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**Green Thumb**  
**The Newsletter for the Polk County Master Gardeners**  
**October 2011**

**ISU Polk County Extension**  
**1625 Adventureland Drive, Altoona, Iowa**  
**Phone 515-957-5760**  
**[Visit the website](#)**

**Dean's Doodles**

This is my twelfth and final article for the Green Thumb as Chair of the Polk County Master Gardener's Steering Committee. It's been an interesting year to be sure and we had some challenges and some rewards. I think we were able to solve or meet most of those challenges, some of which everyone knew about and some most didn't. The only one I feel we don't have much of a handle on and really need to deal with is; what happens if the Botanical Center's new "owners" don't wish to renew our lease with them. To that end, we're still looking for anyone to be part of a group to look at all of the possibilities which might exist to deal with this challenge. If you're interested in being a part of this group, please let Mike Treinen or I know and we'll add your name to the group. You don't have to know anything about greenhouses, just be willing to think about possibilities that we might have.

I know the Program Committee is working hard to finish up details for the **Harvest Dinner on Thursday, October 20th**. I suspect they will have something about that later in this issue, so be sure to look for it and if your schedule is free please try and attend. This is always a great function and a great way to wind up the growing season. I hope to see you there.

Mike Treinen is going to be your new Chairperson for the coming year and I know he will do a great job. He and the Nominating Committee are working on the slate of Officers for 2012 and they will do a great job. For better or worse, I'm not going away because I'll be the Past Chair on the Committee and also a Co-Chair at the Discovery Garden. Next month, it will be his turn to write to you and I really hope you do all you can to support not only him and the Steering Committee, but our whole Program as it moves forward.

Mary Farlow is doing well and is planning on being back in the office around October 15th (last date that I heard), so it will be great to have her back and in better health.

Be sure to get your hours in (last reminder from me). Thank you all for your support this year and all you do for the Master Gardener Program.

**Dean Brand, Steering Committee Chairman**  
**[drbrand@mediacombb.net](mailto:drbrand@mediacombb.net)**

## 2011 Fall Horticulture Conference



Our 3rd Annual Fall Horticulture Conference will be Saturday, November 5th. Speakers will present many topics, including art work in the garden, trees and perennial flowers. Cost to attend is \$50.

A tentative agenda, registration form with payment information, and speaker bios are posted at: [www.extension.iastate.edu/polk/news/2011hortconf.htm](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/polk/news/2011hortconf.htm)  
Seating is limited, so register early!

**VOLUNEERS FOR THE 2011 Fall Horticulture Conference, Saturday, November 5th-** If you would like to volunteer to help with this conference, please email Virginia Hunnell at [vhunnell@iastate.edu](mailto:vhunnell@iastate.edu). Duties will include set-up on Friday afternoon November 4th, registering people on Saturday morning November 5th, keeping a supply of coffee, drinks, etc., available for registration, breaks, lunch and clean-up at the conclusion of the conference. You will receive lunch, and volunteer time.

### Demonstration Garden in Urbandale

Fall has been beautiful...Mother Nature is easing us into the cold months to come. But in the meantime, we are still having work nights (Mondays only) at the Demonstration Garden. If you stop out to harvest, apples are available and donations to the ISU Extension Office are requested, if you choose to pick more than a few. Raspberries and grapes are also available for sampling. We are anticipating good weather for our Garden cleanup; scheduled for Saturday, October 22nd (rain date is Saturday, October 29th). We also had nice weather for our Demonstration Garden potluck, with 40 attending. Special thanks to Allen and Sandie Sydnes for loaning us tables and chairs, to John Ridgway for hauling and for the others who helped tear down.

As the tasks outside wind down, we are starting to focus on planning for next year and inside tasks. There are a few areas which need attention and we would appreciate knowing if you are interested, my contact information is below - 1) we need someone to compile our summer class surveys, 2) a few Garden leads are looking for assistance and 3) this fall, we are hoping to complete new signs.

Finally, thanks to Marilyn Russie, Beth Wilson and Jean Schweizer for their work and assistance on grant writing. As you can imagine, it's an important part of continuing the building and ongoing improvements at the Demonstration Garden. Enjoy each day!

