

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 2008

Spring Is Coming! Shop the 2008 Project GREEN Garden Fair! Saturday, May 10, 9–11:30 AM, at Carver-Hawkeye Arena

Our 38th annual Project GREEN Garden Fair will be held on Saturday, May 10, from 9:00 to 11:30 AM at Carver-Hawkeye Arena. We will have a vast variety of sunny perennials, groundcovers, shade perennials, hostas, wildflowers, trees, and shrubs. Everything we sell is hardy in our extreme Iowa summers and winters.

Volunteer plant sitters in several areas of the arena will hold your flats of plants as you browse for more. The 4-H'ers and Boy Scouts will be there to help you carry your plants to the car.

Each booth will be staffed by knowledgeable plant people and, to answer any questions you may have, the fair's group of experts will include Brad Friedhof, Kent Park naturalist; Terry Robinson, Iowa City forester; Jim Scheib, member of the Eastern Iowa Bird Watch and Iowa City Birders; and the Master Gardeners of Johnson County.

If you've been to the fair previously, you know what treasures it holds. If you're a gardener—or even a would-be gardener—who's never seen the fair's extraordinary spread of healthy green plants of many types, come and join our area's best-known source of garden glory!

Trees, Shrubs, and Vines Booth

Trees are the most successful plants on earth and essential to life. They reduce pollution by absorbing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen. We in the Trees, Shrubs, and Vines Booth spend March and April procuring locally grown plant material to bring



Flats of plants awaiting purchase at the 2007 Garden Fair Plant Sitter's area.

beauty to your gardens. Our goal is to offer a wide variety of plants and encourage you to diversify your plantings, not only of trees, but of everything else! Come and support our efforts! Please call Kasey at 330-7935 for volunteer opportunities with Trees, Shrubs, and Vines.

Groundcovers Booth

The Groundcovers Booth features a great selection of plants for those areas of your yard that you hope to make maintenance-free. Steep slopes that aren't safe to mow, dense shady spots that discourage many plants, and areas with intense sun and heat are all good candidates for groundcover. Our selection usually includes the old standbys such as vinca minor, pachysandra, euonymus, sedums, ferns, wild and European ginger, and much more.

We are always looking for additional volunteers to join our small but mighty group. Please contact Ted and Kay Carpenter at 351-7634 to volunteer time or offer plant donations.

Sunny Perennials Booth

Peonies, both fern-leafed and herbaceous, will be the stars of the show this spring at the Sunny Perennial Booth. We were fortunate to acquire them from their former owners who were moving. Hurry over to our booth while the supply lasts.

The Sunny Perennial Booth will be loaded with plants that love both partial and full sun, so you don't have to have total sun to take our babies home. Think about the height and color you need in your landscape. Shorter plants for the front of your border or nestled by a step or boulder might include our soft lamb's ear (the cultivar 'Helene Stein') or lady's mantle, which sparkles with dew or raindrops in sun or partial shade. We also have dwarf



Garden Fair volunteers take a last minute check of their booths before the doors open.

iris 'Small Wonder' in blue, and sedum 'Vera Jameson' with her rosy flowers as the summer wears on. Medium-height plants to fill in the middle of your border include perennial geraniums, coreopsis, sedum 'Autumn Joy,' and the strong-stemmed daisies 'Silver Princess' or 'Becky.'

We plan to have many tables loaded with a variety of plants that have survived this snowy Iowa City winter. Volunteers are eager to help you find the right plant for your purpose. Stop by and check us out!

Shade Booth Offers an Array of Choices

Of the almost 1,300 hostas available to the hostaphile at the Garden Fair this year, more than twenty-two cultivars have been voted among the most popular by members of the American Hosta Society in the last two years. In addition, more than thirty-five cultivars are new and prized for their variegation and vigorous qualities. Our largest selection in several years includes 4 mini-, 320 small, 467 medium, and 455 large varieties, representing blue, green, gold, and variegated color schemes.



Prairie Plant Booth from the 2007 Garden Fair.

Stop and relax over a cup of coffee and a muffin before going home to plant your new purchases.

