

The History of the
Miami County / Marais des Cygnes District
Extension Master Gardeners

Celebrating **25** *Years*



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Preface

Usually, when a group of people form a new organization, little thought is given to archiving documentation for a history to be written years later. There is too much to be done *now*, a mission statement and bylaws to be written, officers to be elected, and in our case, educational programs to be developed, funds to be raised, and gardens to be built.

So to announce the new organization, a few pictures are taken for the newspaper. Somewhere along the line someone starts keeping records of Board meetings and archiving meeting minutes. Newsletters are written and saved in a binder. Technology comes along to “make things easier.” With luck, a few people are still around years later to reconstruct memories and submit old photos.

The idea of writing a history of the Miami County EMG program (now the Marais des Cygnes EMG program) came from d Brown and Patti Armstrong, who, with her husband Bernard Armstrong, founded the organization in 1996. Members and former members were asked to contribute whatever they have saved. Patti collected and organized a tractor load of information gathered by her committee.

Early information is sketchy, taken from random notes and early minutes of meetings and sporadic newsletters. There are several people from 25 years ago who we still see from time to time at meetings and events. Their contributions have been enormously helpful.

Patti’s idea was to produce a book to present at our 25th Anniversary Awards Dinner in 2021—a daunting task at best, but also an exciting adventure. It was suggested that it would be easier if we set about producing a “first draft,” knowing that there would be unavoidable omissions and inaccuracies. The fantasy is that it can be corrected later. (*Good luck, EMGs of 2046!*) Meanwhile, please forgive us for leaving out many names or getting a year or photo caption wrong. We did our best!

So that is what this book is: A First Draft—a collection of highlights from the past 25 years of a wonderful organization — The Miami County / Marais des Cygnes Extension Master Gardeners.

—Judy Moser, Editor

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OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Marais des Cygnes Extension District Master Gardeners Association is a volunteer organization of specifically trained Miami County or Linn County residents designed to provide the public with sound, research-based horticultural information. The purpose of this Association is to participate in non-commercial, educational and community service projects for Miami County and Linn County. The Association embodies the horticultural education objectives of Marais des Cygnes Extension District cooperating with Kansas State University and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Our Agricultural Extension Agents

1972 - 2003 Herschel George

August 2003 - January 2007 Leanne Coxbill Stevenson

June 2007 - February 2009 Mark Flory

November 2009 - January 2011 Mike Epler

January 2012 - February 2014 Cody Sloan

April 2014 - August 2017 Megan Westerhold

October 2017 - Present Katelyn Barthol

Diane Burnett filled in at various times between agents

Excerpts from a Power Point presentation by Ward Upham

The origins of the “land grant” system:

- The Morrill Act (1862)—Agriculture, grants of land given for “the domestic and mechanical arts” along with traditional university courses (KSU first Land-Grant University created).

- Hatch Act (1887)—Added funds for useful and practical research done on Experimental Stations in association with Land-Grant colleges.

- Smith-Lever Act (1914)—Created “outreach” through field staff around the state. This was the start of the Cooperative Extension Services.

Emphasis in Rural Communities

- Original focus developed in county seat towns where extension staff did a lot of one-on-one consultation, demonstrations, learn-by-doing, and “meetings” or classes.

- Population of Kansas was about 80% rural.

Decades of Progress

- Improved productivity of agriculture
- Efficiency of labor in farming
- Agricultural land use practices
- Mechanization and technology
- Irrigation
- Production and “finishing” in close proximity

There were significant changes in the demographics of Kansas. Many small communities disappeared.

The Decade of the 50s & Early 60s

- Population shifts to urban areas 80%
- Is agriculture emphasis useful to the population?
- Green industry grows 15-20% per year
- Extension needs to change with the times

Kansas Adds Horticultural Extension Agents

- There were seven horticultural agents hired in the late 1960s.
- Educational classes,

diagnostics, phone calls and home visits

- Something new for extension
- Not especially busy some of the time

The Environmental Movement

- A spray/fertilizer for everything
- Growing concern for excesses and overuse
- “Silent Spring” written by Rachel Carlson (1962)
- “Hippies” matured and became involved
- First “Earth Day”—1974
- Info needed for life-cycle of insect and disease, nutrient use needs, environmental interactions, integrated pest/plant management
- Who knows anything about these things?
- More demand for information

The Perfect Storm of the Early 70s

Three circumstances changed horticultural extension education in a dramatic, sudden way. Following are excerpts from Chuck Marr’s history of the KS EMG program. ❀



HISTORY OF THE EMG PROGRAM

Excerpts from a comprehensive history of the Kansas EMG program written by Dr. Chuck Marr, Professor Emeritus of Horticulture, Kansas State University.

Traditional Extension Operations

Since the beginning of Extension at K-State in 1905 and formalized with Land Grant Universities in 1914, local extension offices focused on agriculture, home economics, and 4-H with programming and staffing. By the 1960s there was a general recognition that Extension needed to relate to a larger portion of the population for it to continue to serve citizens. Horticulture was a good way to relate to homeowners in cities and towns, so local Extension boards began to add county extension horticultural agents to their staff in urban counties. In the decade of the 1960s there were six Kansas horticultural agents added, with more to follow in later years. These agents began to offer meetings and classes on a wide range of horticultural topics, answer phone calls and questions on horticultural problems, and make “house calls” to diagnose plant problems.

The “Perfect Storm”

There were three situations that resulted in a huge change in the way horticultural agents worked. The 1973 Arab Oil Embargo led to

The national organization was founded in Washington State in 1970 as a training tool for volunteers wanting to assist in the delivery of educational programs on a county wide basis.

In exchange for intensive training, volunteers agreed to help the extension service provide information to the public.

shortages of gasoline and reduced highway travel. People began to focus on their homes. Interest in landscaping, planting of trees and shrubs, flower beds, and other things to beautify their property increased dramatically.

At the same time, the early 70s was the beginning of the “Earth Movement,” when people became more aware of environmental issues and recycling, composting, and reduced use of pesticides. The first Earth Day was in 1974.

People began to realize that much of the food distribution system depended on truck transportation, and gas shortages resulted in a “food scare.” This led to a dramatic increase in people wanting to “grow their own” food, as well as start local farmers markets.

These three situations combined and resulted in people wanting and needing horticultural information like it had never existed before, and that need was all focused on the research-based, unbiased information available from the Land Grant University at the local extension office. There was a rush for information.

The initial Idea

In the early 70s two horticultural agents in the Seattle/Tacoma area were dealing with hundreds of calls a week. They speculated that a group of enthusiastic, amateur horticulturists could respond to most of the common questions if they were given a “refresher course” to build their confidence. Dr. David Gibby and William Sheer proposed that by offering volunteers



a unique, special horticultural class with a requirement that they volunteer time to share the knowledge they had gained, it would be a way of inexpensively distributing information to a much wider audience. Having both spent time in Germany, they came up with the title of Gartenmeister— or Master Gardener. The idea was enthusiastically embraced after they surveyed people at a shopping mall information booth.

With publicity provided by a local newspaper garden writer and a regional editor for *Sunset* magazine, they gathered 600 names of individuals interested in participating in the program. They worked with Dr. Bernie Wesenberg to develop a curriculum and ways to put the volunteers to good use. Soon other states began to express an interest in duplicating what Washington state had started.

Master Gardening in Kansas

In the spring of 1978, national extension horticulturist Dr. Bob Wearne convened two meetings of state extension horticulturist and county horticulture agents, one in San Francisco and one in Washington, D.C. Participants from Kansas went to D.C. and heard a wide range of ideas that various states were trying. Johnson County horticultural agent Larry Stouse

The Kansas program was started in Johnson County in 1980. Forty Kansas counties now have active Extension Master Gardener programs.

The local program started in 1996 in Miami County. In 2015 the program expanded to include Linn County, and the district was renamed the Marais des Cygnes Extension District Master Gardeners.

elicited help from Dr. Chuck Marr and Dr. Richard Wootton of the state specialist staff to assist in planning the program implementation and curriculum.

Off and Running

By late 1980, the curriculum was set to be completed in six weeks and include 12 units: plant growth and development; soils, water and fertilizer; fruit; vegetables; tree and shrub plant materials; landscape maintenance; landscape design; perennial and annual flowers; insects; diseases; indoor plants; and lawn maintenance.

A large 3-ring binder was produced for trainees, who inserted training materials as the classes went along. *[The notebook was later standardized, which is why it doesn't exactly follow all the classes as they are taught now.]*

The Program Expands

Several horticultural agents visited the Johnson County program, and programs were started in Douglas and Shawnee counties. After the Sedgwick County program was re-established in 1987, several agents in the Southcentral region met to establish regional training. They included Bob Neier (Reno Co), Dennis Patton (McPherson Co), and Chip Miller (Saline Co). Jim Lindquist, county extension director in Riley, started the program in Manhattan, Jack Smith in Leavenworth County, and Bruce Shladny in Wyandotte County.



Growing Pains

Training for the eastern Kansas counties gradually shifted to the fall months and training for the western counties was done in the spring. Training in Johnson County was scheduled for the same day as training in Wyandotte/Leavenworth, with the specialist traveling over the noon hour between locations. A similar type of rotation was established with Topeka and Lawrence as well as Wichita and Butler/Harvey/Reno.

The State Master Gardener Convention

A convention was held in Wichita in 1989 and through 1994. A statewide Advanced Master Gardener training program seemed a better use of volunteer time.

Advanced Master Gardener Training

The original idea was that MGs would receive their training, complete their volunteer hours, and that would be the end. But after the first class it became clear that MGs didn't want to quit! It became clear that having trained volunteers wanting to keep going was a valuable asset. Various types of training included classes and tours, and educational offerings were often led by non-KSU personnel. The dissolution of the convention led to the formation of a statewide advanced training event in 1995 on the Manhattan campus. This has continued each fall, with about 300 Kansas MGs from around the state participating.

