



The Green Thumb

Monthly News and Updates for Polk County Master Gardeners



GARDEN TOUR UPDATE

The Garden Tour meeting On Thursday, Jan. 16th at Jethros is CANCELLED

The Garden Tour is in immediate need of a chair (or co-chairs) to lead this project. If you are interested in leading this event please reach out to Kalsa Parker Browning at kparker@iastate.edu. Please consider giving your time and talents to organizing this educational community event!

The Garden Tour Activities Subcommittee meeting on Jan. 9th will be held as scheduled at Kathy Cole's house: 12949 Lincoln Ave. Clive, IA 50325 at 6:00 p.m.

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Message from the Steering Committee Chair

Hello All and Happy New Year -

For our spotlight interview this month, I was able to catch up with Kate Rolfes. She was busy getting ready for the holidays, but we were able to squeeze in time for a quick chat.



Christine: How or when did you become interested in Gardening? And, what led you to the MG program?

Kate: I am a creative person by nature and received a degree in Studio Art. Gardening acts as creative release for me. I gardened as a hobby, but I had always lived in apartments, so space was a constraint. When I moved in with my fiancé, we had lots more room for gardening at our house and that's when I started to really get into it.

Christine: Flowers or Vegetables? (Or, none of the above?)

Kate: Flowers, I really like perennials and natives.

Christine: When in the garden, what brings a smile to your face?

Kate: I love watching the garden come to life. It's so rewarding to see something you planted as a tiny seedling or seed take root, triple in size, and produce gorgeous flowers or greenery. I enjoy arranging plantings to create symmetry, unique texture and pretty color combinations.

Christine: What do you want others to take away from the Master Gardener Program?

Kate: This is truly a program for all with lots of volunteer and educational opportunities that fit various schedules - including working individuals and those of varying ages and skill levels. MG has been a very welcoming and encouraging group and a great way to volunteer and meet others in the community.

Christine Barker
Steering Committee Chair

Green Thumb - Sneak Peek

Check here for a quick list of volunteer and continuing education opportunities mentioned in this month's Green Thumb.

Check out more details in the appropriate news article.

Volunteer Opportunities

- Program committee - bring soup on Jan. 9th
- 2020 Garden Tour
- Demonstration Garden (Urbandale):
 - Open House Event Coordinator
 - Urbandale School Liaison
 - Co-Chair (Leadership Team)
 - Spring Kick-off Meeting
- Discovery Garden (State Fair Grounds):
 - Communications and leadership opportunities
 - Experience in putting together a CD with photos and music? Contact Patrick (515-657-1937)
- Nominating Committee co-chair positions
- Ambassadors group - get involved!

Continuing Education

- Jan 9: Tivon Feeley: topic TBD 2.5 hours education
- Feb 13 : Dr. Thomas Rosberg: topic TBD, 2.5 hours education
- March 12: Aaron Steil: Gardening Under Lights & information on Reimen Gardens, 2.5 hours education
- April 2: 1 hour of education by Marcia Leeper, topic TBD

Program Committee

Chair: [Mary Poulter](#)



- Thursday, Jan 9, 2020: Tivon Feeley: 2.5 hours education, The History of Iowa from a Tree's Perspective
 - 5:45 p.m. Potluck begins - bring a side dish if you can (**could use a couple more volunteers to bring soup, contact Mary if able**)
 - 6:15 p.m. Housekeeping/introduction
 - 6:30 p.m. Tivon Feeley: The History of Iowa from a Tree's Perspective
 - 9:00 End of evening

RSVP by Jan. 8th

If the weather is poor, look for an email with announcements

- Thursday, Feb 13: Dr. Thomas Rosberg: "Exploring the Natural History of Iowa's Most Wild and Pristine Places." 2.5 hours education
- Thursday, March 12: Aaron Steil: Gardening Under Lights & information on Reimen Gardens, 2.5 hours education
- Thursday, April 2: Spring Celebration: Awards and one hour of education by Marcia Leeper, Container Gardening

Ambassadors

Do you like to speak in public?

Do you like to speak in public? If so, contact the Ambassador group. The DSM home and Garden Show (Feb 6-9, 2020) has asked for some speakers from the PCMG.