Other shade-loving perennials that are always in demand will be available: astilbe, bleeding heart, brunnera, celandine poppy, epimedium, ferns, perennial geranium cultivars, goatsbeard, hellebores, ligularia, and primrose. Native wildflowers have become a staple since local gardeners have been providing us with bloodroot, chelone, wild columbine, Dutchman's breeches, bluebells, hepatica, jack-in-the-pulpit, Jeffersonian twinleaf, shooting star, Solomon's seal, dwarf Solomon's seal, variegated Solomon's seal, trillium, and Canadian and 'Red Caesar' violets.

Shop the Shade Booth and discover choice plants for your garden!

If you would like to join the Shade Booth or have plant materials you wish to donate, please contact any one of us: Marilyn Gaffey, 351-1884; Anne Hesse, 337-3796; Carole Knutson, 338-8442; Linda Prybil, 351-6210; Linda Schuchert, 351-2845; Sue Terveer-Mullins, 339-0984; or Sue Wolken, 351-0861.

Plant Sitters Ready to Help!

As your flats fill up and you still have more plants to select, drop them off at one of the three Plant Sitter booths located near the Sunny Perennials, Hostas, and Trees and Shrubs booths. Our volunteers will label your plants and hold them for you until you are ready to check out.

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

GREEN Garden Fair Management Team

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If you are interested in volunteering time or plants for the fair, please contact the coordinators or a booth chair!

A Tribute to Ron Cameron

Throughout Project GREEN's forty years, innumerable hard-working volunteers have contributed to the success of the GREEN Garden Fair. One volunteer whose unique efforts stand out is Ron Cameron. We are neighbors and, one summer day, I encouraged Ron to get involved with Project GREEN. He has a love of the land and especially of native plant materials. Ron did not have to give my suggestion much thought, and he quickly became an energetic worker and contributor to the fair. For ten years he has grown prairie plants for the Prairie Booth, donating in all fifteen thousand plants, each selling for three dollars.

That total of \$45,000 for Project GREEN is fantastic for one person's efforts, and Ron has never even charged for his enormous expenditure of time and materials. He has provided all the native seeds for his plants, created and produced a special soil mixture for them, and furnished the facility and equipment for their potting-up. In preparation for the fair he has used his own greenhouse, provided the wood for heating it, and seen to the constant watering of each year's developing "indoor prairie." The hours Ron has graciously contributed to the fair while tending to his seedlings and growing plants are beyond the scope of the usual volunteer.

The disappointing news is that the near-record snowfall this year has presented obstacles that will prevent Ron from getting any plants ready for this spring's fair. This year there will be a vacant spot where his lovely prairie has flourished for eager gardeners at Carver-Hawkeye Arena. Ron says that this is only a short break and that the Prairie Booth will be back in the future.

In the meantime, from all of us, Ron, a fervent thank you!

—AK Traw

Project GREEN Garden Tour 2008

June 29, 2008 • 10 AM - 3 PM • \$5.00 admission, children 16 and under free

It's our 40th anniversary! Celebrate by visiting five different gardens in Iowa City for Project GREEN's annual Garden Tour! Begin the tour at any of the five gardens listed below and receive a brochure with a map that will become your ticket to the other gardens.

Neighboring properties will be featured, located in only two areas of Iowa City. Less touring of Iowa City this year will mean more time to tour and enjoy the gardens!

NORMANDY DRIVE

Three riverfront properties on Normandy Drive include two side-by-side gardens that complement each other wonderfully, and the third garden is just a short walk down the street. Plantings of hostas, climbing roses and annual combinations, all accented by clever hardscaping, make a delightful addition to their scenic waterfront setting.

Keo Hoang and Paul Measells, 712 Normandy Drive, moved to their home about seven years ago, and began their garden extravaganza by first shaping beds in their front yard. Each year they have created a new combination of annuals, supplemented by climbing roses, irises, and other perennials. Then each summer, landscape improvements were made in their backyard, which now includes a large brick patio with a water fountain, and a circular stone patio with a fire pit-BBQ. Beds of mixed flowers and vegetables encircle the house and patios.

