

# North Country Gardeners

Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn Co.

UW-Extension Cooperative Extension

Issue 8 , August 2001

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**University of Wisconsin-Extension**

**Area Agricultural Agents Office**

**Spooner Ag Research Station**

**W6646 Highway 70**

**Spooner, Wisconsin 54801**

**(715) 635-3506 or**

**Toll Free 800-528-1914**

## Greetings

I trust everyone is having a productive and successful gardening season. It took me awhile but I finally got "caught up" with the weeds in my garden, and I would say it's one of the nicer vegetable gardens I've had in quite some time. Besides the mini draught we had the end of June and early July it has been a good growing season thus far.

There are several upcoming educational events highlighted in this newsletter. On Aug 30<sup>th</sup> three separate events are planned. At noon learn about selection factors for woody ornamentals, at 4:00 p.m. learn about tomato breeding and tomato care, and at 5:30 p.m. take in the Twilight Garden Tour. The General Master Gardener Training program starts September 25 and on November 8 is our annual grape pruning workshop.

I hope everyone has a bountiful fall harvest. As always I welcome your comments, suggestions, and written contributions to this newsletter.

Happy Gardening,

Kevin Schoessow  
Area Ag Development Agent

## General Master Gardener Training program offered this fall

*Kevin Schoessow*

*UWEX Area Ag Development Agent*

UW-Extension for Burnett, Washburn and Sawyer Counties will be sponsoring the General Master Gardener Training Program. There will be 12 consecutive weekly training sessions. The program is scheduled to begin Tuesday evening, September 25 and continue through Tuesday, December 11. One training site will be at the Spooner Ag Research Station. Additional sites at Hayward, Siren, and Minong are being considered.

Enclosed is a registration brochure, if you are not interested in the training, share the brochure with a friend or neighbor. If you have taken the Master Gardener Training and would like to brush up on a particular topic, just let me know. If you there is room, you are more than welcome to sit in. **Actually, I could use some help facilitating some of the sessions, help will be needed especially if Siren, Hayward, or Minong are added. If you would like to help out give me a call at 635-3506 or 1-800-528-1914.**

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## August 30 workshops at the Spooner Ag Research Station

Kevin Schoessow

UWEX Area Ag Development Agent

### **Woody Ornamentals Workshop**

Whether you're a beginner or novice landscaper, you won't want to miss this rare opportunity to learn from the finest. Scheduled to give a talk on "Factors to Consider When Selecting Woody Ornamental Plants" is Dr. Laura Jull UW-Extension Woody Ornamental Specialist. Planting the right tree or shrub in the right spot is easier said than done. Site characteristics, location, hardiness, and plant characteristics are all important factors to consider.

If you want to add value to your property, what better way than with trees, shrubs, and other woody ornamentals. Deciding what to plant is critical to your success. Dr. Jull will share with participants research results and her own experiences with woody ornamental selection, making it easier to decide which plant you should consider for your next landscaping or tree planting.

To participate in this unique learning opportunity, you must pre-register by August 27. The workshop will be from Noon until 2:00 p.m. on August 30, 2001 at the Spooner Ag Research Station. The cost of the program will be \$10 per person payable at the door. There must be a minimum of 25 participants for this workshop to run. To pre-register contact Lorraine Toman at 715-635-3506 or 1-800-528-1914.

### **Tomato Breeding Project Meeting**

This spring over 200 tomato plants were given out as part of a joint tomato breeding project between local gardeners and UW-Madison. These plants repre-

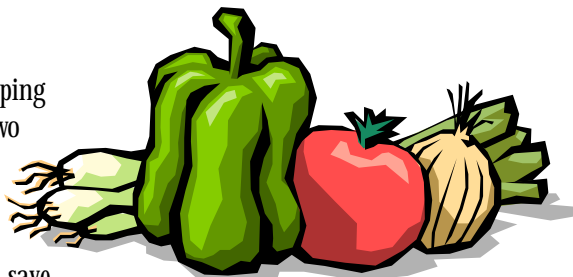
sented the beginning phase of developing a short season paste tomato variety. Two selections are currently being evaluated. Each participant was asked to grow 6 plants and evaluate each plant for various characteristics and save fruit from the "best" plant. The seeds from these "best" plants will then be processed for next year's seed. After several years of selection, it is hoped that a suitable early season paste tomato variety can be released.

