



Johnson County Master Gardener

THYMES

April 2020

MG Steering Committee Meeting

Wednesday, April 8, 7 P.M.; With no close contact recommended due to Covid 19 a meeting at the Extension office is unlikely. More details to follow regarding possible video conferencing.

Thymes Deadline

Information/articles for the Thymes should be sent to Doug Geraets at dougrph@aol.com or Melissa Serenda at msserenda@gmail.com.

Please send news, volunteer opportunities, stories, pictures, gardening book reviews, etc., for the May issue by **Friday, April 24.**

Seed Share 2020 Update

To: Master Gardeners of Johnson County

The evolving news of the coronavirus in our community has given us pause. As a result, we made the decision to cancel 2020 Seed Share and mini-education courses ("Starting Seeds To Transplant" and "Saving Seeds") which had been scheduled for March 29. At this time we do not expect to reschedule the activity in time for the gardening season.

Instead, JCMGs will have an online/catalog shopping opportunity. Please visit our JCMG webpage to see an inventory of seeds from our sponsors: Burpee, Earl May, Fedco Seeds, Peaceful Valley Farm & Garden Supply, Renee's Garden, Seed Savers Exchange, Territorial Seed Company and Victoria Seed Company.

Next, email me your seed order that you would like filled. I will make every attempt to provide the brand, variety and the number of packets that you select. I'll let you know when your order is ready to

pick up so we can coordinate a time to get you the seeds you selected. Please send your requests by April 15 to johnsoncomg@gmail.com. Orders will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Because supplies are limited, an alternate brand will be substituted if your initial choice is no longer available.

I'm hopeful that MGs will be able to *Plant A Row* to donate produce to area food pantries. COVID-19 is making it challenging for everyone to meet financial obligations.

When health officials indicate that it is safe for MGs to meet as a group, we can celebrate spring together. Meanwhile, I may ask you for a testimonial or photo to use in our 2020 Seed Share report to our sponsors.

Did you know gardening ranks among the top 10 pastimes in the world? Not only does it provide an opportunity to enjoy nature, gardening also offers exercise, a healthy diet and in our case, an opportunity to donate fresh produce to an area food pantry.

Be well. Stay safe.

Linda Schreiber, JCMG 2013

Volunteer Opportunities

**Raptor Center Annual Spring Cleanup—
CANCELLED**



Well, as you can probably guess, we will not hold the annual cleanup at the Raptor Center in April. The Raptor Center is currently closed and although there is a tentative reopen date of April 3, 2020, it seems likely that will be extended. In any case, per ISU Extension, we are to follow all CDC guidelines, including social distancing. Once we have determined how and if we can clean up we will be sure to notify you.

Thank you. Stay home when possible and stay safe always!

Project Leader Ann Tvedte & Co-Leader Alice Linhart

Creekside Park Plantings

Backyard Abundance is looking for volunteers to help with two Creekside Park plantings. Volunteers will help: 1) plant an orchard on April 4, and, 2) plant a butterfly garden April 18.



To assist, contact Backyard Abundance Event Coordinator Theresa Carbery at: tcarbrey@gmail.com or 319-471-0042.

This request came from an interaction at the annual Prairie Preview where Chris Sedrel was staffing the MG Attended Displays!

South District Neighborhood Association Flower Beds

The South District Neighborhood Association is

working on changing the stigma of the neighborhood. They are asking JCMG for help on the flower bed along Broadway in front of a mural that will soon become a reality on the east back side of Pepperwood Mall. They can use your ideas and help in this area. MG contact Joan Dinnel has



suggested perennials so that replanting is not required each year.

The edible garden in the neighborhood's Wetherby Park needs to be downsized, cleaned up and restored. Again MG Joan Dinnel has suggested a pollinating garden that hopefully the local kids will learn from and would be less likely to damage.

The date for Broadway flower bed cleanup (3rd Annual Team Up to Clean Up) is Sunday, April 26 10 A.M. to noon. Bring your own gloves & tools! There will be signs indicating where to meet but it will be on Broadway at the end of the median behind Pepperwood Plaza closest to the driveway in the Plaza.

