



The Giving Garden

Volume 4, Issue 4

October—December 2014

From the Board by Martha Grizzel

Mark Your Calendars!! The excitement is building up as we prepare for the dedication ceremony of the “Pergola and Veterans Memorial Garden”. We were given a grant for this project in May by The Home Depot Foundation and with construction by LawnMaster completed the project in September. We foresee making great use of the pergola for social functions and classes.

This project was made possible by many contributors – a quilt made by former Board member, Helen Marsee that was raffled, fundraising garage sales, pavers that were donated by a friend of the garden, cash contributions and labor by Gary Margadonna and Team Depot of The Home Depot – Carrollton store. We look forward to a great celebration and ribbon cutting at 10:00 am on Saturday, November 15th at the pergola.

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Student Volunteers . . Submitted by Lisa Ingalls

The “all gardeners” workdays began in Fall 2013 as we were preparing for the installation of a new fence and realized that so much more could be done when we all work together! As we talked through getting enough help for the big jobs, it occurred to me that we have high school students in National Honor Society that need LOTS of community hours- 60 hours a year. The Newman Smith High School (NHS) sponsors and Hebron High School were happy to add us to the list of opportunities and the relationship between us was born.

Our first workday with students was October 26, 2013 and we had 6 students work for a total of 18 hours. It worked so well, we made room for 10 students and they worked for a total of 23 hours. We took a break through December, but had all 10 spots filled for January 2014! Students continued coming once a month, helping us clean up the garden for spring planting, pulling Bermuda grass, hauling mulch, hauling compost and just giving us a hand, wherever they were asked.

This summer, we experimented using the volunteers on Saturday’s for just a few hours. Again, we had enthusiastic response! Most Saturday’s had at least 4 students, sometimes 6, ready to help with harvest and then assist with various projects. Toward the end of the summer, we realized that we were seeing some of the same students, over and over. Terri Barrett wondered if they would like to see what happens to our harvest when we take it to the church. In August, she invited four girls to join her for the Aldersgate Food Share program. They helped bag the food, and were sent out in pairs to deliver food to a couple of seniors. The girls seemed to love it.

So, we’ve just started another student opportunity by invitation only. Those who have been invited have signed up for September and October food share at the church. We will evaluate that program and see if we will continue it.

We have two more “all garden” workdays before winter sets in. We hope you will join us on the last Saturday of October and November to work as a team in our garden. As we wind down the 2014 planting season, we give thanks to our high school students, who have helped us so much!



Giving Garden Tips Submitted by Martha Grizzel
Seed-starter Pots



Because eggshells quickly biodegrade when introduced into soil in the garden, they also double as the perfect seed-starter pots. When you open your eggs to remove the contents, try to break just a small hole at the pointier end of the shell. Clean the inside of the eggshells (boiling water works well for this) and puncture a small drainage hole in the bottom of each empty shell. You can then place them back into the carton, fill each shell with moist potting soil, and add your seeds. Once the seedlings outgrow their “pots” you can transplant them shell and all directly into bigger pots or out into the garden.

Mystery Plant:

The picture below is of a seed pod opening. This plant made its first appearance in one of our community beds this spring. Can you name this plant? If not, see Page 10 for the answer.



Tired of cutting up all of those plants ?

Submitted by Willie Lane

Well we now have an alternative for those sore hands. We are now owners of an electric chipper/shredder to help take some of the burden off. This shredder is inherently safe, but there are a few safety and operational hints that you need to know.

You should wear safety glasses, which you will find in the shed, while operating the shredder. Do not operate the shredder in the rain. Never put your hand into the hopper opening.

Electrical power for the chipper/shredder comes by using two long extension cords plugged into our power outlet mounted on the outside wall of the portable near the two storage sheds. The cords are kept in the shed. The best way to use the shredder is to lift it into one of our wheelbarrows so that all of the shredded material is captured and can then be dumped into the appropriate compost bin. Operation is simple. Once it is plugged in all you need to do is turn on the power at the switch located on the back side of the unit. (see photo 1).

Once the unit is running all you need to do is feed material in through the opening at the very top of the unit. (See photo 1) It works best on more rigid stem material, so if you allow material to dry for a few days it will be easier to shred. If shredding green material you may have the best luck removing the top leafy stems prior to shredding. Most green leafy material can be placed in the compost bins without being cut up further. I have found that if you alternate stem material and then green it will work well. Part of the secret is to be patient and not try to force too much green material in. The unit comes with a black push paddle that you can use to push the green material through. If you cannot feed material in you may find that you need to open the unit to clear a blockage.

If you are going to open the unit, first turn the power off and unplug the unit. Once power is off turn the hopper locking knob (seen at the very top of photo 2) counterclockwise and open the hopper. You may then remove any objects that are clogging the blades area. Once the blockage is removed, close the hopper lid and engage the locking bolt and tighten by turning clockwise until it is completely seated. You may now resume releasing your pent up emotions.