A State MG Coordinator

In 1996 Ward Upham was hired as Master Gardener coordinator. Through his leadership the program has spread throughout the entire state, with programs in 50 counties, some organized into multi-county extension districts.

Similarities and Differences

Forty hours of initial training and a commitment of 40 volunteer hours remains in most programs today. Commercialization of the program has been avoided. Trainees no longer receive private pesticide applicator license training and certification.

The main thing agents soon learned was that MGs didn't want to quit. Most want to keep volunteering and learning through Advanced Training for many, many years! ♻️



Patti and Bernard Armstrong moved to Miami County from Johnson County, KS, where they had been Extension Master Gardeners for five years. Once settled in their new home they sought out the Miami County Extension Agent, Herschel George. After a number of meetings, Herschel agreed to start an Extension Master Gardener program in Miami County. The year was 1996.

Nine people were trained that year and ambitiously started the Lawn & Garden Show in 1997. At that point it was a one-day show featuring only the nine Master Gardeners. The Lawn & Garden Show became an annual event until 2005, when it became painfully obvious the show was way too successful and labor intensive for the Master Gardeners.

The Lawn & Garden Show was replaced by the Spring Garden Tour in 2006. This Tour is conducted every other year, rotating with the Johnson County Garden Tour. We broke rank with the norm in 2015 and 2017 by conducting Fall Garden Tours. The increased numbers of visitors to the display gardens has proven this timing to be very successful.

In 1997, armed with an increase in EMG membership, the Ursuline Gardens became the new ongoing project. The 35 acres proved to be a wonderful canvas for the many gardens started and maintained. Sister Grace, also an EMG, took over the Rose Garden started by the nuns many years before. The newer gardens were the Butterfly, Conifer and Deciduous, Hosta, and the Shade Tree Trail, with the Grand Alee and World Class Peony Garden. Master Gardeners also helped with an Eagle Scout project. In the end there were 52 planting areas. It was a sad day, 12 years later, when the nuns announced they were moving to Kentucky to join the Ursuline Sisters there. The EMGs continued to enhance

the Extension Office Gardens until moving to a new Extension Office location in 2021.

The energy of the Master Gardeners was redirected to developing the Court House Gardens, and after three years of negotiating with the County and welcoming the cooperation of the local Lion's Club, the first garden was started, I think, in 2010. Now there is a nice array of beautiful gardens for the public to enjoy.



The Trial Garden, consisting of tomatoes and peppers, was started in 1997. The experimental seedlings provided by KSU are grown, evaluated, then weighed, and the resulting data returned to the University. Produce was then shared with My Father's House Community Services in Paola, and later a program at the Osawatomie farmers market, with proceeds going toward scholarships.

As the organization continued to grow, the Mentor Committee was developed in 2003 to welcome the new folks and help them integrate into the group. Your Mentor is your point of contact and is to support and assist you in any way possible.

The annual Plant Sale was started early on, with the Master Gardeners enthusiastically selling some of their more invasive plants. Then in 2006 the Plant Sale was upgraded by offering professionally grown plants, with the profits from these sales going into plant material and

hardscape for the Ursuline project. After this project ended, the Plant Sale was moved to locations on Baptiste Drive, where it continued to be a primary fund raiser and educational opportunity.

Other projects done over the years include a Victory Garden on the Courthouse grounds in 2004. The garden was planted and maintained with the help of a Girl Scout troop to tie in with the traveling Rosie the Riveter display at the Miami County Museum.

In years past, Extension Master Gardeners also participated in Spring Hill's Daffodil Days, Kansas Day, and still participate in the local farmers market. In the past we have had a Great Trees program, a Speaker's Bureau, and an Exhibition Garden at the Fair Grounds. Other ways of reaching the public with research-based gardening information have been newspaper articles, newsletters, Advanced Training, and a gardening hotline.

Over the past five years, one of the most successful programs to reach the public has been a Spring Symposium. Key speakers present their information on a number of related gardening subjects during the all-day affair.

Three years ago KSU combined districts in order to operate more efficiently. At that point our district was expanded to include Linn County, and our name was changed from Miami County Master Gardeners to the Marais des Cygnes Master Gardeners.

Many people have been trained in the MdC Master Gardener program since its inception in 1996. Over the years there has been attrition due to "life happens" events, but our roster remains somewhere between 40 and 50 members. 🌸

d Brown was voted Rookie of the Year in 2003 and EMG of the Year in 2004. She served as Chair of the Advisory Board in 2004 and 2005.

*Through
the Years*

Advisory Board

Bernard Armstrong
Chair
Paul Schonbachler
Treasurer

New Class

Bernard Armstrong
Patti Armstrong
(transfers from JoCo)
Jackie Canaan
Julie Perez
Alice Piezuch
Paul Schonbachler

This was the year the whole thing began. Bernard and Patti Armstrong had moved to Miami County from Johnson County, where they were already very active in the EMG program. They met with Herschel George, the Miami County Extension Agent at the time, and talked about starting a Miami County chapter of the Extension Master Gardeners. Herschel finally said, "Hey, why not!" and the rest is history.



Bernard and Patti Armstrong.



Patti Armstrong, Paul Schonbachler and Herschel George weaving tomato plants.

Special thanks to those who saved newspaper clippings from the early years and provided them to the History Project.

The program is off and running! Bernard wasted no time in setting up the Hotline and largely manning it for longer than he probably intended.

In keeping with our Master Gardener mission of educating the public, the new group organized the first Lawn & Garden Show. The Show grew and was an annual event until 2005, when it got bigger than our volunteers could handle.

But gardeners gotta garden, so the group adopted the 35-acre Ursuline Campus that year as their ongoing, major project.



Master gardeners

Herschel George, Miami County Kansas State University Research and Extension agriculture agent, meets with master gardeners Alice Piezuch, Paul Schonbachler, Bernard Arms-

trong, Patti Armstrong, Denise Charpentier, Jackie Canaan and Julie Perez to discuss plans for a horticulture hot line and the Miami County Lawn & Garden Show in April. The hot line at 294-4306 will be ready for calls Monday.

Photo by Bob Harrington

Gardener's hot line is established

A hot line for gardeners will open at 9 a.m. Monday for gardeners with horticulture questions ranging from what garden and flower seeds to plant to care of shrubs, fruit and shade trees at the Kansas State University Research and Extension office in Paola.

The hot line telephone number is 294-4306 — the same as the regular office number. The hot line will be operated on Mondays only throughout the spring, summer and fall beginning at 9 a.m.

The hot line will be maintained by volunteer master gardeners, who have been trained and are fully qualified to answer basic questions concerning all phases of horticulture, said Herschel

George, Miami County K-State Research and Extension agriculture agent.

Horticulture inquiries have become so numerous that his office staff has difficulty fielding all of the questions.

The master gardeners are from Miami County and are horticulture experts in their own rights.

Master gardeners met last week at the Extension office to iron out details of their hot-line program, and to work on various aspects of the Miami County Lawn & Garden Show that will start at 10 a.m. April 26 at the Miami County Fairgrounds.

Exhibits, educational and safety programs, and demonstrations on

lawn mower and trimmer safety will be available for viewers at the lawn and garden show.

The master gardeners' program has been in operation about 15 years in highly populated urban areas, but only recently has it branched out to rural areas such as Miami County.

Volunteers, who are experts in their own fields, had to complete a 40-hour course in October to be qualified as a master gardener.

A master gardener course will be offered this October for additional volunteers, George said.

Master gardeners from Johnson County have been working with local volunteers to get the hot line developed.



Leaders:

Bernard Armstrong
Patti Armstrong
Paul Schonbachler
Richard Piezuch
Alice Piezuch
Denise Charpentier
Jackie Canaan
Julie Perez

New Class

Marie Henkel
Karen Mitchell
Don Nelson
Linda Stuart
Pat Thomson
Susan Woods

From the August 2007 newsletter:
"There was a discussion as to whether or not to count hours worked at the Osawatometie flood relief project as volunteer hours. It was decided that while it was a good thing to do, it did not relate to MG business and you only get credit from St. Peter. The good news is that you don't need to report the hours to him."

— John Rose

Advisory Board

Bernard Armstrong
Chair
Patti Armstrong
Secretary
Paul Schonbachler
Treasurer

New Class

Kathy Kierl
Jan Putzier
Christine Staten
Brenda Stringham
Bill Vivers

The organizers got serious, and wrote up the By-Laws, which were adopted in October.

There's not much in the way of archives from this period, as the organization was just getting started and members were busy ironing out which projects to devote their considerable energies to.

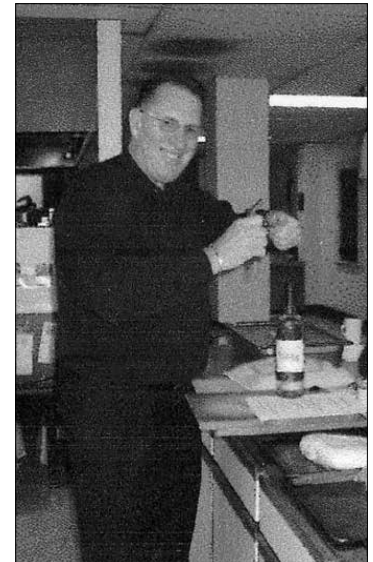
Don Nelson was Master Gardener of the Year. The Lawn & Garden Show was a project from the start.

The Lawn & Garden Show was still the main activity of the group, along with the Farmers Market.

Don Nelson and Bernard Armstrong presented *Composting 101* at the Franklin County Transfer Station.