**Margaret Spikes, Project Chair**  
213-5353, 984-9064, [margaretspikes@wellsfargo.com](mailto:margaretspikes@wellsfargo.com)

## Discovery Garden at the Iowa State Fairgrounds



**MG Betty Lemke sprucing up the Children's Tunnel and a Happy State Fair Visitor Exiting the Children's Tunnel**

Hello - we would like for any MG or MG Intern who wants to work at the Discovery Garden at the Iowa State Fairgrounds to have a chance to join a Bed Design Team! The 2011 Iowa State Fair is in the books and it was a great success thanks to all who worked so diligently to create our beautiful Garden! I know it is hard to believe, but we are beginning our planning for the 2012 Iowa State Fair which will be August 9 - 19, 2012! Current Discovery Garden Bed Designers could you please send Cheree Tilton the following at [tiltoncm@gmail.com](mailto:tiltoncm@gmail.com) - thank you!

1. A list of the people currently working with you on your team.
2. A name or list of any MG's or MG Interns who have been at the Discovery Garden but are not on a team and would like to be; or ask them to be on your team if you need more people.
3. If you currently work at the Discovery Garden and do not care to continue or are unable to continue at the Garden, for any reason.
4. If you prefer a change in status, would like to be a Garden Designer, or change to a different bed at the Garden.

We want everyone who has an interest to have the opportunity to work in our Garden and feel welcome! Please feel free to contact any of the Co-Chairs if you are interested in being a part of the Discovery Garden or if you have a question or concern by visiting our website [www.discoverygardenpcmg.org](http://www.discoverygardenpcmg.org) and click on the Contact Us tab at the top of our Home Page.

As we continue to prepare for next year, here are some important dates to remember: **Thursday, October 6th**, our **Annual Fall Celebration Dinner** is at Smokey D's Restaurant, 5055 NW 2nd Street in Des Moines starting at 6:00 pm. The cost is \$14 for the meal, room rental and gratuity. The dinner includes 2 meats (chopped pulled pork and beef brisket) plus BBQ beans and potato casserole buffet. Please confirm a reservation to Patrick Schmitt by **Monday, October 3rd** at [schmittpatrickj@gmail.com](mailto:schmittpatrickj@gmail.com) **Sunday, October 16th**, wish list for plants is due to MG Melissa Holst, so be thinking about what plants you would like to see in the Discovery Garden. **Saturday, October 29th**, will be clean up day in the Garden. We are pretty sure there will be a killing frost by then. Hopefully, October will be as beautiful as always, so get out and enjoy it. Autumn has finally arrived and the gardening season is coming to an end. Autumn - how we have missed you - cool nights and sunny days - take some time and watch the leaves turn.

***Jean Roe, Dean Brand, Cheree Tilton, & Patrick Schmitt, Co-Chairs***

## Enabling Garden in Altoona



Thank you to Dr. Cindy Haynes for sharing her time and knowledge with us in September for our last talk of 2011 and, thank you to all who attended. The morning was sunny and warm and everyone sampled some edible flowers and hot peppers growing in our Garden.

These past few seasons at the Enabling Garden, our volunteers have been busy. We appreciate them sharing their time and creativity with us to keep our Garden looking lovely! Currently, Paul is putting up a new retaining wall with stone donated by the City of Altoona. And, our work nights continue on Tuesday evenings starting at 4:00 pm until sunset. As we approach our next season, the daylight will be less and less. Please come and join us! Our Garden chores include but are not limited to; watering, weeding, mulching, transplanting, and taking care of all the areas - and we still have some areas up for adoption - if any MG is interested. If you would like to adopt an area or be on our email list, please let Sandie Hamilton [bhamil7132@aol.com](mailto:bhamil7132@aol.com) Christine Barker [cbbark1989@aol.com](mailto:cbbark1989@aol.com) or me know. We'll set a fall clean up date after the first frost. This year, seemed to go by quicker than the previous year! Enjoy the month of October and please stop by the Enabling Garden and view the new sculptures and all the fall colors!

"Almost any garden, if you see it at just the right moment, can be confused with paradise."  
*Henry Mitchell*

**Paula Winslow 967-3409, [peaceinthegardern@aol.com](mailto:peaceinthegardern@aol.com)**

## Gardeners Show House News

By the time you read this, we will have eight brand-new displays in the Show House. Our current theme is, "Paint Box" and it is all about using plants as art. Stop in and visit! We have a very busy fall ahead of us. We will be potting up spring bulbs for forcing, taking lots of coleus cuttings, and doing our annual vine pruning. New volunteers are always welcome. We are looking for volunteers to help with our January and April theme-changes. In January, the theme is, "Global Gardens" and we are looking for people to help create a vertical and a labyrinth garden. In April, our theme will be World Landmarks - we have many good ideas and just need people to put them together. These displays will be set up in 6' x 9' bays in the Show House and will remain set up for three months.

