

September 2020



# What's Growing On!

at Central Gardens of North Iowa

## CENTRAL GARDENS ANNOUNCES SUCCESSFUL CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

The Central Gardens Board of Directors is pleased to announce the completion of a successful capital campaign that was launched in 2019 in anticipation of the Garden's 20th anniversary in 2020. Originally the campaign set a goal to raise \$220,000 to fund twelve upgrades to the grounds, all slated for completion by the end of the 2020 season.

"Thenorthlowacomunity'sresponsehasbeenoverwhelming, and we are pleased to announce that the total amount raised was nearly \$350,000," indicated board treasurer Ann Grochala. "What's truly exciting is not only surpassing our goal as we did, but also being able to contribute half of all monies raised to our permanent endowment, as per board policy, ensuring Central Gardens' existence in perpetuity."

Work on many of the twelve projects has already been completed or is in process. "We've already added a significant number of trees and shrubs to the 8th street side of the property, all designed to create a significant sound barrier between the Gardens and the street," indicated Bob Rennebohm, Central Gardens board member and registered Landscape Architect who drew up plans pro bono for the Upgrade effort. "The fountain at the main entrance has been remodeled, there are new welcome banners hanging from four lampposts on 8th street, the Ceremonial Lawn has had new irrigation and drainage systems installed, new finials have been mounted on the pillars at the south gate, and a new arch and a sliding gate feature at the south entrance will soon be added," Rennebohm noted.

Other projects include the addition of a sign at the northwest corner of the property, new lighting at the south corner, on the Nature Education Pavilion and throughout the grounds, ground drainage corrections at the Mother Earth Workshop, development of a plant identification system, and enhancements to the water feature at the top of the stream adjacent to the Ceremonial Lawn.

Because the original goal was surpassed, other projects previously relegated to the wish list can now be completed. Two of the major ones are relocating the mulch pit to the east side of the activity lawn and adding a new garden and seating area just south of the cutting garden.



*Do all the good you can,  
By all the means you can,  
In all the ways you can,  
In all the places you can,  
At all the times you can,  
To all the people you can,  
As long as ever you can.*

— John Wesley

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, a formal community celebration has been delayed until 2021 when all of the improvements will be on display. A listing of all donors will appear in the Mirror-Reporter and the 2020 Central Gardens Annual Report.

The board wishes to thank honorary co-chairs Paul Barnds and Shawn Sabin, Gary and Diane Laabs, and Corine Hadley for their guidance, generosity, and fund-raising efforts. Thanks also goes to John Severtson and Kirby Schmidt, community fund-raisers.

"This successful campaign will ensure that Central Gardens of North Iowa will continue to be a premier destination and community asset for the next twenty years," commented board vice-president Becke Dorenbush. "We are so grateful to all the businesses, individuals, foundations, trusts, and public entities that supported our efforts. In spite of these uncertain times, north lowans have recognized what an important role Central Gardens plays in providing a place of respite and beauty for so many."

*When we sow a seed, we plant  
a narrative of future possibility.*

— Sue Stuart-Smith

## SEPTEMBER FEATURED VOLUNTEER: KAYLA MYERS



What is now 20 years of volunteer involvement at Central Gardens started when board member Barb Nicholas sought out Kayla Myers, early on in the development of the Gardens. Kayla was tapped not only for her experience as a florist and in horticulture but also for her passion for gardening and design. Year after year, the opportunity to create beauty, while also protecting a green space for the future, kept calling Kayla back.

The community's ongoing support and growing involvement at Central Gardens was a major motivation. Fresh on Fridays is one of the developments of which Kayla is most proud. Cutting back flowers for the health of the Gardens evolved into leaving fresh bouquets for people to take and enjoy in the days ahead. When individuals started leaving money for the bouquets the concept of Fresh on Fridays was born. It has grown to become a sustaining fundraiser for the Gardens, as well as an opportunity to connect with guests.

Now a member of the design committee, Kayla is reminded that the key to volunteering is keeping true to your interests while branching out to try new things. She hopes that her continued volunteer work at Central Gardens will help ensure it exists, for old and new friends, as the joyful place that has always offered her grounding when life has been overwhelming.

## SAVE THE DATE! VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 13

Central Gardens truly reflects its many volunteers whose care and nurturance pours over the grounds every day. Over one hundred volunteers have given countless hours this season leveling hardscape, pruning, planting, deadheading, watering, mowing, taking care of the garbage, cutting flowers, arranging flowers, closing and opening the gates each day, watering, making repairs, fixing fountains, digging plants for the plant sale, fundraising for the garden party, contacting vendors, getting the mail and generating communications, watering, providing guidance for the HUGS team, painting donation boxes, marketing, organizing records, leading projects, ensuring the Gardens presence on social media

## 2020 PRESERVATION CELEBRATION SEPT. 18 - 20

Central Gardens' Preservation Celebration will be a virtual opportunity this year and you're invited to join us on Facebook to learn about and to celebrate the promise of preservation. The focus of this three-day celebration, scheduled Friday, September 18 through Sunday, September 20 is on three basic areas of preservation: cultural, environmental, and food. Friday will focus on cultural preservation, Saturday on environmental, and Sunday on methods and benefits of food preservation. We hope to provide new information to viewers and to connect viewers to local groups and individuals pursuing the wonderful work of preservation. The details of this celebration continue to come together, so stay connected to Central Gardens on Facebook to follow updates on this and other upcoming events.

