

Germinator



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May 2020

LINN COUNTY MASTER GARDENER EVENTS

Steering Committee Meeting*

Extension Office
May 5 • 6:30 pm

Extension Council Meeting*

Extension Office
May 11 • 5:00 pm

Executive Committee Meeting*

Extension Office
May 18 • 3:00 pm

* Meetings held via Webex—email Jean Wilson if you wish login information (jtwilson@iastate.edu)

Charlene Woeste Plant Sale

On-line Orders

May 8 • 8:00 am –May 14 • 4:00 pm

Pick-up Orders

Low Park Greenhouse
May 18-21

Charlene Woeste Plant Sale, and COVID-19 Pandemic

By Phil Pfister and Karen Woeste, Co-Chairs

Due to the Coronavirus, the Charlene Woeste Plant Sale is being moved to a virtual plant sale. This is new ground for us, but with major help and leadership of our coordinator, Jean Wilson, some very dedicated volunteers, and the ISU Event Services, we believe we are set for a very successful sale. This is how it will work:

Customers can check our website at extension.iastate.edu/linn/news/our-annual-plant-sale, where they'll find our catalogs of items for sale. Once the website for purchasing is set up, the link to that site will be there as well.

There they will find catalogs containing annuals, perennials and vegetables, with pictures,

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descriptions, price and number of plants available for sale. The plant availability will be updated as the plants are sold. After making their selections, customers will move to check out and pay, either by credit card or check. As they check out, they will select a pickup time within a block of times and days. The pickup location will be Lowe Park in Marion. When they check out, they will receive an electronic receipt, showing their purchase, pickup time and form of payment. There won't be any cash sales this year. The sales, payment, scheduled pickup time and receipt are all being handled by the ISU Event Services. ISU Event Services also handles our Winter Gardening Fair registration and payment, so we have a very high level of confidence in the process.



As sales are made, a team of volunteers will be kitting up the orders, so when the customer comes to pick up their purchase, it will be ready to place in their vehicle. On the day and time for the order pickup, there will be five pickup locations, spaced such that we easily maintain social distancing. A MG volunteer will verify the customer/order, and another MG volunteer will place the order in the vehicle. We have done a dry-run of this process and it seems to work well.



The sale is open to everyone, starting Friday, May 8 at 8:00 am and ending on Thursday, May 14 at 4:00 pm. The date for picking up the order will be determined when the order is placed.

If you are interested in helping put the orders together, and/or the distribution process, please contact Jean Wilson @ jlwilson@iastate.edu, or Beula Dvorak @ bdvorak4@aol.com

Search for Excellence 2020 Award Winner!

By Beula Dvorak

It is with great pleasure that I share with all Linn County Master Gardeners that the Linn County Community Outreach Gardens Project is a 2020 Search for Excellence Award Winner. The Search for Excellence (SFE) is the recognition program of the Iowa Master Gardener program for projects that have demonstrated outstanding contributions to their communities providing significant learning and impact in the local area.



The Community Outreach Gardens began in 2014 with Catherine McAuley Center gardens as their pilot garden partner. This project has evolved so that we work with approximately 18 community gardens in varying degrees. The past 3 years, its focus has been on produce donation because of receiving the ISU mini grants. During the 2019 growing season over 23,500 lbs. of fresh produce was donated to HACAP and local food pantries from our community garden partners and local gardeners to be distributed to the food insecure.

We will continue our CONNECT, GROW, SHARE A ROW project of produce donation during 2020 to assist the food insecure. We anticipate the demand will be much greater because of our current COVID-19 situation and encourage you to join us in this project by committing to donate part of your homegrown produce to HACAP and the local food pantries to help others.

THANK YOU to all Linn County Master Gardeners who have been a part of this project in any way.....you have helped us achieve what we have been able to do over the years. We continue to be in need of additional people willing to assist with the project. If you have questions about getting involved, please contact Beula Dvorak, bdvorak4@aol.com or 895-8206.

Volunteers Needed at Lowe Park for Garden Walk

By Brenda Garbe

Do you need to fulfill your volunteer hours? Do you enjoy working at a project that has lots of citizen visibility? Do you want to get to know your fellow Master Gardeners better?

The Lowe Park Demonstration Gardens has the perfect fit. We have lots of small projects that can be accomplished by one or two people. The park is always active with bikers, walkers, dogs and kids, all ages are enjoying the beauty of the gardens.

Please put this on your calendars for Fridays May 15 and 22 (8:00-11:00 am and 1:00-4:00 pm) and Saturdays, May 16 and 23 (8:00-11:00 ai) dependent on the weather. This is in addition to the Lead Gardeners' regular garden work sessions on Tuesdays and Thursday mornings starting at 9:00 am, and Thursday evenings starting at 5:00 pm. You're welcome to come join us any of the regular work sessions to lend a hand and learn more about what's happening at Lowe Gardens.

Here is a summary of the tasks we have ahead of us in anticipation of the July Garden Walk. Plan and plant a sensory garden. Moving a tall post, leveling or rearranging flagstone paths, erecting our metal teepee, an iron trellis, stabilizing the wood fence, moving a wooden arch and re-working the green arch, and signage on posts. Planting annuals or direct sowing of seed.

