"To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." At least that what it says in Ecclesiastes—or was it The Byrds who said it first in a folk song? Anyway, it's FALL!

And as my thoughts turn to fall and harvest, I want to express sincere thanks to everyone in the Polk County Master Gardener organization. We've had a great year all round due to lots of very hard work by all who've been involved with our Steering Committee, our three Project Gardens, the Greenhouse operation, the Plant Sale, the Garden Tour, the Bus Tour, the Art Show, and, of course, the Farmers' Market. Planning is now underway for 2016, so by all means contact a Committee co-chair if you want to be involved in a new project next year.

Of course we're not done with this year yet. The flower beds and vegetable gardens are still in business at my house, although at a somewhat reduced output. It'll be sad to put the garden to bed for good after the first frost sometime later this month. But there is a bright side. No garden means a break from watering and weeding. And time to enjoy the fall colors. And to rake up fall colors, if you live in a heavily-forested area like my own Beaverdale neighborhood! And to get fertilizer down on the lawn. And to buy the bulbs to plant before the ground freezes. Where was that break I was thinking about? "Turn, Turn, Turn," I suppose, and then, "Keep turning."

Please mark your calendars for our Thursday, October 22 Fall Harvest Celebration at 6 p.m. As usual, we'll host this pot-luck gathering in the Iowa State Extension office in Altoona, recognizing new Master Gardeners who have now completed their community service requirements, as well as current Master Gardeners who have made extraordinary contributions of service. We'll also have a photo-slide show covering all of the Polk County Master Gardener projects from the past year, as well as reports from each Garden project.

Matt Dore, Steering Committee Chairman  matt.dore@drake.edu

Directory changes

2016 Directories will be printed before Harvest Celebration. If you have any changes, please email them to mfarlow@iastate.edu by 10-15.
**Demonstration Garden**

The featured activity in the demo garden these days is apple harvesting. The apple orchard is breaking all records for production this year by the time you read this, we will have donated more than 500 pounds of apples to local food pantries so far this fall, and the late season apples are just coming on!

Volunteers are welcome to join us on Monday nights in October to help with the harvest. We have several fruit pickers and ladders on hand, but if you can bring along a fruit picker or loan us one for the harvest, it would be much appreciated.

Other activities this fall include the ongoing renovation of grassy areas by turf guys Mike Boes and Mike Fuson. In addition, Charity Andeweg is spearheading a shed makeover to improve organization of tools and supplies, which should serve us well going forward.

Please join us if you can on Saturday, October 24th, beginning at 9 a.m. for the annual Fall Cleanup. It's a bittersweet chance to join fellow volunteers as we put the garden to bed for this year (and start dreaming up some plans for next year). Until then, our regular Monday work nights will continue, beginning around 5:30 p.m.

Co-Chairs, Ruth Doxon and Diane Ackerman

**Discovery Garden**

It is getting quiet at the Garden right now, but the flowers are still blooming and looking like summer. This will all come to an end when there is a killing frost. At that time, the Garden will be put to bed for the winter.

The clean up date will probably be announced at the fall planning meeting, which will be held on, Wednesday, October 14th, at 6:00 pm. If you are planning on attending, contact Jean at ljroe@q.com, 279-8705 or the Discovery Garden gmail account discoverygardenpcmg@gmail.com.

Co-Chairs:

Dean Brand drbrand@mediacombb.net tel:515-360-0774, Jean Roe ljroe@q.com tel:515.205.8706
Patrick Schmitt schmittpatrickj@gmail.com tel:515.279.9645, Cheree Tilton tiltoncm@gmail.com tel:515.262.0488

**ISU Master Gardener Newsletter**

If you are not already on the list, go to [http://www.mastergardener.iastate.edu/news.html](http://www.mastergardener.iastate.edu/news.html), open the latest edition and find the "join our list" link at the top. This will send you news of MG events around the state each month.

**International Master Gardener Conference**

Several Polk County Master Gardeners attended the International Master Gardener Conference in Council Bluffs on Sept 23, 24 & 25. It was a great experience and we would enjoy visiting with you about it if you are interested.

Enabling Garden

The Enabling Garden hosted another successful Fall Fundraiser & Garden Gathering in September. A huge thank you to all of the talented gardeners who spent time creating art, baking, collecting garden flea market items and those that spent hours prepping plants. Your time and efforts are much appreciated!

Now that fall is upon us, we need to start thinking about our garden clean-up dates. Plan for Tuesday, October 13th at 5:00 PM and Saturday, October 17th at 10:00 AM, we will be cleaning up the annuals and completing other tasks around the garden. (Rain date: 10/24) We will plan to have a pot-luck on Saturday, 10/17 at noon, so bring some of your best fall dishes to share. This is a great opportunity to get several volunteer hours in before the end of the 2015 season!

