The Master Gardener Plant Sale is the largest source of income for Polk County Master Gardener projects. Because of all of the expenses associated with getting our new Greenhouses up and running last year, we are having to dig deeply into our reserve account to cover our expenses for 2015. So, it is essential that this year’s sale be our biggest and best ever, in fact a true BLOCKBUSTER. For that to happen we need the help and support of each and every one of you. We need you to come to the sale not only to purchase plants but also to donate as many garden related items as possible, give of your time as a Plant Sale volunteer and, of course, pass the word to all your friends and neighbors to come and shop till they drop. To those of you who have already volunteered and/or made donations, thanks so much.

**Friday evening, 5:30 to 7 pm is the MG "Pre-sale".** Remember, you must have your MG name badge and you are allowed to bring one (ONLY ONE) guest.

**SILENT AUCTION ITEM**

![Image](image_url)

Image Name: Prairie Dawn

Professionally framed and ready to hang: metal, deep blue frame, double matt, outer dimensions of frame: 38" x 21", Lightweight plexi-glass, Image size: approximately 29" x 12" Donation by Photographer: Larry Mendenhall. **Bids taken at Plant Sale Friday after 5:30 until 3:00 Sunday.**

**HELP SPREAD THE WORD**

Print and display the poster for family, friends and co-workers to see. [Click here.](#)

Follow us on Facebook. (Our facebook page is a work in progress!) It can be accessed at [https://www.facebook.com/PCMGPlantSale](https://www.facebook.com/PCMGPlantSale) You can share out posts on your own FB page.

**Plant Sale Chairs: Jen Jenkins 422-8947, Isabella Hurless-Banks 278-2067, and Joy Trueblood 473-2638**
Some years back I heard an Iowa Public Radio interview of a woman who wrote fiction set in the rural Midwest. One of the pieces she read on the air painted a picture of long-abandoned Iowa farm on a summer day. As I remember the scene, a falling-down house and barn, long abandoned, had almost disappeared from the landscape. But a colorful garden patch persisted in the old farmstead's front yard, with decades old roses, daylilies, black-eyed Susans and other perennials stubbornly blooming through weeds. The handiwork of the gardener who planted that flower patch was the only remaining testimony of a farm family's former presence on the property. Although everyone else had forgotten, the garden remembered.

That fictional scene struck me at the time, and I thought about it again a few weeks ago as I walked down Beaver Avenue, past the former home of Polk County Master Gardener Nancy Bork. Nancy's Beaverdale garden was a showpiece on the 2012 PCMG Garden Tour. Although Nancy didn’t know it at the time, she had lung cancer, and that disease took her life less than a year later. Nancy's house then sold to new owners who planted grass over the flower bed she had established in the "parking" between the street and sidewalk. But signs of Nancy's garden handiwork remain. On the very early spring day that I passed by, crocuses and snowdrops - practically the only plants growing in the still-frigid landscape -were blooming beautifully around the base of a large tree in Nancy's front yard. In the weeks since that walk, I've spotted lots of other perennials poking through the remaining beds on her property. Nancy's garden remembers her.

As this growing season begins, take time to think about your own garden legacy. The landscape you are creating will leave a lasting mark on your home and neighborhood, so be thoughtful and plan for the long-term. I wish I had followed that advice years back when, as many novice gardeners do, I planted what has turned out to be an impressively wide-variety of invasive plant species. My shovel and I still stay busy trying to keep them at bay. Other past efforts have proved more successful, like the peony hedge I planted two decades ago, and the evergreen trees and towering Red Sunset maple that now grace the east side of my front lawn.