Jack and Pat Sallady, 817 Normandy Drive, moved in after the flood



Garden tour visitors admire a hosta grouping.



Marcia and Richard Shaffer's pond was a cool oasis during the 2007 Garden Tour.

of 1993 to a yard devoid of grass or plantings, consisting primarily of moss and mud. An overstory of tall trees defeated even the weedy grass that survived in their backyard, so they installed border gardens and a wealth of shade-loving hostas to create their riverside oasis.

Greg and Linda Schrock, 821 Normandy Drive, retired to their home in 1997, only 70 feet from the Iowa River. Formerly a rental unit, the only previous gardening and landscaping activity had come in the form of an occasional trip around the yard with a lawnmower. This garden now sports numerous hosta beds, a butterfly garden, and several water features.

MARCY STREET

Further east from the river, two more neighbors are featured on this year's garden tour. These two cottage gardens share a theme of "Grow where you're planted" because of their many plants that self-seed and spread. Annuals join the show to combine for three seasons of color.

Julie Dahlberg, 1201 Marcy Street, bought her house in 2000 under the condition that she care for the garden! The existing beds were designed by former resident and Project GREEN member Connie Floerchinger, previously on the garden tour in the mid 1990s. This cottage garden abounds with self-seeding and spreading plants that are always in bloom, and features peonies, heirloom roses, daylilies, hostas, and ornamental grasses. Julie is glad to share the wealth by donating hostas to the Project GREEN plant sales!

Sue and Sam Mullins, 1207 Marcy Street, had a virtually clean palette to start gardening in 1991. Their 1921 home was surrounded by grass to the foundation, with only a few large trees and shrubs in the front and along a property line. Over the years they relocated a garage, built a deck and side porch, and created new beds and hardscaping throughout the yard. Delightful combinations of perennials and annuals will offer relaxation and inspiration.



Marcia Shaffer answers questions about her garden.

Project Green Celebrates 40 Years of Public Beautification

In 1967, when Iowa City was in the throes of urban renewal, three members of the volunteer group Citizens for a Better Iowa City listened to a presentation describing how some communities, with volunteer input, could revitalize their natural environment. When Nancy Seiberling, Gretchen Harshbarger, and Jim Maynard collaborated outside of the conference room, they concluded, "We can do that!" These three, eventually known as co-founders of Project GREEN, formulated an organizational plan, complete with goals, purposes, and bylaws, to present to the members of the city council in March 1968. The council endorsed this document and established Project GREEN formally as a quasi-commission of the City of Iowa City. This relationship has been vital to our goal of beautifying our public green spaces as well as raising the environmental awareness of the citizens of Iowa City.

The mission statement formulated that first year, which still guides us today, reads as follows: "It is our belief that the visual impression our community makes upon new arrivals and visitors and the pleasures we derive from living here are the sum total of the imagination, consideration, and care that we each put into the development, improvement, and maintenance of our own homes, businesses, and industries, and that we collectively expect, encourage, and support in our public improvements. It is of this philosophy that Project GREEN was born and we hope will continue to grow."

Knight Prairie Pavilion Opens at F. W. Kent Park

The grand opening of the Knight Prairie Pavilion was held at Kent Park in September. The pavilion was funded through a gift from long-time Project GREEN member Bernie Knight and her family as a memorial to Calvin Knight. The pavilion is a 28-foot open-air hexagon that overlooks an 80-acre tract of reconstructed prairie and wetlands. The highlight of its interpretive panels about the Iowa prairie are illustrations by Mark Muller, a well-known artist of Oxford, Iowa. A large binocular scope provides visitors a closeup view of the vast array of birds, insects, and wildlife that frequent the surroundings. The pavilion will serve not only as a lovely site from which to enjoy a breathtaking view, but also as a valuable teaching tool. Park visitors can hike the mowed trails to explore the ever-changing beauty of this prairie reconstruction. Kent Park is one of Johnson County's natural treasures; take a short road trip and behold the striking beauty of the prairie!



Pavilion patron and Project GREEN member Bernie Knight.



Community members gather at Kent State Park for the grand opening of the Knight Prairie Pavilion.