There were discussions on how to include youth groups in Miami County beyond those in 4-H.

Ten signed up for training—eight from Paola, and one each from Louisburg and Osawatomie.



Mike Hursey and his Slow Food at Ursuline.

“Not until the advent of summer do the brilliant large flowers appear...You must stoop down for the spring flower. The summer flowers reach up to you.”

—Gerald H. Ellwanger, from The Quotable Gardener



Eileen Locke (left) had help from a group of young ladies in the Butterfly Garden the EMGs established at Ursuline.



No identification of the year or place, but we know the names: (l to r) Paul Schonbachler, Patti Armstrong, Alicia Schonbachler, Christine Staten, Bernard Armstrong, and Nancy Kalman. By the looks of the ladies' handbags it would appear to have been a shopping trip.

The first Annual Dinner was held on January 19.

Master Gardener of the Year was Susan Wood, and Rookie of the Year was Elva Bledsoe.

An attempt was made to separate social events from quarterly meetings and Advanced Training sessions.

Linda Stuart reported the group had \$171.50 in the bank.

Members presented a Small Acreage Management seminar in Louisburg.

The Extension Office



From the archives: three unnamed tikes helping plant a tree, presumably at Ursuline.

was located at 20 S. Gold Street in Paola.

After the City asked the group to weed the gardens in Park Square, the group decided we are

primarily an education organization, not a labor pool.

The Board had shirts made with embroidery to identify wearers as EMGs.

Advisory Board

Don Nelson

Chair

Linda Stuart

Treasurer

Bernard Armstrong

Patti Armstrong

Susan Woods

Marlene Elkins

Elva Bledsoe

New Class

Liz Bennett

Sophia Edelbrock

Peggy Haddad

Jane Martin

Sister Grace

Lisa Valburg

From the August 2007 newsletter:

"At this point Kelly swatted at a fly that had been bugging her. She missed, but the noise did wake everyone up. Who said there weren't any flies on Kelly?"

—John Rose

Advisory Board

Don Nelson
Chair

Bernard Armstrong
Patti Armstrong
Elva Bledsoe
Jackie Canaan
Bill Vivers

New Class

Nancy Kalman
Mary Jane O'Leary
Lois Pearce
Nanette Shaver
Nan Zimmerman

This year the Trial Gardens were built at the Fairgrounds. The Trial Gardens have moved around quite a bit in the years since.

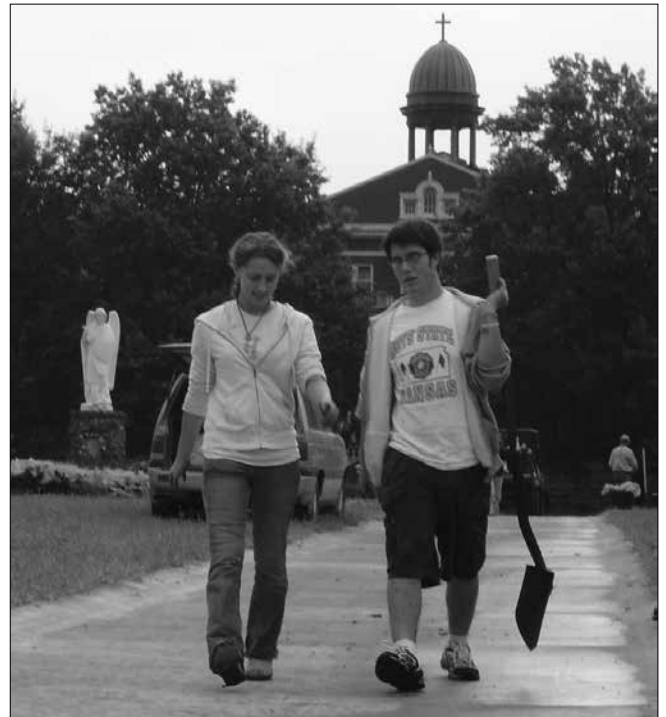
Christine Staten was Master Gardener of the Year.

A discussion was held over the "irrational exuberance" of the Board members over suggested projects — this "must be contained and more careful planning should be given to those projects adopted."

A plant sale held at the opening of the Farmers Market netted more than \$200.

Tours were scheduled for Arnold's Greenhouse and the St. Louis Botanical Gardens.

Ursuline volunteer hours through August topped 1000.



Two kids and a shovel. Better than two kids and their smart phones?

*"In nature,
nothing is perfect
and everything is
perfect."*

*"Gardening:
cheaper than
therapy
and you get
tomatoes."*

—Anonymous



"What's that?" Two women check out the herb bed at the demonstration gardens at the Miami County Fairgrounds. Members of the Miami County Master Gardeners answered questions about the demonstration gardens during the recent porch/tree/garden tour sponsored by the Paola Tourism Group.

The largest undertaking of the year was the Lawn & Garden show.

Renovation of the Ursuline gardens got underway. Other projects that were up and running included advanced training, the speakers bureau, and the farmers market.

The demonstration and trial gardens at the Fairgrounds included tomatoes, peppers, flower varieties, ornamental and native grasses, and a much-admired drip irrigation system.

In addition to the hotline, Bernard and Patti made on-site visits in order to evaluate horticultural problems.

Paul Schonbachler volunteered to serve as publicity chairman. The Lawn & Garden Show advertising budget for 2002 was set at \$1500.

K-State divided their ornamental grasses and donated some to us.

Efforts were made to formalize communication between the Ursuline project board and the Master Gardener board.

Patti Armstrong suggested that we should expand our recruiting program. The Board decided all MG candidates should be personally interviewed.

Discussions continued on constructing an inexpensive greenhouse at the fairgrounds.



Christine Staten, Julie Perez and Nancy Kalman with some of the plants and roots they offered for sale at the opening of the Paola Farmers Market.



Don Nelson presented the Rookie of the Year award to Sister Mary Grace Swift at the annual recognition dinner in January.

Elva Bledsoe was Master Gardener of the Year.

Advisory Board

Elva Bledsoe
Chair
Paul Schonbachler
Vice Chair
Don Nelson
Secretary/Treasurer
Bernard Armstrong
Patti Armstrong
Jackie Canaan
Bill Vivers

New Class

d Brown
Loren Evison
Ron Guilfoyle
Debbie Jongenelen
Carol Kirk
Eileen Locke
Kelly Rayne
Larry Sims
Martha Sundquist

"Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad."

Advisory Board

Paul Schonbachler
Chair
Jackie Canaan
Vice Chair
Nancy Kalman
Secretary
Don Nelson
Treasurer
Patti Armstrong
Bill Vivers
Julie Perez

New Class

Kim Bledsoe
Randy Bonnell
Verle Bostick
Terry Davis
Nancy Harper
Jackie Mullinax
John Rose

*"Any damn fool
can have a garden
in April and May
It separates the
men from the boys
when you have an
interesting place in
August."*

— Allen C. Haskins,
from *The Quotable
Gardener*

In 2002 the idea for a mentor program was presented by d Brown, and its processes and procedures were outlined. The committee included Brenda Stringham and Peggy Haddad.

K-State offered a

three-day, comprehensive Advanced Master Gardener Training program that included a choice of classes on 51 different topics. Registrations could be returned in person, by mail, or by fax (remember the fax?).

Master Gardener of the Year was Patti Armstrong. Rookie of the Year was Nan Zimmerman.

The "Great Trees of Miami County" project took off, with help from the district forest service agent.

Master Gardeners shown appreciation

Annual dinner recognizes old, new members.

New Miami County Extension Master Gardeners and old members were honored at the group's annual appreciation and awards dinner Jan. 19 at the Paola Country Club.

Twenty-eight graduate Master Gardeners, along with spouses and guests, attended the event.

The highlights of the annual meeting were recognition of the new Master Gardeners that finished training in late November, and honoring the "Rookie of the Year" and the "Master Gardener of the Year." Elva Bledsoe, 2000 Master Gardener chairman, and county agriculture agent Herschel George presented official name tags and certificates to Dee Brown, Loren Evison, Ron Guilfoyle, Debbie Jongenelen, Carol Kay Kirk, Eileen Locke, Kelly Rayne, Larry Sims and Martha Sundquist.

The Rookie Master Gardener of the Year honor went to Nan Zimmerman of Louisburg, a graduate of the 2000 class.

Paul Schonbachler, secretary, and Don Nelson, treasurer, presented the certificate for Master Gardener of the Year to Patti Armstrong.



Photo courtesy of Linda Stuar

New gardeners

New members of the Miami County Extension Master Gardeners program were recognized Jan. 19 at an appreciation and awards night at the Paola Country Club. Pictured are, from left, in front, Larry Sims and Kelly Rayne, new Master Garden-

ers; in back, Herschel George, Extension agricultural agent; Eileen Locke, Ron Guilfoyle, Dee Brown, Debbie Jongenelen, Martha Sundquist and Loren Evison, new Master Gardeners, and Elva Bledsoe, 2001 Master Gardener chairman.



Elva Bledsoe, Master Gardener of the Year, and Nan Zimmerman, Rookie of the Year, and Nan Zimmerman, Rookie of the Year, received their awards from Paul Schobachler at the Awards Night in January.

The Lawn & Garden Show was held at the Fairgrounds, hosted by the Miami County EMGs, with horticultural booths, garden arts and crafts, “Ask a Master Gardener” booth, drawings and games for door prizes, and children’s activities.

The Mentor Committee was formed by d Brown in 2003, giving each new trainee a connection with an experienced Master Gardener who could help guide them through the program.

Herschel George retired as Ag Agent in June.

Master Gardener of the Year was Paul Schonbachler. Rookie of the Year was d Brown.