Many of these tasks could be handled by one or two people and I would be happy to give you more details if you want to undertake something on your own schedule.

We're also in need a few items that you may have in your yards and willing part with. A metal trellis or archway, a wood birdhouse, some clear plexiglass (2 pieces about 12" x 30"). Contact me with any information and questions (319-361-8517; bbgarbe@hotmail.com)

Looking forward to working in the gardens, stay healthy.



Scope of the Children's Garden at Lowe Park.

Coordinator Comments

By: Jean Wilson



What a topsy-turvy month it's been, hasn't it? The only saving grace is that the weather is finally warming up and we may have a chance to get out in the garden soon -- I hope!

As you know, we're all busy working on getting the plant sale organized for our first-ever online sales event. There are a lot of people making this happen, especially the planning committee: Phil Pfister, Karen Woeste, Wanda Lunn, and Beula Dvorak. It's a lot of work to make sure we can do this right and do it safely, according to public health guidelines. Give them all a round of applause for the work they're doing. If you haven't had a chance yet to sign up to help, just contact Beula (bdvorak4@aol.com) and she'll find a spot for you.

We had to cancel our May date for the Spring Award banquet. Given all the guidance for social distancing, we felt it was optimistic to plan a large event like that. We are tentatively hoping to have an event on June 15 when we'll have an early evening picnic at a local park. It will still be catered by The Flamingo but at a different venue. We're evaluating where to have it, so stay tuned for more details! If it turns out we can't have a large event in June, we may consider combining the Spring Banquet and the Fall Celebration into an event later in the year. We'll just have to see how things work out.

We are still planning on the Garden Walk, to be held in July at Lowe Park. We're going to need a lot of help to get ready for that and as soon as the plant sale wraps up, we'll start thinking about getting volunteers on board for that event. And I am working on getting training organized for the fall; we have several applicants already and I'm sure we'll get more as the weather warms up and people start to think about getting out of the house and into the garden.

I hope we can all emerge soon and get back to normal -- but for now, stay safe and stay healthy!

April 7, 2020— Steering Committee Meeting—DRAFT

(Remotely via Webex)

The meeting was called to order and roll called.

Present: Rose Blank, Diane Brooks, Julie Clemens, Randy Dusil, Linda Hofmeister, Jan Knott, Cindy Lehman, Barb Neal, Jennifer Reed, Bev Whitmore and Diane Wiesenfeld

Absent: Lynne Brokaw (excused), Tracy Hansen and Deb Walser

Also Attending: Jean Wilson (MG Coordinator), Sam Krumbholz, Deanna Thursby and Jane Schildroth

Minutes from the March 3, 2020 meeting were approved.

Discussion With Project Leaders:

Awards Banquet: Sam and Jane reported that a program is being planned for a June 15 event. Due to social distancing requirements this year the banquet is being planned as an outdoor gathering at a venue to be determined. We will continue our longstanding relationship with The Flamingo which will cater.

School Gardens 101: Sam and Deanna reported on the project which is in the 3rd year as a partner to Grant Wood AEA. A 5 class workshop series will include education on Composting, Soils, Seed and Plant Starting, Garden Siting and Nutrition. Dates are scheduled for June 8,9 and 10.

Coordinator Report:

Project Reports – the First Quarter project reports received to date were distributed electronically. Many were not received likely due to current COVID-19 restrictions resulting in unknowns in seasonal project planning.

The Hortline is continuing to function regardless of the non-staff closure of the Extension Office. Jean is screening incoming calls and e-mail questions which are forwarded to Deb who will either answer or pass on to another MG for action.

Procedure Guide – Revisions to the Procedure Guide were distributed electronically and discussed. These are a result of compiling suggestions and clarifications raised throughout the year. A vote was taken to approve the revisions which will be proposed to the Extension Council. Upon approval by that body they will be distributed to the MG membership in August.

The final accounting for the Winter Garden Fair shows a profit of approximately \$6,000 which is down from previous years. The decrease is primarily a result of expense for ISU registration process coupled with lower revenue from decreasing the registration fee.

The plant sale this year will be a virtual on-line ordering and payment arrangement. Customers will select from an on-line catalog of plant stock

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and be assigned pick up time to receive their order at Lowe Park. There will be no phone orders and sales will open on-line May 8-14. Pick up dates will be May 18, 19, 20 and 21.

New Business:

The numerous cancellations, postponements and uncertainties due to the COVID-19 pandemic will challenge the program for creativity utilizing technology including: virtual meetings, extending activities with youth/ partnering with 4-H, recording and sharing Library Talks, sharing with partner counties, etc.

Old Business:

Concentrating on these challenges will affect the Greenhouse addition project while planning moves forward at a slower pace.

Next Steering Committee Meeting: Tuesday, May 5, 2020, 6:30 pm via Webex

Next Executive Committee Meeting: Monday ,April 20, 2020, 3:00 pm via Webex

Respectfully Submitted,
Randy Dusil

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Extension and Outreach

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