There is a more immediate garden legacy that deserves mention here. Many Master Gardeners have worked incredibly hard at our Greenhouse this winter and spring. Thanks to their efforts, the various Project Gardens will be filled with an incredible variety of beautiful plants this summer. Equally important, proceeds from the Plant Sale will provide critical funds for our organization over the next year. Special thanks to Greenhouse Chairs Bob and Alda Helvey and to Greenhouse stalwarts John Zoutte, Cathie Law, Judy Elings, Jerry Farrell, Gladys Hertzberg, Paul Bratton, Cheryl Fridl, Bob and Jackie Kaufman, and Peggy Goetzke, plus all the MGs who watered the Greenhouse plants on non-work days. Thanks as well to Plant Sale Committee stalwarts Isabella Hurless-Banks, Jen Jenkins, Joy Trueblood and Jen Firzlaff. Well done! ~ Matt

Matthew Dore, Steering Committee Chair, matt.dore@drake.edu
Farmers' Market

May 16 will be our first of five appearances at the Des Moines Downtown Farmers' Market. We're stationed at the corner of Court Avenue and Third Street on the third Saturday of each month, answering questions from market-goers on all sorts of gardening topics. If that sounds terrifying, rest assured that three or four other master gardeners are always nearby to help. We're also armed with ISU handouts on a variety of subjects, and give out the Hort Helpline phone number again and again. The shifts are from 6:45 to 9:00 am, and 9:00 to 12:15. Volunteers are welcome to take a break and stroll around, and the shopping, eating, and people/dog watching at the market are great fun. It's an easy way to earn volunteer hours.

We choose a few feature topics each month. This month we'll be focusing on planning and planting vegetable gardens and flower beds. Later in the season, we'll tackle subjects such as canning, attracting butterflies to the garden, roses, water features, and fall clean-up, among others. We're always looking for volunteers, and if a volunteer has a favorite gardening topic he or she would like us to feature, all the better! At the PCMG plant sale this Saturday, we're also setting up our booth from 8:00 to noon to answer questions, and would happily accept some help.

If you'd like to volunteer for the plant sale booth or the farmers' market, please contact Sherri Soich at 710-5665 or sherrisoich@gmail.com.

Co-Chairs:
Matt Dore matt.dore@drake.edu 274-3292
Sherri Soich sherrisoich@gmail.com 710-5665
Randy Campbell campbellrd@mchsi.com 265-7074

Bus Trips

Registrations are open for our one day trip to Hazelton, Iowa on Saturday, May 30! Please access the registration form through the Polk County Master Gardener website. Our trip to Northeast Iowa is a unique opportunity to visit an Amish community where our host will be providing a home-cooked meal in her home, letting us shop in her nursery and arranging visits to private gardens in the area. Before we get to Hazelton we will be visiting Gary Wittenbaugh's private garden - where it is a real treat to see 900 plants (including 325 conifers) thriving on his 50 foot residential lot. We must have your check and reservation form to hold a spot on the tour.

Save the date for our trip to St. Louis on August 7 to 9. The highlight of this trip will be a visit to the Missouri Botanic Gardens. More details to come when the registration form is available.

Chair: Laurie Barrick barrick8792@msn.com

EAB is close - so you may need to know

Extension publication PM 2084 has been revised with current EAB information. Now that most of Polk county is within 15 miles of a known infestation of Emerald Ash Borer, Ike Eichmann has edited a guide for finding an Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship Certified Pesticide Applicator. Click here to find the instructions.
Demonstration Garden

Rain on Saturday pushed our Spring Cleanup back a couple of days, but we sure enjoyed a beautiful evening in the garden on Monday. We had a great turnout and accomplished quite a lot. Thanks to everyone who pitched in to get the garden ready for the growing season! Believe it or not, there are still some weeds left to pull and a few projects that we didn't get to, so Spring Cleanup - Part 2 will be Monday, May 4, beginning at 5:30. One of the jobs will involve moving landscape bricks from some of the beds and adding them to others. You can skip your Monday workout, and be sure to bring your gloves!

By the time you read this, the fencing crew will have installed a new picket fence around the pantry garden, complete with rabbit barrier to thwart the critter population in our neighborhood. If you’ve been reading this space, you know that this fencing has been a long time in the making. Hats off to the many folks who worked behind the scenes and on the actual construction of this much-needed project. Now that the fence is in, there is still work to be done to ready the bed for planting (see Spring Cleanup - Part 2 above).

Official work nights in the demo garden begin Monday, May 11, at 5:30. We'll also have Thursday work nights beginning May 14, which will continue until our open house in July.