More than 200 people attended a reception for Herschel George, who retired as county ag agent to become Extension watershed specialist for the Marais des Cygnes River Basin. Herschel served for 31 years as Miami County agricultural agent.

Advisory Board

Nancy Kalman
Chair
Loren T. Evison
Vice Chair
d Brown
Secretary
Paul Schonbachler
Treasurer
Debbie Jongenelen
Julie Perez

New Class

Laura Ahlstrom
Donna Beverlin
Patsy Butel
Joan Carey
Debra DeWeese
David Mullinax
Connie Murphy
Linda Raske
Leanne Stevenson
Terri Weis



On the porch at Lenora Larson’s home a few years later—d Brown and the Butterfly Lady herself.

“Have you noticed in Lowe’s ad that they have a ‘Live Plant Specialist’? Where do we go for a ‘Dead Plant Specialist’? Ask for Bernard on Monday mornings.”

Advisory Board

d Brown

Chair

Debbie Jongenelen

Vice Chair

Julie Perez

Secretary

Paul Schonbachler

Treasurer

Nancy Kalman

Loren Evison

Bill Vivers

John Rose

New Class

Pat Butler

Marilyn Chandler

Rae Coffelt

Janice Corbin

Scott Dreiling

Dianne Hunnicutt

Sheryl Roberts

Robert Satterfield

Lennox Taulbee

"Remember the difference between soil and dirt. We plant in soil and bring dirt in on our hands!"

Master Gardener of the Year was d Brown. Rookie of the year was David Mullinax.

The treasurer reported that our bank account continued to grow. During these early years the balance hovered around \$4,500.

There were many proposals for tours, including Powell Gardens, the Missouri Botanical Gardens, and the Johnson County garden tour. A trip was made to Arnold's Nursery and the Wichita Flower Show.

Verle Bostick and Terry Davis headed a World War II Victory Garden project in conjunction with Girl Scout Troop 648. The project was coordinated with the Smithsonian Exhibit at the Miami County Historical Society.

People were gradually learning email etiquette.

Patti Armstrong and Nancy Kalman worked to organize and improve the Paola farmers market. Members dug extra plants to sell at the market on May 15, and the sale netted \$627, which included drawing ticket sales for a bird bath.

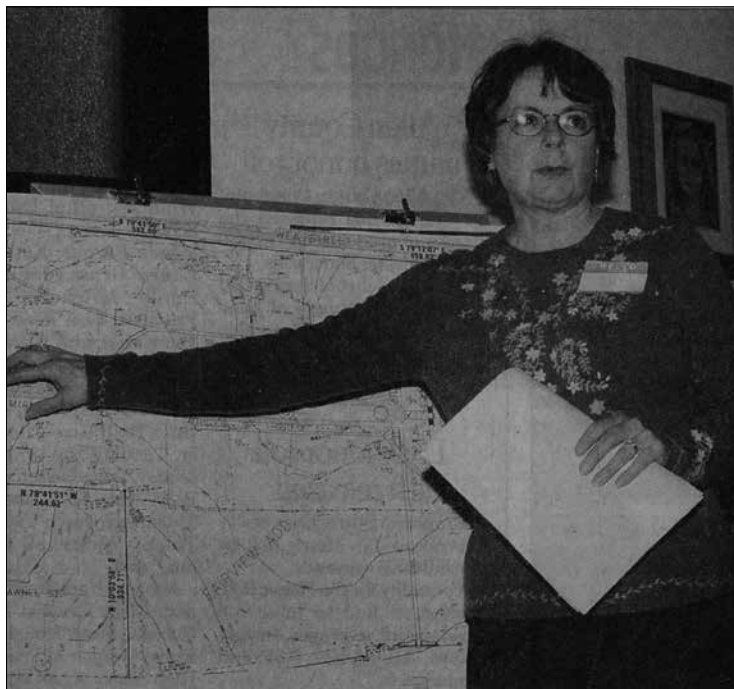
The Ursuline Plant Sale grossed \$11,718, with 40% going to Ursuline and 60% to Spring Valley Nursery (Ken O'Dell).

The Ursuline gardens, advanced training, the county fair, farmers

market, hotline and reference library, Victory Garden, Earth Day, and Paola Tree Board are important events and projects. The Round About and a "walkabout" were mentioned in the newsletter.

There was a proposal to renovate the Ursuline barn to a visitor's center for the gardens.

The volunteer requirement was 40 hours for the rookie class, but just 25 for the rest of the members.



Linda Stuart outlined gardening projects planned at the Ursuline Botanical Gardens and Arboretum on the grounds of the former Ursuline Academy. Julie Perez and Linda Stuart were co-chairs of the design committee.



Christmas party, 2004.

Patti wrote (and we paraphrase here): “Friends of Ursuline Garden and Arboretum grew out of an effort by Mike Hursey to have a garden on the Ursuline Academy grounds. The MiCo EMGs stepped forward. After much discussion it was decided that the hours MGs gave to the gardens would be counted as MG volunteer hours. The MGs did not want to sponsor the organization, thus the reason for the Friends of Ursuline group.”

There was lots of planting at Ursuline, including a magnolia grove, lavender bed, and an allee of Princeton Sentry Ginkgo trees (columnar maples were also mentioned). Enthusiasm ramped up for the World Class Peony garden at Ursuline.

Projects mentioned in the minutes and newsletters were: Ursuline Botanical Garden and Arboretum; Lawn & Garden Show / Grow It — Eat It; the hotline; Great Trees; Friends in the Garden (FIGS); Public Education/Advanced Training; Highway 68 Round About; Louisburg Sign Project; Demonstration Gardens; Saturday farmers market in Paola; Spring Plant Sale; Mentor Program; newspaper articles; speaker’s bureau; and

educational trips and tours.

An EMG plant sale was planned, to be held at the Cider Mill.

Sister Jane Falke, OSU, designed a 2005 prayer calendar, with photos from the Ursuline campus.

There was a day trip to the Wichita Flower Show and buying trips to three area nurseries. Day trips were planned to the Overland Park Arboretum and the Dyck Arboretum of the Plains. Unclear if they

actually happened.

John Rose got the local paper to agree to run at least one MG article a month.

The EMGs turned over management of the farmers market to the Chamber of Commerce, the City and/or the City Council.

There was a fall plant sale at Ursuline, with proceeds going to the Ursuline Sisters.

Master Gardener of the Year was Bernard Armstrong. Rookie of the Year was Scott Dreiling.



Harriet Jack at the Shrine. Patti and Christine (below).



Advisory Board

Chair
Terry Davis/Bernard Armstrong
Vice Chair
John Rose
Secretary
Patsy Butel
Treasurer
Loren T. Evison
Debbie Jongenelen
Nancy Kalman
Jackie Mullinax
Paul Schonbachler

New Class

Carol Castellini
Sharon Conn
Carol Elliott
Myrna S. Guion
Elizabeth Hall
Harriet Jack
Betsy B. Patrick
Elizabeth Prothe
Jonné Stauffers
Jean Trail

“The secretary was chided by Loren for misspelling his name in the minutes. In the future such rebukes shall be taken to mean ‘I would love to take over as secretary.’”

— John Rose

Advisory Board

Bernard Armstrong
Chair

Susan Woods
Vice Chair

John Rose/Jane Martin
Secretary

Larry Sims
Treasurer

Loren T. Evison
d Brown
Jackie Mullinax

New Class

Michelle Boyts
Phyllis Day
Linda Prothe
John Raske
Susan Thompson
Eleanor Zuvanich

The demonstration gardens were moved to the Ursuline grounds. The Board was also working to get approval to move the Extension Office there from its previous location west of the Paola Square.

Major fund-raiser was the first Miami County EMG Garden Tour. Gardens on the tour were: John and Connie Murphy, Spring Hill; Peggy and Paul Hiatt, Spring Hill; Sally and Tom Lundblad, Louisburg; Dianne and Waymon Hunnicutt, Louisburg; Christy and Scott Dreiling, Paola, and the Ursuline Botanical Garden and Arboretum. The expectation was that members who formerly volunteered to staff the Lawn & Garden Show



Kitchen demonstrations at the Lawn & Garden Show.

booth would instead work the garden tour. Event chair was Carol Castellini.

MiCo EMGs turned over management of the farmers market to My Father's House.

Julie Perez formed a committee to build gardens at the Veterans Memorial in Paola.

The Plant Sale became more professional with the addition of a commercial grower, retired nurseryman Ken O'Dell, who was willing to provide plants on a consignment basis.

Master Gardener of the Year: Julie Perez.
Rookie of the Year: Carol Castellini.

"There was talk of forming a 'symbiotic' relationship with Ursuline. I was impressed at the use of the word symbiotic. I'm still not sure what it means, but I think I'd like to drive one."

—John Rose



Volunteer cooks before we discovered the joys of having events catered.

Gardens throughout the Midwest suffered extensive damage from the unexpected hard freeze in April, after many trees and shrubs had already leafed out. So the unofficial theme of the garden tour, our only fund-raiser in 2007, was “recovery.” Plant sale proceeds went to the Ursuline Sisters, funding for the gardens there.



The Extension offices were moved to Monica Hall on the Ursuline campus, as were the Trial Gardens.

There was a field trip to Powell Gardens, where they were still planting in June to replace plants lost in the April hard freeze.

A team of gardeners was working on the Round About project led by Joan Carey.



Work progressed on our website, with Linda Raske as board-approved “clearinghouse.”



A group of volunteers began working to improve the gardens at the John Brown Memorial Educational Garden (Adair Cabin) in Osawatomie.

The by-laws were updated, and the treasurer reported a balance of about \$4k throughout the year. Volunteer requirements were changed to 40 hours, with AT



hours remaining at 10.

Old railroad ties and t-posts were installed in the demonstration gardens.

