

News Letter

City Hall, Iowa City, Iowa 52240
www.projectgreen.org

GROW TO
REACH
ENVIRONMENTAL
EXCELLENCE
NOW



PUBLISHED IN EARLY SPRING AND LATE FALL

SPRING 2019

Farewell to the Garden Fair – See You at the Market!

Ah, spring! We have waited for you for so long. Everyone appreciates the season that brings new opportunities and a fresh start, especially Project GREEN volunteers!

In 2019, Project GREEN will take a new approach to create awareness and to fundraise for our organization. Yes, dear readers, after more than fifty years of very hard work, and now with arthritic knees and backs, we've decided to change things up.

Beginning Saturday, May 4, look for us at the Iowa City Farmers Market in the Chauncey Swan Parking Garage, from 7:30 a.m. to noon, where we will have a table. Our volunteers will connect with the community to create awareness of our new format and sell our locally grown plants. This strategic plan will give our dedicated volunteers a well-earned break from weeks of hard work every spring and fall.

If you have plant donations, please let us know. See the "GREEN Garden Fair at the Farmers Market" below for more details.

And yes, we are going back to our "roots"—much

of our important beautification work was started in the downtown—making an impact along Iowa Avenue, in College Green Park, and at Black Hawk Mini-Park was our concept for downtown Iowa City.

Each year, the cost to maintain our many landscape projects is more than \$25,000. Our devoted followers may also support our mission with a financial donation to our endowment (perpetual) fund at the Community Foundation of Johnson County, or to our operating fund at the City of Iowa City. Contributions of any size are welcome and greatly appreciated.

Project GREEN celebrated fifty years of service to the community in 2018. Since launching, this nonprofit has funded \$2 million of area projects. Through the years, our all-volunteer effort has grown to include parks, roadsides, riverfronts, and median parkways on state, county, and city properties and all public school grounds, as well as efforts to educate citizens about the importance of beautifying private property.

Join us at the market as we continue to Grow to Reach Environmental Excellence Now. ✿

GREEN Garden Fair at the Farmers Market

By Lorie Leo

Q: What could be more fun than selecting fresh local produce, meeting up with friends, and enjoying luscious lemon-blueberry pancakes at the IC Farmers Market?

A: Stopping off at Project GREEN's stall on the way out, to select a beautiful blooming plant for your garden!

Yes, this growing season, in the months of May and June and then again in October, Project GREEN will be selling plants at the Wednesday evening and Saturday morning Farmers Markets in Iowa City. We will have all the favorite trees, shrubs, shade plants, and sunny perennials we've had in years past, just not all at the same big event. Our volunteers will divide and share their most outstanding performers from their mature gardens—plants with proven track records of high performance in our locale.

We'll begin in May with charming spring bloomers, sought-after cultivars of award-winning hostas and daylilies, and

of course those irresistible bleeding hearts. Pick up something special for Mother's Day! Later on, we'll have all kinds of iris, tough-as-nails sedums, groundcovers, even houseplants and tender succulents. Since the black-eyed Susan was named the official flower of Iowa City last year, we'll be sure to have those on hand. Let's get some growing in every garden in town! We'll also feature "pollinator pleasers," plants that encourage native bees, bugs, and butterflies, with emphasis on those beneficial to the threatened monarch.

In October, we'll feature heirloom peonies and fresh divisions of other hardy, showy plants that may have caught your eye in gardens around town all summer. Fall is a great time to transplant trees, so if you don't get that sweet little lilac or utilitarian viburnum planted during your busy spring, you can do it as the season winds down in October.

(continued on page 2)

The GREEN Garden Fair, our newly-retired, major fundraising event, began in 1968 as a few tables in the Robert A. Lee Recreation Center of downtown Iowa City. We moved quickly out to the Johnson County Fairgrounds for added space, then on to Carver-Hawkeye Arena to accommodate larger crowds of shoppers and thousands of plants. The fair became a spring tradition in this area, valued for the wide selection of choice plants grown by local volunteers. Our strategy has changed, but the goal of civic beautification has not, and all proceeds go directly to Iowa City for our planting projects around town and at district schools.

One mission of the Farmers Market is to educate people about the benefits of locally produced food. Education has always been part of Project GREEN's mission too. What we'll offer is food for the soul, locally sourced and grown without commercial pesticides, along with information on how to incorporate these plants into a healthy landscape. Our traditional garden tour is undergoing a transformation as well this summer (see the Open Gardens Weekend article), so it is fitting that locals will want easy access to diverse plant materials as they prepare to open their garden spaces to others and share what they have learned.

