

DIGGING IN

At Troy Community Gardens
Madison, WI

Harvest Time at Troy Gardens

By Jill Schneider

We're finally into the time of year when you tend to overlook those weeds creeping into the plot and finding their way under your tomato plants. It's that special time of year when all your hard work brings forth a bounty of tomatoes, potatoes, onions, shallots, squash and those treasured peppers, sweet and hot alike.

Notice how I didn't mention wax or green beans. This has been one of the most disappointing years for beans I can remember. The wax beans we planted at home were glorious and are still producing as I write. Our beans at Troy were

beautiful mid-July and were just starting to yield when the bean beetle set up house. Scratch that, it would be better described as a small city of bean beetles. They were everywhere on the beans in every stage of development: the eggs, the disgusting bright yellow larvae and pupae, and the adults busy devouring every bean leaf in sight.

We were not deterred. We've seen invasions like this before (think Colorado potato beetle). We knew what to do: get out the rubber garden gloves and squish, squish, squish. No good. These things were on a mission. We made the decision to leave the first crop of beans as a trap crop, hoping the beetles would ignore our second crop of beans. We had

been especially careful with the second crop, draping them with row cover to help protect them from the invasion. The long beans we had planted for the first time looked good—producing like champs—seemingly immune to the bean beetle attacking our wax and green beans.

We got brave one day in the last week or so and uncovered the second crop of beans near the trap crop. After all, they were about a foot high and needed to get out from under that row cover. Huge mistake. It was as if we hung a neon sign next to the second crop that said, "Fresh young leaves. Come and get 'em." And, as if that weren't enough, we returned three days later to discover our second crop of long beans were wiped out by the dreaded bean beetle.

We're now down to one small bed of a second crop of green beans that will remain covered with row cover until the first frost. I have no idea if they will ever produce any beans, but I'll be darn if I'm letting those bean beetles have at 'em.

In retrospect, 2011 was a great year for having a plot at Troy. Can we say, "No mosquitoes!" That in itself is cause for celebration. Also, I've heard no reports of late blight. The heat of July and early August was rough, but it seems most things survived and are now hanging in there to give us a nice harvest. Our sweet potato vines are lush, and I'm hoping the voles haven't been stuffing themselves unbeknownst to us above-ground

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WORK DAY

SATURDAY
September 17
9 AM -12 NOON

If it is raining on Sep. 17, the work day will be changed to Sep. 18, 9 a.m.

Hnub ua haujlwm pab dawb yog 9/17/11, 9 a.m. txog 12 teev tavs, yog los nag muab pauv rau 9/18/11 9 a.m.

Día de Trabajo

El Sábado 17 de septiembre 9 a.m. -12 medio día
Si llegara a llover el 18 de septiembre, el día de trabajo será cambiado para el día 18 de septiembre 9 a.m.

Notice

The 2011 All-Gardener meeting previously scheduled for Saturday, 10/8/11, has been cancelled. The All-Gardener meeting is usually reserved to review the season and discuss any proposed changes for the following year. Since the only significant change approved by the Steering Committee for 2012 is to tighten up the policy regarding neglected plots, we decided a meeting wasn't necessary. The change is outlined on page 3.

Harvest Time

(Continued from page 1)

dwellers. We still have some potatoes in the ground, and we'll be fighting over who gets to dig them up—easily one of the most satisfying garden tasks.

I hope most of my fellow gardeners had a productive and enjoyable growing season. We have about a month and half left before our last work day, which is also our Closing Day, on October 22. I'll detail what this means in next month's newsletter, but basically it means those in the plowed section must remove everything from their plot by 9 a.m. that day in preparation for next spring's plowing.

Traditionally, we've had a Harvest Festival on the same day as the September work day (9/17), but this year we are skip-

ping it due to scheduling conflicts. The Harvest Festival features an antique cider press to make juice from apples collected from the Mendota Mental Health Antique Apple Orchard. A recent evaluation of this year's crop at Mendota shows it to be smaller than most years. At the 9/17 work day, we will have volunteers go over to the Orchard to pick up the windfalls to add to our compost bin or to be use within plots. Those volunteers can also pick and keep any apples that are ready. Mendota Mental Health Institute allows us to harvest the apples each year in exchange for maintaining the apple orchard by picking up windfalls now and pruning the trees in the spring.

Enjoy your harvest, and if you still need volunteer hours, consider helping out on September 17. You may even be able to add some apples to your harvest.

