

News Letter

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Civic Center, Iowa City, Iowa 52240
www.projectgreen.org

PROJECT GREEN

PUBLISHED IN EARLY SPRING AND LATE FALL

SPRING 2009

Another spring, a new garden year. . . and the **Thirty-Ninth Annual Project GREEN Garden Fair!** **May 9, 9–11:30 AM at Carver-Hawkeye Arena.**

The Project GREEN Garden Fair is a special tradition in the Iowa City/Coralville community. Gardeners and would-be gardeners will find a great assortment of trees, shrubs, vines, ground cover plants, and sunny and shade perennials, as well as sources of expert information to help with plant selections.

Again this year, Project GREEN will be the beneficiary of Judy Allen's wonderful garden sculptures, donated by her for sale at the fair.

Local experts will be available to answer your garden questions. This year's authorities will include Mark Vitosh, DNR forester; Terry Robinson, Iowa City forester; Tim Thompson, DNR wildlife

biologist; Jim Scheib, member of Eastern Iowa Bird Watch; Master Gardeners of Johnson County; a garlic mustard specialist; and Jennifer Jordan, the IC recycling coordinator, who will be available for information and questions relating to the IC Community Compost program.

**Plan to come to Carver-Hawkeye Arena on May 9.
Doors open at 9 a.m.**

Proceeds from this year's Garden Fair will be used for replanting the flood-damaged landscaping in the North Dubuque Street – Taft Speedway area. Please see pages 2 and 3 for more information on this year's Garden Fair.

North Dubuque Street Plantings Will Be Restored

The June 2008 flood caused major damage and loss to Project GREEN's Foster Road–North Dubuque Street project, which had only recently been completed. The ornamental grasses and shrubs between Foster Road and Taft Speedway on the west side of Dubuque Street were destroyed, as were sixteen trees. Additional trees needed straightening and support, and it is possible that yet more casualties will be discovered this spring. The estimated cost of replacing the lost trees alone was \$7,600, and the \$2,000 grant from MidAmerican Energy Company's *Trees Please!* program will help with funding. Project GREEN is required to provide matching funds.

Landscape architect Laura Hawks, who originally designed this project, is assessing the area and will prepare a modified replanting design, with more "flood-friendly" species. Project GREEN is committed to restoring these areas and maintaining attractive entrances to our community. Your support is essential, and with your help we can make this area lovely once again. Funds raised from the 2009 GREEN Garden Fair will also be earmarked for restoration of flood-damaged plantings.



Michelle Payne, engineering supervisor for MidAmerican Energy, presents Project GREEN President Cindy Parsons with a check for \$2,000 from a grant made through MidAmerican's Trees Please! program. The funds will be used to purchase replacements for trees lost along North Dubuque Street in the June 2008 floods.

Groundcover Booth

The Groundcover Booth will have our traditional offerings of those great perennials for areas where perfection means something that grows quickly and fills in all the empty spaces. You can count on a plentiful supply of pachysandra, vinca minor, lily-of-the-valley, and American ginger. Be sure to check out our *Polygonatum falcatum* 'Variegatum'—variegated solomon's seal—which is a real beauty all summer in a shady spot. We also plan to have sedums for sunny areas.

Anyone interested in volunteering with the Groundcover Booth can contact Ted and Kay Carpenter at (319) 351-7634 or TCarpe8615@msn.com.



Look for Judy Allen's sculptures to purchase for decorating your garden.

Info Ladies (and Gents)

Each year at the GREEN Garden Fair, "Information Ladies" serve as the people to seek out for suggestions, directions, and help. Information Ladies walk the floor and help wherever needed. They know their plants and are great with people.

We need ten Ladies and/or Gents this year. You're qualified to be one if you're an avid gardener and enjoy sharing your expertise. Please call or email Karen Chappell, (319) 341-3774 or krchpp@aol.com.



Ted and Kay Carpenter work on groundcover labels identifying plant names, growing instructions and prices. Melanie Hauptert and Barb Gartner are readying themselves for the next days fair.