On Thursday August 30 starting at 4:00 p.m. at the Spooner Ag Research Station there will be a meeting for all participants of the tomato breeding project. At this time we are asking all participants to bring in their evaluation data sheets, and five fruits from the "best" plant. Tomato breeder Dr. Jim Nienhuis from UW-Madison will be present to discuss how fruit quality, flavor, and disease tolerance are used for evaluating new variety selections. He will also discuss how to save seeds and demonstrate how a tomato's soluble solids (sugars) are determined using a refractometer.

Those who are unable to attend the meeting at 4:00 p.m. can bring their fruits and data sheets to the Garden Twilight Tour later that evening, or at another prearranged time. You do not have to be a participant of the plant breeding project to attend.

### **Twilight Garden Tour**

The annual twilight garden tour is scheduled for Thursday, August 30 starting at 5:30 p.m. at the Spooner Ag Research Station display garden. As in the past, this event will allow area gardeners a chance to view some of the different flower and vegetable varieties suitable for northwestern Wisconsin. Horticulture Specialists Dr. Bob Tomesh and Dr. Helen Harrison will be guest speakers and will be available to help answer your horticulture questions. Dr. Jim Nienhuis,



UW-Madison vegetable breeder, will also be on hand. In addition to admiring and learning about this year's varieties we will attempt a tasting of some of the produce in the garden.

The display garden saw a number of changes again this year. The row of apple trees has been removed. These trees will be replaced by newer apple varieties some with increased disease resistance. Some older woody ornamental plantings were also removed and were replaced with viburnum, cotoneaster, barberry, butterfly bush, and hydrandia. Varieties of amelanchier (serviceberry), current, gooseberry, ligonberry, and jostaberry were also added. The purpose of these plantings is to demonstrate and evaluate how these plants grow in sandy soils typical of our hardiness zone. This is also the second growing season of the shrub rose variety trial.

In addition to the perennial plants we also have a demonstration of a portable hoop house, 10 different "garden" potato varieties, 23 varieties of carrots, and 10 different onion varieties, plus many vine crops and our colorful array of annual flowers. Come out and see what's growing and enjoy an evening talking and meeting with fellow gardeners.

The display garden is located on Orchard Lane across from the Sheep Research facility. Orchard Lane is approximately one mile east of Spooner on Highway 70, just before the Historical Marker Park and the Yellow River bridge. Watch for garden tour signs.

## Roses and their care

Kevin Schoessow

UWEX Area Ag Development Agent

**Did you know that...** Roses are the most popular of all garden flowers and are also our national flower.

- \* Roses grow best in full sun, a minimum of six hours per day.
- \* Roses require evenly moist well-drained soil. Deep watering once a week is very beneficial.
- \* You should fertilize with a complete granular rose fertilizer (apply as directed) in early spring after the new growth has started. Repeat later in the growing season. Do not fertilize after early August in the Northeast.
- \* Soil pH should be between 6.0 to 6.5. Add limestone as necessary or, if needed, a source of phosphorous such as super phosphate or bone meal may be added.

### Pruning

Prune roses in early spring when buds begin to swell. Completely cut out all dead, weak, diseased, and crossing canes. Reduce the size of the remaining canes by 25 to 50%. Make the final cuts at a 45 to 60 degree angle, ¼ inch above an outward-facing bud. To prevent the entrance of cane borers, cover pruning cuts with wax, a thumbtack or pruning paint.

Roses that only bloom once, such as rambler or polyanthus roses, should be pruned after flowering.

### Pest Control

Dust or spray with a registered fungicide (apply as directed) during the summer months on disease-prone varieties. Treat for insects as needed.