Kale with Sausage and White Beans Recipe

Submitted by Laura Margadonna

Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes



We used curly kale for this recipe, but you could use any kale, as well as chard, turnip greens, beet greens, or collards. A splash of vinegar (sherry, red wine, cider) is a nice touch right at the end of cooking. This is formulated to be served as a side-dish, but I add extra broth and serve as a hearty soup.

Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1/2 pound bulk sweet Italian sausage or other sausage (use gluten-free sausage if cooking gluten-free)
- 1 onion, sliced thin (about 1 1/2 cup's worth of sliced onions)
- 2 large garlic cloves, sliced thin
- 1 pound kale (1 large bunch), center thick rib removed, leaves roughly chopped
- 1/2 cup chicken or vegetable stock
- 1 15-ounce can of white beans, rinsed and drained
- Salt and pepper

Method

1. Heat the olive oil in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat and add the bulk sausage; if you can't find bulk sausage, remove the casings on the links. Cook for 3-4 minutes, then add the onion slices and turn the heat to high. Cook until the edges of the onions brown, about 3-4 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for another minute.
2. Add the kale, sprinkle salt over everything, then add the chicken stock. Cover the pan, lower the heat to medium and cook for 2 minutes.
3. Uncover, mix everything well (the kale will have cooked down by now) and add the beans. Cover the pot again and lower the heat to low. Cook another 5 minutes, then turn off the heat. Let stand 5 minutes, then serve.

Fall Pest That Loves Cold Crops . . . Submitted by Laura Margadonna

When I start seeing holes in the leaves of my broccoli, collards, and kale I know it's the tiny green cabbage looper larvae (worm). They can usually be found on the underside of the damaged leaves.

Larvae are easily identified by their unique movement in which they double up or "loop" as they inch along. Also called "inchworms", cabbage looper larvae start out small but grow larger as they feed (about 1 ½ inch), and are pale green caterpillars with a pair of narrow white lines down their backs and one line along each side. Eggs are light green, dome shaped and generally found on the underside of leaves.

Life cycle

Moths emerge from overwintering pupae in mid-spring and lay their eggs on the lower surface of leaves. Eggs hatch in 3-6 days and the larvae feed for 2-4 weeks, then pupate for about 10 days in thin silky cocoons attached to stems or leaves and the new adults emerge. There are three to four generations per year in most areas.



The cabbage looper is a green caterpillar with white stripes down the back.



Cabbage loopers at various stages in their life cycle.

Host Plants

Cabbage loopers are common pests of the brassica family of plants, including cabbage, kale, collards, cauliflower, broccoli, turnips, Brussels sprout, kohlrabi, mustard, watercress and others, yet host plants are not restricted to only cold crops; other plant hosts include tomato, cucumber, potato, beet, bean, celery, lettuce, pea, parsley, spinach; flowers include carnation, and nasturtium.

Damage and Signs of Infestation

Larvae have voracious appetites making an "infestation" mean as few as 2 or 3 worms per plant. Cabbage loopers chew large, irregular holes in the leaves of host plants. A serious infestation can deprive a plant of photosynthesis owing to the absence of leaves, resulting in the death of the plant. A minor infestation will look unsightly but crops may still be edible.

Organic Control and Prevention of Cabbage Looper

- 1. Use row covers:** Growing crops under floating row covers is an excellent and essential method of preventing cabbage looper adults and other pests from laying their eggs on plants. These row covers create a barrier that allows air, light and moisture through but keep insects out.

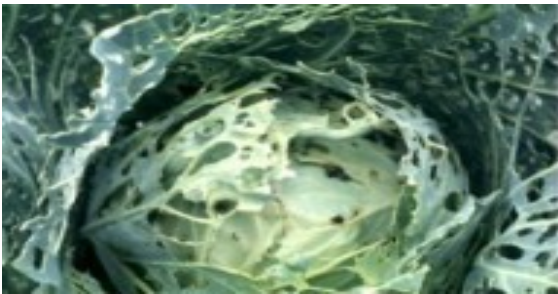
Fall Pest That Loves Cold Crops . . . Continues

2. Scout and handpick: Keep a close lookout for caterpillars, eggs, or signs of damage (chewed leaves, dark green droppings). You can easily keep small populations of cabbage loopers under control by picking them off your plants and dropping them in a bucket of soapy water.

3. Cultural practices: Cleaning up after a harvest, tilling the soil and removing dead plants and garden litter can reduce number of overwintering pests in the garden. Another way to avoid serious infestations is to stagger (earlier or later) your planting dates in a manner to avoid crop susceptibility depending on your growing season.

4. Grow healthy organic plants: Strong plants can handle some cabbage looper damage better than weak, struggling plants which is of course a no brainer. Ensuring that your crops are getting enough sunlight and water and that the soil is well-drained and rich in nutrients and organic matter will help minimize damage caused by pests.