Be sure to stop at our stall each time you visit the market, and see what's growing! In no time, shoppers will be bringing an extra bag to market each time, to carry home something for the garden as well as for the kitchen. See you at the market! ❁

Wanted: YOUR Garden

By Beth Cody

Project GREEN needs your help—and your garden—for our new event: a FREE Open Gardens Weekend, July 13–14, 2019.

The Open Gardens Weekend will offer visitors a wide selection of exceptional Iowa City gardens—no tickets required—and will raise money to make our community more beautiful.

The money we raise will come from local business sponsorships of the event: the more gardens we can offer, the more visitors we'll have—and the larger the attendance, the



The lovely yard of Ginny and Bryan Clemons was featured at the 2018 Garden Tour.

more sponsors will be willing to support the event.

This is a chance to share your garden for a good cause: If you live within the city limits of Iowa City and are proud of your garden, we'd love to include it in our event. Project GREEN is looking for 40-plus gardens of all sizes and styles.

If you're willing to open your garden to inspire other gardeners and help Project GREEN raise funds for public beautification, please either:

- visit our website at www.projectgreen.org to fill out the online Gardens Wanted application, or
- call (319) 430-6649 and we'll mail you a form
- *Application deadline: May 15*

Or if you know of an exceptional Iowa City garden, please contact the owner to ask if she/he will open it for a good cause—not everyone is aware of our new event.

We think the Open Gardens Weekend will quickly grow to become a prominent Iowa garden event. The Buffalo (NY) Garden Walk attracts 70,000 visitors annually to visit 400 open gardens. We believe our Open Gardens Weekend could eventually attract thousands of local and out-of-town garden enthusiasts each year.

The Open Gardens Weekend will be Saturday and Sunday, July 13–14, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. This leaves plenty of time for garden hosts to sneak out and visit a few gardens themselves—no one should miss this opportunity to see some of Iowa City's most beautiful gardens!

The Open Gardens Maps with addresses and descriptions of participating gardens will be available before and during the event at sponsor retail locations. More information is available at www.projectgreen.org. Many thanks for your help in making our event a success! ❁

Reminded of the Still Cold

We are reminded of the still cold of centuries ago as the snow crowds us and slows us in this age of plenty helplessness.

When light and warmth of a fire was a miracle in woods of Europe, Asia, and America, we are disarmed as our drive tools like stoves, cars, and furnaces want to fail for the moment in the cold.

Think of lives affected. Expand your horizons.

Sheep in the fields, and cows and pigs in the barns where straw, the insulating waste of harvest past, benefits all.

By Max J. Molleston, Project GREEN steering committee member

Project GREEN Receives State-Wide Recognition

By Laura Hawks

Project GREEN was selected by the Iowa Urban Tree Council as a 2019 Outstanding Community Organization for its parkway landscaping and annual parkways maintenance program. The Iowa Urban Tree Council (IUTC), a volunteer organization administered by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, works to advance the conservation and maintenance of urban forests and to provide assistance and advice to the state urban and community forestry program.

The award-notification letter noted that Project GREEN's



"nomination recounts accomplishments and commitments that resonate with our mission. We greatly value your efforts to preserve, protect, expand, and improve your community's urban forest resources. Your contributions serve as a model for others, and we would like to share your achievements with the rest of the State of Iowa."

Project GREEN Co-Presidents Cindy Parsons and Diane

Allen and landscape architect Laura Hawks plan to receive the IUTC award at a luncheon on April 3 at the Sheraton Hotel in West Des Moines.

Project GREEN—maintained parkways include those of Iowa Avenue, Melrose Avenue, North Dubuque Street (from Meadow Lane to Interstate 80), the Foster Road and North Dubuque Street intersection, the Park Road bridge and North Dubuque Street intersection; Highway 6 from Keokuk Street to the east property line of Fair Meadows Subdivision, the northeast corner of the intersection of Highway 6 and Gilbert Street, the south planter at the Mormon Trek railroad overpass, and, since 2018, the Ashton House Project GREEN Gardens at 820 Park Road in Iowa City. Bids for 2019 maintenance work along the parkways will be submitted by Project GREEN's landscape maintenance contractors on April 4.



