

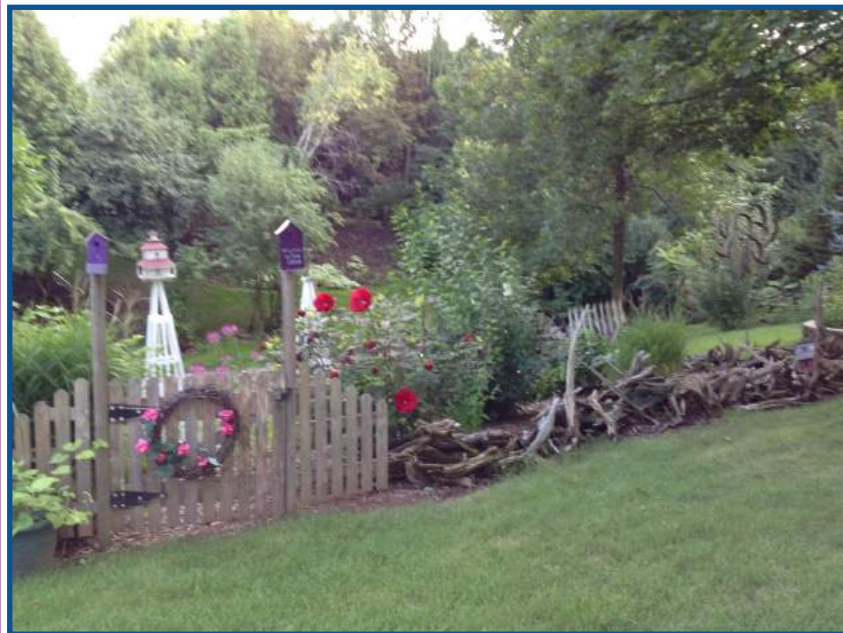
Master Garden Spotlight

Cheryl Theimer



As a youngster, the family summer meal plan sort of followed the vegetables growing in the garden. It probably started with peas and then young carrots, green beans, even kohlrabi (not my favorite), sweet-sour cucumbers, all served with a cream sauce on potatoes with addition of a selected meat. Of course, there were pickles and beets as well. I guess it could be described as “economical and healthy eating.” Picking berries with my aunts was special fun with buckets of strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, elderberries and grapes. All these wonderful fruits gave me the idea to try wine making: dandelions, rhubarb, grape (mixing tame and wild grapes), and elderberry. My mother had extensive flower gardens which received a generous load of manure each spring which lead to my extensive training in the art of weeding. Once I ordered a package of huckleberry seeds from Jungs Seed Catalog, planted them at a relative’s farm and for some reason rather forgot about them for a time. Then one day there were these high bushes covered with these beautiful large purple berries; wonderful pie!

A home of my own gave me a large yard and opportunity to fill a large area with vegetables and many flowers. I was privileged to be on the 2012 Garden Walk. I think it was during one of the hottest stretches July could offer. My husband and I watered sometimes twice daily just to keep things alive. The water bill brought a call from the city wondering if something was wrong at our house. After my husband died, I am living in a smaller place and my garden is limited to pots of flowers and gardening at my church. There is a saying, “When God closes a door, He opens a window.” And that takes me to my second home: Hearthstone Historic House Museum. As I was training to be docent and lead tours, I noticed the two antique urns in front were filled with “bouquets of artificial flowers.” I asked permission to plant them with live flowers and that led to a whole new garden venture that has continued for five years and hopefully into the future. With



the help of MG David Calle, who has provided a wonderful historical background along with digging and planting power, the house has slowly been enhanced. We have been working off a landscape design by Dennis Buettner, that was drawn for Hearthstone, but never purchased. Mr. Buettner was a nationally known landscape architect whose credits include WI Governor’s Residence, Paine Art Center, and Allen Centennial Gardens. MG Eamonn Lenaghan has trimmed and cut down more brush and branches than thought possible. Five years of planning, planting, moving, some trial and error, PATIENCE, MG grant money, help from volunteers (we need more), are slowly

transforming the exterior of the property to match the beautiful interior of this 1882 Appleton landmark. It has been my privilege to be part of the OCMGA and the membership. Their educational and sanctioned projects are very much appreciated and of great asset to our community.