



November 2021



## Johnson County Master Gardener

# THYMES

### IMPORTANT NOTE: *Record Your Hours!*

**F**all is here, signaling an end to the gardening season. Please record your 2021 hours early so we can brag a little. Click [here](#) to record your hours on the Volunteer Recognition System.



In 2022, JCMG will celebrate our 40th anniversary. We hope to have a project to represent each decade of service to the Johnson County area and hope that you will volunteer. These projects not only offer community assistance but also raise awareness of our program and projects.

### MG Steering Committee Meeting

**Wednesday, November 10, 7 P.M.** virtual Zoom meeting. All MGs are invited to participate—contact Shannon for information and instructions!!

### Thymes Deadline

Information/articles for the Thymes should be sent to Melissa Serenda at [msserenda@gmail.com](mailto:msserenda@gmail.com) or Doug Geraets at: [dougrph@aol.com](mailto:dougrph@aol.com).

Please send news, volunteer opportunities, stories, pictures, gardening book reviews, etc., for the **Dec/Jan** issue by **Friday, Nov. 26**.

### Update: Secest Octagonal Barn

BY DEB CASSELL

**F**ollowing a writeup in the June 2021 Thymes newsletter work has proceeded on planting beds—the foundations of two former farm buildings have been cleared, the concrete floors removed, and the cleared area topped with soil to make it ready for planting in the spring.



View of cleared area from the south

These two 32-ft by 7-ft beds are available for any MG to cultivate for use and could be made into (for example) a:

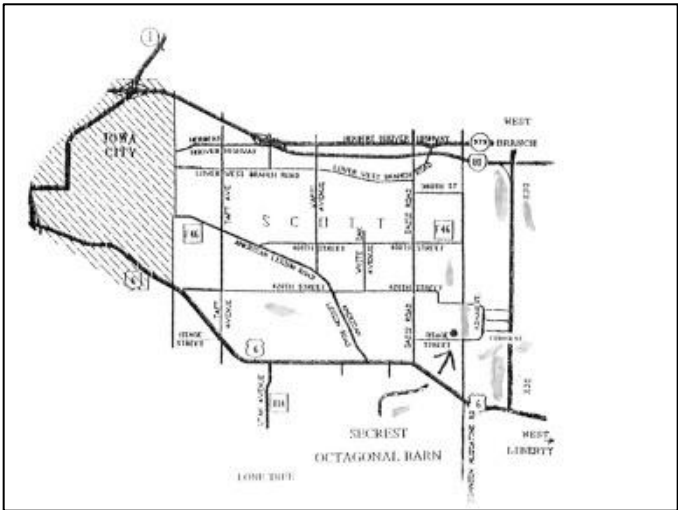
- pollinator garden
- flower bouquet garden
- vegetable garden to grow food donations

There is a water hydrant (visible on the right of picture below next to white building) on site.



View of cleared area from the east

If you are interested, have any questions or would like to visit the Secrest Barn then you can email me: [debcassell@gmail.com](mailto:debcassell@gmail.com). The barn, however is always open to visit. Its location, 5750 Osage St SE, West Liberty, is indicated on the map below.



**MG Birthdays**



| November 2021 |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 2 .....       | Linda Schreiber |
| 6 .....       | Nancy Kennedy   |
| 9 .....       | Janis Bultman   |
| 19.....       | Jayne Ryder     |
| 19.....       | Anita Jung      |
| 21.....       | Amanda Baker    |
| 29.....       | Barb Krug       |





## Flower Bouquet Fundraiser Aug. 12 JC Fairgrounds



## Houseplant Propagation and Care Oct. 19 JC Fairgrounds





## Wetherby Park Tree Planting

*Launches Early JCMGs' 40th Anniversary Celebration*

**BY LINDA SCHREIBER AND DOUG GERAETS**

**Photos by Alice Linhart**



**W**etherby Park is a 24.3-acre south side Iowa City neighborhood oasis. As of Saturday, Oct. 2, the park is home to 42 new trees including three conifers and 39 deciduous trees up to 12-feet in height.

Nearly 50 Master Gardener and neighborhood residents came out for this community service project.



Tyler Baird, Iowa City Parks Superintendent, explained the planting would replace many of the trees destroyed by last year's derecho. Grant funds supported the project that will eventually provide more challenges for disc golfers using the park's 9-hole disc golf course. A diversity of trees were selected for the project: Bald cypress, Black Gum, Buckeye, Catalpa, Espresso Kentucky Coffee tree, Hophornbeam, Hornbeam, Turkish Filbert, White pine and Yellowwood.