Please consider helping with this neighborhood improvement activity. Contact Angie Jordan (southdistrictneighborhood@gmail.com) who is head of the neighborhood association or look for their Facebook website "South District Neighborhood Association." **Because of the restrictions in place with the COVID-19 virus, please check for updates on Facebook and NextDoor.com. The South District Neighborhood Association is planning on holding the event, but will modify accordingly to protect community members. Stay tuned!**

2019 YEAR END Awards Recognitions

FROM SHANNON BIELICKIE

Johnson County Master Gardeners—we would like to express our gratitude for all that you do and give recognition to a few folks that hit some milestones in 2019 and went above and beyond... congratulations!!

1st Year 40 Hours requirements. Individuals listed below are now an official JCMG and will be receiving their certificate, pin, & name badge.



Jane Balvanz, Breyan Neyland, Muriel Naumann, Bernadette Fox, Amanda Baker, Pat Kealey, Craig Wilbanks, Megan Garrels, Amanda Vincent, Deb Cassell and Carole Hanna.

Volunteer Hours Milestones—individuals below will be receiving their recognition pins.

500 Hours: Beth Fisher, Chris Sedrel, Kris Jones, Betty Alfaro and Doug Geraets.

1,000 Hours: Sharon Jeter

2,000 Hours: Joan Dinnel, Linda Schreiber

3000 Hours: Carolyn Murphy, Joyce Miller, Linda Schreiber



Volunteer Anniversary Milestones were reached by those listed below and they will be receiving their recognition Certificates & gift.

15 Years Of Service: Torrie Masko and Reed Rennekar

20 Years Of Service: Sherlyn Flesher

30 Years Of Service: Jim Ridenour



Outstanding MG 400 hours in 2019—by the following and they will be receiving their recognition Certificates: Carolyn Murphy, Linda Schreiber and Joyce Miller.



Lifetime Master Gardeners requirements completed by the following and they will be receiving recognition certificates: Carolyn Murphy, Joanne Leach and Joan Dinnel.



YOU ALL made an AMAZING impact during the year 2019! You should be very proud of yourselves.

Johnson County Master Gardeners (JCMG) 2019 yearend notes:

- 6,787 volunteer hours reported
- 1,269 education hours reported
- For a total of 8,056 hours committed including ~23 Core project areas. And I believe JCMG was 3rd in the State of total reported hours
- 3 JCMGs that reported 400+ hours in the 2019 year were recognized as Outstanding Master Gardeners
- 11 students completed their first year of hours
- 10 JCMGs reached milestones of 500/1,000/2,000/3,000 hours
- 4 JCMGs reached Anniversary milestones of 15, 20, 25, or 30 years
- 3 JCMGS reached Lifetime Master Gardener status

Unfortunately, due to the need to make efforts to keep everyone safe we were unable to celebrate with you at the Winter Potluck this year. I will be sending the recognition awards in the mail soon and we will work hard to find a way to celebrate again in person once the world gets back to normal. In the meantime, stay safe and healthy. And enjoy your time in your home horticulture projects.

With great admiration,
Shannon Bielicke

Grow Yardlong Beans

Unique and edible bean pods!

BY JAYNE RYDER

The countdown to growing season needn't be so long! Get an early start planning to include one of the tastiest, most amusing vegetables to grow in your home garden—the yardlong bean. Also called the asparagus bean, long podded cowpea, Chinese long bean, or



snake bean, its scientific name is *Vigna unguiculata* subsp. *sesquipedalis*. It's enchanting, unusual, and a great conversation piece with delicious edible pods that grow to 1.5-feet long.



Long pods need a long vine. This vigorous climber can reach up to 12-feet tall, so you'll want to set up a 5- to 7-foot trellis or even better, a teepee; you can enjoy your favorite gardening newsletter as you lounge under the shade of your cool bean teepee.

