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

ISU Polk County Extension
1625 Adventureland Drive
Altoona, Iowa
[Visit our Website](#)
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Dean's Doodles

Well, the 2011 Iowa State Fair is over and all of the area schools have returned to classes, so the beginning of fall is definitely upon us.

The Steering Committee met this past Monday night and heard that Mary Farlow is doing well following her surgery, which we're all delighted to hear. During our discussion, the subject of education and volunteer hours came up again. If you're a little behind in those hours, there are still options for you to complete hours this summer. The Enabling and Demonstration Gardens have at least one education program remaining, there is a conference that will be conducted later in the fall or you can audit the current Master Gardener Class which starts in just a couple of weeks on Tuesday evenings at 6:30 pm. There are a lot of work nights or days at all of the gardens remaining and the the Show House at the Botanical Center has scheduled work times.

If you have physical challenges, contact one of the gardens to see if there is something you might be able to do from your home such as, using a computer or completing some type of project. Another possibility is answering questions at the ISU Extension Office. We want everyone to know there are many ways to get your volunteer hours, as well as your education hours. If you're having challenges because of your job or some other circumstance, let someone know and maybe they can give you suggestions on how to get your hours in so you stay current. Don't wait until the last minute to try and figure out a solution, let someone know now when it may be easier to figure out the solution. Our goal is to have all the Master Gardeners current with your certification.

We are still looking for MG's to brainstorm on possibilities/options on what we can do if we are not able to continue to utilize the Greenhouse at the Botanical Center. Please contact the Extension Office or myself if you'd be willing to be a part of this group.

Thanks for all you do for the Master Gardener Program and the hours you spend volunteering!

Dean Brand, Steering Committee Chairman
drbrand@mediacombb.net

Demonstration Garden - Urbandale

Despite the cancelation of the final class, the Demonstration Garden had a successful summer class session, with an average of 45 people per class. I am grateful for all the presenters, those who contributed door prizes and the input received for next year's classes. Thank you also to those who helped with the Open House in July, especially the Garden leads, Demonstrators and Leader, Susan Mahedy-Ridgway for organizing it.

Work nights continue on Mondays only (no Thursdays) for the remainder of the summer.

All Master Gardeners are invited, along with a guest, to a potluck on Thursday, September 15th at 5:30 pm at the Demonstration Garden. Please RSVP to either the Extension Office or myself since chicken will be provided. Please bring a side dish as follows: last name ending in A to G: appetizer; H to R: salad; S to Z: dessert.

We are also planning a fall Garden clean-up on Saturday, October 22nd at 9:00 am - October 29th is the rain date.

All Garden leads should plan on which plants you will want for next year. Seed orders will be taken in the October/November time frame. It's hard to believe we are planning for next year already - 2011 really flew by!

Margaret Spikes, Project Chair

984-9064

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Discovery Garden at the Iowa State Fair

The fair is over and we can confidently say it was a success! We had a lot of positive comments. Thank you to all the volunteers who hosted in the Garden, you really made a difference. The Communications Team did a wonderful job making signs for the plants, shrubs and trees and enhancing the volunteer packet. Their work eliminated a lot of questions from the public and assisted the volunteers. Please visit the Discovery Garden's website by clicking [here](#) to view a map of the Garden, Bed and Plant Lists and photos from this year's Iowa State Fair. Thank you MG Jen Firzlaff for your work on our website!



Our "Cow le flower" was also a success, a lot of people posed with her for photo ops and we saw many children giving her hugs. She did not win any prizes but we think she is great and look forward to seeing her again next year as a permanent part of our Discovery

Garden. Cow le Flower will be placed near the gazebo at the west entrance into the Garden during September. Please come visit her any time. Once again, the Discovery Garden Committee would like to thank MG Betty Lemke and her son Eric Guyler for the many hours they put in painting Cow le Flower.

The Gardens are still doing well and we will maintain them until there is a killing frost and then it will be clean up time. For now we will start the process for next year, so Garden designers please be thinking about what plants you want to have. I know it is difficult to do, but we will be ordering in November.

