

January—February 2024

# Kewaunee County Garden Club Newsletter

## Freezing and Thawing Cycles?

I was visiting with a friend the other day. While looking out her kitchen window, I said, “Are those buds on your trees already?” Sure enough they were! This is January 2024, **not April 2024!** Mother Nature is playing tricks on us or is this a sign of what is to come? Warmer temperatures in the winter with little snow; hotter temperatures in the summer with drought conditions. Looks like El Nino rather than La Nina!

What does all this mean to the gardener and our farming friends? With the unexpected warm temperatures, budding trees and flowers, green grasses, and longer growing season ... more time in the garden and out in the field!. More work, no play!

What is troubling is the fluctuations of temperatures which can mean losing perennials, trees, shrubs, and grass if they aren't protected from the elements. Freezing temperatures don't generally harm dormant plants. However, freezing temperatures can damage new spring growth, especially flowers. As flower buds begin to swell, they become increasingly vulnerable to cold temperatures. The extent of damage will be determined by the plant species, stage of plant development, and temperature.

Tulips, daffodils, and other spring-flowering bulbs have already started to emerge from the ground due to the warm temperatures. This usually occurs when plants are on the south and west sides of homes and other buildings. These areas are usually warmer than the rest of the yard because sunlight is reflected off the building to the ground. In addition, heated basements keep the soil near homes relatively warm.

Freezing and thawing changes the soil dynamics, causing expansion and contraction that can push plant roots up and even out of the soil. So what does a gardener do about the freezing and thawing cycles? The only answer is to mulch heavily to provide steady insulation. There are no bare soils in nature and this is one reason why. Once soil freezes, a good deep mulch layer will keep them frozen longer, thus enabling them to stay frozen during all the thaw cycles. If compost isn't available, straw or leaves are good alternatives for protecting plants from the elements.



## Programs and Events 2024

**Tuesday, January 23**— KC Garden Club Meeting at 6:30 p.m.—Algoma  
“Ornamental Grasses” - Warren Hingst

**Saturday, February 10**—PBS Garden Expo in Madison

**Tuesday, February 27**—KC Garden Club Meeting—Kewaunee  
Tom Zenner will have a special program

**Tuesday, March 26**—KC Garden Club Meeting

**Tuesday, April 23**—KC Garden Club Meeting

**Saturday, April 27**—World Migratory Bird Day Celebration!  
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.  
Algoma High School

**Tuesday, May 21**—KC Garden Club Meeting

**Saturday, May 25**—KC Annual Plant Sale—Lakehaven Hall, Kewaunee

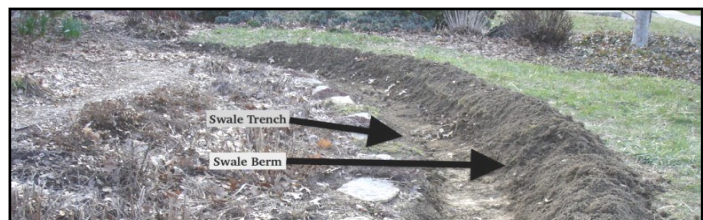
**Tuesday, June 25**—KC Garden Club Meeting

“O, Wind, if winter  
comes, can spring  
be far behind?”

-Percy Bysshe Shelley

## Environmental Considerations

- Converting two-cycle gas powered engines (*blowers, lawn mowers, etc.*) to battery operated machinery reduces carbon emissions.
- ‘Rewilding’ or converting portions of lawn into meadows using eco-friendly plantings.
- Using peat-free potting soils to help lower peat harvesting. Peat bogs are vital wetland habitat for many animals, insects, and plants. Harvesting them damages the ecosystem.
- Alternatives to a lawn:
  - a. Gravel Gardens
  - b. Rain Gardens
  - c. Swale Gardens



# Kewaunee Co Garden Club presents a trip to: Saturday February 10th

List of seminars and times



**Contact us at:**

<https://www.kcgardenclub.org/contact.html>

**Cancellations made after Monday February 5th will be refunded minus any expenses incurred.**

**\$60.00** per person Includes:  
Transportation to and from the expo, one admission ticket and refreshments on the bus.

Those of you that have joined us on previous trips know that we always have a good time and it's a great way to kick off the gardening season

### Pick-up Points & Times

Algoma – Nicolet Bank parking lot 5:35 am  
Kewaunee – Middle School, south parking lot 6:00 am  
De Pere - Park and Ride, Hwy G, Main Ave, 6:40 am

The bus will leave promptly, please be on time so we can meet our arrival schedule.

**Remit payment to:**

Ann Brunner N2420 Lakeshore Rd, Kewaunee, 54216

Deadline: **Monday February 5<sup>th</sup>**

Please include your name, email, phone# and pick-up point.

You will receive an email confirmation with payment



## Expo Educational Seminars 2024

The lineup of some of the seminars at Garden Expo is very interesting. Some topics on the schedule ...