Co-chairs in training:
Diane Ackerman fridafolks@aol.com
Ruth Doxon rdoxon@gmail.com
Susan Travis eagles.wind@gmail.com

Discovery Garden

In case you have not heard the news, the Discovery Garden received a Search for Excellence award from the Iowa Master Gardeners. We received it for our plant signage that is provided during the fair. Congratulations to Gloria Morris and the Communications team for all of their hard work and for the education that is provided.

Plant pickup will be Saturday May 9th from 9 to 11 am at the GREENHOUSE in Altoona, Cheree and Jean Schustek will be there to assist with the plants, that have been arranged by garden so it should be easy to accomplish.

Thanks to Alda and Bob Helvey, Cathie Law, Gladys Hertzberg, Jean Schustek, and the rest of the GH crew for providing the plants for the Garden, it is a huge undertaking.

The Garden has been cleaned and is ready to be planted, which needs to be completed by May 30th.

"Spring unlocks the flowers to paint the laughing soil."
Co-Chairs: Dean Brand drbrand@mediacombb.net ph.: 515-360-0774
Jean Roe jroe@q.com ph.: 515-205-8706
Patrick Schmitt schmittpatrickj@gmail.com ph.: 515-279-9645
Cheree Tilton tiltoncm@gmail.com ph: 515-262-0488
Art Show

Be part of the fourth annual Master Gardener's Art Show. New this year, the show is open to all Iowa Master Gardeners. The exhibition will be held at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, beginning with a reception on Monday, August 31, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Applications are being accepted now through August 1, 2015. Entries must have a horticultural, floriculture, or gardening theme and must have been completed within the last 3 years. In addition to Best of Category designation, selected art work will be exhibited at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden's North Gallery from September 1 through November 16. Free standing art pieces may be entered in the Art Show, but it is not possible to display free standing objects in the North Gallery; these entries will be represented in a photo collage. Selections for art to be hung in the gallery will be based on Botanical Garden criteria for exhibits and selection will be part of the judging process.

Awards will be presented at the Art Show Reception open to the public, friends, and family at the Botanical Garden's Swartz and Walsh rooms on Monday, August 31, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

If not selected to hang in the North Gallery, art needs to be picked up August 31, 7:30 p.m. at the Botanical Garden. If selected to be hung in the North Gallery, art needs to be picked up on November 17.

Categories - Drawing, Painting, Photography, Mixed Media, Fiber/Leather/Basketry, Ceramic, Metal, Glass, and Repurposed for Garden Art. If an individual artist wishes to apply in more than one category, a separate application will need to be submitted for each piece of artwork. Up to 3 entries can be made per category. Mail completed application(s) to Pat Reeves by August 1, 2015. Questions - contact Pat at patriciareeves2@gmail.com

Please check out the categories and enter the Art Show. The application is at this link. Please bring your friends and family to the Art Show Reception. Some pieces will be for sale.

Chair: Patricia Reeves patriciareeves2@gmail.com

Detour

Posted to Facebook at ISU Extension and Outreach - Polk County at ISU Extension and Outreach - Polk County

Here are a couple of temporary detours that will get you to our office while I-80 Exit 142 eastbound off-ramp (orange highlighted ramp) is closed from now until May 21. Using exit 141 off I-80 Eastbound is a good way to reach the greenhouse for the plant sale.
Enabling Garden

While our Annual Arbor Day Celebration was supposed to be held on April 25th, due to the overwhelming forecast for rain, wind and chilly temperatures we made the decision to cancel the event. It was a tough decision, but with the weather we feared that attendees wouldn't have an enjoyable time.

Thank you to everyone that assisted in the 3 clean-up days, the garden is now ready for our Spring activities. We are very grateful for our volunteers; you all are the key the Enabling Garden's continued success. Many thanks!

Our regular work nights at the Enabling Garden have started on Tuesdays any time after 5:00PM to dark, weather permitting. Please join us for fun, food and fellowship in the garden.

The Enabling Garden's arranged plant pick-up time for the Enabling Garden is Friday, May 7th from 5:30-6:30 PM at the Master Gardener Greenhouse (at Victorian Acres, Altoona). Please ensure that you pick up your plants at that time or make arrangements for someone to pick them up for you. Planting in the garden can begin immediately or after you feel the threat of frost has past.

