

The Giving Garden

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July - September 2016

From the Board by Martha Grizzel

When you think of pollinators in the garden you may first think of honey bees. You've probably heard of the terrible plight of the honey bees dying from pesticide use. The Department of Agriculture has reported that 44% of honey bee colonies died in the past year alone. If we lose all the bees, we could lose one-third of our food supply including more than 140 types of fruits and vegetables that depend on the bees for pollination. Bee pollinators are directly responsible for one out of every three bites of food that we consume. Globally, 87 of the leading 115 food crops are dependent on insect pollinators. Although our Giving Garden is totally organic, pesticides used all around us – in the neighborhoods and in the Kroger lawn – can affect the bees coming to the garden.

The Giving Garden is making a conscious effort to attract and sustain bees in the garden. We have gotten involved with the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge launched by The National Pollinator Garden Network, an unprecedented collaboration of national, regional, conservation and gardening groups to support the President's Executive Strategy to "Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators." Beds number 7 and 8 are filled with flowering herbs and plants to attract the bees and even has landing pads for butterflies. You may have noticed swarms of bees in these beds that seem to be very docile. These are more than likely mason bees, a native bee to the United States which are solitary and do not produce honey. They will only sting if squeezed or stepped on. They make their homes in narrow holes or tubes. You can find a mason bee house behind the asparagus in Laura Margadonna's bed number 14. Laura purchased this house for \$20 and if you would like one for your home you can find them at https://www.facebook.com/The-Dapper-Bee-998696566855108/

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The life cycle of the mason bee is fascinating and can be viewed in this excellent British video. https://vimeo.com/129712987 It is long but well worth watching. The mother mason bee first emerges from her cocoon in the spring, the males come out first and remain near the nest waiting for the female. When she emerges they mate and then the male dies and the female begins provisioning the nest. The female visits flowers to gather pollen and nectar and makes numerous trips to complete the provisioning mass. Once completed, she backs into the tube hole and lays an egg on top of the mass. She then makes a mud partition and begins the next cell. This continues until she has filled the tube cavity. Interestingly, female eggs are laid in the back of the nest and male eggs in the front. When finished with a nest, she plugs the entrance to the tube. The larvae feed on the provisioning mass until the eggs are ready to hatch and the whole cycle is repeated.

In an effort to be good stewards of the air we breathe, water we drink, and the creatures that play a role in the sustainability of our environment, we can all work together to save the pollinators.

The Fall Vegetable Garden

By Stephen A. Seewoester Dallas County Master Gardener



Summer has descended upon North Texas and the spring garden is showing some success (peppers, squash, cucumbers) and some new challenges with our intense heat (the tomatoes won't set). Maybe you haven't thought about a fall garden, but now is a good time to start preparation and planting.

If you can get past the heat, an autumn garden provides many second chance opportunities for your summer favorites. First, you are able to extend the production into another growing season. Second, once established a fall garden is a joy to manage as it matures and produces during those wonderful Indian summer days of autumn.

Also, since the days are getting shorter many vegetable crops store more sugar and have better flavor than spring grown crops. Here are some tips to help make your autumn efforts successful.

Starting Seed

August is a good time to plant seeds for your fall favorites such as broccoli, kale, cabbage and two of my favorites — bok choy and Swiss chard. It is usually more difficult to start seed during hot dry weather. It can be helpful to soak larger seed such as okra, peas and beans overnight between two damp paper towels.

Some seed will not germinate at all during hot weather and planting should be delayed until temperatures moderate such as after a cool-front. It may help to begin seeds indoors in small terrariums — I use plastic clamshells recycled from strawberry purchases. This helps keep the seeds damp until germination.

Transplants

Once the seedlings are standing tall they will need to enjoy some early morning sun and light breezes to toughen them up. Next transplant the seedlings into individual planting trays (recycled from the garden store). Although full sun is recommended for spring/summer vegetables there is one exception: the middle of our Texas summers. That is when a little shade from the afternoon sun can be essential. I place my planting trays in an area that provides

The Fall Vegetable Garden Cont.

morning sun and shade in the blazing afternoon. Note: Add a week or two to the number of days to maturity listed on seed packets. It takes longer in the fall for crops to mature because the day length is getting shorter. Also, use varieties that are relatively short maturing.

