MG EVENTS

Steering Committee Mtg.
Extension Office
May 6 • 6:30 pm

Noelridge Greenhouse Planning Mtg.
Extension Office
May 1 • 6:30 pm

Winter Gardening Fair Mtg.
Extension Office
May 15 • 1:00 pm

Plant Sale
Plant Drop Off—Extension Office
May 16 • 8:00 am—6:00 pm
Sale—Extension Office Lot
May 17 • 8:00 am

Noelridge Mother's Day Showcase
May 11 • 10:00 am-5:00 pm

Intern Graduation Ceremony
Extension Office
May 22 • 6:30 pm

Plant Sale—May 17
The Master Gardener Plant Sale will be held on Saturday, May 17, in the Extension Office parking lot of 383 Collins Road starting at 8:00 am.

All plants should be brought to the Extension Office by 3:00 pm Friday, May 16.

Many volunteers are needed for this event, so please complete and send in the attached Sign Up sheet.

Guidelines for donating your plants for the Sale are in the April Germinator.

If you have any questions, contact Phil Pfister (pter4@aol.com; 360-1734) or Charlene Woeste (gardenerwoeste@gmail.com; 378-1343).

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“Everything that slows us down and forces patience, everything that sets us back into the slow circles of nature is a help. Gardening is an instrument of grace.”
— May Sarton, 1912-1995, American poet, novelist, and memoirist
The Linn County Master Gardener Annual Banquet was held, appropriately, on Earth Day, April 22nd, 2014, at the Flamingo. Approximately 100 Master Gardeners, Master Gardener Interns and guests attended to celebrate the accomplishments of 2013. Our gratitude goes to Louise Harn, Doris Hardt, Sue Usher and Shelby Foley for putting together a wonderful event and taking care of the important details – from cookies and the beautiful table arrangements to organizing the menu and raffle of Sue’s lovely coleus cross-stitch. Extra gratitude goes to Shelby (photo right) for also taking on the role of “Mistress of Ceremonies!” Thank you also to Jackie MacLaren for capturing some great photos at the event (not an easy task)!

Four Master Gardeners were awarded personalized Master Gardener coffee mugs for accumulating their first 500 hours in the program: Steve Bartlett, Helen McKinstry, Karen Stewart, and Karen Woeste.

The following received Awards of Special Merit for accumulating volunteer hours during their time as Linn County Extension Master Gardeners:

For 1000 hours: Laurie Azeltine, Barb Brown, Jean Minehart, Jean Murray, Carol Sears, and Sue Usher.

With 2000 hours: Doug Smith
With 3000 hours: Dianne Johnson
With 4000 hours: Deb Walser

And, finally, Charlene Woeste was recognized for accumulating 6000 hours since she began with the program in 1991 (photo right). Devon Dietz was honored with the Silver Trowel pin for completing the most volunteer service hours in 2013 (photo right). The official “pinning” took place at the banquet.
Three Master Gardeners attained Lifetime Master Gardener status, determined by a combination of service hours and years in the program. Doris Hardt, Louise Harn, (photo left) and Dick Harrison are now Lifetime Master Gardeners and have received their special green name badge in recognition of their long-standing and exceptional commitment over the past 10 years.

The following MG were recognized with the Silver Star Award for contributing more than 100 hours in 2013 (photo below): Mike Anderson, Barb Brown, Melanie Brown, Kathy Carew, Thea Cole, Judi Dolezal, Linda Eggleson, Doris Hardt, Louise Harn, Linda Hinzman, Dianne Johnson, Sylvia Kelley, Mary Sam Krumbholz, Becki Lynch, Kay McWhinney, Jean Murray, Tom Roe, Jane Schildroth, Diane Stevens, Judy Stevens, and Karen Woeste.

We also had many MG recipients of the Gold Star Award for contributing more than 200 hours in 2013 (photo below): Steve Bartlett, Pam Brackey, Wil Carew, Devon Dietz, Beula Dvorak, Carson Fixmer, Shelby Foley, Linda Hayward, Debbie Main, Karla McGrail, Helen McKinstry, Jean Minehart, Phil Pfister, Fran Potratz, Zora Ronan, Doug Smith, Karen Stewart, Shirley Thornton, Sue Usher, Deb Walser, Barb Wing, and Charlene Woeste.
Following the Earned Awards, the Selected Awards portion of the ceremony acknowledged team and individual accomplishments in 2013.