Project GREEN's contributions to Iowa City's GREEN Fund, 1968–2008:

\$1,574,619.30

Help provide community landscaping for all to enjoy.

Your contribution is tax-deductible. Join to help. Grow to Reach Environmental Excellence Now!

"Proven Winners" Garden Forum

April 13, 2-4 PM • Iowa City Public Library

The Project GREEN Sunday Garden Forums continue at the Iowa City Public Library on April 13 with a talk by Sandy Wentworth, a marketing coordinator for Proven Winners, the wide range of special flowering plants known to most gardeners. Ms. Wentworth will present new 2008 products as well as PW plants you may already know. She will recommend combinations of plants, the best planting methods, and the proper culture to keep plants flourishing throughout the summer.

The Project GREEN Garden Forums are given in partnership with the Iowa City Public Library. All forums take place on Sunday in Room A of the Library from 2 to 4 PM. They are free and open to all. Televised live on the library channel 10, they are also recorded on DVDs for the library's video collection and are available for checkout. If you have a landscape or gardening subject that interests you, or a question you want to research, look into the video collection for subjects that have been addressed in past forums.

On February 10, 2008, Lee Zieke and Lindsay Lee from Willowglen Nursery presented a forum on gardening design, current plants, and the Willowglen perspective on why and how we garden. On March 3, District Forester Mark Vitosh discussed some of the trees that do well in our area, as well as others to avoid.

We try to present subjects of interest for our gardening forums. If you have an idea for a future forum, please contact any Project GREEN volunteer or Melanie Hauptert, forum coordinator.

Local Communities Invited to Compete in the 2008 Great Garlic Mustard Challenge

In May of 2007, the City of Iowa City and Johnson County, Iowa, held the first Great Garlic Mustard Challenge in an attempt to establish a record for pulling out garlic mustard plants. At their one-day event, a total of 1,950 pounds of the weed was pulled by volunteers in area parks and on private property.

This year, in an effort to expand the program and establish a new record, other Iowa communities are being challenged to participate and to beat the Iowa City–Johnson County effort of last year.

Garlic mustard 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 as a food source. The white-flowered plant has spread at an alarmingly fast rate during the past two decades, and is now degrading local woodlands by crowding out native wildflowers, ferns, and tree seedlings. By reducing the number of these natives, garlic mustard is also limiting the available food supply for woodland animals. To control its spread, the weeds must be pulled or cut between March and June, before they go to seed and repropagate.

This year, the main Iowa City–Johnson County Great Garlic Mustard Challenge event will occur on April 26, 2008, from 9 AM to noon. Other locations in Johnson County—public or privately owned properties—can arrange to host a garlic pull at any time during the month of April if other dates are more convenient. The website developed for the Great Garlic Mustard Challenge www.icgov.org/garlicmustard can be used by interested property owners to register their sites and by volunteers to sign up. You can also contact Marcia Klingaman at the city's Neighborhood Services Office at 319-356-5237.

Guides will be available to assist volunteers at all sites in identifying which plants to pull, and garbage bags will be provided. Bags of the pulled garlic mustard will be collected by city staff, and they can be dropped off at designated sites in Iowa City to be weighed at the landfill for a final tally. Neighborhood associations, service groups, youth groups, and individuals are encouraged to participate, either at one of the designated park sites or in their own backyards and neighborhoods.

The website also offers a printable flyer titled "Garlic Mustard 101" and a poster about the event, as well as a listing of various other websites where you can learn more about garlic mustard. Driving directions to each site are also included. Free brochures about the Great Garlic Mustard Challenge will be distributed at various local nurseries, garden centers, gardening supply stores, and at government offices, including the Iowa City Public Library and the Johnson County Extension Office. If you would like copies of the brochure to distribute,

please contact Marcia Klingaman at 319-356-5237.

The event is being organized by Iowa City's Neighborhood Services Office, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the Public Works Department.



Garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) is an invasive, biannual flowering plant.



Website Improvements

Thank you to Libby Shannon and Goosetown Graphics for maintenance and design work on our website, www.projectgreen.org. Improvements and updates are under way, so check back frequently!

