



Fall has come on fast and, at nearly every turn, things are changing. In the Gardens, the color is draining from the coleus, but the grasses are spectacular with a sheen that will make you squint when the sun hits them. The zinnias and dahlias offer pops of color in a background that gets more neutral every day. Come and see the beauty of this changing landscape and check out all the updates financed by donations from the 2020 Upgrade capital campaign. Hint: The waterfall has been completely overhauled and it is stunning. Plan your visit to Central Gardens before the gates close October 31st!

*A garden is always a series of losses  
set against a few triumphs,  
like life itself. – May Sarton*

## OCTOBER FEATURED VOLUNTEERS: GATEKEEPERS

Every organization has its unsung heroes, the people who work behind the scenes, the ones that are largely invisible, whose efforts go unnoticed. For Central Gardens, those heroes are gatekeepers Alice Blomstrom, Harold and Elaine Fratzke, Alice Hanley, and Kirk Kraft, whose prescribed regimen offers little flexibility but whose service is essential for the preservation of the Gardens and the fulfillment of its mission.

The gatekeepers job requires a daily commitment to either open the gates at dawn or to close them at dusk, times most people don't want to leave their homes. Their service ensures that all is in order at the beginning of each and every day, seven days a week, May through October, and at the end of each day as well.

Alice Hanley shared her thoughts about being an early morning gatekeeper for the last six years:

*"I've enjoyed the gardens since the beginning, and know how dependent any non-profit organization is on volunteers. Opening the garden gates is how I'm able to help in a small way. It's so peaceful in the early hours. I'm not a gardener, but I am an early riser, so it made sense. It makes me feel special to be the first person to greet the day at Central Gardens. And this year, I've made friends with our local Clear Lake foxes, that I often see in the morning."*

Alice is pictured above with Harold and Elaine at the Volunteer Appreciation event last month. Alice, Harold, Elaine, Alice B., and Kirk, we are grateful for all you do for the Gardens! Thank you so very much!



## TIPS FROM THE GARDENS: SEED SAVING

Isn't it fascinating that one tiny seed holds all the genetic material of a plant that's just waiting to be? Seed saving is a way to preserve a plant that has desired qualities such as the beauty of it or the taste, its resistance to disease, or the time it takes to bloom. No matter the reason, seed saving engages us in the rich cycle of life.

A male plant produces pollen which is carried to a female plant by the wind or by a pollinator. Some plants have both male and female parts and are often called true flowers as they self-pollinate. In both instances the pollen makes its way inside the female plant, where it connects with the ovaries and produces seeds.

Some plants are easier to save seed from than others.

If the plant is open pollinated the offspring will be a true type with the same look and taste as the plant from which it came. However, if the plant is a hybrid, this is not the case, so while it's possible to save these seeds, it will not be a true type and the results will vary.

Seeds mature in different ways in different places for different crops, and the ideal time and method for gathering seeds varies. Bean seeds are a great crop for beginner seed savers as they ripen in the pod. Select the pod after it has dried, open it up and collect the seeds. Then let them dry on a paper towel for a week



or so and package them in an envelope or a small glass container and be sure to label it. Zinnias, marigolds, and poppies are a few flowers for which seed saving is also easy. No matter how the seeds are collected, ensure they are dry and hard before storing them in a cool, dry location.

Some benefits of seed saving include preserving heirloom varieties, encouraging genetic diversity, and saving money. According to Regeneration International, age-old heirloom varieties are disappearing at an alarming rate and 90% of the crop varieties grown 100 years ago are already gone.

For those interested in digging in a little deeper, check out Gardening is Important, but Seed Saving is Crucial at <https://civileats.com/2020/04/21/gardening-is-important-but-seed-saving-is-crucial/>. Also, be sure to check out the resources from Seed Savers on our website at <https://centralgardensnorthiowa.com/preservation-celebration/>. Get saving and have fun!

*And for information about which plants to over-winter and which to discard, check out this article in The New York Times <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/16/realestate/fall-gardening-indoor-plants.html?smid=em-share>*

## MEMBERSHIPS: THE LIFEBLOOD OF CENTRAL GARDENS



*It is the mission of Central Gardens of North Iowa, Inc. to provide a public, intergenerational garden environment that is welcoming, beautiful, calm, educational, recreational, and fun.*

Central Gardens and its patronage have evolved over the past twenty years. From the visionaries who donated to the Gardens even before plans were developed, to the people who donated to make the Gardens more beautiful, educational, and recreational, to a third group of donors whose gifts ensured the future of Central Gardens,

each has evolved into present day visionaries, expanders, and garden keepers that sustain it and keep it growing.