Our Season of Learning starts this month with our special guest, Barry Laws from Quilted Gardens, who will present Captivating Conifers for Landscaping. Barry will provide interesting and unique ideas on conifers. Please join us at 7:00PM on Tuesday, May 19th for what is sure to be a fascinating discussion that you won't want to miss!

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

Greenhouse

The plants at the greenhouse are looking healthy and colorful. This Friday is the start of our big sale and there is a lot of plant material to chose from.

At the last steering committee meeting Bob and I announced our retirement from managing the greenhouse effective at the end of the 2016 growing season. We have approached several people about replacement positions. Both of us will remain and work with the new management team to the extent they want our input.

We have had a terrific time, learned a lot and met fabulous people like you. At the end of 2016 we will have completed our sixth year with the greenhouse team. Thanks to each of you, thanks for all the roles you have taken on and thank you for your valuable advice. I am amazed every time I go to the greenhouse by what can be accomplished with faithful volunteers who always go the extra mile.

Non Profit Organizations

On Saturday May 9 any left over plants will be given away to nonprofit organizations. If you know of a church, organization, food pantry or community park that would like the plants, please ask them to pick up plants between 12:00 and 2:00 pm. Each person will be asked to sign in with their name and organization they are representing.

Soil For Sale

If you would like a bag of the soil that we use at the greenhouse, please send Bob an email at bob@tsmcgrp.com. The cost is $20.00 per bag. Soil can be picked up on Saturday May 9 between 9:00 - 2:00.

Co-Chairs: Alda & Bob Helvey 515-224-6424 bob@tsmcgrp.com
NEW INFORMATION:
Tickets will NOT be sold at Herndon's Des Moines Seed & Nursery. They are going out of business and their doors may close before tour day.

A few tour day positions are still open. Garden prep help is needed. See information below to sign up.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

Garden Prep -
Help the tour gardeners prepare their gardens for tour day. We already have a request to help mulch as soon as the snow is gone. To sign up, email kwinter32@mchsi.com your name, your home phone number and your cell phone number. Be sure to put "GARDEN PREP" in the email subject line. You will receive an email with possible work days/times as the tour gardeners request help.

Poster Hangers -
Help publicize the PCMG Garden Tour by hanging posters in the windows of 10 Polk County businesses of your choice. Choose dates and times that suit your schedule... but plan to hang the posters between May 20 and May 27. To sign up, email your contact info to: mbrown@bsbdesign.com. You will receive an email in May with details about when and where to pick up the Garden Tour posters.

Tour Day Volunteer -
Sign up at VolunteerSpot.com using this link: http://vols.pt/RBZrCR Tour Day Volunteers greet tour attendees and answer gardening questions during the PCMG Garden Tour on June 20. Two shifts are available: 8:30am-12:30pm or Noon-4:00pm. Volunteer Training will be held on June 13.

2016 Garden Tour Chair -
2015 will be my last garden tour serving as the chair. The committee is a great group of MGs and the tour is always fun to organize. If you would like to serve as 2016 garden tour chair, or join the committee, email mwalkedesign@mac.com.

This year's tour winds along the Des Moines River Valley and includes gardens in the rural Polk City, western Ankeny and Lower Beaver Neighborhood. Tickets are $15 each and go on sale June 1 at: Earl May Garden Centers (all Polk County locations plus Waukee) Goode Greenhouses The Woodsmith Store Garden Center and the Polk County Extension Office.

2015 Garden Tour
Saturday, June 20
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Rain or Shine

Michelle Walke, Garden Tour Chair
Community Requests

Volunteer Opportunity to Reduce Food Insecurity in Polk County!
The Altoona Community Garden opened in the Spring of 2014. It contains 42 garden plots and is located in the SW corner of Lions Park, 507 13th Avenue SW, in Altoona.

There are two sizes of plots that local residents can rent for the season. Two large and four small plots are dedicated to planting for community giving. Produce is to be donated to local food pantries including the Altoona Caring Hands Food Bank and the Altoona Senior Meal Center.

