Matt's Missive

As September arrives and the weather cools down, Polk County Master Gardeners can look back with pride on a successful gardening season. The Greenhouse plants thrived, the Plant Sale set record profits, and the homes on the Garden Tour drew rave reviews. Our project gardens all matured nicely, and newly-added features like the Children's Garden (Enabling), Water Feature and Picket Fence (Demo) were well-received. I'm not sure if head counts are possible, but with increased attendance at the State Fair, the Discovery Garden-looking better than ever-likely saw a record number of visitors.

Our public outreach extends beyond our project gardens, of course. We've had another strong season of gardening Q & A at the PCMG Downtown Farmers' Market booth, and the Master Gardener Art Show has now launched at the Des Moines Botanical Garden, with art exhibits from 67 Iowa Master Gardeners. The Bus Trips and Ball Seed excursions deserve mention as well, as the gardens that were visited inspired many of our members with ideas for next year.

All in all, a very impressive showing. And not a single bit of it would have been possible but for the collective efforts of several hundred Polk County Master Gardeners, all of which were well-coordinated by the leadership teams on our various project committees. Many thanks to those involved.

I'm very pleased to report that several folks have expressed an interest (tentative, but it's a start!) in coordinating next year's Garden Tour, and that others have stepped up to head our Program Committee. If any others of you have an appetite for a totally new project, please let me know. The City of Urbandale has asked whether our group has any gardeners who are interested in designing (and/or implementing) show beds in the heart of soon-to-be opened Dunlop Park-located a few blocks southwest of the Demonstration Garden. A ground-floor gardening opportunity for those with pioneering spirit! -Matt

Matthew Dore, Steering Committee Chair, matt.dore@drake.edu
"Our State Fair was a GREAT State Fair", I am paraphrasing the song, of course, but is was a great fair. Thanks to all of the gardeners who spent time planning, planting, and then maintaining their gardens, lots of compliments were bestowed upon them by fairgoers. Also a huge thank you to all of the people that volunteered during the fair. We had wonderful weather, except for the monsoon and the cold snap, so lots of questions were asked by all of the people streaming through the Garden.

Congratulations to Mary Smith and Barry Law for winning blue ribbons on their fair entries, it is always fun to see a Master Gardener's name on an entry, especially when they win a ribbon.

Our season is winding down, but we are already planning for next year, working on the wish list, the deadline for returning the list, to the co-chairs is September 1st.

On Tuesday, August 18th, the Discovery Garden submitted a Community Betterment Grant application for $30,000 to the Polk County of Iowa for our Renovation Project. Part of the grant application process is to have a visit from the Polk County of Iowa to our Discovery Garden. On Wednesday, September 16th, a Polk County Grant Administrator (Lisa Moody-Tunks) along with one or two Supervisors will visit. We could use as much representation from our Master Gardener volunteers that evening as possible. That evening, we would like you to complete your regular maintenance in your garden bed and assist with showcasing our Discovery Garden. Our ability to complete this journey depends on your personal participation and a showing of support from you will be most important in achieving our goal of being awarded the $30,000 grant.

Additionally, the attached letter will provide you an opportunity, as well as your family members and friends, to send an email to your own County Supervisor (listing below) and Tom Hockensmith (who represents the Fairgrounds District) to request their support of our $30,000 Community Betterment Grant request to Polk County. Feel free to edit the template and use your own wording to make it more personal. The grant application will be reviewed in September with anticipation of a decision in October. Thank you.

Angela Connolly (NW Des Moines and West Des Moines) Angela.Connolly@polkcountyiowa.gov

Robert Brownell (Alleman, Clive, Elkhart, Grimes, Johnston, Polk City, Sheldahl, Windsor Heights, Urbandale) Robert.Brownell@polkcountyiowa.gov

Tom Hockensmith (Fairgrounds, NE Des Moines, Runnells and parts of SE Des Moines) Tom.Hockensmith@polkcountyiowa.gov

John Mauro (Des Moines and South Des Moines) John.Mauro@polkcountyiowa.gov

Steve Van Oort (Altoona, Ankeny, Bondurant, Mitchellville, Pleasant Hill) Steve.VanOort@polkcountyiowa.gov
The main focus of our Renovation Project will be a permeable pathway made out of recyclable materials; and will also include additional upgrades to our Perennial Bed, Gazebo and a new perimeter fence. Currently, there is a loose brick chip pathway which has made it difficult for those with disabilities, strollers, scooters and wheelchairs to maneuver and therefore, has resulted in numerous accidents over the past few years. The permeable pathway is an environmentally friendly project and will address water quality initiatives promoted through the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship to reduce materials from our landfills and provide additional educational aspects which can be promoted to the public.

