**September 21**
2021 Garden Tour Planning Meeting, 10 am at Wallace Park (see page 2)

**OCTOBER 13**
3rd Quarter General Meeting, 6:30 pm, Extension Office (details on page 2).

*The following classes will be on Zoom. Katelyn will be sending links. It is recommended you participate from home, but both will be available to view at the Paola Office.*

**September 22**
Nancy Chapman presents “Organic Gardening Practices,” 6:30 pm on Zoom. (Details on page 8)

**October 27**
Judy Sharp presents “Drought Resistant Perennials,” 6:30 pm on Zoom.

**Advanced Training Online:** See K-State Garden Hour on Facebook

**Garden workdays** are as follows:

- **Courthouse:**
  Workdays: Wednesdays at 9 am, 8 am on really hot days
- **Phyllis Benedict** 913-294-4751
  phabenedict51@gmail.com

**Extension Office:**
Work days: Tuesdays at 9 am
**Sue Burns** 816-510-5291
smbohmker@hotmail.com

**Trial Garden:**
Work days vary
Call **Chet McLaughlin** for info
913-963-7187
mclaughlin1944@gmail.com

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**A New Home for the Extension Office**

The Paola Extension office will be moving to the Sutherlands Shopping Center on 913 N Pearl (Old KC Rd) in Paola. Our last day at the 104 S Brayman location will be January 31, 2021.

The MdC Paola staff are very excited to be moving to a location that is easier to get to, more visual to the public, and has a bigger parking lot. There is some remodeling that needs to be done to the location before we can move in, so we are not looking to move items just yet. Our storage space at the new location will be tight, so I am asking you all to help with “cleaning” the EMG office.

We have permission from our new landlord to put flower pots/containers on the sidewalk in front of the office and a small garden around the signage sign near Old KC Rd. There is no water hook up there, but we can try something new—drought-tolerant plants.

We have permission to remove plants from the gardens at the current office. So we will be having a “transplant party” before the next Quarterly meeting on October 13. No plants will be removed before this date. Details about the event will be sent later. I will keep you all updated on our progress.—Katelyn Barthol

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**IMPORTANT NOTES**

- The Symposium has been cancelled for 2021. Tentative plans for the 2021 Awards Banquet and Spring Plant Sale are in the works.
- Tentative dates for the 2021 Garden Tour are September 10-11. The board voted to change the ticket price to $15 (good for both days). Sponsorship levels will change to $350 for Patrons, $200 for Sponsors, and $100 for Supporters.
- **FREE POTS!** Richard Piezuch, a former EMG, has lots of pots to give away—all types and sizes, including starter pots. Many have been cleaned and stored in plastic bags. Call him at 913-557-6940 to arrange for pickup. He lives just off Highway 68, near Hillsdale Lake.

Follow the Marais des Cygnes EMGs on Facebook at www.facebook.com/mdcemg
Garden Tour Planning Meeting

Come join us Monday, September 21st, 10:00 a.m., at the Wallace Park pavilion for an organizational meeting of the MdC EMG 2021 Fall Garden Tour. It’s exciting to start planning such a positive occasion. Save the date for the “A September to Remember” garden tour September 10 and 11, 2021. We have five wonderful prospective gardens.

We need folks to sign up for various committees/tasks and of course volunteers at each garden during the tour. We will arrange pre-tour tours for all of the volunteers to experience and learn about the gardens. We will adhere to social distancing guidelines with masks advised. Feel free to bring your own chair.

Hope to see you September 21! If you are unable to attend and interested in being involved, contact Betsy Hasselquist at bjbniangua@yahoo.com and/or Jan Thompson at jkg.thompson@gmail.com.

Laraine Crawford’s beautiful garden will be on the tour.

Bring a Shovel—or at Least Yourself...

...to the 3rd Quarter General Meeting on October 13, 6:30 pm, at the Paola Extension Office.

With the prospect of the Extension Office moving, we are proposing that EMGs attend the October General meeting to help with digging up and saving numerous plants that will need new homes. EMGs are welcome to reap the benefits. Donations appreciated.

Bring your muscle or supervisory, cheerleading, organizational, and conversational skills—and containers to help and take advantage of quality transplants.