The award for the Outstanding New Master Gardener of the year went to Beula Dvorak in recognition of the significant contributions she made to a variety of projects in 2013 (photo left). Karla McGrail was honored with the Master Gardener of the Year award for her years of outstanding service and leadership in the program (photo below). The Project Team award recipient was the Winter Gardening Fair 2013 team.

The New Project of the Year award was conferred to two projects this year: the Newbo City Market Learning Garden and the “From the Ground Up” Gazette Column.

The Youth Award for outstanding youth engagement was presented to the From the Ground Up project for their program in Linn County 4th grade classrooms.

The Jack-of-All-Trades award went to two Master Gardeners this year: Louise Harn and Kay McWhinney for their selfless work, often behind-the-scenes on a variety of projects (photo right).

The Friend of Linn County Master Gardeners was announced at the banquet, but, as of press time, it is still a secret!

Following the awards ceremony, a drawing was made to determine the winner of the framed coleus cross-stitch donated by Sue Usher. The lucky winner was Charlene Woeste. The Banquet Committee was pleased to announce that all attendees could take home a portion of the table arrangements this year. The Greenhouse crew had secretly cultivated and potted pansies for all attendees.

Thank you to everyone who attended, provided planning support and advice, and made it a wonderful evening!
**Noelridge Greenhouse Updates**

*By Jean Minehart*

**Planning Meeting Scheduled**

We've planned an important meeting for the Noelridge MG and MG Interns Project volunteers on Thursday, May 1 at 6:30 pm in the Extension office large meeting room. We've planned this meeting to give everyone a chance to get to know the other Noelridge Project MG & MG Intern volunteers better. Also we want to share some of the things Kathy & I have been up to and to get you to share your ideas for more!

We need to decide when to clean off our garden and when we want to plant it. The elderberry bush and one of the rose bushes need to be moved to keep all the ‘herbs of the year’ in year order. We have a few ideas for education at the herb garden such as making miniature wreaths at the end of the season using herbs from the garden, making tussie-mussie bouquets with herbs, making horseradish and giving samples, but we need more ideas and volunteers to plan and present sessions.

Please plan to come to enjoy yourself, help make important plans, and share your ideas about any other educations or anything else you want to discuss!

**Mother’s Day Showcase**

Noelridge Park and Greenhouse will have the annual Mother’s Day Showcase/Open house on Sunday, May 11, from 10 am to 5 am. Master Gardener volunteers are needed to help answer questions and provide brochures and other printed materials. There will be four 1-1/2 hour shifts and one 1-hour shift (from 4:00 - 5:00); we would like to have 2 for each shift preferably a MG and an MG intern. 1-1/2 hours are: 10:00-11:30, 11:30-1:00, 1:00-2:30, 2:30-4:00; 1 hour shift only is 4:00-5:00. If you are interested, contact Jean Minehart (jeanminehart@live.com).

Tell your family and friends to bring their favorite mother, grandmother, daughter, granddaughter, or aunt/s to enjoy hundreds of blooming plants and also some interesting educational displays. There will be hanging baskets, coleus, New Guinea impatiens, basket stands and books; as well as honey, handcrafted jewelry, and beautiful greeting cards handmade using dried flowers available for sale. The Eastern Iowa Orchid Society will also have orchids to sell.
2014 Creative Gardening Series Wraps Up
By Linda Hinzman

The 2014 Creative Gardening Series was held on Thursdays March 27, April 3, and April 10 at Whipple Auditorium in the Cedar Rapids Public Library from 6:30 to 8:30 each evening. Committee co-chairs Bruce Johnson, Lisa Lafler, and Linda Hinzman organized this year’s series. Several additional Master Gardener volunteers assisted during the events. Elizabeth Ward provided oversight and assisted at each presentation as well.