For more information visit the American Rose Society (<http://www.ars.org/index.html>).

## Cutting or “deadheading” roses

Sue Donatell

Master Gardener

The past two summers Ed Jacobsen and I have been “deadheading” the roses that were planted at the research station as part of a hardy shrub rose research project through the UW Horticulture department.

Most of the roses weathered their first winter fairly well; a few, however, simply disappeared. This year black spot and aphids are a considerable problem but are not treated as part of the research project. As last year, 2 or 3 varieties stand out as being most desirable. Some of my personal favorites are Wisconsin Cheese, Easy Living, and Pomona. Be sure to come for the Twilight Garden Tour to choose your own favorite.

Following is an article by Rachel Hunter from the American Rose Society website about “deadheading” roses:

Once a rose has bloomed, it should be removed, and the term applied to this procedure is called “deadheading.” One should use pruning shears that are sharp in order to avoid tearing the cane as opposed to cutting it. Cuts should also be made at a 45-degree angle and about 1/4" above a leaf set.

Roses are deadheaded in order to prompt the bush into producing yet more blooms. The blooms should be deadheaded just as the petals are about to fall or shortly thereafter.

The first blooms of Spring will typically be borne on plants that are rather short, either because the bushes were newly planted or because they were heavily pruned back

in the previous fall or winter. In any event, one must remove the first set of spent blooms without cutting too far down the cane. A cut made at the second leaf axil down from the

bloom will be sufficient to effectuate the removal of the spent bloom, yet still leave enough cane to aid in the production of the second bloom cycle.

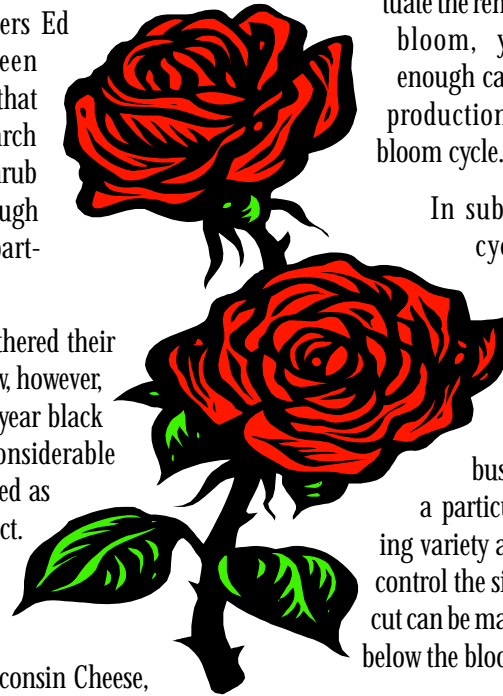
In subsequent bloom cycles, one can deadhead farther down the stem depending on the size of the bush. If the bush is a particularly tall-growing variety and one wants to control the size of the bush, a cut can be made several inches below the bloom.

Leaf clusters on roses either come 3, 5 or 7 leaves to a set. The first deadheading of the season will likely be made just above a 3-leaf set. Future deadheadings will usually take place just above a 5-leaf set, usually because you'll find many more 5-leaf sets than 3 or 7. The goal is to cut the stem far enough so that when the new growth emanates, you'll have a decent-sized cane. If you cut up at a 3-leaf set, the new cane emerging will be quite small.

If you cut down at a 7-leaf set, you'll be removing a lot of cane because the 7-leaf sets usually occur far down the cane.

In areas where cane borers are present, it is also advisable to seal the new cut. This can be done by either painting nail polish over the cut or using Elmer's Glue.

By following these simple procedures, one can ensure repeat bloom cycles and have many more roses to enjoy during the course of the growing season.



## Japanese beetles appear in Barron County

The past week it has been confirmed that there were Japanese beetles in two locations within the city of Cumberland. These are the first verifiable infestations of the Japanese beetle in Barron County. The beetles somehow got transported there—probably hitching a ride on someone's car or camper. There has been a lot of press in the Midwest U.S. about outbreaks this summer.

