Winter Gardening Fair—A Learning Experience!
By Phil Pfister

The 2017 Winter Gardening Fair was held at Kirkwood Community College, on Saturday, February 25, 2017. Our mission is to provide current research based horticultural information and education to the public, and this is the largest single event that the Linn County Master Gardeners sponsor that provides educational opportunities to the most people at one time.

Attendees could select 4 classes from a list of over 45 lectures and hands-on workshops. They also could choose between two keynote speakers. Megan Cain spoke on “Design Inspiration for Creative Vegetable Gardening”, and Scott Koepke spoke on “Feeding Soil, Feeding Souls: The Values/Pillars of Gardening.”

Lunch, which was included in the

Continued Page 2
registration fee, consisted of a pulled pork sandwich, coleslaw, a roasted vegetable medley, chips, cookie, and a wide assortment of beverages.

Attendees also had a number of horticultural society and vendors to visit and shop with. The societies represented were: Harsbarger Hosta Society, Iowa Woodland Owners, Cedar Valley Iris & Daylily Society, Iowa Regional Lily Society, Beekeepers, Eastern Iowa Orchid Society, Prairie States Mushroom Club, Linn County Soil & Water Conservation District, Tallgrass Prairie Center, Monarchs of Eastern Iowa, Bonsai Club, Iowa Honey Queen, and Green Iowa AmeriCorps.

Vendors attending were: In The Country Garden & Gifts, Oak Valley Farm, Sam McCord Plant Markers, Lois Friday, Usborne Books & More, Carol Brandt, Gerry’s Garden, and Garden Art.

The Master Gardeners also had a sale table (photo right) consisting of plants and arrangements designed by Shelby Foley, Tina Patterson and Coleen Kint, and planted and grown by a number of Master Gardener Volunteers, at the Lowe Park Greenhouse. There was also a table of door prizes, some donated by Master Gardeners and others donated by the vendors. All very well done, and a great take-home for the lucky winners.

It takes a lot of volunteers to put something of this magnitude together. Co-chairs Larry Dawson and Phil Pfister would like to thank the committee members that made all this happen. They are: Kim Becicka, Gail Denny, Beula Dvorak, Devon Dietz, Larry Edwards, Tim Gilbertson, Ann Halverson, Linda Hinzman, Kathy Hughes, Sylvia Kelley, Sam Krumbholz, Carrie Nilsson, Fran Potratz, Sue Usher, Deb Walser, and Jean Wilson.

We would also like to thank our Master Gardener Coordinator, Shelly O’Neal for all the work and support she has put in, and Kirkwood
Community College, especially Michelle Cherrier and Matt Murphy for everything they did to help make this event such a success.

Over the next couple of weeks, we will review the evaluations and look at lessons learned. Then the planning for the 2018 Winter Gardening Fair gets underway. Co-chairs Larry Edwards and Sam Krumbholz will be assembling the team for 2018. If you are interested in helping with this event, please contact them or Shelly O’Neal.

The hands-on courses, held during the day’s final session, were a big hit. Photo Left: "Gazing Globe" presented by Sylvia Kelley; Photo Center: "Terra Cotta Fountains", presented by Deb Walser; Photo Right: "Build a Fun and Function Tower Trellis", presented by Karla McGrail with assistance from Diane Stevens and Louise Harn.

Not a seat was empty in Kirkwood’s Ballantyne Auditorium at Megan Cain’s keynote address "Design Inspiration for Creative Vegetable Gardening".

Master Gardeners take a much needed break. Photo left: RaeAnn Barmhart, Director; Joan West, Sylvia Kelley, Jean Wilson, Larry Dawson and Donna McCabe; Photo right: Louise Harn, Barb Wing, Shelly O’Neal, Kathy Hughes, Linda Eggleston and Jane Schildroth.
Coordinator Comments
By: Shelly O’Neal

Dear Linn County Master Gardeners,

I am so proud to be your coordinator! You never cease to amaze me with your talents and dedication in all the projects that you take on. The most recent, the Winter Garden Fair. Everyone I had the opportunity to speak with at the fair said they were having such a wonderful day!