In 2018 Project GREEN spent \$53,170 for maintenance of parkways and the Ashton House Project GREEN Gardens. Since 2007, Project GREEN has spent \$385,921 on parkway maintenance.

We're looking forward to another beautiful year along the parkways—the springtime flowering crabapples and redbuds along Highway 6 and Iowa Avenue; the summertime blooms of the little-leaf lindens and Japanese tree lilacs on Iowa Avenue and Mormon Trek Boulevard; and in fall, the reds and russets of the oaks and ironwood along North Dubuque Street, Highway 6, and Melrose Avenue. ...

In Memoriam

My friend, Blossom Shaw



beautiful shade garden ready for its second Project GREEN showing on the garden tour of 2018.

Blossom and I often met for coffee or lunch. We would talk about plants, bike riding, feeding the birds and squirrels, and other topics, but her real joy was her family. She took pride in her late son Eric's talent as a sculptor; several of his creations decorate the Shaw yard. Her daughter, son-in-law, and grandchild were great sources of happiness for her.

I am thankful to have known the wonderful plant lady named Blossom Shaw.

Marilyn Gaffey

Jan Carpenter



A friend and longtime Project GREEN volunteer, Jan Carpenter died March 21 while visiting her oldest son in Florida.

A dedicated gardener, Jan considered peonies and iris, two of Iowa's prominent spring flowers, to be her favorites. The gardens of more than a few of us are graced with the mountain bluets that Jan invited us to dig from her landscape. She helped Project GREEN's Shady Ladies for nearly two decades with hosta digs at the lineup bed and at the annual GREEN Garden Fairs and garden tours. Jan co-chaired the Sunday Winter Garden Forums for two years and, most recently, she was the welcoming face at the reception table.

Jan's ever-present smile and personality brought sunshine to every activity and undertaking. She will be greatly missed, not only by her adored two sons and their families, but by her large circle of friends and colleagues.

"Give fools their gold, and knaves their power; let fortune's bubbles rise and fall; who sows a field, or trains a flower, or plants a tree, is more than all."

John Greenleaf Whittier

Project GREEN Donations January 1, 2018 - December 31, 2019

GIFTS OF \$1000 or more

Community Foundation of Johnson County (grant)
Fowles, Don, and Dorothy
Gantz, Bruce in memory of Mary Gantz
Holthues Trust (grant)
Langhorne, John, and Mary Jo
MidAmerican Trees Please (grant)
River Products Co. in memory of Mick and Jayne Lillig
Seiberling, Franklin in memory of Nancy Seiberling and Gretchen Harshbarger

GIFTS OF \$500-\$999

Allison, Fern
Angerer, Loretta
*Catalano, Jo
*Jacobson, Todd, and Lisa
McCabe, Yvonne in memory of Mary Gantz
McKusick, Joye Ashton in memory of Ned Ashton
Mullins, Sam, and Sue Terveer
Noyes, Russell, and Martha
Wunder, Charles, and Marcia
Zlatnik, Frank, and Gail

GIFTS OF \$250-\$499

Allen, Larry, and Diane
Caplan, Daniel, and Terry
Chappell, Karen, and Wally
Conger, Jim, and Syndy
De Puma, Richard
Echternacht, Brandt, and Harriet
*Hoppin, Margery
Jones, Joni
Klink, William, and Judith
Koza, John, and Trish
Leff, Phil, and Joyce
Luhman, Lowell, and Joan
Menninger, Dr. John
Skaugstad, Charles, and Marilyn
Stanford, William, and Marlene
*Weigel, Ron, and Paula

GIFTS OF \$100-\$249

Ahrens, Susan
Atkinson, Kendall, and Alice
Balmer, John, and Penny
Barker, Ed, and Ethel
Blake, Larry, and Jan
Brandt, Paula O.
Braverman, Mace, and Kay
*Byington, Helen
Cannon, Lynne
Caplan, Richard, and Ellen
Christensen, Jim, and Carol
Cilek, Mike, and Judy
Clark, Dr., and Mrs. Charles
Clemons, Bryan, and Virginia
Clifton, Katherine
Eggenburg, John
Elliott, Maggie
Enzle, Sharon & Savin, Gene
Eskin, Sandra
Fellows, Robert, and Karlen
Fieselmann, Randee, and John

