Green Thumb
The Newsletter for the Polk County Master Gardeners
ISU Polk County Extension
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Sherri's View from the Garden

"You need a pond," said Dan, my best friend from law school. "My backyard is the size of a postage stamp," I replied. "We'll make it the right size for the yard," he assured me, and a few months later, he arrived from Arkansas armed with thousands of pounds of wall rock and a strong back. We had a wonderful time as we built the pond over a long weekend, fueled by a steady supply of Felix and Oscar's pizza and gin and tonics. "You need zinnias," I told him a few years later as I delivered scores of seeds to him; his backyard now brims with color.

Closer to home, my neighbor and fellow Master Gardener Matt and I chat most days over the long flower bed that separates our two driveways. I make unsolicited suggestions and Matt does all the work. We stroll through our gardens and happily take stock of the daily changes in the landscape. Matt inspired me to become a gardener years ago when I moved in next door and set eyes on his beautiful garden.

On our Beaverdale street, our neighbors and friends regularly trade plants, ideas, and garden tools, and are always happy to lend a hand. Friendships develop outside in the sun while we tend to our gardens, and I like to think that our street gets prettier and friendlier every year. So the next time you're working in your garden, share some of your time, knowledge, muscle, or plants with a friend or a neighbor. Evangelize a little. Turn someone else into a gardener, and he or she will thank you for it. Have a great August!

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"Out of gardens grow fleeting flowers but lasting friendships." ~ Beverly Rose Hopper

Sherri Soich, Steering Committee Chair  sherrisoich@gmail.com  or 515-710-5665.

Changes for MG Training schedule

This year, instead of waiting until the Connect classes are done to have our three face to face classes, we're going to have two in September with the last one being our last class in November. So, the "Orientation evening" will be September 6 and "graduation/potluck" will be on November 29. That way we will be finished with classes before the busy December holiday season. For you, that means that if you want to volunteer as a class coordinator or if you'll need to attend an evening (or three) to finish your 10 hours of education required for MG certification, you'll need to take a good look at your calendar now and plan accordingly.

Class coordinators will be extra important this year as a new MG coordinator gets familiar with the facility and the classes. If you can help, you'll need to be available on Sept. 6 and Nov. 29 between 5:15 and 9:30 pm as well as 2 or 3 Tuesday evenings from 6:00 to 9:45 pm between those dates. We'll need 3 coordinators at least for each of the 11 evenings. If you want to assist and get some last minute volunteer time, email polkmg@iastate.edu before 8-15 please.

Thanks  Mary Farlow
Awards will be presented at the Art Show Reception, open to the public, friends, and family at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden’s Swartz and Walsh rooms on Thursday, August 18, 5:00-7:00 p.m. Selected art work will be exhibited at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden’s North Gallery from August 19 through October 16.

Please bring your friends and family to the Art Show Reception. Some pieces will be for sale.

Pat Reeves, Art Show chair

Discovery Garden

Summer is flying by, which means it is time for the great Iowa State Fair. We are going to be ready and because of all of the renovations, the Garden is looking fabulous! The flowers should be at their peak for the fair, and we are all looking forward to showing them to the hundreds of people that will visit. If you have not seen the Garden yet, come and visit and walk on the new permeable pathway or gaze at the art work. We are sure you will enjoy it.

We will be distributing the fair passes and information about the fair on Wednesday 8/3 at 6 pm. Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Co-Chairs:
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Education Opportunities

Only a few more talks in our gardens and one more ISU Summer Webinar at the Extension office. If you'd like to print a copy for yourself, click here. Or got to the PCMG page http://www.extension.iastate.edu/polk/page/polk-county-master-gardeners and connect to the list.

