



The Giving Garden

Volume 5, Issue 7

January - March 2016

From the Board by Laura Margadonna

We have had a wonderful year at the garden thanks to all of you with a bountiful harvest of over 2,000 pounds! We have come a long way since 2010 when we donated 500 pounds. Looking back on those first days, it's so gratifying to see how the garden has progressed and the additions like our rabbit-proof fence (don't laugh), the berry patch, the information kiosk, the pergola, rain barrels, compost bins, and the native plant bed. We recently added three signs to educate the public on who we are and what we do.

We have also been blessed to meet and work with so many wonderful people from the church and community. Some have become members and some have moved on, but all have contributed so much.

There are many benefits to belonging to the garden not the least of which are the friendships and camaraderie from working together to accomplish a goal of helping others.

Even though winter is finally here and only the cold hardy plants are producing, there are still tasks that can be done to get ready for 2016. Now is a good time to remove any dead plants and be sure to add amendments to the soil in the garden beds so planting in the spring will get a jump-start. We will be purchasing compost and bedding soil in the spring for the entire garden.

So plan on adding that and amendments such as dried molasses, green sand, worm castings, alfalfa meal, etc. before the planting season to give it time to release microbes and nutrition into the soil.

The first vegetables of the season can be planted in February, so now is a good time to order seed catalogues and start planning. Potatoes and onions and all sorts of greens can be planted in the month of February. Garden stores will begin to have seed potatoes and onion sets by late January or early February.

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Annual End of Harvest Celebration . . . by Angela Glover



Gardeners and family members were greeted with warm weather during our Annual Harvest Celebration on December 10th. The Margadonna's provided the setting at their HOA Club House with Christmas music and a beautiful tree. Martha Grizzel made her famous hot cider and everyone shared a variety of dishes including mini baked ham sandwiches and pea salad (see recipes on pages 12 and 13). After feasting on a delicious meal we had a Chinese Gift exchange (or Yankee Swap) which brought about lots of laughter and excitement. Gifts ranged from garden tools and candle holders to animal crackers. Automated garden birds were hot items and ended up being exchanged two and three times. Imagine opening your unique gift and someone takes it from you, not once but twice.

Congratulations to Laura Margadonna for winning a beautiful *Gift Bucket* valued over \$100.00 and a gift certificate for a free garden bed rental for 2016.



Benefits Blooming from Gardening by Rebecca Vaughan

2015 is officially behind us and it's time to start looking towards the possibilities that 2016 will bring. If you're like most people your top three wishes for 2016 include getting healthy, decreasing stress, and saving money. It may seem that these are lofty goals, but an everyday activity like gardening can help you make all three dreams your reality in 2016.



While the main objective of gardening is planting pretty flowers and delicious produce, the squatting, pushing, and pulling movements engage your body in resistance and body weight type exercises. Such exercises are ideal for building bone density, maintaining range of motion, developing muscle strength, and preserving manual dexterity (coordinated hand and finger movements that are usually compromised by arthritis). Additionally, studies show that participating in gardening can help you shed a few pounds and improve cardiovascular endurance. The key to realizing these benefits is consistency and maintaining a level of vigor in the activity. Hence, the Surgeon General recommends that adults should participate in 150 minutes of moderate physical activity a week for general health and physical conditioning. That translates to just 30 minutes of gardening 5 days a week or 50 minutes of gardening 3 days a week!

Gardening not only benefits the body, it also has a positive impact on mental health too. For instance, did you know that spending time in nature reduces stress, irritability, headaches, and the risk for depression? Specifically the July 2010 Harvard Health Letter stated that exposure to natural sunlight decreases incidences of seasonal affective disorder and elevates the mood by increasing levels of Vitamin D - a vitamin increasingly linking to a myriad of mental health problems when deficient. The effects of nature on mental health are so profound that the environment is now factored into urban planning, residential design, and therapeutic treatments such as ecotherapy (also known as earth-centered therapy or nature therapy).

Benefits Blooming from Gardening Cont.

In addition to the health benefits aforementioned, gardening can also help you save money. It is estimated that individuals who actively participate in community gardening save an average \$75 to \$380 a year on food costs. To look at the savings from another perspective, consider how much monetary value is generated for the amount of money put in to gardening. The National Gardening Association completed a study that found the average family with a garden spends \$70 annually to maintain it and grows about \$600 worth of produce. Why spend \$70 on one week's worth of groceries when investing the same amount on a garden will yield about eight weeks, or two months, worth of groceries?

It's clear that gardening benefits our health, and bank balance, in many important ways. However, as previously stated, the only way to take advantage of the benefits is to garden on a consistent basis with vigor. This means that you're squatting, stooping, reaching, pulling, and keeping your feet moving at a swift pace while you're in the garden. Maintain these habits through 2016 and you're bound to have a fruitful year - better health, less stress, and more money in your pockets.