Forester Available to Local Woodland Owners



District Forester Mark Vitosh discusses the management of invasive plant species with local landowners.

How would you like to get paid to walk through beautiful woodlands every day throughout the year, observing the variety of wildlife and vegetation? This is a daily activity of Iowa DNR District Forester Mark Vitosh, who is responsible for assisting private landowners in Johnson, Linn, Scott, and Muscatine counties to manage their woodland resources. There are approximately 177,000 acres of forest cover within these four counties, and the majority of it is owned privately. If you own at least an acre of forest cover, Mark will talk with you to understand your management goals, walk the property with you and inventory your forest resources, and then develop a plan that will help you reach your goals.

Mark is an Iowa City native with B.S. and M.S. degrees in forestry from Iowa State University. Over the last twenty years he has worked as a forester in Okalahoma, as an extension specialist at Iowa State University, and with the Iowa DNR Forestry Bureau as a district forester since 2000. Also in 2000, Mark and his daughter Ashley coauthored a children's book called *The Forest Where Ashley Lives*.

There is no charge for Mark's services, and he can be contacted at the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Forestry Bureau, 4265 Oak-Crest Hill Road SE, Iowa City, IA 52246-5881, 319-351-8886, or Mark.Vitosh@dnr.iowa.gov.

Ornamental Grasses . . . So Many Choices, So Little Space!

There's a grass for every sunny spot in your garden. How to choose the best one? Let's start with choices of short ones. The books said blue fescue was short-lived, and my early experience confirmed this. But since I planted it in my soil-amended rock garden with good drainage, it has proved very hardy. I like the cultivars 'Elijah Blue' and 'Soling' (8–12 inches tall). I cut off the seed heads to prevent self-sowing and pull the brown leaves off in the spring.

I use the same spring pruning for all the slightly taller grasses. Blue oat grass is a real favorite of mine. It is striking planted in clumps of three (2 x 2 ft.). I have also liked the shorter carex 'Ice Dance' (10x12 in.) and

moor grass 'Variegated' (15x10 in.).

The best-behaved of the taller grasses has to be feather reed grass. It is very upright and stays fairly narrow. You can plant it in a perennial garden with no concern that it will crowd out its neighbors. I like 'Karl Foerster' and the variegated 'Over Dam' (4 x 2 ft.).

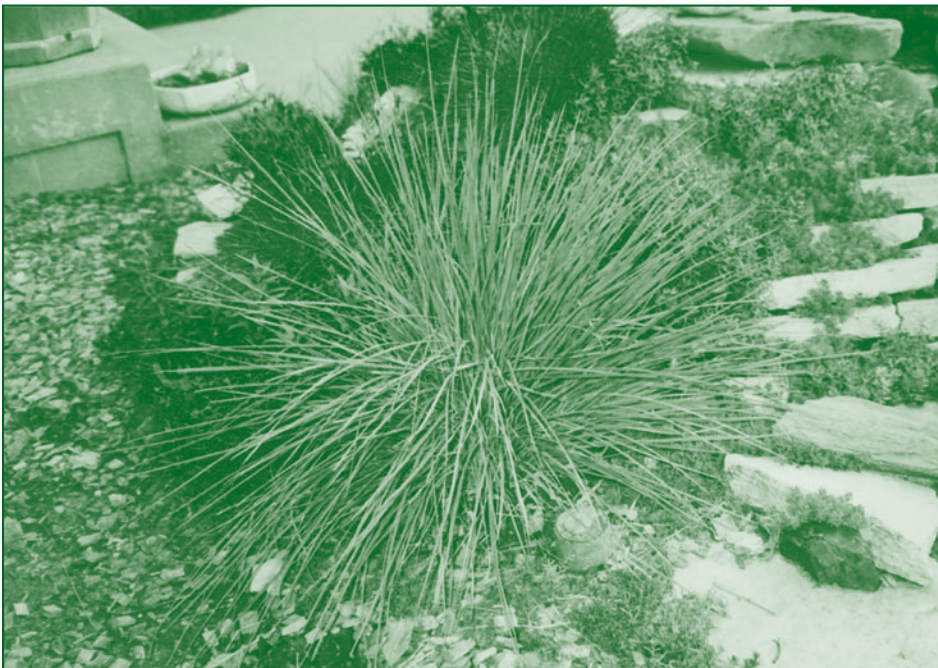
My two favorites in the six-foot or larger size are 'Malepartus' and 'Sarabande.' You must plan enough room for them to mature. Lodging—leaning and flopping—is a problem with taller grasses which I solve by putting a steel post behind the plants and tying them up in July. I cut back all the taller cultivars to four inches in the spring, just as they start to grow.



