

Summary of project activities conducted throughout the year and results of the project: (include any data of successes of the project). Plus, the gardens being open to the public daily, 2 community events were held this year.

Project Green Citywide Garden Tour, July 10th & 11th. 24 people signed the guest list for self-guided tours at the gardens. According to the director, 67 people signed the guest book as they toured the house.

The Taste of the Heritage Gardens event was held on July 13th. This event required more planning than previous years as we were celebrating the 25th anniversary. It was also a time to remember Betty Kelly, founder of the gardens and a 34-year member of the Johnson County master gardeners, who passed away in March. We dedicated the garden bench her family donated during the event (photo below). Joanne Leach, Carolyn Murphy, Darlene Clausen, Lavon Yeggy, Barb Schintler, and Beth Fisher organized the event. We overcame many obstacles including hauling tables/chairs to and from the fairgrounds. In the past the Solon boy scout troop had carried out this job using a trailer. Doug Geraets organized a crew with trucks to haul the tables/chairs. Other helpers included Mike Murphy heading the parking of cars, Katy Carlson organized the fresh flower bouquets for table decoration as well as the giveaway. Of course, the many cooks that were organized by Beth Fisher, and the paper products that were gathered by Barb Schintler. Carolyn M & Joanne Leach planned the menu and designed the commemorative placemat. Dane's Dairy donated ice cream cups. We collected \$978 which included two generous donations. There were 145 paying guest, 5 Post Office Brass Band members and 62 master gardeners involved. 81



cookbooks were sold which included a section on Betty Kelly and Plum Grove history. The Steering Committee voted to donate \$150 to the Post Office Brass Band for playing at the event. Expenses included paying for paper products and decorations, and if requested, food ingredient (not all expenses been totaled at this time). Overall, we were pleased with the turnout after being cancelled due to COVID-19 last two years.

On August 31, seventeen incoming interns & eighteen current master gardeners came to Plum Grove to visit the gardens. Carolyn gave a brief history of the Plum Grove Historical site and how the heritage kitchen garden was started as a core project by Betty Kelly and Joanne Leach in 1995 and the addition of Grandma's Flower, wildflower, and Quester's Rose gardens in the following years. As we toured the

**Johnson County Master Gardeners
25th Annual**

'Taste of the Heritage Garden'
Wednesday, July 13, 2022

5:30 - 7:00 p.m.
**Plum Grove Historical Site
1030 Carroll Street
\$5.00 suggested donation**

**Taste 19th Century Recipes
Visit the heirloom gardens
Tour the 1840 home of Robert Lucas, first territorial governor
Listen to the Post Office Brass Band
Celebrate the memory of Betty Kelly
Thank you to Dane's Dairy for donating ice cream**

Door Prizes
Donations help fund the gardens, Kirkwood horticulture scholarships, and 4-H Fair awards.
(Incliment weather location: Iowa State Extension Office, Johnson County Fairgrounds, 3109 Old Hwy 218 South)

Drawings by Betty Kelly



gardens each chair (Lavon/wildflower, Darlene/vegetable, Carolyn/flower) and weekly volunteers talked about the heirloom plants, garden layouts, and gardening methods. Treats and drink were provided.

Statement of what you would consider the greatest success of this project:

Plum Grove Historical site is a step back in time. JCMG's are increasing awareness of the importance of preserving heirloom seeds for the future by planting the gardens with methods used in 1850's (using heirloom seeds and practicing seed saving). The heritage gardens have been recognized by receiving the first Iowa State Extension Service Award, Smithsonian Garden Award, National Garden Club Award, Irving Webber Historic Award, and selected to be on the Project Green Garden Tours six times.

What needs are there to help this project continue? What changes would you like to make for the future?

Recruiting new volunteers for the gardens and annual tasting events is important to maintain the seasonal work and fundraisers.

The brick border around the rose garden will be extended to lay a pad for the memorial bench donated by Betty Kelly's family. The wildflower and vegetable gardens will need fence repairs. We made temporary repairs this year, however, next year we will need more permanent fixes. Both the vegetable and flower garden will require new chicken wire to keep the bunnies out. Wood fences, gates, and garden layout holders are needing repairs and paint. Since our funds are low and we haven't had a fundraiser for several years due to COVID-19, we requested money from the general fund to complete these repairs. We received a budget for the gardens - \$800, Taste of Heritage Gardens - \$600, Taste of Heirloom Tomatoes - \$200.

Submitted by Carolyn Murphy, Darlene Clausen, Lavon Yeggy

Date: December 2022