

30th anniversary celebration

Can you think of a better way for Capital District Community Gardens to celebrate our 30th anniversary than to host a garden party? Well that's just what we did on September 15th at our



8th Street Garden in Troy. CDCG Board and staff were joined by Senate Majority Leader Joseph L. Bruno, Cohoes Mayor John McDonald, Albany Common Councilmember Richard Conti and other elected officials, community gardeners and supporters to commemorate this important milestone and discuss the future of urban gardening and beautification in the Capital Region.

New Board member, Doug Burns and Past Board President, Margaret Diggs spend some time with CDCG founder Dean Leith.



Senator Joseph Bruno and Cohoes Mayor John McDonald shared their thoughts on Capital District Community Gardens' past 30 years and future. CDCG Board President, Steve Cowan is pictured in background.

Despite a stormy day and prediction of rain, it was a beautiful evening to catch up with old friends and meet new ones. Partygoers were treated to beautiful music by Maria Zemantauski and delicious food from two local restaurants. Attendees were asked to bring produce for CDCG's Squash Hunger Program and were given an elegant pair of gardening gloves, courtesy of Foxgloves, Inc. Thanks to their generosity, we collected 450 pounds of fresh produce in two hours which was delivered to local food pantries the next day. During the next 30 years we look forward to continuing to positively impact the lives of our community gardeners, the beauty of our neighborhoods, and the health of our Region. ☼



Pound by pound we collected produce for Squash Hunger.



WHAT'S INSIDE

from our window . . .	2
tree plantings . . .	3
herb feature . . .	4
fact sheet . . .	5
in the gardens . . .	6 - 7
squash hunger . . .	8
donors . . .	10 - 11
on the table . . .	12





The mission of Capital District Community Gardens is to educate and engage the community in organic gardening and urban revitalization for the benefit of the Region and the health of its citizens.

In operation for 30 years, CDCG manages 44 community gardens in Albany, Rensselaer & Schenectady Counties, plants hundreds of city street trees each year, and works with community groups to improve the overall appeal of our cities and the quality of life for residents.

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from our window

Amy Klein, Executive Director

What a thrill this year has been for all of us at Capital District Community Gardens. Our 30th year was one of celebration and accomplishment – and we have so much to feel good about.

The year began with the development of three new community gardens. Although it was not planned, it was fitting that we created three new sites this year – marking the three decades that we have served this region with neighborhood food gardens. Typically it takes a few years for a new garden to be fully productive. This was not the case at the new Cutler, Edward or Sand Street Community Gardens. They were all quickly filled with participants eager to grow their own food. This brings the number of garden plots to 776 and the number of people participating to more than 3,000!

Our tree planting program also had a very productive year. We worked with five communities this year to plant more than 280 trees on the streets of Cohoes, Menands, Rensselaer, Scotia and Troy. For some of these communities, it was our first time planting trees and in others, it had been a while since we'd done a tree planting. In all cases, we made a lasting improvement to the streetscape making these communities more attractive places to live, work and do business.

Our Squash Hunger program, now in its second season, also had a momentous year. You might recall that in our first year we collected 6,000 pounds of fresh produce, and we were hoping to double that amount this year. Despite getting a later start than planned, we collected almost 12,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables and distributed it to area food pantries. The program also garnered extensive media coverage this year which helped raise awareness about hunger in our Region and the importance of making healthy food available to all.

In celebration of our 30th Anniversary we threw ourselves a garden party in September. In typical Community Gardens' style, it was open to the entire community and participants brought produce for our Squash Hunger program. We were thrilled to have Senator Bruno, Mayor McDonald, Councilman Conti and other elected officials, supporters and gardeners join us for this event.

Next year you can anticipate more programmatic expansions and improvements — more gardens created, more trees planted, and more healthy food for our communities. Also, in the coming months you'll be hearing the outcome of our two-year planning process to determine the feasibility of creating a Gardening Education Center. We are excited about the opportunities to enhance our existing programs, expand into new programmatic areas and serve as a model of environmental stewardship for our Region. Stay tuned... ☼

Amy

P.S. We were sad to say goodbye to Garden Educator Nicole Donato this fall. Nicole is pursuing a Masters Degree in teaching and we know she'll be an outstanding educator because we saw her in action!



communities benefit from new trees

Capital District Community Gardens has had a record-breaking year for its tree planting program with 280 new trees planted in municipalities throughout the area. Many residents and businesses in Cohoes, Troy, Rensselaer, Menands and Scotia have benefited from the opportunity to have a tree planted along the street adjacent to their property.

