

Green Thumb

The Newsletter for Polk County Master Gardeners

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

515-957-5760

October 2009

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

All's Well with Mel

For those of you who weren't at the Harvest Banquet and might not have heard yet, these are the people who will be your PCMG Steering Committee Officers for next year. Charlene Butz will continue as our Treasurer, Carol Visser will replace Pat Berry as Secretary, Dean Brand will replace me as Vice Chair and I am replacing Eddie Cox as the Chair. Thanks to those who are stepping down from any of these positions for a job well done and also thanks to those stepping up to fill those positions. I'm sure we are looking forward to another great year.

There is one area I would like to see us all putting at the top of our priority list for the coming year. That is getting a higher percent of interns certified and those certified re-certified each year. We have plenty of projects where this can be done and new ones are continually being added, so I don't feel it is a lack of opportunity. I know how easy it is to say "Not today but one of these days I will get to it" but just never quite make it. So I would like to see every certified PCMG (YES, I MEAN YOU) year make it a priority to encourage any non-certified PCMG that you know to get their hours put in and turned in. If this means setting a time to pick them up and take them with you to a work area, then do it. For those of us who volunteer somewhere regularly our going is no big deal but for the first timer or occasional volunteer it is not as easy to just show up somewhere.

Mel Visser, PCMG Steering Committee Chair

Farmer's Market News

Our 2009 run at the Downtown Farmer's Market wrapped up on a chilly note. The cool temps kept the crowd numbers down but we had a good time with the brave Master Gardener volunteers. By the end of the morning, the group was batting a thousand on questions, probably due to the excessive consumption of hot coffee to keep warm. For our last appearance we offered help for fall chores and garden preparation for winter. Thanks to our expert for the day, Warren Larson.

Most questions at the market were about the proper timing for pruning of trees and shrubs. Several people wanted to know if it is too late to plant their spring-flowering bulbs. Most were surprised to find out it wasn't too late. So for all of those Master Gardener's out there, if you bought bulbs and had the intention of planting them but hadn't yet, there is still time!

Once again we'd like to thank all the great volunteers we had this year. We managed to miss all the rain and snow in our market appearances. We will try to keep up this track record next year and hopefully we will see you all there. We're already recruiting volunteers for next year.

If you have an idea for a booth topic and would like to help host, please drop us an email or give us a call. Also if you would like to simply volunteer for a shift, please give us a call and we'll add you to the list. We'd love to have all our volunteers back again next year. See you then!

Aaron and Sarah

Directory Updates

Christine Barker has new home address and phone: 3827 NW Elm Street, Ankeny IA, 50023 515-963-4465

Seed Orders!

Hope you are all working on your garden plans for 2010. Remember to have your seed quantities into your Garden Heads by November 13, if not sooner. If you have any questions please call Kathy at 967-3832 or email gocke@aol.com.

Demonstration Garden News

Congratulations to the Master Gardeners who received Outstanding Service Awards at the annual meeting. Those recipients include: Marj Akers, Jody Barrett, Aaron Bewyer, Nancy Bork, Sharon Cummins, Jerry Ferrell, Cindy Miller, Dale Millis, John Ridgway, Susan Mahedy-Ridgway, Marilyn Russie, and Bob Shaw. Congratulations as well to those gardeners receiving Emeritus status-exemplifying the long term commitment and education of gardening: Loran Parker, Dale Millis and Clel Ruppert.

Thanks to Cindy Miller and Lawrence Winkler for helping to dig holes for the Valerius Elementary School bulb planting! Lawrence's tool for digging bulb holes was fantastic! The bulbs are to be planted Tuesday Nov. 3rd from 9:30am to 11:30am.

Jerry Ferrell, Dale Millis and Bob Shaw demonstrated how well a team can work together and solve the issues related to the dilemma regarding the small uneven grassy area between the new vegetable garden and the shed. Bricks were moved, ground was leveled and rock was hauled to make this area a welcoming, well-landscaped area. These gentlemen continue to work hard to put together the raised beds that will populate the vegetable garden inside the picket fence. Thanks also go to Marilyn Russie, Allen and Sandie Sydnes, Dale Millis and Kent Zarley for their work and input on the design of the raised beds. You would have thought gardening season is over! I am looking for volunteers who would like to lead the Ring Around the Rosey bed for next year, or who may want to partner with another for that. We can always use volunteers for the rose beds as well. Over the winter, we will be concentrating on how to handle signage for the garden. Please speak up if you would like to work on any of these areas.