Please also consider donating to the Discovery Garden. Gifts given for public purposes to the Discovery Garden at the Iowa State Fairgrounds are tax-deductible as defined under Iowa tax code and federal guidelines. Any Discovery Garden gift or donation inquiry may be directed to: Discovery Garden in c/o Co-Chair Patrick Schmitt at Iowa State University Extension and Outreach-Polk County Office, 1625 Adventureland Dr., Suite A, Altoona, IA 50009, or phone Patrick at 515-279-9645

Co-Chairs: Dean Brand drbrand@mediacombb.net  ph.: 515-360-0774  
Jean Roe ljro@q.com ph.:515-205-8706  Patrick Schmitt schmittpatrickj@gmail.com ph.: 515-279-9645  Cheree Tilton tiltoncm@gmail.com  ph: 515-262-0488

Demonstration Garden

As cooler weather and fall color begins to creep into the garden, the fruit trees are taking center stage. The apple trees are loaded with an abundant crop this year, and the apples should be ready for picking beginning in mid September. Watch This n That for volunteer opportunities to help with the harvest and the delivery of apples to the food pantry.

Save the date: On Sunday, September 27, we will be hosting a cider press demonstration along with a "shed clean" out sale. More details about this event to follow.

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

Enabling Garden

The Enabling Garden would like to invite you to our 3rd Annual Fall Fundraiser and Garden Gathering scheduled for Sunday, September 13th from 1-4 PM. We will have perennial plants, arts and crafts, garden produce, jams and pickles, baked goods and garden-related flea market items for sale. We will also offer garden tool sharpening, so bring your tools that have dulled over the summer and let us put a new edge on them. This is the perfect opportunity to come out and enjoy a beautiful late summer afternoon and support the Enabling Garden!

Regular work nights will continue on every Tuesday as long as the weather is good. Please join us any time after 5:00PM for fun, food and fellowship in the garden.

Thanks again to all of our volunteers that help to make the garden beautiful.  
EG Co-Chairs: Christine Barker, Sandie Hamilton, & Sharon Schoonover
September 19 will be our last of five appearances at the Des Moines Downtown Farmers' Market this year. We're stationed at the corner of Court Avenue and Third Street on the third Saturday of the month, answering questions from market-goers on all sorts of gardening topics. In September, we'll focus on autumn clean-up tasks and planting fall bulbs for spring color. In 2015, we've tackled the subjects of canning, herbs, attracting butterflies to the garden, roses, native plants and water features to name a few. We visit with at least 200 people each time we appear at the market. While the booth is fully staffed for September, if you're the type that likes to arrange your schedule way in advance, please contact Sherrie Soich at 710-5665 or sherrisoich@gmail.com to volunteer for next year, beginning in May.

**Greenhouse**

Greenhouse assistance needed.

The Greenhouse will be holding two work days in September to inventory the pots and flats to be used for our next growing season. We will meet at the Greenhouse at 9:00 am Saturday, September 12th and again at 9:00 am Wednesday, September 16th. These days will be a perfect opportunity for anyone who needs more hours to complete their volunteer requirements.

If there are any pots that haven't been dropped off from the plant sale or pots from purchases made over the summer that you want to donate, please bring them with you and join us.

"If you agreed to grow plants originating from the Ball Seed trial seeds we received, it's time to report your findings. Please email them to Kay Oliver (oliverbkay@gmail.com) by September 15th."

