Coming Together...at a Distance by Betsy Hasselquist, MdC EMG Board Chair

Really enjoyed seeing those of you who ventured out to the 3Q EMG General Meeting at Wallace Park on July 14, despite the heat and all the craziness. We social distanced with sharing, caring and laughing.

Life goes on!!! Although lots of circumstances, perceptions continue to change, people are still gardening and keeping busy, thriving, surviving the best we can.

Several folks reported life on the farm is much the same as always. Garden reports were diverse from “best gardens ever” to “too many weeds, as usual” to starting innovative entrepreneurial projects that benefit the soil and environment (Janette E.-more on that later).

Hopefully you take advantage of this time at home, including enjoying the down time compared to your “normal” schedule. Living in a rural community is a blessing in more ways than one.

I love eating out of my garden, enjoying the “fruits” veggies of my labor. Still waiting on tomatoes to ripen myself although enjoyed the tasty ones Janette shared.

And remember, it’s time to think about planning a fall garden. Think about planting cucumbers, beans, root crops like beets and carrots soon, maybe starting leafy salad greens, cabbage family plants inside to transplant outside later and ordering bulbs. I’ve had a tough time finding seed (zucchini). Any suggestions? Hoping for a reprieve from this heat and for some rain.

(More from Betsy on page 3)

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Advisory Board

Chairman — Betsy Hasselquist
Vice Chairman — Phyllis Benedict
Secretary – Anita Boyett-Voke
Treasurer – Laraine Crawford

Members at Large
Sue Burns
Cathy Stainbrook
Judy Moser

Committees

Courthouse Garden
Phyllis Benedict & Kathy Doherty

Trial Garden
Shirley New & Chet McLaughlin

KSU Extension Office Garden
Sue Burns & Debbie Kitchell

Lakemary Liaison
Becky Thorpe

Advanced Training
Laraine Crawford

Awards Banquet
Donna Cook & Susan Thompson

Symposium
Chair(s) Needed

Plant Sale
Sondra Dela Cruz & Lenora Larson

Garden Tour 2021
Jan Thompson & Betsy Hasselquist

Publicity
Judy Moser & Lenora Larson

Seeds for Kids
Kathleen Brady-Francis & Janette Bennett

Social Media
Anita Boyett-Voke

Miami County Fair
Chet McLaughlin & Michael Poss
Pat Trachsel & Sue Burns

Linn County Fair
Mike Brown

New Recruits/Mentors
Jan Thompson & Betsy Hasselquist

Newspaper Articles
Katelyn Barthol, Extension Agent

Send news and photos to:
Judy Moser, Newsletter Editor
judy@springvalleynursery.com

The Extension Office Gardens

At top, the corner garden is quite full of coneflower color. Above, the “bed” in front of the office. Right, a Black Swallowtail caterpillar munching away on its parsley host plant.
Highlights of the Q3 General Meeting

By Betsy Hasselquist, Mdc EMG Chair

- K-state Extension Office is back open with social distancing; no more than four families in the lobby at a time; masks will be required in Paola public places starting July 22.

NEW CLASS/RECRUITMENT— help spread the word, applications available on the website and need to be submitted by July 31; four applicants so far; plans for classes being revised to include zoom classes at the Paola Extension Office. MENTOR CHAIR needed for 2021. You’re welcome to work with Jan and Betsy this year.

- MI CO Fair is July 18-25. Open classes were cancelled this summer, but 4-H classes going strong.
- Treasurer’s Report- current balance $11,146.62, not much going in or out this year.
- Garden Projects underway with social distancing; come anytime, there’s always things to do.
- Court House Garden workday is Wednesdays at 8 a.m.; Extension Office workday is Tuesdays at 9 a.m.; Trial Garden—tomatoes at Angela’s, peppers at Chet’s and Shirley’s, not a normal year; took their first produce harvest to Osawatomie last week.
- Plant Sale (our primary fund raiser) and Seeds for Kids were cancelled for this year but planned for next year.
- Symposium was a huge success; next Symposium to be planned for 2022.
- Brainstorming Committee produced lots of positive ideas, some already implemented, hope to resume the momentum in the not too distant future.

- History Project—plan to restart.
- Hot Line recommenced July 2. Still some slots open for sign-up on Thursdays 8-10 and 10-12.
- Garden Tour—planning for fall garden tour 2021; still looking for garden options.
- Advanced Training—resuming August 25, 6:30 p.m. at Paola Extension Office, “How to Kill Your Plants,” Lenora Larson (with social distancing of course).
- Volunteer Hours—no worries—requirements are being revised for this year due to COVID-19.

NEW EMG BOARD MEMBERS— we need three people for nominating committee. Also, you’re welcome to submit yourself if interested on serving on the board. Please contact Betsy (bjbniangua@yahoo.com); Update: three positions open, including vice chair position.

The Dynamics of Pandemics

We’re ALL in this together whether we like it or not. We need to take care of each other, our community, our nation, our earth.

So many changes. We can adapt and need to adapt in order to get back to some semblance of normal.

With the growing numbers of “the big germs” (as my granddaughter would say), how has our great country come to have the most cases in the world and growing? What precautions should be taken? What precautions are you taking?

Nobody likes wearing a mask. They’re uncomfortable and make it hard to breathe. There are so many choices to be made. What about schools? Health risks vs benefits? Many folks are struggling just to survive. There are so many stressful, conflicting, confusing, unbelievable messages out there.

Let’s hope to conquer the “big germs” and unity for all—a just society, equality and peace.

We ALL (no matter race, national origin, religion, sex, and political beliefs) want a good life for ourselves and our loved ones, encompassing basic needs, health and happiness.

Be kind, compassionate, patient, loving (of yourself and others). ✨
The past few years I have looked at as many of our state champion trees as possible. Some of these champions are gone. In order to be champions they are of course old trees, and have been burned by the glare of life, if not taking a direct hit by lightning. The champion bur oak has been hit by lightning and now has a lightning rod and the scars to prove it.

I saw the champion bur oak one January in St. George just east of Manhattan. This giant has a circumference of 19’ and 11”. A height of 88’ and a spread of 82’. Our state champion bur oak has been award 348 points. That is one BIG tree. That January our champion had some growth buds waiting for warm weather and longer days. This year, 2020, it is 277 years old and still full of pep and energy.

- The scientific name for bur oak is Quercus macrocarpa.
- Quercus is the classical name for oaks
- Macrocarpa refers to the large fruit (acorn).
- Bur oak is in the white oak group along with white, post and chinquapin oaks.
- Male and female flowers appear on the same trees in April.
- Acorns mature the same year.
- Acorns are true nuts, as are our native walnuts, hickories, pecans and hazelnuts.

Another famous bur oak in Kansas is the Council Oak in Council Grove. Under that famous tree in 1825 a treaty between the U. S. Commissioners and the Osage Indians was signed giving the right of way through Indian land to establish the Santa Fe Trail. The original bur oak has died and a new “COUNCIL OAK JR.” was planted in 1975. Today Junior is just over 40 feet tall and just about as wide.

More information on champion trees in Kansas is at www.kansasforests.org.

Bur oak is native in most of the eastern half of Kansas and has been growing here for about 11,000 years, so we should have some big ones. If you are aware of any large native trees in Kansas and want to notify me, send an email to Ken@springvalleynursery.com. I retired twenty years ago but still use that email.

Ken O’Dell is the Kansas City regional leader of the Kansas Native Plant Society. He is a longtime honorary EMG in Miami County.