

Germinator

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September 2020

LINN COUNTY MASTER GARDENER EVENTS

Steering Committee Meeting*

Extension Office
September 1 • 6:30 pm

Extension Council Meeting*

Extension Office
September 14 • 5:00 pm

Executive Committee Meeting*

Extension Office
September 21 • 3:00 pm

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

Low Park Derecho Destruction

By Phil Pfister and Brenda Garbe

One report we have heard is that Low Park experienced a wind gust of 142 mph. The devastation to the Master Gardener projects is evident of the tremendous force of the wind. Following is a walk around the park with a brief overview of the destruction.

In the greenhouse itself, 8 of the 12 roof panels (photo below) are either missing or totally destroyed. The



Low Park Greenhouse after the August 10, 2020 Derecho, missing most of the roof panels.

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remaining panels have stress fractures and will need to be replaced as well. The west wall of the greenhouse is somewhat bowed. The wind seemed to have sucked all of the flats and pots that were in the process of being cleaned and sterilized out of the greenhouse and spread them all over the park. The anemometer cups blew off. The bench with tarp on the deck on the west end of the greenhouse blew off, along with everything stored under the tarp. All the wheelbarrows, soil mixing tumbler and the pot cleaning barrel blew all over the park. We found some of them as far away as the east entrance to the greenhouse, but we still haven't found

the majority of the roof panels, or the soil mixing system. The Doris McElmeel pergola blew down (I think most of it can be salvaged). The south wall of the hoop house collapsed. The arbor we built this spring in the rose garden (photos right) was lifted out of the ground and ended up in



Rose garden arbor new, Spring 2020



Rose garden arbor after August 10, 2020 Derecho

one of the other gardens; we can salvage some of it. The fence around the perennial nursery was a mess. This year was to be our first year for a great apple harvest...the storm picked them all (photos below).

Some signage is standing as if nothing happened, other pieces are flat on the ground. The ornamental corn surrounding the Kids Corral has been shredded, just like all our farm fields in the area. Remarkably, the sunflowers in the same area are still standing strong.



This list, of course, is not all inclusive, but should give an idea of some of the damage. There was a lot of destruction, but fortunately no one was working and no one was injured. Also on the positive note, the garden plants are in relatively good shape. Even the tomato plants seem to be okay. As the State recovers from this storm, we will once again be back to gardening and enjoying the outdoors. And, after we meet with the insurance adjuster, we will start repairs and rebuild.

Stay tuned for future work sessions planned to rebuild our garden structures. At that point, we can use all the help we can get.

Community Gardens Update

By Beula Dvorak

WOW! What a wild couple last weeks we have had in Cedar Rapids/ Marion and surrounding area. So much storm damage and lots of MGs have lost many, many trees, turning shade gardens to sun gardens. Thankfully heard of little home damage or personal injury/death to MGs but widespread damage throughout the community.

The MG community gardens did not go unscathed. Although I have not heard from all garden personnel and have not gotten to all the gardens, the following is what I do know:

Olivet gardens were totally covered with downed trees, so most of the gardens are done for the year. Two sheds were destroyed by the storm and lots of trees gone. Below are a couple of pictures from these gardens.



Catherine McAuley gardens lost much of their fence (photo below) and at least part of their pear tree on site. It looked like the gardens might survive even though looking quite wind blown. They were very, very dry... understandably when folks were busy with personal cleanup from the storm. It looked like the new CMC building across the street from the gardens was damaged, but I don't know the extent.



I tried to check on the Old McDonald Farm gardens, but the street was still blocked so couldn't even get into the park. I'm sure they have much tree damage, but at this time don't know the status of the gardens.

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The newly planted Lester Buresh Center gardens in Mt. Vernon had all the tomato and pepper plants in cages overturned. Sarah Boots and I tried to bring them back upright, but not sure just how much recovery they will do. The squash and cucumber plants don't look good..... so wind-blown and somewhat uprooted so likely there will be no production.

The SE Linn gardens at the Lisbon site seemed to weather the storm in decent condition. They should continue to produce tomatoes, peppers, squash, and melons from what I saw.

Mark Goodsmith reported that the tomato and pepper plants at Lowe Park gardens took quite a hit. Our cages were no defense to the high powered winds.

Prior to the storm, I had received the following produce amount harvested and/or donated to the various gardens:

SE Linn – total of 1,787.93 lb. thru August 15

Marion Uptown Gardens – total of 67.6 lb. mid/June thru mid/July

HACAP Corporate – total of 3,568 lb. thru July 31

Olivet – total of 1,427.2 lb. thru July 29

Lowe Park – total of 185 lb. as of August 20

As I learn about the status of our community garden partners, will let you know.