Our next planning meeting is Monday, November 14th, at 6:30 pm in the Riverwalk Cafe. Anyone who would like to be a part of the Show House can attend. All are welcome. Any questions or interest please contact Mary Howell-Williams - 556-3684, [mhwphoto@mchsi.com](mailto:mhwphoto@mchsi.com) or Ann Goecke [Goecke.Ann@principal.com](mailto:Goecke.Ann@principal.com)

**Mary Howell-Williams, Project Chair**

## Garden Tour Committee

Join the Garden Tour Committee! Are you looking for a great way to be more involved with the Polk County Master Gardeners? The Garden Tour Committee is seeking additional members! We are looking for MG's who enjoy organizing events or who have great people skills. The Garden Tour Committee meets once a month and most of your volunteer activities can be done on your own schedule. Our committee is small, but lots of fun! We usually meet at the Beaverdale Grounds for Celebration coffee shop. If you are interested in this committee or have questions, please contact **Michelle Walke** [mwalkedesign@mac.com](mailto:mwalkedesign@mac.com) today! Thank you!

## Master Gardener Class Schedule

The **Fall 2011 Master Gardener Class Schedule** is available on the Polk County Master Gardener website. [www.extension.iastate.edu/polk/info/mastergardener/mg.htm](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/polk/info/mastergardener/mg.htm)

MG Volunteers are needed for the Fall 2011 Class on Campus visits at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa on Saturday, October 15th and Saturday, October 29th (Polk County date). We are looking for "hosts" for each of these groups, 8 volunteers per date. If you are interested, please contact Virginia Hunnell, [vhunnell@iastate.edu](mailto:vhunnell@iastate.edu). There will be a brief meeting for the hosts prior to each one of the sessions above, probably at 8:00 am with the day ending around 3:45 pm. You will be able to count the time in the class room as continuing education, and time between the sessions as volunteer time. A continental breakfast and lunch from Hickory Park is provided.

**2012 MASTER GARDENER TRAINING** - We will be sending an information letter and application to those individuals who have indicated an interest in taking the Spring Class. Please let your family, friends, and co-workers know to send an email to [vhunnell@iastate.edu](mailto:vhunnell@iastate.edu) or [mfarlow@iastate.edu](mailto:mfarlow@iastate.edu) if they would like to be included in this mailing. Classes start in January and go through March of 2012, every Tuesday evening, from 6:15 pm to 9:30 pm.

## Annual Harvest Celebration Thursday, October 20th at 6:30 pm Polk County Extension Office in Altoona, Iowa

### **6:30 pm**

#### **Dessert Buffet with Garden Book Magazine and Seed Exchange**

New this year...Please join us for a Dessert Buffet - bring your friends, spousal unit, and kids. Also, bring any ol' garden books, magazine, seeds or plants to trade with your gardening family. It is a good opportunity to pass along garden related items which are too good to toss. Please label any plants and seeds.

*Desserts prepared by Kathy and Vicki Gocke.*

### **7:00 pm**

#### **Business Meeting and Project Reports**

### **8:00 pm**

#### **40-hour Awards to Polk County Master Gardener Interns**

### **Social Hour**

Following the awards presentations, please greet our new Master Gardeners

*Seating is limited to the first 125. RSVP required by email only to Jeri McGinnis: [jsmcginnis@netins.net](mailto:jsmcginnis@netins.net) by Noon on Thursday, October 13th. Five Dollars per person will be paid at the door starting at 6:15 pm. Please join us!*

## 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 at **Enabling Garden, Altoona**

Wednesday and Saturday mornings at PCMG greenhouse, done until February 2012

Wednesday evening work nights at **Discovery Garden at the Iowa State Fairgrounds**

Friday morning work session at **BC River Walk**

## For Sale - Garden Mulcher/Shredder/Chipper

MG's Paul and Gloria Morris have an 8 Horsepower leaf mulcher/shredder/wood chipper available to a Master Gardener who could use it. It is a Yard Machine Model 24A-465, in excellent condition, and 2 collection bags are included at a cost of \$245. If you are interested, please contact Paul or Gloria at 515-287-4256, [gloria.morris@mchsi.com](mailto:gloria.morris@mchsi.com) or [paul\\_morris@mchsi.com](mailto:paul_morris@mchsi.com)



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