The Board was looking for someone to do a presentation on butterflies.

Ambitious plans were suggested for a community garden to be called “Sunflower Gardens” in

Paola, but it was tabled later in the year because the city was “not ready to take it on at this time.” Progress was made at the Veterans Memorial.

Master Gardener of the Year: Carol Castellini.
Rookie of the Year: Susan Thompson.

Advisory Board

Bernard Armstrong
Chair

Carol Castellini
Vice Chair

John Rose
Secretary

Larry Sims
Treasurer

Kelly Rayne

Jeannie Trail

Jane Martin

Loren Evison

New Class

Renee Avenaim

Donna Cook

Kathy Doherty

Shirley New

Beverly Roy

Vickie Vetter-Scruggs

“Looks like the relocation of the Extension Office will happen August 15. Plan your out-of-town vacation then so you will have a good excuse for not helping with the move!”

—John Rose

Advisory Board

Jeannie Trail

Chair

Carol Castellini

Vice Chair

Susan Thompson

Secretary

Betsy Patrick

Treasurer

Jane Martin

Patti Armstrong

Kelly Rayne

New Class

Dawn Crumpley

Pam Peters

Lisa Sims

Penny Windler

The 2008 Class project was to plan and hold a plant sale separate from the Ursuline sale.

Master Gardener of the Year was Larry Sims. Rookie of the Year was Vickie Vetter-Scruggs.

Jane Martin continued as coordinator of communications and wrote hints for "green living" in the monthly newsletters.

Master Gardeners had a booth at Connie Murphy's during the MiCo Farm Tour.

The Class of 2008 plant sale at the Louisburg Cider Mill was held on May 3. The last Ursuline Plant Sale was held May 9-10, with plans to continue it as a Master Gardener fund-raiser.

Richard Piezuch continued to lead the youth programs.

The February general meeting was a Project Fair to introduce members to the many projects available.

This year marked the first mention of alternating a symposium-like event with the Garden Tour.

Julie Perez headed a group that planted the Veterans Memorial with colorful annuals, perennials and grasses, with shrubs to be added in the next few years.

A plan was developed for the Courthouse Gardens, with Scott Dreiling, Julie Perez, Susan Thompson and Patti Armstrong planning to start digging in the fall.

The Fall Plant Sale netted \$2,256 for the EMG program.

The Great Tree committee, led by John Rose, met with the Paola Tree Board.

The 2009 Garden Tour was postponed for lack of a Chair.



"Master Gardeners is not about attending meetings... but is really about educating the community in fun and effective ways. Come help us find those ways."

—Jeannie Trail

The first big spring plant sale from which the proceeds went to the Master Gardener program was held in May. Net profit was \$3,801. The sale was advertised in KC Gardener magazine, The Free Shopper, and on Sudden Link cable. Donna Cook and Vickie Vetter-Scruggs co-chaired the sale.



Our bank balance grew to \$7,846.

Master Gardener of the Year: Susan Thompson. Rookie of the Year: Pam Peters.

Linda Raske and Patti Armstrong co-chaired a 2010 seminar committee.

The Great Trees project was led by Ron Guilfoyle.

The New Class Project was to spruce up the County Administration Building beds on the front and south sides.

Larry Sims left a strip of soil in the Trial Garden at Ursuline for a new project for moms and toddlers to learn about seeds and soil. Project chair was Jeannie Trail.

Martha Sundquist led youth projects.

There was planning to set up "an Internet link where we can share pictures of all our gardening projects." It is not clear when this "link" became Facebook.

Shirley New and Pam Peters met with the Courthouse design committee. The Lion's Club



will donate \$1,000. Infrastructure was put in place before sidewalks were laid.

There was discussion of sidewalk bricks at the Courthouse for memorials.



Advisory Board

- Jeannie Trail
Chair
- Susan Thompson
Secretary
- Betsy Patrick
Treasurer
- Jane Martin
- Linda Raske
- Scott Dreiling
- Patti Armstrong

New Class

- Jamie Albright
- Dixie Forney
- Mike Hursey
- Gail Muller
- Barry Stuart

"After some growling from various stomachs, the Board meeting was adjourned!"

—John Rose

Special thanks to John Rose for making those early newsletters and minutes fun to read!

Advisory Board

Vickie Vetter-Scruggs

Chair

Jeannie Trail

Vice Chair

Linda Raske

Secretary

Sharon Conn

Treasurer

Scott Dreiling

Renee Avenaim

Harriet Jack

Pam Peters

New Class

Dan Campbell

Phyllis Benedict

Mary Miller

Lenora Larson

Rogene McPherson

“Anyone who has time for drama isn’t gardening enough.”

— Anonymous

Lenora Larson gave out butterfly host plant seeds at the January Advanced Training in preparation for the New Class Plant Sale at her farm during the May Farm Tour.

Master Gardener of the Year: Scott Dreiling. Rookie of the Year: Pam Peters.

Pam Peters reported that there are cost-sharing funds available through the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) for anyone interested in building high and low tunnels. Nancy Kalman presented an AT on the subject.

There were both spring and fall plant sales. Ken O’Dell was made an Honorary Miami County EMG at the last board meeting.

Vickie Vetter-Scruggs and Lenora Larson gave a presentation on butterfly gardens at the Kansas Day/Business Expo.

Loren Evison continued to write and gather articles for the newspaper.

In June a reunion of Master Gardeners from 1996-2010 was held at Casa Somerset, home of new EMG Mike Hursey and his wife, Christine Hursey.

The Courthouse Arches were dedicated by the Chamber of Commerce.

The city failed to mulch the new beds at the Veterans Memorial. EMGs resumed work there in the fall.

Lenora Larson had an AT on butterflies (what else?) at her farm. She also promoted participation in activities of the Idalia Society of Mid-American Lepidopterists.



Diane Burnett gave the MGs a thorough run-through on the resources available through K-State and the publications they offer online, including the Miami County website. She urged MGs to use the resources there and explained how to do it.

Master Gardener of the Year: Kathy Doherty. Rookie of the Year: Jamie Albright.

Dan Campbell sold eggs, produce and more at the farmers market while also promoting the EMG program and KSU Extension brochures.

The 2011 Garden Tour was canceled because several of the people who had agreed to show their gardens became unable to do so.

Shirley New and Eleanor Zuvanich donated produce from the Trial Gardens to My Father's House in Paola on a regular basis and donated tomatoes to the 4-H kitchen for the Fair.

Many people staffed the "Lucy Booth" at the Fair. MGs are urged to enter something next year in hopes of winning a blue ribbon like Linda Raske Hoffman did this year.

Barry and Linda Stuart cleaned up the Extension



Barry and Linda Stuart.



Moving peonies from Ursuline to the Courthouse had been planned for later in the summer, but they began disappearing from the Ursuline campus so the schedule was moved up.

There was a successful Fall Plant Sale.



Dan Campbell, Phyllis Benedict, Lenora Larson, and Mary Miller.

Office gardens, which is to say they pulled a truck-load of weeds!

The Courthouse Gardens became an official Monarch Waystation, a project of the class of 2011.

Kathy Doherty, Kathy Kierl and Phyllis Benedict stepped in to water, weed and generally care for the Courthouse gardens.

Vickie noted the presence of "Cinnamon Pine"—pine trees that were suffering the Pine Wilt that was spreading, and said they should be removed immediately.

\$500 was donated to the Elva Bledsoe Memorial Scholarship, established by her husband, John Bledsoe, after she died of cancer at age 51.



Kathy Doherty, Phyllis Benedict, Lisa Sims, d Brown, Loren Evison and Larry Sims.

Advisory Board

Vickie Vetter-Scruggs
Chair
Christine Staten
Vice Chair
Sharon Conn
Secretary/Treasurer
Shirley New
Marty Sundquist
Eilen Locke
Renee Avenaim

New Class

Joyce Ghaisarnia
Leah Istas
Jackie Johnson
Chet McLaughlin
Troy Medlin
Julie Newcomer
Kathy Nicholson
Rita Skelton
Becky Thorpe
Laraine Crawford

"Even if you think you are right, you know that you can be wrong and are always willing to listen to and hear an opposing or contradictory view."

—A definition of the term *open-minded* presented by Vickie Vetter-Scruggs

Advisory Board

Vickie Vetter-Scruggs
Chair
Christine Staten
Vice Chair
Susan Thompson
Secretary
Shirley New
Treasurer
Marty Sundquist
Donna Cook
Phyllis Benedict

New Class

Penny Hoffman
Jane McLaughlin
Eleanor Head
Teresa Yohe
Mark Govea

Aside from the celebrity factor, MGs never know where the information they pass on will wind up. A good example: Bernard Armstrong was extensively quoted in the Sept. 3, 2011 KC Star gardening section in an article about growing tomatoes.

Cody Sloan became our new Ag Agent in January, and 35% of his time was dedicated to the MG program.

Master Gardener of the Year: Loren Evison. Rookie of the Year: Phyllis Benedict.

For the first time, the newsletter was available by email. Patti Armstrong wrote very informative and useful newsletters during this time.

The Board was *once again* trying to get people to sign up for the hotline, which was a perennial problem.

The new class project was a 24 x 36 garden next to First Option Bank, called the "Louisburg Memory Park."

New projects: Seeds for Kids. An irrigation system was installed at the Courthouse. The John Brown Memorial Education Gardens project was taken over by a group at the Osawatomie YMCA.

Julie Perez and Christine Staten agreed to co-chair the 2013 Garden Tour. The fall newsletters each featured two gardens scheduled for the 2013 tour.

Bermuda grass invaded the Veterans Memorial. The City promised to follow up with a diligent spraying program in 2013. (Note:



Bernard A. pretending to man the hotline.