Finally, November is a great time to give thanks to all those who have made my life easier by helping at the Demonstration Garden, planning for it, and the other tasks that go unnoticed. It is truly a wonderful group of volunteers who make this a better garden, and I appreciate all you do. Happy Thanksgiving!

Margaret Spikes, Project co-chair

Botanical Center Grounds News

Recently, the Friends Board of Directors had a fall bulb sale and while the sale was very successful, there were a few dozen bulbs left over which now have been discreetly scattered over the Botanical Center grounds and River Front walk. There were also some peonies left, which we will winter over in cool storage and then select the spots along the walkway to plant them already started next spring. That ground, however, will have to be dug up and prepared for planting before we can plant them and the mud like we now have don't work up that well. If you would be interested in working at your convenience on one of the river front areas, I would like to hear from you. Hopefully, in 2010, we will be adding some new areas, such as the peony one referred to above. If you have an idea for the river front walk or particular plant love, I would like to hear from you as well. Once again I would like to say thanks on behalf of Mary Oothout, Sondra McAllister, Burl Pierce and myself to PCMG for the help you gave us this year as you did make a big difference.

Please contact me by e-mailing hostahunter@msn.com or call 967-3394.

Melvin Visser, Botanical Center Outside Coordinator

Botanical Center Show House News

There have been lots of visitors to the Show House for our current exhibit, "Repurposed Gardens". I hope you all have had a chance to see it!

And don't forget the Show House fundraiser! Shelley Bain has a large collection of beautiful European glass ornaments that she is selling. It takes place on November 6th and 7th, during the winter bulb mart at the Botanical Center. Please contact Shelley at 557-8111 (office) for more information.

We are excitedly looking forward to the week after Thanksgiving, when the Show House will be transformed for the holidays. Each bay will be designed around a holiday song.

Remember that we have gardening to do all winter long at the Show House. It's a great place to be when the weather turns cold. Also, we could still use display-makers for 2010. Contact me if you are interested in helping out. 556-3684, or mhwphoto@mchsi.com.

Mary Howell-Williams, Project Leader

Discovery Garden News

October is almost over and so the 2009 season ends at the Discovery Garden just in time for the 2010 season to begin. As this issue comes out, the garden will be cleaned and ready for the coming Iowa winter and the 2010 Garden Designers will be busy designing their beds and picking out their plants for the coming year. Lists are to be into Shelley Lande by November 13 so that the co-chairs can get them on the greenhouse seed ordering list and back to Kathy Gocke in time to be ordered.

We had a really good 2009 Discovery Garden Awards Banquet and 2010 Pre-planning Meeting on October 7 with about 50 persons in attendance. We talked about future projects and the order in which we will pursue them. The Barn's replacement will be the major order of business for the 2010 season and co-chairs are in the process of getting ideas, drawings and pricing together to present for funding. We will also check with the East High School Industrial Arts program to see if they would be interested in working with us as one of their volunteer projects. Other things talked about were the possibility of an entrance arbor at the east end of the garden, bed changes on the 2010 map, and whether or not we should order new t-shirts or visors or something like that to identify ourselves as Discovery Garden volunteers for fair security and during the Iowa State Fair. Co-chairs will get prices together and there will be a vote on this sometime before the end of 2009. Our next meeting will be the first part of March.

Have a great fall and a very Happy Thanksgiving -

Shelley, Jean, Cheree and Dean, Discovery Garden Co-Chairs

Garden Tour News

Be sure to mark June 19, 2010 on your calendar as the date for next year's tour. The gardens have been chosen and the committee is so excited about the gardens that will be on tour. Watch for upcoming issues of the Green Thumb for garden descriptions and, of course, our requests for volunteers.

Happy Thanksgiving.

Contact either ***Linda Day***, 515-490-4417 or ***Carol Nading*** 515-289-1532, for more information.

Enabling Garden News

The month of November is the month I like to write about the most because I easily link November with Thanksgiving. There are numerous Master Gardeners to thank, and we are blessed with a great deal to be thankful for!