Favorite Fall Crops

Fall vegetable crops are categorized as long-term and short-term crops. Duration of these crops is dependent upon when the first killing frost occurs and the cold tolerance of the vegetables.

Plant short-term, frost-susceptible vegetables together so that they can be removed after being killed by frost. Frost-susceptible vegetables include beans, cantaloupes, corn, cucumbers, eggplants, okra, peas, peppers, Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, squash, tomatoes and watermelons.

Some crops just seem to excel when planted for fall production. Of course, an early hard frost can change things real quick. Check this Texas A&M website for suggested planting dates for North Texas.

http://dallas-tx.tamu.edu/files/2010/06/Vegetable-Planting-Guide.pdf

And enjoy the less stressful times working with your fall garden.

Blackberry Patch

Before . .

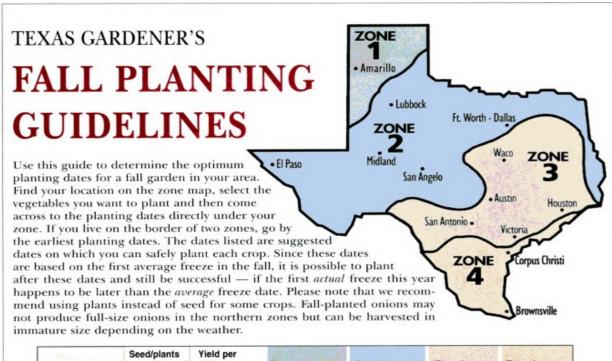




After . . .







Vegetable	Seed/plants per 25 feet	Yield per 25 feet	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4
Beans, Snap Bush	1/8 lb.	5-7 lbs. (shelled)	July 15	August 1	September 1	September 10
Beans, Lima Bush	1/8 lb.	5-7 lbs. (shelled)	July 15	July 25	August 20	September 1
Beets	1/4 oz.	15-25 lbs.	August 15	September 1	October 15	November 1
Broccoli	8-12 plants	10-15 lbs.	August 15	September 1	October 1	November 1
Brussels Sprouts	8-12 plants	15-20 lbs.	July 15	August 1	September 1	October 1
Cabbage	8-12 plants	12-20 heads	August 15	September 1	October 1	November 1
Carrots	1/8 oz.	150 carrots	July 15	August 15	November 10	November 20
Cauliflower	8-10 plants	25 lbs.	August 15	September 1	October 1	November 1
Chard, Swiss	1/2 oz.	12-20 lbs.	August 1	August 15	October 1	October 20
Collards	1/6 oz.	25-37 lbs.	August 1	August 15	October 10	October 20
Corn, Sweet	1-1 1/2 oz.	25-50 ears	July 1	August 10	August 20	September 10
Cucumber	1/8 oz.	35-40 cukes	July 15	August 1	September 1	September 10
Eggplant	1/32 oz.	25-50 eggplants	July 1	June 15	July 1	July 10
Kohlrabi	1/16 oz.	15-20 lbs.	August 15	September 1	September 10	October 1
Leaf Lettuce	1/16 oz.	12-25 lbs.	September 1	September 15	October 10	November 1
Mustard	1/16 oz.	10-25 lbs.	September 1	October 1	November 1	December 1
Onion (plant)	1 bundle	25 lbs.	not recommended	October 15 or wh	nen available (Zone	s 2, 3, 4)
Peas, Southern	1/2 lb.	25 lbs. (shelled)	June 15	July 1	August 1	August 15
Pepper	1/32 oz.	100 peppers	June 1	June 15	July 1	July 15
Potato	1 1/2-2 1/2 lbs.	38 lbs.	not recommended	August 1	September 1	October 1
Pumpkin	1/8 oz.	3-7 pumpkins	June 1	July 1	August 1	August 10
Radish	1/4 oz.	200-300 radishes	September 1	October 1	November 25	December 1
Spinach	1/4 oz.	12-25 lbs.	August 15	September 1	November 15	December 1
Squash, Summer	1/4 oz.	17-25 lbs.	August 1	August 15	September 10	October 1
Squash, Winter	1/8 oz.	25 lbs.	June 15	July 1	August 10	September 1
Tomato	7-9 plants	50-90 lbs.	July 1	July 15	July 25	July 25
Turnip	1/8 oz.	12 lbs., 350 roots	September 1	October 15	November 1	December 1