Foster, Marian
Franklin, Karin
Funk, Connie
Gardner, Lynn
Gatens, Marylou
Gay, Marilou
Goddard, Bruce, and Carolyn
Hahn, Thomas, and Laura
*Hartwig, Sally Mathis
Hauptert, Bruce, and Melanie
Hayek, Matt, and Mary Kate
Hayes, James P.
Hazell, Joan
Heiden, Patricia
Hesse, Chuck, and Anne
Hieronymus, John
Hines, Bill, and Jean
Hinrichs, Char
Hobart, Tom, and Jeri
Hoherz, Paul, and Monica
Holland, Joe, and Nancy
Hood, Albert, and Jean in memory of Sally Lindberg
Hoover, H.D., and Myrene in memory of Al, and Freda Hieronymus
Hubel, Kenn, and Jan in memory of Gretchen Harshbarger
Hudson, John, and Sandra
Hutchinson, William in memory of Jacqueline Hutchinson
Kerber, Richard, and Linda in memory of Lew and Eloise January
Kramer, John, and Kathy
Kruse, Dick, and Mary Lea to honor Anne Hesse
Leach, Jim, and Deba in memory of Nancy Seiberling
Lensing, Michael
Liebold, Karen
Lonngrén, Karl, and Vicki
Madsen, Douglas, and Joanne
Mills, Sally
Mixdorf, Mary in memory of Gordon Mixdorf
Molleston, Max, and Rhonda
Monson, Kevin, and Julie
Morgan, Reese, and Jo
Nelson, Ted, and Margaret in memory of Dorothy Moeller
Nothnagle, John in memory of Gail O. Nothnagle
Novick, Naomi
O'Leary, Mike
Osterberg, David
Pagliai, Polly, and Armond
*Parsons, Cindy
Parsons, Dave & Reynolds, Luann
Parsons, Joan
Paul, Doug, and Linda
Penno, Bonnie
Prediger, Dale, and Kay
Price, Steve & Myatt, Jan
Ricklefs, David, and Janice
Ringgenberg, Helen
Sandrock, Jean Prior
Sayre, Hutha
*Schreiber, Linda

Schroeder, Larry, and Judy
Scott, William, and Winifred
Smith, Isabelle
*Staley, John, and Sally
Stang, Alan, and Sharon Kay
Stratton, John, and Elizabeth
Summerwill, Joan
Summerwill, Dick, and Joyce
Summerwill, Kristin
Tallgrass Business Resources
Tellin, Art
Thomas, John
Tiggles, Dave, and Joanne
Vernon, Rhoda
Walker, Jean
Walters, Jim, and Chris
Wilson, Herb, and Janice
Wrede, Gary, and Deb

GIFTS UP TO \$99

Addis, Patricia
Baender, Mary Lou
Baumbach, Diane
Baumbach, Janice
Beadle, Gary, and Susan
Black, Dan, and Minette
Braddock, Carol
Brashier, Bill, and Ann
Brennan, Tim, and Jackie
Burger, Shirley
Burke, Peggy in memory of Joyce Murphy
Burmeister, Fern
Busch, Doug, and Julie
Buxton, Joan
Carpenter, Jan
Carter, Sue
Cleveland, Melanie
Craig, Susan
Cummins, Laurie, and Dan
Curry, David & Friedman, Donna
Dahms, Terry
Denehy, Gerald, and Jan
Donta, Helene
Falconer, Joan
Farrell, Mr. & Mrs. Dennis
Frye, Susan J.
Galask, Gloria
Galer, Ernie & Heidi
Hacker, Mary F.
Hall, Becky
Hamel, Nancy
Hanson, Barb
Hardy, Nadine
Haring, Barbara
Hartwig, Wyonna
Hoogerwerf, Lou Rae
Hughes, Karen
Jakobsen, Jane
Jordan, Herb
Kantor, Joe to honor Kasey Jurgensen
Kelly, Betty in memory of Gretchen Harshbarger
Kelly, Shirley
Kemp, Mr. & Mrs. Robert
Kennedy, Nancy
Knutson, John, and Claudia