I know the food pantries are being stretched as their requests and numbers of clientele have most likely increased with the COVID situation combined with this recent storm. SO, if you happen to have extra produce coming from your garden, please consider donating to HACAP or a food pantry near you to help those in need.

Coordinator Comments

By: Jean Wilson



Just when you thought 2020 couldn't throw anything else out there, Monday August 10 happened.

I know that we've all lost property, trees, plants, shrubs and energy because of the storm. I sympathize with all of you. Our property is now a sunny acreage, not a wooded one. I once had an extensive hosta garden, a shady meadow of lily of the valley and bluebells, and a field of lamium in the shade. I have no idea what will survive, but you know what? I'll worry about that later. For now, I'm just thankful no one died, the damage to the house and car are minimal, and we only lost power and water for 6 days. And I am so happy to see traffic lights again – who knew they were such a blessing? I guess it's true: you don't what you've got 'til it's gone!

The greenhouse suffered extensive damage as did the grounds around the garden. Our New Bo flower beds withstood the blast, but many plants were flattened. Several community gardens suffered and we're working to assess where they stand. Harvesting continues, though, and food donations are going to be more critical than ever after a disaster like we've endured.

The west end of the Extension Office had roof damage and lots of water. I waded through ankle-deep water as we tried to rescue 4H supplies and MG training materials we had stored in the side office. The conference room was under water and I don't know when we can use it again. The storage room took on water, too, but I think the MG room was spared. I can't really assess that because we had to get everything away from water and much was tossed in there. Luckily the power came on relatively quickly so fans could be run and air conditioning kicked on.

MG training begins on September 1 and I expect I'll need to juggle around some classes because some of our speakers may not be able to participate. I'll figure that out as we go. Right now we have no other events planned for the fall and given the uncertainty about sites and Covid, I think that's a very good thing. As we start to think about the future, please keep community needs in mind as we plan articles, workshops, and activities. We'll get a lot of questions about "starting over" in those suddenly sunny spots, what trees to get to replace those that fell, and how to handle the trees that remain. I think MGs will be in the spotlight for months to come as we help people come to grips with what happened.

I hope all of you are recovering and can take time for yourselves to gather your wits and your energy. You're all a valuable asset to the community!

**August 4, 2020—6:30 PM Steering Committee Meeting—DRAFT
Remotely via ZOOM**

The meeting was called to order and roll called.

Present: Rose Blank, Julie Clemens, Randy Dusil, Linda Hofmeister, Jan Knott, Cindy Lehman, Barb Neal, Jennifer Reed, Bev Whitmore and Diane Wiesenfeld. **Absent:** Lynne Brokaw, Diane Brooks, Tracy Hansen and Deb Walser. **Also Attending:** Jean Wilson (MG Coordinator) and Linda Hayward.

Minutes from the July 7, 2020 meeting were approved.

Discussion With Project Leaders:

Expert Education – Linda reported on the project that was originally initiated as a vehicle for Master Gardeners to achieve education hours. There are 5-6 programs per year consisting of webinars and arranged speakers both from within and outside of the membership. The public is welcome to attend these programs. Past webinars can be found by searching YouTube with key words “Iowa State University gardening webinars” and qualify for education hours. As with many projects, social distancing makes planning difficult.

Coordinator Report:

The current budget was reviewed and discussed. Throughout the year variations in both revenue and expenses can be expected due to the affects of COVID-19 on the ability to perform and the types of programming allowed.

The Architect continues toward plans for the Lowe Park greenhouse addition. Once received, the bidding phase will be delayed to a more favorable environment.

A meeting was recently held with project chairs to discuss events and programming options.

The Extension is embarking on strategic planning with a focus on how to best serve the community at this time and beyond.

Training will begin with an orientation on September 1 and a current trainee count at 14.

The recent Garden Walk was attended by +/- 100 people. Discussions have raised consideration for the possibility of holding the event on a 2 year cycle in lieu of annually. Host volunteers have been difficult to acquire in the past and the project currently has no chairs or shadows.

Next Steering Committee Meeting: TBD due to conflict with training

Next Executive Committee Meeting: Monday August 17, 2020, 3:00 pm via ZOOM

Respectfully Submitted,

Randy Dusil

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Extension and Outreach

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