

# Germinator



Vol. 31, No. 2 Editors: Julie Stark/Kathy Hughes

February 2021

## LINN COUNTY MASTER GARDENER EVENTS

### ***Steering Committee Meeting\****

ZOOM Meeting  
February 2 • 6:30 pm

### ***Executive Committee Meeting\****

ZOOM Meeting  
February 22 • 3:00 pm

### ***Extension Council Meeting\****

ZOOM Meeting  
February 8 • 5:00 pm

### ***ICNC Talks***

Zoom—Links inside this Germinator  
February 2 • 5:00 pm  
February 4 • 5:00, 6:00 & 7:00 pm

### ***Shade Tree Short Course***

February 22-26  
Details inside this Germinator issue

### ***Lowe Park Greenhouse Work Sessions***

February 16 & 18 • 8:00-11:00 am

### ***First Virtual LCMG Happy Hour***

Zoom—Details inside this Germinator  
February 15 • 6:30-7:30 pm

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## Germinator Deadline



All Linn County Master Gardeners are welcome to submit news, volunteer opportunities, stories, pictures, gardening book reviews, etc. for the March Germinator issue by February 21, 2021.

Please send to: Julie Stark (crgardengal@gmail.com) or Kathy Hughes (hughesydoozey@yahoo.com)

\* Meetings held via Zoom—Contact the Linn County Extension Office for link (319-377-9839)

## Meet Your Current Steering Committee

*By Linda Hofmeister, Chair*

This is the second article highlighting members of the Steering Committee and features Dyan Anderson and Rose Blank.

### **Dyan Anderson**

Dyan Anderson was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan, grew up in West Windsor, New Jersey, went to college at Marquette in Milwaukee, raised her children in Chicago and now lives in the state where her husband was born and raised. She is a happy Iowa transplant.

She has a sister in Milwaukee who is also a master gardener. She and her husband have five children between them: two girls and three boys.

Dyan is a nurse at UIHC. Her experience is in intensive care nursing, but is currently working in the simulation center educating healthcare teams on safety and communication.

Flowers and vegetables are her favorites. She loves building upon what she has learned from year to year. Hollyhocks and tomatoes are her passions. She is not sure whether or not she has a favorite season, but it might be summer.

Dyan has been a Master Gardener since 2016 and has been involved in the Winter Garden Fair here in Linn County. While in Chicago, she worked on the plant information desk at the Botanic Garden for five hours per week, assisted with the Titan Arum exhibit, the winter seed exchange, the annual volunteer luncheon and the bulb sale.

She was prompted to consider serving on the Steering Committee because Linn County has so many experts and great projects going. She would like to learn, get to know other master gardeners and help continue on the progress made.

### **Rose Blank**

Rose grew up on a farm near Central City, Iowa, the oldest of 5 children. She is married and has 3 adult children, 2 adult step-children and 3 grandchildren.

In 2017, she retired after 29 years of serving as a United Methodist pastor in several towns in Iowa as well as serving as the Southeast District Superintendent. After retirement, she moved to Cedar Rapids and began to do volunteer opportunities as a way to make some connections in the community. One of the primary places she spends time volunteering is Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center in Hiawatha. She tends the "Garden of Eat'n" which is outside the main building. It is designed as an edible landscape and a fascinating garden where she spends time nearly every Wednesday morning during the growing season. She also works part time at Prairiewoods as an associate spiritual director which brings her great joy as she journeys with people on their spiritual journeys.

Rose loves both flower and vegetable gardening. Her mother and grandmother instilled this love of planting, tending and harvesting as well



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as enjoying the beauty of flowers – what else would you expect from someone named Rose? It's was hard for Rose to pin down a favorite season since she loves the beauty and wonder of each one – yes, even winter!

She completed the training for the Master Gardener program in 2019. Rose helped with the Garden Walk in 2019 and volunteered at the Winter Garden Fair. Her primary project is working with the garden at New Bo - watering, harvesting and helping with clean up at the end of the year.

When Rose was asked to think about serving on the Steering Committee, she felt she could bring her experience of working on numerous boards and agencies. Working as a team was a huge part of her ministry so she brings those assets to our work together. Serving on the Steering Committee gives Rose a broader picture of all the work and the great projects that we do to bring beauty, education and support to the larger community. She is grateful for this opportunity and hopes to serve well in this capacity.

## "Gardener at a Glance" - Featuring Rebecca Wheeler

*By Beverly Whitmore*

It's February! The seed catalogs have been showing up in my mailbox and what a delight to look at on cold days. They give me hope and inspiration for the upcoming gardening season, how about you? Each year there are new flowers, new vegetables and we at Linn County Extension also has new master gardeners....this month please meet Rebecca Wheeler!