Lance, Phyllis
 Laughlin, Mary
 Leo, Lori, and Ken
 Levey, Linda in memory of Andrea Levey
 Lovell, Laura
 Lust, Gary, and Sharon
 Maas, Janet
 Margolin, Mike & Joanne
 McGurk, Marita
 McGurk, Ramona
 McLaughlin, Teresa
 Mears, Julia
 Meloy, Linda
 Mockaitis, Mary
 Nauseef, Bill, and Judy
 Neely, Marilyn
 Ostrander, Harry, and Chris
 Parsons, Doug, and Connie
 Pattschull, Dick, and Jo
 Paul, Dorothy
 Perrin, Marlene
 Peterson, Joanne
 Pfeifer, Shirley
 Phelan, Helen
 Pugh, Joe
 Roberts, Daria
 Rosazza, Jack, and Trudi
 Sangster, Jackie in memory of Joye Ashton
 McKusick
 Seery, Clyde, and Kay
 Segar, Jeffrey, and Ellen

Siefers, Dick, and Vicki
 Smith, Connie R.
 Sopher, John, and Anne
 Spaziani, Carol
 Tomanek, Robert, and Rita to honor Monica
 and Paul Hoherz
 Traw, Chuck, and AK
 Wagner, Frank, and Barbara
 Wehrheim, Eugene, and Nancy
 Welsh, Bob, and Eunice in memory of Marilyn
 Long
 White, Pat, and Betty
 Williamson, Harold
 Williamson, Stan, and Catherine in memory
 of Mary Gantz
 Wilson, Larry
 Wyrick, Shirley
 Ziegler, Ekhard, and Wendy

IN-KIND GIFTS

Allen, Larry, and Diane
 Big Grove Brewery
 Conley, Garth
 Ehrhardt, Pam
 Ford, Steven
 Goodfellow Printing
 Goosetown Graphics
 Hafner, Lyn
 Harding, Mo
 Hawks Design, LLC
 Hy-Vee Drugstore

Iowa City Landscaping, and Garden Center
 the Java House
 Joynt, Joe, and Sandra
 Kalona Brewery
 Leff Law Firm
 Lowder, Mary
 Lowes Home Improvement
 Maynard, Jim
 Molleston, Max
 Mullins, Sue Terveer
 Oasis Falafel
 Old Capitol Quilters Guild
 Parsons, Cindy
 Pattschull, Jo
 Rindy, Inc.
 RSVP Stationers
 Samuelson, Carol
 Seter, Helga
 Smith, Sondra
 Stockman, Flo
 Theisens Home-Farm-Auto
 Tomanek, Rita
 Wegman, Marcia
 Weiss, Beppie
 Wilcox Digging Tools

* GIFT TO SUPPORT PROJECT GREEN
 ENDOWMENT FUND AT THE JOHNSON
 COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Project GREEN and the ICCSD

A Partnership to Make Our Schools Green

By Jo Pattschull

At the opening of the Iowa City Community schools in the fall of 2019, there were twenty-nine school buildings in the district, plus the old, repurposed Roosevelt Elementary. Maintenance of that many buildings is demanding and costly, and state funding is limited. As a result, the district's maintenance director, Ben Grimm, decided that future plans for the placement of trees, shrubs, and plants will be made by the ICCSD division that provides outdoor yard care. Underground utilities locations, safety issues, and maintenance demands complicate decisions about these plantings. Diane Allen and I will meet with Mr. Grimm to work out a new relationship with the schools in the planning and purchase of landscape materials.



Project GREEN will participate in the purchase of plants for the new Christine Grant Elementary as soon as the school construction reaches the appropriate stage of development.

Mr. Grimm has responded positively to our offer to provide plantings of black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckis hirta*) in Iowa City schoolyards. The City of Iowa City adopted this native forb as our city flower last fall; because it is colorful, low-maintenance, and adaptable, it is appropriate for butterfly gardens and around school signage. We hope to see black and gold everywhere.

Of course, the Mary Gantz GREEN Grants Kindergarten Tree Program will continue for all schools wishing to participate. ❁

2019 Winter Garden Forums at the ICPL

Our three forums in 2019 provided our enthusiastic and attentive audience with a wide range of topics, from saving tiny seeds to growing and preserving our towering oaks. Project GREEN is committed to offering entertaining, informative programs with a twofold goal: they teach us how to adapt garden and landscaping ideas into our own green spaces, and they encourage us to support the beautification and care of our public spaces.

Saving Seeds—from Backyard Gardens to the Svalbard Seed Vault



On Sunday, January 13, we were treated to a fabulous presentation from Phil Kauth from Seed Savers Exchange in Deborah, Iowa. Phil—the seed bank manager—very ably filled in for our scheduled speaker, Lee Buttala, the executive director of Seed Savers. Seed Savers' mission is to conserve and promote America's culturally diverse but endangered garden and food crop heritage for future generations: this unique organization collects, grows, and shares heirloom seeds and plants.