Thursday, March 27, 2014 - Bill Shores (photo right) presented “Small Space Food Gardening,” offering an overview of techniques to produce food organically in small urban/suburban spaces to approximately 175 attendees. Topics included efficient use of in-ground space, intensive and succession planting techniques, raised bed gardens, season extension, indoor gardens, and building and maintaining healthy soils. For the past 18 years Bill has specialized in creating and maintaining space-efficient, organic gardens suited to the urban environment including indoor gardens, small-space in-ground gardens, raised bed & container gardens, and deck & rooftop gardens. Bill has managed both home-based and commercial gardens and understands the differing needs of both. Currently, Bill manages gardens for Chef Rick Bayless in Chicago, growing a wide array of food and ornamental crops in a variety of spaces.

Thursday, April 3, 2014 - Mike Nowak presented “Guys on Grass (Organic Lawn Care 101)” to approximately 80 attendees. Mike looked at why the concept of the “perfect lawn” is so harmful, starting with that lock-step mentality and moving on to the use of synthetic fertilizers and pervasive pesticides. He explained how some simple cultural practices can be just as effective as expensive chemicals to keep your lawn green and healthy. He emphasized soil testing as a starting point. Mike is host of the “The Mike Nowak Show,” that airs Sunday mornings on a variety of Chicago area radio stations. Mike is an Illinois Master Gardener and Openlands TreeKeeper. In 2002, he co-founded the Midwest Ecological Landscaping Association and served as MELA’s president for four years. He is president of the Chicago Recycling Coalition and part of the Speakers Network for SafeLawns.org, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting natural lawn care and grounds maintenance.
Thursday, April 10, 2014 – James Locklear presented “The View from Phlox Mountain” to approximately 50 attendees. Phlox is a genus of 60 species that includes many of America’s most beloved wildflowers, and has yielded plants that are cultivated by gardeners around the world. Jim’s presentation explored the phlox species in the wild and their use in the garden. Jim is director of conservation at Omaha’s Lauritzen Gardens in Omaha.

This year, the series moved from Kirkwood to the new Cedar Rapids Public Library. Many favorable comments were received about the facility, both from attendees and the speakers. There was no charge to use the facility, and the library staff were extremely helpful and friendly. It was felt that attendance at the third presentation was affected by the extremely nice weather that day. All three presentations received excellent evaluations and many suggestions for future topics were submitted by the attendees.

Bruce, Lisa, and Linda would like to thank all of the volunteers who assisted and to all Master Gardeners who attended, brought their friends, and helped spread the word about these events. For a variety of reasons, all three of us are leaving the CGS committee. The new committee will be chaired by Carson Fixmer.

2014 Upper Midwest Regional Master Gardener Conference—Stipends Available

You won’t want to miss the Upper Midwest Master Gardener Conference June 25-28, 2014 in Bettendorf. Scott Ogden & Lauren Springer-Ogden, authors of Plant-Driven Design and Passionate Gardening will both be speaking at the conference. Felder Rushing, author of Garden Hearts, Bottle Trees, and Slow Gardening is another keynote speaker. Melinda Myers, contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and author of more than 20 garden books will be a featured speaker. Conference website (http://www.aep.iastate.edu/iowamg2014/). If you are interested in applying for a stipend to attend this conference, please contact Mike Anderson (mla85@mchsi.com), Chair of the Stipend Committee.
Coordinator’s Comments
By Elizabeth Ward

With the Spring Banquet & Awards Ceremony fresh in my mind, I am still in awe of the massive amount of time and passion that Master Gardeners muster each year to achieve all they set out to do. From the number of first quarter volunteer service record sheets streaming into the office, it’s apparent that 2014 is going to be another outstanding year for Master Gardener public outreach. The official arrival of spring also highlights the magnitude of our community’s demand for quality horticultural information. The Master Gardener dance card is definitely full this season with booths at community events, requests for consulting and education at community gardens, a busy Speakers Bureau schedule, increased Hortline calls, enthusiastic attendance at library talks & the Creative Gardening Series, and highlights in local newspapers.