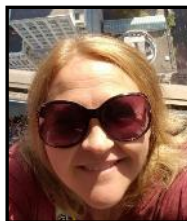
Rebecca, who is from Nebraska, has been married for 40 years and has 2 grown sons and 2 grandchildren. Add in 3 cats and her immediate family is complete!

Rebecca has an eye for art, when I asked what is her favorite flower, tree, shrub or vegetable her answer was her favorite flowers are glass! She loves tomatoes and all kinds of greens. Perhaps that is why she loves spring for starting her garden, but she also loves winter because it's a chance to slow down a bit, read and dream about the coming spring. While living in Colorado, Rebecca wanted to become a Master Gardener while teaching canning classes at the extension office, but family issues brought her back to Iowa. So last fall, she enrolled in the Linn County MG classes. Her inspiration is to learn as much as she can to grow the best food and herbs for her family, neighbors and friends.

When asked what did she learn from the MG Program this past fall, Rebecca said she learned quite a bit about the local insects, patterns and how diverse Iowa is. Outside of the Master Gardener Program, Rebecca is a workshop facilitator, having taught a variety of crafts and planner/journal classes.

Rebecca is looking forward to volunteering in Master Gardener projects that assist with fresh food accessibility to food pantries....certainly Linn County can use her help! Currently she volunteers at Lowe Park. Please stop over and meet Rebecca where she will be volunteering at the demo vegetable garden for the 2021 season.

Welcome Rebecca!



# Low Park Greenhouse Making Plans for Upcoming Year

By Brenda Garbe

What's happening in the Lowe Park Demo Gardens at this time of year? Well, nothing outside but planning for next year is taking place. Seeds have been ordered for next year and we're waiting on those. They will be started inside the Lowe Greenhouse, planting seeds and propagating plants the week of **February 15 and if you would like to participate, we would love to see you Tuesday and Thursdays 8-11 AM**. No experience necessary and all skill levels welcome.



We have a new Lead Gardener Marilyn Tormey (aka Lyn) heading up the "Wet Zone Garden" (photos right). This area is the most eastern garden, closest to the Parks Building main doors. We have suffered from roof water runoff for years keeping this garden extremely soggy in the spring-summer, then it dries out and heats up from the adjacent concrete. Lyn has decided to use this as a teaching element and develop a rain garden area. Her plan is to develop and provide a natural rain garden demonstration area as an educational exhibit to teach the public about beneficial impacts including less soil erosion, better retention, and better water control. The plan is to build the rain garden in the wet area using a variety of natural materials with native grasses, and pollinator friendly flowers and plants.



At times, the garden will have very wet soil, while other times it will be dry, so it's important to choose plants that can withstand both extremes. Good choices can be Turtlehead (*Chelone glabra*), Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*), Blazing Star (*Liatris spicata*), and Purple Coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*) just to name a few.

## February ICNC Talks

**February 2—5pm:** Trees for Bees and Other Pollinators (Deb Walser)

Join Zoom Meeting: [https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82272757734?](https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82272757734?pwd=NHBMBHVEZHHhcDNudXlBN1VpNy8ydz09)

[pwd=NHBMBHVEZHHhcDNudXlBN1VpNy8ydz09](https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82272757734?pwd=NHBMBHVEZHHhcDNudXlBN1VpNy8ydz09)

Meeting ID: 822 7275 7734 Passcode: XX634U

**February 4—5 pm:** Outstanding Trees for the Midwest Home Garden (Mike Anderson)

Join Zoom Meeting [https://us05web.zoom.us/j/87994159180?](https://us05web.zoom.us/j/87994159180?pwd=M2RoSUcyYnN4NWwMwN0JwUmJuZExLdz09)

[pwd=M2RoSUcyYnN4NWwMwN0JwUmJuZExLdz09](https://us05web.zoom.us/j/87994159180?pwd=M2RoSUcyYnN4NWwMwN0JwUmJuZExLdz09)

Meeting ID: 879 9415 9180 Passcode: B0MQuW

**February 4—6 pm:** Permaculture 101 (Amber Mullen)

Join Zoom Meeting [https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82341132314?](https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82341132314?pwd=Y1FZSmF0cUg3bitnOm15aU1MTE4xOT09)

[pwd=Y1FZSmF0cUg3bitnOm15aU1MTE4xOT09](https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82341132314?pwd=Y1FZSmF0cUg3bitnOm15aU1MTE4xOT09)