Those who received awards for their years of service.



Veterans Memorial workers and plant sale co-chairs.



before proofreading there was a typo here that said "diligent praying program..." A Freudian slip of the fingers?)

The Trial Gardens were moved to Angela Scherman's property on Old KC Road in hopes the pilfering of

produce would cease.

Patti wrote tidbits called "On the Road" in the newsletters that gave readers a heads-up on what to look out for along the highway and back roads. Example: "68 Hwy, north side, the native purple coneflowers are just starting to bloom...Going north on New Lancaster about a mile beyond 68 on the west side is a spectacular fence line full of trumpet vine."



Cody Sloan, our ag agent until early 2014.



Honorees Kathy Doherty and Phyllis Benedict.

The year marked the passing of Bernard Armstrong, one of the founders of the Miami County EMG program in 1996. Trees to honor Bernard and also Bill Vivers were planted at the Courthouse, and a bench was added in honor of Bernard.

Master Gardener of the Year: Phyllis Benedict.
Rookie of the Year: Julie Newcomer.

The Spring Garden Tour had nine gardens, and the ticket price was \$10. Each garden had two liaisons and most had vendors selling various garden-related wares.

There was a Spring Wildflower Walk at Hillsdale Lake, and an Advanced Training on drip irrigation systems.

The new class project was Spring Hill Daffodil Days.

Successful plant sales were held in spring and fall. Hotline crews were gaining confidence, according to Cody.

There was an AT on dragonflies, given by Betsy Betros. Lenora Larson invited the Master Gardeners to a "mothing" at Long Lips Farm.

Alan Branhagen of Powell Gardens was the keynote speaker at the statewide AT in Manhattan.

The treasurer reported a balance of about \$13k. This year was the first mention of Miami County and Linn County joining forces. Also the first mention of our Facebook page.

Pat Trachsel and Christine Thomas-Hursey obtained a \$500 grant from Walmart for the Extension Office gardens project.



Advisory Board

Vickie Vetter-Scruggs
Chair
Donna Cook
Vice Chair
Susan Thompson
Secretary
Shirley New
Treasurer

Phyllis Benedict
Dan Campbell
Dawn Crumpley

New Class

Michael Poss
Karl Willig
Karl Armstrong
Patricia Trachsel
Christine Thomas-Hursey
Shelli Helm

"All EMGs are encouraged to attend the Board meetings on a monthly basis. (Bring your own donuts.)"

Advisory Board

Penny Hoffman
Chair
Martha Sundquist
Vice Chair
Lenora Larson
Secretary
Shirley New
Treasurer

Jan Putzier
Jane McLaughlin
Dawn Crumpley

New Class

Debbie Kitchell
Sue Burns
Dwight Miller
Sipora (Zip) Coffelt
Theresa Miller

*“All kudos belong
to the Master
Gardeners.
All mistakes
are mine.”*

—Patti Armstrong
in the newsletters

Since the Spring Plant Sale was longtime supplier Ken O’Dell’s last, a committee was formed to find new vendors to supply plants on consignment. They considered moving to a more heavily-trafficked location or to develop an entirely different fund-raiser in its place.

Master Gardener of the Year: Lenora Larson. Rookie of the Year: Penny Hoffman.

The newsletter was sent by email starting in January (this was also mentioned in the 2012 notes. *Confusing!*)

The Historical Society donated the cast iron guard rail that enclosed the fountain on the square at the beginning of the 20th century. (It was installed in the Courthouse Gardens in 2020.)

Lenora Larson and Ken O’Dell led a wildflower walk at Hillsdale Lake, followed by lunch in Susan and Bob Thompson’s back yard. Lenora was busy arranging an outstanding array of Advanced Training speakers.

Julie Perez reported that since 2008, Miami County Master Gardeners each year “supplied close to \$3,000 in manual labor, along with an average of \$1,000 in new plant material” toward the Veterans Memorial project.

Kansas Senate Bill 411 proposed to eliminate the district’s ability to levy a tax to support the services of the Extension office. Funding under the proposal would revert to what was available through the county commissioners. This came after six years of planning and development to combine Miami and Linn counties into one district, which was as yet unnamed.



Miami County and Linn County were finally combined into one district. The new name, Marais des Cygnes Extension Master Gardeners, meant new shirts and a new mission statement were needed to reflect the change.

The newsletters included contact information for both the Paola Extension Office and the Mound City Extension Office.

Master Gardener of the Year was Shirley New. Rookie of the Year was Karl Armstrong.

The newly-formatted Spring Plant Sale was held in the parking lot of Rockers Pharmacy on Baptiste, with Mary Miller as chair and with new vendors.

The new class project was the design, planting and maintenance of the beds at the Extension Office entry from Wea Street.

The hotline was being transformed. The new name under consideration was Mobile Hotline (a clue as to the new approach).



Advisory Board
 Penny Hoffman
Chair
 Martha Sundquist
Vice Chair
 Lenora Larson
Secretary
 Laraine Crawford
Treasurer
 Patti Armstrong
 Dawn Crumpley
 Jan Putzier

New Class
 Pam Bond
 Mike Brown
 Harley Davidson
 JoAnn Davidson
 Sondra dela Cruz
 Dennise Fink-Morse
 Betsy Hasselquist
 Jan Thompson

"The training alone is worth the volunteer commitment. But beyond that, the program is great for making friends and getting out into the community."

—Patti Armstrong

Advisory Board

- Michael Poss
Chair
- Martha Sundquist
Vice Chair
- Pat Trachsel
Secretary
- Laraine Crawford
Treasurer
- Eleanor Head
- Jan Putzier
- Shirley New

New Class

- Carmen Anthony
- Tom dela Cruz
- André Dight
- Doris McElreath
- Rena Tedrow

“Gardening is experiential. When things don’t work out, you’ve learned something... sometimes you just need to move on.”

—Michael Poss

There were 55 in attendance at the first annual Spring Garden Symposium, held in the Paola Extension Office.

Ongoing projects were:

- The Courthouse, Extension and Trial Gardens. Courthouse Gardens volunteers worked with a 5th grade class to clean up the gardens.

- Come Grow with Us (in LaCygnes)

- The Plant Sale, held in a parking lot on Baptiste, with new consignment vendors.

- The Awards Dinner: Master Gardener of the Year: Michael Poss. Rookie of the Year: Mike Brown.

First time for these awards: Work Glove (most volunteer hours): Lenora Larson. Seeds of Knowledge (most AT hours): Kathy Ayers.

André Dight proposed that EMGs take on Lakemary Gardens as a project, assisting and consulting in starting gardens, including a butterfly garden, to support students in learning to plant and maintain gardens.

- Touch-A-Truck and Seeds for Kids. Through sign-ups at Touch-A-Truck, Earth Day, Gardening with Kids, we had more than 240 kids registered for Seeds for Kids.

Planning began for the 2017 Garden Tour and garden selection.

There was a tour to Hollingsworth Peonies in Maryville, MO, Des Moines Botanical Garden, the Tulip Festival in Iowa and Reiman Gardens at Iowa State U.

Signupgenius is now where volunteers sign up to help with events.



The Second Annual Spring Gardening Symposium was held at the Extension Office, with registration fee of \$25 and nearly 70 in attendance..

Master Gardener of the Year: Betsy Hasselquist. Rookie of the Year: Tom Dela Cruz. Work Glove Award: Betsy Hasselquist; Seeds of Knowledge Award: Connie Murphy. Friend of the Master Gardener: Judy Moser.

At the Awards Dinner, André Dight presented information on the new Lakemary Therapeutic Ranch project.

Four members served as Open Class Superintendents at the Miami County Fair: Floriculture, Michael Poss; Agriculture & Horticulture: Chet McLaughlin; Seeds for Kids: Shirley New and Jane McLaughlin.

Katelyn Barthol became our new Ag Agent in October.

MdC EMGs donated \$5,000 to the fairground rebuilding project after major flood damage earlier in the year.

Nancy Kalman presented



the first Facebook LIVE broadcast on the subject of growing garlic.

There was a group bus tour to P. Allen Smith's Moss Mountain Farm, Garvan Woodland Gardens, and the

Springfield Botanical Garden.

KC Gardener magazine was identified as best for reaching our target market. Ads, articles and calendar listings for AT and fund-raisers were placed there.

Advisory Board

- Shirley New
Chair
- Debbie Kitchell
Vice Chair
- Pat Trachsel
Secretary
- Laraine Crawford
Treasurer
- Jam Putzier
- Rebecca Thorp
- Jane McLaughlin

New Class

- Brenda Wrischnik
- Judy Moser
- Gary Thompson
- Cathy Stainbrook
- Janette Bennett
- Carol Williams



"Hope... is the thing that rises from a tiny seed, in its own sweet time."

—Timothy Egan in the NYTimes

Advisory Board

Mike Brown/
Betsy Hasselquist
Chair
Debbie Kitchell
Vice Chair
Becky Thorpe
Secretary
Laraine Crawford
Treasurer

Phyllis Benedict
Sondra dela Cruz
Betsy Hasselquist

New Class

Anita Boyette-Voke
Kathleen Brady-Francis
Lori Calvin
Brandon Johnson
Steve Kemplay
Barbara Shropshire
Fred Snead
Patricia Wolfe

One EMG was heard to say that Judy O'Mara's advanced training on Identifying Plant Problems was "the most useful AT class I have ever attended!"

The Mound City Library held this year's *Come Grow with Us!* classes and workshops on growing and preserving food.

Master Gardener of the Year: Becky Thorpe. Rookie of the Year: Judy Moser; Work Glove Award: Judy Moser. Seeds of Knowledge Award: Mike Brown.