All this activity makes for a highly visible period for the program and an excellent opportunity to capture new and familiar audiences for upcoming projects and events. This is definitely a time when many hands, many perspectives, and many hours will be needed! Below is a list of some of the projects where your help would be much appreciated.

Also, please continue to promote the Master Gardener program to those who may be interested in becoming a Master Gardener. Dates for the fall Master Gardener training class will be announced soon, and prospective participants can be put on our interest list for more information. Please have anyone interested contact me. ISU campus announced there will not be a winter/spring 2015 class.

Volunteer Opportunities

**Plant Sale**, May 17: Please check out the volunteer sign-up sheet in this issue. The Plant Sale is a project with high visibility and an important fundraiser for the entire MG program.

**Marion Farmer’s Market outreach booth:** Saturday mornings: June 14, July 12, and August 9

**Linn County Fair outreach booth:** Planning and staffing – 1 day (TBD) during week of June 25-30. 1-2 Vermicomposting presenter(s): For demonstration/lecture at Prairiewoods in July

Co-Lead to work with **Catherine McAuley Center (CMC)** staff and Master Gardeners/Interns: The role entails being the point-of-contact between the CMC and Master Gardeners. CMC volunteers and program participants will be cultivating the food gardens and looking to Master Gardeners for informal education and expertise.

Chair or Co-Chair the **Newbo Learning Garden** project: At least 8 Master Gardeners/MG Interns have already expressed interest in being involved this year, but we need a Chair/Co-Chair team to coordinate the planning process and communication with Newbo City Market staff.

Please contact me with interest or questions regarding any of these opportunities! eward@iastate.edu
Expert Ed Presentation from Kerry Culp from ISU: 
Information on Soil Sampling and Interpretation 

By Linda Hayward

On Saturday, April 12th, Kerry Culp presented “Soil fertility analysis for residential horticulture...simplified”. Those who attended learned the proper procedure to take a soil sample.

Each soil sample should be about 1 ½ cups from several areas in the place that one wants tested explained Kerry. If you are taking samples for an entire yard, one needs to take 12 samples from various places in the lawn. The soil sample should be mixed and put in the bag supplied by the Extension Office. If one is testing several different areas, there needs to be a separate bag for each location such as lawn, garden, flower beds or trees. The soil should be fairly dry. If when the sample is taken, the soil is very moist, it should be allowed to dry before putting in the bag. The bag should be placed in a box with packing it so it is held in place. It is important that the bag arrives at ISU in good condition. Kerry suggested that flat rate postage boxes are good boxes to use for sending samples.

When samples arrive at ISU, the soil is handled very carefully and is numbered and tracked for the person who sent in the sample. The results of the soil tests are sent to the Extension Office of the person who sent in the sample as well as to the individual person. The results may be kept at the Extension Office for 3-4 months. To understand the results, one needs to think about the ratio of the numbers on the test paper results. Kerry pointed out that fertilization, moisture, compost or other things that have been added to the soil will affect the composition of the soil that is being tested.

This was a very informative presentation!

Inquiring Master Gardeners Want to Know:

Q: I’ve been told that some of my indoor plants are infested with mealybugs. How can I verify this and how do I control them?

A: Mealybugs are part of a group of sucking insects that are often covered with a light protective coating of wax. They can be found on a range of different hosts and on all parts of a plant. Sticky, cottony substances, especially between leaf axils, are a sign of mealybug infestation. Examine the upper/under sides of the foliage, especially along stems. Severe infestations will resemble patches of cotton anywhere on the plant. Also, look for sticky substance called honeydew excreted by the bugs.

Washing plants regularly will keep infestations down. Mealybugs often nest deep in the crotches of a plant, which makes chemical control especially difficult. Mealybugs are often controlled by lightly rubbing the insect with a cotton swab dipped in alcohol. Insecticidal soap is also a suitable treatment if applied before the young mealybugs develop their protective white coats. Isolating infested plants while eradicating the mealybugs will help avoid infecting other plants. Reference: HHPN April 6, 1994.
Lowe Greenhouse Update
By Phil Pfister

Head grower Shelby Foley and a team of volunteers have been diligently working at transplanting the many seedling and plugs that are growing in the Lowe Park Greenhouse, to have them ready for the Plant Sale, demonstration gardens and City of Marion. The plugs for the City of Marion arrived the last week of March, and are growing nicely. They will be planted in the various containers and planters at the Marion Library, Marion City Hall, Marion Square Park, and some at Thomas Park. This is part of our agreement with the City of Marion for our greenhouse location and help with utilities.