The plants thrive in full sun and in hot, humid summers. Pods begin to form 60 days after direct sowing into the soil after the danger of frost has passed. I usually sow them in-between my sugar snap peas, so the yardlong beans can take over the trellis when the snap peas are finished producing. Yardlong beans will continually produce beans until the first frost.

Experience has taught me that yardlong beans have fewer pest problems than green bean plants and are easier to cook and eat. They grow and taste similar to traditional string beans but without the string.

The yardlong bean is a true legume. It enriches the soil by fixing atmospheric nitrogen in nodules on its roots; it makes its own food with the help of nitrogen-fixing bacteria.

The plant has bright green compound leaves with three heart-shaped leaflets, with the pods usually formed in joined pairs. The flowers look like other legumes with five petals—the largest petal on top. The flowers' color ranges from white, pink, and lavender depending on the variety of yardlong bean. The plant can also be used as an ornamental to add interest to any green space. Small mammals, deer, and birds may eat young plants, but I have not had that issue.

Just harvest the immature pod when it's between 10-12 inches long, or save the mature seeds



to cook like dry beans. The ideal yardlong bean is emerald green and ¼-inch wide. Pods develop quickly, so make sure to harvest daily. The young stems and leaves can also be steamed and eaten.

Enjoy the immature pods raw or cooked. Raw pods store well in the crisper of the fridge for up to five days. I regularly boil the immature beans and serve them with butter or add them to stir-fry. Yardlong beans are a good source of protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, thiamine, riboflavin, iron, phosphorus, potassium, folate, magnesium, and manganese.

Yardlong beans attract many pollinators, especially wasps and ants. At first, I was nervous to harvest while the vines were covered in wasps, but in over 10 years of growing these beans, I've never suffered a sting. **Warning:** If you are frightened or allergic to wasps and bees, the yardlong bean might not be the safest to grow. Aphids, mites, and thrips are the most common pests, but they have not caused problems with my crop.

The yardlong bean is a fun and enticing plant to grow. I fell in love with them the first summer I grew them. The flowers are gorgeous (see example here) and food for our pollinator friends. I prefer the taste and texture of yardlong beans over traditional green beans. Impress your family, friends, and neighbors this summer with this winning plant.



Source: USDA Plant Guide Yardlong Bean

Prairie Preview 2020

BY CAROLYN MURPHY



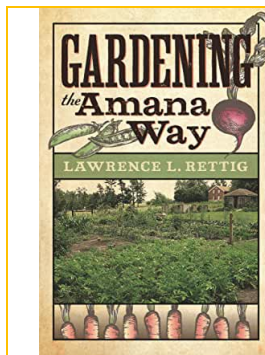
From L: Chris Sedrel, Lavon Yeggy, Megan Garrels, Carolyn Murphy and Mike Murphy

The 37th annual Prairie Preview Event was March 3 at the Bohemian Hotel in Iowa City. It was sponsored by Bur Oak Land Trust. Sarah Nizzi from Xerces Society, keynote speaker, gave an interesting presentation on “Integrating Nature Into Our Daily Lives And Why It Matters.”

Attended Display leader, Chris Sedrel was joined by Lavon Yeggy, Megan Garrels, Mike and Carolyn Murphy to answer questions. During the Preview 127 people stopped by the table to pick up ISU Extension brochures and see the pollinator display.

From a Gardener's Bookshelf

BY MARY LYNNE HENSLEY



Gardening the Amana Way
by Lawrence L. Rettig



Have you visited the Amana Colonies when the Lily Lake is in bloom, or noticed the charming wooden trellises found on many of the historic houses in the seven Amana villages, or wondered if there are heirloom seeds available that have been saved from Amana's early communal gardening traditions? These topics and more are addressed in an enjoyable and educational book entitled *Gardening the Amana Way*, written by Lawrence L. Rettig.

The author was raised by parents who had experienced communal life in the Amana Society. Mr. Rettig begins by recounting the origins of the “Inspirationist” movement in Germany in the early 18th century; and he explains the history and eventual emigration of this community to the

United States, where they settled first in New York state and later moved westward to Iowa.