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Growing Herbs in North Texas ... By Angela Glover



Ever wonder what's the difference between an herb and a spice? According to Denton County Master Gardener, Barbara Brown herbs have leaves and are temporal, whereas spices are harvested from portions of the plant other than leaves including roots, flowers, fruits, seeds or bark. Spices are native to tropical climates and can be woody. Herbs are used fresh and spices are dried before use. Additionally, herbs can be used to brighten up landscapes, planter gardens, or even fairy gardens. For healthy plants, you must plant herbs in suitable areas with good air circulation and water drainage.

Harvesting Technique:

There are different methods of harvesting herbs. For example, herbs that have a woody stem require that you grab the stem top and pull directly down. For soft stem herbs, you harvest in the direction that the plant is growing. The younger the plant, the more oil you get out of the plant when harvesting. In addition, it's best to harvest leaves early in the morning, after the dew has dried for fresh seasonings. You can harvest up to 50% of the plant at each harvest.

Cooking Tips:

Normally, (3) times fresh herb is equivalent to (1) times dry herb. Fresh herbs should always be added when the dish is almost done. This allows your taste buds to fully enjoy the dish. Rosemary, Sage, Bay Leaves, and Thyme are exceptions to this rule. These herbs are considered strong herbs and can be used early in the cooking process. Bay Leaves should be removed before serving the dish. It is always a good idea to perform the nose test and use a light hand when adding strong herbs to a dish.

Herb Substitutes:

- Lemon verbena can be used as a lemon zest.
- Marjoram for Oregano
- Like mint, use Lemon Balm for flavoring brewed tea or lemonade.

Storing Fresh Herbs:

- 1/3 cup of oil for every 2 cups of chopped herbs. Freeze using ice cube trays or refrigerate for 2 to 6 weeks.
- Chopped herbs can also be placed in ice cube trays and covered with water for future use.
- ½ cup butter to 3 4 tablespoons of chopped herbs. Also try this with ginger, lemon, or orange zest.
- Store dried leaves in air-tight-containers or hang them in loosely tied bundles in a well-ventialted room for later use.
- Use a dehydrator when drying herbs.
- Lastly, dried herbs should be kept out of direct sunlight.

Gardening Tips . . . by Laura Margadonna

As spring progresses, ornamental annuals can get leggy. Pinch them back to encourage more compact growth. At the same time, side dress them with fertilizer and check for insect pests.



An Extra Hand - Keep an old pair of kitchen tongs in your gardening bag for picking up things you would rather not touch, like fallen, oozing tomatoes and stinging caterpillars.

Instant Sun - If your vegetable garden isn't getting enough sun, cover a board with aluminum foil and place it where it will indirectly reflect onto the sun lovers.

No Bend Pest Patrol - Glue a small mirror to the end of a stick and use it to check under leaves, for insects.

Planting Okra - As soil temperatures begin to warm, it is time to plant okra and other heat lovers such as southern peas and malabar spinach. We like to pre-sprout our okra seed by placing the seed on a plate between two paper towels. Keep the paper towels moist for a couple of days. When you notice the seed starting to break through the seed coat, it is time to plant.

Radishes for Carrots - Plant some radish seeds along with your carrots and parsnips. The radishes will sprout quickly, marking the row and loosening the soil for the slow poke carrots and parsnips to break through later.

Quick Plant Cages - Check out your local dollar store for plastic mesh buckets and baskets. They're a quick and inexpensive way to protect young plants from curious pets and hungry animals. Place them over plants and hold them in place with a brick or rock placed on top.

A Quick Test for Well-Draining Soil - Find a low spot in your yard or garden and dig a 1 ft. x 1 ft. hole, then fill the hole with water. If the water drains immediately, water and nutrients are moving too quickly for plants to access them. If the water is still pooling, check back in 30 minutes to 1 hour. If the hole has drained by then, you have well-draining soil. But if the hole still has water a day later, your soil is heavy.

