



The Giving Garden Of Carrollton

Volume 8, Issue 1

January—March 2018

From the Board by Laura Margadonna

The Giving Garden has begun its eighth year!! We welcome all our new gardeners and look forward to another productive year of raising organic vegetables for ourselves and the community.

In 2017, we donated 3,200 lbs. of organic produce to Christian Community Action and Aldersgate United Methodist Church Food Share; this exceeds last year's record by nearly a half-ton! Since its inception, the garden has donated more than 13,500 pounds of fruits, vegetables, and herbs.

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The growing season was long last year and Mother Nature was kind, but we attribute achieving this significant milestone to our many hard-working garden members and enthusiastic supporters. In The Giving Garden, we laugh, educate, learn, share, work, exercise, and make new friends.

Last year, we welcomed many young students, first through third grade, from the Enrichment Classes of Carrollton (ECC) which is a Christian, nonprofit, cooperative offering enrichment classes for homeschooling families. Unlike the high school students who come to work, these came to learn.



Terri Barrett arranged for their visits to the garden to learn about subjects like seeds and Kim Lester allowed them to harvest some of his carrots. It's not easy to make seed tapes outside, but I managed to show the kids how. It was also fun to conduct an indoor class on composting. We had the kids bring scraps from home and then allowed them to add them to the compost bins. The teachers ask questions and seem to enjoy these outings as much as the kids.

Continued

The Giving Garden and Aldersgate UMC Food Share has been nominated for the 2018 Carrollton Outstanding Project! The winner will be announced at City Hall at 6:30pm, February 27th! Last year, our very own Terri Barrett, Bed #16, won for "2017 Volunteer of the Year". Please come to support all the nominees and wear your garden T-shirt!



(L-R Kim Lester, Laura Margadonna, Terri Barrett, Cindy Baxley and Martha Grizzel)

If you don't have a T shirt, we will be selling them at the February 17th Spring Orientation. We will also be handing out laminated planting date's charts for spring and fall, and seed packets purchased by the Board and some that were donated by Westlake Ace Hardware.

At the orientation meeting, Marshall Dunbar from CCA will be speaking to us about the Food Pantry, its volunteers and clients, and distribution practices, and how The Giving Garden supports their mission. There will be a LOT of information shared and we don't want you to miss any of it! Some highlights will be:

2018 Adopt a Plot Agreement Changes:

Par. 13 – Gardeners who do not report or put in their required volunteer hours are subject to declined renewal the following year

Par.7 – On harvest day, everything that is ripe and ready will be harvested unless a red noodle has been placed in the bed.

Garden Member Sign-Ups:

NEW! Mid-week harvest volunteer opportunities!

Sign-Up Genius link for 2018 will be e-mailed after orientation

On **March 1st**, we will look at Sign-up Genius and if you have not signed up for your 3 slots, we will assign open slots to you and e-mail you the dates

Lettuce (Leaf) Growing Guide

Soil

Most soil types, but best in moisture retentive soil with some compost dug in.

Light Requirements

Sun to partial afternoon shade.

Frost tolerant

Tolerates light frost, but needs protection from hard freezes.

Spacing

Single Plants: 3" each way (minimum)

Rows: 3" with 5" row gap (minimum)

Varieties (Leaf Lettuce)

Salad Bowl, Black Seeded Simpson, Red Sails (red color)

Planting dates:

Spring: February 10 - March 15

Sow and Plant

Start seeds indoors in early spring, or simply sow fresh seeds where you want them to grow. Scatter seeds atop prepared soil, about one-half inch apart and barely cover them before patting them into place. Sow more seeds in summer for a fall crop.

Notes

As lettuce seedlings grow, thin them so that the leaves of adjoining plants do not overlap. Feeding is not usually required. Mulch open space between plants to retain soil moisture and prevent weeds.

Harvesting

You can pick individual leaves, use scissors or a knife to harvest handfuls of baby lettuce, or grow plants at proper spacing to get large, loose heads.

Troubleshooting

Shallow lettuce roots need constant moisture. Do not allow the soil to dry out.



Four (4) Beginner Gardening Mistakes To Avoid



Seed Sower



Square Foot Garden

1) Planting Too Many Varieties of Veggies

When you're just starting out with a garden, it's a good idea to keep it as simple as possible for the first year. It's tempting to want to try a little of everything, but you'll have a much better chance of having a successful garden if you focus on just a few varieties for the first year and then add in others the next year. We try to cover this when we interview new members.

When I first started at The Giving Garden, I went a little bit overboard that first year. I used the Square Foot Gardening method (see picture above) where you plant little blocks of plants like 16 carrots in a square or 9 carrots or one broccoli. I wanted some of everything so every block was different. It's a great way to make efficient use of your space, but if you only plant one block of green beans you won't harvest enough to make it worthwhile versus planting 4-5 blocks of beans.

