

# Germinator



Vol. 31, No. 1 Editors: Julie Stark/Kathy Hughes

January 2021

## LINN COUNTY MASTER GARDENER EVENTS

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

ZOOM Meeting  
January 5 • 6:30 pm

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

ZOOM Meeting  
January 18 • 3:00 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 February Germinator issue by January 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)

## "Gardener at a Glance" - Featuring Sylvia Street

*Submitted by Beverly J. Whitmore*

It's January! I don't know about you, but so many people are "Done!" with 2020 and ready to move on and look forward to 2021. If you are wanting some positive vibes, big smiles, friendship and enthusiasm in gardening then you must meet one of our newest Master Gardeners, Sylvia Street!

Sylvia is from Michigan, grew up in Muskegon on the shores of Lake Michigan. Three years ago, she and her husband moved to Marion after living in South Dakota for 35 years. Her two adult children and 6 grandchildren complete her family circle.

Recently I asked Sylvia what her favorite plant was and she responded that she had more than one. She loves the beauty in both a poinsettia and an iris. Her favorite season is spring, where her faith makes her heart excited for the promise of new beginnings as spring approaches! When I asked Sylvia, what prompted her to apply for the Master Gardener training...she shared that two nearby Master Gardener neighbors shared their gardens & plants with her...that and a little encouraging nudging was all it took! This opportunity also gives Sylvia a chance to enjoy a hobby with her gardening husband. Sylvia and her husband purchased a property that was truly a "blank slate"... they have added perennials, raised bed gardens providing and sharing fruit, vegetables and herbs, a children's free library book garden and recently a native prairie area.



Although retired, Sylvia is a busy lady...she is a retired educator, loves sharing time with family and friends. In her spare time, she wraps Christmas packages at VonMaur. Her passion is sharing experiences and knowledge, and she would love to cultivate interest through presentations and workshops!

Sylvia has already jumped into volunteering at Lowe Greenhouse and is eager to try many of the opportunities presented to Linn Co. Master Gardeners!

Welcome Sylvia!

### **Correction...**

It was brought to our attention that last month's Germinator misidentified the individual in the photo standing alongside Sandra Fiegen at Lowe Park. That MG was Karen Woeste. Please accept our apologies.

## Meet Your Current Steering Committee

By Linda Hofmeister, Chair

As we begin our MG activities for 2021, one of our goals is to enhance relationships and expand our collaborations - with fellow MGs as well as with other program folks across the Linn County Extension and Outreach. To learn more about each other as we further develop our relationships with each other, we will feature members of the Steering Committee each month. This issue will feature the 2021 Chair and Vice-Chair.

### **Linda Hofmeister – Chair**

Linda grew up in Remsen in NW Iowa on the family farm with her six brothers and sisters. She retired in November 2018 from Mercy Medical Center as Director of Labor Resource Management. Prior to then, she worked in the world of Food and Nutrition in Illinois, Indiana and Iowa. She has been active in leadership positions at the state and national levels for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Soroptimist International and the University Healthsystems Consortium.



Flowers, vegetables and herbs are her favorites and she is working on incorporating them together in various beds. Her philosophy is the more perennials, the better! Her favorite seasons are spring and summer – spring because it is a fresh start each year and summer because that is the time to enjoy the beauty of the yard.

Linda took the Master Gardener coursework in 2013. Since then, she has been involved in the various Winter Garden Fairs, Annual Garden Walks, the Noelridge Spring Open House, the Annual Plant Sales, the Farmers Market in Marion, the Bruce more Event and the Swamp Fox Festival. She has been on the Speakers Bureau for the Winter Garden Fair and has worked the Hortline. She is currently working with Cindy Lehman and Deb Walser in developing the MG partnership with Indian Creek Nature Center.

As Linda approached retirement, she chose to spend more time on MG activities. She applied to serve on the Steering Committee to expand her understanding of Linn County Master Gardening. She has participated in the Linn County Strategic Planning Committee and serves on an ad hoc committee chaired by Jay D. Harmon, Associate Dean for Iowa State University Extension and Outreach to develop a suite of potential solutions for the future of the Hortline service. This is her third year on the Steering Committee and currently serves as Chair for 2021. As part of Extension Outreach of Iowa State University, Master Gardeners are asked to participate in the ISU Covid-19 Recovery Plan as well as the Strategic Plan, particularly related to Food Insecurity. Linda's goal is to support MGs in implementing these plans based upon collaboration, particularly with 4-H.

### **Jennifer Reed – Vice-Chair**

Jennifer grew up in Storm Lake, Iowa. She attended the University of Iowa, and has been in eastern Iowa ever since. She has been married over 30 years. She and her husband



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have a son and daughter in their early 20's; both recent graduates of the University of Iowa.

Her background is marketing, advertising and public relations.

Jennifer considers herself a "tomato snob." She will only eat a fresh garden tomato and avoids store-bought tomatoes. She is always on the hunt for the best tasting tomato. She also began canning a few years ago to preserve the fruits of her labors. If anyone has a tomato plant suggestion, she would love to know!

Summer is her favorite season as everything is so green and beautiful and we can be outside more. She loves walking her dog and enjoys biking the trails.

