



[“Beauty Outside Your Door” Gardening Webinars and Activities](#) with garden expert and author Melinda Myers

for Wisconsin Public Libraries

April through June 2024

This partnership aims to provide **free and accessible** information focused on practical, budget-wise gardening strategies anyone can employ. Teaming with Wisconsin Public Libraries, Melinda Myers sponsored by We Energies will provide free gardening webinars and projects to Wisconsin library patrons to help them grow beautiful gardens, fruits and vegetables, and help support pollinators. Gardeners can help increase the green space in their communities, improve their health, and save energy through sustainable gardening and landscaping practices. Melinda will incorporate these practices into the 2024 webinars and activities.

We hope you can use Melinda’s programs at your library this spring and summer!

The following programming/content will be provided free of charge to Wisconsin Public Libraries:

3 Webinars presented by Gardening Expert & Author Melinda Myers - These will be live webinars and later housed on YouTube for on-demand viewing.

April 10, 2024, 6:30 p.m. CT

WEBINAR: Container Gardening Throughout the Year with gardening expert & author Melinda Myers

Use container gardens to boost the color and seasonal interest in any size landscape, garden, balcony, or deck. With your budget in mind, we will explore attractive combinations of trees, shrubs, flowers, edible plants, and those that attract pollinators. Plus, you’ll learn strategies for extending your enjoyment year-round by transforming all or a portion of the container planting with the changing seasons.

Register for this free webinar at: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_SwTJwDSaQgWnm7YU-iY0mg

4/10/24 Facebook event to share on your library Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1391300844843192>

May 1, 2024, 6:30 p.m. CT

WEBINAR: Ornamental Fruits and Vegetables with gardening expert & author Melinda Myers

Increase the nutritional value and beauty of your landscape by incorporating attractive fruits and vegetables into your landscape, garden beds, and containers. Growing varieties that are both ornamental and productive increases the opportunities for creating a beautiful space right outside your door. We will look at new and proven fruit and vegetable varieties suited to both gardens and containers.

Register for the free webinar at: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_SFUNmF3LSUmpTXGpRMVbiA

5/1/24 Facebook event to share on your library Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1705737653249420>

June 5, 2024, 6:30 p.m. CT

WEBINAR: Under-Appreciated Pollinators with gardening expert & author Melinda Myers

The plight of honeybees and monarchs fills the news, but many more pollinators are often overlooked yet critical to the production of food, fiber, and other raw materials we depend upon. Native bees, moths, bats, beetles, flies, and birds are also important. We will look at a variety of pollinators, their role in the environment, and their impact on people. Plus, we will discuss ways to co-exist with these often overlooked and sometimes feared or dreaded animals.

Register for this free webinar at: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_q1UbmctTMyumfGd-o6AA

6/5/24 Facebook event to share on your library Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1811971235905390>

Gardening Activities & Projects from Gardening Expert & Author Melinda Myers

Melinda Myers will provide both a video and activity guide for each of these activities to libraries to incorporate into their 2024 programming. Consider hosting groups at your library to do these activities together. Your library can also use these activities for your summer reading programs (ie: activity guides can go in summer reading take-and-make kits, etc.) or your library can link to these activities where patrons can download the activity guides to do at home. A web page (created by Melinda Myers) will house the videos and activity guides which can be downloaded and printed or shared digitally.

April Activity: A Container Garden of Greens

Start the garden season right now with a container of greens. These are nutritious, colorful, and fun to grow indoors or out. All you need is a container, potting soil, and some seeds. In 30 days or more, you will be harvesting some homegrown veggies to enjoy throughout the spring and early summer. Use them to create a salad, dress up a sandwich, or top a pizza. The video and activity guide will include:

- Overview of the nutritional value of lettuce, spinach, and other greens.
- Tips for designing and planting an attractive container garden of greens.
- Seasonal care and harvesting tips.

