Since many of you may not know me, let me introduce myself. My name is Isabella Hurless-Banks and I am the new Chair of the Polk County Master Gardener Steering Committee. Those of you who do know me probably do so as the co-chair of the MG Plant Sale and the person constantly asking you for donations. I became an MG in 2002 and in these intervening years have learned so much and met so many great people that my life has been endlessly enriched.

In this my first article, I would like to start by saying a big thank you to our outgoing Chair Sherri Soich for her year of service. Sherri, you leave big shoes to fill! I would also like to extend my congratulations to all of our new 2016 MG's and to welcome the new 2017 class. Hopefully I will get an opportunity to interact with each and every one of you in the months ahead and that you will find the Master Gardener experience as wonderful as I have.

The coming year will definitely be a very challenging one. Our lease on the greenhouses at Victorian Acres will be up at the end of May 2017 so, although we will be good for the next plant sale, we find ourselves once again looking for a new home. We have had a wonderful four years in Altoona after losing our space at what was then the Botanical Centre, but unfortunately all good things do come to an end. So we need each and every one of you to be on the lookout for any possibilities which we might explore in order to find new space and you never know when a lead will come along or what form it might take.

After all, we found out about Victorian Acres through the Fed Ex driver who made deliveries to the Extension office! It goes without saying that without greenhouses there will be no plant sale and no funds to provide plants for our garden projects. We also lose the wonderful educational value which the greenhouses afford to all Master Gardeners. So please contact me at imhurless@aol.com with any ideas/possibilities you may hear of no matter how unusual or unlikely and our Greenhouse Search Committee will pursue them.
Despite this great challenge, I am sincerely looking forward to the coming year and the opportunity to serve our organization.

Isabella Hurless-Banks, Steering Committee Chair
imhurless@aol.com

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Program Committee

Thanks for contributing to a fun Harvest Celebration!

In just 90 minutes we enjoyed yummy food, had fun with door prizes, celebrated memories from our 2016 projects, and congratulated volunteers on their milestones!

Ike at the Mic

Thank YOU Volunteers!
Several people came early to help the Program Committee members set-up the room and/or stayed afterwards to clean-up: Lurae Zavalla, Sandie & Bert Hamilton, Paula Winslow, Alesia Trask, Valerie Singer, Marilyn Anderson, Marie McCartan, Charon Cecil, Christine Barker, Mary Kay Dial, Faith Huitt, Anastasia Tekippe, Stephanie McAdam, Mary & Wil Farlow, and Sherry Swihart.

I am pretty sure I have missed people who helped with the clean-up while I was answering questions--so our gratitude to everyone who pitched in! --Ike

Special Acknowledgements from the Committee
Jennifer Darling, Power Point Partner Mike Treinen, Photographer

Thank You for Donating Door Prizes!
Demonstration Garden (Katherine Howsare) Discovery Garden (All Iowa Art Show (Pat Reeves) Enabling Garden (Greenhouse (Cheryl Fridl)) Program Committee (Paula Winslow) Farmers Market
Annual Passing of the Silver Trowel --
from Sherri Soich to Isabella Hurless-Banks

Annual Harvest Celebration

Great Food & Conversation with Garden Friends!

Marje Turnquist and Jean Koch

Welcome to Our 2016 Polk County Master Gardeners!

Nancy Anderson  Marlene Anderson-Beattie  Kristy Ballard  Cheryl Bergren
Susan Ekstrom  Kent Freise  Susan Griffiths  Carol Jungman
Ron Junkman  Trudy Koger  Rene Leppert  Craig Lien
Brittni Longer  Marie McCartan  Laura McCord  Crystal McManus
Lynda O'Hara  Sharyn O'Connor-Beener  Addie Palmer  Kerri Patton
Sally Peterson  Mary Poulter  Connie Rider  Kaci Rother
Jeanne Sandahl  Monique van der Heijden  Carol Sipfle  Steven Smith
Beth Wall
Annual Harvest Celebration

Celebrating Milestones in Volunteer Hours!

Thank you for your contributions!

Bob Helvey, Leanna Culver, and Patrick Schmitt
(not pictured, Dean Brand)

Wow! Clocking over **3,000** Volunteer Hours!

Dean Brand  Leanna Culver  Bob Helvey  Patrick Schmitt

Oh, my! Achieving over **2,000** Volunteer Hours!

Alda Helvey  Jean Koch  Cathy Law  Stephanie McAdam

Ruth O'Connor  Jean Roe

Golly! Recording **1,000+** Hours!

Ralph Chiodo  Vickie Cossel  Judy Elings  Jen Firzlaff

Isabella Hurless-Banks  Rita Perea  Stephen Perrin  Sandie Sydnes

Gosh! Recording **500+** Hours!