Meeting ID: 823 4113 2314 Passcode: 7MvHfz

**February 4—7 pm:** Blueberries Strawberries Raspberries oh my! (Deb Walser)

Join Zoom Meeting [https://us05web.zoom.us/j/81959300114?](https://us05web.zoom.us/j/81959300114?pwd=WlpieXBhZlFTZ2RwSDdHN0lwZWoyUT09)

[pwd=WlpieXBhZlFTZ2RwSDdHN0lwZWoyUT09](https://us05web.zoom.us/j/81959300114?pwd=WlpieXBhZlFTZ2RwSDdHN0lwZWoyUT09)

Meeting ID: 819 5930 0114 Passcode: vBS8hK

# Registration Now Open — "Shade Tree Short Course"

By Jane Schildroth

It has now been nearly a year since I attended my last "Shade Tree Short Course" on the campus of Iowa State University. In fact, it is time to register to attend this year's virtual conference. Registration this year is only \$40 (on or before February 14) and \$55 (after February 14) and involves just the mornings of February 22-26. A smart way to present a virtual conference! For speaker information, agenda and to register, visit: <https://www.regcytes.extension.iastate.edu/shadetree/>



What a great way to accumulate the necessary education hours to maintain Master Gardener status – and to learn a great deal about a wide variety of topics related to trees!

Following the August derecho, I am sure that many Master Gardeners have been approached for advice about trees and shrubs as folks try to decide on the best replacements. We have access to research-based information and partnerships across the county are making it easy to acquire the desired flora. Another challenge now exists following the extensive damage – diagnosing possible health problems with the woody plants that remain. Cut down? Trim? Save? I have information from the STSC (Shade Tree Short Course) that offers some help.

Five steps are recommended:

First of all, identify the plant and know its characteristics. This will help you know its normal characteristics and the possible disease or insect problems. Many problems are host-specific.

Second, examine the entire plant. This includes removing the bark from branches to examine the vascular system. Look for the root flare at the base of the tree or shrub.

Thirdly, take a look at the area where the plant is growing. If other plants are showing symptoms, make note of any patterns you observe.

The next step is to get background information. When was this plant established? Has there been a change to the soil grade that may have disturbed the root system? (Especially relevant due to the equipment that may have been used during derecho clean-up.)

And lastly, research the possibilities. (Hint: in Google, you can limit your search to just university sites by adding 'site:edu' after any search, for example 'oak diseases site:edu'. Be skeptical of social media myths. Don't believe it unless the research supports it.

This information is from the Plant and Insect Diagnostic Clinic, Iowa State University: [pidc@iastate.edu](mailto:pidc@iastate.edu)

If you contact them with questions, your responses to their questions will be aided by the five steps listed above. Good researching as you decide the next best future for your woody plants!

## First LCMG “Virtual Happy Hour”

*By Lisa Hinzman-Howard*

Join us! You’re invited to our first Linn County Master Gardener Virtual Meet Up!

Missing your fellow Master Gardeners? We agree! Lisa Hinzman Howard brought forth an idea for a “virtual happy hour” where Linn County Master Gardeners join via Zoom to socialize and catch up safely with each other.

We’re excited to bring it to you with Lisa as our first host. We’ll have a fun ice breaker activity and time to chat. Bring your favorite beverage or snack - whatever you want from wherever you want, virtually! Video ON is strongly encouraged! It’s awfully hard to catch up if we can’t see each other. Be brave and have fun!

When: Monday evening, February 15th, 6:30 to 7:30 pm - join 5 minutes before the event starts to get in on all the action OR pop in when you can and out when you need to!

Where: Zoom! You must download Zoom to your device before the meeting.

Join from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device:

Please click this URL to start or join. <https://iastate.zoom.us/j/93109742263?pwd=M1lnMTBwbWc4OUh2YVkrZXU5eWI5Zz09>

Or, go to <https://iastate.zoom.us/join> and enter meeting ID: 931 0974 2263 and password: 183819

Join from dial-in phone line:

Dial: +1 646 876 9923 or +1 301 715 8592

Meeting ID: 931 0974 2263

Participant ID: Shown after joining the meeting

International numbers available: <https://iastate.zoom.us/u/abFXtPnvlS>

We plan to have a virtual meet up every other month, with hosts changing each time, until we can get together in person again.

