

Green Thumb

The Newsletter for Polk County Master Gardeners

ISU Polk County Extension, 1625 Adventureland Drive, Altoona, IA 50009

515-957-5760

August 2009

Extension programs are available to all without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability.

Eddie's Ready!

The Iowa State Fair is just around the corner and that means it will be time to showcase the Discovery Garden. The Garden is looking very good and the pond is very impressive. There has been a lot of hard work done at the garden and the garden reflects the hard work. A good job done by all.

Our fall Master Gardener class will start on September 8th. It is always good to get the classes started. I look forward to working with all the new interns.

Also, there have been meetings scheduled for the Seed Ordering Committee. This starts the process of evaluating the various varieties of plants that are available.

I would like to remind everyone that you are invited to attend a Steering Committee Meeting. Our next meeting is scheduled for September 14th at the ISU Extension Office.

If you have any ideas or questions about the Master Gardener program, please feel free to attend a meeting. If you cannot attend, please contact anyone on the Steering Committee. We would like to hear from you.

Thanks to all the volunteers working at all the garden projects, the Show Garden, and the Botanical Center grounds. Please remember to turn in your hours to Mary.

Eddie Cox, PCMG Steering Committee Chair

Botanical Center Show House News

We always need volunteers to give a couple hours of their time to maintaining the Show House during the slower (and hotter!) summer months. Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers who keep it looking beautiful!

We are gearing up for our fall change-over - "Re-purposed Gardens". It takes place in September and is going to be a fun one!

If you want to be involved in the Show House in 2010, please come to our next planning meeting at the Show House. Time and date to be announced soon. Watch your email or contact mhwphoto@mchsi.com or 556-3684.

Mary Howell-Williams, Project Leader

Botanical Center Grounds News

What a difference a year can make. It was just a little over a year ago when I took my first walk down along the river walk and surveyed all the damage the flooding had done. I wish you all could see the changes from then till now, as you would marvel at how much it has changed. Oh we still have a lot of work to do but it no longer seems like an insurmountable task. Those who have been around for a while say all the Botanical gardens and river walk area are looking the best they have for a while. We still have work to do and changes to make but the urgency has diminished greatly. Thanks to many a helping hand things are looking a lot better.

We are now hard at getting the conifer garden whipped into shape since the dive bombing Blackbirds have their babies safely out of the nest and on their own. Also the cactus garden is in for a major renovation, as well as some changes to the Hosta area. So the work goes on and any and all hands are always welcome as finally we can start planning for the future by either adding new areas or renovating old areas neglected due lack of time and/or plant material to maintain them. If you would like to be a part of making a difference please contact me by E-mail hostahunter@msn.com or call 967-3394.

Melvin Visser, Botanical Center Outside Coordinator

Discovery Garden News

I believe this is the best garden yet. Thanks to all of the good volunteer help we have gotten over the past few months, things have really come together.

If you haven't signed up for a shift at the fair, you need to contact Jean Roe, ljroe@ecity.net [mailto:ljroe@ecity.net] or 279-8705 immediately. There are only a couple of time slots left.

Remember to mark your calendars for the annual Discovery Garden Volunteer Appreciation and State Fair Orientation night to be held at the Discovery Garden Wednesday, August 5, 6:30 pm. There will be refreshments, we will go over the State Fair volunteer duties, hand out fair passes and there will be a tour of the garden to familiarize state fair volunteers with the garden and to just show it off a little. Many of the bed designers will be available to discuss their beds and point out any plant that may be interesting. Come join us for a relaxing evening in the garden talking with fellow Master Gardeners.

Hope to see many of you August 5 and the rest of you during the fair!

Shelley Lande, Discovery Garden Co-Chair

Demonstration Garden News

A big thank you to those volunteers who helped with the Open House held July 10 at the Demonstration Garden. Those who attended were impressed by the garden and the demonstrations. Several improvements have been gradually made through the summer, including the white fence next to the shed and the meandering paths throughout the garden.

Feedback has been very positive, as the paths add direction and a bit more formality.

Summer classes have been well attended-between 30 and 60 attendees at each class.

We appreciate the feedback from those who complete the surveys so we can continue improving the garden. We have also been pleased to begin offering garden produce to the Urbandale Food Pantry. Our own Cindy Miller, our Urbandale school liaison, has been working with a few Valerius families and has been coordinating the delivery to the pantry. Thank you for your efforts!