Thanks to successful grant proposals funded, in part, by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's Urban and Community Forestry Program, the National Tree Trust, Troy's Community Development Block Grant Program and The Troy Savings Bank Charitable Foundation, each of these municipalities has taken advantage of this opportunity to make vital improvements to the health of its' urban forest. Besides the obvious benefits related to improved aesthetics and beautification, trees reduce energy consumption, remove harmful pollutants from the air, provide habitat for birds and wildlife, reduce storm water runoff, increase property values and generally improve the quality of life in cities.

Since 1989, CDCG has been organizing an annual street tree planting program in Troy, where more than 1,000 trees have been planted. Utilizing a group of well trained volunteer planting supervisors (from Albany and Rensselaer County Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Program and interested community members) and student volunteers from the local high schools allows us to easily plant 50-75 trees in a day. The unique combination of CDCG's expertise and volunteer labor makes the plantings affordable for small municipalities lacking a forestry staff but results in a high quality product and project.

This was our fourth tree planting in the City of Cohoes with more than 200 trees



planted since Fall 2003. Cohoes has recently undertaken several major reconstruction projects, and we are so thrilled to be working alongside Mayor John McDonald, DPW Commissioner Ken Radliff and many others to be a part of the city's revitalization.

CDCG's last big tree planting project in the City of Rensselaer was in the Fall of 2001, and although we did two small plantings last year, we



were excited when the City's Planning Department asked us to organize a large citywide planting for Fall. Thanks to Tracy Farley at Rensselaer High School, dozens of students volunteered to help plant 68 trees throughout the City.

Smaller plantings took place in Troy and Scotia. Our good friend, Troy High teacher, John Getbehead brought a dozen terrific students to help plant 20 trees throughout Troy. Our first ever planting in the Village of Scotia was a success with several trees planted along Mohawk Avenue.

With grant funding already secured, we are looking forward to multiple plantings in Spring 2006. Property owners in Cohoes, Rensselaer, Troy or Scotia interested in having a street tree planted, should call us for an



application. If you have questions about our tree planting program, call CDCG Program Manager, Sharon DiLorenzo at 274-8685. And if you are interested in becoming a planting supervisor, we would love to talk to you. Give us a call anytime! ☘



ginger (*Zingiber officinale*)

For centuries, ginger has been used throughout the world as a culinary herb, especially in far eastern cuisines. Ginger originated in Asia but it quickly spread to many other countries via the Silk Road. Shortly after the discoveries of Columbus, Spaniards introduced ginger to the West Indies where it now grows profusely. In fact, some of the highest quality varieties of ginger are grown in Jamaica. The Pilgrims are believed to have brought the spice to North America.



The active constituent of fresh ginger is gingerol, which is a relative of capsaicin, the active ingredient in chili peppers.

When ginger is dried, the gingerol is converted into a much more pungent form. When ginger is cooked, the gingerol becomes much less pungent and has a spicy-sweet aroma.

Ginger is high in vitamins A, B complex and C, as well as calcium, phosphorous, iron, sodium, potassium and magnesium. Its' therapeutic and medicinal uses are many, and it is wonderful for warming up the body and fighting off germs with its antioxidant properties. Ginger is a circulatory stimulant and opens up blood vessels to improve blood flow helping to warm cold hands and feet. It can help lower cholesterol levels and blood pressure and reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke. Ginger is especially effective in easing indigestion and nausea. It stimulates digestion, promotes gastric secretion and aids in the absorption of food so you get better nourishment from the food you eat. Chewing on a piece of fresh ginger root (or crystallized ginger) is an effective remedy for motion sickness. This can also help with morning sickness, although pregnant women should only use a tiny bit as ginger is also a uterine stimulant.