We have added three work sessions to our regularly scheduled work sessions in order to catch up after a cold and overcast late start to the growing season. We will have many flowers, herbs, tomatoes, peppers, and some Cole crops available at the Plant Sale on Saturday, May 17, from 8:00-noon at the Extension Office parking lot. This year we are also adding a limited number of vine crops like cucumbers, summer squash and winter squash. Come early, as they should go fast.

Check out the hoop house by the greenhouse when you are at Lowe Park. We have a variety of cool season crops germinated, and have moved some of the cool season plants out of the greenhouse to the hoop house.

We are pleased to welcome Coleen Kint to our team as an additional grower. She will add expertise in several areas and already has proven to be a valuable extra set of hands.

If you have an interest in volunteering at the Lowe Park Greenhouse, and are not currently receiving notices for work sessions, please contact Phil Pfister, ppfister47@gmail.com, or Elizabeth Ward, eward@iastate.edu, and we will add you to the distribution list.
May 11

2015 Winter Gardening Fair Meeting Planned

There will be a 2015 Winter Gardening Fair meeting on Thursday, May 15, at 1:00 p.m. in Extension’s small conference room. Please consider being a co-chair or shadow for the Fair. Master Gardeners who are unable to attend the organizational meeting are encouraged to send Linda Hinzman (email: linnieza@aol.com) or Elizabeth Ward their suggestions for the three featured speaker slots available as well as topics and presenters by Master Gardeners.

Five Diverse Gardens to be Featured at the 2014 Garden Walk

By Kay McWhinney

Five SE quadrant gardens will be on display on July 12 from 10:00am to 4:00pm. New colorful, large garden flags will mark the location of each garden.

Barbara Brown’s lovely shade garden exudes memories of special family events with a large center garden complete with many hostas amongst the trees, hand-made welded garden art and a grandchild-painted mural in the potting area.

The garden of Doris Hardt is in a quiet locale with shade perennials in four distinct garden “rooms”. A sunny backyard patio area features annuals, perennials, ornamental grasses, and a small raised bed that leads to a Bird Sanctuary with a woodland feel.

Louise Harn’s meticulously manicured lawn sets the stage for several, mostly sunny, themed pocket gardens with unique garden art. Plants are all deer resistant. A fenced vegetable garden is also on the property.

Vegetables set the stage in Gene Nassif’s unique vertical gardens. His produce is abundant due to his richly amended soil. Wanting to keep the wooded view from his home, all vegetables are grown vertically along the home’s foundation.

Barbara Wing’s two acres are blessed with abundant sunny and shady areas to support a large perennial garden dotted with potted annuals. The “girl’s” hosta garden features all plants with girls names. Garden art is scattered about. A straw-bale area of the garden is featured as well as a working garden railway.

Many hands are necessary to help the host with garden priming before the GW. Also needed are about 60 MG’s on the day of the event as Garden Guides, Ticket Sellers, and Parking Attendants.

Please respond on the volunteer form that is mailed to you. The deadline is May 13. Assignments will be mailed on May 20. A meeting of Hosts, Team Leaders, and ALL other volunteers will be held in the large Conference Room on June 24, from 6:30pm to 8:00pm.
Gearing Up for Garden Season
By Jean Wilson

Gardening, like other summer sports, uses muscles we never knew we had—until we use them and discover they aren't as flexible or as strong as we'd like.

Here's how you can get a jump on the season and be ready to garden without days of pain after that first ambitious day. Do a few of these core exercises in the weeks before gardening season kicks off. That way you'll be ready when those warm days beckon to you.

As always: know your limitations and your weaknesses. If you can't do an exercise, or can't do it with good form, don't do it. Use common sense!