A truly diverse array of plants, including peonies, irises, sedums, coneflower seeds and much more. Lots of lily bulbs from the Court House Gardens will also be available.

AGENDA: Work or just enjoy the gardens 6:30-7:30 p.m., then gather in the Extension Office for updates. Although it’s difficult to plan, things are happening!

The October EMG Board Meeting will be held that day at 5 p.m. at the Paola Extension Office. EMGs are always welcome to attend board meetings. We always try to respect social distancing and safety guidelines.
New Normal? Nobody Knows

By Betsy Hasselquist, MdC EMG Chair

Fall is approaching. Venture out and appreciate nature and this cooler weather. At least gardening remains a constant in these times of uncertainties, granting beauty, inspiration, serenity, creativity, productivity and exercise—with just a few uncertainties as part of the process. I’m enjoying lots of delicious homegrown tomatoes. I don’t eat much bacon, but relish that first garden BLT. Have enjoyed growing and eating bok choy this year. Time to purchase and start planting garlic and flower bulbs soon.

The new class and mentors enjoyed a meet-and-greet at Lenora’s fabulous gardens. We plan to meet at the Court House gardens September 16 at 9 a.m. Delighted to have nine new garden-lovers this year! Excited to start planning the 2021 fall garden tour, engendering hope.

What is normal? We are comfortable with what’s usual, ordinary and customary, but redefining “normal” has been thrust upon us and we’re not done yet. Change is actually a constant.

People often resist change, but changes can be positive. We’re experiencing challenges we never dreamed of with losses, traumas, anxieties and increased awareness of social justice... and inequities throughout our country and the world. Who could have imagined so many sports might be cancelled?

The new “normal”: Adaptations are evolving with pros and cons, although some will likely carry on in various forms: working from home, Zoom for business and pleasure (have connected more often with long distance friends, love my Zoom yoga classes), less driving, reducing carbon footprints, increased online purchases, although who cares what I wear (convenient, but not so great for retail stores, both big and small), online grocery shopping and delivery (advantageous for busy working families and elderly folks particularly), restaurants offering creative options, an increase in outdoor activities... Support our local businesses.

Back to school, back to school... So many decisions, with each family, district and university trying to figure it out. Our school systems have never dealt with a pandemic before. How does one prepare for the unknowns? Time will tell how things evolve...but I believe children are resilient. My five- and seven-year-old granddaughters are attending school. Wearing masks doesn’t seem to be a problem for them. Seems they adjust better than we adults. Teachers are our new heroes.

Are you registered to vote?

I’ve never been a germophobe, but am definitely more aware of potential risks these days when out “in the real world.” Stay healthy. Stay safe. Be kind to yourself and others. ✿

The MdC EMG History Project resumes. Patti Armstrong, a founding member, is spearheading these efforts. Our goal is to develop a book on the history of our program. Founded in 1996, our 25th anniversary is next year!

In order to get back on track, EVERYONE, PLEASE, bring ALL your accumulated materials, including pictures to the Paola EXTENSION OFFICE by OCT. 7 and place them in the file cabinet in the office just inside the front door.

Committee members who have worked on specific years should include your collected information as well as any completed data forms and your name on your work.

We plan to get an idea of what we have overall and what might be missing to make a plan on format and then have a committee meeting for implementation. Let Patti know if you’re interested in writing about a special project (Patti41@gmail.com, or 913-533-4043). Judy will help with writing, editing and formatting to make it happen, possibly in “first draft” form, in time for the January banquet (if we are able to have it).

Remember to drop off your data to the extension office by October 7.
Candidates for the EMG Board Have Been Announced

**Sue Burns:** Eight years ago we bought a 20 acre farm south of Paola because we wanted room for our horses “and a little garden.” And it snowballed from there. One day, six years ago, I was driving into town and saw that life-changing sign, “Master Gardener Plant Sale.” Everyone at the sale was so nice and so helpful that I knew I had to join the program.

I love learning and teaching, and that’s the basis of EMG. Five years ago, after graduating, my class took over one of the small gardens at the Extension office, and that commitment has extended to all of the gardens surrounding the office building. I believe in what we offer to the community and will continue to be involved in any way I can for as long as possible.