The community is seeking volunteers willing to adopt the community giving plots, plant, care for, and donate the produce. There are a some funds available from last year's fundraising to purchase seeds or plants for the giving plots, but volunteers need to be prepared to fund the cost of planting. No rental is charged for these plots. Tilling and water are provided to all of the gardens and there is an on-site tool shed with some supplies for use by in the garden plot by volunteers and plot renters. Large garden plots are 15 ft. x 6 ft. Small garden plots are 6 ft. x 6 ft.

The community garden is one of the initiatives of the Healthy Altoona Partnership, an all volunteer group organized in 2013. Information on the community gardens and how to adopt a plot is on the Partnership's blog:
http://healthyaltoona.com/community-garden/

Bidwell Riverside Center is requesting assistance at their food pantry in Des Moines. (They also have a child development center and clothing pantry.) Please call Missy Reams at 244-6251 x 214 or email mreams@bidwellriverside.org if you can spare an hour to assist with some plant ID.

Planting day at Terrace Hill Mansion, 2300 Grand Ave, is May 13th. Planting starts at 9 AM - stay for the number of hours that is convenient for you. Please bring your gardening tools. Lunch will be served. Please send me an email if you are able to help. PLEASE NOTE THE DATE CHANGE TO MAY 13TH.
Thanks, Theresa Garrison  tdgarrison61@q.com

Young Women's Resource Center has landscaping in front of their building that needs much work. If you can help at 818 5th Ave, Des Moines, contact Kathy Parenza at 244-4901 or kparenza@ywrc.org

Freedom for Youth Ministries at 2301 Hickman Rd, Des Moines is hoping for some gardening assistance on Friday, May 8, from 10-2. Contact Jacqueline Gibson at 282-4822 or jgibson@freedomforyouth.org to let her know if you are able to help.
On Thursday, May 14, the Evening Star Garden Club has the pleasure of Carrie Bailey, butterfly expert, speaking on butterflies, their behavior, how they’re endangered and how we can help preserve these garden treasures. The program is sponsored in conjunction with Piney Ridge Greenhouse in Johnston, and will begin at 7 p.m. The public is cordially invited to this free program with a social time at 6:30 p.m. Location is the Johnston Lions Club, Merle Hay Road and NW 62nd Avenue. For additional information, please contact Judy Anderson 278-0939 andrsnjudy@mchsi.com
Orchard Planting Field Day

On Saturday May 2nd from 8-noon (weather permitting) we will be planting trees for the new high density (trellised) organic rootstock trial at Wills Family Farm in Adel (33130 Panther Creek Rd, Adel, IA 50003). I know this is short notice but trees arrived earlier than planned. I thought it would be a great opportunity for some hands on experience planting apples and to earn volunteer hours (if Master Gardeners). We will be marking tree locations, digging holes, setting trees, spreading cover crop seed (if time permits), pruning (on an as needed basis), watering in trees (if needed). In addition, we will discuss what we did to prepare the site, why we are using the specific cover crops chosen for the project, and the basics of trellised apples.

It should be a fun and informative morning. If you are interested, drop me a note and be sure to include your phone number/email in case plans change due to weather. Joseph M. Hannan, 515.971.9503 cell, jmhannan@iastate.edu

Polk County Conservation is some great classes and events this summer. See here for details and links.

Beat the heat! Save water and fertilizer this summer with drip irrigation training at Drip Irrigation School!

You are cordially invited to attend a day of professional development at the Horticulture Research Station north of Ames on Monday June 29th, 2015 from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm (registration begins at 8:45). ISU Extension and Outreach Commercial Horticulture specialists Ajay Nair, Patrick O'Malley, and Joe Hannan will take the fear away from building and operating drip irrigation systems.

This workshop is intended for local food system service providers across Iowa. No prior irrigation knowledge is required. Cost is free, but registration is required as space is limited. Please register by June 19, 2015 with the Dallas County Extension Office at afeltner@iastate.edu or kbeni@iastate.edu or by calling the office at 515.993.4281.

A limited number of scholarships are available in the amount of $50 to help offset the cost of travel and are reimbursable through SARE after the event. Please mention the scholarship when registering as these are available on a first come, first served basis. Support for this program is provided by Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program, ISU Department of Horticulture, and ISU Extension and Outreach.

If you have any questions, please contact Joseph M. Hannan, 515.971.9503 cell, jmhannan@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.