# Homegrown National Park

by Linda Hinzman and Lisa Hinzman Howard

Have you had a chance to catch a presentation by native plant and pollinator guru, Doug Tallamy? We have seen him many times, at the Linn Landowner's Forum, the International Master Gardener Conference, and most recently on webinars that have popped up since the pandemic. Doug is a distinguished professor of entomology at the University of Delaware and so much more. Read about him and his influence on the native plant and pollinator movement in this recent Smithsonian article: <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/meet-ecologist-who-wants-unleash-wild-backyard-180974372/>.



Doug's latest project is called "Homegrown National Park." The idea is that if half of the nation's privately owned pristine lawns were converted to native plantings, the result (and the goal of the project) would be approximately 20 million additional acres devoted to pollinators. Imagine what a glorious landscape we would see across our beautiful country as we move away from the American love affair with the lawn? Read more about goals of this new initiative: <https://homegrownnationalpark.org/about-us>

The great news is, you can play a direct role too! In addition to sharing this information with others, you can add your own property to the map. By doing so, you'll indicate support of this movement and that your property is already doing much of what Doug is suggesting - planting for pollinators! There is also a place to set a goal if you are new to pollinator gardening or want to increase your efforts. Follow the mission on Facebook by searching "Homegrown National Park."

## We Need You!

By Barb Neal

After some discussion the Steering Committee has decided to make changes to the Garden Walk. In the past, the walk was held annually on the second weekend in July. This has been a very popular event for the public and has brought wonderful exposure to the Master Gardener program. The challenge, however, has become finding Master Gardeners who are willing to present their gardens. After much deliberation, the decision was made to hold the Garden Walk every other year, the next time being in 2022.

In order to have a successful walk, the planning needs to be started a year prior. The first step is to find a person or persons willing to chair or co-chair the event. We are looking for a chairperson(s). Perhaps you have been the chaired this event in the past or maybe you are looking for a great way to get your volunteer hours. Whatever your motivation, WE NEED YOU!! We would hate to see the end of our Garden Walk. Please contact Linda Hofmeister or any member of the Steering Committee if you are interested.



# Linn County Master Gardener Steering Committee Meeting—January 5, 2021: 6:30 PM via ZOOM

The meeting was called to order and roll called.

**Present:** Rose Blank, Lynne Brokaw, Diane Brooks, Randy Dusil, Tracy Hansen, Cathy Holub, Linda Hofmeister, Cindy Lehman, Gina Milroy, Barb Neal, Jennifer Reed, Deb Walser and Bev Whitmore

**Absent:** Dyan Anderson

**Also Attending:** Michelle Sillman

Minutes from the December 1, 2020 meeting were distributed previously and approved.

## Monthly Business

Per previous discussion it was decided to postpone the next Garden Walk to 2022. A Chairperson is needed to begin planning the event. The vacancy will be published in an upcoming news flash and in the Germinator.

A Hortline Taskforce has been established following the retirement of Richard Jauron after serving 36 years. Linda Hofmeister is a member of the taskforce which is made up of representatives from throughout the State including ISU campus staff and various County Extension persons. The first meeting was held December 18 and will continue to focus on future path forward and replacing the substantial inquiry volume Richard handled throughout his tenure.

The Extension Council has approved expanding the MG Coordinator into a full time position adding horticulture and local food education to that role. The vacancy will be advertised in Corridor Careers, Master Gardener Website and Indeed by the end of the month with the goal of filling the position by April.

Planning is underway for collaboration projects with 4H both at Lowe Park and Linn County Fairgrounds. Getting the 4H youth involved would be desirable via mentoring by the older 4H members.

Rose introduced a potential grant opportunity thru Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration which is accepting applications for Eco-Spirituality related programming.

Deb has met via Zoom with all the presenters for the upcoming classes that will be issued through Indian Creek Nature Center which will be offered in lieu of a Winter Garden Fair.

A discussion took place regarding the possibility of MG Member Zoom meetings to keep the group in touch to a greater extent.

A memo from RaeAnn Gordon (County Director) was distributed setting forth goals for COVID Action Recovery Planning. A subcommittee will be held to initiate assistance by the ISU Extension and Outreach to the community toward recovery efforts.

It was discussed and felt that a listing of potential avenues to fulfill

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required MG Education Hours would be useful. Opportunities include: Trees Forever, Indian Creek Nature Center presentations, ISU website, Master Gardener Website, Monarch Research Project etc.

Next Steering Committee Meeting: Tuesday February 2 at 6:30 pm Via ZOOM

Next Executive Committee Meeting: Monday January 18 at 3:00 pm Via ZOOM

Respectfully Submitted,  
Randy Dusil

## IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

### Extension and Outreach

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