Ginger's warming qualities are also useful for the lungs, helping to combat coughs, cold, flu, and even fever as it stimulates eliminative sweating. At the first sign of sore throat, cough or cold, make ginger tea by simply grating two tablespoons of fresh ginger root into a non-aluminum pan with two cups of boiling water. Let it steep for at least

ten minutes, strain, and add honey and/or lemon to taste. This tea also works well to aid digestion after a meal. To stimulate circulation or ease aching joints, pour boiling water over a few slices of fresh ginger (cover to keep essential oils from evaporating), and pour into bath water. Powdered ginger can also be used for tea and baths but fresh is much more enjoyable in tea.

Ginger root is widely used in Chinese and far eastern cuisines, although western cooks use it regularly in sweeter foods like gingerbread, ginger snaps, biscuits, cakes, ginger ale and beer.

Ginger can be grown from a piece of the fresh root which you can find at most grocery stores. This reed-like, exotic plant grows easily in hot tropical areas of the world where it can be prolific. In the northeast, our short growing season makes it impossible to cultivate outdoors year round. Ginger cannot handle frost or ice but it can be grown indoors, particularly in a greenhouse where its small, rarely seen flowers may make an appearance. If you are interested in growing flowering ginger, you might try *Zingiber mioga*, *Zingiber rubens* or *Zingiber spectabile*, which flower more reliably.



Whether or not you experiment with growing ginger, be sure to use it more liberally in your diet where its many wonderful qualities will surely keep you warm and healthy. ☼

Making New Year's Resolutions? Add this to your list . . .

Become a Gardener Mentor!

Share your gardening knowledge with a new Community Gardener. A few hours of your time will have a positive impact for years to come!

Remember: "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach him to fish and you feed him for a lifetime."

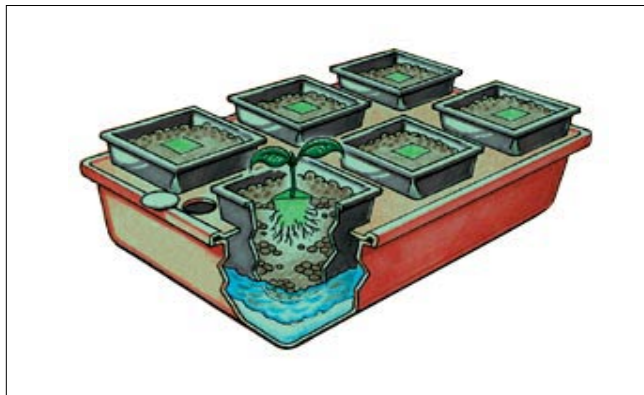
**Call 274-8685 or email info@cdcg.org
for more information.**



growing hydroponic vegetables

Anyone familiar with our work at Capital District Community Gardens might be intrigued to see that we are writing an article on hydroponic vegetable growing since the core of our organization is focused on providing plots of land for vegetable production. In the course of our research related to the planning for the Gardening Education Center, we've learned a great deal about hydroponics and thought it might be useful and interesting to provide our readers with some of the information we have gathered.

Hydroponics simply means growing plants in water without soil. Virtually any plant will grow hydroponically but some will do much better than others. Fruit bearing crops like tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers do very well as do leafy greens, herbs and flowering plants. Hydroponic growing proves that soil isn't required for plant growth but the nutrients contained in the soil are the key.



Hydroponics uses a nutrient solution mixed with water and a 'grow medium' that simply holds the plant and its root system sturdy through its life. This is in place of soil which also contains nutrients while providing stability to the roots and plant. The main difference between soil growing and hydroponics is that with hydroponic growing a nutrient solution provides the exact measure of minerals and nutrients that a plant needs while soil does not. To grow plants, you don't necessarily need soil, you just need the nutrients. Hydroponic solution contains the same elements that rich soil has like nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus. But it also contains what soil usually lacks, micronutrients such as calcium, sulfur, boron, cobalt, copper, iron, manganese, molybdenum and zinc. Where plants, or more importantly their roots, growing in a soil culture must grow out to find these nutrients (which requires more growing

space) roots grown hydroponically have all the nutrients they need delivered right to them, allowing plants to be grown just inches away from each other thereby increasing the number of plants you can grow in your allotted space.