Lisa Ingalls displaying *The Giving Garden of Carrollton's* new signage.



100th School Garden

[Dallas Morning News -- 100th learning garden article](#)

Real School Gardens of Dallas completed its 100th garden in the Dallas-Fort Worth area on Nov. 14 at Jerry R. Junkins Elementary School in Carrollton. With the muscle power of students, parents and volunteers from Sprouts Farmers Market, the nonprofit organization created a 7,000-square-foot learning garden in one day. The landscape features seven raised beds of vegetables and fruits plus a rain barrel, a water feature, a market space with a scale to weigh produce and a shaded seating area. Students will tend the garden and eventually taste the fruits of their labor

For most schools, the first step is to create the learning garden. **The REAL School Gardens** program unites teachers, parents, businesses and the students themselves to design a learning garden tailored to each school's unique needs. Then, in one satisfying day of service, hundreds of volunteers come together to create a beautiful place for children to learn and grow.

After the garden is built, our partner schools enter a multi-year training program to learn how to use their new teaching tool to get REAL results. Our seasoned and certified educators provide on-site one-on-one training with teachers, sharing proven tips and techniques tailored to each teacher's individual needs. Teachers also get ready-to-use lesson plans that are easy to implement and continue to receive new activities and garden materials to help them succeed. You can find a listing of different REAL School Garden [program and training products here](#). and you can tour a REAL school garden [here](#).

[Full story](#)

Building a Hoop House . . . by Maxine Allen

I think most of you know some of the benefits of building a garden hoop house but did you know how simple they are to assemble? And for a novice gardener like myself, that was great news! Let's begin with our needed supplies:

1/2" PVC pipe (10' long)	1/2" conduit clamps (straps)
5-10 spring clamps	Wood screws
Breathable garden fabric	Measuring tape w/marker
Screwdriver (preferably powered)	

All materials, except fabric can be purchased at a hardware store (Home Depot or Lowes). Fabric cover is best purchased from a garden center.

I suggest using 4-6 hoops for a 20 ft. bed. Totally your choice of how much of your bed you want to protect. Using the measuring tape mark out the location for your first conduit strap on the inside wood frame about 4"-6" from the corner of your bed. Inside is better, because the soil helps keep the pipe in place. And do the same thing on the other side of the bed (keep the measurements the same so the hoops are even). Space the remaining straps 2.5 to 3 ft. apart making sure they line up with the other side. Now use your wood screws and screw the straps into the wood frame. The straps can be about 2" down from the top of the wood. With all of your straps in place on both sides of your bed, take a PVC pipe and push in through a set of coordinating straps and down into the soil. Install the rest of the pipes, and adjust as needed to keep the heights the same.

And now it's time to cover the hoops with your fabric and use your spring clamps to secure the fabric in place. I suggest a clamp in the center on top, clamping down the four corners and folding and/or bunching the openings with a clamp. And for added protection, blocks can be placed around the outside of your bed to keep your fabric in place.

Options: For added stability, rebar can be pushed into the dirt and your PVC pipe can slide down over it. I think I would still use a strap around the pipe in order to keep the wind from possibly shifting the hoop. A pipe can be placed on top of the hoops and attached with plastic zip ties to give added support to the structure as well as a place for clamping fabric. I would love to assist anyone who is interested in building their own hoop house.