On a final note, if you are interested in being a part of the 2012 Discovery Garden at the Iowa State Fair - as a Bed/Garden designer, part of a Bed/Garden team, as a volunteer at the Garden or with the Communications Team, please let one of the Co-Chairs know - we would love to have you join us!

*Enjoy the rest of summer,
Discovery Garden Co-Chairs Cheree Tilton, Jean Roe, Dean Brand, and Patrick Schmitt*

Enabling Garden - Altoona



The Enabling Garden Committee will be hosting Dr. Cynthia Haynes as our guest speaker for our last talk of 2011, please join us! The Program will start at 10:00 am on Saturday, September 10th! Dr. Haynes' topic will be, "Exploration of Sensory Plants". Dr. Haynes is a tremendous speaker and an extremely passionate gardener! For numerous years, Dr. Haynes has held the position of Master Gardner State Coordinator and is a frequent guest on NPR and WHO Radio, as well as, exceptionally active in all aspects of horticulture. Our great State is very fortunate to have Dr. Haynes. Dr. Haynes is a key element of our volunteer organization!

As a bonus to the morning, we are hosting a simple dedication of our two new sculptures, a honey bee and a lady beetle. Local artist, John Brommel, who created the praying mantis is the artist of the two new sculptures. This dedication will start at Noon. This would be a good opportunity to view the sculptures, ask questions, and also obtain education hours from Dr. Haynes talk! We will have refreshments following the dedication. If you are able to join us we are asking you to please bring some treats to share with everyone.

Our work nights continue on Tuesday evening although we have changed the hours from 4:00 to 7:00 pm.

Thank you to our volunteers who have remained devoted for the caring of the Enabling Garden, the fall weather has brought a display of new colors to the plants and the garden looks gorgeous!

Paula Winslow
967-3409
peaceinthegardern@aol.com

Fall Master Gardener Class

The 2011 Fall Master Gardener Class is full! Thank you to all those who assisted with the outreach of our Master Gardener Program. As a reminder, classes are every Tuesday beginning with orientation on September 6th through November 29th with graduation and a pot luck. Time is 6:15 pm to 9:30 pm. If you have any questions regarding the Master Gardener classes, please feel free to contact Virginia Hunnell at vhunnell@iastate.edu.

Des Moines Farmers Market Information Booth



August was our last appearance at the Des Moines Downtown Farmer's Market for the 2011 season. We finished out the year with a beautiful August morning and one of our most popular topics, canning and preserving your fall harvest. In fact, we logged over 160 questions at the booth. Many people are intrigued by the possibility of canning because they have fond memories of their parents and grandparents preserving their harvests but are fearful of the amount of work involved. We tried to reassure everyone that it isn't as hard as it seems and there are many great resources available from Iowa State University to help them preserve foods correctly.

This year, the ISU Extension has updated many of their canning and preserving publications and we recommend visiting their website.

www.extension.iastate.edu/healthnutrition/food/preservation/resources.htm

They are also offering a new comprehensive Food Preservation Program called Preserve the Taste of Summer. This Program will include on-line lessons and hands-on workshops as an introduction to safely preserving your crops. If you are interested in these classes, you can get more information on the ISU Extension website.

www.extension.iastate.edu/healthnutrition/food/preservation/preserve.htm

It has been a short but busy season for us at the Farmer's Market. We would like to thank all of our volunteers for toughing it out though the hot days, the rainy days and even the perfect days like this month. We believe the Farmer's Market booth is a terrific way to meet the goals of the ISU Extension's Master Gardener Program through public outreach and education.

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

Gardeners' Show House

The Show House is gearing up for a busy fall. Our next change-over will take place on Saturday, October 1st - the theme is "Paint Box", and there are some very creative displays in the works.

We have a lot for our volunteers to do, now and through the winter. Please join us for our Tuesday and Saturday morning work sessions! Don't worry if you have never worked in the Show House before - we will show you the ropes.

If you want to garden AND be creative, we are looking for volunteers to create displays in 2012. Our theme is "Global Gardening". There are four display change-overs throughout the year - and we have many great ideas to start with. Local garden clubs are welcome, too.

Our next planning meeting is Monday, September 12th at 6:30 pm in the Conference Room at the Botanical Center. Please join us! If you would like more information, please feel free to contact me.

