



CHARLIE BAIER, Iowa State University Howard County Extension Education Director

FOR THE WEEK OF August 29, 2005

Small Towns on the Road to Success

Community strategies for success will be featured at the third annual Northeast Iowa Community Development Conference, "Small Towns on the Road to Success." The conference will be held September 15, 2005, at the Hotel Winneshiek, Decorah. Examples of small town housing development, tools to support beautification and quality of life enhancements, developing local broadband access, and ways to attract and support local entrepreneurs are on the agenda. The keynote speaker is Chuck Offenburger, member of the Governor's Strategic Planning Council, who will talk about Iowa communities' desired futures and strategies for the state. Approximately twenty community volunteers in twelve breakout sessions will talk about their experiences in their own small towns. Mike McAbee, local musician and comedian will provide luncheon entertainment, with his original songs about rural life. Early registration is \$40, by September 2, 2005. Late registration is \$50. Call 319-234-6811 or our office at 563-547-3001 for a brochure, or go to <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/communities/neiadc.html> to view the schedule and download a brochure with registration form.

Taking the Road Less Traveled: A Career Conference for Girls

Taking the Road Less Traveled. Sponsored by Iowa State University's Program for Women in Science and Engineering, the conferences aim to expose girls, sixth through twelfth grades, to career paths within science, technology, engineering and math. More than 2,500 individuals participate in this program each year. In the morning participants hear from professional women; in the afternoon they participate in hands-on activities or tours.

This fall's conferences will be held on the following dates: October 13 (High School = Grades 9-12), October 20 (Middle School = Grades 6-9), October 27 (Middle School = Grades 6-9). . The registrations are set up as three-page PDF documents, with pages one and two offering important information. www.pwse.iastate.edu

Please feel free to contact Kristin at ISU if you have questions or if you have difficulty downloading the forms. Kristin can be reached at (515) 294-5319. Or, email us at trlt@iastate.edu.

Fall Perennial

Many popular flowering perennials such as peonies, iris and daylilies peak in spring and early summer. But what is my pick for the garden in September and October?

Asters (*Aster*) are my favorite as they are dependable bloomers in a sunny flower garden. Many start blooming in late August and continue through early October. Asters range in height from 1 to 5 feet and are crowned with clusters of brilliant pink, fuchsia, lavender, purple or white daisies. 'Purple Dome' and 'Alma Potschke', with dark purple or fuchsia flowers, respectively, are stunning in September. Asters should be planted in full sun with well-drained soils and good air circulation to prevent the development of foliar diseases.

Black Nightshade

This summer we have seen a lot of weeds including black nightshade. Black nightshade is a low-growing annual with stems that can grow from one to three feet long or high. It is a weed that grows only from seeds. It likes shade and grows around hedges, fences, bushes, and buildings. The distinctive round, smooth fruit, which starts out green then, turns to dark blue or blue-black berry when it matures. Black nightshade is poisonous to livestock that eat it. Calves, sheep, goats, swine, dogs, poultry, and rabbits suffer serious poisoning. The poison is found in all parts of the plant but the amount is usually highest in the green unripe berries. The plant often has a musty-scent that is very distinctive. Since this plant is an annual, the prevention of seeding by mowing or pulling of the plant will eventually eradicate it from your yard. Plants that already have fruit on it should be pulled or cut and then removed from the area.