Extra Produce?

During this time of abundance, please consider donating your extra garden produce to a local food pantry. Below is a list of Northside and Eastside food pantries compiled by Community Action Coalition who are willing to take fresh fruits and vegetables. Give them a call to find out what times are best for dropping off your produce.

Madison - North

Kennedy Hts Community Center FP
199 Kennedy Heights
(608) 244-0767

Lakeview Lutheran Church FP
4001 Mandrake Rd.
(608) 244-6181

Living In Community FP
St. Paul's Lutheran Church
2126 N. Sherman Ave.
(608) 244-8077

The River FP
2201 Darwin Rd.
(608) 442-8815

Madison - East

Bashford FP
329 North St.
(608) 249-9222

East Madison Community Center
8 Straubel Ct.
(608) 249-0861

Evangel Life Center – Bread of Life FP
4402 Femrite Drive
(608) 222-4900

Fritz FP, Goodman Community Center
149 Waubesa St.
(608) 241-1574

Salvation Army

3030 Darbo Dr.
(608) 250-2264 or (608) 577-2040

Solomon's FP

S.S. Morris Community A.M.E. Church
3511 Milwaukee St.
(608) 240-4622

United Asian Services of WI, Inc.
2132 Fordem Avenue
(608) 256-6400

Composting Work Shop

This year we were fortunate enough to be able to offer two work shops for gardeners. Our first one, *Help Your Vegetable Garden Produce Like a Vegetable Farm*, was held at the beginning of the season, and last month Joanne Tooley and Joe Muellenberg presented *Basics of Composting*. The work shop was translated into Hmong, and all in attendance learned the benefits of composting as well as the how to manage your compost pile.

Even though we have the City of Madison deliver un-sifted compost from Dane County several times in the spring, the compost you make within your own plot can be controlled by you. That is, you know exactly what goes into it, and you can control how fast it heats up and, therefore, how fast you get finished compost.

Most of us have too many "greens" for our own compost piles because we have a lot of weeds from our plots. Don't forget, however, that you can use hay to add "browns" to your pile. We usually have leaves delivered in the fall, so those can be used as "browns" for your pile. And, remember, make sure you add enough water. A lot of us tend to neglect our compost piles by forgetting to add water. You will still get compost out of a neglected pile, but it will take much longer (a year versus a few weeks).

We'd like to thank Joanne and Joe for educating us about composting. If you enjoyed these work shops and would like to see more, be sure to indicate on next year's Plot Application what type of work shops you'd be interested in for 2012.

Celebrating  Anniversary

the Good Food

garden party

Party in the Garden!

Many of you know about the Good Food part of our ten year anniversary celebration, but did you realize that the **Garden Party afterwards is free?**

If you cannot come for the Good Food dinner please join us from 8:00-10:00pm for music, dancing and cake! Music by the Madpolecats. We will also have beer and soft drinks available for sale.

Saturday, September 10th 8:00-10:00pm on the big lawn at Troy Gardens, 500 Troy Drive.

We still have tickets for sale for the Good Food part. Check out the details at <http://www.troygardens.org/who-we-are/announcements>

3601 Memorial Dr., Suite 4 | Madison, WI 53704



Upcoming Events

Good Food Garden Party at Troy Gardens

Sat., Sept. 10, 5 - 7:30 pm ticketed dinner event; 8 - 10 pm free portion of event open to public with music and dancing by Madpolecats.

Community Gardens Work Day

Sat., Sept. 17, 9 am - 12 noon

Community Gardens Work Day/Closing Day

Sat., Oct. 22, 9 am - 12 noon (those in plowed plots H61-H120 must have everything cleaned out of plots by 9 a.m. on 10/22)

For more info about these events, please call the Community GroundWorks office at 240-0409.

Troy Gardener Seed Exchange Proposed

When we held the Hmong cooking demonstrations at the Savor the Summer event August 6, 2011, there was great deal of interest in the long beans the women were cutting up and preparing. Many of the Lao and Hmong gardeners grow these beans in their plots and save their seeds year to year. Because these beans seemed unique to most of the non-Hmong gardeners in attendance, a few of us thought it might be fun to host a seed exchange with fellow gardeners.