DNR Forester Mark Vitosh provided the volunteers instructions for tree planting in near-drought conditions. He reinforced the importance of tree diversity to avoid the massive destruction brought on by diseases such as Dutch elm disease and the emerald ash borer. Currently, about 17 percent of Iowa's trees are ash. If a new disease attacks maple trees the state stands to lose more than 40 percent of its total tree population. Mr. Vitosh and Mr. Baird strongly encourage homeowners to select a diversity of trees to plant in their landscape.



Due to the dry, hard soil conditions, Iowa City Park employees pre-dug planting holes using an auger. Volunteers, working in teams of four to five, followed Mr. Vitosh's instructions and were assisted by Park crews to fully prepare roots of each tree, setting the new trees at a proper depth, trimming any damaged branches and completed the planting with 3-inch wood chip mulching around the base. City crews then completed each planting by adding a protective collar, staking for support and watering. Park crews installed a tree watering bag that will be used throughout the fall and the first year. Water bags are removed during winter months to extend their useful life.



This community tree-planting project serves as an early start to commemorate the Johnson County Master Gardeners' 40th anniversary in 2022. Stay tuned—throughout 2022 we will be conducting service projects to celebrate this milestone!

## Fall Cleanup Deserves Your Attention


BY LINDA SCHREIBER



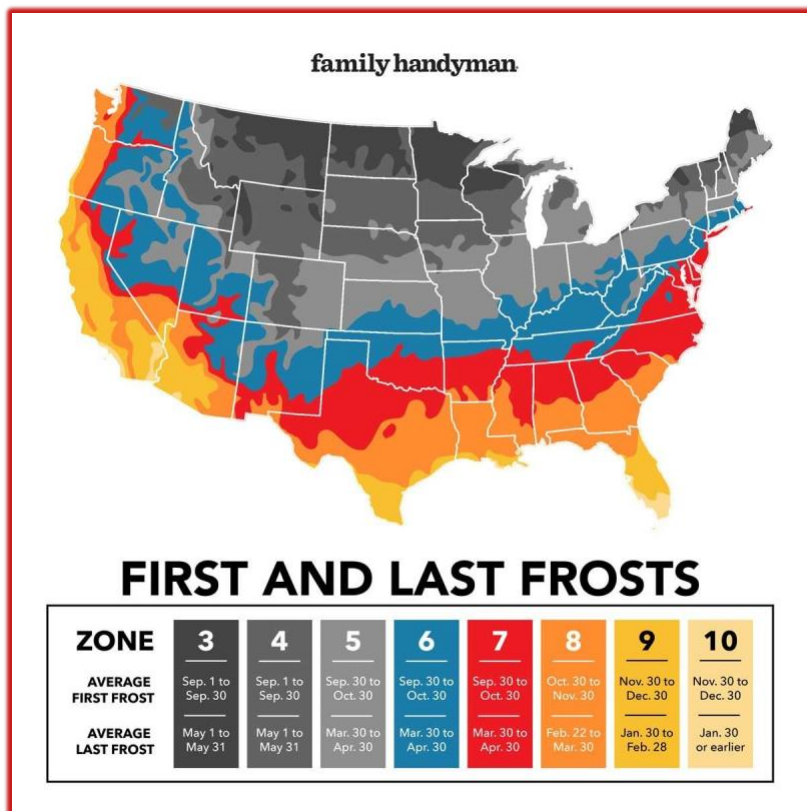
**T**here's still time to focus on a few fall cleanup chores that should always be done before cold weather arrives. The first rule applies every time you work in the garden, especially if you work in someone else's garden or on different JCMG projects.

**1. Fall Cleanup: Take Care of Garden Tools.** It's more important than ever to keep your garden tools clean because it's possible for plants to swap diseases and parasites if your tools aren't cleaned after each use. This is especially true if you work in multiple gardens. Wipe tools clean of any sap, soil or dirt. If you've used a tool on a diseased plant, be sure to soak it in a 10 percent bleach solution and rinse well with clear water. Allow the tool to dry thoroughly before storing it away to avoid rust. I also recommend wiping tools down with an oily cloth. This is a good time to replace worn out or damaged tools.



**2. Dig Up Non-Hardy Bulbs.** Get down and dirty. Non-hardy bulbs like dahlias, gladiola and cannas need to be dug and stored for the winter. Some plants grow well outdoors in the summer, but just can't take the winter cold. Storing these bulbs will save money in the spring. Check out this handy resource on the right for frost dates. 