Everyone presented such incredible classes and there were also the ones behind the scenes to make it a successful day. I want to recognize each Linn County MG because you all play a part in the success of the program. It's hard to recognize only a few because so many have such important roles and I don't want anyone to be left out. I will be recognizing all of you at the awards banquet this year. Mark your calendars for March 30th. I want to celebrate with you all that you do for this community.

You are all amazing!!!!!!!

WMT Outdoor Living Show—Volunteers Still Needed

The WMT Outdoor Living Show is set for Saturday, March 11, from 9-5, and Sunday, March 12, from 10-4 at Hawkeye Downs. Co-chairs are Sue Usher and Barbara Wing.

Presenters this year are Debbie Main with “Verticals, Vines and Variations”; Fran Potratz and Karla McGrail with “Weed Identification”; and Devon Dietz with “Green with Envy”. Their presentations are Saturday at 10:00, 1:00 and 3:00 respectively. Zora Ronan with “Seed Starting” and Jane Schildroth with “Have Fun Creating a Theme Garden” will present on Sunday at 12:00 and 2:00.

We could use a few more volunteers to help at the tables during the two days. If you are interested please contact either of us: Barb Wing (barley92@hotmail.com) or Sue Usher (dsajusher@juno.com).

If you are a volunteer you are reminded to wear your new shirt and Master Gardener badge for free admission.
Volunteer Spotlight—Lori Bailey
By Linda Skvor

Lori’s journey through the Master Gardener program was fueled by her father, La Vern, who died of kidney failure in July 2008. Lori’s dad was her mentor and inspiration, and growing up on a farm in rural Clinton, Lori did not enjoy the work of the garden that was right in her own back yard. “I did not appreciate anything about it. Something I regret to this day. Later on, my parents retired from the farm and moved into the city of Clinton and their backyard became their new garden spot. Vegetables, flowers, Peonies, Lilacs, Cannas and a variety of trees were planted and cared for by my father. When I came for a visit, the first thing he wanted to do was take me on a tour of my parent’s back yard. This was a special time for me.”

So during the summer of 2008, grieving the loss of her dad, Lori pursued the MG program. She cried during the interview process. “Maybe the MG program was just what I needed to help with the mourning process.” So, in her first year, Lori signed up for just about everything, and quickly realized this wouldn’t work. Instead, she found she liked public speaking and has been a speaker at the Winter Gardening Fair and any group that would enjoy listening to her for 45 minutes! “My presentation topics? I find something I would like to know more about, then study that subject, take lots of notes, take lots of photo’s and then put a presentation together. Then, in turn, this benefits me and my listeners. I love the thought that maybe I inspired someone to do something that they would never thought of or tackled before. This year I am presenting on my whimsical garden. I have also done presentations on Coleus, Foliage plants, beginning photography and shade gardening. Next year I would like to do Begonias, then maybe tropicals and cutting gardens.”

Lori describes her garden as whimsical and “one of a kind” with lots of pottery. “Pottery has become my art of choice, some made, some bought, but all that is very whimsical and hopefully would put a smile on your face. There is a story behind many of the creations. I love that the pottery are all handmade and no two are alike. You could say I have part garden-part pottery art gallery! :)

Lori and husband, Dan, have three grown girls, a great son-in-law, two grandchildren and one on the way. Her youngest daughter is planning a wedding this fall. “My other passion is a ministry that my husband and I do together, called “Dance with Me Ministries”. For eight years, we have been teaching basic ballroom to empty nest couples, to encourage them during this stage of life and all that it brings. It has been very rewarding and we have met amazing couples.”

Lori’s goals for her garden are not to have it be a place that is just work, work, work, but to really enjoy it with friends and family. (Amen!) Lori tries to have a friend over each week with a special refreshment and coffee. They sit outside and enjoy all the beauty and wonder that Iowa has to offer. “My yard is wooded and feels like being out in the country, yet being right in the middle of Cedar Rapids. I don’t want my garden to become too big that it does not allow me to do this. A friend day would not be complete, without a tour of my garden that I can share, just as my dad did with me.”

Continued Page 6
Lori’s favorite flowers are those the deer don’t eat. “The cannas that my dad shared with me, that each day as I watch the hummingbirds enjoying, I am reminded of that special someone that is my hero, my inspiration, my dad!” Lori, thanks for making this column a tearjerker this month!!