Because hydroponics takes up less space, the prospect for growing food indoors year round becomes more practical. On a small scale you can get away with using lights and since you're inside your home, you've already got the necessary heat. Because the nutrient solution is so exact, you will need to spend more time taking care of measurements and the system itself. Plants that are grown indoors in soil usually just need water and maybe some fertilizer periodically. Soil grown plants are more forgiving if you skip maintenance for a day or two. When you use nutrient solution (depending upon the type of hydroponic growing method you use) you have to check the pH and nutrient solution frequently if you are growing on a large scale.

There are other advantages to hydroponic growing. No soil means no weeds to pull, no tilling, and no soil borne diseases. Hydroponics actually uses less water than soil gardening because no water is wasted or consumed by weeds. By providing exact nutrient requirements, plants grow more rapidly and produce greater yields.

It's important to remember that, although hydroponics is much more efficient and generally more environmentally friendly, it tends to lack the ability to evoke emotional closeness with the earth and nature. At the end of the day there's something to be said for the emotional high one experiences when getting their hands, knees and clothes dirty, which only soil can do. ☼



in the gardens

Cutler Street, Schenectady

From the beginning, the neighbors loved it. Sure, they weren't exactly sure what 'it' was, but it was better than the vacant lot that had been left for years since the house on that location burnt down. They watched as the hedgerow and trees were removed. On a couple of cold November days, earthmovers took out rocks and rubble and the ground was plowed. Then mysterious piles of soil were trucked in one at a time. When a fence was erected and a shed installed, the neighbors knew something was happening. As we were fastening contact information signs to the fence on a freezing winter day, a neighbor finally stopped us to ask, "Is this going to be a garden?" Our first gardener had come forward, setting the tone for what would become a fantastic first season at the new Cutler Street Community Garden.

The Garden, located on the corner of Cutler Street and Sixth Avenue, is the first community garden in Schenectady's Mont Pleasant neighborhood. With this site, there are now seven community gardens in the City of Schenectady including three in Hamilton Hill, one in the Vale neighborhood, and two at Steinmetz Homes.

Spring at the Cutler Street Garden started off strong as volunteers from Schenectady's Promise helped us spread 88 cubic yards of garden soil over the new site. A picnic table was built by the Education Opportunity Center in Troy and delivered by CDCG, a new grape arbor installed, and the shed was stocked with tools. Now all we needed were the gardeners. During one of our garden preparation days in the spring, we signed up folks for five plots. Most of these gardeners were just walking by hoping to see some action in the garden in order to find out what they needed to do to be a part of it. We had no idea the excitement folks held for the garden once they saw it being cleaned-up and readied for the season.

One of the new gardeners, Gini Walters, lives in an apartment and has never had her own garden before. When she saw a CDCG flyer, she called us for information, took a trip over to the Cutler Garden and decided this was the place to give it a shot. Although it is "a lot of hard work", Gini says she "loved going over and seeing the plants grow" and witnessing the fruits of her labor, especially when the tomatoes started popping out. "I was like a kid in a candy shop."

By seasons end there were eight households using most of the 13 available plots that were overflowing with fresh food: beans, tomatoes, basil, swiss chard, and spinach to name a few. Many of the gardeners are no strangers to the soil and it certainly showed. That knowledge must have rubbed off on some of the newer gardeners as their harvest



Cutler Street lot before garden development.

was almost as good as the veterans. The Garden *must* look good enough to eat as more and more people seem to be inquiring about it. According to some of the gardeners, nearly every time they are in the garden a new person walks by and asks, "What is this all about?" Gini said she had so much swiss chard that one of the neighbors ended up with a couple of big bags full on several occasions. The neighbor seemed to like the greens so much she wants to get a plot this spring.

Stories of help and community caring also evolved at the Cutler Garden. When our first gardener, Mr. Costa, became ill, fellow gardener Rookmum Parmesar, who also lives next door, lent a hand and helped Mr. Costa plant and maintain his plot while he was getting back on his feet. Another gardener, Cathy Rogers, who is involved in the local Boys and Girls Club, took two plots so that the kids could see what it was like to witness food production firsthand. Already the garden is fostering a sense of community.

It is clear to us that the Cutler Street Community Garden has a bright and bountiful future in Schenectady's Mont Pleasant neighborhood. ☘



in the gardens



Arthur T. Scott Memorial

This garden located on the corner of Plum and Franklin Streets in Albany's Historic Pastures Neighborhood received a fresh coat of paint thanks to volunteers from Key Bank for their *Make A Difference Day* project. About 30 individuals came out, with paintbrushes in hand, to give the shed and fence a facelift.