Mr. Rettig describes the evolution of gardening practices in Amana, from communal to modern times. Enhancing his stories are early photographs illustrating communal life. Recent photos feature some of the author’s favorite plants and scenes—including a tour of his and his wife’s home garden, which is known as “Cottage-in-the-Meadow Gardens” and has the distinction of being documented in the Smithsonian Institution’s *Archives of American Gardens*.

Filled with insightful stories for local historians, traditional recipes for cooks, clever ideas for craft projects, as well as interesting information for vegetable and flower gardeners, there are many reasons one might choose to spend time exploring this book. When the occasion arises, a copy is available through the ICPL. Enjoy!

<div>   </div>	
<div> <div>MG Birthdays</div> </div>	
<div> <div>April 2020</div> </div>	
3	Susan Ahrens
5	Carole Hanna
10.....	Jean Holzhammer
12.....	Betty Alfaro
13.....	Joni Jones
24.....	Michael Hesseltine
24.....	Kathy Erenberger
24.....	Sara Maples
25.....	Kathy Patience
27.....	Janice Dallas
28.....	Jackie Wellborn
30.....	Gail Johnson

MG Upcoming Events/Volunteer Opportunities

*****Check organization website for cancellations prior to event date.*****

April 2020

Backyard Abundance

<http://backyardabundance.org/events>

Saturday, April 4

1 to 4 P.M. Establish an Edible Forest. Creekside Park, 1858 7th Avenue Court , Iowa City IA 52240. Support the growth of free, public food by joining the community to establish the new Creekside Edible Forest. Experts from Backyard Abundance and Trees Forever will teach you how to properly establish trees, shrubs and herbs that will feed families for years. Join us for a quick 15-minute tour or the full 3-hour learning opportunity. The event is free and open to everyone. Please wear standard gardening attire such as boots, jeans and gloves. If available, please also bring trowels, shovels and steel rakes labeled with your name.

Saturday, April 18

1 to 4 p.m. Establish a Pollinator Garden. Creekside Park, 1858 7th Avenue Court , Iowa City IA 52240. Support your buzzing friends by joining the community to establish a large pollinator garden at the new Creekside Park Edible Forest. You will learn how to properly establish plants that attract pollinators, monarchs and birds. Join us for a quick 15-minute tour or the full 3-hour learning opportunity. The event is free and open to everyone. Please wear standard gardening attire such as boots, jeans and gloves. If available, please also bring trowels, shovels and steel rakes labeled with your name.

Bur Oak Land Trust

<https://www.buroaklandtrust.org/events/>

Wednesday, April 22

4 to 9 p.m. Pizzas 4 Prairie @ Pagliai's. A & A Pagliai's Pizza, 302 E Bloomington St, Iowa City. Join Bur Oak Land Trust at Pagliai's Pizza for a Share the Profit partnership on the 50th anniversary of Earth Day! Enjoy fantastic pizza while supporting the environment and your community! Our mission: To protect and conserve natural areas to enrich and engage current and future generations. Bur Oak Land Trust receives 15% of your receipt from Pagliai's Pizza!

Eastern Iowa Bird Watchers/IC Birds

<http://www.iowacitybirdclub.org/events>

All events for April canceled.

Johnson County Conservation

<http://www.johnson-county.com/conservation>

salgreen@co.johnson.ia.us

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/johnsoncountyconservation/events/>

Sunday, April 5 – POSTPONED – new date to be posted later this spring.

1 to 2:30 P.M. Ciha Fen Moments from a Nature Photographer. Kent Park Conservation Education Center, 2048 US-6, Oxford. Nature photographer and JCC Volunteer Aaron Basten has hiked through Ciha Fen Preserve several days each week for the past four years, bringing his camera with him along the way. Through his keen observations, patience, and sheer hours on the land, he's been present to witness amazing moments in the natural world. Aaron will share the stories and photos of these captured moments and the neat ecological details he's learned from them. He'll also share information and helpful tips about his approach to nature photography. This program is free and no registration is required. For questions, call 319-645-1011 or email kmorrow@co.johnson.ia.us.