Michael Boes  Julie Christian  Cheryl Fridl  Margaret Schultz

Mary Smith  Marty Torrence  Susan Travis
The 2017 greenhouse lab has been scheduled for Saturday, January 21, Wednesday, January 25, and Saturday, January 28. **The lab starts at 9:00 am and is completed around 11:00 am.** The trainees have selected their dates and we have room for those certified Master Gardeners who would like a jump start towards their education hours and those who would like a greenhouse refresher.

Sign-up will be first come, **first served with a deadline of December 15, 2016.**

**Space Available:**
- **Saturday, January 21:** one
- **Wednesday, January 25:** fifteen
- **Saturday, January 28:** eighteen

**Reminder on the Rules:**
- Please arrive early so we can start right at 9:00.
- Wear layers and remember to wear your name tag.
- You must sign-up to attend. Those who show up and have not signed up will be politely asked to leave.
Please contact Cheryl Fridl at cfriel@aol.com. A response to all emails will be sent letting you know it was received and confirming your request or suggesting an alternative date.

Greenhouse Co-Chairs: Cheryl Fridl and Jean Schustek

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NEW for 2017!

Garden Art Market

The Polk County Master Gardeners are excited to announce our first annual Garden & Art Fair!

This one-day outdoor event will feature garden-inspired fine art and crafts for sale, specialty garden merchandise, hands-on art activities for children and adults; and live gardening / art demonstrations.

Browse the work of local and Midwest artists including pottery, metal work, jewelry, photography, painting and more - in a beautiful garden setting. Settle in and listen to talks from local gardening experts. Learn how to create something beautiful of your own: dive into our hands-on art and gardening activities, many of them free!

Date: Saturday, August 5th, 2017

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Location: PCMG Demonstration Garden

Interested in being a vendor for this event? Application forms will be available online starting January 1st, 2017

For more information contact Mary Howell-Williams: mhwphoto@gmail.com 515-556-3684

Co-Chairs: Mary Howell-Williams, Nancy Dunbar, Terry Thielen

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2017 All-Iowa Master Gardener Art Show

We had a very successful 2016 Art Show and we are looking forward to an even bigger show in 2017. Please start planning your entries and . . .

. . . Save the Date for the

Art Show Reception at the Botanical Garden

on Thursday, September 21, 2017

5:00-7:00 PM

The application period will open in April, 2017.

Chair: Patricia Reeves
Demonstration Garden

Thank YOU!
As another gardening season is winding down, we are grateful for the wonderful volunteers who are the heart of the demonstration garden. Special thanks to everyone who participated in the fall cleanup in October, and to those who collected and unloaded two truckloads of aged manure later that day. It truly was an amazing effort that gives us a step up on preparations for next year.

Reducing Food Insecurity!
We're also pleased to report that local food pantries received approximately

- 507 pounds of apples
- 888 pounds of vegetables

... from the demo garden this year. *Well done, everyone!*

Final Garden Clean-up in November
Official Monday work nights have ended, but there will still be volunteer opportunities in November when we put the roses to bed, plant dormant fruit trees, and shut down the water lines. Watch your inbox for announcements about those event

*Best wishes for a peaceful Thanksgiving with your families and friends!*

Co-Chairs, Ruth Doxon, Sandie Sydnes, and Diane Ackerman

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Discovery Garden

A Memorable Season-- Thanks to our Volunteers!
The Garden has been cleaned and is ready to take a well deserved rest during the winter. All of the gardeners are ready for that rest also, it has been a very busy but rewarding season. The co-chairs would like to thank all of the volunteers who worked in the gardens both during the season and the State Fair, our success would not have been accomplished without you.

Congratulations are in order for the 2016 Master Gardener class, some of you are involved, at the garden, and we look forward to working with you again in 2017.

*Well done everyone!*

November also brings Election Day (finally) and Veterans Day, so get out and vote, thank a military person for their past or current service, and show your patriotism by flying the United State flag.

*Have a wonderful Thanksgiving!*

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
Enabling Garden

Great Weather and Awesome Volunteers!
We had some decent fall weather and a successful clean-up dates in October. Thanks for everyone who made time to come out and help. The work goes much faster and is more fun when you have the help of a group folks willing to lend a hand!

Thanks for the Many Ways You Volunteer!
Additionally, the EG co-chairs would like to give thanks for all of our volunteers who participated in the Enabling Garden this year! Thank you for being there to:

- write the grants
- plant annuals
- pull weeds
- water
- donate goodies
- fundraise
- and most importantly, bring a meal to work night!

These contributions are what make a volunteer organization work! It has made the Enabling Garden a beautiful jewel of Altoona.

Thank you and have wonderful Veteran's Day and Thanksgiving.

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

2017 Garden Calendars: $7.00

Our directories were updated in October to include our new Master Gardener Trainees and other contact updates.

2017 Garden Calendars and 2016 Polk County Master Gardener Directories

AND
Directories are available NOW at the Polk County Extension Office.

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