Downtown, Troy

Over the past few years the Downtown Garden on 5th Avenue and Ferry Street in Troy has been looking fantastic. The front beds have been meticulously cared for, the plots are producing like crazy, and the garden has garnered much interest from those passing by. Coordinators Bram and Rhonda van Heuveln have been working hard to



get the gardeners involved in the clean-up days and helped initiate a Squash Hunger plot this past season at the garden. Spearheaded by gardener Chris Sohn, chicken wire is being dropped a foot down along the fence line to help keep out the pesky rabbits and woodchucks. The garden is located on the corner of 5th Avenue and Ferry Street directly adjacent to the Congress Street corridor where major redevelopment plans are underway. We hope that as the plan moves forward, the garden will maintain its high profile and continue to provide downtown residents with a place to grow their own food.

~Wish List~

Chainsaw	Perennial Plants
Garden Hoses	Pole Pruner
Garden Tools	Pruners/Loppers
Gas Lawnmowers	Watering Cans
Gas Weedwackers	Wheelbarrows/Carts

NEWS OF NOTE

Corliss Park, Troy

With support from Health Research Inc.'s Disability and Health Program, the Corliss Park Community Garden is now accessible to all! Newly paved ramps and walkways and raised beds have been installed so anyone can garden organically. Please contact us if you are interested in learning more about this new opportunity. ☘

11th and Eagle, Troy

Many thanks to Howard Stoner for helping us replace the garden's leaky shed roof (in addition to ALL of his other help during the year repairing equipment, rototilling, snow plowing...) Special thanks to John Husson for his expertise and hands-on assistance with this roof project! ☘

Leonard Place, Albany

Thanks to support from the City of Albany, gardeners will be greeted by a new, easier-to-open gate next season! ☘

Cutler Street, Schenectady; Edward Street, Cohoes; and Sand Street, Albany

To everyone who gardened in these new sites this year: You did a great job of turning an empty plot of land into a beautiful and productive garden. ☘

IN MEMORY

Remembering our gardening friends who recently passed away...

Jason Doeg - Leonard Place Gardener

L.C. Foster - longtime Hudson and Livingston Avenue Gardener



squash hunger - modern day gleaning

By: Sara Worden

Above my kitchen sink hangs a water stained cheap reproduction of Jean François Millet's painting *The Gleaners*. The three women hunched beneath a setting sun gathering the leftover harvest acts as a reminder to me of the never-ending abundance of my garden and the importance of assuring that none of it goes to waste. The only problem is that I don't live in rural France and traditional "gleaning" or gathering after the harvest, which is encouraged in the bible, doesn't seem to be really popular in downtown Albany. These days, even with their small urban plots many gardeners become overwhelmed with the abundance of vegetables. While the next-door neighbors may have had enough tomatoes and your family may be sick of squash, there are many hungry families and children in the Capital District that want and need more fresh nutritious produce.

Thankfully, modern methods for dealing with excess continue to be worked into our social framework. Our Squash Hunger Program, now in its second year, redistributed almost 12,000 pounds of food throughout the region. Capital District Community Gardens, in partnership with Food Pantries for the Capital District have put into



effect a food distribution network that gets homegrown produce into the hands of hungry and nutrient-deprived residents of our area. The Squash Hunger Program, which began in July and ran until late October, distributes surplus produce that is grown and donated by home and community gardeners to local charitable agencies including food pantries, day care centers and soup kitchens. These agencies then provide the produce to those in need or turn the donations into healthy and nutritious meals for those who otherwise would not have access to high quality fruits and vegetables. America's Second Harvest estimates that more than

900,000 New Yorkers rely on Emergency Food Programs such as soup kitchens and food pantries each week, a number that includes an increased amount of children during the summer when school-provided meals are not available. CDCG began the Squash Hunger Program to help combat this problem in the Capital Region.