We are looking for help with plant identification, watering and for tips for the roundtable discussion at our August 6 class. You can either email them to me or present them-please let me know if you are planning on attending. That is our last summer class, but we may schedule some last minute classes specifically for Master Gardeners. Watch your email for details.

One more date to add to your fall calendar: Fall Cleanup will be Saturday, October 31 at 9:00 a.m. Please call Margaret Spikes at 984-9064 or email margaretspikes@wellsfargo.com. Thanks for your ideas!

Margaret Spikes, Project Co-chair

Garden Tour News

It is the time of the year again when the Garden Tour Committee is urgently seeking gardens for next year's tour, which is primarily in West Des Moines. We currently have four great possibilities lined up, but we need another three to four gardens to make the tour complete. The first thing you are thinking is "my garden is not good enough." Every previous host gardener has had those same thoughts. Your garden just may be what we are looking for. This is the perfect time of year, as your gardens are at their peak and we can take great pictures for next spring's publicity campaign.

Being on the garden tour is a rewarding experience you'll never forget. Please contact Carol Nading via email at carolnading@nadinglaw.com or 289-1532 (H) to set up a time for the committee to preview your garden.

Carol Nading, Garden Tour Committee

Fall Master Gardener Classes

It is hard to believe that we are actually preparing for the fall class. I am looking for individuals who would like to be class coordinators. Job responsibilities are to help set up for the classes, check in the interns and get to know them and encourage them to participate in all the MG volunteer opportunities. Orientation class is Tuesday, September 8 and the final class is Tuesday, December 1. Connect classes start on September 15 and run from 6:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. A meeting for class coordinators will be on Tuesday, September 1 at 6:30 p.m. at the Extension office.

A schedule will be set for at least two coordinators/class and assignments for orientation will be made. If you are interested in becoming a class coordinator, please email vhunnell@iastate.edu. This is a great opportunity to be the first to get to know the interns and to earn volunteer hours.

Enabling Garden News

The Enabling garden looks gorgeous right now, thanks to the many volunteers who have helped us this summer and with the plentiful rains from above.

The little annuals we planted last May have really performed well! I have to say, in the beginning they looked very puny and leggy, but the tender loving care they received earlier this year from the greenhouse volunteers gave them the strength to mature beautifully! Thank you dear Master Gardeners!

The turnout for our talks last month was a bit sparse, due to much construction on the new Prairie Heritage Trail Civic Center Plaza.

The first phase of this project should be completed by the end of October and the second phase by 2010. We'll have to be patient until then, but when all is finished, the Enabling Garden will be more visible. Plus the PHTCCP will be an area for citizens to gather for various events and a place where families can join others to spend their days simply hanging out, enjoying nature, and probably meandering over to the Enabling Garden.

I want to thank Melvin & Carol Visser who shared a demonstration with us in July. They were in competition with a bulldozer "thingy" so it was a little noisy; nevertheless they shared a variety of shade plants and information with us. Our children's program went well and we look forward to the future when all the construction will be done and we can host another children's program. Thank you to Susan, Ruth, and Valerie for helping!!

We'll plan to host our talk this month, (featuring Master Gardener, Tina Gosselink who will talk about Flower Arrangements) on Saturday, August 15th at 10:00am.

Please be prepared, parking will be a challenge due to the construction. We ask that you park on adjacent streets, 9th, 10th, or 11th, or the HyVee parking lot.

The bumblebees, butterflies, dragonflies, and many other insects are out in full force at the Enabling Garden. Would you like to come, take a look, and join us for our work nights? We would love to have you help us out! We guarantee it to be painless and in fine friendships. Work nights are Tuesday evenings at 5:00.

Any questions please email, peaceinthegarden@aol.com or ccbark1989@aol.com. Or you may call Paul at 515-480-0120.

Paula Winslow, Enabling Garden co-chair

"One by one our senses are captivated and charmed by the garden and then all together:

We are swimming in bird song and perfume, fresh flavor and cool touches, all decorated with gorgeous colors." Jeff Cox

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## Bits & Bytes

### FREE DAISIES!

From Jeanette Becker "I've been working in one of my flower beds and removing daisy plants that have self-seeded to places I don't want them to be. I've got 4-6 plants now, and will probably have that many more when I finish my effort. Do you know any place that might be interested in them? I hate to hold onto them til next May! [beckerj3@yahoo.com](mailto:beckerj3@yahoo.com)

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### 2009 CENTRAL IOWA GARDEN RAILROAD TOUR

August 1, 2009

9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Total Cost for Tour: \$5 per car

Tickets Available At All Locations

Anyone who has questions can call Cindy Doggett at 240-8440 or leave a message at their home phone 967-4955.

