

JCMG Steering Committee Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, Aug. 9, 2023, 6:30 P.M. Hybrid Meeting

1. Call to order 6:34 P.M. (Yes-Quorum 14/24)

Present:

Doug Geraets, Chair
Jackie Wellborn, Vice-Chair, Yard and Garden Information
Melissa Serenda, Thymes
Emil Rinderspacher, Plant Sale & Flea Market
Chris Sedrel, Demo Garden, Fairgrounds Beautification
Laurie Roehl, Demo Garden, Fairgrounds Beautification
Megan Garrels, Speakers Bureau
Beth Fisher, Social Events
John Weeg, Ecumenical Tower
Darlene Clausen, Plum Grove, Plant Sale & Flea Market
Linda Schreiber, Downtown City Gardens
Lavon Yeggy, Plum Grove Gardens
Carolyn Murphy, Plum Grove Gardens, Butterfly House
Mike Murphy, Butterfly House

Absent:

Jean Holzhammer, Treasurer
Barb Robinson, Secretary
Kay Mohling, Yard and Garden Information
Karen Martinek, Coralville Schoolhouse
Michael Hesseltine, Ecumenical Tower
Mary Starry, Hortline
Barb Schlintler, Firefighters Memorial
Melanie Hauptert, Hospice Garden
Vickie Siefers, Oaknoll
Sharon Jeter, Past Chair

Others present:

Shannon Bielicke
Laurie Canady
Carl Hensley
Mary Hensley
Sharon Rude, Buckets of Flowers, 4H Scarecrows

2. Approval of **June 20** Meeting Minutes- Approved with minor clarification. Carolyn clarified that the at the last meeting there was mention that the Silent Auction at the Plant sale may not be needed which she has not agreed to. Emil clarified that it was just a suggestion that since it is a lot of work and that since the General account is well-off maybe the committee could support the Butterfly project with funds from the sale. This topic will continue to be discussed in the future.

3. Treasurer's Report (Jean)

General Fund: **\$38,559.63**

Income: Mary Lou Gay memorial gifts = \$290.00

Income: Virginia Stutsman memorial gifts = \$250.00

Income: Donation to Ecumenical Housing Corp. = \$150.00

Income: Plant Sale = \$303.00

Expense: \$1593.17

Plum Grove: **\$1288.88**

Income: \$415.80 Heritage Party

Expense: \$522.65

Butterfly House: **\$6233.63**

Income: \$20 Donation

Income: \$1329.51 - 2023 Fair

Expense: \$23.80

New or Known Pending Receipts: All approved.

\$72.67, Alphagraphics, MG General Demo Garden (pre-approve additional project), Hügelkultur Sign

\$128.79, Chris Sedrel, MG General Demo Garden, plants, hose, potting soil

\$70.73, Chris Sedrel, MG General Demo Garden signage supplies

\$77.94, Chris Sedrel, MG General Demo Garden plant markers & signage supplies

\$10.35, Linda Schreiber, Plum Grove Taste of Heritage, recipe ingredients

\$71.89, Sharon Rude, Plum Grove Taste of Heritage, recipe ingredients

\$24.23, Laurie Roehl, Plum Grove Taste of Heritage, recipe ingredients

\$354.93, Carolyn Murphy, Butterfly House

\$104.74, Carolyn Murphy, Plum Grove Gardens

\$103.71, Carolyn Murphy, Plum Grove Heritage Party

\$1,088.70, City of Iowa City, Linda Schreiber, Downtown City Gardens, perennial

plants

*Carolyn is waiting on the invoice from Forever Green Landscaping, Lucy H. for Butterflies. Once received she will submit it to Shannon for payment.

4. Extension Report/Announcements (Shannon)

- Reimbursement requests & budget check in- An updated budgets list with project expenses through 6/20/2023. Shannon reminded project leaders that they need to pay close attention to their budget. Spending over the approved budget needs to be preapproved (approved by the committee before money is spent). Several projects are over their budget. All expenses were approved with a reminder that those projects need to consider their 2024 budget requests closely.

- JCMG Bylaws final review- Discussion was postponed due to time running out.
- Fall JCMG training class status update, state scholarships, & county scholarship- 37 Students including 1 ProHort, 1 Reactivation, 7 scholarship requests. ISU will be providing 3x\$100 state scholarships per county. If some counties don't use all 3 scholarships the unused scholarships will be redirected to counties with more scholarship requests. Shannon requested matching funds to cover any remaining requests not covered by the state. Up to \$1,000 were approved to help cover all scholarship requests.
- Fair Review & Thank you's have been coming in the mail and were shared.
- Johnson and Linn County will be partnering to put on the Master Woodland Stewardship program in Fall 2024. It will be a great opportunity and will be advertised once planning is complete.
- Fall Harvest Potluck Oct. 1, 2023- Planning is in progress. Please see details in the September Thymes newsletter.
- Kirkwood tour is still in the planning for late Fall.