Co-Chairs: **Alda & Bob Helvey 515-224-6424** [bob@tsmcgrp.com](mailto:bob@tsmcgrp.com)
**Cheryl Fridl 515-979-0635** [cfidl@aol.com](mailto:cfidl@aol.com)
**Jean Schustek 515-255-7892** [jean.schustek@gmail.com](mailto:jean.schustek@gmail.com)

**All Iowa Art Show**

The show was a great success and the entries will be on display at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden North Gallery until Nov. 16. For a list of the placements, [click here](#).
Save the Dates

Our Fall Harvest Celebration (Graduation) will be October 22. Your invitation will be in October Green Thumb.

Polk County Extension will be hosting the Fall Horticulture Conference on Nov 7. This year, we'll focus on a full afternoon, which should provide five hours of Master Gardener education. This will allow you to have lunch before the program begins.

12:15 - 12:30 p.m. Welcome
12:30 - 1:30 p.m. A Beautiful Landscape with Minimal Care Melinda Myers
1:30 - 1:45 p.m. Break and book signing
1:45 - 2:45 p.m. Hobby Greenhouses Richard and Cynde Schreiber
2:45 - 3:45 p.m. Preparing State Fair Exhibits Jennifer Joos
3:45 - 4:00 p.m. Break
4:00 - 5:00 p.m. Beekeeping TBD
5:00 - 6:00 p.m. Volunteer Gardens Dean Brand
6:00 Adjourn and shop


The October Green Thumb will have details about volunteer opportunities for each of these events.

Education Opportunities

Field Day Agenda - Understanding and Preparing for Invasive Species

September 9th, 2015
Jester Park Lodge
11121 NW Jester Park Drive
Granger, Iowa

PART 1 [inside]
3:00 pm - 3:15pm Registration Welcome Overview
3:15pm - 4:00pm Invasive Plant Species Identification and Control Options
4:00pm - 5:00pm Invasive Insect Prevention, Identification, and Treatment -Asian Long-horned beetle, Japanese beetle, Emerald Ash borer
5:00pm - 5:15pm BREAK, and register new/late arrivals

PART 2 [outside]
5:15pm - 6:15pm - Walk and learn
6:15pm - 6:55pm - "Ask a Forester" discussion groups
6:55pm - 7:00pm - Final remarks

RSVPs are appreciated, but not required. Attendees are encouraged to attend Parts 1 AND 2, but may also RSVP for a single part.

For questions or to RSVP call or email Anna Bruen - 641/472-6177 anna@pathfindersrcd.org
Food Preservation 101: Free canning class Sept. 15.

Not sure what to do with all the excess produce in your summer vegetable garden? Planning a garden for next year? Find out how to preserve food safely at home!

"Food Preservation 101," a fun, free ISU Extension class about general food preservation principles will be given Tuesday evening, Sept. 15, 6 to 7 pm, at the Franklin Avenue Library, 5000 Franklin Ave., Des Moines.

The class includes current recommendations for canning, freezing and drying. No actual hands-on preservation will be done in class. Participants will be able to inspect and discuss a variety of food canning and drying supplies and equipment. All will receive a list of accurate and safe food preservation resources. The purpose of the class is to help beginners decide which method of food preservations is right for them and to remind experienced canners of the latest safety recommendations. This free class is sponsored by Parks and Recreation of Des Moines. Spaces are limited. To register, please email communitygarden@dmgov.org or call 515-248-6373.

Teaching the class will be Mary Krisco, MS, RD, Human Sciences Specialist in Nutrition and Wellness for ISU Extension, Polk County.

A new and revised ISU Extension publication, *Canning Salsa*, will be distributed free at the class.

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FEDERATED GARDEN CLUBS OF IOWA
GARDENING STUDY SCHOOL, COURSE II - SESSION 11
IOWA ARBORETUM, MADRID, IOWA
HUGHES EDUCATION CENTER
SEPTEMBER 17-18, 2015
Open to the Public

**September 17, 2015 (Thursday)**
8:15 A.M.  COFFEE/TEA ONLY/REGISTRATION
8:30 - 10:30  *TECHNIQUES FOR GROWING VEGETABLES* Lynnette Carpenter
10:30 - 10:45  BREAK
10:45 - 11:45  **UNDERSTANDING PLANT DISEASES** Aaron Steil
11:45 - 12:15 P.M.  LUNCH *(Please bring sack lunch)*
12:15 - 1:45  TECHNIQUES FOR GROWING LAWNS/ALTERNATIVES Ryan Adams
1:45 - 2:00  BREAK
2:00 - 4:00  *CONTAINER GARDENING* Lisa Orgler