5. Biological insecticides: Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) has been used for suppressing cabbage loopers for a long time now, and has the advantage of not disrupting beneficial insect population. It is a naturally occurring bacterium that is fatal to only caterpillars. Spinosad, a biological pesticide is another bacterium that works as a neurotoxin when ingested by many insects including cabbage looper caterpillars.



*Cabbage
looper
damage.*

6. Attract beneficial insects and natural predators: Planting flowers, such as marigolds, calendula, sunflower, daisy, alyssum, or dill can attract beneficial insects such as native parasitic wasps and trichogramma wasps that parasitize cabbage looper eggs. Birds, spiders and predatory beetles will also help in controlling these pests.

7. Red-leafed varieties of cabbage and kohlrabi are less preferred by cabbage loopers, probably because they provide insufficient camouflage.

8. Organic sprays and soaps: Homemade hot pepper spray and garlic sprays have been known to work to some effect. Organic insecticidal soaps will help kill caterpillars but must be applied extensively to achieve good control.

Meet the Gardener Karen Stone



Karen and Dean

I joined the Giving Garden to be a part of providing for the needy in our community and to learn more about organic gardening from experienced gardeners.

- Live in Carrollton, married with 3 children.
- I am self-employed. Our family-owned business is Spectaveris, Inc. We provide Audio, Video, Acoustic and Broadcast consulting and integration services for churches, Cable TV, schools and corporations.
- My favorite hobby besides gardening is visiting with close friends.
- My favorite thing about belonging to The Giving Garden - It is hard to pick a favorite. I would say, meeting great people, learning and giving.
- The three adjectives my family and friends would use to describe me? Upon reading this question, I decided to put it out there on my Facebook page to find out. The top three answers were kind, loving and devoted. However, my friends might be a little biased.
- I was inspired to become a gardener because I get to taste the fruits of my labor and the joy of sharing it with others.
- My favorite vegetables are fresh lettuce and tomatoes from the garden.
- The last movie I saw was "Frozen".
- If I could travel anywhere I would go on an African safari.
- I would like to learn how to can and preserve my harvest.



James and Annie

To learn more about organic gardening.

- Live in The Colony, married, 2 children and 3 grandchildren.
- I'm retired, prior to retirement I worked for DART as a Operator.
- My favorite hobby besides gardening is cooking and fishing.
- My favorite thing about belonging to The Giving Garden is getting to know the other people in the garden.
- The three adjectives my family and friends would use to describe me is funny, a great personality, and easy to interact with.
- I was inspired to become a gardener because I am able to eat what I grow and share it with others.
- My favorite vegetable is collard greens.
- The last movie I saw was "Seven years a slave".
- If I could travel anywhere I would go to the Holy Land.

Mystery Plant Submitted by Laura Margadonna

Mystery Plant Answer: This is a ripe seed pod of the Butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa* ass-KLE-pee-us too-ber-OH-suh) which is growing at the end of the wildflower bed. Willie and I both broadcast seeds in the bed and we are never quite sure what will come up. Sometimes they seem to stay there over winter and pop up next spring. This is a vital native wildflower in that it is the host plant for the Monarch butterfly. What that means is that the adult female Monarch will lay her eggs on Butterfly weed and the emerging caterpillars (the larval stage) will eat this plant as it grows. The pods turn from green to brown and are full of tiny, flat, brown seeds attached to a tuft of hair. This “hair” allows the seed to be blown on the wind for dissemination much like dandelion seeds.



Butterfly Weed seeds about to take flight

For more information on how to save the seeds check the link below:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FIJHlpLJio>

Building our Pergola Thanks to our volunteers



The Giving Garden Board

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About The Giving Garden of Carrollton

The Giving Garden of Carrollton is a non-profit community garden that is jointly developed by Keep Carrollton Beautiful and Aldersgate United Methodist Church (AUMC). The goal for the community garden is to provide a sustainable community garden opportunity for the citizens of Carrollton, without regard to demographic or socioeconomic status.

Christmas Party

Like to plan events or decorate, join the Giving Garden Christmas Party Planning Team. If interested, please email Angela Glover at yeshua73@hotmail.com or Laura Margadonna at lsm033@verizon.net

Helen Marsee, former Board Member advice . . .

One of the best pieces of advice that I picked up from another master gardener was to nurture purchased fall plants at home until they develop a strong enough root system to withstand the full sun and heat of the garden. If purchasing fall vegetables in 4" pots, transplant them to larger pots and keep at home for a week or two to watch over them so that they won't wilt from lack of a root system to support their needs when transplanting to the garden.

Blackberry Plots



Thanks to T.C. and Carolyn Rice for building and managing our new Berry Patch plots. We're looking forward to bountiful berry harvests in a couple of years. We appreciate your hard work.