The Spring Gardening Symposium moved to Town Square after it became obvious that we needed more space than we had at the Extension Office. There was unexpected profit of \$1,573, as realization set in that this could be an annual fund-raiser in addition to being an educational event in keeping with our mission statement. There were 180 in attendance.

The Board approved changes to the By-Laws.

As our potluck meetings seemed to be losing their appeal, the second quarterly general meeting was a "Talent Show," showcasing members' various skills related (or not) to gardening. Q3 was a plant swap. The Q4 game night was postponed due to health issues of the event organizer.

The Board contributed to an annual \$500 scholarship for graduating high school seniors "who exemplify exceptional horticultural skills." Selection was managed by the 4-H Foundation.

An information and recruitment brochure was produced, along with a photo roster to help members put a name together with a face.

KC Gardener featured Lenora Larson as the first in a series called "Meet an

Extension Master Gardener."

MdC profit from the Plant Sale was more than \$5,700.

A new social event was a Christmas Cookie Exchange held at the Jackson Hotel in Paola.

The Ursuline property was sold but the deal fell through.

Staff began pursuing options in case the Extension Office had to move.

Monthly newsletters began listing committees and their chairs, along with the Advisory Board officers and members.



The Plant Sale ramped up efforts to focus on native plants, butterfly host plants, and pollinator plants.

Sue Burns planted a pollinator garden in the children's area at the Cider Mill.

Debbie Kitchell organized a private MdC EMG event at the Gardens of Wendwood, a private garden she has managed for 18 years.

We have five EMGs who have earned emeritus status: Patti Armstrong, d Brown, Linda Hoffman, Jan Putzier and Larry Sims.

Master Gardeners of the Year were Sue Burns and Laraine Crawford. Rookie of the Year: Anita Boyett-Voke. Seeds of Knowledge: Anita Boyett-Voke. Work Glove Award: Laraine Crawford. Friends of the EMGs: Angela Scherman and Julie Ramsey.

Registration fee for the Fourth Annual Symposium was \$40, with four excellent speakers. Issues of space and visibility at Town Square led to anticipation of another move for 2020.

Cathy Stainbrook organized a private EMG-only garden tour in Linn County. What amazing variety we saw in those gardens!

The Q3 general meeting was held at Lakemary Ranch.

Anita Boyette-Voke increased our online social media presence in an effort to reach younger people.

Laraine Crawford helped maintain a Biblical Garden at her church.

Fall 2019 brought the initial planning for the EMG History Project book and request for information and photos.



2019

Advisory Board

Betsy Hasselquist
Chair
Debbie Kitchell/Phyllis Benedict
Vice Chair
Sondra dela Cruz
Secretary
Carmen Anthony/Sue Burns
Treasurer
Cathy Stainbrook
Jan Thompson
Judy Moser

New Class

Cindy Katzer
Janette Everhart

"We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses."

—Abraham Lincoln

Advisory Board

Betsy Hasselquist
Chair

Phyllis Benedict
Vice Chair

Anita Boyette-Voke
Secretary

Laraine Crawford
Treasurer

Sue Burns
Cathy Stainbrook
Judy Moser

New Class

Stacie Campbell
David Gifford

Stephanie Myers
Susan Hain

Debbie Day

Helen Kloepper

Shelli Shockey-Bichel

Rhonda Lewis

Randa Lewis

“If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need.”

–Cicero

New recruitment signs placed around the counties resulted in nine trainees for the class of 2021. Patti Armstrong reported that 174 EMGs have been trained since the program began

Big news in 2020 was that the Extension Offices would be moving in early 2021 to 913 N. Pearl—Old KC Road.

Master Gardener of the Year: Judy Moser. Rookie of the Year: Janette Everhart. Work Glove Award: Anita Boyett-Voke. Seeds of Knowledge Award: Cynthia Katzer.

Kathleen Brady-Francis and Janette Bennett took over

the Seeds for Kids program.

MdC EMGs had a booth at Kansas Expo Day.

The Symposium was moved to the Lighthouse Presbyterian Church in Paola to accommodate many more people and improve visibility. The hugely successful February 29 event made it just under the wire before Covid-19 shut everything down. It turned out to be our only fund-raiser in 2020.

The Plant Sale was canceled. EMGs were urged to support our plant sale vendors. Tentative plans were made to hold the 2021 sale in the parking lot of our new offices on Pearl/Old KC Road.

Brainstorming meetings produced tons of excellent ideas for promoting the program, but Covid-19 put everything on hold for now.

Lenora Larson continued to contribute monthly articles on beneficial and harmful insects for the newsletters.

Advanced Training was mostly by Zoom. Garden maintenance continued with social distancing protocols strictly observed.

The EMG program called “Holiday Happiness” matched member donations (up to \$500) to the food pantries in Miami and Linn Counties and donated a total of \$1,475.



*Community
Education*

Nancy Kalman remembers having Advanced Training when she joined in 2000. Arrangements at that time were made by county horticultural agents, and ours was Herschel George. Most of the presenters were other extension agents and K-State professors. Chuck Marr was a regular, and according to Nancy, he was very funny.

For a time, Bernard Armstrong and Paul Schonbachler stepped up to organize the Advanced Training presentations.

About the time when Herschel left the program, Nancy became the volunteer in charge of Advanced Training. She says the agents were always helpful in contacting professors and other agents. Nancy tried to have a presentation each month, and did that job for several years.

Skipping forward, Lenora Larson (Class of 2011) soon became the chair of the Advanced Training committee (which was usually just one person). Lenora was perfectly suited for the job, as a presenter herself both in our program and throughout the area, where she networked with other program presenters.

Both Lenora and Nancy had a wide range of knowledge and experience and an eagerness to share it with others. ❁



Sherry Thomas



Lenora Larson finds great AT presenters, and is one herself.



Nancy Kalman continues to do AT presentations.



Johnson County Hort Agent Dennis Patton always draws a crowd.



Several attendees said this plant disease diagnosis class was one of the most useful they had attended.

Plant Sales



2007 sale checkout in the Ursuline parking lot.



The weather was not always perfect (2013 fall sale).



Patti at the 2012 spring sale.

In the early years, members dug plants from their own gardens to sell at various locations, including the Cider Mill. This became a huge task, albeit a productive way for members to dispose of aggressive spreaders rather than dragging them to the compost pile.

In 2006 the decision was made to turn the sale over to a commercial grower. A consignment grower had been found. Ken O'Dell, Spring Valley Nursery, agreed to take back unsold plants, thus assuming all the risk for bad weather and other

unforeseen problems.

After Ken retired from retirement in 2014, new consignment vendors were found, and the sale moved from Ursuline to a more trafficked area on Baptiste. Mary Miller and her husband Steve ran the sales in a very businesslike manner, and EMG net profits rose.

Sondra dela Cruz and her husband Tom took over after the Millers moved away, and although Covid-19 canceled the 2020 sale, the event remains one of our more successful fund-raisers. ❀



Tips from super-salesman Ken O'Dell. Lenora used her sales skills to increase butterfly awareness in 2018.

Spring Symposium

The Symposium evolved from a 55-attendee event to a 250-attendee event (with 60 more turned away) in a few short years, as the date and venue changed to accommodate enormous interest throughout the region among EMGs and others.

Speakers at the 2016 event were: Jamie Kidd, Cheryl Boyer and Lynn Loughary.

The 2017 Symposium featured Ania Wiatr, senior gardener at Powell Gardens, Cynthia Gillis, Jack Carson, and Sherri Thomas.

In 2018 the keynote speaker was Merle Sharpe, long-time Master Gardener and landscape designer. Other speakers were Cynthia Gillis and Brian Boccard.

“Gardening by Design” was the ongoing theme. The Symposium the following year featured Bryan Boccard as the keynote speaker, with Dennis Patton, Timothy Moloney and Myrna Minnis filling out the program.

“The Color-filled Garden” delighted attendees in 2020, with presentations by Timothy Moloney, Susan Mertz, Ania Wiatr, and Lenora Larson.

Jeannie Trail and Susan Thompson made these programs very successful, with help from many other volunteers. ❀



Merle Sharp spoke at the 2018 Symposium held at Town Square.



Tim Moloney was a favorite.



Interest in attending soon outgrew the conference room at the Extension Office.



Tickets for the 2019 Symposium had to be cut off because of limited space at Town Square, so the venue was moved once again, this time to the Lighthouse Church (left).



Garden Tours

The 2007 program

Our Garden Tours have been among the most complicated educational and fund-raising events to organize—but hugely popular and successful.

The Lawn & Garden Show was replaced by the Spring Garden Tour in 2007, being held in alternate years with the Johnson County spring garden tours.

In 2015 the tour dates were moved to September, in order to highlight gardens during a different season.