If you have unique or interesting plants you grow in your plot, consider saving a few extra seeds and sharing them with other gardeners next spring. The Gardens' Steering Committee has discussed this idea and thought the Spring Registration event might be a good time to exchange seeds. Spring Registration for 2012 is tentatively planned for Saturday, March 3. We will remind you about the seed exchange idea in next month's newsletter and again when the Spring Registration meeting is announced. If you have any suggestions about the proposed seed exchange, you can contact Jill Schneider (241-1821 or schneiderjill@charter.net).

2012 Rule Changes for Neglecting Plots

The Gardens' Steering Committee recently discussed the perennial problem of gardeners who neglect their gardens and let their weeds go to seed, spreading the problem to other nearby plots. In the past, the penalty for neglecting a plot after being contacted was to consider the gardener to be in bad standing. This bad standing status means if the gardener applies for a plot the following year, they are moved to the bottom of the plot assignment list. If we run out of plots to assign, they might not get their plot back. What usually happens, however, is we have enough plots for everyone. Therefore, a gardener who has neglected their plot the previous year often gets their plot back the following year. This has created situations where gardeners are neglecting plots year after year. The Steering Committee approved the following changes for next year:

- If you have been contacted by Plot Monitoring 3 times in one season and you haven't weeded your plot(s) as to not impact your neighbors' plots, you will be asked to forfeit your plot(s) for the current year and will not receive your plot(s) the following year.
- If you are asked to forfeit your plot(s), you can submit an appeal to the Steering/Leadership Committee via the Garden Coordinator. A decision will be made within one week.
- You may reapply for a garden plot after the one year penalty period (e.g., If you forfeit your plot in July 2012, you may reapply for the 2014 season).

Harvest Recipes

Red Hot Vegetable Chili

3/4 C. olive oil
 2 med. Zucchini, cut into 1/2" cubes
 2 med. Yellow onions, cut into 1/2 " pieces
 4 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
 2 lg. Sweet red peppers, cored and cut into 1/4 inch pieces
 1 can (35 oz) Italian plum tomatoes
 1 1/2 pounds fresh ripe plum tomatoes, cut into 1 inch cubes
 2 Tbsp. chili powder
 1 Tbsp. ground cumin
 1 Tbsp. dried basil
 1 Tbsp. dried oregano
 2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
 1 tsp. salt
 1 tsp. fennel seeds
 1/2 C. chopped Italian parsley
 1 C. canned dark-red kidney beans, drained
 1 C. canned garbanzos, drained
 1/2 C. chopped fresh dill
 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
 sour cream, Monterey Jack cheese, scallions for garnish

This recipe is by Julia Child for Parade Magazine. It can be doubled and tripled, and it freezes well. Take some on your fall camping trip.



1. Heat 1/2 C. olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add zucchini and saute until just tender. Remove zucchini to large casserole or dutch oven.
2. Add remaining 1/4 c. olive oil to skillet over low heat. Add onions, garlic and red pepper. Saute until just wilted, about 10 minutes. Add to casserole with the oil.
3. Place the casserole over low heat. Add undrained canned tomatoes, fresh tomatoes, chili powder, cumin, basil, oregano, pepper, salt, fennel, and parsley. Cook uncovered, stirring often, for 30 minutes.
4. Stir in kidney beans, garbanzos, dill and lemon juice; cook for 15 minutes more. Stir well and adjust seasonings to taste. Serve immediately. Garnish with sour cream, grated Monterey Jack cheese and sliced scallions.

Roasted Cherry Tomatoes and Pasta

This recipe was given to me by a friend recently after I had shared with her my overabundance of cherry tomatoes. I was wondering what she was doing with all those cherry tomatoes. Now I know! This is a delicious and simple recipe. Thanks Tracy - Jill S.

1-1/2 pounds ripe cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
 4 garlic cloves, minced
 1/2 cup fresh bread crumbs
 1/2 cup freshly grated parmesan cheese
 Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
 1/4 cup olive oil
 1 pound penne, fusilli, or farfallini pasta
 1/2 cup finely chopped fresh basil



1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Place the tomato halves in a large baking dish that can be brought to the table.
2. In a small bowl, combine the garlic, bread crumbs, cheese, salt and pepper. Spoon evenly over the tomatoes. Spoon the olive oil evenly over the mixture.
3. Roast the tomatoes for 30 to 35 minutes, or until the mixture is bubbly, browned, and slightly thickened.
4. In a large pot of salted boiling water, cook the pasta for about 10 minutes, or until al dente. Drain well.
5. Add the pasta to the tomato mixture in the baking dish. Add the basil and toss to combine. Serve immediately.