**March Master Gardener Events in the Area…**

Webinar “Protect Your Veggies from Hungry Insects”
Friday, March 3 (1:00 pm): Webinar is presented by Zach Snipes, Horticulture Extension Agent, Clemson Cooperative Extension (https://learn.extension.org/events/2843).

Conference: “Horticulture in the Heartland, Planting Today for Tomorrow”, Clinton County Master Gardeners
Saturday, March 4, 2017 (8:00-2:15 pm): Clinton Community College, Clinton, Iowa

For brochure: (https://www.extension.iastate.edu/mastergardener/files/events/files/2017%20Clinton%20Co%20Horticulture%20in%20the%20Heartland%202017.pdf). ($35.00 Registration)

Mondays in March Seminar Series, Delaware County Master Gardeners
7:00-8:00 pm): Our Savior Lutheran Church, 116 Guetzko Ct, Manchester, IA ($2.00 donation)

March 6, 2017—“Square Foot Gardening/Raised Bed Gardening” by Deb Walser, Linn County MG
March 13, 2017—“Consumer Supported Agriculture” by T.D. Holub, Owner Garden Oasis Farm, LLC
March 20, 2017—“Heavenly Hydrangeas” by Wil Carew, Linn County MG
March 27, 2017—“Backyard habitat for Birds, Bees and Butterflies” by Patty Reisinger, Trees Forever

Spring Garden Seminar “Foolin’ Around in the Garden”, Dubuque County Master Gardeners
Saturday, April 1 (8:30-2:30): NICC Town Clock Center for Business, 700 Main Street, Dubuque, IA ($35.00 Registration). For brochure: (http://www.extension.iastate.edu/dubuque/spring-garden-seminar)
The Lowe Park Greenhouse Hosts Kokedama Workshop!
By Phil Pfister

Nine Master Gardeners and MG Interns attended the Kokedama workshop, held on Saturday, 11 February, 2017. Kokedama, pronounced KO-KAY-DA-MA, is a form of Japanese bonsai from the Edo period (1600 – 1880 AD). The Kokedama starts with the selection of a plant such as a begonia, ivy, or palm, then a ball of soil that is wrapped in moss which is held in place with strings. The Kokedama can then be displayed as a hanging plant, or in a saucer. Tina Patterson and Shelby Foley led the workshop. Tina’s goal was to complete 20 plants within the time allocated for the workshop, but due to an efficient group of volunteers, 49 were completed. The plants will be sold at the Winter Gardening Fair and other events.

Left Photo: (left front to back) Tina Patterson, Shelby Foley, Linda Skvor, Mary Mikkola (right front to back) Jo Dillon, Sandy Fiegen, Coleen Kint, Paula MacNider; Center Photo: Tina Patterson; Right Photo: Paula MacNider

Upcoming Presentation at Linn County Extension Office
by Linda Haywood

Thursday, March 16, 2017 - The 4th “R” Rot – Jason Evans, Director of Education of the Linn County Solid Waste Agency will give a presentation on the process by which compost is made at the facility. He will discuss what materials are received and how they are mixed, maintained, monitored, and ultimately given out to the public. Jason will also discuss how compost can be used. He will briefly touch on other services provided at the facility as well as future plan for Mt. Trashmore. Jason plans to bring sample bags of finished compost so those attending can see the final product.

The presentation will be at the Extension Office 383 Collins Road, NE, Cedar Rapids, Iowa in the large conference room from 6:30 – 8:30. It is open to Master Gardeners and the public. To register, please contact Linn County Extension by calling (319) 377-9839 or email soneal@iastate.edu
February 2017 – Steering Committee Minutes—DRAFT
(Abridged for Germinator)


Financial Report: Linda presented the financial report and pointed out $100 stipend from the Garden Club for a speaker, money coming in for classes at the Greenhouse, and money coming in for Deb Walser’s pottery classes (minus expenses for materials). Financial report approved. Diane, Glen, Cindy, Linda, and Phil will review project budgets in March.