Japanese Beetles are slightly less than ½ inch long, and are shiny, metallic green. They have coppery-brown wing covers that do not entirely cover the abdomen. There are six pairs of patches of white hairs along the sides and back of the body, under the edges of the wings. Males and females have the same markings, but females are typically slightly larger. Newly hatched larvae are approximately 1/8 inch long and translucent creamy white. Once feeding begins, the hindgut appears gray to black. The typical C-shape of Japanese beetle larvae is similar to that of other white grub species.

Japanese beetle adults do not damage turf but are an important pest of many other plants. They feed on foliage or flowers, and are a major pest of over 300 species of plants, maples, birch, crabapples, purple-leaf plums, roses, mountain ash, and linden are highly preferred ornamental hosts. Adults feed on the upper surface of the foliage of most plants, consuming soft mesophyll tissues between the veins and leaving a lace-like skeleton. Often the upper canopy is defoliated first or most severely. Trees receiving extensive feeding damage turn brown and become partially defoliated.

Japanese beetle grubs feed below-ground and chew on the roots of turf and ornamentals. As result, they reduce the plants ability to take up enough water and nutrients to withstand stresses or hot, dry weather. The first evidence of grub injury in turf appears as localized-patches of pale, dying grass that displays symptoms of drought stress. As

grubs develop further and feeding increases, damaged areas rapidly enlarge and coalesce to a point whereby the turf is not well anchored and can be rolled back like a carpet.

Parasitic wasps help provide some control as the wasp population increases. Frequently natural control is too slow to protect the plants the beetles are attacking, however. Control suggestions include sevin, pyrethrin or neem oil.

## Protect your garden from insect damage

*Kevin Schoessow*  
*UWEX Area Ag Development Agent*

Did you know that 90% of the insects around your home are beneficial to or do not harm your plants? They eat pest insects, recycle organic debris, or feed on plants without causing any noticeable damage.

Inspect your garden weekly to reduce insect damage to your plants. Start at the base of each plant and work your way up through the foliage. Beat test plants by tapping a branch against a white piece of paper to look for pests and beneficials. Take a particularly careful look at the underside of leaves where many insects lay eggs and feed.

The best way to manage pests is to use a combination of chemical and non-chemical control. Only take action when the problem is serious enough to damage the plant. If we all use Integrated Pest Management (IPM), we can control pests in an environmentally conscious manner.

Physical control of pests is simple and highly effective. Damage to your plants is stopped in its tracks and it takes less time than applying a pesticide. Simply remove pests from plants as soon as you spot them. Small insects such as aphids and mites can be removed with a thorough washing down of the infested plant with your garden hose. Other pests can be picked off or tapped into a bucket of soapy water.

## Calendar of Events

**August 30, 2001** Woody Ornamentals Workshop with Dr. Laura Jull. Noon - 2 p.m. Spooner Ag Research Station.

**August 30, 2001** Tomato Breeding Project Meeting. 4:00 p.m. Spooner Ag Research Station.

**August 30, 2001** Twilight Garden Tour, 5:30 p.m. Spooner Ag Research Station Demo Garden.

**September 25 - December 11, 2001** Master Gardener General Training. Tuesdays 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

**November 8, 2001** Grape Pruning Workshop, Spooner Ag Research Station.

**Spooner Garden Club** meets 4th Thursday of every month. Contact Merle Klug at (715) 635-6239.

**Hayward Garden Club** meets 2nd Tuesday of every month. Contact Carol Alcoe (715) 462-3213.

**Burnett Garden Club** meets 2nd Thursday of every month. Contact Kris Henning at (715) 463-5247.

### Brown Bag ETNs

August 24 - Mulching

September 29 - Managing Your Soil for Optimum Plant Productivity

October 27 - Native Plant Restoration: Sources and Implementation

### Wisconsin Gardener TV

August 26 - The Summer Garden

September 30 - Fall is for Planting and Picking!