As the season begins to wind down, the EG co-chairs would like to thank all of the volunteers for their time and gifted contributions to the garden. From spring planting, support with treats and speakers, and finally all of your passion for gardening, this was a year great year at the Enabling Garden. As it is every year, it was all made possible due to our faithful volunteers and friends of the garden.

Have a fabulous fall season.

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

Facebook Page(s)

If you are a Facebook user, please go to https://www.facebook.com/groups/pcmgiowa/. That page will keep you up to date on the PCMG activities and has links to each of the project pages as well.

Interested in Garden Tour?

We all hope this great project won't have to be discontinued. Several people will be meeting at the Extension Office on 10-6-15 at 7:00 pm. We'll be learning from Tour Committee members just what might be involved in being a co-chair of the committee. You are welcome to join us and learn more.
Education Opportunities

The end of the year is fast approaching and if you have not completed and reported your 10 hours of education yet, there are just a few more opportunities for you.

**Fall Horticulture Conference**

November 7, 2015
12:15 to 6:15

Five hours of education available
Topics: Low Maintenance Landscape, Hobby Greenhouses, Preparing State Fair Exhibits, Beekeeping, Working with Volunteers in a Public Garden.


Registration Deadline is 10-29-2015

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**Training classes**

The Fall MG Training series has begun.
Classes are held each Tuesday evening, starting at 6:15 at the Polk County Extension Office in Altoona. Each provides 3 hours of MG education.
The list of topics and speakers is available [here](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/polk/news/fall-horticulture-conference-2015).

Certified MGs are welcome to audit these classes.
We do ask that you bring your own snacks or beverages.

IDNR State Forest Nursery

The 2015-2016 Seedling Catalog is now available at the Polk County Extension Office. Hardwoods, Evergreens, Small Trees & Shrubs can be ordered in increments of 100. Specialty packets are available for plants to promote Turkey, Pheasant, Quail. Pollinator and Songbird habitat.
New Hours Reporting System

ISU has made major changes in the Hours reporting system but the web address is the same. http://mastergardenerhours.hort.iastate.edu/

You'll need to click on "Sign In to VRS" in the gray box on the left. Your Username (email) and password will be the same as the previous system. There is a Quick Tour Video on the home page to explain some of the changes.

Please note:

Continuing Education Requirement is listed under Category field. Hours entered here should only be learning time. Travel for Education is one of the option under Polk Local Projects and needs to be a separate entry from class time.

If you choose "Other" under Category, the field below it (Local Project or Sub-Category) will have a pull down menu with a list of the Polk County projects for you to choose from. So you no longer have to type out the project name.

Just like the old system, the Description field is the place for you to make notes about what you did for that project for that day.

Under the MG Profile tab, there are 4 tabs so you can see and/or change your personal information.

Volunteer Background Check Forms coming

In order to comply with current ISU policy, active, certified PCMG who had their initial training prior to Fall 2013 should watch their mail and email in October for the instructions and forms they will need to complete the requirement that all volunteers be screened. Letter about ISU's policy will be included. If you have questions about volunteer background checks, please contact Mary.
Annual Harvest Celebration
Thursday, October 22, 2015
starting at 5:30 p.m.
Polk County Extension Office in Altoona, Iowa

5:30 pm Set up Potluck ... Social Time ... Plant & Garden items exchange
In true Master Gardener tradition, bring garden books, magazines, seeds, or plants to trade with your gardening family. Please label any plants or seeds.

6:00 pm Potluck We’re going with a potluck again this year. Please bring dishes according to your last name. Last names beginning with A-H, bring a hot dish; last names beginning with I-R, bring a salad; last names beginning with S-Z, bring a dessert. There are plenty of outlets for slow cookers for those who want to bring something hot.

7:00 pm Business Meeting and Project Reviews

7:30 pm 40-hour Awards to Polk County Master Gardener Interns
Awards for 500 & 1000 hour pins

Seating is limited to the first 100.
With limited hours in the office, Mary Farlow is hard to reach by phone. You can leave a message at 957-5761 but we’d prefer you email Faith Huitt at fhuitt@mchsi.com by noon on Thursday, October 15. No charge this year, as it is a potluck, but we do need to know how many chairs and tables to have ready. Please bring your family and join us!

Do you have photos to share?
Beth Kramer Reding is working on a slide show for our Harvest Celebration. If you have .jpg images of any PCMG activities, please attach them to an email to her at bjkramer@mchsi.com by 10-9-15.

Iowa State University
Extension and Outreach

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