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Green Thumb
The Newsletter for the Polk County Master Gardeners
August 2011

ISU Polk County Extension, 1625 Adventureland Drive, Altoona
Phone 515-957-5760

[Visit the website](#)

Dean's Doodles

Last month at this time I was writing about the monsoon season and now we seem to be living in a very steamy oven, but the monsoons seem to have ended and some of us are glad when we get some rain.

Summer is certainly progressing quickly and soon many of the kids will be returning to school and the state fair is right around the corner. We have lots of opportunities for volunteers to work at the Discovery Garden during the fair yet, so please contact Jean Roe to get signed up. You get a pass into the fair the day that you work and also a parking pass, so it's a pretty good deal plus you get to visit with a lot of fun people who are visiting the fair and seeing what we've done this year. You can also indulge in all the new food on a stick (you have to buy it yourself, sorry) that's being offered this year.

Another year that is coming to a close before too long is my year as chair of the steering committee. At our next committee meeting which will be this month, there will be a nominations committee appointed to find people to represent us, as the Polk County Master Gardener's, on the steering committee. Mike Treinen will be moving up to the chair position and we will be looking for someone to be the vice-chair and to succeed him the following year. We will (at least this is what we were told last year) be looking for someone who has been a Master Gardener for more than 10 years to take Mark White's place on the committee as the "10 year class" representative. Last year Mark said that he would do it one more year, so unless he changes his mind we will need to fill his position. We will also be looking for a person from the most recent classes to replace Sandie Hamilton as the "new class" representative. Other possibilities are the secretary and treasurer. I haven't asked nor have those folks said if they would like to stay on and I'll leave that to the committee, but if you are interested in any of these positions you can notify myself or call the extension office and let them know and the information will be passed along to the nominations committee. All the new officers take over following our Harvest Dinner on Oct. 20.

We are still looking for some of you that would like to brainstorm on possibilities/options to what we can do if we are not able to continue to utilize the greenhouse at the Botanical Center. Again contact the extension office or myself if you'd be willing to part of this group.

Last month I wrote about the welcome home ceremonies for all of our deployed soldiers and I think by the time you read this, the entire 2BCT (Brigade Combat Team) will have been welcomed home from the deployment to Afghanistan which is great for lots of folks.

Thanks for all that you do for the program and the hours that you spend volunteering.

Dean Brand, Steering Committee Chairman drbrand@mediacombb.net

Bus Trips Update

The second trip for 2011 just happened so no update this time.

Laurie Barrick 278-8792 barrick8792@msn.com

Demonstration Garden News

Looks like this group is too busy in the garden to send an update this month. You'll just have to go to Urbandale and see what they are up to. *mf*

Margaret Spikes, project chair 984-9064, margaretspikes@wellsfargo.com

Discovery Garden

The Polk County Master Gardeners Discovery Garden at the Iowa State Fairgrounds has a website www.discoverygardenpcmg.org- take some time to check us out! The Discovery Garden Beds' Map is now on-line and the end of July our Bed-Plant List will be on the website, as well. We are located at E. 30th & University, South of the Agriculture Building, Iowa State Fairgrounds.

The Iowa State Fair is August 11th-21st, and Polk County Master Gardeners will be available each day from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm to answer questions of the State Fair visitors. To sign up for shifts, contact Jean Roe 279-8705, ljroe@ecity.net, or you can go to our web page www.discoverygardenpcmg.org and be connected to her email. **There are still shifts open so contact Jean if you are interested.**

A Pre-Fair Celebration at the Discovery Garden will take place on Wednesday, August 3rd at 6:00 pm. All Discovery Garden Bed Heads and Teams and those volunteering during the Iowa State Fair are invited to attend. At this celebration, you will receive instructions for your volunteer work, tour the Garden, meet the Co-Chairs, Jean Roe, Dean Brand, Patrick Schmitt and Cheree Tilton and other volunteers you will be working with during the State Fair.

Polk County Master Gardener Dean Brand will be on the Channel 8 - KCCI Weekend AM Show scheduled for Saturday, August 6th at approximately 8:50 am following the Jerry Cluver segment; and on the WHO 1040 AM Gardening Today Radio Show with Eileen Robb scheduled for Sunday, August 7th from 10:00 am to Noon. Dean will be talking about the Discovery Garden at the Iowa State Fair and the Master Gardener Program.

Discover Gardening at the Discovery Garden is a series of educational talks presented to the public at no charge. Remember to bring your lawn chair or blanket to sit on and feel free to wander through the Garden before you leave and enjoy the beauty. Hope to see you there!

Sept. 7 TOMATOES

Judy and Bill Goshorn
Polk County Master Gardeners
This class starts at 6:30 pm

***Jean Roe, Dean Brand, Cheree Tilton, & Patrick Schmitt, co-chairs
Nancy Bodine & crew, publicity***

Enabling Garden Update

This summer it has been a difficult to maintain our garden chores between the rain and hot and humid weather, but our volunteers at the Enabling Garden seem to be doing the best they can. Thank you to each and every one of you for tending your areas and creating a garden of beauty and interest! It is worth all the work as you witness the dancing butterflies and hear the sounds of the goldfinches, robins, and wrens singing you a song, as you feel the sweat dripping down your back and off the tip of your nose, a breeze near keeps you sustained as you care for the little plants you so tenderly planted in the spring. Iowa weather you got to love it!