October 28 - Fall Color in the Garden

November 25 - Harvest Creations

## Tri-County Master Gardeners Association forming

Kevin Schoessow

UWEX Area Ag Development Agent

For the past several months, master gardeners have been meeting to “officially” form a local Master Gardener Association. The group has been working very hard developing a set of by-laws for the association. These draft by-laws have been enclosed with this newsletter for two reasons. The first is to inform all past, present, and future Master Gardener Participants that a local association is being formed, and the second is to solicit input on the proposed by-laws.

If you have any comments or suggestions concerning the by-laws please contact, Sue Donatell at 635-9676, or Sharon Tarras at 635-3593. The comment period for the by-laws will be until Friday September 7, after which time they will be sent to the State MG Association for acceptance. The next North Country Master Gardener Association Meeting is set for Thursday September 27 at 7:00 p.m. at the Gov. Tommy Thompson State Fish Hatchery on Hwy. 70 in Spooner.

## Common thrips may cause chafing in vegetables

Kevin Schoessow

UWEX Area Ag Development Agent

The recent, dramatic dry-down has made conditions ideal for buildup of thrip populations in home gardens, especially those that aren't being watered with a sprinkler during recent dry conditions. Thrips are extremely small (1mm – 5mm in length) and sometimes difficult to see. They have a tendency to hide in leaf folds and near the base of plants. They feed by scraping the surface of the leaf with mandibles that are asymmetrical (one long, one short) and then ingesting the released plant fluids. Heavy feeding will result in browning of leaves.

Insecticides aren't very efficient. However, don't despair, the number one sum-

mer mortality factor of thrips is rainfall. The gardener can control thrips by using a sprinkler to water the garden on a regular basis. The artificial rainfall washes the thrips off the foliage. Once that happens, their urge to reproduce diminishes.

If you have a magnifying glass, you can easily distinguish a thrip from other critters. While the asymmetrical mandibles may be hard to see, their unique wings are not. When fully developed, the wings are long and narrow and are fringed with very long hairs.

## Prolong flower cuttings

Kevin Schoessow

UWEX Area Ag Development Agent

Cut flowers early in the morning or late in the evening when they are holding their maximum amount of water.

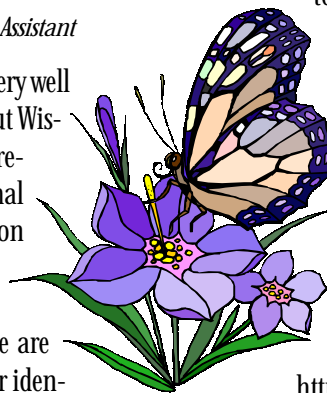
Flowers picked during midday when stressed and wilting from heat and lack of water may not fully recover. Bring a bucket of water to the garden to receive flowers. Cut flowers before they open fully, usually with a clean slanting cut. Straight cuts may allow the stems to rest flat on the bottom of the container and reduce water uptake.

## Butterfly websites

Lee Daniels

UWEX Summer Horticulture Assistant

Butterflies have done very well in this area and throughout Wisconsin this year. This has resulted in larger than normal numbers of some common ones, and some that rarely make it this far north for us to see. There are some excellent websites for identifying butterflies. If interested, check out *Butterflies of North America* from Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center: [www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/bflyusa/bflyusa.htm](http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/lepid/bflyusa/bflyusa.htm); or *Caterpillars of Eastern Forests*: [www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/2000/cateast/cateast.htm](http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/2000/cateast/cateast.htm).



## Useful plant websites

Sheri Snowbank

Master Gardener

The weather and the bugs this summer has not made this the best season to go out searching for wildflowers. Denied their natural habitats, many backyard naturalists are sitting in their air-conditioning searching on the computer for websites in an effort to keep their spirits up. Below are three excellent sites to start with:

<http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/herbarium/> (Vascular Plants of Wisconsin) This site is maintained by the UW-Madison Department of Botany Herbarium and is the best and most complete site for Wisconsin plants. The site is user friendly and searches can be easily done by scientific name, habitat type, status, county, family, genera, or common name. The results give a detailed description and most have a photo and distribution map.

