2014 Garden Tour
By Shirley Matheis

Please make plans to join us for the 2014 Garden Tour on June 24, 4-8pm and June 25, 9am-1pm. Tickets are $15 per person or 2 for $25. Tickets are available at the Sioux Center Chamber office, June 23 & 24, from 8:30am to 5pm and June 25 from 8:30am to 12pm. Tickets are also available at each garden site both days.

Jay & Val Brink, 4110 Hickory Ave

For 25 years the Brinks have been making improvements to their property, doing all the work themselves. They began their biggest project, the paver patio and sunken fire pit, about six years ago. Val has always loved gardening—flowers are her favorites—so she thoroughly enjoyed adding the plants and flowers around the new hardscape.

The Brinks, like every gardener, know that they are never really finished. They collect rain water from the gutters into an old underground cistern and also use a sump pump to water the flowers. From scraps, leaves, and grass clippings, they make their own compost for use in all the pots and to top off the gardens. Val expects to continue for many years working with her flowers and the vegetable garden. The Brinks marvel at the beauty the Lord allows them to enjoy every spring as the earth springs back to life.

Ron & Lu Ann Van Den Berg, 1472 3rd Ave SE

The Van Den Berg garden comprises four small garden areas along the bike trail behind their house. Lu Ann started out with two raised bed vegetable gardens, one of which has been converted into a “straw bale garden” this year. The straw bales are conditioned to compost internally so plants can grow on the top. In the two small garden areas next to the raised beds, Lu Ann has planted herbs, flowers, and aronia (chokeberries) bushes. Because she loves to hunt in second hand stores for “junk” to use as flower containers, you just might spot in her garden that coffee pot you donated to Melissa’s Hope Chest or Second Chance Depot!

In case the flowers don’t grow, Lu Ann has backups—flowers she makes out of old plates and bowls from other junk-hunting forays. Lu Ann says she’s really not a very successful gardener, but she keeps trying. You can be the judge!

Marc & Sheri Geels, 1840 4th Ave SE

The first thing you may notice as you approach the Geels home are the large angular boulders incorporated into three tiers of retaining walls, with grasses, birches and evergreens scattered throughout the landscape. To the right of the timber frame entry way is a bubbling rock fountain. Around the side of the house, a flagstone and crushed granite path winds its way to the backyard.

A two-tier deck wraps around the back of the house, with a catwalk connecting two seating areas that overlook the back yard and can accommodate large groups of people. A natural stone staircase leads down to a sunken, stamped concrete fire pit area with sitting walls, columns, and large boulders in the retaining wall. This area, backed by quaking aspens and native plants, is great for smaller groups. In the evening, hidden lights softly illuminate the landscape both front and back. A garden shed that complements the landscaping is almost complete. Greenworld and Vision Builders worked together to create a beautiful outdoor living space that Marc and Sheri and their guests will enjoy for many years.

Roger & Marlys Kroll, 1501 4th Ave SE

A garden stone given to the Krolls in 2008 in memory of Rog’s mother reads “wherever a beautiful soul has been, there is a path of beautiful memories.” Deciding that stone should be placed on a beautiful path, they began to plan a rock garden. The project begun in 2009 has expanded every year since. Hundreds of hours were spent hauling stones, planting bushes, and laying pavers. The larger rocks for the retaining wall and the raised garden were picked from Marlys’ family farm near Edgerton, Minnesota. The central feature of the yard is the arbor that Rog designed and built from a picture in a lawn and garden magazine. Plants and flowers now bloom throughout the year in a variety of colors.

Landscaping is hard work, but the Krolls say that seeing the results is worth the effort; the “project” turned into a hobby. Now they enjoy walking through lawn and garden centers and finding something they haven’t seen before. They think that there is nothing better than sitting on the patio next to the garden watching a sunset on a warm summer evening. They hope you enjoy their garden.
Auditions for NISO
By Karen DeMol, General Manager

Every fall, NISO conducts auditions. The auditions are for new members and also for returning student members, who must re-audition each year. Most auditions are for strings—violin, viola, cello, bass; woodwinds, brass, and percussion are welcome to audition as well.

The auditions are held at Dordt College on the first Friday and Saturday after Labor Day—September 5 & 6 this year. You may contact the NISO office to get on the auditions list. Listening to the auditions are the Music Director, Bradley Miedema, and professional members of NISO. Auditioners should come prepared to play excerpts that demonstrate their technical and expressive skills; good choices are a fast etude or solo showing one’s technical facility and also a slow lyrical solo or etude demonstrating one’s expressive range. Auditioners also sight-read passages provided at the audition. Auditioners are contacted within a week about the outcome of the audition.

High school students auditioning for NISO may also indicate their interest in the scholarships provided by Friends of NISO, which provide an amount toward the cost of private lessons for the academic year. Application for the scholarships is made at the time of the auditions.

A Season of Symphonic Colors
By Karen DeMol, General Manager

A Season of Symphonic Colors is... well... the colorful title of the 2014-2015 Northwest Iowa Symphony Orchestra season. “Colors” in music refers to the various tone qualities of instruments—the powerful brilliancy of brass, the sweet smoothness of strings, the pungency of reed instruments, and so on. Any symphony season will be full of symphonic color, but the 2014-2015 NISO Season will be particularly colorful. Let’s take a look at the four concerts that compose this season.

The Fall Concert on Tuesday, November 18, is titled “Thunder and Lightning,” after the opening piece, a polka by Strauss. The centerpiece will be Prokofiev’s Peter and the Wolf; beloved by children of all ages, which uses different instrumental colors to represent the characters in this story; happy-go-lucky Peter is represented by light-hearted strings, the grandfather by the low bassoon, the hapless duck by the oboe, the bird by (of course) the fluttery flute, and so on. Enacting this story while the orchestra plays the story will be the Eugenspiegel Puppet Theatre, which will also appear in the Concert for Children in the afternoon, performing with puppets specifically designed for this NISO concert. Completing this program will be Beethoven’s Symphony No. 7, light and celebratory and full of dance rhythms, written, it is said, when Beethoven was in love with his “Immortal Beloved.”

The Pops Concert on January 31, 2015, will be unique in the history of NISO Pops Concerts; it will feature The Victory Belles, a vocal trio from the National World War II Museum in New Orleans paying tribute to the men and women who fought in that war. They will take us on a nostalgic journey through World War II-era musical classics, such as Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy, Don’t Sit Under the Apple Tree, Chattanooga Choo Choo, and I’ll Be Seeing You, all sung in rich, three-part harmony. NISO will also play favorite American works, including Sousa marches and patriotic works. Servicepeople will be honored at this concert.

The Spring Concert on April 7 will entirely feature music by Tchaikovsky. “I Like Tchaik” is the title of this concert, and we do! The featured “color” is that of the cello; Anthony Arrone, professor of cello at the University of Iowa, will join the orchestra for the virtuosic Variations on a Rococo Theme. Another highlight of the program is the passionate fifth symphony, full of despair, romance, and triumph, which will feature the powerful brass section of NISO. And the opener is the lilting “Waltz” from Sleeping Beauty. Yes! We like Tchaik—and we are convinced you will too.

Our Guest Concert on Saturday, April 18, features Rhythm and Brass, a dynamic ensemble of brass and percussion that has performed here before, to popular acclaim. Although we do not yet have their program in hand, we are sure that it will be big, brassy, and brilliant!