

The Gardener

A monthly note for Muskegon County's Healthy Garden

Volume 2, Issue 2

Welcome Healthy Gardeners!

We've had several garden meetings with some really exciting plans being laid for the Healthy Garden in 2010.

Why I Garden at Public Health - Muskegon County

Denise Thompson has been gardening with Muskegon County's Healthy Garden since 2004. As an Advanced Master gardener she saw a great opportunity here to pursue her passion of starting community gardens throughout the county.

One of Denise's goals with working in the garden is to educate others about garden practices and how to grow their own healthy foods. She is a huge advocate of giving back and the Healthy Gardener's policy of donating a portion of our plot's yield is something that she does with enthusiasm.

Denise also loves any opportunities to work with kids to teach them about how much fun it is to be in the garden and learn about bugs!

Denise is grateful for the opportunity that the County has given all of us to use the land and to engage the community in how we can all live healthier.

Calendar of Events

Location: Training Center – 133 E Apple in Muskegon



- May 11th @ 5:30 – Lazy Gardening with Kim Wood
- May 25th @ 5:30 – Composting and Succession Planting with John Noling and Joel Mikkelson
- June 8th @ 5:30 – Herbs with Terri Hample
- June 22nd @ 5:30 – Companion Planting with Pam Goodman

Planting Deadline: June 7, 2010



Moving Forward Together: Partnering with Other Gardens Throughout the County

Pam Goodman, Pat Fanberg and Poppy Hernandez had the opportunity to attend the first ever Community Garden Summit at the Michigan Alternative and Renewable Energy Center in Muskegon County. It was an incredibly productive meeting. Some of the outcomes included the community gardeners learning about what all of us are doing to improve our communities, making contacts for future collaborative efforts and a plan to provide education and training services to all the community gardeners.

Based on feedback from the Summit, the Healthy Garden gardeners will host two trainings a month at the South Campus location (Training Center – 133 E Apple). The trainings, taught by gardeners from the various community gardens, will be held at 5:30 pm and are open to anyone. Check out our calendar of events to see what learning opportunities are coming up at the county.

May's Featured Trainer

LAZY GARDENING by Kim Wood:

Kim will provide education on gardening techniques that require little effort while resulting in a great yield. She is a master gardener that has mastered the art of re-purposing, reusing and recycling. Join us for a potluck meal and our continued growth in the Healthy Garden.

Reaping What We Sow

It's important to track our garden progress. We ensure our sustainability through garden principles that guide our community practices. In keeping with the guidelines of growing healthy neighborhoods and productive gardens our garden grows! This season we welcome several new gardeners to the Healthy Garden including: Barb Young, Natalie Walther, Teresea Ammann, Priscilla Birch and Jonathan Broek. Priscilla and Jon are representing the WIC program and working to bring WIC families and staff into the garden. If you are interested in helping them in their efforts they can be reached at 724-1392.

The Healthy Garden is for Muskegon County residents wanting a place to grow crops, a place to work alongside neighbors in the County, and to set an example of good citizenship for youth and community. Thanks to each of you for honoring your contract to be leaders for our community and demonstrating character-building behavior as outlined in your garden agreement to:

1. First PRIORITY: Grow Healthy Kids and Neighborhoods
2. Share harvests, skills and concerns with others more needy than ourselves
3. Respect others' space and purpose in the garden
4. Protect the safety of yourself and others in the garden
5. Grow productive gardens
6. Communicate clearly between all garden stakeholders as an important community-building principle

We want our garden to survive and thrive and it will when all participants demonstrate good citizenship and support of one another and demonstrate care and concern for their community.

----P. Fanberg

Garden Credits

You may notice several young people earning school credits working with John Noling, one of our long-term garden partners. Not only do these young people earn credit and help in the gardening tasks, they learn how to be community partners. Yeah!



Growing and Giving from the Healthy Garden

The Johnson Family Cancer Center located at the Mercy Campus of Mercy Health Partners serves people living in Muskegon that are being treated for cancer. Denise Thompson's life was touched by cancer with the loss of her mother and for the past three years she has grown pink, purple and white flowers in the Healthy Garden, which she uses to create and deliver beautiful arrangements to the patients being treated at The Center. Her work touches the lives of people who need to be reminded of the beauty around them while inspiring the rest of us with what can be accomplished when we care and then follow up with action. She is the sole source of funding for her efforts. If you are interested in supporting her work contact her via email at thegardeningqueen@verizon.net.

Using Last Year's and This Year's Produce

Recipe: Blueberry-Rhubarb Pie

This is the time of year when we start cleaning out all last year's produce from the freezer in order to make room for the fresh crops coming. One of the first of the new crops is rhubarb. If you've got frozen blueberries to use up, enjoy combining the old with the new.

Ingredients:

Pastry for two-crust Pie	3 t flour
2 c blueberries	Pinch of cinnamon
1 ½ c rhubarb, chopped in ½ inch pieces	¾ t of lemon zest
1 c sugar	

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400°.

Line nine-inch pie pan with pastry, allow half-inch of crust to hang over the edge. Put blueberries and rhubarb in large mixing bowl. In small bowl, mix together sugar, flour, cinnamon and lemon zest. Pour sugar mixture over fruit and stir gently with a rubber spatula until mixture is well distributed. Transfer to lined pie pan. Use remaining dough for a lattice top. Fold the overhanging bottom crust back over the ends of the strips and crimp the pastry for a decorative finish. Bake for 15 minutes, reduce heat to 350° and bake for 20 to 30 minutes or until crust is golden and juices are bubbling. Cool for several hours before cutting to serve. (A little ice cream is nice.)



The Gardener is a monthly newsletter published by Public Health – Muskegon County. Any community garden in Muskegon County is welcome to submit articles. The deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month for the following month's issue. Please email gardening stories, helpful tips and photos to hernandezpo@co.muskegon.mi.us.