<http://biology.uwsp.edu/idtest/home.htm> (Common plants of Wisconsin) UW-Stevens Point maintains this site which includes over 200 species of plants, trees, shrubs and ferns. My favorite part of this site is the plant identification quiz. This multiple choice quiz can be modified to a variety of skill levels. The Treehaven course separates the species by growth forms and habitats. Search results show photographs, detailed life history, distribution and occurrence. This site is a macromedia product and requires a free program called Authorware Web Player (link on site) that is easy to download.

<http://www.klines.org/joanne/> (Wisconsin Plant of the Week) This site was developed is updated by a WIDNR employee. Each week a different plant is featured. Each entry provide excellent photos of the plant/tree/shrub as well as a very detailed life history. The archive of past featured plants is listed by scientific name.

**How did you do?**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. False—there are many differences such as care, spacing, and time of bloom.</li> <li>2. False—about 3 weeks is the average. This is one of the challenges in designing with them— to ensure something is in bloom most of the time. Another option is to intersperse them with annuals which will provide consistent bloom.</li> <li>3. It depends: true—if you live in a warm, sunny or dry region, false—if you live in the cooler north, especially a cloudy area, they do fine in sun provided they get enough water</li> <li>4. False—They need weeding, staking and dividing among other cares. The only plants requiring no maintenance are dead plants!</li> <li>5. False—Most need dividing at least every 2-3 years, yearly for vigorous ones like some yarrow and loosestrife. Only slow</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. False—organic materials such as bark chips or cocoa shells as bark chips or cocoa shells are better. Perennials need room to spread which the mats prevent. Such woven textile mats do work well around trees and non-spreading shrubs, covered with a thin layer of mulch.</li> <li>7. True—Penstemon 'Husker's Red' from the Cornhusker state of Nebraska.</li> <li>8. True—It is also one of the tallest, and most vigorous, and has white flowers.</li> <li>9. True—This is another advantage of perennials--the ability to specialize.</li> <li>10. True—yes, this is what I like, an almost limitless choice; no boredom here!</li> </ol> |
|---|---|

**Answers**

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|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Woven fabric mulch mats are good to use around perennials.</li> <li>7. The 1996 Perennial Plant of the Year is named after the "Cornhusker" state where it was developed.</li> <li>8. 'David' is a garden phlox cultivar relatively resistant to powdery mildew disease.</li> <li>9. Hostas, irises and daylilies among other large perennial groups have their own associations.</li> <li>10. There are hundreds of perennials to choose from.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A perennial is a replacement for an annual.</li> <li>2. Perennials bloom for most of the season.</li> <li>3. Perennials such as astilbe and hosta must have shade to grow well.</li> <li>4. Perennials require no maintenance.</li> <li>5. Perennials seldom need dividing.</li> </ol> |
|--|--|

**Gardener's Quiz**

## The Herbal Harvest

*Dr. Leonard Perry*

*Extension Professor, University of Vermont*

An herb is any plant that is used in whole or part as an ingredient for flavor or fragrance. To get the most out of herbs, harvest them at their peak of freshness and store or preserve them properly.

Harvest herbs when the soils responsible for flavor and aroma are at their peak. The timing depends on what plant part is being harvested and its intended use.

Most herbs are cultivated for their foliage and should be harvested just before the flower buds open. Although herbs such as chives are quite attractive in bloom, flowering can cause the foliage to develop an off-flavor. Many herbs, especially parsley, chives, mint, and oregano, can be harvested continually for fresh use beginning as soon as the plant has enough foliage to sustain growth. Harvest herbs grown for seeds—dill, caraway, coriander, and cumin, for example—as the fruits change color from green to brown or gray but before they scatter to the ground.

Collect herb flowers such as borage and chamomile just before full flowering. Har-

vest herb roots including bloodroot, chicory, ginseng, and golden seal in the fall, after the foliage fades. Just be sure to mark the plants before the foliage drops, so you don't forget where they are located. You can harvest fragrant herbs and dry them for pot pourri.

