



UPCOMING PROGRAM:

How to Show at Fair—Flower Arranging

Tuesday, May 15, 7:00 p.m.

Boone County Comm. Bldg, Fairgrounds

Presented by Barb Henning, owner of Everlasting Flowers in Ogden.

Counts towards MG Continuing Education Hours - and it's FREE!!!!

Message from the Chair:

Hi everyone! This rain certainly has put a damper on gardening. The days are looking brighter and now is catch-up time. I haven't touched my garden beds—and it will be a nightmare when I do. I mowed tonight but about $\frac{1}{2}$ an acre is so wet (and long) that I had to retreat to drier parts.

Be sure to join us for the Flower Arranging on Tuesday night. Some exhibitors suggested bringing the design division back to the fair show, so we'll give it a try. Barb Henning will be bringing flowers and will give us some helpful tips. James Romer did a great job with the flower and vegetable segment in April.

Work nights are starting. All the project chairs appreciate your help.

There isn't a shortage of plant sales in the next couple weeks. They are listed in the calendar on the next page.

--Melanie Erickson

Learn How to Trim Grapevines

We're going to double our pleasure on Monday, May 14 at 6:30 p.m. in Moingona (between Boone & Ogden). Bring your pruners and loppers. Gail Olson will demonstrate how to prune grapevines and then we'll pitch in to help clean up one of the yards for the RSVP Caregiver Project. Can count towards Continuing Education or Volunteer Service—whatever you need!!! If you don't have email, contact Gina Christians for more information (432-1098 or barneybernard@yahoo.com). Otherwise, she'll send email soon.

MG's Teach Outdoor Classroom

Holly Cleppe and Linda Cox are teaching container gardening to second graders in the Outdoor Classroom on May 8 and 10. **HyVee** and **Wal-Mart** each donated about \$25 worth of supplies. **Hill Top Greenhouse** went above and beyond and donated over \$200 worth of flowers and all the pots!! When you get ready to buy plants this year please visit Hill Top and thank them for their generosity.

Family Resource Center Work Session Scheduled

- **Thursday, May 17, 5:30 p.m.**

Items to cover: Tree trimming, cut back bushes, cut back grasses, trim roses, clean up any perennials that need it, and weeding.

If you can't come to this work session, feel free to stop by and help out when you can.

Member Garden Tour on July 8

Mark your calendars for the West of Boone Garden Tour on Saturday, July 8. Deanna Garwood is organizing some member gardens for us to visit. More information in future newsletters!

**Boone County Fair:
"Aim for the Stars"
July 18 - 23, 2007**

Calendar of Activities

MAY

12--SCMGA Plant Sale, Christy Hall, Nevada

12—Boone Garden Club Plant Sale, 8-12, Kate Shelley Drive, Boone

12—Ames Garden Club Plant Sale, 8-12, Reiman Gardens Maintenance Building

12-13—Polk Co. MG Plant Sale, Des Moines Botanical Greenhouse, 8-4 Saturday, 12:30-4 Sunday.

12—Krieger Greenhouse Plant Sale, 7-12, State Fairgrounds Midway Area, Des Moines.

15—How to Show at Fair—Flower Arranging Program, Comm Bldg, Fairgrounds, 7 p.m., Speaker: Barb Henning, Everlasting Flowers, Ogden

19—Native Plant Sale, DSM Farmers Market, 7-noon, sponsored by Iowa Native Lands, DSM Park & Rec, Polk Co., Soil & Water District.

19—Green County MG Plant Sale, 8-11, Greene Co. Fairgrounds, Clover Hall.

23—Polk Co. MG Garden Tour. \$10, tickets available in mid-may at DSM garden centers and ISUE, Polk County.

26—Boone County Service Project, 10-Noon, State 4-H Camp. Camp cleanup, counts as MG Cont. Ed. Hours. Contact Rich at EO for more info.

JUNE

9--SCMGA 1st Annual Garden Tour

Ames Farmer's Market Info

This year the Ames Farmers' Market will be at the Main Street Station on Thursdays (4 pm-7 pm) and Saturdays (8 am-1 pm) from May to the end of October. They will also be at the Reiman Gardens on Wednesdays. In May they will operate from 9 am to 1 pm. June through September they will operate on Wednesdays from 4 pm to 7 pm. Check out their website at www.amesfarmersmarket.com.

Tune Into Local Radio Programs

WOI-AM (640) radio's weekly horticultural show airs at 10 a.m. every Friday.

WHO-AM (1040) radio's weekly "Gardening Today" show airs every Sunday 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Web Sites of Interest

Papa Genos

www.papagenos.com

The Prairie Flower

<http://www.theprairieflower.com/index.htm>

Reiman Gardens

MOTHER'S DAY, SUNDAY, MAY 13, 2007

All mothers admitted without admission charged, free carnations upon departure. String quartet playing during a fabulous brunch served for one price for adults. This event is sponsored by Exchange State Bank.

Garden Art Fair 2007

Mark your calendars for Reiman Gardens' 5th annual Garden Art Fair on Sunday, July 8, 2007 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission to the Garden Art Fair is FREE!