**3. Store Garden Hoses.** Drain your garden hoses and bring them inside when you are done. Water can lead to cracking that may burst hoses when in use. Be sure to check your outside faucet. You may have an internal shutoff valve inside the house. That valve allows the water to drain properly. If you don't have a freeze-proof outdoor faucet you will want to cover the faucet with an insulated slip-on cover. Exterior pipes should be wrapped with insulated tubing. This project will help protect indoor pipes from freezing and bursting.



**4. Protect Your Roses.** This is an easy fall chore that's worth the time to protect your plants. A seasoned Master Gardener tells me deadheading blooms is fine but trimming roses should wait until late winter or early spring, about the time new growth begins. This time could vary as early as January or as late as May, depending on the zone where you live. It is important to cover roses with dry leaves or mulch. Before you cover your roses, clean up any diseased leaf debris. If you use rose cones make certain they're vented as critters may seek shelter in them.

**5. Mark Plant Locations.** Fall is also a good time to mark the location of new and existing perennials, bulbs or seeds that you might forget about next spring. It doesn't have to be anything fancy (unless you want it to be). A permanent marker and a paint stir stick will do. Top the marker with a clear coat of gloss spray enamel.

Finally, another experienced Master Gardener recommends: leave the leaves. They are home to incubating insects. Let the soil rest. Also resist the urge to turn the soil. This will protect the earth from winter winds and moisture.

P.S. Fall is often a good time to find discounts on plants that are past their peak as most retailers offer steep discounts when the perennials go out of bloom.

As people headed back outside after our very hot Iowa summer, concerns about damage to their lawns, trees and shrubs seemed to be the most common September questions. Here are five quiz questions from topics the JCMGs' HortLine addressed during the month of September 2021. What would your response have been to these questions? Choose your answers and then compare them to the responses provided by the HortLine volunteers, provided below the quiz.

1. What is wrong with these peach tree leaves?

- A. Peach Leaf Rust
- B. Anthracnose
- C. Bacterial Spot
- D. Brown Rot



2. Which of these plants are considered the most deer resistant?

- A. American Arborvitae
- B. Clematis
- C. Common Lilac
- D. Serviceberry

3. What is the cause of this lawn disease?

- A. Brown patch
- B. Summer patch
- C. Take-all patch
- D. Pythium blight



4. An Iowa City gardener wants to plant a small to medium size tree to perform Niwaki, or “cloud pruning” on. Which type of tree would you recommend for an Iowa City garden?

- A. Japanese holly
- B. Norfolk olive
- C. Gold juniper
- D. Japanese boxwood



5. Can you identify this fall blooming perennial?

- A. Bergenia
- B. Joe Pye Weed
- C. Hyssop
- D. Rodgersia





Now, here are the answers, as researched by the HortLine volunteers. If you have a suggestion or different information regarding any of these, please let us know, so we can all learn from each other!

1. **Answer is A.** These leaves are showing signs of Peach Leaf Rust, which can appear on leaves, twigs or fruit and whose symptoms are often noticed first in the fall. Sometimes confused with stinkbug damage. A resource for common peach tree diseases is <https://peaches.caes.uga.edu/research/diseases.html> .
2. **Answer is C.** Both Clematis and American Arborvitae are frequently damaged by deer while Serviceberry is occasionally damaged. Although no plant is 100% guaranteed deer resistant, the Common Lilac is rarely damaged according to <https://hortnews.extension.iastate.edu/1993/5-26-1993/damdeer.html> .
3. **Answer is B.** Summer patch is a hot weather disease caused by the fungus Magnaporthiopsis poae and is a problem for annual bluegrass, Kentucky bluegrass and fine fescues. A good article from PennState Extension is <https://extension.psu.edu/turfgrass-diseases-summer-patch-causal-fungus-magnaporthiopsis-poeae> .
4. **Answer is C.** All of these types of trees can be used for Niwaki or cloud pruning. However Japanese boxwoods and Norfolk olive are not cold hardy in Iowa. Japanese holly is hardy to Zone 5, but a really cold spell could cause issues. We recommended a gold juniper which is hardy in zones 2 through 9 and grows up to 15 feet tall.
5. **Answer is B.**

## **MG Upcoming Events/Volunteer Opportunities**

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

**November 2021**

### **Eastern Iowa Bird Watchers/IC Birds**

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

**Saturday, Nov. 6, 8 A.M. to 12 P.M.**

Belgum Grove. Meet at 8 A.M. at the Fin & Feather parking lot, 125 HWY 1 W, Iowa City, or at 8:30 A.M. Belgum Grove, 3261 500th St. SW (F62), Iowa City. Leader Jason Paulios will guide us through this Bur Oak Land Trust property of wetland and prairie habitat. There will be extensive walking on mowed grass paths which may be wet or muddy. Carpooling is optional and only for those vaccinated for COVID.