Quick, Portable Compost Bin - A large tomato cage, or even a circle of chicken wire, makes a great compost bin that fits just about anywhere in your garden.. It's especially handy in the vegetable garden, where you always have things to toss in it.

Helpful Links:

http://www.gardenguides.com/organic-gardening-tips/

Tool Maintenance Tips

by Thomas Harris "The Hill Country Gardener"

Shovels: Sharpen back side (only) of shovel with portable grinder. Try to maintain the original sharpening bevel on the tool.

Coat wooden handles with boiled, linseed oil, let set 15 minutes, and then wipe off excess and allow to dry overnight.

Picks: Sharpen the flat part of the pick (if it has one) the same as the shovels; i.e., maintain original bevel on one side only. Sharpen the pointed part, too.

Any other tools with wooden handles: Apply a coat of boiled linseed oil, let set for 15 minutes, and then wipe off excess and allow to dry overnight.

Any other tool that is sharpened: Maintain the original bevel on the part to be sharpened. Do not sharpen the flat side of any blade.

A rough file could be used to do the sharpening, but an electric, portable grinder will do it much quicker.



Meet the Gardeners ... Jerry and Patricia Bunch



Their favorite thing about belonging to The Giving Garden is growing organic vegetables and sharing them with people who don't have access to them.

(Patricia not pictured)

- Live in Carrollton, TX with their cat.
- Patricia works part-time at the Timberglen Branch of the Dallas Public Library and Jerry, while retired, works in the remodeling and maintenance field. Jerry grew up on a farm and has been wanting to garden. The *Giving Garden* has given him an opportunity to watch things grow outside again.
- When Patricia first met Jerry, family and friends described him as rude, crude, and anti-social.
- Their love for fresh vegetables is what inspires them to garden.
- Favorite vegetable is jalapeno.
- The last movie they saw was "Men in Black 3".
- Favorite hobbies besides gardening is reading for Patricia and cooking for Jerry.
- If they could travel anywhere they would go to Israel.
- Both wish they knew how to tolerate people more.

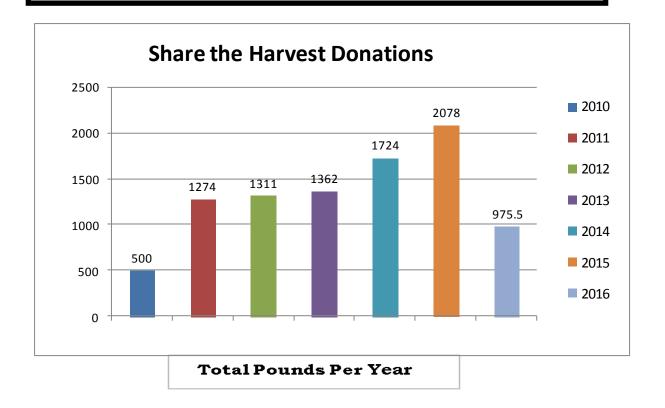
Meet the Gardeners . . Orie and Betty Achonwa



Meet mother daughter team.
Their favorite thing about
belonging to The Giving Garden
is the great community of
like-minded individuals.

- Mother and Daughter live in Irving TX.
- Orie is single and works as a Coach for United Healthcare. Betty, a widower, works for Paradise Shops.
- They joined *The Giving Garden* to have access to chemical-free produce, give to important causes, and have fun.
- The three adjectives family and friends would use to describe both are compassionate, thoughtful, and positive.
- They are inspired about gardening because of the good it does for their wellbeing and those who are recipients of the gardeners' collective effort.
- Favorite vegetable for Orie is kale and Betty loves okra.
- Favorite hobbies besides gardening is exercising and arts-n-crafts.
- Last movie they saw was "The Pursuit of Happiness".
- If they could travel anywhere they would go to Ivory Coast, Africa.
- Orie wishes she knew how to dance while her mother wants to get more things done in a day.