Trees, Shrubs, and Vines Booth

Almost any garden, whatever its shape or size, can be tailored to suit individual tastes and lifestyles. Whether you have an existing garden or are starting from scratch, trees and shrubs provide the anchor most gardens require to maximize their potential. Creating those focal points are what we in the trees and shrubs area will be able to help you with. A new redbud, golden rain tree, or several of our flowering shrubs could help you get that "Wow!" from your neighbors and friends. Ask our booth experts about your particular needs.



Please call Kasey at (319) 330-7935 to volunteer for the trees, shrubs, and vines group.

Garden Fair Cashiers— GREEN and green work together

Cashiers for the Project GREEN Garden Fair play an important role each year. These volunteers work with a different kind of "green"—collecting the receipts of the garden sale, more than \$30,000 in each of the last several years.

Fair cashiers will be stationed at the south and west doors of Carver-Hawkeye Arena. We accept cash and checks, but we are not able to take credit or debit cards. Checks should be made out to *Green Fund*.

We need cashiers for the fair! The time commitment for the day is from 8:30 to 11:30 AM. If you're interested in volunteering, please contact one of us. We appreciate your help. Marilyn Shurr, (319) 338-5344, and Joanne Tigges, (319) 621-4139.



Shade Booth

A hosta bonanza awaits shoppers at the GREEN Garden Fair this year! More than 1,700 hostas donated by local gardeners will include the full gamut of sizes (mini to extra-large) and colors (green, gold, blue, and variegated). Never before have we had such an astounding array of cultivars—nearly one hundred of them, some recently named and many especially desirable. Some may be available only as one-of-a-kind, but many will be offered in generous numbers.



Carole Knutson and Nancy Ross stand in front of the hosta specials table. Award winning and sought after hosta varieties will be easy to locate among the shade perennial plants.

Are you just starting a shade garden? Do you have space to plant hostas in a grouping? Do you want to create a unified border? Then shop our “Abundance Table,” where plant varieties are great in number and prices are nominal. Many of our generous donors continue to share certain commonly grown, reliable, vigorous, and stunning hostas so that we can offer bargain prices to the shopper.

Perennials to enhance your shade garden will range from Iowa’s favorite spring wildflowers to handsome, stately fall blooms and foliage: bloodroot, jack-in-the-pulpit, solomon’s seal, variegated solomon’s seal, trillium, bluebells, twinleaf, Dutchman’s breeches, perfoliate bellwort, shooting star, astilbe, ligularia, primroses, ferns, columbine, celadine poppy, pulmonaria, epimedium, and many more.

Special offer for Shade Perennials!

We offer another bonanza this year. Will you be unable to make it to the garden fair? Any leftovers we have will be available for purchase at Carole Knutson’s driveway, 137 South Mt. Vernon Drive, Iowa City, from 4 to 6 PM on Saturday, May 9, and Sunday, May 10, or by appointment by calling (319) 338-8442.

Plant Sitters

As your arms or your flats fill up at the garden fair, and you still have more selections to make, drop your plant treasures off at one of the three Plant Sitter booths. We’ll be located near the Sunny Perennials, Hostas, and Trees and Shrubs areas. Our volunteers will label your plants and watch over them until you’re ready to check out. Some of our younger volunteers (Scouts, 4-H’ers and others) can help you move your selections through the check-out process.

If you’d like to volunteer as a plant sitter, please call Gene Knutson, (319) 338-8442, or Judy Cilek, (319) 354-4631, co-chairs.

Sunny Perennials Booth

April is here—and we have been longing for spring for months, it seems. We lowans should know better! Nevertheless, spring will spring, and we will be up to our garden clogs in mud very soon. Once again the Project GREEN emails have begun to flutter, and we know that it’s almost time to get outside and get to work—a welcome promise of yet another magical spring in Iowa City (minus the flooding).