**Thursday, Nov. 18, 7 P.M.**

Bird Club Meeting. Zoom. Everly Eldeen will present “Internship in Ecuador: Banding Tropical Birds.” The Zoom link will be emailed to ICBC members one week in advance, or go to the calendar on our website at <https://iowacitybirdclub.org/events/> and click on the meeting date.

**Johnson County Conservation**

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

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

**Multiple dates/times.**

Prairie Seed Harvest Events. Help Johnson County Conservation harvest prairie seed for future prairie restoration projects across the county! This volunteer project is easy for people of all ages and backgrounds. No prior experience is needed. At the start of each event, a naturalist will teach participants how to identify and harvest the wildflower species of focus for the day. Volunteers can then spend some mindfulness time in the prairie on their own, or connect with other volunteers while in a safe, outdoor setting.

- Friday, Nov. 5, 12:30 to 3:30 P.M., Cedar River Crossing - South Entrance, 5398 160th St NE, Solon.
- Sunday, Nov. 7, 9 A.M. to 12 P.M., Evergreen Landing, F.W. Kent Park, 2048 HWY 6 NW, Oxford.
- Wednesday, Nov. 10, 10 A.M. to 12 P.M., Ciha Fen Preserve, 5656 145th St NE, Lisbon.
- Wednesday, Nov. 17, 1 to 3 P.M., Valley View, F.W. Kent Park, 2048 HWY 6 NW, Oxford.

To sign up for any of the events, visit: <https://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Johnson/Events.aspx>.

**Thursday, Nov. 11, 10 A.M.**

OWLS Prairie Hike. Ciha Fen Preserve, 5656 145th St NE, Lisbon. The OWLS (Older Wiser Livelier Seniors) program is for people 65 years and older. They are designed to help people connect with one another while enjoying the outdoors and some light physical activity.

This hike will cover one mile of prairie trails. Participants should expect to walk over some sloped and uneven terrain along the way, and through some short-grass prairie vegetation. Along the way we'll stop to soak in the views, share ecological details, and make sure everyone is comfortable with the pace.

**Saturday, Nov. 20, 10 A.M.**

Naturalist Hike. Cangleska Wakan, 4045 245th St NE, Solon. Join a JCC naturalist for a long forest hike at one of JCC's newest properties! We'll help hikers to learn the trail system on Cangleska Wakan as well as the adjacent Big Grove Preserve - owned and managed by Bur Oak Land Trust. Hikers should expect to hike 3-4 miles of hilly terrain.

**Saturday, Nov. 20, 10 A.M. to 12 P.M.**

FIND LGBTQ+ Group Hike. Melinda Reif Reilly Fen and Prairie, 4495 140th Street NW, Solon. Members of the LGBTQ+ community or allies with their LGBTQ+ friends and family join our naturalist for a hike of one of the newly added conservation areas. This area features 53 acres of relic prairie, wetland, and fen habitat. This primitive area will fill your adventure loving spirit. All ages are welcome.



### **Trees Forever**

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

**Friday, Nov. 19, 9 A.M. to 4 P.M.**

Iowa's Living Roadways Celebration. Gateway Hotel and Conference Center, 2100 Green Hills Drive, Ames. The Iowa's Living Roadways programs of Community Visioning, Trails Visioning, Living Roadways Trust Fund Community Assistance and Stewards of the Beautiful Land support communities who want to make their town better! For 25 years, communities have dreamed, planned, and acted to make their little corner of the world the best it can be. Join us to celebrate this milestone, network and learn from others who are making things happen!

Please register below by Nov. 12. Masks are required for all attendees. Learn more and register at <https://treesforever.org/event/ilrcelebration/>.

### **Additional Resources/Event Opportunities**

#### **100 Grannies**

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

#### **Backyard Abundance**

<http://backyardabundance.org/events>

#### **Bur Oak Land Trust**

<https://www.facebook.com/BurOakLandTrust/events>

#### **Iowa State Extension**

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

#### **Johnson County-ISU Extension**

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

#### **Linn County-ISU Extension**

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

#### **New Pioneer Coop**

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

#### **Project GREEN**

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



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***Mail can be sent to:***

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