  germination rate.)
9. Based on your germination rate, you decide what number of seeds to plant to get your desired number of plants. Germination rates of less than 50% are not desirable and the seeds are probably not worth planting.



## What's Coming Up?

### Plan ahead for our future meetings!

The April meeting will be Saturday, **April 29**, from 10 a.m. to noon at the home of Veronica and Rob Geurts to put together willow trellises to be sold at our May plant sale.

Our fund-raising plant sale is **May 18** for setup, then **May 19 and 20** for the sale.

In June we return to meeting the fourth Wednesday of the month, **June 28**, at 5:30 p.m. We have a tour at EZ Swap Pots, a business in Seymour, and Debbie Schumacher has invited us to view her gardens after the tour.

**July 22** will be the garden walk which we are sponsoring for fund raising.

August is grape-tasting—we will visit the vineyards of Rick and Diane Buss in Abrams at 5:30 p.m. on **August 23**.

Remember, anything can happen, and programs or times may need to be changed. Always check the **Giller** and your email for up-to-date details.

## Planting for a Purpose

by Patti Nellis



This photo is of Joey Pokledowski bringing produce from his “Planting for a Purpose” gardens to Paul’s Pantry. Garden plots are available through Community Gardens. Garden produce weighing in at 4,500 lbs. was donated in 2022.

Our club would like to be supportive to these generous and hard-working gardeners who share this nutritious garden bounty for those in need. So far, we have invited them to come to our educational meetings (starting seeds for annual plants they will need for their gardens). Seeds for annual plants can be provided for you by our club if you wish to participate in “Planting for a Purpose”.

If you can think of another way we can be helpful, please let me know—this gives our club purpose—to fulfill our commitment to community service through gardening! Call or text Patti Nellis at 920-288-7166.

See more at [browncountycommunitygardens.org](http://browncountycommunitygardens.org).

President's message, continued

something again or quickly go forward to skip over a part. He makes learning so entertaining, and you can save it to listen again or send it to a friend. You need to download the podcast app on your phone first. Then go to [wpr.org](http://wpr.org) - shows - *The Larry Meiller Show* - "Garden Talk". Call me or talk to me after a meeting if you need help.

Shirley and I have spent many, many hours the last few weeks designing our new 'rack card' for recruiting new members and promoting our two fundraisers (30 emails in 3 days!). Hoping it'll be done for our next meeting.

We hope you can come Saturday, March 25th, to learn about organic gardening—it'll be a 30-minute program. Then I'll give a virtual tour of our first year of work with the two gardens at the Wildlife Sanctuary (the good, the bad, and the ugly!) Patti and I recently attended a GBBG native plants class taught by the owner of Stone Silo Prairie Plants so we have more ideas for transitioning the plantings to native deer and geese resistant plants.

If you have 14-16" empty pots you could donate to our trellis making workshop (to sell at our plant sale), we would love for you to bring them to our March meeting.

Patti and I invite you to come early to the meetings (we're there at 9:30) and stay later to visit or ask questions!

CJ Janus, Co-President

## Lacewings—Heroes of the Garden



Giant Lacewing with 2" Wingspan

A giant Jurassic-era insect missing from eastern North America for at least half a century was spotted in 2012 clinging to the side of a Walmart store in Arkansas. The identification of the giant lacewing – *Polystoechotes punctata* – sent scientists into raptures. The discovery of a species that was abundant in the age of the dinosaurs but which was thought to have disappeared from large swaths of North America has stoked speculation that there may be entire populations

tucked away in remote parts of the Ozark mountains. Michael Skvarla initially had misidentified the lacewing, but after presenting the insect to his online entomology course in the fall of 2020, he realized that what he had all those years was something much rarer and more impressive. DNA testing revealed the true identity.



Common Green Lacewing  
7/8" to 1 1/4" Wingspan

Gardeners know the value of lacewing insects. Adults help pollinate plants and normally feed on nectar and honeydew. Although the adults eat a few pests, it's the babies that make lacewings so popular with gardeners. The lacewing larva is so successful at eating aphids (greenfly, blackfly, and whitefly) that it has the nickname the 'aphid lion' (or 'aphid wolf'). A single larva can eat 200 aphids a week.