#A: Boulder Creek Railroad - John and Pat Olsen

#B: C. J. & G. Railroad - Jay and Cheri Nugent

#C: Rose Valley Railroad - Phil and Barb Deats

#D: Rock Island Beaverdale Division - Eric and Sandra Bickel

#E: Beaver Valley and Donnelly Railroad -Fred Loveridge

#F: Maple Creek Railroad - Doug and Cindy Doggett

#G: reindeer pass railroad - Mike and Renee Kidman

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### COMPOST INFORMATION

[www.mastercomposter.com](http://www.mastercomposter.com) is available as a possible information source but that is not an edu site.

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## 2010 SEEDS ORDERS

I know it's a little early as the State Fair isn't here yet, but it is getting close to the time we need to be thinking of ordering seeds for the 2010 gardening season.

I will be having a meeting to get your wish list in Sept. If you will be planting a garden in one of PCMG gardens please start thinking of plants you might want to plant. Remember this is only a WISH LIST, you will be able to make selections from all the other gardens WISH LISTS this fall. Take a few minutes to write some ideas down as you finish up this year. If you have any questions, please call or email Kathy Gocke 515-967-3832 or [gocke@aol.com](mailto:gocke@aol.com)

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## BAGWORM

NOW is the time be checking and treating for bagworm. If you noticed bagworm on your trees or shrubs last fall, you learned this - by the time you noticed them, it was probably too late to treat them by anything but hand picking. Once those sneaky little critters attach themselves to a limb and seal up the "bag", nothing you can spray will reach them. For more information, check out these articles from ISU's on-line newsletter Horticulture and Home Pest News. "When should I spray for Bagworm?" and "Bagworms Have Hatched" The second article is a couple of years old - we saw a LOT of bagworm in Polk County last fall - but the other information in it is still accurate.

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And finally, from Melissa Holst, this adorable frog picture:



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## Directory Updates

\* Mary Jack email address change: [maryjack@q.com](mailto:maryjack@q.com)

\* Mary Eggers McCarroll has new contact information (and a new husband!), 4101 Oak Forest Drive, Des Moines, Iowa 50312, (515) 255-3693, [eggers-mccarroll.mary@principal.com](mailto:eggers-mccarroll.mary@principal.com)

\* Judy Elings email correction [jelings@q.com](mailto:jelings@q.com)

\* Pam Heilskov's home address has changed: 755 NE Spring St., Ankeny, IA 50021. Email stays same.

\* Matt Pering email address change [trilithon11@q.com](mailto:trilithon11@q.com)

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## Upcoming MG Events!

August 1 & 2 Polk County MG **Bus Tour** visits northeast Iowa

August 6, 8:00 a.m. **First Annual All-Horticulture Field Day**, Iowa State University Horticulture Research Station

August 13 - 23 **IOWA STATE FAIR** - see you there!!

August 15, 10:00am **Flower Arranging** - MG Tina Gosselink at the Enabling Garden

Sept. 8, **Fall MG intern classes** begin. Schedule of topics will be on website, in case you need ed. hrs.

September 8, 7:00 pm **Gardening for Butterflies** - MGs Melissa Holst & Don Kerr - Discovery Garden

September 12, 10:00 am **Plant Pathology**, ISU's Dr. Mark Gleason at the Enabling Garden.

October 22, 6:00 **Fall Harvest Celebration and Awards** ISU Polk County Extension Office

October 31, 9:00 am **Fall Clean-up Day Demonstration Garden**

## Recurring MG Calendar!

Farmers' Market booth every third Saturday, May to October

Monday evenings until fall clean-up Demonstration Garden work nights

Tuesday evenings until fall clean-up Enabling Garden work nights

Tuesday mornings and Tuesday evenings Botanical Center Grounds work sessions

Wednesday mornings Botanical Center Gardeners Show House work sessions

Wednesday evenings until fall clean-up Discovery Garden work nights

Wednesday evenings Botanical Center Grounds work session

Friday morning Botanical Center Grounds work sessions

Saturday mornings Botanical Center Gardeners Show House work sessions