Wednesday, April 8 – POSTPONED – new date to be posted later this spring.

6 to 7:30 P.M. Noxious Weeds and Invasive Plant ID Workshop. Kent Park Conservation Education Center, 2048 US-6, Oxford. Learn to identify and control difficult noxious weeds and invasive species found in Eastern Iowa. This workshop will cover problem plants found in a range of habitats including backyards, forests, fields, shorelines and parks. Find out about the methods and tools used by noxious weed control specialists to effectively control these challenging weeds. This class will be helpful for anyone seeking to control these problem species and for those simply interested in learning more about noxious weeds and invasive species. This program is free and no registration is required. Hosted by Johnson County Secondary Roads Dept.

Saturday, April 25

10:00 to 11:00 A.M. Ciha Fen Spring Hike. Ciha Fen Preserve, 5656 145th St NE, Lisbon. Celebrate Earth Day with a stroll through a beautiful JCC preserve. The hike will cover one mile both on and off trail over. Along the way, we'll look for signs of spring – flowers blooming, frogs calling, trees budding, birds signing, and more! This program is free and open to all ages. Registration is required; To register, email kmorrow@co.johnson.ia.us.

Johnson County-ISU Extension

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/johnson/>

Wednesday, April 8

7:00 to 8:30 P.M. JCMG Steering Committee meeting. Johnson County Extension, 3109 Old Highway 218 S., Iowa City.

Check website for other events.

Project GREEN

<http://www.projectgreen.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/www.projectgreen.org>

Wanted: Your Garden. Open Gardens weekend will be June 27-28, 2020. Sharing your garden can make a difference and inspire other gardeners. Consider sharing your garden.

<http://www.projectgreen.org>.

Trees Forever

<http://www.treesforever.org/Events>

Friday, April 3

12 to 1 P.M. Creating a Buzz Pollinator Webinar. Online or at the Trees Forever office, 80 W 8th Ave, Marion. Trees Forever and partners are Creating a Buzz through our pollinator trainings that provide a comprehensive look at the importance of pollinators, the decline of pollinators, what pollinators need, and how you can attract pollinators to your farm. Attendees will be provided with a digital toolkit they can use to educate others about the topics discussed. Learn about the importance of trees and shrubs to early season forage habitat as well as nesting opportunities for a range of pollinator species. There are two ways to participate, from the comfort of your own home through the webinar option, or in-person at our Trees Forever Training Center, located at the Trees Forever office, 80 W 8th Ave, Marion, Iowa; limit 20 participants at our office location. This is free training but registration required—visit the website to register.

Saturday, April 4

1 to 4 P.M. Establish an Edible Forest. Creekside Park, 1858 7th Avenue Court , Iowa City IA 52240. Support the growth of free, public food by joining the community to establish the new Creekside Edible Forest. Experts from Backyard Abundance and Trees Forever will teach you how to properly establish trees, shrubs and herbs that will feed families for years. Join us for a quick 15-minute tour or the full 3 hour learning opportunity. The event is free and open to everyone. Please wear standard gardening attire such as boots, jeans and gloves. If available, please also bring trowels, shovels and steel rakes labeled with your name.

~~**Tuesdays, April 7, 14, 21, 28**~~ - **POSTPONED – new dates to be determined.**

6 to 9 P.M. TreeKeepers in the Corridor. Trees Forever Office, 80 West 8th Avenue, Marion. This four-class series trains volunteers to identify and care for trees. Since each hands-on lesson builds upon the knowledge of the previous session, we ask participants to attend all four classes. Registration fee of \$30 includes dinner, TreeKeepers handbook and TreeKeepers t-shirt. Visit the website to register.