**Pushups**: if you can't do pushups on the floor, try a few against the wall. Keep your body straight from head to toe. This mimics the action of pushing a wheelbarrow or moving large piles of brush and works your upper body.

**Double-arm carry**: grab equally heavy weights (either dumbbells or heavy cans or bottles of water) in each hand and just walk around the room with them. This mimics carrying those heavy buckets of dirt or compost all around the yard.

**Squats**: Practice bending at the knees and don't let your back round forward towards the ground. You can do these with weights or not. This helps you get ready to bend down and pick up heavy objects, like bags of dirt or compost.

**Kneeling**: Practice just getting down on the floor and getting up, keeping your balance as you do it. Grab your padded kneeler you use in the garden and practice this in your home.

**Lunge**: Like kneeling, a lunge prepares you to get down on one knee and work on pulling weeds or planting seeds. Try to make sure you don't lean down and forward. If you can't do a full lunge, just do what you can until you build up your strength.

Try a few of these during those anxious April days and your May just might be a little less painful.

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Want to contact a fellow Linn County Master Gardener or update your personal profile?
[http://mgquickfind.info/](http://mgquickfind.info/)
April 2014 Steering Committee—Draft

(Abridged for Germinator; Committees not listed had no report)


Committee Reports:

Brucemore (Melanie Brown): The committee has secured 3 MGs to help in the display boards and they are looking for 3 more. Jay McWherter is going to be our photographer for the day. Phil Pfister has offered to be the lead for staffing the Brucemore Greenhouse. Someone is needed to lead garden tours regarding seed savers, etc. for fall. Also a co-chair is needed who will take over next year.

Community Garden Connection (Sam Wittrock, Americrop Volunteer): In March, the Community Outreach Gardens Committee has made a lot of progress and is continuing to move forward with two pilot projects at the Catherine McAuley Center and at the Ely Community Garden. The committee will be working to connect Linn County community gardens with Master Gardener resources such as hands-on education, the Speaker’s Bureau, Hortline, or other projects.

Demo Garden/Granger House (Lynette Brenzel /Jo Dillion): James Nash, Tracy Wolder and I met with Kathy Wilson, Granger House Director & Don Meritt, Granger House garden liaison on March 22, to review progress of the garden redesign at Granger House. In April, a team of AmeriCorps volunteers will be creating the new cutting garden and raised herb and vegetable garden beds. As soon as cutting garden bed is constructed, Granger House and MG volunteers will move items out of existing beds that merit saving or are able to be moved and into the cutting garden area. MG are growing transplants in the greenhouse and working on designs for the herb/vegetable beds and the cutting garden.

Demo Garden/Lowe Park (Shelby Foley): The snow has melted off the beds and the hearty gardeners are out and about. Devon trimmed the grasses bordering the conifer bed and hopefully will soon be able to uncover the specimen plants. On St. Patrick’s Day, appropriately, Nancy Sutherland scattered the Bells-of-Ireland seed.

Demo Garden/Noelridge (Jean Minehart/Kathy Rhodes): Four Noelridge MGs were invited to speak and demonstrate at the Goodwill of the Heartland Event. Plans are complete for the 2014 MG Herb Garden and plant order reviewed with Kristie. Becki Lynch completed plans for the new AAS garden. Project members continue to assist with mentoring the Goodwill clients the first Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday of each month. Continuing with greenhouse potting and transplanting. The greenhouse is filled with beautiful plants getting ready for the Easter and Mother’s Day Showcases.
Expert Education (Linda Hayward): March 30, Grant Olson presented Historic Seed Saving at the Marion Heritage Center. April 12 (Rescheduled from March 1) Kerry Culp presented “Soil fertility analysis for residential horticulture.. simplified” at the Extension Office.

From the Ground Up (Pam Brackey/Linda Eggleston): Committee met March 24 and are continuing their work on the new curriculum. They will finish up the year at the beginning of May.

Garden Walk (Kay McWhinney/Mary Sam Krumholz): The 2014 MG Garden Walk will take place on Saturday, July 12, from 10:00am-4:00pm. Garden Hosts this year are: Barb Brown; Doris Hardt, Louise Harn, Gene Nassif, and Barbara Wing. The committee met in April.