Contact

Chairs:

Rhonda Murphy
Mary Rolfes

The Ambassador group has a prepared slide show plus we will also take offers of other topics. We have an opportunity to have as many time slots as we want.

Do you know of an organization that would like a presentation from the Master Gardeners? If so, let us know!

2020 Bus Trips



SAVE THE DATE for our 2020 bus trips! We have two fun bus trips planned for 2020. Each trip includes opportunities to connect with other gardeners, tour fabulous gardens, and shop for plants and accessories at local garden centers.

The one day bus trip will be July 25th. We will travel to the Cedar Rapids area to visit some beautiful private gardens in-between shopping opportunities at some really nice garden centers.

Contact

Chair:

Laurie Barrick

We are traveling to the Kansas City area August 29th to the 30th for our overnight trip. We have found so many gardens to visit in this area - it is going to be a very busy two days of garden overload!



The registration forms with trip details will be coming soon. For now, we hope you will get these dates blocked off on your calendar and plan to join us on the bus tours. We are very excited about all of the stops on these two tours!

Questions? Please contact [Laurie Barrick](#).

Demonstration Garden

Time to start a new year. Each year we have the opportunity to start fresh, review lessons learned from the previous gardening season and experiment with something new. It has been an interesting early winter. Many bicyclists and hikers were on the trails Christmas eve and Christmas Day. A few days later we were having a winter rain storm with no snow predicted for central Iowa in the very near future. Hopefully snow cover will eventually arrive serving as winter plant protection.

The Demonstration garden is looking for MG's and interns to step up into leadership roles. There are a variety of opportunities available including (but not limited to) the following:

Open House Event Coordinator: Co-Chair of our most important community event on July 9th, 2020. You and your team will welcome the Urbandale community to our hidden treasure by creating a festive event through planning activities, demonstrations, children's fun, art, food and more. Ideal for a two person team.

Urbandale School Liaison: Serve as the Demo garden's primary contact with Urbandale Schools, including inviting to special events, recruiting student volunteers, coordinating with school system and exploring and planning special projects. Ideal for Urbandale teacher or past or present parent.

Co-Chair Demonstration Garden Leadership Team: Bring your passion, interests, and ideas to the Demo Garden Leadership Team. Match your skills to flower garden management, orchard coordination, special events, volunteer recruitment/coordination, special projects. Options are endless.

If you have an interest in learning about the volunteer opportunities mentioned or the many others available, please contact a Co-Chair.

Mark your calendar for our Spring Kick Off Meeting to be held on **Monday, March 23rd at the**



Co-chairs:
[Ruth Doxon](#)
(515) 253-9115
[Sandie Sydnes](#)
(515) 276-1497

Visit our [website](#) and like us on [Facebook](#).



Urbandale Public Library. Details to be announced.

Happy New Year! Welcome to a new decade and a new season.



**Thursday, August 13
through Sunday, August
23, 2020 - 2020
Iowa State Fair**

Contact:
Co-chairs:

[Dean Brand](#)
(515) 360-0774
[Joyce Carle](#)
(515) 229-6769
[Jean Roe](#)

Discovery Garden

A Hidden Gem

As we look forward to 2020, we pause to review, refresh and renew. As we review, we are reminded of how grateful we are for the many MG volunteers who worked so hard during 2019 and are so important to our Discovery Garden, as well as, at all the project gardens under the leadership of our ISU Extension and Outreach Office in Polk County. As we refresh and renew, we look toward having another successful year of gardening and educating the public through our volunteer efforts and talents. Thank you and have a Happy New Year!

We received a donation of \$100 in tribute to our very own MG volunteers ~ Paul and Gloria Morris ~ from Joan Mannheimer and the Mannheimer Family Foundation Fund with the Greater Des Moines Community Foundation. **Thank you Paul and Gloria for this connection and thank you Joan Mannheimer!** The donation is much appreciated.

DG Communications Team: We currently have an opening on our Communications Team with a heavy emphasis on the administrative side of the DG business. We do have someone who is interested so that is exciting! However, if anyone else is interested in assisting the Communications Team ~ the work and responsibilities could be shared. Just let us know at the contact information listed below.

