6.17.2015

The Greater Des Moines Botanical Center would not have been built if not for Polly Moore’s tenacity and determination. When the City of Des Moines was denied a federal grant to help finance the Botanical Gardens, she marched into their Denver office and demanded to know why Des Moines did not get the award. Shortly thereafter the Des Moines Botanical Center was awarded a federal grant and then Polly went to work helping to raise the $3 million dollars in private donations to be used with the federal grant. Construction began in 1977 and the Botanical Center opened in 1979. In the early 80s Polly served a 3 year term as President of the Botanical Center Board. She is currently an Honorary Director for the Botanical Gardens where she still works tirelessly raising money for the facility and its programs.

Polly is not afraid to get her hands in the dirt. In addition to planning and tending her own garden, she assisted in planning the landscape at the previous Governor’s residence at 2900 Grand and has participated on the Grounds Committee of Plymouth Church. She has been active in Des Moines Founders Garden Club since 1957 where she served as President from 1966 – 1968 and she has served on many local, regional and national committees for the Garden Club of America. She was awarded the national Garden Club of America Amy Angel Collier Montague Medal for Civic Achievement in 1985.

Polly has also served on the State Capitol Planning Commission, the Des Moines Taxpayers Association Board, the United Way of Central Iowa Campaign, and the Environmental Health Advisory Committee of the Central Iowa Health Planning Council.

Polly is always willing to share her knowledge with people like me who do not have her knowledge of plants. She is also a wonderful keeper of history for both the Des Moines Founders Garden Club and the Botanical Gardens. She is a treasure trove of information which she shares without hesitation.

We could all learn a lot from Polly’s determination – whether it’s righting a wrong or helping to make the Greater Des Moines area the best it can be.

It is my pleasure to nominate Polly Moore for the Sages over 70 award.

Allison Fleming