Supported by fascinating slides, Phil described the history of Seed Savers and how it became part of an international coalition working to store seeds in Svalbard, Norway. Photos of the operation in Decorah show a beautifully laid out property anchored by a handsome visitor center and flanked by the vegetable plots where heritage plants are grown and harvested for their seeds. Phil delighted the large crowd with a generous collection of seed packets and the new catalog as take-aways from his presentation.

Artful Storm Water Management



Mother Nature had a say in the February 10 Winter Garden Forum—snowy conditions prevented our original speaker, Adam Janke, from driving in safely from Ames. Fortunately,

a quick-thinking member of our group proposed an alternate speaker, Sandy Steil from MMS Consultants. Many thanks to Sandy for saving the day and providing our small but intrepid audience with timely and valuable information on storm water management.

Sandy explained that storm water is not waste water, which goes into the sanitary sewer system and is treated before it is discharged. Storm water is runoff from streets and farmlands that eventually flows into the Iowa River, then to the Mississippi—resulting in the nitrogen-induced dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico.

Sandy demonstrated how the engineers in her firm use treatment methods that differ from those used just a few years ago.

Sandy—also a Johnson County Master Gardener—outlined a number of options that communities have employed to slow runoff, allowing soil to absorb moisture before it can empty into storm sewers. She described how individuals can employ some of these methods, such as soil- and water-retaining vegetation, permeable pavers, rain gardens, and green roofs, in their own landscapes.

Landscape Tree Health: Challenges, Management, and Planting Diversity



The planets aligned for our March 10 forum with moderate weather and our originally scheduled speaker available to address our crowd. Mark Vitosh, district forester for the Iowa DNR/Wildlife Bureau is a popular forum presenter and a frequent guest on IPR's "Horticultural Friday." Mark shared his knowledge and expertise in "all things trees" for our large and engaged crowd. With great slides showing the do's

and don't's of landscape trees, he stressed the need and value of diversity in tree selection, suggesting trees that are underutilized in local landscapes. Mark related the good news/bad news about the spread of the emerald ash borer: it's definitely present and affecting local trees, but treatments (which, he cautioned, require a long, costly commitment) seem to be effective. He advised planting replacements now even if your ashes seem healthy. Mark brought along handouts that included the DNR's seedling catalog, a handbook for the family woodland owner, and a brochure on selecting trees for the yard.

As usual, there are many folks who make these forums successful. Thanks to Jennifer Wagner and Linda Schreiber for getting the word out to the public and the Master Gardeners. Our hospitality table, managed by Becky Gelman and Fern Allison, provide our audience with freshly baked cookies and bars, coffee, and tea. Thanks also to Jan Carpenter and Linda Schreiber for attending to our greeter's table, to Linda for her photographs, and to the volunteers who added to our door prize supply. And, as always, thanks to the Iowa City Public Library for hosting us, complete with camera, microphones, and other electronic gear.

The Sunday Garden Forums will be back next winter, starting Sunday, January 12, 2020. We hope you will join us.

Winter Damage - It's Not Your Fault!

By Lorie Leo

When the snow melts and we eagerly peruse our yards for signs of spring, we inevitably find some tree or shrub or prized perennial that hasn't survived. Where did we go wrong? How did we fail? Ah, guilt—who needs it? Here are four valid reasons to just blame the weather.

1. Record cold temperatures. Although plants do not feel wind chill, our temperatures alone were low enough to kill some borderline-hardy specimens like Japanese maple or flowering dogwood. Thriving plant materials that were well established before winter cold probably fared better than those that were newly planted or stressed by poor growing conditions or pests. Many woody plants will suffer partial dieback on branches. Prune back to a healthy bud that points outward.
2. Unusual fall and winter rains. Oftentimes we assume cold was the culprit when it's actually soggy soil that has doomed our prized plants. Winter wet, as the Brits call it, can do more damage than cold in clay-y soils (like ours in Iowa). Incorporated compost can loosen soil by adding air spaces. Planting on a slight mound or in raised beds will assure that excess water drains away faster. Be aware of low spots in your landscape that hold water longer, and find other sites for plant materials labeled "Enjoys a well-drained soil."
3. Heaving. Sometimes winter can't make up its mind, and we get mild spells interspersed with cold. Alternate freezing and thawing of the soil can cause the roots of certain plants to rise up a bit each time, until the root ball is essentially sitting on top of the soil, exposed to drying winds. Since such "heaving" is more likely to afflict late-season plantings, a layer of mulch will help

to insulate the soil enough to protect a new plant from temperature fluctuations.