May Activity: Creating Containers from Repurposed Items

Save money, reduce waste, and create an attractive container from items headed to the recycling center or landfill. Paint, glue, and your imagination are all you need. Start with a walk through your basement or shed, talk to friends, or retrieve some pots from the recycling shelf at the garden center. Once you complete your creation, add some drainage holes, fill it with potting soil, and get started planting. The video and activity guide will include:

- Examples of how to convert items headed for the landfill or recycling center into containers for planting.
- Key features to include so your plants will grow and thrive in their new home.

June Activity: Grow Your Own Sunflower in a Recycled Container or the Garden

Sunflowers are a favorite of gardeners, kids, birds, squirrels, and a variety of pollinators. You can't help but smile when you see the blossoms or the bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds dining on the nectar and songbirds and squirrels munching on the seeds. This North American native plant is easy to grow in containers or a sunny spot in your garden. The video and activity guide will include:

- Start to finish tips on planting sunflower seeds.
- A chart to track the sunflower's growth throughout the growing season.
- A space to record pollinators visiting the sunflower.

Ideas for Libraries to Use the Webinars and Activities:

- Your Library can host a webinar watch party on the live webinar dates or schedule it after the live webinar date and play the recording. If you host a live watch party, your patrons will be able to submit questions live and get them answered by Melinda at the end of each webinar. You can also let your patrons know they can individually register for the webinars if they'd prefer to watch them at home.
- Melinda Myers will provide both a video and activity guide for each of the gardening activities. Libraries can host groups at the library to do these activities together.
- Libraries can use the activities for summer reading programs (ie: activity sheets can go in summer reading take-and-make kits, etc.) or your library can link to these activities where patrons can download the activity guides to do at home. A web page will house all the videos and activity guides which can be downloaded and printed or shared digitally.
- Offer program-themed story times at libraries and distribute related materials.
- Create book lists related to the program topics.
- Incorporate the activities into summer reading program (and other library programs) and have books about the programming topics count toward incentives/prizes.
- Share projects for adults and/or kids to do at home, where appropriate.

- Set up displays that include program-related books, book lists, educational materials, and the program sign with QR code for patrons to register for free webinars and access Videos and the Activities.
- Create take-and-make kits related to the DIY project(s).
- Include a link on the library website to the [program web page](#) where all program content is housed (how-to videos, downloadable DIY activity materials, webinar registration links).
- Promote webinars and activities to patrons on the library's website, social media platforms, and traditional media leading up to and throughout the campaign.
- Use the program hashtag, **#BeautyOutsideYourDoor**, on social media platforms to create a thread/share ideas across libraries.
- Encourage patrons to share their program DIY activities using the program hashtag, **#BeautyOutsideYourDoor**, to learn from and inspire others.

Promotional Materials that will be provided to Libraries

- ✓ Website icon with [link to all of the content](#) will be provided to libraries by Melinda Myers & We Energies
- ✓ A hashtag, **#BeautyOutsideYourDoor**, for the program so all participants can share ideas and inspiration
- ✓ Social media posts and images for the libraries to share
- ✓ Facebook event links to promote the webinars – links provided to libraries to share on libraries' FB pages
- ✓ Press release templates – each library can customize and send to media outlets in their community

A special thanks to our sponsor for making this program possible!



About Melinda Myers

Nationally known gardening expert, TV/radio host, author & columnist Melinda Myers has over 30 years of horticulture experience and has written over 20 gardening books, including the [Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition](#) and [Small Space Gardening](#). She hosts the nationally syndicated "[Melinda's Garden Moment](#)" radio program and The Great Courses "[How to Grow Anything](#)" DVD series. Myers is a garden columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* and writes a nationally syndicated newspaper column. Before her current media work, Melinda hosted "The Plant Doctor" radio show on WTMJ 620 AM for over 20 years as well as seven seasons of "Great Lakes Gardener" on PBS. She has a master's degree in horticulture and was a horticulture instructor with tenure. She was also recently inducted into the National Association for Garden Communicators Hall of Fame. Melinda's website, www.MelindaMyers.com, has gardening videos, podcasts, gardening tips, monthly garden checklists, and more.