This month we will go to work in the Barn (2385 Sugar Bottom Road) on Saturday mornings, potting plants beside the wood-burning stove while renewing old friendships and making new ones. Every year we are somehow able to come up with scads of Iowa-grown winter-hardy sunny perennials from generous donors, and this year will be no different.

We Need Wagons!

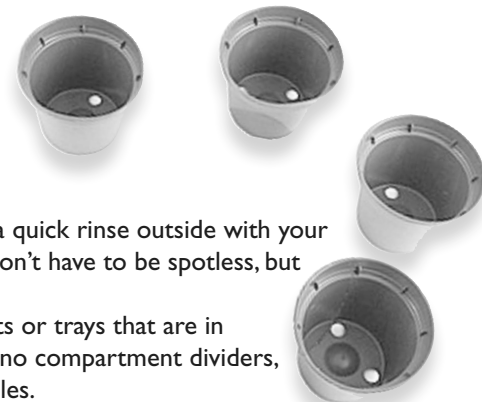
Are you stumbling over a leftover little red wagon in your garage? The Plant Sitters could use it— or one of any other color--to make our services even better.

To donate, contact
Gene Knutson,
gene@mchsi or
338-8442.



Please join us! Potters, diggers, groomers, donors, and fair workers are needed. Let this be your year to volunteer— we promise, you will be hooked! As for our loyal every-year Sunnies, see you in the Barn! For information call Suzie Treloar, (319) 624-7175, Melanie Hauptert, (319) 351-1149, or Shirley Lakin, (319) 338-0041.

Containers needed for the GREEN Garden Fair



The GREEN Garden Fair requires *lots* of plastic pots for all the plants we sell. We welcome the chance to recycle these pots again and again, so here are a few tips if your garage is overflowing with potting supplies:

1. We use *plastic* containers, 4 1/2" square or in diameter, or larger.
2. The containers must be of sturdy plastic that is designed to be reused; we can't use the flimsy plastic used for potting many annuals.
3. Please remove all labels and tags.

4. Please give the pots a quick rinse outside with your garden hose—they don't have to be spotless, but free from most dirt.
5. We also welcome flats or trays that are in solid condition, have no compartment dividers, and have drainage holes.
6. Bring your donations in a tied garbage bag to Ted and Kay's house at 612 Seventh Avenue, Coralville, and leave them in our driveway by the other pots. Thank you!

Ted and Kay Carpenter, 612 Seventh Avenue, Coralville,
(319) 351-7634, TCarpe8615@msn.com

Sunday Garden Forums Get Off to a Good Start

On Sunday, February 8, the 2009 Project GREEN Garden Forums got off to a great start as an audience of 200 gathered to hear Mark Zillis present his program, "Hosta Highlights." Although Mark's new book, *The Hostapedia*, was not to be available for at least a month, he entertained and educated us with his photos of all sorts of hostas and his comments telling us all we need to know about their characteristics and culture.

March 8 was the perfect time to have Deb Walser present the latest on new plants and new ways to use familiar plants for this year's garden. Deb's program, "Perennials; New, Old, and Unusual," had us itching to visit our favorite nurseries as soon as they are stocked this spring. Deb has worked for nearly ten years at a landscape nursery in Cedar Rapids and is an experienced Master Gardener. You may have heard her on WMT at 7 AM on Saturdays or 9 AM on Wednesdays.



As usual, our Sunday Garden Forums take place with the help of our good partner the Iowa City Public Library. All forums are open to all and free of charge. They begin at 2 p.m. and end around 4 p.m. in Room A of the library, just off the Linn Street entrance. Each forum is recorded for check-out at the library and is televised on channel 10 for live home viewing. After an hour presentation, and 10–15 minutes for refreshments, we have 45 minutes for Q & A, allowing the audience to interact one-on-one with our speaker.



If you missed this program or February's garden forum, don't forget that you can check out DVDs and tapes of these and other forums from the Iowa City Public Library's video collection.