If I could go back to the year I first started a garden, I would have been better off just trying a few simple, easy-to-grow varieties that do well here like Celebrity tomatoes, Black Beauty eggplant, Baby Bubba okra, California Wonder and Big Bertha sweet peppers, etc. Also, if your time is limited, mass plantings of plants like onions, garlic, and potatoes usually require water and fertilizer but are harvested all at once compared to the almost daily harvests required for okra, cucumbers, and tomatoes. Ask your "plot" neighbors what varieties did well for them – we all have our favorites.

2) Crowding Plants Too Close Together

This kind of goes along with the first mistake. If you've tried to plant too many varieties, you're probably also trying to squeeze as many seeds or seedlings into your garden space as possible.

Direct seeding is the only way to go with some veggies like the root crops (carrots, beets, radishes and turnips). The problem is they are very small seeds and if you sow them too thickly you have to spend time thinning them out or they won't grow properly. I made that mistake with turnips one year. Instead of a productive harvest, I ended with up beautiful looking turnip greens but they were so crowded I got only a couple dozen small turnips.

To avoid this you can make your own seed tapes (really easy!) or use a seed sower (see picture above). I bought one to leave in the shed and have my own if anyone wants to borrow it. It has different settings for different size seeds. You can also buy these at Home Depot.

3) Watering Plants Too Often, or at the Wrong Time of Day

It's easy to worry so much about whether your plants are getting enough water that you end up giving them *too* much water by mistake. Some plants do need more water than others, but generally they do better with fewer, more thorough waterings (like they would get if it were raining) than they do with getting a shower from the hose every time you walk by and think they look even a little bit thirsty.

It's also best to water in the morning while the sun is still low in the sky. Or, if you can't get up even earlier than you already do to just to water your garden, you can water in the late afternoon or evening after the sun has mostly gone down. Don't forget about the "Buddy" system where you partner up with other gardeners and set up a schedule, especially in the heat of summer, to take turns with the watering. What you want to avoid is watering them in the heat of the day when the sun is at its peak because the water can scorch the leaves and damage them.

Also, some plants, especially tomatoes don't do well if you wet their leaves. This can promote fungal diseases. So always water your plants as close to the roots as you can get.

4) Planting the Wrong Varieties Next to Each Other

If you feel like you've tried everything and you still can't figure out why your garden isn't thriving, it might be that you're planting the wrong varieties next to each other.

Certain types of plants do really well when they are together, helping to keep away insects and pests or by helping to enrich the soil. Other plants, though, may actually inhibit the growth of the plants that they are near.

By using companion planting and planning your garden to keep together the varieties that work well with each other, you have a better chance of having a successful garden.

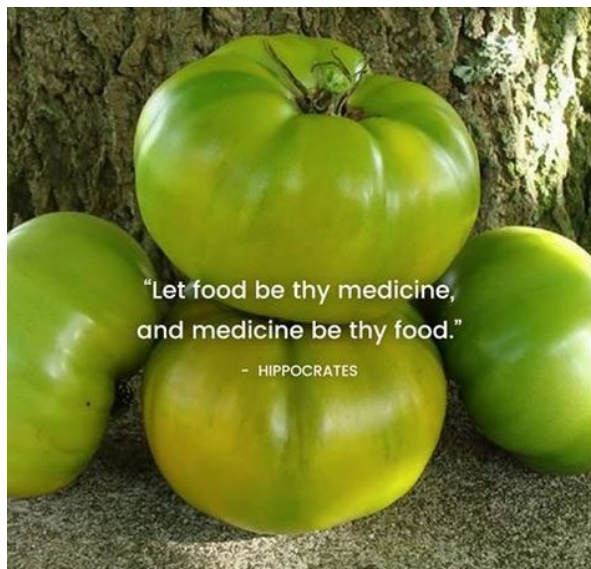
For more information about companion planting, you can find charts and lists of companion plants at these links:

<http://www.motherearthnews.com/organic-gardening/companion-planting-guide-zmaz81mjzraw.aspx>

[Companion Planting \(Overview and Chart\)](#)

[Plant Companions: Friend or Foe?](#)

[An In-Depth Companion Planting Guide](#)



The most Important Word in “Community Gardening” is not “Gardening!”



I was sorting some flyers from my October trip to Santa Fe, NM, and took time to look through a free newspaper that I had picked up. I found this excellent article written by Mark Winne, the co-chair of the Santa Fe Food Policy Council. This was a presentation he gave to the American Community Gardening Association. It's far too lengthy to include here so I am adding the link to the full article and a tiny excerpt that resonates:

My message boils down to this:

- **The most important word in “community gardening” is “community”**
- **Build on the good work you are all doing, but link arms with others recognizing that none of you have all the answers**
- **Engage government; the people and the policymakers must be on the same page. This is what they call democracy, and as a citizen, that is what I signed up for**
- **If you don't belong to a food policy council, join one. If you don't have one, start one**
- **Create a message that unifies your work and speaks to the proven benefits of community gardening**
- **Poverty is the cause of hunger; the time has come to work toward the end of income and wealth inequality.”**

For more go to:

<http://www.markwinne.com/the-most-important-word-in-community-gardening-is-not-gardening/>

Harvest Update

The Giving Garden Annual Donations



Total Pounds Per Year

Can You Name That Hoe?