Thursday, April 2

1 to 4 P.M. Forest Bathing with the Seasons at Prairiewoods. Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center, 120 E Boyson Rd, Hiawatha. Spend the afternoon exploring the mindfulness practice of forest immersion with Dr. Suzanne Bartlett Hackenmiller, MD, FACOG, FABOIM, a practitioner of integrative medicine. In this afternoon at Prairiewoods (120 East Boyson Road in Hiawatha), we will learn about evidence supporting the healing benefits of forest bathing and then experience an extended gentle, contemplative, guided walk with the Prairiewoods land. We will use our senses to enhance well-being in the healing embrace of nature. Breathe, relax, wander, touch, smell, taste, see, listen, share and engage! This hands-on forest experience is offered in partnership with Trees Forever as part of its Earth Week Blitz. The cost is \$50 and includes snacks. Please register and pay by April 23. For more information or to register, contact Prairiewoods at www.Prairiewoods.org or 319-395-6700.

100 Grannies

<http://www.100grannies.org>

Friday, April 17

10 A.M. to 12 P.M. Ped Mall hand out bags with U of I student Environmental Coalition. Iowa City Ped Mall. U of I student Environmental Coalition wants us to help with their bag exchange in the ped mall again. (tentative time).

Monday, April 20

4 to 5 P.M. Good Neighbor Committee. Iowa City Public Library. Good Neighbor Committee meets monthly, third Monday of the Month at ICPL. usually in Room E or as noted in lobby calendar display. We welcome new members, or just come once to check us out.

Tuesday, April 21

10 A.M. to 2 P.M. Earth Day at Kirkwood Community College. Kirkwood Community College, 1816 Lower Muscatine Rd, Iowa City. Kirkwood Sustainability event. Table may be highlighting Good Neighbor info or Plastic.

Thursday, April 23

10:30 to 11 A.M. Storytelling at ICPL. Iowa City Public Library. Earth Day theme

Saturday, April 25

10 A.M. to 1 P.M. Coralville Earth Day. Coralville Marriott Hotel, Intermodal facility and wetla, 300 E 9th St, Coralville,nds. Coralville Earth Day Celebration. More details coming soon.

Saturday, April 25

3 to 6 P.M. Earth Fest. Robert A. Lee Recreation Center, 220 S Gilbert St Iowa City. Earth Fest this Spring again. You can table for 100Grannies, but we also ask that you provide an activity for kids and/or adults related to the environment/sustainability like we did last year!

Tuesday, April 28

5:30 to 7 P.M. Grannies 8th Anniversary Party Celebration. . Save the date, details to follow. This will be a potluck for members and interested women with some entertainment and a short business meeting.

Thursday, April 30

5 to 8 P.M. Food and Film: Prayer for Compassion. Coralville Public Library 1401 5th St Coralville. Join us for a free film screening of A Prayer for Compassion. Get your free ticket at:

www.aplos.com/aws/events/prayer_for_compassion_film_screening. Tickets are required in order to plan for the correct amount of food. Enjoy free vegan food samples and a Q&A with the movie's executive producer Dr. Sailesh Rao. This documentary meant to inspire & encourage those already on a spiritual or religious path to widen their circle of compassion, to embrace all of life, regardless of species, and to make choices in alignment with love of others and the planet. This is part of The Pinky Promise Tour. Dr Rao, made a pinky promise with his granddaughter. He locked pinkies with her, and promised her, he would help make a more compassionate and peaceful world with a more sustainable future. Food starts at 5:00, film starts at 6:00.

Additional Resources/Event Opportunities**Iowa State Extension**

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/calendar/>

Nothing scheduled at press time

Linn County-ISU Extension

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/linn/>

All activities cancelled for April. Check website for future upcoming events.

New Pioneer Coop

<https://www.newpi.coop/community>

Check the website for events and activities.

Seed Savers

<http://www.seedsavers.org/events>

April classes cancelled. Check website for future opportunities.



The Johnson County Master Gardener Thymes is published monthly, except January and August. It is distributed under the auspices of Iowa State University.

Mail can be sent to:

*Johnson County Extension Service
Attn: Master Gardener Newsletter
3109 Old Highway 218 S.
Iowa City, IA 52246*

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