Information compiled from: <https://friendsoftheearth.uk>,  
<https://www.cnn.com>, and  
<https://www.theguardian.com>

### Lighten Up!

An aging man lived alone in Ireland. His only son was in Long Kesh Prison, and he didn't know anyone who would spade up his potato garden.

The old man wrote to his son about it, and received this reply, "For HEAVENS SAKE, don't dig up that garden, that's where I buried the GUNS!"

At 4 a.m. the next morning, a dozen British soldiers showed up and dug up the entire garden, but didn't find any guns. Confused, the man wrote to his son telling him what happened and asking him what to do next.

His son's reply was:  
"Just plant your potatoes."



## Travel to the Gardens of the Lakeshore

June 21, 2023

### Sponsored by C&M Presents

There is no better way to celebrate the first day of summer than surrounded by beautiful blooms, fragrant blossoms, whimsical characters and tranquil waters! You'll find all of the above on our "Gardens of the Lakeshore" tour this summer.

We will be boarding our Deluxe Discovery Motorcoach and enjoying continental breakfast and coffee as we head toward Lake Michigan. Our day will include stops at "West of the Lake Gardens" in Manitowoc, "Bookworm Gardens" in Sheboygan, and the fabulous "Christopher Gardens" in Sheboygan County which only opens its doors for private groups. All will be blooming and waiting for us to enjoy!

Our journey also takes us to some fantastic private and semi-private gardens featuring lavender and hosta where you will learn from the pros and be able to purchase directly from them as well.

Chef Susan Beno wants you to know that she has a very special seasonal luncheon planned you are sure to enjoy.

Of course we'll have some seasonal treats and surprises for you along the way as well!

Come join us for a very special trip on the longest day of the year. We'll make the most of every minute on our Garden Adventure in the great outdoors of Wisconsin in the summertime.

Our motorcoach will board at the Hoffman Road Park and Ride beginning at 8 a.m. for an 8:30 a.m.

departure. Our planned return time is 5:30 p.m.

\$129 per person (**The Gardeners Club of Green Bay members can get a \$10 discount off this trip by contacting Susan Broberg at (920) 471-7951 directly, not using the website, and identifying they are with the club.**)

See [www.candmpresents.com](http://www.candmpresents.com) for more trips—July 20, 2023 - Off Door County's Beaten Path.

C&M Presents  
2488 Wildwood Drive  
Green Bay, WI 54302



CJ mentioned this plant in her president's message and submitted a photo of it. Here's information about this variety of commonly known Swedish ivy. ***Plectranthus* 'Guacamole'** is a great filler that has standout foliage that is deeply textured and variegated with bright chartreuse with splashes of avocado green on deep red stems. *Plectranthus* FANCIFILLERS™ Guacamole grows 18-24 inches high and wide and is well branched with a nice spreading habit. It is hardy in zones 8-11, and is treated as an annual in cooler climates. Place *Plectranthus* 'Guacamole' in a part sun location for best color and performance and provide well-draining soil and regular watering. It is an excellent choice for hanging baskets, containers, window boxes, and border plantings.

Source: <https://www.gardencrossings.com/product/fancifillers-guacamole-plectranthus/>



## The Gardeners Club of Green Bay

Shirley A. Winnes  
Tiller Editor  
301 David Drive  
Green Bay WI 54303

Affiliated with The Gardeners of America  
National website: [www.gardenersofamerica.club](http://www.gardenersofamerica.club)  
Local website: <http://gardenclubgreenbay.weebly.com>