The 2021 tour will feature six gardens, and the ticket price has been raised to \$15 from the original price. 🌸



Miami County
Master Gardener Garden Tour
Not Your Ordinary Garden Tour
Saturday, June 3rd 9 am - 5 pm
Sunday, June 4th 12 pm - 5 pm
Sponsored by the Miami County K-State Research and Extension Master Gardeners



- 1 Connie and John Murphy**
2020 W 223rd Street, Spring Hill
For those of you considering a retirement career based around your acreage, we offer Honey Meadow Farm. Initially it was established as an orchard, with colorful perennials and annuals used to enhance the home's landscaping. Now in retirement, Connie's organized plantings have evolved into dozens of overflowing beds, with thousands of flowers, used for "Connie's Potting Shed". This farm not only offers a Monet garden for your enjoyment, but will show you the workings of a production flower farm providing the botanicals needed for all fresh and dried designs.
- 2 Cindy and Gayle McPherson**
20250 W 223rd Street, Spring Hill
Country living at its best! Visit the lush surroundings of this 2 acre home in Spring Hill. The McPherson's brick ranch is nestled among mature landscape which relies heavily on conifer shrubbery. This formal design uses deciduous trees and the colors of perennials and annuals for its accents. You will find the use of landscaping, to create privacy, in their large backyard. Discovery of a miniature, Italian style, garden awaits those who appreciate symmetry and formality.
- 3 Peggy and Paul Hiatt**
20314 W 223rd Street, Spring Hill
Are you sentimental? Do you like white picket fence? Join us for a nostalgic tour through the Hiatt's 2+ acre property. As you arrive, your eyes are drawn to the white picket fence that highlights a striking island bed. You will be enticed around this country home by multiple, native rock edged islands. Each bed is full of classic perennials, native plants and colorful annuals. Sentimental art is nestled in amongst the many colors and scents. This nostalgic treat will surely inspire you!
- 4 Tom and Sally Lundblad**
110 Broadmoor Dr., Louisburg
The Lundblad's garden transports you from the midst of a highly concentrated subdivision to the Colorado mountains showcased with a...
- 5 Waymon and Dianne Hunnicutt**
29630 Metcalf, Louisburg
Nestled on top of a rural rocky hillside with a panoramic view, this garden could be on the cover of any country-themed garden magazine. A relaxing, casual garden style with whimsy everywhere; many winding, inviting seating paths through a wide variety of plant material with inviting seating areas scattered throughout. Although the gardens are compact, there is a pond fed by a babbling brook and even an enchanted woodland path. Country serenity at its best!
- 6 Scott and Christy Dreiling**
906 E. Plankishaw, Paola
This classic Victorian home in the heart of Paola is wonderfully showcased by charming gardens. From the window boxes to the flower edged vegetable garden, it is a treat to see. Native rock lines the unusual water feature, which is two levels, connected by a stream flowing under the deck. Scott has used native plants extensively in the shade and sun areas. An urban yard owned by a large, busy family, this garden even has a kid-friendly play area designed to hold up to activity.
- 7 Ursuline Botanical Garden and Arboretum**
901 East Miami Street, Paola
Ursuline Gardens are operated and funded by the Friends of Ursuline Garden and Arboretum, a not for profit 501 c. 3. The raise money through plant sales and donations and use the money to design and plant.

It is the Mission of the Garden to inspire people to appreciate, beautify and conserve our natural environment by providing a peaceful setting with opportunities for prayer, reflection and learning. The gardens are designed in harmony with the history and traditions of the Ursuline sisters, the landscape of the Midwest, in order to create a lasting influence on our community. The gardens are open to the public from dawn to dusk.



A few of the gardens. Clockwise from top: Dela Cruz, Murphy, Larson, Michel/Coffey, Green, and Peterson.



So Many Other Public Education Projects

Projects have evolved over the years to reflect the skills and interests of a changing membership.

Newspaper articles were written by Patti Armstrong, d Brown, Connie Murphy, Nancy Kalman, Vickie Vetter-Scruggs, Lenora Larson, and many others. As advertising revenue has fragmented the publishing industry, the local paper runs our articles as space allows.

The speakers bureau has always been loosely organized, as few members are comfortable speaking before large groups of strangers. Lenora Larson is a notable exception, and she takes our message to other garden and butterfly groups far and wide.

Through the years Patti Armstrong, Nancy Kalman, Mike Brown, and others have also carried the torch as public speakers for the EMG program.

We partnered with the Paola Tree Board for several years, starting in 2004.

Annual 4-H Scholarships have been awarded to students who showed an interest in horticulture.

In 2016 Andre Dight, a new EMG at the time, saw the need for our group to establish a relationship with the Lakemary Ranch program for kids and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

There was amazing work done at the John Brown Memorial Educational Gardens by volunteers who took that project on.

Earth Day and Touch-A-Truck events were manned by volunteers who enjoyed working with children.

Our booth at the Paola farmers market booth always drew much interest. Retired teachers were the best at working with children.

Wildflower walks at Hillsdale Lake were open to anyone interested in learning more about nature. ❁



Larry Sims at JBMEG



Lakemary volunteers



Farmers market



Susan Thomson with kids



The Lakemary Ranch



A wildflower walk at Hillsdale



Work at JBMEG



Chet McLaughlin, Earth Day



An EMG booth at Touch-A-Truck

*Projects in
the Community*

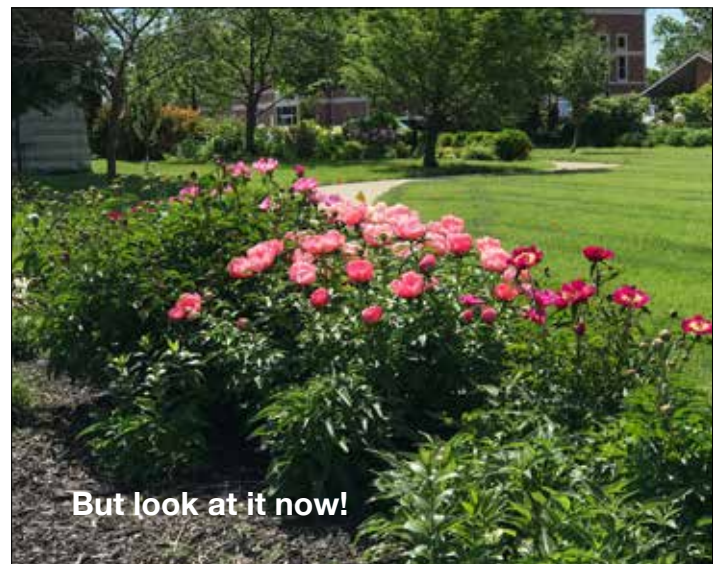
The Courthouse Gardens



The gardens were in the planning stage for two years and are a cooperative project of the Paola Lion's Club, Miami County, and the Master Gardeners. They broke ground in 2008 with the planting of the State Tree of Kansas. The sidewalks were installed in 2009 and beds were planted next to the building. In 2010, thanks to Doherty Steel, the arbors were built and installed, along with more beds.

A big year was 2011, with installation of directional and informational signs, more beds and the Monarch Way Station. All suffered from the major drought of that year. In 2012 an irrigation system was installed and a redesign led by Nancy Branum of the Johnson County EMGs put the gardens back on track. Amenities were added in 2013, including two memorial benches and historic lighting donated by the Miami County Historical Society. The long-awaited Medallion went in the center of the sidewalk.

Many yearly improvements continue into 2021. ❁



But look at it now!



Extension Office Gardens

The Ursuline Sisters came to Paola in 1895 when local businessmen donated the original land for the campus. The Sisters started a school in the spring of 1896 and gradually expanded it to include education for girls from kindergarten through junior college. Also, many Sisters taught in the surrounding parochial schools.

Times changed and the college was closed in 1957, but the sisters founded Lakemary Center in the 1960s. The high school was closed in 1971, and the facilities then served as a retreat center and a location for a variety of other activities. The Miami County Extension offices were moved to Monica Hall on the Ursuline campus.

The Ursuline Sisters shared their campus with all who came just to see the grounds or participate in retreats, meetings or other gatherings. Time moved on, and the remaining Sisters moved to the Ursuline campus in Kentucky.

The property was sold and the Extension Offices moved in 2021. ❁



Veterans Memorial Garden

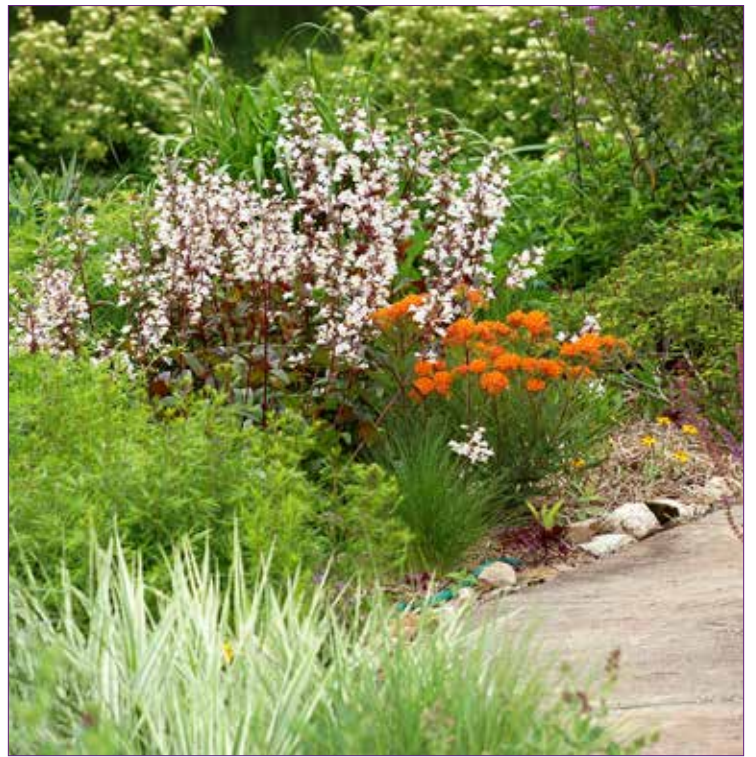
A group of dedicated EMGs led by Julie Perez designed, planted and worked very hard to maintain the gardens surrounding the Veterans Memorial in Paola for a number of years. The memorial honors those who sacrificed so much for our country. ❀



The Trial Garden

Volunteers at the Trial Garden plant various vegetable varieties and document their relative success for K-State. The produce is now sold at the Osawatomie farmers market, with proceeds going toward horticultural scholarships. 🌸









2021

*Congratulations to us,
the Marais des Cygnes District Extension
Master Gardeners*

*on our first 25 years
of service to the community.
Thanks to the many, many members
whose dedication and hard work
have made this
volunteer program possible!*