**Janette Bennett:** My Journey to becoming a master gardener—where do I begin? I guess with my love of gardening. I remember in my sophomore year, I asked the teacher if I could do an experiment on growing peas. I bet he didn’t hear that too often. Then when my husband and I were newlyweds I convinced my in-laws to plant a vegetable garden. But it probably was in my genes. My grandmother had a big flower garden. It took up about a fourth of a block. There was of course a pathway, a meandering pathway through the garden. It was super neat. My mom was also big into gardening.

My first garden started off slow but pretty soon it became noticeable to everyone driving by. When we moved out to the country, once again it started off slow but after a few years it became more and more noticeable.

Twenty-five or so years ago I bought a grow light. It had three shelves. I could start lots and lots of plants. It was about this time that I became interested in raising butterflies. Once again I started off slow, planting a few milkweeds and watching to see if I could entice a monarch to lay some eggs. It worked! And I became hooked on raising butterflies.

Three years ago I planted a “lasagna garden” (where you cover the ground with newspaper and put mulch on top). It was super successful. This was also the year I became a Master Gardener. Some of my plants are from the Master Gardener plant sale, and that has improved my garden’s ability to attract new species. Each year I seem to add another butterfly species to my list. This year I had three new ones: Pipevine Swallowtail, Giant Swallowtail, and one that I have not yet identified. But it seems I am never satisfied; the more I get the more I want.

If you want a butterfly experience I’m your gal!

**Chet McLaughlin:** Howdy. I grew up outside Washington DC in a neighborhood of homes built in the 1800s with little lawn or garden space and big old trees. My experience with plants included hospitalization for poison ivy and going gaga at Mother Nature’s wonders at the National Arboretum and National Zoo. Going to KU was a real experience. I became concerned with the environment while working for Pittsburg Plate Glass Company and returned to KU for a masters in environmental engineering. I worked for KDHE and US EPA for 40 years trying to protect the people and land. I also spent six years in the Navy.

My grandfather and grandmother rented land near Basehor, Kansas where they grew a beautiful garden, and preserved much of the produce in a cold cellar. I spent most of my summers with them. They were both president of the Wyandotte County Garden Club at different times.

Jane and I built an energy efficient, solar panel covered house with multiple gardens. As an environmentalist I serve on the board of the Heartland Renewable Energy Society and volunteer at two recycling centers each week.

I learned everything I know about gardening from my grandparents and from Miami County Master Gardeners. Shirley New and I have lead the KSU Trial Garden efforts for the past six years and we donate the proceeds to the Osawatomie student-led community garden, since they do not have a grocery store in town.

I have helped with many of the Master Gardener’s projects since becoming a member in 2013. Hopefully, I can contribute to our growth and fun over the next two years by participating on the Board.
Putting Art in Your Garden

By Lenora Larson

We EMGs love plants, and there’s never enough room for all the plants that we crave. So, why would you give up valuable real estate to an art object rather than one more plant?

Because garden art enhances your beloved plants as a dramatic contrast to their flowers and foliage. A sculpture can also provide clues about the garden space, such as a bee sculpture in your pollinator garden or a bronze blue heron guarding your water garden. Other useful functions include providing focal points and solving design challenges such as hiding the air conditioner or reinforcing the house’s entrance. You can also use art to share your personality. Do you like the whimsy of a rabbit statue or the grandeur of a large fountain? Additionally, garden art has an unlimited color palette, never needs watering or pruning, and can add winter interest to your yard.

Getting Artistic

The best source of garden art is a gardening artist! Many of you remember Myrna Minnis who spoke about garden art at our 2019 Garden Symposium. Several of us MdC EMGs have been filling our gardens with her unique creations.

Fortunately, Myrna opens her charming garden to visitors twice a year. The next opportunity to purchase garden art from Myrna and ten other artists will be October 10 and 11. Wine will be served at the Friday night opening from 4:00 pm to 7 pm. On Saturday the garden will be open from 10 am to 4 pm. 9700 Canterbury in Overland Park, 66022 This outdoor garden setting will allow for social distancing and payment will be made to each artist rather than at a central checkout.

Do you need a Christmas gift for a gardening friend? Or a gift to your garden? This is the perfect opportunity.

Please visit “Art with Myrna” on the web or Myrna Minnis on Facebook for more information.

All art sculpted by Myrna Minnis

This tadpole planter is perfect for succulents.

