Down Cheryl's Garden Path

February was certainly a weather challenge. March looks to start out on the same path. That is the joy of working in the greenhouse.

While we can't promise white sandy beaches, palm trees or pina coladas, you will find a warm escape, if only for a few hours. Seeds sown early in February are germinating and will soon be ready for transplanting.

The greenhouse team is getting settled in the new facility and making adaptations as we face new challenges. There are many seeds to be sown, pots to be washed and soon, transplanting to be done as well as the fellowship that coincides with these projects.

There is always a pot of coffee on and drinking water available and depending on the day, pastries and cookies for consumption. A rare treat and delicious deviation were the breakfast burritos handmade and brought in by Intern Rich Gilbreath. You never know what you will find on a work day.

Please get into the habit of checking the greenhouse Facebook page. Updates are posted weekly. We have many interns who have not been in for training. Mark the work days on your calendar; every Wednesday and Saturday from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm or when the day’s work is complete. Last sow date is March 28. As always, wear your name tag and come when you can and leave when you must. See you at the greenhouse!

Cheryl Fridl
Steering Committee Chairperson
# Education Opportunities

--- free & open to the Public

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Speaker</th>
<th>Event Details</th>
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| Kathleen Delate | **Organic Gardening -- focus on Tomatoes & Peppers**  
Thursday, March 8th  
6:30 to 8:00 PM  
Raccoon River Park Nature Lodge  
West Des Moines  
For a Map to RRP Nature Lodge: [CLICK HERE](#)  
Kathleen is our statewide expert on organic gardening. She was with us at the Program class in February -- but this presentation will focus on growing two "challenging" vegetables using organic practices.  
Reservations are not required. |
| Mike White | **Grape Vine Pruning**  
**Friday, March 2nd**  
10:00 to Noon  
Demonstration Garden  
**and**  
**Saturday, March 24th**  
9:00 to Noon  
Iowa State Fairgrounds  
(Charles Thorton Vineyard at Grandfathers Barn)  
Mike is our statewide expert on grapes and wine industry. If you have grapevines this is a great opportunity to learn how to care for those special plants!  
Reservations are not required. |
| Jesse Randall | **Pruning Workshop**  
**Monday, March 5th**  
1:00 to 3:30 PM  
Demonstration Garden  
It is time for our annual Intern Workshop and there is room for a few MG to attend for continuing education credit. Monday’s workshop will be conducted by one of ISU’s Forestry Specialists, Jesse Randall.  
Space is LIMITED -- Please pre-register by contacting Ike: nancyike@iastate.edu (515-957-5761) |

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## 2018 Educational Program Nights

2 Hours of Continuing Education
this month we invite you to learn from:

Rick Bednarek  
NRCS Soil Health Specialist  
and

Patrick Bryant,  
Prairie & Pollinator Educator,  
Neil Smith National Wildlife Refuge

Thursday, March 15  
The Program is FREE & OPEN to the Public

Get Here Early for Dinner!  
Once again there will be a free, made from scratch soup dinner before the program. If you'd like to bring a dish to share it is welcome--but not required!

Each month we'll feature a variety of soups made by our volunteers--and at least one will be a meat & dairy-free soup!

RSVP Please!  
We need to know how many chairs--and anticipate the amount of soup to prepare, please RSVP and provide a phone number AND the names of who will attend:

Please register electronically (preferred): CLICK HERE!

By phone: call Ike: 515-957-5761

Connect with your MG friends on the third Thursday in March and clock two hours of great horticulture education as well!

Location: Polk County Extension Office

Soup Dinner: 5:45 to 6:20 PM
Program: 6:30 to 8:30 PM
Volunteers Needed for Children's Event

Help Host our Children's Learning Activity

*During the Annual National Ag Day at*

**Living History Farms**

**Saturday, March 17th**

**Noon to 4:00 pm**

If you can volunteer for all or part of the afternoon, please contact:

Jessica Moyer:  jessjoymoyer@gmail.com  515-829-6682

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Demonstration Garden

*Spring is just around the corner.*

This year the spring equinox falls on **Tuesday, March 20, 2018 at 12:15 P.M. EDT**. Many of us are looking forward to the slowly warming weather, particularly after having experienced icing multiple times in mid to late February.

A couple of the intern pruning labs have had to be rescheduled due to the weather. As a result there are a few openings for master gardeners to participate in a refresher course.

**Watch for communications from Nancy (Ike). Openings are limited and reservations required.**

Our annual Spring Kick-Off meeting for the Demonstration Garden is: **Monday, March 19th**  

**6:30pm** at the Urbandale Library. 

All are welcome, please join us.

Although official work nights do not commence until early May, **in April there will be several opportunities for volunteering.** In addition to our annual Spring Clean up scheduled for the morning of April 21st, we will be finishing the edging of the new pathway near a couple of our beds and also construct a tumbled paver path connecting the latest pathway to a section completed a few years back. **Dates and times to be announced later.**
Happy Spring!