## MEMBERS: SUPPORTING THE MISSION OF CENTRAL GARDENS

We are grateful for the generous support for Central Gardens this year from our 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, Larson's Mercantile, North Iowa Credit Union, North Iowa Orthodontics, Sail Inn, Schupick & Associates, PC, Spenser Rahm with Edward Jones Investments, and The Basic Birder.

Please support the mission of Central Gardens by becoming a member today. Individual and corporate memberships are available year-round and run January 1 through December 31.

and, you may have guessed, watering. As a small token of appreciation, Central Gardens will host a Volunteer Appreciation event Sunday September 13 from 4 PM to 6 PM to honor these individuals.

While volunteers are diverse, they have many characteristics in common. They have a fearless approach, infinite patience, they think creatively, they're eager to take initiative, they stay humble about their work, and they're driven by passion. We are blessed to have so many amazing volunteers. They have been the backbone of Central Gardens for twenty years! If you're interested in finding your spot to volunteer at Central Gardens, contact us today at [info@centralgardensnorthiowa.com](mailto:info@centralgardensnorthiowa.com).

*I have found that among its' other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver. – Maya Angelou*



# THE EVOLUTION OF FRESH ON FRIDAY: A Short Story

Fresh on Friday began as a way to share the beauty of the Gardens while encouraging it to produce more by making gorgeous fresh bouquets through targeted cutting and design. Bouquets have remained a cornerstone of Friday mornings, but it has grown and evolved to create a community space where all can learn from the Gardens and from each other, celebrate the beauty and bounty of the Gardens together, and to savor life.



We aspire to keep it fresh so you may have noticed a few changes over the last twelve years. "Friday Flowers" was its birth name and in 2009 and 2010 a limited number of bouquets was offered from a garden cart set up near the fountain from 9 AM – 10 AM. In 2011, a fresh food element was added and with that a name change to Fresh on Friday. A small, hidden cutting garden was added in the Alumni Garden to help provide additional flowers for a growing number of followers.

The year 2012 brought many changes including serving refreshments on the Nature Education Pavilion terrace and bouquets being arranged and sold from Mother Earth's Workshop. Hours were expanded, and a second cutting garden was planted outside the Workshop. Special activities were added to enhance the educational component and to strengthen community involvement.

Do you remember Super Fridays, Take Time at Ten and Friday's Find in 2014 and 2015? During this time, in addition to bouquet sales, various subjects were presented on things such as worm composting, upcycling, herbs, and bee keeping. While there were a few kids' activities, it wasn't until The BEE Happy Garden was rooted in 2015, and raised beds added in 2016, that a focus on youth and gardening education really took off.

New this year was Team Harvest-Unite-Gather-Share (HUGS), a component of the Growing Green Gardeners program, made up of youth in grades six and up. They met on Friday mornings to help tend the BEE Happy Garden, learn about gardening and nutrition, and to sell fresh produce. Drip irrigation was added to the cutting garden this year, reducing the need to water. Unfortunately, the pandemic necessitated a decision to eliminate refreshments on the patio and our kids' garden activities this year. We look forward to a bringing them back next year though!

## WORTH COUNTY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY GRANT

Our gratitude goes to the Worth County Development Authority for awarding Central Gardens \$3,110 to improve accessibility for guests. This grant allowed us to purchase a wheelchair, two walkers and an automatic door opener kit for the north entrance of the Nature Education Pavilion. We're also grateful to the City of Clear Lake for adding railings at the northeast corner of the property, enhancing the safety and access for our guests. Thank you, WCDA and City of Clear Lake!



## DONATE A BENCH TO THE GARDENS



Central Gardens has a new "Donate a Bench program" and opportunity to support replacement of fourteen existing wood benches with all-weather steel benches. The benches have been ordered from SiteScapes Manufacturing in Lincoln, Nebraska and will be delivered by mid-September.

A donation of \$1,000.00 before October 1, 2020, (\$1,200.00 thereafter), entitles you to sponsor one of the new benches, select the location of your donated bench (on a first come, first serve basis) and have affixed a customized plaque on the donated bench identifying the donor(s) and/or memorial as desired. Contact us at [info@centralgardensnorthiowa.com](mailto:info@centralgardensnorthiowa.com) to order today!



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

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

**FRIDAY, SEPT. 4, 9 AM – 11 AM** *Fresh on Friday bouquets & vegetable sales*

**SUNDAY, SEPT. 6, 5 PM – 6 PM** *Picnics & Performances (Juni West & Brent Estlund)*

**SUNDAY, SEPT. 13, 4 PM – 6 PM** *Volunteer Appreciation*

**SUNDAY, SEPT. 13, 5 PM – 6 PM** *Picnics & Performances – Planet Passengers*

**SUNDAY, SEPT. 18 - 20** - *Preservation Celebration (Virtual Event)*

*Follow us on Facebook for details about these and  
other activities happening at Central Gardens!*