Lenora commissioned “the Purple Rumpus” to match her garden’s color motif.

Vickie commissioned this happy Buddha to welcome visitors to her garden.

Nine ceramic fish swim through the Catmint and Prairie Dropseed Grass in Lenora’s garden.
Meet Three More EMGs-in-Training

We asked our new EMGs-to-be to write a few words about themselves to help us get to know them. (The other six were in the August newsletter.)

I am Shelli Shockey-Bichel, an animal, nature, and outdoors lover known for laughing and enjoying life.

I work a fulltime job at the Olathe School District (Service Center) and have for 15-plus years.

My husband Jeff and I live in Paola and love our little 7 1/2 acre Rusty Fence Ranch. Horseback riding, kayaking, bicycling and hiking are a few of my favorite activities.

I have gardened off and on for years. Flowers, herbs and vegetables. I am not sure what I like the best because I enjoy watching all seeds and plants grow. I make salves, tinctures, soaps and lotions with herbs and find it relaxing to make them.

I look forward to learning more from the Master Gardeners and being able to return the knowledge to others who love gardening. I am also interested in soil and water improvement.

My name is Rhonda Lewis. I am a life-long resident of Miami County. I grew up on an acreage west of Louisburg. I always loved working outside in the vegetable and flower gardens alongside my parents, who also had a love for the outdoors and plants.

I am married to Chris and have three children. We have recently moved and have lots of garden ideas for our property south of Louisburg. This spring we have added beekeeping to our hobbies. We put in a garden this spring and it has been wonderful to have those fresh veggies and herbs available.

I love being outdoors and working on my gardens or taking care of the yard. I have worked at a local greenhouse for several years, seasonly.

Now that our children are older, I finally feel like I have the time to put into the Master Gardener program. My oldest daughter is actually doing the program alongside me. I am not only excited to expand my knowledge of gardening but to also be able to pass this on to the next generation. I am also excited to get back to volunteering and helping with different projects around our area.

Randa Lewis: For the past two years I have been studying biology at Pittsburg State University with the hope to one day practice naturopathic medicine. With the current state of the world, I have decided to take a semester break from school to work and take part in the Master Gardener program.

I am excited for this journey and grateful I am able to share this time and appreciation of gardening with my mom, Rhonda Lewis, who is also apart of this year’s program. Currently, I am working at Swan’s Water gardens. It has been so interesting to learn more about aquatic plants and ecosystems. In the past, I spent several years working at Louisburg Greenhouse and Nursery. During that time I found my love for succulents and small container gardening. This season, my mom and I had a successful garden, growing watermelon, kale, a few surprise pumpkins and more.

I am excited for this program to further my knowledge and develop new skills that will provide for a better harvest next season. I look forward to sharing what I learn with others who are interested in gardening and food independence for themselves and their families.

Follow the Marais des Cygnes EMGs on Facebook at www.facebook.com/mdcemg
New EMGs-to-Be and Mentors Visit Lenora’s Garden

PHOTOS BY JAN THOMPSON
Organic Gardening Practices

September 22, 6:30 pm, on Zoom

The term organic has been so overused, not everyone is clear about what the term actually means. Nancy will discuss the matter in-depth, so hopefully by the end of this training you will be able to share the organic concept with more confidence.

Nancy Chapman: Growing up in Southern California raised by Midwestern parents, Nancy learned early that you can blend a modern lifestyle the natural way, by respecting Mother Nature. Riding in the car every summer visiting family from Los Angeles to South Dakota and Omaha, Nancy had seen just about every National Park and historical marker along the way. Those early years really shaped Nancy’s gardening philosophy.

Nancy has been a part of the EMG family since 2007 and loves every minute. Her own gardening activities bring back fond memories of seeing her father around the house with his vast collection of houseplants and tending his vegetable and fruit garden in the yard. From what she learned and experienced, Nancy came to respect the importance of healthy soil in order to have success in the garden. “No matter what you are growing, if you make the roots happy, the top will turn out just fine.” Nancy says that combining that with planting the Right Plant for the Right Site, it’s the recipe for success!

Lenora Larson’s August 25th presentation “Ten Ways to Kill Your Plants” was well-attended (socially-distanced) and delightful, as always.