If you don't intend to use herbs immediately, drying is the most common way to preserve them. Tie leafy herbs with long stems in bunches and hang to air dry. Rinse dust and soil from foliage, shake off excess water, and remove dead or damaged leaves. Then hang upside down in a warm, dry, well-ventilated place. To preserve foliage color, avoid drying in sunlight. Enclose seed heads in paper bags to catch seeds as they fall.

An old-fashioned method of preservation is to salt-cure by placing herbs between layers of coarse grade or regular table salt. Seal the drying salt in an airtight container such as a glass jar or plastic tub. Salt-drying preserves herbs for future use as well as produces herb-flavored salt that can be used as a seasoning in cooking.

After the harvest, prepare perennial herbs for winter by cutting plants back to the ground. Mulch if tender, like lavender.

## Some people are shocked.....

by what they find when they dig in their yards. It is common for homeowners and gardeners to dig holes in the ground for new trees, shrubs, fenceposts, mail boxes, and new buildings. All require some digging, and a hole from a foot to several feet deep. The problem is, you don't really know what you are going to dig into.

Damaging or disturbing underground utilities can cause power outages in your neighborhood. Worse, you could be seriously hurt.

So, call Digger's Hotline at **1-800-242-8511** if you plan to dig--no matter how deeply--on your property.



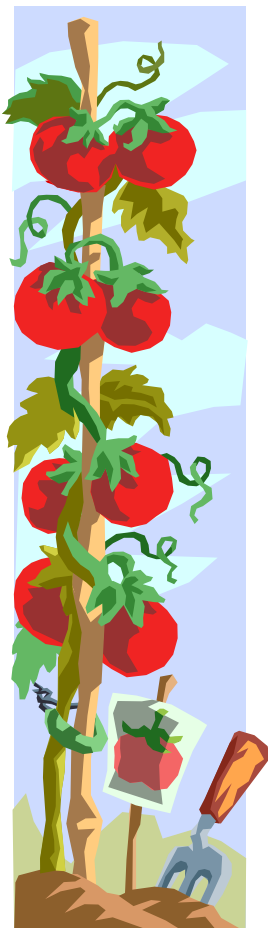
Advise them of your address and approximate location you will be digging in, and they will have the area marked for you within three working days.

**Remember--Call Before You Dig!**

**Volunteering Update** -- There continues to be plenty of volunteering opportunities for Master Gardeners or others interested. The following is a list of projects along with contact information:

Location	Project	Contact	Phone
Spooner Fish Hatchery	Shoreland Restoration	Sheri Snowbank .....	635-2101
Spooner Ag Research Station	Demo Garden	Kevin Schoessow .....	635-3506
Spooner Ag Research Station	Shrub Rose Experiment	Kevin Schoessow .....	635-3506
Spooner	Vets Cemetery	Merle Klug .....	635-6239
Webster	Fort Folle Avoine Garden	Kevin Klucas .....	866-8890
Grantsburg	Community Beautification	Kris Henning .....	463-5247
Hayward	Fairgrounds Beautification	Liz Metcalf .....	462-4662
Hayward	Smith Pond City Park	Verna Warman .....	634-2854

Don't forget about helping the young and old with gardening projects. Consider working with 4-H, Boys & Girls Clubs, Church groups, or Senior Citizens. Share the bounty by planting an extra row of vegetables and donating it to a local food shelf or senior center. Once you've been certified, you only need 10 hours of volunteer time per year plus 10 hours continued education.



# North Country Gardeners Newsletter

A publication for gardening enthusiasts from the  
Tri-County area of Burnett, Sawyer, & Washburn



*EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER*

Cooperative Extension  
**United States Department of Agriculture**  
University of Wisconsin Extension  
432 N. Lake St.  
Madison, WI 53706

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Official Business

Visit us on the web! You may find this newsletter and other useful information by visiting the website of the Spooner Ag Research Station.  
<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/sars/index.htm>