April 5 will bring Dr. Donald Lewis from Ames to Iowa City to help us deal with the insects in our landscape. Are you tempted to spray the livin' daylights out of every bug you see? Dr. Lewis will help us to see the good bugs as helpers. He will show us ways to get rid of bad bugs in an environmentally friendly way—and we'll learn which bugs are which. You will find his presentation useful as the summer brings critters into your yard.



Left photo: A large crowd gathered early at the Iowa City Public Library to hear Mark Zillis present "Hosta Highlights."
Top photo: Diane Allen asks Mark Zillis a question from the audience.
Bottom photo: Deb Walser presented her very entertaining and 4 educational program in March.

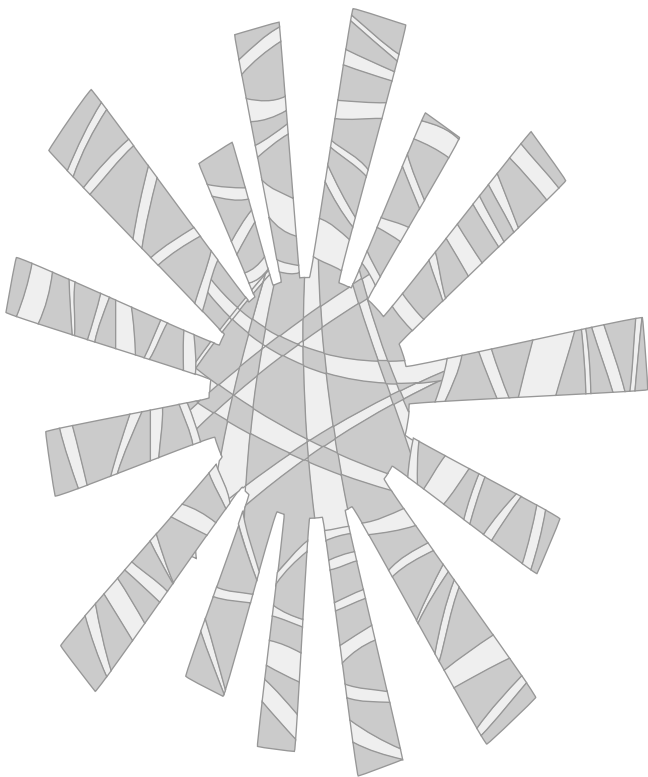
Get Ready, Get Set . . .

Southeast Junior High is embarking on a Project GREEN Grant landscaping project this spring. After major construction which modernized and enhanced the usefulness of the building, Principal Deb Wretman and staff realized there were several scattered areas around the building which would benefit from revisions in landscaping. Two have been initially targeted: a courtyard adjacent to the science classrooms, which includes a drainage area and is surrounded by building walls; and a high-traffic entrance area near the art rooms, which is described as being in the “elbow” of the building.

Pleasing year-round aesthetics, enhanced functionality with low maintenance, and opportunities for experiential learning are the goals outlined in the proposal. Stay tuned for updates on the progress of this project as landscape architect Brenda Nelson works to help SEJH achieve its goals!



East Side, Earth Day—Celebrate on Saturday, April 25!



The Iowa City Landfill and Recycling Center and the Habitat ReStore will host an event to celebrate “Earth Day at East Side” on Saturday, April 25, from 10 AM to 4 PM at the Iowa City East Side Recycling Center, 2401 Scott Blvd. SE.

Activities and attractions will include the following:

- Iowa City Community Compost give-away (Bring your own bucket!)
- Interactive activities sponsored by environmental groups, with information about their projects and goals and ways to get involved
- Booth for waste reduction, reuse, and recycling education
- Display of plans for the future East Side Recycling Center
- Special sales for the ReStore
- Free one-hour workshops (bicycle maintenance and repair, making art from salvaged materials, and furniture reupholstery, and more)
- Food vendors
- Music

For more information, contact Jen Jordan, recycling coordinator, Iowa City Landfill & Recycling Center, 887-6160; or Mande Butler, ReStore manager, Iowa Valley Habitat for Humanity ReStore, 338-5687.