First of all I would like to thank co-chairs Christine Barker and Paul Wilkens. Christine and Paul each have their own large areas to design, plant, and take care of. I can count on Christine's expertise to help prepare the budget, agendas, minutes and several issues and ideas that come up all throughout the seasons, thank you Christine! Paul is the lead man in making sure the Enabling garden is always up to snuff. Paul is at the garden most mornings, afternoons and evenings. When we need someone to help with heavy physical chores, we can count on Paul, he will gather up our men and it doesn't take them long to finish the project. Most importantly Paul is our masonry guru.

Next on the list are all the Master Gardener bed heads, they also are responsible for adding beauty to the garden by designing, planting, weeding, well, you know the process, they are; Bill & Judy Goshorn, Melvin & Carol Visser, Matthew Bailey & Cindy Haynes, Ruth O'Connor, Jane Ferguson, Nancy Nelson, Peggy Goetzke, Steve Perrin, Tina Gosslink, Dean Brand, Susan Genalo, Dee Tingle, and our new interns, Tracy Coresello, Sandie Hamilton and Theresa Garrison. All their talents and passion for gardening is what makes the Enabling Garden gorgeous year after year! Thank you! You need to know, Tracy and Sandie have agreed to be new co-chairs for the 2010 year, please add their names to your list!

Third, I would like to thank the other Master Gardeners and interns that have volunteered over the past year in many ways, either giving a presentation or just simply showing up to volunteer at our work nights!

Last but most important, I give respect and thanks to our Lord above and the many angels who look over the Enabling Garden and have blessed us with the nourishing rains and healthy soils!! We planted thousands of annuals, 20 trees, and moved around numerous perennials this year and after we planted we received rain and sunshine to complete their transplantation to their new homes. We are truly blessed!

Beyond doubt, it takes many hands to keep a garden of this size and magnitude looking beautiful and valuable for all the hundreds of citizens that come by each year.

A genuine thanks you to all of you!

We will meet and celebrate the end of the season with a Christmas lighting of the pergola, and of course a potluck to follow. Please mark your November calendar for Sunday, November 8 at 2 pm. We'll meet at the Enabling garden to hang up the Christmas lights and then off to the Extension office to eat and relax. This year we are asking you to bring a covered dish and ALSO an item we can donate to our local food pantry. All Master Gardeners and new interns are welcomed.

Joy is the simplest form of gratitude. Karl Barth

With joy & peace, Paula

Upcoming MG Events!

October 31, 8:30 am Fall Clean-up Day Discovery Garden

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

November 8, 2:00 pm Enabling Garden hanging of lights and potluck at the Extension office.

Recurring MG Calendar!

Tuesday mornings Botanical Center Gardeners Show House work sessions

Wednesday evenings Botanical Center Grounds work session

Friday morning Botanical Center Grounds work sessions

Saturday mornings Botanical Center Gardeners Show House work sessions

Annual Harvest Celebration was Thursday October 22th, 2009

Watch the December newsletter for a photos and list of graduates and other honorees.

Master Gardener Spring 2010 Class

Classes start January 5 for the spring 2010 class. I have completed most of the initial information meetings and the deadline for registration fees is November 13. If you would like to be a class coordinator, please email me and I will add you to the list. We will have a meeting Tuesday, December 8 at the ISU Extension office at 6:30 p.m. You can earn up to 3 hours/class of volunteer time and it is an excellent opportunity to get to know the new interns. My office phone is 957-5762.

Bits & Bytes

Sad News X 2

Many of you got an email on Thursday about the death of Judy Elings' husband on Tuesday. (Judy took MG classes in 2006 and was a class coordinator in 2007. She also was on the Programs committee in 2008.) **Ted Elings'** obituary says visitation is Sunday evening (11-1) and services are Monday, all at Hamilton's near Highland Memory Gardens.

Also in Friday's obituaries:

Linda Jones (who took MG classes in 2006 and did a lot of volunteering with the Farmer's Market booth in 2007 before she left the area) has passed away. Her visitation was Friday evening in Waukee and graveside services on Saturday morning, 10-31, in Ft. Madison, Iowa.

Education Opportunity

We wish we could still offer Fall Perennials Conference on 11-14. You can still send your registration but we had such a great response, the conference was full in about 2 weeks. So we have started a waiting list and will be encouraging participants to let us know if something changes and they are not able to attend.

Check out the December 2009 issue of Garden Gate Magazine, page 12/13 (season-long color). Look familiar? It is the 2008 Discovery Garden. The two beds shown were designed by Bob and Alda Helvey and Shelley Lande and are on the east end of the garden.