Greenhouse (Phil Pfister/Shelby Foley): Twice weekly work sessions continue to be well supported, generally with 6-10 Master Gardeners at each session. A lot of seedlings and cuttings have been started and more being planted at each session. Plants will be used in demonstration gardens, donated to HACAP, and other organizations providing assistance to low-income gardeners, and sold at the Plant Sale. Three scouts from Troop 89, three from Troop 42, and a junior girl scout are using the greenhouse to work on the requirements for a Gardening Merit Badge. This activity is lead by LCMG and Head Grower Shelby Foley and LCMG and Scout Leader Matt Pieper. The current plan is to plant the hoop house during the March 25 work session. Signs will be made describing the process for extending the growing season using a hoop house.

Hortline (Doug Smith): The move was smooth. The office is now closer to the front door, closer to clients with questions coming to the office. There isn’t quite the space as before, but shifting can be done. Training was held for use of the manually operated stereoscope and the digital ZipScope. Dates have not been set for more training sessions.

PR (Debbie Main): Several requests are being received for a Master Gardener presence at health fairs and similar events at corporate offices. April 8 & 9 a table will be set up at each TransAmerica location. Priced publications have been relocated to an area near Elizabeth and Mary’s offices so they are more easily accessible when requested.

MG Stipends (Mike Anderson): There have been no requests for stipends in the previous month. A notice will be in the May Germinator that stipends are available for the Upper Midwest Regional MG Conference.

School Projects: Hiawatha (Cindy Fagan/Phil Pfister): Phil kindly delivered filled earth boxes and the students went to work! They helped Mrs. Bradley plant lettuce, Swiss chard, spinach, peppers, tomatoes, basil, cilantro and oregano. The seeds came from Blairs Ferry Hy-Vee Drugstore as part of our grant. The 5th grade ELL (English Language Learners) students will be updating the school garden blog with photos/articles of how things are growing in the Earth boxes. The Hiawatha Compost Club continues to compost fruit and vegetable scraps from the school cafeteria.

Speaker’s Bureau (Deb Walser): LADD Library talks started April 2. There have been requests from area businesses to have speakers during their lunch time hours. Deb also reported that Master Gardeners have been cut
from WMT radio programming after a 25 year relationship.

WMT Garden Show (Sue Usher): The 2014 WMT Outdoor Living Show presented by King's Material was held on March 8-9. Chair was Sue Usher and Tri-Chairs were Karen Woeste and Tammy Lutz. 26 Master Gardeners volunteered their time. 164 people attended the presentations. The Master Gardener's booth answered questions and gave out information to approx. 450 people. Sam Wittrock was available to answer questions regarding Polly the Portable Produce.

Coordinators Report:

Awards Selection Committee met in early March and selected awards recipients for the April 22 Banquet. RSVP cards going out tomorrow (April 2). Cost for MG and interns is $5; the cost for guests is $15. Watch for April messages encouraging MGs and interns to use/update the MG webpage including online directory, quarterly budget reports, etc. Several open chair/co-chair and committee positions - recruiting through emails, Germinator, recommendations

Old Business:

Fundraising Process Committee: Barbara Brown Chair. The MG Fundraising Process Committee met on March 12 to discuss fundraising options for MG projects. Elizabeth Ward reported on Extension guidelines (state-level and Linn County) that relate to MG fundraising as well as precedents set by other counties. Based on those precedents and communication with State MG coordinator, Denny Schrock, the Linn County office has determined that several funding strategies are allowable for MG projects. These options could include fundraising events, sponsorships, in-kind donations, grants, and paid vendors at events. The Linn County Extension Office supports the pursuit of diversified funding for the MG program when it promotes greater flexibility, sustainability, and community impact, while upholding the integrity of the MG mission. Committee will meet again in April to determine next steps for developing processes associated with possible fundraising activities. Committee Notebooks, committee update: Committee has met and Elizabeth continues to work on the project.

New Business:

A photo was taken of current Steering Committee members. Meeting adjourned. Respectfully submitted: Louise Harn Secretary; Date of next meeting: May 6, 2014