This work is something you can complete from your home using your own computer and printer. This is a great way for you to earn MG volunteer hours working on your own schedule with timelines developed by the DG Communications Team and the DG Co-Chairs. If you are comfortable with computer work, are well versed in gmail and computer software programs and have an interest; please contact any Discovery Garden Co-Chair for more information. Some of the duties could include: writing and editing an article each month for the Green Thumb;

(515) 205-8706
[Patrick Schmitt](#)
(515) 657-1937

[View our website](#)
[join our Facebook group.](#)



preparing and editing monthly DG emails; mailing correspondence; updating the DG gmail contact listings; preparing labels and signage for the DG garden beds; attending meetings with the DG Communications Team (typically a few times a year); coordinating efforts with the ISU Extension and Outreach, Polk County Office as needed; assisting with the communications work for MG volunteers at the Iowa State Fair shifts; preparing agendas, letters, correspondence and research on behalf of the Co-Chairs; and other various administrative work, as needed.

DG Co-Chair Leadership: Please contact any Co-Chair if you have an interest in a potential leadership position as a Co-Chair. We, as Co-Chairs, manage the business side of the Discovery Garden; the people side of the Garden, as well as, solve problems which may arise on an ongoing basis. We would love to have some new MG's step up for future leadership. Please join us at our Discovery Garden!

Upcoming Dates:
Spring Dinner and Planning Meeting - Mid-March
date to be announced

Polk County Master Gardeners Garden Tour

June 20, 2020 9am-4pm

featuring gardens in Urbandale and Clive

GARDEN TOUR UPDATE



extraordinary
gardens
by ordinary people

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[Garden Tour Website](#)
[Facebook Page](#)

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Nominating Committee

Contact:

Chair:

[Bob Helvey](#)

Want to be a chair? Your name could be here!

We now have a formal process to nominate and elect officers and two at-large positions for the Steering Committee.

[That document can be viewed here.](#)

This was the first year the process was used, and it was used to great success. We elected folks for all the elected positions to the Steering Committee. Thank you to Rosie Surber, Paul Satre, and Kalsa Parker Browning for their efforts in making the process work. My hat's off to them.

As with many successes like theirs, Rosie and Paul have accepted new positions as Co-Chairs at the Enabling Garden. I don't need to wish them luck in their new position because I know they will be successful. The Enabling Garden is getting two valuable folks.

That leaves the Nomination and Election Committee with a hole in our management team. We only have one chair, me, and to be successful we need more. So, **I'm reaching out via this Green Thumb asking for volunteers to join me as a Co-Chair of this committee.** The link to the web site will give you information about the committee's activities. If you have questions or want to volunteer, you can reach me at

bob@tsmcgrp.com

or 804-357-7956. Thank you in advance for considering this opportunity.

Electronic Directory

The Electronic Directory is ready! If your contact info is included in this resource you will receive an email to access this document through www.box.com

You will need a box.com account to view this document. This is to ensure your personal information is protected and only visible by current Polk County Master Gardeners.

Find info about how to sign up for box.com [here](#) (it's free).

[Questions? Email Kalsa.](#)

Better Late Than Never!

Record your volunteer and continuing education hours

If you have unrecorded hours from 2019 - please get those in! Your efforts help show the impact that Polk County Master Gardeners have in our community.

In 2018 Polk County Master Gardeners recorded:
19,335 volunteer hours

In 2019, we've recorded:
16,721 volunteer hours

[Record your hours here](#)

About

Polk County Extension Agriculture and Natural Resources programs aim to help all Iowans, from the home hobbyist to the ag professional, make informed decisions through research-based education. Some programs and focus areas include farm management education, technical expertise for crops, livestock and pests, as well as our Polk County Master Gardener volunteer program; our signature horticulture education program. Our work supports clean water and healthy habitats, profitable farms, and a more secure food system.



Contact

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Natural Resources Program Coordinator
ISU Extension and Outreach, Polk County
(515) 957-5768
kparker@iastate.edu



genetic information, marital status, national origin, pregnancy, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or status as a U.S. veteran, or other protected classes. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies may be directed to the Diversity Advisor, 2150 Beardshear Hall, 515 Morrill Road, Ames, Iowa 50011, 515-294-1482, extdiversity@iastate.edu. All other inquiries may be directed to 800-262-3804.