Artists and designers share your garden-inspired art with the public through sales and display in a beautiful garden setting. Artists will enjoy FREE parking, complimentary water and refreshments, and easy set-up access. Registration information is available at www.reimangardens@iastate.edu or (515) 294-8981. Registration deadline is Tuesday, May 1, 2007.

Iowa Arboretum

- May 26, 9 a.m., Hypertufa Troughs. \$45 members, \$55 non-members.
- July 10, 6:30 p.m., Ash Trees in Danger—Dr. Mark Shour talks about the Emerald Ash Borer. \$6 members, \$8 non-members.
- July 18, 6:30 p.m., Hybridizing Daylilies—Nan Ripley from Walkabout Gardens near Nevada. \$10 members, \$12 non-members.

Contact the Arboretum at 515-795-3216 to preregister or to get more information.

BRENTON ARBORETUM

Programs count towards continuing education

Members \$5; \$10 non-members

Andy Schmitz , Horticulturalist and General Manager
Counts towards MG Continuing Education.

How to Plant Trees

Saturday, May 19th, 9:00 – 11:00 AM

DES MOINES BOTANICAL CENTER

- May 13, 2007, 10:00am-5:00pm Mother's Day at the Botanical Center, Free admission for all Moms accompanied by a paying child. Members are free.
- May 18, 2007 Garden Art & Antique Auction, Annual fundraiser supports programs, events and special projects of the Botanical Center. Offerings will include an array of garden art items and antiques as well as botanically inspired experiences donated by Iowa artists, garden enthusiasts and Friends of the Des Moines Botanical Center. For more information please contact Jean Samson at 515-323-6297.
- May 19, 2007, 10:00am-2:00pm Rose Sale, 5th annual rose sale on May 19, 2007 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the lobby of the Botanical Center. Please call the Botanical Center Staff at 323-6290 for more information.

Other Opportunities

Garden Gate Offers Seminars at Woodsmith Store

Learn from the experts at Garden Gate Magazine, based out of Des Moines.

- May 12, 9:30-10:30, Sherri Ribbey & Jim Childs, No-Fear Roses
- May 19, 9:30-10:30, Marcia Leeper, Putting on Pot Pizzazz
- May 26, 9:30-10:30, Kathleen Ziemer, How to Build a Butterfly Habitat
- June 2, 9:30-10:30, Stephanie Polsley Bruner & Kristin Beane Sullivan, Hypertufa: Make your Own "Stone" Container
- June 9, 9:30-10:30, Deb Gruca & Kevin Venhaus, Water Feature in a Day!

Seminars cost \$8 each plus you'll receive a \$5 Woodsmith Store/Garden Center Coupon. Or you can buy a season pass for \$45. *Seminars count toward MG Continuing Education.*

***Iowa State Fair:
"SOUNDS LIKE FUN"
August 9 - 19, 2007***

"How Does Your Garden Grow?"

Living History Farms in Des Moines on Saturday and Sunday, May 12-13, 2007. Discover the many gardens around the museum grounds with blooming flowers, historic vegetables, and modern crop varieties. Help plant the vegetables in the garden plot at the Henry A. Wallace Exhibit Center where organic agricultural practices are demonstrated. The first 250 guests will receive a free packet of seeds.

Rainbow Iris Farm holds Bloomfest in May

Bloomfest! 2007 will begin on May 19th and continue through June 3th. Business hours are Monday through Saturday 9:00 am to 6:00 pm, Sunday from 1:30 pm to 5:30 pm. Memorial Day hours are 9:00 am to 6:00 pm. Check their website for more details,
<http://iris.stores.yahoo.net/bloomfest.html>.

Directions to the farm:

From Bedford take county road N44 south to 310th Street. Turn right and travel 1.75 miles. You can't miss us.

Looking for Something Different? Check out these groups

The Central Iowa Orchid Society (CIOS)

was formed December 5, 1960, in Des Moines, Iowa as a non-profit society. Membership is available to all individuals who show a sincere interest in orchid culture and preservation. Yearly dues are \$15.00 for a single membership and \$25.00 for a family membership. Membership to the CIOS includes membership to the Mid-American Orchid Congress.

Among the advantages in becoming a member or the CIOS are the use of a large library of orchid literature and videos, practical tips, helpful advice, door prizes, interesting programs on various topics related to orchid growing and preservation, displays, and judging of blooming plants, plant sales, refreshments, and lots of friendly socializing about orchids.

The CIOS meets at 2 p.m. on the first Sunday of each month (unless otherwise noted, see [Meeting Dates](#) for the date and the other location) at the Sears Tower Merle Hay Mall, Des Moines.

The CIOS is a group of orchid devotees who enjoy working with their favorite flower. We invite you to attend our meeting and see for yourself the excitement that orchids generate. Visitors and guests are always welcome.

Check out their website at <http://www.c-we.com/cios/>.