Jennifer is a proud graduate of the MG class of 2017. Her favorite volunteer project is the Winter Garden Fair as she loves to expand her knowledge by learning from the MG experts.

Jennifer has served on several non-profit boards, and hopes to bring those experiences to benefit the LCMG. She serves as Vice-Chair of the Steering Committee for 2021.

## **2021 Garden Calendar—Iowa Natives**

Bloodroot, bluebells, prairie smoke, bur oak, witch hazel, winterberry, and other Iowa native plants are featured in the 2021 Iowa State University Extension and Outreach Garden Calendar. This 12-month calendar showcases the beauty of several plants native to Iowa woodlands or prairies each month throughout the year. Many of these Iowa natives also perform well in the home landscape.



The large calendar grid acts as a gardening journal to record the progress of your garden. Refer to the monthly tips that provide timely cultural information for fruits and vegetables, lawn care recommendations, tree and shrub guidance, and other information. Whether it be flowers, fruits, vegetables, trees, or turfgrass, this annual calendar provides tips on a variety of topics so that you can quickly know what task should be completed next in your garden. Purchase cost is \$7.00.

To order yours, click on the below link:

<https://store.extension.iastate.edu/product/2021-Garden-Calendar-Iowa-Natives>

# Low Park Greenhouse Updates

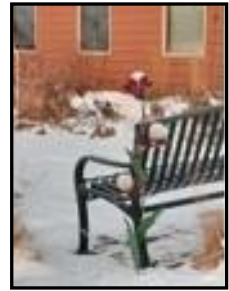
By Brenda Garbe

The Demonstration Gardens may be asleep but planning for next summer is under way. Seed orders have been placed for flowers and vegetables to be germinated in the Lowe Greenhouse. If you would like to spend some time in the sunny tropical atmosphere of the Greenhouse getting your hands on some plants join us on Tuesdays or Thursdays 8-11. We propagate plants, raise seeds and everything needed to grow lovely little babies to mature size for our Demo Gardens and the May Plant Sale. All gardening experience is welcome, come when you can. (ISU Covid protocols are being followed)

We're in need of a volunteer to take care of the Community Food Pantry Beds, there are 4 raised beds just south of the Greenhouse and 2 standing height accessible beds. These are planted and harvested with the produce taken to the local food banks plus provide tomatoes and peppers for the Swamp Fox food tasting in August (provided we can participate)

The derecho storm destroyed 3 of our large containers from the gardens, if you have any 18" diameter minimum that you would like to rehome let me know. They don't have to match, and we're not too particular with color.

Contact me if you have questions or interest on any of the aspects.



*Snow on the metal flower in the Wet Zone.*



*Snow on sunflowers in the Children's Garden.*

## Winter Garden Fair Update

By Deb Walser

The Master Gardeners have set up an arrangement with Indian Creek Nature Center to have weekly talks, much like our Library Talks. These will all be done "virtually" via Zoom. The folks at ICNC will set up registrations and handle all the Zoom technology.

There is a \$5.00 fee to cover their costs for the technology and to have someone host the Zoom meeting. Participants will be receiving confirmation of their request and a day before the class they will get a zoom link. **ICNC is doing a special deal for the Winter Garden fair participants by offering 5 classes for \$25.00 with a voucher for a 6<sup>th</sup> class free.** There will be plenty of time for learning and for having questions answered. We're all set with talks from February 6<sup>th</sup> to April 24<sup>th</sup>. Our hope is that this will bring in new audiences and to expand our partnership with ICNC for hands-on workshops, talks that have an outdoor theme, and other events.

To find the classes and times, check ICNC web site.

# Linn County Master Gardener Steering Committee Meeting—December 1, 2020: 6:30 PM via ZOOM

The meeting was called to order and roll called.

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

Minutes from the November 4, 2020 meeting were distributed previously and approved.

## **New Business:**

The new Steering Committee members present were welcomed to the group and given the opportunity to introduce themselves.

Having completed their terms, Jan Knott, Julie Clemens and Diane Wiesenfeld were bid farewell and thanked for their service.

Linda Hofmeister (incoming Chair) issued her request for 2021. Her desire is that all members submit a bio including photo, background, project participation etc.

Appreciation was extended to Jean for all she has done for the program throughout her tenure as Coordinator.

RaeAnn reintroduced herself to the group and refreshed Extension information including land grant history, formation, mission and some strategic plan highlights. Key directional focus goals will include: Cultivating partnerships to respond to community needs, Expanding our reach, Demonstrating impact/public value and Empowering staff and volunteers.

A Covid recovery task force has been formed.

A suggestion was aired to feature "Gardener At A Glance" in the Germinator as a way of introducing Interns.

## **Coordinator Report:**

The State Hortline support person has retired and replacement is unlikely. A committee is being formed to evaluate impact and needs.

All trainees have passed their test to become interns including 1 from Benton County and 1 from Cedar County.

An updated directory is being distributed.

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Jean has put together a plan for potential in-person plant sale.

Jean's last official day as acting Coordinator will be 12/31/2020

Next Steering Committee Meeting: Tuesday January 5 at 6:30 pm Via ZOOM

Next Executive Committee Meeting: Monday December 21 at 3:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,  
Randy Dusil

## IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

### Extension and Outreach

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