While Central Gardens relies on grants, sponsorships, and other donations to support programs and events, it is memberships that support operations that underlay it all. Without memberships, the ability to provide the infrastructure and support for forty plus free programs and events that are offered each year are in jeopardy. In its simplest term, membership is the lifeblood of Central Gardens.

Please support the mission of Central Gardens by becoming a member today. Individual memberships start as low as \$50 and corporate memberships start at \$250. **And if you join now, your membership will not expire until December 31, 2021!** Log on to <https://centralgardensnorthiowa.com/member.../become-a-member/> for more information.

*Thank you to all of our current members, including corporate members Bonnie Hall Associates, CL Tel, Don's Body Shop, Farmers State Bank, First Gabrielson Agency, Hearing Associates, PC, Hosmer's Toyota, Images Photography, Iowa Farm Girl Enterprises, Lake Auto, Lake Liquors, Larson's Mercantile, Metalcraft, North Iowa Credit Union, North Iowa Orthodontics, Sail Inn, Schupick & Associates, PC, Spenser Rahm with Edward Jones Investments, and The Basic Birder. We appreciate your support!*



## VIRTUAL PRESERVATION CELEBRATION

We are grateful and so appreciative of Marissa Fichter, a devoted volunteer who took Central Gardens' 2020 Preservation Celebration entirely online this year. The two-day virtual event on September 19 and 20 supported the momentum of last year, gained an audience, and provided a bridge to next year when we hope to offer both live and online opportunities. Check out all the details of cultural, environmental, and food preservation on our website at <https://centralgardensnorthiowa.com/preservation-celebration/>. Great work Marissa!



*Fifteen wood benches have been replaced around the Gardens with all-weather steel benches and are available on a first come first serve basis for \$200. Contact us at [info@centralgardensnorthiowa.com](mailto:info@centralgardensnorthiowa.com) to arrange pick up of a beautiful old bench for your own garden!*

## ESTABLISH YOUR LEGACY AT THE GARDENS

According to the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa (CFNEI), a benefit of a charitable bequest is that it enables you to further the work of the cause(s) you care about long after you are gone. Supporting Central Gardens through a planned gift, life insurance, or a retirement asset like an IRA/401(k)/403(b) account means your legacy will live on forever.

Bequests can be made to support operating costs, educational programs, events that are offered free of charge, and any specific area the donor wishes. Additionally, by directing your bequest to Central Gardens through the Community Foundation, the full value of your gift is available to create an endowed fund to support the Gardens in perpetuity.

For more information about leaving your legacy at Central Gardens contact us at [info@centralgardensnorthiowa.com](mailto:info@centralgardensnorthiowa.com), the Community Foundation at 319-287-9106 or [info@cfneia.org](mailto:info@cfneia.org), or your wealth advisor.



## APPRECIATION FOR OUR VOLUNTEERS



Sixty-two volunteers and families attended the Volunteer Appreciation event on a beautiful, sun-drenched day September 13. Our heartfelt thanks to Lake Liquors, Michael's Cookies and Cookies, etc. for their donations of wine, beer, frozen cookie dough, and ice cream bars that made the event special! We are grateful!



Central Gardens of North Iowa  
P.O. Box 735  
Clear Lake, IA 50428

**Address Service Requested**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2020, DUSK**, *gates close for the season*

**SATURDAY, MAY 1, 2021** *Opening Day*

**FRIDAYS, JUNE 4 – AUGUST 27, 9 AM – 11 AM** *Fresh on Fridays Bouquets*

**FRIDAYS, JUNE 4 – AUGUST 27, 9 AM – 11 AM** *BEE Happy Discovery Garden*

**SATURDAYS JULY 10 – JULY 31 8:30 AM – 9:30 AM** *Movement Saturdays*

**SUNDAYS, JULY 25 – SEPTEMBER 12, 5 PM – 6 PM** *Picnics and Performances*

*For information on these and other events and activities at Central Gardens, follow us on Facebook or visit our website at <https://www.centralgardensnorthiowa.com>. And look for our entry in the Harvest Festival Decorating Contest (aka light pole by Central Gardens) on the 400 block of Main Street October 1st through 31st and vote for us with the letter T! Remember, a vote for Central Gardens is a vote for good! Vote T today!*