Harvest Update



Foods that Heal by Angela Glover

Onions - The layers of an onion are dense and packed with antioxidants and nutrients which can help prevent and heal. A 2015 study published by the British Journal of Nutrition showed that onion skin extract contains an antioxidant called quercetin which helps lower blood pressure. Onions are also packed with vitamin C. Happy eating, especially when grilling.



Carrots - Rich in vitamin A and K, carrots are colorful and tasty. According to National Institutes of Health, vitamin A helps keep your eyes healthy and may lower the risk of cancer. Additionally, vitamin K helps maintain strong bones to help reduce the risk of osteoporosis. Ask for seconds.

Eggplants - contains vitamins C, K and B6 as well as fiber, folate, potassium, manganese, phosphorus, copper, thiamin, niacin, magnesium, and pantothenic acid. The Black Magic variety contains nearly three times the amount of antioxidant phenolics than other eggplant types. Phenols are known to be one of the most powerful free radical scavengers, which fight heart disease. So let's keep harvesting those eggplants.

Upcoming Educational Opportunities

First Week

Dallas: Garden Masters, Inc., meet the **first Wednesday of each month** at North Haven Gardens, 7700 Northaven Rd., Dallas. The club hosts different speaker each month from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Bring your lunch! For more information, email Bunny Williams at bunny-williams@sbcglobal.net.

Fort Worth: The North Central Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas meets the **first Thursday of each month** at 6:30 p.m. except (January and July) in the Fort Worth Botanical Garden Building at 3220 Botanic Garden Boulevard, Fort Worth. For additional information, contact President Theresa Thomas at kayleetl@sbcglobal.net.

Second Week

Denton: The Denton County Master Gardener Association meets from 9:30 a.m. until 11 a.m. the **second Wednesday of each month.** Meetings are open to the public. For complete details, visit http://dcmga.com/.

Third Week

Denton: The Denton Organic Society, a group devoted to sharing information and educating the public regarding organic principles, meets the **third Wednesday of each month** (except July, August and December) at the Denton Senior Center, 509 N. Bell Avenue. Meetings are free and open to the public. Meetings begin at 7 p.m. and are preceded by a social at 6:30. For more information, call 940-382-8551.

Fourth Week

Fort Worth: The Organic Garden Club of Forth Worth meets at 7 p.m. on the **fourth Tuesday of each month** except July and December at the Deborah Beggs Moncrief Garden Center, 3220 Botanic Blvd., Ft. Worth. Refreshments are served. For more information, call 817-263-9322 or visit www.ogcfw.webs.com.

Dallas: The Dallas County Master Gardeners meet the **fourth Thursday of each month** at 11:30 a.m. For location and program information, visit http://www.dallascountymastergardeners.org/ or contact The Helpdesk, M-F, 8 to 4:30 214-904-3053.

Dallas: The Greater Dallas Organic Garden Club meets at 7:00 p.m. on the **fourth Thursday of each month** at the REI, 4515 LBJ Freeway, Dallas. For more information, call 214-824-2448 or visit www.gdogc.org.

Arlington: The Arlington Organic Garden Club meets from 7 p.m. until 9 p.m. on the **last Thursday of each month** (except November and December) at the Bob Duncan Center, 2800 S. Center Street, Arlington. For more information, contact David at 817-483-7746.

OKRA PATTIES submitted by Martha Grizzel



1 lb fresh okra or 1 (18 ounce) bag frozen cut okra 1/2 cup onion (chopped) 1 teaspoon salt 1/4 teaspoon pepper 1 large egg 1/2 cup water 1 teaspoon baking powder 1 pinch garlic powder (optional) 1/2 cup flour 1/2 cup cornmeal oil (for frying)

Combine cut okra, onion, salt, pepper, water and egg. Mix well. Combine flour, baking powder, cornmeal and garlic powder. Add to okra mixture, stirring well. Drop about 1/4 cup portions into about 1/2" hot oil. Fry over medium heat until well browned on both sides. Drain on paper towels.