4. Mice and rabbits and deer, oh my! Heavy snow cover may have acted like a nice cozy comforter to protect our flower beds, but it meant that hungry critters resorted to desperate munching on whatever they could reach. The lifeblood of woody plants runs up and down just under the outermost layer of bark. Small nibbled areas of bark here and there are probably going to heal, but if a woody plant is girdled—the bark is chewed completely around the trunk—the damage is probably fatal. Native and common woody plants may well sprout anew from their roots, but ornamentals and fruit trees are often grafted onto a rootstock, and sprouts from below that graft are usually undesirable. Next year, consider tree guards or cylinders of hardware cloth to protect against critter damage.

But here's some great news for procrastinators. For woody material that appears dead, Mark Vitosh, our district forester with the DNR, advises patience: It may look dead, but it may still have potential. Our harsh winter may cause deciduous plants to leaf out later than usual. On deer-damaged arborvitae and yews, new growing points may be hard to see early on.

Wait until early June before giving up all hope. If you have a damaged tree or shrub you wish to salvage, try not to remove more than one third of the branches this year; wait and prune again next year.

As for those plants that are gone forever? Think of each as a wonderful opportunity to add something interesting and new to your garden. Stop by the Project GREEN stall at the Farmers Market for creative suggestions. ☘

Ashton House Project GREEN Gardens Volunteer Opportunities

Please join our weekly gardening sessions! Mark your calendar for Mondays, beginning May 6, 2019, 9 – 11 a.m. Everyone is welcome, newcomer or seasoned GREENhead. These work sessions go quickly, as we weed, plant, water, prune, deadhead, and, most important, enjoy our time together. (You might even learn some valuable new gardening tips from us experts.)

The address is 820 Park Road, Iowa City. If you have favorite gardening tools, please bring them along. If not, Project GREEN has a nice collection of tools in the Ashton House garage for volunteers' use. Our sessions extend into October.

Diane Allen is the contact person for this Project GREEN activity. You may contact her at dlallen16@hotmail.com or 319-354-5720 for more information.





PROJECT GREEN

City Hall
410 E. Washington St.
Iowa City, Iowa 52240

Return Service Requested



Might you be willing to donate your extra golf cart to the Ashton House volunteers? We'd use it to haul and distribute plants and supplies while caring for the eight really big acres surrounding the historic house. We are also wishing for a couple of round garbage cans, which we'd put in the back where you carried your golf clubs. We'd use them to collect branches and debris like weeds and trash for the compost or garbage. Your donation would decrease wear and tear on our faithful volunteers and make us more efficient. Please contact Diane Allen (dlallen16@hotmail.com) to donate.

Thank you!

CLIP AND SAVE

Iowa City Farmers Market

(Chauncey Swan Parking Ramp)
Wednesdays, 5 – 7 p.m.
Saturdays, 7:30 a.m. – noon
May 1 through June 30

Ashton House Gardening Volunteers

820 Park Road, Iowa City
Monday mornings, 9 – 11
May 6 through fall

2019 Open Gardens Weekend

July 13 – 14, 2019 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Project GREEN Ice Cream Social

Ashton House, 820 Park Road, Iowa City
July 14, 3:30 – 5 p.m.
Everyone is invited to join in the ice cream fun!

Project GREEN Officers

Cindy Parsons,
co-president
319-400-7179

Becky Gelman,
garden forums
319-351-5852

Diane Allen,
co-president
319-354-5720

Connie Goeb,
garden forums chair
310-938-0395

Barb Burkhardt,
treasurer
319-330-1933

Lorie Leo,
farmers market chair
319-626-6144

Mary Lowder,
secretary
319-430-0217

Jennifer Wagner,
facebook chair
319-331-2242

Jo Pattschull,
Mary Gantz GREEN grants
for schools chair
319-338-8405

Beth Cody,
open gardens weekend chair
319-683-3088

Be sure to check out our updated and easy to navigate website: www.projectgreen.org