Mary Howell-Williams, Project Chair
556-3684
mhwphoto@mchsi.com

4th Annual Fall Bulb Mart

The 4th Annual Fall Bulb Mart **Preview Night** is **Thursday, September 29th** from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm for friends members, volunteers, and Master Gardeners.

The Bulb Mart will be **Open to the Public** on Friday, **September 30th and Saturday, October 1st** from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and again on **Sunday, October 2nd** from Noon to 4:00 pm. Proceeds will help grow the Des Moines Botanical Center.

If you are interested in receiving a Bulb Mart Plant List please contact Elvin McDonald at emcdonald@botanicalcenter.com You will want to mail your completed Bulb Mart Plant List to the Botanical Center - no later than Thursday, September 15th. Address is: Botanical Center, 909 Robert D. Ray Drive, Des Moines, IA 50316. You may pick up your bulbs at the Botanical Center Greenhouses beginning Thursday, September 29th at 4:00 pm through Sunday, October 2nd at 4:00 pm.

Landscape Options: Design to Planting

An Educational Landscape Design Symposium sponsored by the Federated Garden Clubs of Iowa is being held on Saturday, September 17th from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm at the Iowa Arboretum near Luther, Iowa.

The symposium will include:

- "Focus Your Garden Design" by Lisa Orgler
- "Combining Plants for Your Landscape" by Cynthia Hayes
- "Landscaping With Natives Plants" by Bill Johnson
- "Conifers for the Landscape" by Gary Wittenbaugh
- "Kiss for the Landscape Design" by Peggy Moody

Although this symposium is designed to allow FGCI Landscape Design Consultants to refresh their credentials; it is also designed to provide design ideas to all interested people. The public is invited to attend. This symposium qualifies for Master Gardener continued education hours. Registration fee is \$30 including a light lunch with a \$5 late fee after September 8th. An additional \$5 is required for those LD Consultants taking symposium for refresher credit. Please join us.

Federated Garden Clubs of Iowa Education Opportunities

September 8, 2011 (Thursday)

Techniques for Growing Vegetables
 Understanding Plant Diseases
 How New Plants are Developed and Evaluated
 Container Gardening
 Techniques for Growing Lawns/Alternatives
 Liliium, the True Lily
 Understanding Garden Pests
 Open Book Test

Recommended Reading: National Gardener; LIVING WITH PLANTS by Schumann, Chapter 5 Meeting the Enemy (disease and pests); Chapter 7, Indoor Gardening; Chapter 8, Baskets and Terrariums; Chapter 9, Outdoor Gardening. Available through National Garden Clubs, Inc, 1.

Gardening Study Course II, Session 9

September 8-9, 2011, Iowa Arboretum, 1875 Peach Avenue, Madrid IA,
 Recommended reading: Living with Plants by Schumann, Chapters 5, 7, 8, 9.
 Registrations accepted until September 1, 2011; however, walk-ins are always welcome but the hand-outs may be limited.
 Fee: \$32 ___ Test: \$5 ___ Refresher: \$5
 (Bring National Gardener Label)
 Please make checks payable to: Jennie Clay, 4144 15th St, Des Moines IA 50313
 Phone 515-244-1434

Gene and Jennie Clay

Recurring MG Calendar

Monday evening work nights at Demonstration Garden, Urbandale
Tuesday & Saturday mornings Botanical Center Gardeners' Show House work sessions
Tuesday evening work nights from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm at Enabling Garden, Altoona
Wednesday evening work nights at Discovery Garden at the Iowa State Fair
Friday morning work session at BC River Walk
 PCMG Greenhouse (done until February 2012)

Invitation

Master Gardeners and honey lovers are invited to the **First Annual Honey Harvest and Open Garden** at Tim and Christie Flickinger's home at 3105 E. 39th Street in Des Moines on Saturday, September 17th from 1:00 to 5:00 pm. There will be honey samples and honey lemonade--and guest will see how the 2011 Tour Garden looks in the fall.



Polk County Master Gardeners serve as agents of the Iowa State University Extension. You will find them volunteering throughout our community providing horticulture classes, demonstrations, and leadership to home gardeners.

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