MG Coordinator Report: Veteran’s Gardening Day is March 25 at 9:00-3:00 at the Veteran’s Memorial Building. Do we want a table for MG’s with information for participants? This project will be tabled and discussed later. Rockwell Collins Volunteer Event is February 14; Linda will be there from 11:00-12:00 and Glenn from 12:00-1:00. Jim Harkin is our new Regional Education Director and begins his duties on March 1.

Old Business: Civil Rights Training - Shelly will see to it that all MG’s receive information on Civil Rights training. Public Relations Committee - Devon Dietz would like help to chair this committee. COG – Beula will report on these various projects in the future. Jackie raised the question about how MG’s provide help to projects (see Handbook, section 7). We don’t provide landscape design, but we offer educational suggestions. More discussion will take place at the next COG meeting.

New Business: The Awards Selection Committee of Devon Dietz, Theo Cole, Will Carew, Larry Dawson, Vicki Keegan, Sue Usher, and Jane Schildothe will meet February 16 at 1:00. VHR – Kathy brought up that MG’s are not always reporting volunteer hours in the correct column; Shelly will send an e-mail to all MG’s to explain categories and sub categories so volunteer hours are accurately reported. Phyllis Olson will be awarded a lifetime MG badge and Shelly will set up a time for her to receive it. The financial report will be added to the Germinator on a quarterly basis. The Mentor/Mentoree approved in the past will be taken over by Beula Dvorak and Jean Wilson. Shelly will recruit a new committee to work on the new Urban Orchard Project which will consist of planting 200 fruit trees on city property and could be a joint project with the city, a 4-H group, and MG’s. Laura with the Dubuque MG Program will be invited to come and talk about their new pilot program which is very hands on and seems to be quite successful. Our new red shirts will be here February 17.

Project and Committee Reports

Expert Ed: Following are the Thursday webinars from ISU. January 16, “Donation and Small-Space Gardens”; 24 people attended. February 9, “Impact Matters”; 7 people attended. February 16, “Growing and Harvesting Vegetables”; 16 people attended. The next Expert Ed event is March 16; Jason Evans will present “The Recycling Process in Cedar Rapids”. This will be in the large conference room from 6:30 to 8:30. It will be open to the public.

Lowe Park Gardens: Nine Master Gardeners and MG Interns, led by Tina Patterson and Shelby Foley, participated in the Kokedama workshop on Saturday, February 11, 2017. Tina’s goal was to make 20 plants within the time allotted for the workshop, but the well organized and productive team finished the workshop with a total of 49. The Kokedama will be some of the plants on sale at the Winter Gardening Fair and other events. Seeding has started with early flowers and herbs. Work sessions are taking place
every week on Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to noon. Watch for Thursday evening work sessions to start soon.

NewBo City Gardens: Kick off committee meeting is planned for March.

Noelridge Greenhouse: Volunteer opportunities at Noelridge Greenhouse the month of February included the repotting of tropical plants, taking cuttings and transplanting from the cuttings taken from the Noelridge Gardens last fall to propagate for the upcoming showcases and growing season. January MG volunteer hours totaled 39.

Plant Sale: It’s hard to tell what will happen with the weather between now and the plant sale, but if it continues to be mild, we might want to start watching for plants poking up early, and potting them up so they have some extra time to look great for the sale. If you need containers, let Phil Pfister know. The Sale is scheduled for Saturday, May 20, 2017 from 8:00 a.m. to noon, at the Extension and Outreach Office parking lot.

Winter Gardening Fair: The WGF committee has been meeting regularly to work through all the details necessary to ensure the day is a success. We had a great response from the MG’s and MG Interns to volunteer. Over 20 vendors and society members are attending, displaying and demonstrating their products and areas of expertise. Our thanks to the WGF committee members; Shelly O’Neal, our MG Coordinator, and our Kirkwood team, for all the effort put into making the event a success.

WMT Lawn & Garden Show: The WMT Outdoor Living Show is Sat. March 11 (9:00-5:00) and Sun. March 12 (10:00-4:00) at Hawkeye Downs. Planning for the event is underway with four of five speakers selected and numerous volunteers secured. We hope to have the final speaker confirmed by next week and the rest of the event staffing done shortly afterwards.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55. The next meeting is March 7 at 6:30 p.m.
Respectfully submitted, Sam Krumbholz, Secretary