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* **The Gardeners Club of Green Bay** was begun \*  
\* in 1967 and became chartered in 1968 by \*  
\* the Men's Garden Clubs of America (now The \*  
\* Gardeners of America, Inc). \*  
\* Purpose and objectives of our club: \*  
\* • to educate its members and the public \*  
\* and to promote interest in horticulture per- \*  
\* taining to home gardening, \*  
\* • to acquire and disseminate horticultural \*  
\* knowledge in regard to materials, plans, \*  
\* and ideas in connection with home gar- \*  
\* dens to and for the benefit of individuals \*  
\* and communities, \*  
\* • and to encourage and promote civic inter- \*  
\* est and pride in individuals and communi- \*  
\* ties, and to encourage and promote pride \*  
\* in individual or private gardens, commun- \*  
\* ity plantings, and parks. \*  
\* Membership is extended to serious gardeners \*  
\* who have a concern for the above objectives \*  
\* of the organization. Membership categories \*  
\* and dues for 2023 are \*  
\* 1. \$25 per individual, \*  
\* 2. \$35 per family, \*  
\* 3. lifetime: \$200; \$10 annual local dues. \*  
\* In addition to the **tiller**, members receive a \*  
\* national newsletter. \*  
\* At the national level, a photography contest is \*  
\* held each year, \$1,000 scholarships are \*  
\* presented, Youth Gardening and Gardening \*  
\* from the Heart programs are implemented, a \*  
\* national convention is held, and much more. \*  
\* At the local level, members are involved with \*  
\* community institutions through financial \*  
\* support and contributions of labor and plant \*  
\* materials. Silver Trowel awards are given to \*  
\* recognize contributions to community \*  
\* beautification in the areas of residential, \*  
\* commercial, industrial, institutional, civic, \*  
\* and individual. \*  
\*\*\*\*\*

## Events of Interest to Gardeners

**GBBG TILL Talk: Spring Activities on an Herb Farm: Propagating & Wild Harvesting**, March 22, 12-1 p.m., Tony DiMaggio, owner of Sacred Blossom Farm and Herbal Tea. Early spring is a wonderful time at Sacred Blossom Herb Farm; it's when they start around 50,000 herb plants and forage about 1,000 dry pounds of wild cherry bark, wild raspberry leaf, and nettles. Join us to learn how you can produce healthy, consistent plant starts and how they will harvest spring herbs that are abundant in our region. Seeds will be brought to share! Learn more about the farm and watch the farm tour video on <https://www.sacredblossomfarm.com>. Free. In-person and virtual options.

**GBBG - Survival Gardens**, April 5, 6:30-8 p.m., Jackie Johnson, ND, Author/Educator. During World War II, they called them victory gardens. The 2023 version is termed survival or necessity gardens. We'll cover what veggies and herbs to plant and how much you'll need to create your own survival garden. ☀Heirloom seeds and seed saving. ☀Preserving what you grow and ☀Some old skills you might want to reconsider. \$8/Garden Member; \$10/General Public.

**GBBG - TILL Talk: Bonsai for Beginners**, April 12, 12-1 p.m., Chris Augustian, Bay Area Bonsai Society. This TILL Talk will welcome you into the beautiful world of bonsai. Chris Augustian of the Bay Area Bonsai Society will introduce the history of bonsai and discuss some tips and tricks you need to know for cultivating and sustaining healthy bonsai. Free. In-person and virtual options.

**STEM Innovation Center - Master Gardeners 2023 Speaker Series, Insider Information on Peonies**, Sat., April 15, 2023, 10-11:30 a.m. Presenter: Nate Bremer, President of The American Peony Society and owner of Solaris Farms, grower and breeder of daylilies and peonies. He has the insider knowledge of peonies. Advance registration: \$10; day-of registration: \$15; *in-person OR online*. Questions? Call 920-391-4654 or email [extension@browncountywi.gov](mailto:extension@browncountywi.gov)

**GBBG - Earth Day Milkweed & Monarchs Workshop**, April 22, 1-3 p.m., Charlene Breitlow, local monarch expert. Join Charlene Breitlow as she guides you through a hands-on family-friendly workshop on how to sustainably plant, grow, and harvest milkweed. She will also teach the importance of milkweed to monarchs and the importance of monarchs to humans. Take home some milkweed seeds to start your very own pollinator garden at home or to add to your existing garden! \$10/Garden Member Family; \$13/General Public Family.

To reserve your spot at GBBG, visit their website at [gbbg.org](http://gbbg.org) or call 920-490-9457.