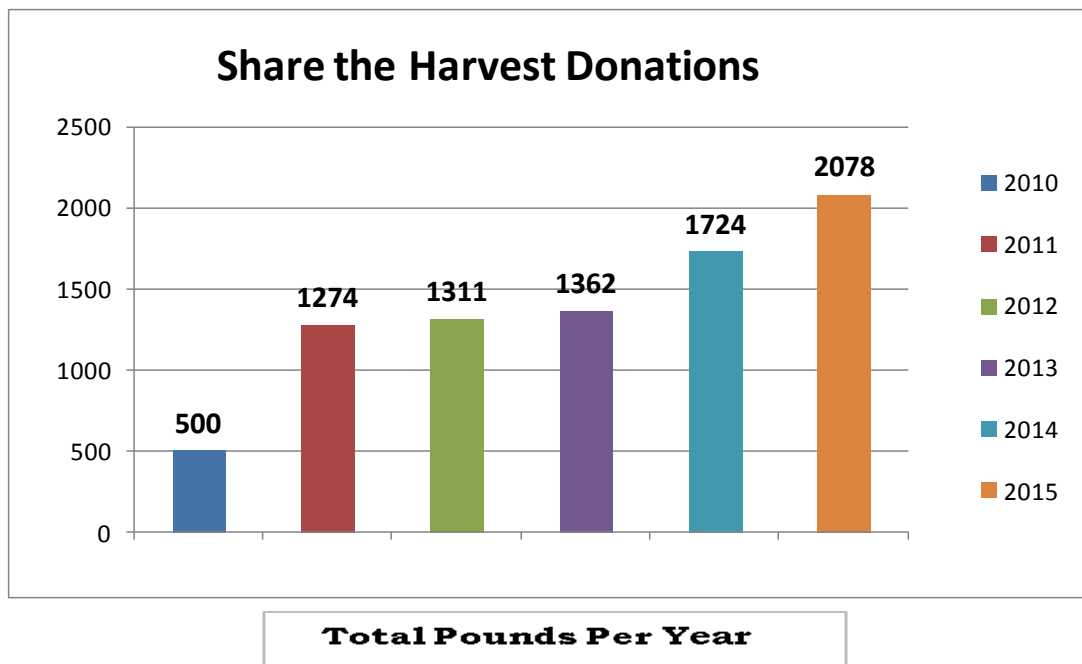
Recognitions



Willie Lane recognized Gary and Laura Margadonna for their endless volunteer hours. Ensuring the operation of the garden runs smoothly from organizing activities, repairing the front and back gates, building rain barrel system, designing nature garden and herb beds as well as providing garden advice to the novice.



Willie Lane acknowledged Lisa Ingalls who has been instrumental in coordinating student volunteers for the Garden. The students helped with the annual garage sale, cleaning out beds, turning compost, harvesting and delivery. We really appreciate our energetic student volunteers.



The Giving Garden donated 492 pounds to Aldersgate UMC Food Share program and 1,586 pounds to Christian Community Action for a total of 2078 pounds in 2015.



Giving Garden Calendar

Saturday, March 19, 2016

The Giving Garden will be partnering with Lewisville Independent School District “Big Event” – Volunteer to Improve Your Community Day.

Annual Spring Orientation

will be held towards the end of February

Giving Garden Application & Agreement are available for completion. Go to www.givinggardenofcarrollton.org

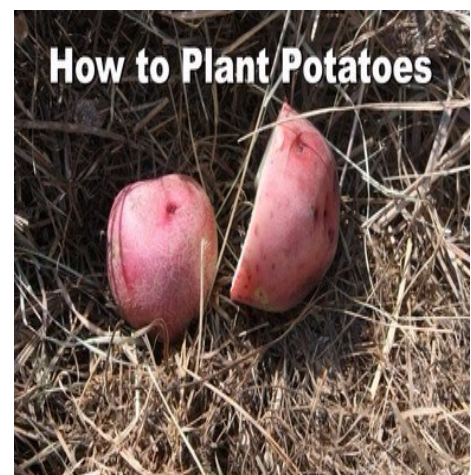
Upcoming Educational Opportunities

Marshall Grain in Grapevine - located at 3525 William D. Tate, Colleyville. For hours of location check out their website at: <http://www.marshallgrain.com/contactus.asp>

January Events Get to the Roots

Saturday, January 9

Learn “**How to Grow Onions and Potatoes.**” We’ll present our step-by-step guide on how to grow two of our favorite root vegetables. You’ll learn how to plant them, nurture them, and recognize when they are ready to harvest.



Looking Back in Pictures

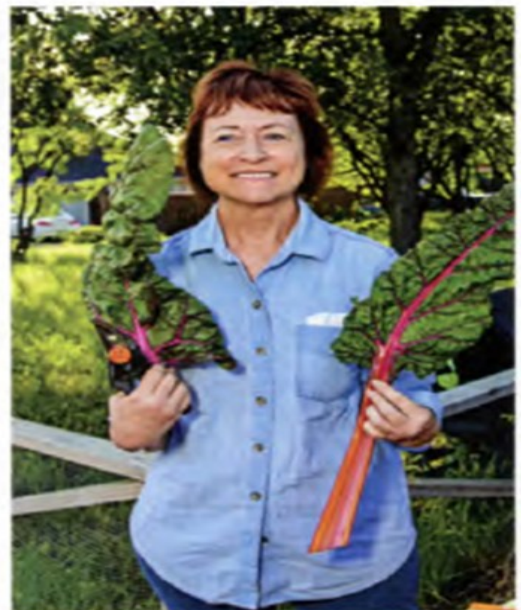
The Giving Garden was featured in Live Happy magazine's August 2015 issue.



Carrollton, Texas

—Photographs by Brian Coats

LEFT, FROM TOP: Lori Jago prepares rainbow chard, radishes and lettuce for harvest donation. Lori Jago and Eileen Graziano are ready to deliver their donated harvest. Martha Grizzel waters her plot with grandson Rhett Parks. BELOW: Laura Margadonna shows off some spectacular samples of chard from the community garden.



A look at the Giving Garden harvest delivery of eggplants to Christian Community Action (CCA) Food Pantry in November.