Miscanthus sinensis 'Variegatus'



Miscanthus sinensis 'Sarabande'



Blue oat grass, *Helictotrichon sempervirens*

If you are looking for a really tall, dramatic grass, *Saccharum ravennae* (10 x 12 ft.) will fill the bill.

Ornamental grasses do not need a lot of care as they can grow in poor soil and are drought tolerant. They have a presence all year long. The time to divide is spring, just as they send up green leaves. They can be planted anytime from nursery stock in pots. Read the labels as to the height and spread and save enough room for a mature plant in about three years. The grasses were a standout with ice and snow in my garden this winter.

—Marilou Gay

2006 Tornado Didn't Stop the Growing of the Green

Post-tornado cleanup and restoration of College Green Park continues! The Iowa City Parks and Forestry Division contracted with three area landscape firms—Iowa City Landscaping, Lewis Brothers Tree Farm, and Pleasant Valley Nursery, Landscaping, and Irrigation—to furnish and plant 55 new trees in and around College Green Park during October and November 2007. The restoration plan, developed by City Forester Terry Robinson and Project GREEN representative Jim Maynard, includes oaks, maples, and lindens as overstory shade trees and white pines as evergreen accents throughout the interior of the park, and ornamental pears and flowering crabapples along the crosswalks and along Washington and Dodge Streets on the east and north sides of the park. A few columnar Japanese tree lilacs remain to be planted in the center of the park this spring.

These new plantings were financed by memorial donations to the

city for use in the park and by city funds allocated for tornado-damage restoration (no Project GREEN funds were required). The Parks and Forestry Division is planning additional improvements to furnishings and lighting during 2008. These improvements along with the new trees will bring years of enjoyment to Iowa City residents and visitors and continue the tradition of College Green Park as a focal point of our community.

Restoration of the medians in the eastern two blocks of Iowa Avenue that were heavily damaged during both the tornado and the following cleanup should be accomplished during 2008. Landscape architect Jim L. Maynard has completed the plans, and competitive bidding will begin as soon as site conditions and construction work on adjacent properties permit. The restored plantings will maintain the character of those destroyed by the tornado and provide seasonal interest throughout the year.

Winter Storms Take Their Toll on Local Trees

This past year's ice and snow storms have caused significant damage to yard trees throughout our area. Consider the following steps when evaluating and managing damaged trees on your property:

- Before you do anything, be sure that any tree in question is on your property. If it's in a public right-of-way, contact your city office to see who is responsible for managing trees in these locations.
- If your tree is immediately adjacent to power lines, contact your local utility for assistance with pruning or removal. Do not prune around utility lines; this work should be done by trained professionals.
- Check the tree for potential hazards: large hanging branches and splits or cracks in the trunk that could result in a fall onto your house or garage—or your neighbor's. If the tree or its branches present a potential hazard to people or property, removal as quickly as possible is essential.
- If your tree has lost more than 50 percent of the crown (branches), it will struggle to maintain good health, so it should be evaluated for removal. If it's sustained significant damage but does not create a hazard, it is okay to consider leaving it to see how well it responds over the next few years.
- Most of the trees damaged this year were left with broken branch stubs and hanging broken branches. Larger stubs (2 inches or more in diameter) and broken branches are often

entry areas for decay-causing organisms, so having them removed correctly to allow proper wound closure will be beneficial to long-term health. If stubs and broken branches are less than 2 inches in diameter, removal is not critical, but still beneficial.