**September 18, 2015 (Friday)**
8:15 A.M.  COFFEE/TEA ONLY
8:30 - 10:00  HOW NEW PLANTS ARE DEVELOPED AND EVALUATED Nan Ripley
10:00-10:15  BREAK
10:15 - 11:15  POLLINATORS  Laura Jesse
11:15-12:15P.M.  **UNDERSTANDING INSECT DISEASES** Nathan Brockman
12:15-12:30  LUNCH *(Please bring sack lunch)*
12:30-3:30 EXAM
*TESTED TOPIC
**OPEN BOOK TEST

RECOMMENDED READING: THE NATIONAL GARDENER magazine 1-800-550-6007.

Master Gardeners may be awarded 1 hour CEU for each 1 hour class time.

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To register for the FGCI Registration - Gardening Study Course II, Series 11, Sept. 17-18, 2015, Iowa Arboretum, 1875 Peach Avenue, Madrid, IA. Please complete the form below.

REGISTRATIONS ACCEPTED UNTIL Sept. 9, 2015, NO REFUNDS AFTER Sept. 9, 2015.

WALK-INS ALWAYS WELCOME, BUT HANDOUTS MAY BE LIMITED

NAME (Only 1 name per form) ________________________________
ADDRESS ___________________________________________________________________________________
CITY, STATE, ZIP __________________ E-MAIL ADDRESS ______________________________
NEW __________________ LAST COURSE ATTENDED ______________________________
NAME OF GARDEN CLUB (if a member) ________________________________

Unless checked, we may use your name, address, telephone and e-mail above to contact you with National Garden Clubs, Inc. information, including future Gardening Study Schools. ________

Class $40 _______ Class + test $45 _____ Class + refresh _______ $45. Refreshing is available only to those who are already Garden Consultants or Master Garden Consultants.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: GARDENING STUDY and mail to 122 N Russell Avenue, Ames IA 50010, Phone 515-232-0608, E-mail adamaelewis@gmail.com

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"Going Native: Iowa Prairies Seminar" in Perry on Saturday, September 19.

Check-in will begin at 9 a.m. and the event will conclude at 5:30 p.m. after a prairie visit and Native American performances at Forest Park Museum. Going Native: Iowa Prairies Seminar is $25 per person payable at the door and includes lunch catered from Hotel Pattee. Registration can be completed by contacting ISU Extension and Outreach Marketing and Communications Coordinator, Caitlyn Ryan, at (515) 993-4281 or cryan@iastate.edu.

For full details and description go to http://www.extension.iastate.edu/dallas/GoingNative

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The list of dates and times for intern classes starting September 29 will be on the PCMG web page after Labor day.
ISU updates

Do you have photos of Master Gardeners in action? Submit digital images for the Master Gardener photo contest by October 1st to win prizes. Download and send the entry form and three to five digital images to be entered into the Master Gardeners in Action Photography Contest. Please note that the images should include at least one Master Gardener involved in a project or program. Let us see and share with everyone some of the great work that you do as Master Gardener.

The Iowa Master Gardener website is now mobile-friendly. Check out the new website by clicking here. This upgrade will allow you to access the website from the garden or anywhere else with your smart phone or iPad! Of course, you can still visit the website with your laptop or desktop computer, too.

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Changes are coming to the Master Gardener Hours Reporting System. This September, the website will have a new look, and will be more user-friendly. Tutorials on how best to use the new system will be part of the upgrade.

All the data for Master Gardeners currently enrolled in the old system will be automatically transferred from the old system to the new platform. The new system will make it much easier for you to track your volunteer and continuing education hours. During the conversion—sometime during the first 10 days of September—the old system will be inaccessible for a couple of days. If during that time you are unable to log in, please be patient and try back a couple of days later.

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Other details available from the ISU MG Newsletter - Are you signed up?

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
Extension and Outreach

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