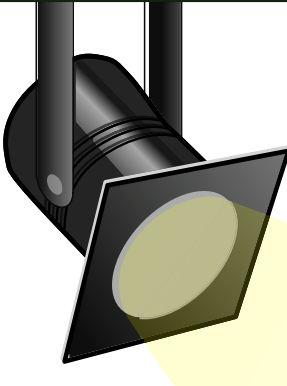


MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

DAVID DiPIETRO Class of 2010



Being a master gardener volunteer is enjoyable and has given me the opportunity to make friends with fellow gardeners. There are so many master gardener activities it is hard to pick a favorite. I really enjoy the plant sale. There are so many plants, but so little space to put them at home. So far that has not stopped me from buying my fair share. For the plant sale I worked with Colleen Reed on advertising. We can do this at almost any time around any given event as most of our work involves posting announcements on social media sites and on-line calendars. If you are on Facebook, you can help by liking and sharing the postings from OC-MGA.

Gardening is a tradition in my family. My father and grandfather were both gardeners in the Chicago area. I have passed gardening on to my two sons and their families. I like to try different types of tomatoes, hybrid and heirloom. Along with sweet and hot peppers, these tomatoes are used to make salsa. Other vegetables I grow are green beans (freeze the extra for later in the year), zucchini (I try to pick them small, but it always happens that I miss some and it gets out of control), lettuce, and basil. The basil is used to make fresh pesto sauce and the extra is frozen for another time.

Summer brings an abundance of fruits that I will can or freeze. I have currants, which are used to make jam. I also buy or pick peaches, blueberries, apples, and strawberries for making jams and sauces. I did take the Master Food Preserver training and am now a MFP Volunteer. This fun group educates community members on safe food preserv-

ing methods.

I enjoy growing perennial flowers, but the rabbits enjoy eating them even more. It is a battle to try to keep them away from the young plants. My perennials include peonies (old variety passed on from my parents), lupines (out of control), rudbeckia, purple cone flowers plus a few others. A few annual flowers are mixed in for color and to accent the perennials.

The large trees in our front yard have been or will be removed. Last year the birch clumps were removed due to die back. It was replaced with a Japanese tree lilac. This spring the linden was removed due to a split trunk, which can happen to lindens. This was a well-established tree. Lindens have a very nice scent from the flowers in the summer. With the larger trees gone, this will leave room for more flowers.

I am married to my first wife, Jean and have 2 sons, Matthew and his wife Jenna; Mark and his wife Katie. They live in Appleton and each have 2 children. I have 3 granddaughters; Grace, Ava, and Willow and a grandson, Luca. Luca is the youngest and was born in April this year.

I am looking forward to an exciting growing season and meeting new gardening friends.