Pick One:

1. Push/Pull
2. Paddle
3. Warren
4. Snake-head
5. Scuffle
6. None of the Above

See Answer at end of newsletter.

Meet the Gardeners ...

Angie Kalsch and Maria Amosson (Bed #13)



- Angie and Maria are sisters who joined The Giving Garden in June 2017. Their first bed was #25.
- Angie works at Keurig Dr. Pepper as a Systems Analyst and Maria works at Cintas-Office & APMGK.
- Both live in Carrollton; Angie has two sons and Maria has one.
- Their favorite hobby besides gardening is reading.
- Their favorite thing about belonging to The Giving Garden is having an activity they can share.
- The three adjectives friends and family would use to describe them would be family-oriented, nutty, and caring.
- They don't have a favorite vegetable and donate everything they grow.
- The last movie they saw was "Forever My Girl".
- Their inspiration for gardening was to create an opportunity to spend time together.
- If they could travel anywhere it would be Colorado.
- If they could meet any three people, they would be: Tom Hanks, Abraham Lincoln, Grandpa Amosson, Grandpa Kyltl.
- They wish they knew how to garden!



Meet the Gardener... Lyn Martin (Bed #12)

- Lyn Martin is a member of Aldersgate UMC and 2018 is her first year at the garden. Her friend, Susan Vohtz, will be helping in her bed and joined her for the mulch work day.
- Lyn lives in Lewisville, is married with three adult children (all married), 3 grandchildren, and a cat named Sydney.
- She works at ADP Tax Credit Services and is a full time - remote employee.
- Lyn joined The Giving Garden to learn more about gardening and to experiment by trying new things.
- Lyn classifies her level of gardening expertise as "Advanced beginner".
- Her favorite hobbies besides gardening are travel, working out, riding bikes and golf.
- Lyn's favorite thing about belonging to The Giving Garden is spending time with friends and meeting new people.
- The three adjectives friends and family would use to describe Lyn would be: carefree, personable and intuitive.
- Her favorite vegetable is Tomatoes.
- The last movies Lyn saw were: Molly's Game and Darkest Hour
- Her inspiration to garden comes from seeing the results of growing her own food.
- If she could travel anywhere she would go to Australia and Fiji.
- If Lyn could meet any three people, living or dead, they would be: her grandfather Frank who she never met, Princess Diana, and Michael Jackson.
- She wishes she knew how to play the piano.

Horticulture Notes

Soil Temperature Conditions for Vegetable Seed Germination

Vegetable	Min (°F)	Optimum Range (°F)	Optimum (°F)	Max (°F)
Asparagus	50	60-85	75	95
Bean	60	60-85	80	95
Bean, Lima	60	65-85	85	85
Beet	40	50-85	85	85
Cabbage	40	45-95	85	100
Carrot	40	45-85	80	95
Cauliflower	40	45-85	80	100
Celery	40	60-70	70	85
Chard, Swiss	40	50-85	85	95
Corn	50	60-95	95	105
Cucumber	60	60-95	95	105
Eggplant	60	75-90	85	95
Lettuce	35	40-80	75	85
Muskmelon	60	75-95	90	100
Okra	60	70-95	95	105
Onion	35	50-95	75	95
Parsley	40	50-85	75	90
Parsnip	35	50-70	65	85
Pea	40	40-75	75	85
Pepper	60	65-95	85	95
Pumpkin	60	70-90	90	100
Radish	40	45-90	85	95
Spinach	35	45-75	70	85
Squash	60	70-95	95	100
Tomato	50	70-95	85	95
Turnip	40	60-105	85	105
Watermelon	60	70-95	95	105

Soil temperatures should be taken by inserting a soil thermometer 3 to 4 inches deep into the soil surface and noting temperature. Soil thermometers are available from garden centers, feed and seed stores, and from many garden supply catalogs. Soil temperatures should be consistent for several days before seeds are sown to ensure that the seeds are being exposed to optimal temperatures for germination.

Okra Patties

Submitted by Martha Grizzel



Ingredients

1 lb fresh 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.

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 operates under the umbrella organization of the Community Gardens of Carrollton. It was jointly developed in 2010 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.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Annual Spring Orientation

When: Saturday, 2/17

Where: Aldersgate Fellowship

Time: 8:45—10:00 AM

Birthdays:



12/6 Willie Lane

1/18 Greg Haeger

2/15 Nisanth Muruges

3/18 Lyn Martin

3/20 Orie Achonwa



Hoe Quiz Answer: E.

Scuffle Hoe - Scuffle hoes cut in both directions, backward and forward. The name is appropriate. You scuffle the blade along the soil, rather than pulling it repeatedly toward you, as with conventional hoes. If your soil is not too compacted, it also works well as a cultivator.