Fall Master Gardener Training Classes will be starting September 13 on Tuesday evenings at 6:15 at the Extension office. As in previous years, we’ll have the full schedule on the PCMG page soon and you are welcome to audit a class that interests you for a refresher. If you stay for the entire lecture, it counts at 3 hours MG education. You are welcome to bring a beverage or snack for yourself but, just like other intern classes, we ask that you leave the treats (and the seats at tables) for those who are seeing the material for the first time.
Farmers Market

Our July outing at the Market was a hot one, but we still managed to attract nearly 200 visitors to the Polk County Master Gardeners' Booth. We handled a wide variety of gardening questions and continued our free seed packet giveaway. Our next Market appearance will be August 20, when we'll feature Ornamental Grasses for Iowa and Techniques for Canning and Preserving Garden Produce.

Matt Dore, FM Co-chair  matt.dore@drake.edu

Directory Updates

Dawn Cullison is now at dawn.cullison@gmail.com
Cathy Law is now using cathielaw6@gmail.com

Enabling Garden

This is your last chance to come join us for the Tai Chi the Enabling Garden on Saturday, August 6th at 10:00 AM. This gentle exercise is open to folks of all abilities so bring a bottle of water and friend to get your weekend started with stretching, strengthening and relaxation. The class is free, but we are always accepting donations to fund projects in the garden. The co-chairs would like to thank to Bill Goshorn for his time and expertise to lead the classes.

Due to heavy rains July, we had to postpone our "Wanted Small Hands Artists" program until Tuesday, August 9th 6-9 PM. Just a reminder that we will have our talented master gardeners helping children to showcase their creativity with easy artistic projects! Please bring your kids and join us for this fun hands-on "talk." There is no charge for this event.

Our Season of Learning at the Enabling Garden continues with our talk Using Herbs from your Garden by PCMG Nancy (Ike) Eichmann. The program starts at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, August 23rd. Bring a lawn chair and get ready to learn about those herbs you have been growing and how to integrate them into your cooking to really bring out the flavor.

Regular work nights at the Enabling Garden continue on every Tuesday starting around 5:00 PM. As always, please join us for fun, food and fellowship in the garden. (Generally, we will be working even when it is hot, but please use your own judgment with the potential for extreme heat and humidity that often comes with the turn of the calendar to August: Bring water to stay hydrated!)

Thanks again to all of our volunteers that help to make the garden beautiful.

EG Co-Chairs: Sandie Hamilton, Paula Winslow, Christine Barker & Sharon Schoonover.

Do you use Facebook?

If so, please check the various PCMG project Facebook pages regularly and "like" them so you can share news of upcoming events with those who see your posts. Once on Facebook, search for Polk County Master Gardeners, PCMG Garden Tour, Polk County Master Gardeners Annual Plant Sale, Discovery Garden - Polk County Master Gardeners, Demonstration Garden, Polk County Master Gardener Greenhouse, Enabling Garden, and PCMG Demonstration Garden.
Demonstration Garden

Our annual Open House has come and gone again this year, and once again fair weather favored the occasion. The recent hot spell took a break just for that evening, and the much-needed rain fell just days before. The garden truly looked its best that night due to the efforts of so many dedicated Master Gardener volunteers. Thank you to all who helped get the garden ready for visitors and contributed in so many ways to the success of our event.

Our usual Monday work nights continue, as there is still much to be done maintaining the beds and harvesting fruits and vegetables for donation to local food pantries. As of July 25th, Demo has contributed 257 pounds to the Urbandale Food Pantry. Please join us if you can, beginning around 5 p.m., or whenever you can get there.

And now, a couple of programming notes:

Thursday, August 4th, is the date for our Art in the Garden - Small Container Challenge. You are invited to bring a small (think small enough to put on a display table) container garden of your own design for display that evening. There are no restrictions on type of container or selection of plant material, so let your imagination be your guide. Attendees will be asked to vote for their favorite entry. In addition to the container garden challenge, there will be a presentation by Susan Appleget Hurst, local speaker and garden writer, beginning at 7 p.m. Please deliver your container gardens to the display table by 6:30 p.m.

In case you missed the notice, the class on Planting in Shade, with presenter Tara Dudley of Plant Life Designs, was postponed to Thursday, August 11, at 7 p.m.

Co-Chairs, Ruth Doxon, Sandie Sydnes, and Diane Ackerman

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach

Extension programs are available to all without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability.

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