On July 23rd, our two new beneficial insect sculptures were installed. We are patiently waiting for the signage to be added. Artist John Brommel said he had more fun building these new sculptures than any other he has designed. We will plan an open house this fall to dedicate the, "Saving Grace" & "Bee-lieve in the Honey Bee" sculptures.



Our July speaker was Entomologist, Dr. Donald Lewis. We truly appreciate the fact that Dr. Lewis and his wife Dorothy came to the garden and shared with us his knowledge on beneficial insects, although it continued to rain all morning. The rain turned out to be a blessing because the last two weeks we have been watering twice a day. After the talk we were able to move our potluck lunch to the extension office, everyone dried off and enjoyed a delicious lunch. Thank you to Dr. Lewis, it will be unforgettable to all who attended. Thank you to all the great cooks who shared their bounty with us and thank you to Mark White for letting us use his sound system!

Our next talk will be Saturday, August 13 at 10:AM. Our guest speaker will be Cindy Bowen. Cindy will talk about," The Joy of Gardening with Physical Modifications and Concerns".

Our work nights continue on Tuesday evening at 6:30 PM.

We had fun at the garden welcoming Ragbrai riders from all over the United States including a team from Italy! Master Gardener David Cooney from Muscantine donates a tree to every over night town, we now have a new Bur Oak planted on the north side of the garden! Thanks to Christine, Paul and Steve for hosting and helping plant the new tree!



Nature and the garden bring out the best in our characters. Felicity Bryan

Paula Winslow, peaceinthegarden@aol.com 967-3409

Fall Master Gardener Class

We will have a 2011 Fall Master Gardener class. One important aspect of the classes are the class coordinators. They help with setting up the equipment and classroom for classes, interact with the interns, do homework and answer questions. Classes are every Tuesday with orientation on September 6 and run through November 29 with graduation/potluck. Time is 6:15 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Coordinators all need to assist with first and last class. For lecture sections, coordinators can take turns with only three or four needed each night. If you would like to be a class coordinator for this class, please email vhunnell@iastate.edu. There will be a class coordinators meeting on Tuesday, August 30, 6:00 p.m. at the ISU Extension office. Should not last more than one hour.

Farmers Market Information Booth

July was our hottest month this year at the Downtown Farmer's Market. Not only was it nearly 100 degrees but we talked with over 225 people with horticultural questions! Marnie Stein was our expert presenter who brought examples of shade perennials that could fit almost every garden situation. Many gardeners don't realize the wide variety of shade perennials available with bloom times spanning the entire growing season. If you would like more information on shade perennials check out the publication store on the Iowa State University Extension website <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/store/>. You might be surprised to find a few that will make those gardeners with only full sun jealous.

The questions at the market last month focused on two main issues. How do I get rid of Japanese beetles and why won't my hydrangeas bloom? Fortunately, we were in possession of a recent yard and garden column written by Richard Jauron and Wendy Klein at ISU for help on the Japanese beetles (<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/article/yard-and-garden-japanese-beetles>). Japanese beetles are an increasing problem in Iowa as their populations increase and they spread. We do not see Japanese beetles until July because the adult beetles do not start to emerge from the soil until the end of June. According to ISU the control of adult beetles is difficult because they emerge every day for a period of several weeks. Handpicking high-value plants may be of benefit in isolated situations with limited numbers of beetles. Spot spraying infested foliage of high value plants with carbaryl (Sevin), permethrin (Eight) or cyfluthrin (Tempo) may reduce damage for several days, but multiple applications are required to maintain control. Traps are not recommended because they only attract more beetles to your yard.

There are also many articles on ISU extension's website about hydrangeas. While there are many reasons a hydrangeas might not bloom including: soil, light, improper pruning, fertilization, it is important to remember that not all hydrangeas can grow and more importantly bloom in our zone. Bigleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*) blooms on the previous season's growth. Unfortunately, in Iowa, the plants often die back to the ground in winter. The plants grow back vigorously in spring, but don't bloom since the previous season's growth has been destroyed.

Be sure to stop by next month on Saturday, August 20th when we'll be discussing canning and preserving. This will be our last appearance at the market this year so be sure to say hello if you're at the market.

Aaron Greiner and Sarah Piziali aarongreiner@mchsi.com 262-4187

Gardeners Show House News

The Show House is running on a lighter schedule until Labor Day, but we still have our regular work days of Tuesday and Saturday mornings. Feel free to stop in: we always welcome extra help, and we won't keep you long - we clear out before it gets too hot!

We are looking for volunteers to create displays in 2012. The theme is "Global Gardens", and we have a lot of really fun ideas already. If you are interested, please contact Mary Howell-Williams.

Mary Howell-Williams, project chair 556-3684, mhwphoto@mchsi.com

Freebies

Dennis is willing to part with the bricks, etc. for free for the hauling. Interested parties can take part or all-but need to make sure Dennis is home when they stop by. I guess they will need to anyway to get directions.