Calling All Volunteers!

Gene Knutson stands next to the sandwich board that he designed and built as a Project GREEN volunteer. Gene has donated hundreds of hours to Project GREEN as Plant Sitter Booth co-chair, carpenter extraordinaire for the sandwich board, and mastermind of improvements to the shady perennial line-out bed that allow more-efficient and less-stressful work for Project GREEN volunteers' aching backs. Gene is one of the hundreds of volunteers whose efforts promote Project GREEN's goal of enhancing the natural beauty of our community.

Volunteers are our most vital commodity! Consider the GREEN Garden Fair, the GREEN Garden Tour, or a Garden Forum as your volunteer activity.

To volunteer, please contact

Cindy Parsons, (319) 338-3975, cparsons@icialaw.com;
or Diane Allen, (319) 354-5720, dlallen16@hotmail.com.



Watch for the sandwich board at the GREEN Garden Fair which will announce Project GREEN activities and events.

Master Gardeners Events in Johnson County

Second Annual Garden Flea Market and Plant Sale

Saturday, May 16, 2009, 8 AM–noon

Food Booth Building, Johnson County 4-H Fairgrounds

Sponsored by the Johnson County Master Gardeners



With this event, Master Gardeners raise funding for an annual scholarship given through Kirkwood Community College, for 4-H awards, and for support of Master Gardener projects.

Look for used but usable items including garden and lawn tools, plant containers, yard art, horticulture books and magazines, and other hort paraphernalia. There will also be plants, seeds, bulbs, etc.

Questions? Call Kay Baldrige (319) 688-2661.

Fourteenth Annual Plum Grove “Taste of the Heritage Garden”

Wednesday, July 22, 2009, 5:30–7 PM

Plum Grove historic site, 1030 Carroll St., Iowa City

Johnson County Master Gardeners will prepare soups, salads, vegetables, breads, and desserts based on recipes from the mid to late 1800s. The historic home of Robert Lucas, first territorial governor of Iowa, will be open for tours. Come and stroll through the heirloom vegetable, flower, and prairie gardens, listen to music by the Old Post Office Brass Band, and maybe win a door prize. \$5 suggested donation.

For more information, call Betty Kelly (351-4903).

The Johnson County Master Gardeners are a volunteer group through ISU and the Johnson County Extension. Their purpose is to “provide current, research-based home horticulture information and education to the citizens of Iowa” through programs, displays, the Hortline (question-answer line at 337-2145), one-on-one contacts, demonstration gardens and projects approved by the Extension.

Becoming a Master Gardener requires forty hours of class instruction covering all areas of horticulture, followed by forty hours of volunteer service. The cost is \$125, and scholarships are available. For more information or to get your name on the application list, call Barb Schintler (351-1574).

Donate Your “Stuff” to Benefit Project GREEN

Project GREEN now has an account at Stuff Etc's Coralville location! Items in good condition, including furniture, household goods, and seasonal clothing, may be dropped off without an appointment if you mention that your donation is to benefit Project GREEN.

Some items cannot be accepted, including computer equipment, TVs and stereos, and exercise equipment, so you should check the website at www.stuffetconline.com or call in advance (319-545-8408) if you have questions.

This account is at the Coralville store only, located at 2818 Commerce Drive (near Kohl's and Walmart), and the account number is 26719. Store hours are Monday–Thursday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m.

Turn your trash into someone else's treasure, and benefit Project GREEN at the same time!



Mary Beth Sundblad, owner of Stuff Etc Quality Consignments, presents a check for \$1,250 to Project GREEN Vice President Diane Allen, as Project GREEN President Cindy Parsons (on left) and Sara Sundblad of Stuff Etc look on. The funds were raised through Stuff Etc's Charity Umbrella program for the month of January. Project GREEN appreciates the generosity of Stuff Etc. and all its customers who made donations.