Visit our website and Like our Current Facebook page:

http://www.demonstrationgardenpcmg.org/
https://www.facebook.com/demonstrationgarden/

Demo Garden Co-Chairs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ruth Doxon</th>
<th><a href="mailto:rdoxon@gmail.com">rdoxon@gmail.com</a></th>
<th>(515) 253-9115</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sandie Sydnes</td>
<td><a href="mailto:sasydnes@gmail.com">sasydnes@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>(515) 276-1497</td>
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Discovery Garden

With warmer temps, sunshine, and ice melting Spring has to be getting close.

The Spring meeting will be held on:

Wednesday, March 21st
Bright GrandView golf course
Meal: 6pm, Meeting 6:30pm

There is still time to rsvp at discoverygardenpcmg@gmail.com.
We have a full agenda, so we hope to see all of you there, ready and eager to begin the 2018 season.

May your troubles be less and your blessings be more, and nothing but happiness come through your door.

Co-Chairs:
Dean Brand  drbrand@mediacombb.net  tel: 515-360-0774
Jean Roe  ljroe@g.com  tel:515.205.8706
Patrick Schmitt  schmittpatrickj@gmail.com  tel:515.279.9645

Like us on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/discoverygarden/
View our website:  www.discoverygardenpcmg.org
Enabling Garden

Please join us to start planning a productive 2018 season!

Tuesday, March 20th at 6:00 PM
Altoona Public Library
700 8th Street SW.

Also please save the dates:

- April 10th (Tuesday) - Central College Service Day (Time - TBD)
- April 21st (Saturday) - Enabling Garden perennial plant sale
- April 28th (Saturday) - 1:00PM Spring Clean-up
- May 1st (Tuesday) - 5:00PM First work night at the Garden
- May 15th (Tuesday) - 5:00PM EG planting day for everyone!

Also, plan ahead: Our work nights are Tuesday nights starting around 5:00 PM, weather permitting. Plan ahead and come join the fun, working and socializing in the garden.

Thanks and see everyone soon!

Please connect with us on our website
www.enablinggardenpcmrg.org

or check out current pictures and activities that are going on at the Enabling Garden:
https://www.facebook.com/groups/EnablingGarden/

Enabling Garden Co-Chairs:

- Sandie Hamilton
- Paula Winslow
- Christine Barker
- Sharon Schoonoer

Master Gardener Bus Tour
We are finalizing the details of our two trips for this year. We hope to have
registration forms available soon for the one day trip. On the meantime, grab
your calendar and make sure you **SAVE THE DATE for both trips!**

**One Day Trip - Saturday, June 2nd**
We will be heading to the Iowa City area for our one day tour this year. We have a
cute (and very busy) day planned. Our trip includes visits to private gardens, a
public garden and some great shopping opportunities for both plants and yard
art. As we have planned previous trips, we have had home gardeners suggest
that we also visit their friend or neighbor's garden - this time one man suggested
that we also include his brother's garden in our trip - We look forward to visiting
the very different gardens that the two brothers have created in the Iowa City
area!

**Three Day Trip - Friday - Sunday, July 20 - 22nd**
We are very excited to be returning to the Rockford/Janesville area for our three
day trip this year. There are so many great public gardens to visit:

- Anderson Japanese Gardens
- Rotary Botanical Gardens
- Nicholas Conservatory
- Gardens, and Klehm Arboretum & Botanic Garden.

As a special treat - we also have a shopping stop scheduled for The Flower
Factory in Stoughton, WI. Most people are impressed (and a little overwhelmed)
with the huge selection of perennials available at this nursery. We will also make
time for visits to other great nurseries in the area.

**Chair:**
Laurie Barrick barrick8792@msn.com tel: 515-278-8792

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**Art in the Garden 2018**

**Saturday, August 4th, 2018 - Demonstration Garden**

9:00 am to 3:00 pm
One very simple way we can all help promote our Art in the Garden fundraiser is to like our Facebook page, and share new posts!

We plan on having not only more vendors this year, but also offer some food, live demonstrations and a public art project! We will have the "Made by a Master Gardener" booth again, for those of you who love to craft and create, but don't want to commit to your own booth (a percentage of sales in this goes to the Polk County Master Gardeners)

Of course, we will need volunteers to help run this event - look for sign-ups starting in June.

Are you or someone you know interested in being a vendor? Artist vendors do NOT have to be Master Gardeners.