This is a ROUGH GUESSTIMATE:

- 1) bricks - actual house bricks but the old type with the holes in them and the rough outer edges. Roughly 175 - 200 plus lots of pieces (mostly halves).
- 2) landscape/patio stones - reddish color. Somewhere around 150 - 175 plus some pieces
- 3) a bunch of limestone paving - guesstimate of around 20 - 30 pieces of varying size
- 4) Some scalloped shaped edging
- 5) a piece of limestone edging
- 5) Some rocks and misc

Contact Dennis at 515-283-1691. If not here, please leave a message.

Summer Webinar Series: Garden Natives & Invasives 2011

The series will highlight management of invasive plant species (weeds) and discuss viable native plants for use in the landscape.

When: 4th Tuesday of each month this summer; May 24th, June 28th, July 26th, and Aug 23rd from 6:30-8:30pm with a 10 min break

How: The setup will be similar to MG training, therefore webcasts will be delivered via Adobe Connect at Extension offices.

On August 23, *Native Friends and Invading Forces*, the final session, will highlight the importance of native species and discuss the problems and related issues with invasive species in Iowa. An attempt will be made to define the elusive terms "native" and "invasive." Participants will learn about appropriate and inappropriate uses of native materials, and also tips on selection of plant materials for use in landscapes with a better chance of not overstaying or overgrowing their welcome. Because gardening success is often largely dependent on choosing materials to fit planting sites that are adapted, an exploration of reasonable site adaptations will be included in the session. The program will help tie together information that has been presented in earlier programs in the series and will be presented by Rich Pope, Harrison County Extension Coordinator from Logan, Iowa.

Virginia Hunnell, vhunnell@iastate.edu 957-5762

PCMG 2011 Summer Classes

This may be hard to read but you can print a full size version [here](#).

Polk County Master Gardener educational talks presented to the public at no charge. Remember to bring your lawn chair or blanket to sit on and feel free to wander through the Gardens before you leave and enjoy the beauty.

<p>How Does A Garden Grow series At the Master Gardener Demonstration Garden 92" & Dewey Gibbs Road, Urbandale All Programs begin at 7:00 pm</p>	<p>A Season of Learning at the Enabling Garden Located 1050 1st Ave South Altoona "Where Disabilities Become Abilities." 2011 classes start at 10 a.m.</p>	<p>Discover Gardening at the Discovery Garden Outside the Ag Building at the Iowa State Fair Grounds</p>
<p>June 16 Annual Arbor Day Celebrati Everything is Coming up Roses <i>Shelley Londe, Master Gardener</i></p>	<p>April 16 Arbor Day Celebration Dr. Jeff Hles, ISU Horticulture</p>	<p>All Programs begin at 7:00 pm unless otherwise noted. Hope to see you there!</p>
<p>June 23 There's a Blind Man in My Garden! <i>Roger Erpelding, Master Gardener</i></p>	<p>May 21 Photography in the Garden Sharon Powell</p>	<p>June 8 OWLS Patrice Peterson-Keys Environmental Educational Coordinator, Polk County DNR</p>
<p>June 30 No Class – Enjoy the Holiday!</p>	<p>June 11 The Enjoyment of Flower Arranging MG Tina Gosselink</p>	<p>June 22 TREES AT THE DISCOVERY GARDEN Emma Bruemmer State Urban Forester, Forestry Bureau Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources</p>
<p>July 7 Got Dwarf Conifers? <i>Larry Skellenger and Barry Laws, Quilted Gardens</i></p>	<p>July 23 Beneficial Insects and Beyond Dr. Donald Lewis, ISU Entomology</p>	<p>July 13 COLEUS PROGRAM Leanna Culver Polk County Master Gardener</p>
<p>July 14 Open House <i>Various displays</i></p>	<p>August 13 The Joy of Gardening With Physical Modifications & Concerns Cindy Bowen, Mercy Hospital</p>	<p>July 27 ORAGANIC LAWN CARE PROGRAM Brad Mann, Safe Earth Lawn & Garden</p>
<p>July 21 Getting More From Your Landscaping <i>Jennifer Boussetat, Master Gardener</i></p>	<p>September 10 Exploration of Sensory Plants Dr. Cindy Haynes, ISU Horticulture</p>	<p>Sept. 7 TOMATOES* Judy and Bill Goshorn Polk County Master Gardeners *This class starts at 6:30 pm</p>
<p>July 28 Preserving your Garden Produce <i>Jennifer Richards, Local Gardener</i></p> <p>August 4 Art in Your Garden <i>A host of talented folks</i></p>		

You can also find a link on the PCMG web page.

Recurring MG Calendar!

Monday evening work nights at Demonstration Garden
Tuesday & Saturday mornings Botanical Center Gardeners Show House work sessions
Tuesday evening work nights at Enabling Garden
Wednesday and Saturday mornings at PCMG greenhouse, done until Feb. 2012
Wednesday evening work nights at Discovery Garden
Friday morning work session at BC River Walk

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