

JCMG Steering Committee Meeting Agenda  
Wednesday, Sept. 13, 2023, 6:30 P.M.

1. Call to order
2. Approval of **Aug. 8** Meeting Minutes
3. Treasurer's Report (Jean)
  - General Fund: **\$34,690.79**
    - Income: Virginia Stusman \$50.00 memorial gift
    - Expense: \$3,928.84
  - Plum Grove: **\$973.99**
    - Expense: \$314.89
  - Butterfly House: **\$4,579.70**
    - Expense: \$1,653.93
  - New or Known Pending Receipts: (as of Sept. 12)
    - \$78.11, Barbara Schintler, Plum Grove account, Plum Grove Heritage Party, table supplies
    - \$50 donation, Karen Hughes, Memorial in honor of Virginia Stutsman.
    - \$180.45, Darlene Clausen, Plum Grove account, Plum Grove Gardens, wire cloches & galvanized netting
    - \$66.17, Darlene Clausen, Plum Grove account, Plum Grove Tomato Taste, Aero Rental- PA system rental
4. Extension Report/Announcements (Shannon)
5. Review of JCMG Steering Committee Meeting Calendar (Doug)
  - September
    - Initial planning meeting? for Saturday, May 11, 2024 Plant Sale & Flea Market
    - Finalize dates for MG activities in the coming year, create JCMG event bookmark
    - Fall Harvest Social & Potluck (Sunday, Oct. 1, 4–7 P.M.)
  - October
    - Nominate steering committee officers
    - Develop fiscal budget with project leaders

- Review Bylaws
- November
  - Approve fiscal budget
  - Approve steering committee officers
  - MG project brochure review
  - Reporting hours reminder
- 6. Old Business
  - Update on *JCMG Community Speaker Series 2024* (previously JCMG Continuing Education)—Linda
  - Summary Report 2023 Plant Sale & Flea Market—Emil
  - Vote to approve revised JCMG Bylaws
- 7. New Business
  - Solon Library request to be Approved Project—Kathy Erenberger
  - Finalize dates for MG activities & events in 2024
- 8. Administrative Reports
- 9. Adjourn
  - Date of Next Meeting: **Wednesday, Oct. 10**
  - Thymes Newsletter Deadline: **Wednesday, Sept. 27**

## **Project Reports**

*(submitted in advance of meeting)*

- **Yard & Garden Information –**
- **Butterfly House –**
- **Coralville Historical Schoolhouse –** Our work team took a break during the extreme heat in July and August. After a visit to check the condition of the gardens and finding them dry and singed looking, we scheduled a group watering, dead heading and weeding session on Sept. 1 which greatly improved the appearance of the gardens. Coordinator, Karen Martinek
- **Ecumenical Towers –** Last Wednesday night, Aug. 30, I spent a couple hours doing a cleanup at ET. John had alerted me that there was an accident over the prior weekend. A motor vehicle had jumped the curb, ran through one of the perennial beds and demolished a bench. Lost was a rose bush and this year's perennials in that bed. I will be sending an approximate replacement cost to the facility for the cost of the handful of plants lost. I also removed some invasive gourd vines planted by someone without consulting the coordinators.

John and I also have a multi-month project planned for this fall running Sept through November and includes existing bed rejuvenation, installing a new perennial bed and hopefully in November the building and installing of raised garden beds to enable residents who have limited range of motion to become gardeners. Coordinator, Michael Hesseltine

- **Demo Gardens –**
- **Downtown City Projects –**
- **Fairgrounds Beautification (includes Raingarden) –** Raingarden report: We are starting to deadhead plants but still had 12 different varieties blooming. We are going to plant bulbs for spring blooms.
- **Firefighters Memorial –**
- **Plant Sale & Flea Market –**
- **Hortline –**
- **Hospice Garden at Willow Creek –**
- **Oaknoll Garden Project –**
- **Plum Grove –** See the Thymes for story on Bucky the deer and report on return of tomato tasting & tasty tomatoes we all loved. Fall vegetables planted: fall beets, carrots, spinach & swiss chard. Donated 72lbs of grapes to Community foodbank. Both flower gardens continue to have lots of blossoms but do require some watering (until this week!). We will need to budget for new fences at both vegetable & wildflower gardens as both are old and rotting.
- The **Tomato Tasting** was held Thursday, Aug. 31, 5:30 to 7:00 P.M. The last tasting was held in 2019. The pandemic and lack of tomatoes put the event on hiatus until this year. Event planning committee members were Darlene Clausen, Lavon Yeggy, Megan Garrels, and Melissa Close. Carolyn Murphy was an advisor. Volunteers for the event included the planning committee and MGs: Doug

Geraets, Roger Jenson, Chris Smith, Steve Lyons, Jeff Walberg, Sadia Embree, Fred Meyer, Karen Miller, Janice Hining, Sue Kloos, Esther Retish, Marilyn Kempnich, Barb Schintler, Barb Robinson, Marge Jensen, Leah Latella, Kristin Ho, Helene Donta, and Holly Hotchkiss. Linda Schneider wrote and distributed a press release. Melissa Close contacted the Lucas Farms Facebook administrator. Volunteers signed up either by Sign Up Genius or by contacting Darlene Clausen. Darlene Clausen and Melissa Close served as emcees.

We brought in \$128. There were approximately 30 to 35 attendees. A suggested donation of \$4 was requested. Rental of the speaker system from Aero Rental was \$66.17. No other expenses were incurred. Twenty-two recipe booklets from the Taste of the Heritage Garden at Plum Grove were sold for \$1 each.

There were 20 varieties of tomatoes contributed by Master Gardeners. There were 9 categories for comparisons. Categories were cherry tomatoes, paste tomatoes, and sandwich slicers. Categories were further divided by color. An additional question asked voters to guess which tomatoes were hybrids. Our education effort was to describe the uses for each tomato type on the ballot. We also tried to show the difference between hybrid and heirloom tomatoes.

Samples of Tomato jam and Brethren cheddar bread were served. Melissa Close made the jams and Lavon Yeggy made the bread. The jams were Red Tomato Jam and Yellow Tomato Basil Jam. Recipes were found online. Ingredients were donated by makers.

Door prizes were drawn. Four bouquets were made by Master Gardeners, the book *Ten Tomatoes That Changed the World* by William Alexander was donated by Prairie Lights, two \$25 gift cards were donated by Hills Bank, and a gift bag of Plum Grove plum sauce, grape preserves, and jars of the tomato jams with recipe booklets from the Taste of the Heritage Garden Tastings in 2022 and 2023 were the prizes.

Suggestions for changes for next year include:

- Add overall best tomato to the ballot
  - Assign a photographer
  - Assign someone to distribute flyers
  - Make yard signs advertising the event
  - Provide music (background harp, guitar, or the like)
  - Count attendees
  - Provide recipe cards for food being tasted
- **Speakers Bureau** –
  - **Thymes Newsletter** – Great project photos and updates filled out the September *Thymes* as we wrapped up the summer. In August, the JCMG-Thymes blog had 362 views from 179 visitors, with the most popular articles being "[Trees please...](#)" by Linda Schreiber and interestingly Marilyn Kempnich's "[Great Grandma's Sun Dill Pickle Recipe](#)" which was originally published back in April and continues to drive engagement several months later. So ... consider sharing your favorite recipes for the garden!