- Avoid pruning oak trees between March and October to prevent infection by the fungus that causes oak wilt. The best time to prune most tree species is during the winter months, but non-oak species can be pruned at other times as long as the leaf-out phase in the spring and the leaf-color-change phase in the fall are avoided.
- In general, wound dressings (pruning paint) are not needed on pruning wounds. One exception to this rule is oak. If an oak tree is wounded or pruned between March and October, treat the wound immediately with a non-tar-based wound dressing such as latex paint.
- If you do not have the experience, ability, and equipment to prune your own tree safely, you should hire a professional.
- If you hire a professional tree service/arborist, consider the following: 1) Avoid folks knocking on the door offering to work



on trees. Most local companies do not create business this way. 2) Check with city hall to see if tree services/arborists are required to be licensed in your community. 3) Ask for proof of personal and property damage insurance, and workers compensation.

- 4) Ask for references from local clients.
- 5) If possible, obtain written estimates, listing all the work to be done, from multiple companies. 6) Do not pay for work until it is complete. 7) Be patient. After a storm most local companies are very busy, and it could take weeks or even a few months before they can complete the work on your tree.

It is important to remember that the proper management of storm-damaged trees can promote long-term tree health. Also, if you have planted any trees in the last 10 to 15 years, proper care and pruning can

promote healthy, strong trees that will be less susceptible to storm damage.

For more specific information on managing storm-damaged trees, proper tree care and pruning, and hiring a professional tree service/arborist, go to the Tree Care and Pruning Section of shadetrees.iowadnr.gov.

—Mark Vitosh, district forester, Iowa Department of Natural Resources/Forestry Bureau, 319-351-8886, Mark.Vitosh@dnr.iowa.gov

Johnson County Master Gardeners Activities 2008

The Johnson County Master Gardeners are a volunteer group through ISU and the Johnson County Extension. Its mission is to “provide current, research-based home horticulture information and education to the citizens of Iowa” through programs, demonstrations, displays, one-on-one contacts, and demonstration gardens and projects approved by the Extension.

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

Garden Flea Market and Plant Sale

Sponsored by the Johnson County Master Gardeners
Saturday, May 17, 2008, 8 AM–NOON
Food Booth Building, Johnson County 4-H Fairgrounds

Master Gardeners are having this event to raise money for an annual scholarship given through Kirkwood Community College and 4-H awards and to support Master Gardener projects.

Master Gardeners are donating 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.

Second Annual Master Gardener “Top Gardening Tips”

Sunday, May 18, 2–4 PM
Iowa City Public Library, Room A

Are you interested in a particular gardening topic and just need “top tips” to get you moving in the right direction? Betty Kelly will offer “Top Organic Gardening Tips,” and Sherlyn Flesher will present “Easy Composting.” Planning for a third presentation is still under way. The event is free. Refreshments will be provided. For more information, contact Fred Meyer at fred.meyer@BackyardAbundance.org or 319-358-7665.

Plum Grove Tasting Party

Wednesday, July 16, 2008, 5:30–7 PM
Plum Grove historic site, 1030 Carroll Street, 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, is open for tours. You can stroll through the heirloom vegetable, flower, and prairie gardens maintained by the JC Master Gardeners, hear entertainment by the Old Post Office Brass Band, and win a door prize! \$5 suggested donation. For more information, call Betty Kelly, 351-4903.

Van Allen Elementary Renews Plantings

On the very hot Saturday of October 6th, 2007, parents, teachers, landscape committee members, and students of Van Allen Elementary School met to plant replacement trees and many new perennials in beds located near the school's front entryway. The PTO's landscape committee worked with Country Landscapes in designing a low-maintenance plan for the four existing tree beds, and "the results are spectacular!" says the landscape committee co-chair Lisa Carlson. These before-and-after photos underscore her enthusiasm. To match existing PTO funds for purchasing the plant materials, Van Allen



received a grant from the GREEN Grants for Schools program. The Van Allen community hopes to make this the first of several opportunities to work with Project GREEN to beautify and enhance their school grounds.



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The Project Green newsletter is edited by Diane Allen, Cindy Parsons, and Gail Zlatnik. Photos by Betty Kann, Jim Maynard, Sheryl Little, AK Traw, and Marcia Shaffer. Produced by Goodfellow Printing.

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