Garlic Mustard Challenge 2009 Is On: Quad Cities vs. Johnson County! Saturday, May 2

For the past two years, the Great Garlic Mustard Challenge has been just a two-opponent event—us against the weeds. In 2009, another contender will join us in the ring, as the Quad Cities have challenged Johnson County for the title of Great Garlic Mustard Challenge Champion.

Team Johnson County has accepted. And this year, North Liberty has joined Iowa City, Coralville, and the university to help fight this invasive weed. While it's not yet known what the winner will take home—other than the elimination of what we hope will be tons of garlic mustard that are threatening our local woodlands and parks—there will be some type of traveling trophy awarded. Last year participants topped their previous year's pull by almost two tons! Almost one ton was pulled in 2007, three tons in 2008, and we'd love to see triple that this year.

Garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) is a nonnative plant species that has no local natural controls, in part because none of Iowa's native insects or wildlife rely on it for food. This white-flowered plant (whose leaves smell garlicky when crushed) has spread at an alarming rate the past two decades, degrading our woodlands by crowding out native wildflowers, ferns, and tree seedlings. In so doing, garlic mustard also limits the food supply for woodland wildlife. To control its spread, the weeds must be pulled out or cut off between March and June, before they go to seed and repopulate.

Currently there are four major events scheduled to pull garlic mustard in participating Johnson County communities:

Coralville Clear Creek Greenbelt
Saturday, April 25, 9 AM–noon

University of Iowa Finkbine Golf Course (Meet at maintenance shed, 20 Mormon Trek)
Sunday, April 26, 10 AM–noon

Iowa City Hickory Hill Park
Saturday, May 2, 9 AM–noon

North Liberty Cornerstone Park (intersection of Dubuque and Zeller)
Saturday, May 2, 9 AM–noon

Other locations in Johnson County—publicly or privately owned properties—may host a garlic pull at any time between April 20 and May 17 and still count toward the total. Interested property owners can register, and volunteers can sign up to pull, at the Great Garlic Mustard Challenge's website, www.icgov.org/garlicmustard. You can also contact Marcia Bollinger at Iowa City's Neighborhood Services office, (319) 356-5237.

Guides to assist volunteers in identifying garlic mustard will be available at all public sites. Bags of pulled garlic mustard will be collected by city staff or can be dropped off at designated drop sites. They'll be weighed at the landfill for the final tally. See the website for more information about drop site locations.

Pullers, please note: You'll need gloves, and you should wear long sleeves and pants and closed-toe shoes, in case of poison ivy. Garbage bags will be provided at the public sites.

Neighborhood associations, service groups, youth groups, and individuals are encouraged to participate, either at a designated park site or in their own backyards and neighborhoods. When we work together, we can take down garlic mustard!



An Iowa City Community Special—Compost!

Every year, within just a few miles of Iowa City, tons of quality compost is produced from local yard clippings, grass, and leaves. The Iowa City Landfill and Recycling Center accepts about 6,500 tons of organic material yearly in yard waste from all of Johnson County and the cities of Kalona and Riverside. The landfill is currently seeking DNR approval to compost food waste with the yard waste.

At the landfill, the plant materials are ground up and pushed into windrows so the composting process can begin. The windrows, which are about 200 feet long, 12 feet wide and 12 feet tall, are turned monthly to maintain ideal

temperature, moisture, and oxygen levels. This enables happy bugs to break the materials down well and to kill any weed seeds in the mix. In six to nine months, the compost is tested for “doneness,” screened to remove large particles, and cured for thirty days.



Finished Iowa City Community Compost is offered for sale to the public and contractors at \$10 per ton, with a minimum purchase of \$1 for up to 200 pounds. Landfill staff will happily load trucks or trailers with an end-loader, but customers should be prepared to load smaller amounts by hand, so bring a shovel!

Please contact the recycling coordinator, Jennifer Jordan, with any questions about compost at (319) 887-6160.

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PROJECT GREEN

Civic Center

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Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Return Service Requested



Please plant trees