Hard to believe it has been over a year since we completed the pergola that was dedicated to our veterans. We certainly have enjoyed having its shade this summer.

missions



the giving garden

The Giving Garden dedicated its new Veterans Memorial Garden and Pergola November 15th. Despite the chilly weather, a large crowd was in attendance, including representatives from Boy Scout Troop #753, Carrollton veterans, Home Depot, gardeners, Christian Community Action, Keep Carrollton Beautiful, our city council, and Aldersgate UMC. Afterwards, a reception was held in the narthex and cake was enjoyed by all! Since its inception in 2009, The Giving Garden has donated over 5,500 lbs. of fresh, organic produce to Christian Community Action and Aldersgate's Food Share programs. For more information about the garden, visit our website: www.givinggardenofcarrollton.org



Mini Bake Ham Sandwiches . . . Sponsored by Walmart

Total Time:

Prep: 30 min

Cook: 20 min



Ingredients

- 1 pound deli ham slices (shaved)
- 1 pound Swiss cheese thinly sliced
- 1 stick butter
- 1 1/2 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 1/2 teaspoon dried minced onion
- 1 12 pack King's Hawaiian Original Hawaiian sweet rolls

Directions

Melt butter and mix in mustard, sauce and onion.

Cut the entire pack of rolls in half, horizontally (keeping all top and bottom halves separately in tact).

In a 9x13-inch pan, place bottom half of rolls and cover with ham and cheese.

Cover ham and cheese stacks with top half of rolls.

Drizzle butter mixture over top of rolls, making sure onion is evenly distributed. Refrigerate over night.

Bake uncovered at 350°F for 15-20 minutes and, once finished, separate for serving. This recipe was shared by King's Hawaiian.

English Pea Salad with Cheddar by James Pittman



Ingredients

- 1 can baby English peas, drained (use the Lesueur brand)
- 1 can show peg corn
- 1/4 cup onions
- 1/4 cup bell pepper
- 1/4 cup celery
- 1/2 fresh tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon of Rosemary
- 1/2 cup sweet pickle relish
- 2 hard-cooked eggs, chopped
- 2 ounces sharp cheddar cheese cubes
- 1/2 cup sharp shredded cheese
- 2/3 cup of mayonnaise

Directions

Mix all ingredients together in a bowl until they are coated in mayonnaise; season with salt and pepper. You can customize the salad by adding other vegetables also.

Annual Garage Sale

The Giving Garden had a successful garage sale in October, raising over \$1,600.00. It was a beautiful day and thanks to numerous donations we offered a variety of items this year including furniture, clothing, kitchenware, picture gallery, décor etc. A special thanks to our volunteers, Martha Grizzel's company, Allegiance Capital for donating office pictures and everyone who brought their trucks and made runs to pick up donations or transported items from the portables to the parking lot.



Turk's Cap Dirt Doctor



Shade to Full

Ht.: 5'-8' Spread: 5'-8'
Spacing: 3'-5'

http://www.dirtdoctor.com/garden/Turks-Cap_vq542.htm



Native plants that provide long lasting color are important in my garden and I recommend you try some. One of the best shrubs or woody perennials that is particularly effective in the gardens of north Texas is Turk's Cap.

Turk's Cap (*Malvaviscus arboreus*) is a very durable plant, requires little care, and is colorful all summer long with red fez-like flowers followed by red fruit. The fruit is red and pulpy and is very effective and tasty in herb teas. It can also be used to grow additional plants from seed. This is a striking plant that can be grown in sun and shade. It does lose its leaves and go bare in the winter but returns dependable every spring. You can cut it back to the ground or leave the bare stems showing. A white variety is available, is not as showy and not as durable.

HABIT: Red, fez-like flowers in summer. Red fruit resembling rose hips in the late summer. (see picture top right) Bushy, shrub-like growth with many stems from the ground. Considered it a perennial, but it looks more like a shrub.

CULTURE: Can be grown easily from seed, which can be started indoors in the winter or outdoors after the last frost. No treatment is needed.

USES: Flowers are excellent for attracting hummingbirds and butterflies. Flowers and fruit make a good herb tea. The fruit is full of pulp and seed; cooked down, it produces a good jelly or syrup. The flavor of the raw fruit resembles that of watermelon or apple. One of the best flowering plants for shady areas. Attracts pollinators like bumblebees and hummingbirds.

PROBLEMS: Various leaf-chewing insects like caterpillars and grasshoppers but none serious if the plant is in healthy soil.



How to Make Turks Cap Tea - The Dirt Doctor
by Dirt Doctor
244 views

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KjwGxEgwxg>



Turk's Cap
by OKGardeningClassics
752 views

Another look at Turk's Cap

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTfaUWeKWwo>

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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.



Happy New Year from the Board

(Left to Right) Martha Grizzel, Cindy Baxley, Terri Barrett, Angela Glover, Laura Magadonna, Doug Forbes, Willie Lane.