5. Review of JCMG Steering Committee Meeting Calendar (Doug)

August

Tomato Taste (Aug. 31)

September

Plan fundraising for upcoming year

Finalize dates for MG activities in the coming year, create JCMG event bookmark

Fall Harvest Social & Potluck (September or October)-Scheduled for October 1.
Please see details in the September Thymes newsletter.

October

Nominate steering committee officers

Develop fiscal budget with project leaders

Review Bylaws

6. New Business

- Change in Project Coordinator for Buckets of Flowers/Scarecrow Contest- Sharon Rude will be taking over coordination of these projects. She will discuss with Doug G. and let him know if she would like to request being added as a voting member of the JCMG steering committee
- Speakers Bureau was discussed. It was recommended that Megan reach out to the MGs to remind them that if they are doing speakers bureau engagements that they need to notify her so that she can document and help facilitate these opportunities
- The need for Compostable utensils has been expressed. Carolyn M. and Bonnie P. have expressed willingness to share their knowledge on the subject. Shannon expressed that a plan needs to be in place. Current supplies need used up, a supplier needs to be determined for purchase by the extension office, & a disposal plan needs to be worked out. John W. expressed that the demo garden

compost could be a place for disposal and is willing to help. Further discussion will be had.

- Plum Grove will be working on new paths in the gardens.
- 2 horse farm requests were discussed. These projects can be claimed as 'other' volunteer hours. But are not something that can be taken on in more commitment at this time.
- Emil and Shannon will communicate and reserve the fairgrounds buildings for the 2024 Plant Sale & Flea Market.
- *Kiss the Ground* documentary film to be shown at ICPL on Tuesday, Sept. 19, at 7 p.m., in the Iowa City Public Library. The sponsors of the film are 100 Grannies, Backyard Abundance, Bur Oak Land Trust, ICPL, JCMG, LWVIA, and Project GREEN.

7. Old Business

- Update on JCMG CE 2024 – Planning is in the works.

8. Administrative Reports

Shannon will be out of the office in Des Moines for the Ag NACAA Conference next week (Aug. 13-17 & probably off on Friday, Aug. 18). Limited access to email but will be checking it. You may use her cell phone # if urgent.

9. Adjourn

Date of Next Meeting: **Wednesday, Sept. 13**

Thymes Newsletter Deadline: **Friday, August 25**

Project Reports

(submitted in advance of meeting)

- **Yard & Garden Information** – Yard and Garden Information staffed a table all four days of the Johnson County Fair. We answered many gardening questions, wrote down other questions to research and talked to many people about various subjects and of course, the heat and drought. On Aug. 31 we will be staffing a table and providing information handouts at the Plum Grove Tomato Taste.
- **Butterfly House** – This was our 10th year putting on this butterfly exhibit at the fair. July is always hot, but this year was really a scorcher. The fair itself wasn't as busy; the Butterfly House visitor count was approximately 4,500 (average is 6,100).

Each year we have added to our education displays. An outdoor educational sign about pollinators has been added for year-round education. To update the hoophouse front gardens, Lucy Hershberger donated a flat of native plants and sent a crew to help us clean up stone landscaping, plant, and mow the grass (cut down the thistles). The Demo gardens (thank you Chris) donated crescent stones they no longer needed. With a few purchased stones, we were able to complete the job. Forever Green provides most of the trees, shrubs, flower garden displays, however, this year I asked for a corner. I wanted to set up and show the different types of milkweed plants and how you can engage your kids in learning about butterflies and other pollinators. We also added another educational activity for the kids to learn about a butterfly life cycle with a paper plate and pasta. The caterpillar tunnel has taken quite a beating in the few last years and did require repairs. Mike and I decided to go ahead and make those repairs as the kids really love it and it does bring families to that end of the fairgrounds.

Training on Sat, July 22 was attended by 23 MG. They learned about the 11 species of native butterflies and Luna moths that we were able to get for the hoophouse. We even managed to have a monarch hatch during the training. We ordered from two sources to get this variety of butterflies, moths, chrysalises, and cocoons.

We had 42 MG and three Forever Green staff work during the fair. It was a smaller number than usual, so we appreciated the help. We have several seasoned volunteers who are always there to help when we need them. The hoophouse, outside displays, merchandise and tattoos, seed ball making, and kids activities kept us all very busy. Thank you to Mahmooda for the gorgeous Henna tattoos and donated plants to sell. Liz Loeb donated "Hungry Caterpillar" hair ties. All proceeds and freewill donations will be used to help purchase butterfly specimens. Carolyn Murphy, Project Coordinator

- **Coralville Historical Schoolhouse** – In July we held a work session to decide how to proceed with the gardens at the 1876 Coralville Schoolhouse. We were able to go

through our east gardens and especially the southeast garden that has received the least love and care in the last years. We talked about which volunteer plants to remove and identified some of the other plants. We moved some grasses and will trim others back.