1. Herbs for Butterflies
2. Pruning Basics
3. All About Tools
4. Maximizing Pollinator Gardens in A Time of Climate Change
5. Simple Steps to a Beautiful Rose Garden
6. Gardening in a Warming Wisconsin
7. Preserving and Circulating Biodiversity Among Seed Savers.



# Garden Trends for 2024

## 1. **Pollinator Planting**

With the decline of monarch butterflies, gardeners are planting more milkweed, butterfly weed, and borage.

## 2. **Smart Yard Technology**

Smart sprinkler controllers use real-time weather data to water plants when they need it. Mobile Apps also allow users to adjust and monitor watering schedules to save water and money.

3. **Ecology Lawns** replace grass with clovers, herbaceous plants, and other drought tolerant and disease resistant plants.

4. With the rising awareness of **climate change**, more gardeners want to be stewards and capture more carbon in their yards using mulch, cover crops, and compost amendments to sustain the soil rather than tilling.

5. **Perennial Plants** stay in the ground longer which gives them a longer time to store carbon in the soil.

6. **Tended Gardens** are popular having well-kept hedges and shrubs.

7. **Foliage gardens are in demand.** Features various shades of green, along with silver, blue, soft chartreuse/mint, white or white variegated and maybe some black to those who are daring!

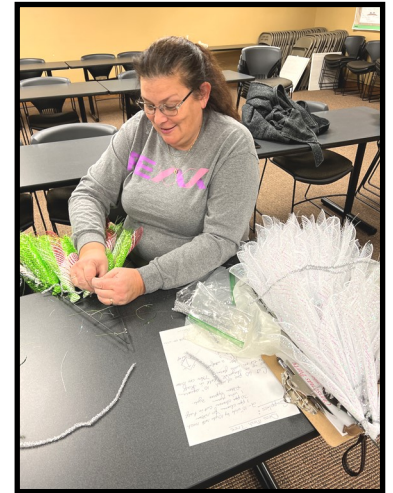
8. **Flower Color:** Anything goes ... growing whatever brings joy!

9. Focus on buying **native plants** which can add biodiversity to the backyard and lessens the usage of water and fertilizers.

10. **Grasses** and **Sedges** serve as ornamental and ecological roles in the



# December Crafting



## Put On Your 'Thinking' Cap!

- 1. Which of the following crops is not a good companion plant for green beans?**
  - a. Brussel Sprouts
  - b. Cucumbers
  - c. Onions
- 2. Aged compost is typically the best option for veggie gardens. Which of the following is not a feature of aged compost?**
  - a. Moist
  - b. Dry
  - c. Crumbly
- 3. Which part of the horseradish plant can be used to make a sauce?**
  - a. Root
  - b. Flower
  - c. Leaves
- 4. Bonsai is the art of creating small trees to mimic the shape of trees in real life. From which country does it come from?**
  - a. Japan
  - b. India
  - c. Vietnam
- 5. A deficiency of which element may lead to the yellowing of leaves on a plant?**
  - a. Calcium
  - b. Iron
  - c. Potassium
- 6. Which of the following nutrients do plants not get directly from the soil?**
  - a. Carbon
  - b. Nitrogen
  - c. Potassium
- 7. What is the main cause of blossom-end rot, a quite common gardening issue?**
  - a. Cold Conditions
  - b. Water Shortage
  - c. Calcium Imbalance
- 8. When is the best time to grow garlic?**
  - a. 4 weeks after the ground freezes
  - b. 4 weeks before the ground freezes
  - c. 4 weeks after the beginning of summer
- 9. Which type of vegetable is a Bintje?**
  - a. Cucumbers
  - b. Beets
  - c. Potatoes



# Annual Christmas Party - Hotel Stebbins, Algoma



**President:** Tom Zenner  
**Vice President:** Cheryl Eberle  
**Secretary:** Sue Hepp  
**Treasurer:** Ann Brunner

**Marketing Committee:**

Tom Zenner  
Barb Smith  
Cheryl Eberle  
Nancy Lamack  
Joel Weichelt  
Mary Novak

<https://www.kcgardenclub.org/>

Answers to 'Thinking' Cap:  
1 c, 2 b, 3 a, 4 a, 5 b, 6 a, 7 c, 8 b, 9 c



## Master Gardener Updates

### Continuing Education Opportunities:

**Tuesday, January 16, 2024**—'Bring Your Garden to the Sun: All About Container and Straw Bale Gardening' with Craig LeHoulier via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. This presentation will be part of the WIMGA Annual Meeting. The meeting will be recorded and will be available for later viewing.

**Thursday, February, 15, 2024**—Vanessa Mueller—'Trees in the Landscape' via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. Vanessa will talk about the 'State of the Nursery 2024' trees, shrubs, and perennials that add beauty and benefits to all gardens.

**Mondays, March 4, 11, and 18**—Diana Alfuth—'Environmentally Sound Landscaping in a Changing Climate'

**Cost is \$30.00 for WIMGA members/ \$45.00 for non-members**

**Thursday, April 11, 2024**—Mark Dwyer—'Adaptive Gardening' via Zoom at 6:30 p.m.