Stuffed Banana Peppers by Park Seed Company





Ingredients:

- 16 18 large Parks Sweet Banana peppers from your garden (or any large Banana pepper)
- 16 ounces Fresh ground pork sausage (or mild or hot Italian sausage)
- 8 ounces shredded mozzarella cheese
- Using the largest peppers you have, cut off the tops and clean out seeds with a small knife.
- Using your side burner of the grill, cook sausage until lightly browned and crumbly.
- Combine sausage and cheese and stuff into peppers. You can make cheese only ones too.
- Put on grill and grill 3-5 minutes each side, until cheese melts.

More recipes - Go to http://parkseed.com/article.aspx?a=park-recipes-appetizers

Asian Sesame Cucumbers (PF Chang's Shanghai Cucumbers)

submitted by Laura Margadonna



Ingredients:

1 large Cucumber

3 tbsp Soy Sauce

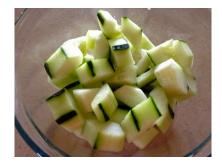
1 tsp White Vinegar (can substitute rice wine vinegar)

1/4 tsp Sesame Oil

1 tsp Sesame Seeds

Method:

Chop into bite size pieces one peeled and seeded cucumber (I leave a little of the peel for color).



Mix together the soy sauce, white vinegar and sesame oil, add to the cucumbers. Toast the sesame seeds in a hot dry pan.



Easy Blackberry Cobbler



Southern Living

Make the easiest blackberry cobbler ever using fresh <u>berries</u> plus 5 more ingredients. To make it special, top with whipped cream and a mint garnish.

Yield:

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients:

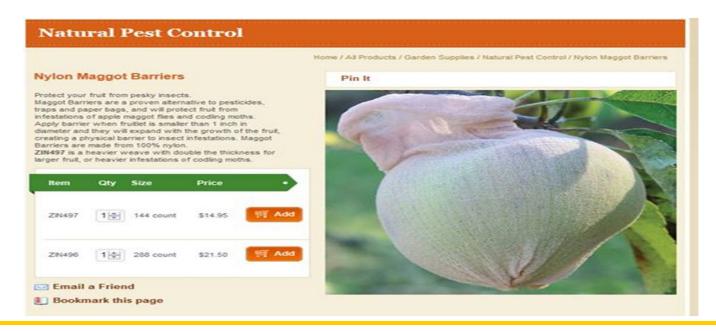
- 4 cups fresh blackberries
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 large egg
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 6 tablespoons butter, melted
- Whipped cream (optional)
- Garnish: fresh mint sprig

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 375°. Place blackberries in a lightly greased 8-inch square baking dish; sprinkle with lemon juice. Stir together egg, sugar, and flour in a medium bowl until mixture resembles coarse meal. Sprinkle over fruit. Drizzle melted butter over topping. Bake at 375° for 35 minutes or until lightly browned and bubbly. Let stand 10 minutes. Serve warm with whipped cream, if desired. Garnish with fresh mint sprig, if desired.

Protecting Tomatoes by Laura Margadonna

Territorial Seed is an interesting website. You can buy Leafcutter bees and Lacewing bugs for pest control. I read about using the nylon barrier below to protect ripe tomatoes from birds, but the writer (some magazine in the library, probably Mother Earth) said she was going to use old knee high hose. I used it for my bush tomato on the patio and the knee high fit with no problem – I just picked it almost fully ripe. Looks like they use on fruit and may be less expensive than hose if it's 144 for \$14.95. http://www.territorialseed.com/category/natural_pest_control





Birthday Birthday

Leah Casey - July 15
Karen Pagan - July 22
Stephanie Halliday - July 13
Jill White - July 25
Jerry Bunch - Sept 8
Martha Grizzel - Sept 21
Brenda Vaughn - Sept 14
Laura Margadonna - Sept 25

Don't forget to mark your calendars for our Annual Garage Sale on September 24th

The Giving Garden Board Members

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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.



If you have not had a chance to purchase your Giving Garden T Shirt, we still have a limited number available (7 medium, 2 small, and 1 extra large). These are adult size and pre-shrunk. The cost to members and former garden members is \$18 with check made payable to "Keep Carrollton Beautiful" and Giving Garden written in the memo section. Contact Laura at lsm033@verizon.net if you would like a T shirt.