Mid-Iowa Cactus & Succulent Society

The purpose of the Mid-Iowa Cactus and Succulent Society (MICSS) is to further the interest in the study, propagation and exhibition of cacti and succulents for the education of the members of the Society and the general public. The Mid-Iowa Cactus & Succulent Society began in 1970. We are a non profit local affiliate of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA) <http://www.cssainc.org>

Meetings normally occur on the 3rd Sunday of each month from 2-5pm., at various locations, depending on the program. Meetings may include the following:

- Educational program related to cactus & succulents, usually presented by a club member; occasionally by an outside speaker.
 - VIP (very important plants) table: An educational free choice display of members' plants and/or c&s related items to show off.
 - A library book checkout: There are many c&s books and periodicals members may check out at meetings; including a newsletter exchange from about 15 other clubs.
 - Active members participate in a business meeting.
- Their website has not been updated recently, but they are hosting a show at Merle Hay Mall in August. I have contacted them to see if they have a current list of events. If they do it will be in an upcoming newsletter.

Evening African Violet Club of Des Moines

Sears Towers, 3950 Merle Hay Road, Des Moines
Meeting Times: Second Thursday each month, except Nov and Dec, 7:00 p.m. in the Merle May Mall, Sears Towers

Notes: Our affiliate serves central Iowa. Everyone of all ages is welcome. All are encouraged to arrive at 7:00 for 'coffee time', fellowship, and a chance to ask questions. Annual show/sale is held each spring at the Merle Hay Mall.

Contact: Joan Watts

Address: 620 Ray St, Colo

Email: jojewels@netins.net

Contact 2: Ken Wilkinson

Address: 638 Jerlynn Ave, Des Moines

Phone: 515-266-2752

Email: kkwilkins@earthlink.net

MG Minute for May

This is a Master Gardener Minute on maintaining soil fertility in perennial beds.

To assure that your perennial beds are at their best from year to year, soil nutrients should be maintained at an acceptable level. Depending on the results of soil tests, a spring application of fertilizer such as well-rotted manure is beneficial for most perennials. This should be spread as a 2-inch top dressing.

If a supply of manure is not available, a complete commercial fertilizer with an analysis of 5-10-5 or 4-12-4 may be applied. Apply recommended amounts according to package directions. Use the lower recommended amounts on sandy, porous soils and follow with a second application four to six weeks later.

Apply as evenly as you can and rake in trying to avoid pockets of concentrated fertilizer, which can actually harm or kill the plants you are trying to help.

Do not apply excessive amounts of synthetic, highly soluble fertilizer as much of the excess leaches away, which is wasteful and can contribute to nitrate pollution of rivers and ground water.

This is a Master Gardener Minute on spring gardening chores.

Don't be in too much of a hurry to plant tomatoes. The average last frost date in most of Iowa is around May 10th so wait unless you plan to protect your tomatoes if necessary.

If you've planted coleus, impatiens or other very tender annuals, keep an old sheet handy to protect them if nighttime temperatures drop past the low 40's in the next couple of weeks. Those temperatures probably won't harm some annuals, like marigolds, although they may not grow much until it's warmer. Others, like snapdragons, like those cool nights. Ants on peonies aren't hurting anything. There's some debate about why these insects spend so much time on peonies, but most likely they feed on sweet, sticky secretions from the buds.

Deadhead your tulips and daffodils as the blossoms die but leave the leaves to die down on their own to provide food for next year's bloom,. Don't remove the leaves until they are brown and dried. Be sure and feed them now with a bulb fertilizer.

This is a Master Gardener Minute on using annuals.

In the spring you see them for sale everywhere – the bright, colorful jewels of the garden, the annuals. This means they are planted in the spring, grow, bloom and last until frost. Even if they are short-lived, annuals can do a great job of enhancing your landscape. You need only to think of a beautiful hanging basket of impatiens on a shaded tree limb or a shepherd's hook in a sunny area with the cheerful colors of lantana cascading.

Newly planted shrubs are usually spaced some distance apart, but you can use masses of annuals to fill in. When tulip flowers fade, plant flowering annuals in front of them to hide the dying leaves. Annuals also do well as potted plants on the patio or deck.

Read the labels as this will help you decide your creative choices for sun or shade. Relatively inexpensive and with a little care to watering and some mild fertilizing, annuals will add color and beauty to your garden.

This is a Master Gardener Minute on garden soil preparation.

Most vegetables and garden flowers require soil preparation no deeper than one foot, the less digging the better.

Designing gardens to restrict foot traffic to mulched paths or stepping-stones may minimize the soil compaction that often requires annual digging. Soil quality can be improved year by year by adding well-rotted manure, compost and organic mulches, all of which release nutrients as they decompose and form a loose, friable soil.

Shallow forking or rototilling may be necessary each year in the vegetable garden and in beds used for annuals, but in established perennial beds, soil amendments are best applied as top dressing and left on the surface where they help control weeds, reduce evaporation, and stabilize soil temperature. Released nutrients percolate downward.

Routine cultivation is usually not necessary on soils already loosened with organic amendments and covered with mulch. Weed control, if required, is best done by cutting tops from roots with a sharp scuffle hoe. Also, various types of hand weeders are available for small beds and borders.