Click for links to the Artist Vendor Application

Art in the Garden Co-chairs:
Mary Howell-Williams: mhwphoto@mchsi.com
Katherine Howsare: howsarek@live.com

Polk County Master Gardeners' 2018 Garden Tour

Preparations are underway for the 2018 Garden Tour!
There have been lots of updates to our webpage: www.pcmggardentour.com

Join the Garden Tour Committee! Our planning group will meet again:

- Tuesday March 13th at 6:00 PM
  Johnston Public Library--East Meeting Room

- Thursday, April 12th at 6:00 PM
  Johnston Public Library--West Meeting Room

- Thursday, May 10th at 6:00
  Johnston Public Library--West Meeting Room

Sub-committees Meetings.
are held on Tuesday nights at Jodie Hands' home--6680 NW 54th Ct, Johnston

- Publicity subcommittee: Tuesday, March 6 at 6:30
- Activities subcommittee: Tuesday, April 10 at 6:30
We have a sub-committee who is planning activities and demonstrations for the gardens on tour day and a publicity committee. . .

. . . Interested in attending a sub-committee meeting? Please contact Jodie.

Donations
If anyone knows a local garden related business who might consider making a donation to help offset printing costs or costs of materials for activities, please contact Jodie Hand or Therese Rolfes.

Craft Supplies--cleaning out your closets?
Activities subcommittee has some fun ideas for the visitors to each garden--for children and adults and they have a wish list of craft supplies. Click here for the full list. If you have some to donate please drop them off at the Polk County Extension office.

Helping with Garden Prep
Volunteers will be needed to prep gardens ahead of the tour.

Please sign up here.

You can click on any day from April 1 - June 29 when you are available. Host garden sponsors will contact you about assisting with garden maintenance tasks (planting, weeding, watering, etc.).

Helping on Garden Tour Day
Volunteers will be needed to set-up and manage children activities and demonstrations on the day of the tour. We will need help taking tickets, answering gardening questions, and miscellaneous tasks throughout the day. Jodie will have information closer to June on how to sign-up for shifts.

Even if you aren't on the planning committee please take the time to "Like" our pages and share it with your friends so we can get some FREE publicity through social media!

https://www.facebook.com/PCMGgardentour/

Instagram: pcmggardentour

Questions -- call Jodie--but it is also okay to just come to our next meeting!

Save the Date: PCMG 2018 Garden Tour is Saturday, June 30!

Garden Tour Co-chairs: Eric & Jodie Hand

Primary Contact is Jodie:

• jodiemariehand@gmail.com  319-361-9224

Secondary Contact is Eric:

• eric.hand@caseys.com  515-291-1214
Plant Sale

Mark your 2018 Calendars for May 4, 5, & 6!

We are so excited that we are in a position to have a Plant Sale this year. There is extra pressure on us this year to make this sale our most successful ever. We are exploring possibilities for a permanent home and should we be successful it will be a costly endeavor. I know it is early but please start thinking about what you can contribute to the sale. Your donations translate to pure profit so don’t be shy about also asking friends, neighbors and relatives to contribute.

If you have any questions or ideas for the Plant Sale please contact one of the Co-Chairs

Save the Date for our Plant Sale Preview:

- Thursday, April 19th
- Polk County Extension Office
- Pot Luck at 5:45--bring a dish to share
- Program: 6:30 to 8:00 PM

Plant Sale Co-chairs:

Isabella Hurless-Banks: imhurless@aol.com
Jen Firtzlaff: skiier13@mchsi.com

Farmers' Market 2018

Downtown Des Moines on the third Saturday of the month May-September

We are in the process of setting up a Signup.com page for volunteers. Look for details and instructions in next month's Green Thumb.

If you have ideas about special gardening topics that we should feature at one of our Farmers’ Market appearances this season - please contact a Co-chair!

Farmers' Market Co-chairs:

Matt Doré: matt.dore@drake.edu
Sherri Soich: sherrisoich@gmail.com
Randy Campbell: campbellrd@mchsi.com
All-Iowa Master Gardener Art Show 2018

Tentatively mid-September through mid-November.  
Please watch for updates!

Categories are:

- Drawing
- Painting
- Mixed Media
- Ceramic
- Glass
- Fiber/Leather/Basketry
- Metal
- Re-purposed Garden Art

Photography - NEW - Identify your photo as:

- Traditional
- Close Up
- or Digitally Enhanced (limit is 3 entries in photography)

Let's make this the seventh year the biggest show yet!

Please email any questions to Patricia Reeves

Committee Chair: patriciareeves2@gmail.com

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ISU Soil Lab Now Closed

Soil samples will no longer be accepted at the ISU Soil Lab

Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship labs:

IDALS operates soil analysis labs in several locations. For more information on those lab locations, CLICK HERE.

This closing does NOT impact the operation of the Plant & Insect Diagnostic Clinic. The PIDC will continue to operate as in the past.

March Office Hours for Ike
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Phone: 515-957-5761

by email: nancyike@iastate.edu

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach

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

Polk County Master Gardeners, 1625 Adventureland Drive, Suite A, Altoona, IA 50009

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