We have an abundance of Hostas that look scorched this time of the year. Our plan is to move some of the Hostas to a shadier location behind the schoolhouse or to the west garden in the fall. If we feel we still have too many we will dig some up in the Spring and take to the plant sale. Some members have offered to bring in perennials from their yards to add some diversity and fill in a few bare spots.

Our plan for the next month is to work on our own when cool times allow for routine maintenance; light weeding and a bit of watering. In the extreme heat, even the weeds have slowed and everything is very dry. The storms have knocked down some milkweed and other taller plants that have been trimmed back now. We are looking forward to cooler weather. Karen Martinek, Proj. Coordinator

- **Ecumenical Towers** – ET site is in good shape. We have had a couple of work sessions this summer and a meet and greet with the residents on the patio on the south side of the building towards Washington. At the patio talk with the ET residents we discussed future plans and answered all of their questions. This fall we are planning on: 1) rejuvenating an existing bed, 2) tilling up a new bed location on the central lawn and 3) working on raised beds right off the patio for the residents. It is a lot and ambitious but if the weather cooperates we should be able to work on these projects from Sept through October. Michael Hesseltine, Proj. Coordinator
- **Demo Gardens** – The Demo garden saw many visitors during the Fair. There were many questions about the square foot gardens, the Hügelkultur, the tall ornamental corn, and the kale in the rock garden. Kids were invited to taste the early tomatoes, beans and carrots. A scavenger hunt was a great way to engage kids and adults. We have donated almost 500 lbs of produce along with 178 lbs of aronia berries.
- **Downtown City Projects** – The Downtown City Gardens team enjoyed a few breaks during the summer months. In June, we toured seven of the eight JCMG garden sites (Plum Grove was not open until 1 P.M.). These garden visits gave us opportunities to see what other groups are doing in their gardens. DCG July breaks included the Fourth of July and Open Gardens Weekend to allow MG opportunities to visit the gardens and support our Master Gardener friends who had their gardens listed on the tour.

Our May planting on the south side (Burlington Street) of Capitol Street Parking Garage has transitioned the space into an Iowa native perennial garden and it's looking

wonderful. There are fewer weeds and those that are present are typically along the sidewalk. The conversion, which is nearly complete, is part of a growing (no pun intended) movement to embrace natives in personal landscapes for their remarkable functionality.

Birds outdid themselves planting sunflower seeds in the Dottie Ray Garden at Melrose Avenue. Plants had to be trimmed to create better visibility when entering the Finkbine parking lot. The plan is to move coneflowers into the garden.

The Karl Forester grasses planted (2020) in the Northside gardens are attractive and functional. A grant from Iowa City Downtown District funded the planting project. We also assisted Mercy Iowa City with the rose gardens — trimming the rose bushes, removing diseased stems (sawfly larva damage; rose slug) and weeding to keep the gardens looking great for patients and visitors.

- **Fairgrounds Beautification (includes Raingarden) –**
- **Firefighters Memorial –**
- **Plant Sale & Flea Market –**
- **Hortline –**
- **Hospice Garden at Willow Creek –**
- **Oaknoll Garden Project –**

- **Plum Grove –** Taste of the Heritage Gardens was held July 12, 5:30-7pm. Due to threatening storm forecast and previous rain that morning, the event was moved to the ISU Extension Building. Thank you to all that helped us with this change.
We had a smaller crowd due to the location change. I believe this is only the fourth time in 26 years that the location was moved due to weather. We were pleased to see some of our loyal followers from the Lucas Farms neighborhood show up to enjoy the music, food, ice cream and flower arrangements. A bouquet of flowers was picked from all three of the Plum Gardens and given as the first door prize. After a short program flower bouquets were given out.

There were around 50 MG volunteers, 56 paying guests, 5 Old Post Office brass band members, and Donna Dane present. Donna was kind enough to bring the ice cream and cooler for the evening. In the past, Donna has donated ice cream, in memory of her mother, Allie Dane, who was a long-time MG. A donation was made to the Old Post Office brass band. We sold 27 cookbooks at \$1.00 each.

Thank you to all the cooks, servers, setup/teardown crew, bouquet makers, greeters, coordinators, and everyone that helped with this event. It was fun. I hope you had a

chance to talk with fellow MG and guests during the evening. - Plum Grove Heritage Garden Committee

- **Speakers Bureau –**
- **Thymes Newsletter –** We've consistently been getting great content and photos—but contributors are few. Please encourage those you volunteer with on your projects to consider submitting a short article about or photos of their gardens, something new they learned, or what it's like working on a project. The JCMG-Thymes blog had another good month in July, with 413 views by 194 unique visitors, with 4 posts published. The most-visited post in July was Linda's article about [Open Gardens Weekend 2023](#).