The response from the community has been awesome. At our office, which was one of twelve drop off sites in the area, we saw hundreds of pounds of delicious produce get dropped off and then distributed to local food pantries. Through our doors, three sisters (pictured here) came in with squash from their grandmother's garden, college groups with 60 pounds of fresh picked apples, and many community gardeners who made harvesting and donating their excess part of their daily routine. Thanks to all who participated in keeping the tradition of gleaning alive. Keep an eye out next spring for information on where to donate your extra produce. ☘



Special Thanks to our Squash Hunger Supporters & Partners

SPONSORS: Gazette Newspapers, Honest Weight Food Co-Op, Metroland, News Channel 6-WRGB, NYS DOH-Healthy Heart Program, Stewart's Shops, Times Union

Drop-Off Location Partners: Cafe Nora, Delmar Market Place, Hilltowns Community Resource Ctr, Honest Weight Food Co-Op, L & S Garden Center, Liquid Assests Coffee & Tea Co., Nichol's SuperValue, Niskayuna Food Co-Op, Spindle City Market, Troy Farmer's Market, Uncommon Grounds

And . . . Food Pantries for the Capital District



the year of the woodchuck

By: Allison Pratt-Szeliga

Woodchucks (*Marmota monax*) were everywhere this summer - by the side of the road, under sheds, in gardens and fields. The woodchucks (also called groundhogs) that dined in many of our community gardens were very bold and ignored humans as they chomped their way through row after row of veggies.

Woodchucks are stocky mammals, with short, strong legs and a short bushy, almost flattened tail. Their fur ranges from light to dark brown with lighter guard hairs, giving them a frosted appearance. The feet are dark brown to black; the front feet have long, curved claws for digging burrows.

Woodchucks are excellent diggers; they dig both simple and complex burrow systems. The depth and length of the burrow varies depending upon the type of soil. Woodchuck dens can be up to five feet deep and 50 feet in length with at least two entrances. Their burrows consist of nesting quarters for sleeping and raising young and even a toilet to keep the chamber clean. They can be seen early morning or late afternoon and are one of the few mammals classified as a true hibernator.

If you begin to notice mysterious losses in your garden, first try to discern whether this is actually the work of woodchucks. If your plants have been neatly clipped, a woodchuck or rabbit has probably been treating your cabbage like a lunchtime buffet. If the leaves have a ragged appearance, it is more likely that a deer has browsed your garden. If a 10–12" hole appears in the ground or under your shed with mounds of dirt outside of it, you can bet that a woodchuck has moved in.



HOW TO EVICT THEM:

Catch them before they reproduce with a Havahart Trap

- Late winter and early spring are excellent times for trapping woodchucks. Woodchucks active in early spring will produce the next generation later that year. Catching one woodchuck in March could eliminate five in June. Early trapping also has tactical advantages. Consider the barren landscape in March. Woodchucks will be desperate for food due to the absence of vegetation. Your bait will be irresistible.

- The Havahart trap is a wire cage with a door and tripping mechanism. The tripping mechanism is baited and the door rigged so as to close behind the unwitting prey. Bait your trap with salad greens, whole kernel corn, carrot tops, apple core, potato, beans, pea pods or cucumber. You should try to catch them at the source, so locating the woodchuck's burrow is important. The best place to set your trap is just outside the burrow hole, 5 to 10 feet away from it at most.

Pretend there's a predator nearby

- Trick the woodchuck into thinking there is a predator nearby by dumping used kitty litter down the entrances of their burrows. This, in combination with digging around their entrances, gives the appearance of a potential threat.

Erect barriers around your garden

- Chicken wire fencing can provide some protection against woodchucks. The fence should be 3 to 4 feet high with a buried portion at least one foot deep. Leave the top 12-15" of chicken wire unattached to fence posts and bend it at a 45-degree angle. The buried portion of the fence should be placed at a 90-degree angle with the bottom six inches pointing away from the garden to fend off persistent diggers.

Note: If you are a community gardener, you must talk to CDCG staff **BEFORE** erecting fencing in your garden plot.

Get rid of those brush piles

- Woodchucks traditionally build their burrow near thickets, fields, and woodland edges. Eliminating brush piles and similar habitat near your garden helps remove hiding places.

Peaceful coexistence with woodchucks is entirely possible. Like all woodland creatures, woodchucks are just looking for a place to live and eat and unfortunately, find our free meals too enticing to pass up. ☘



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Sharon DiLorenzo	Robert Pastel	Heuveln

Special Thanks To: Bloomin' Flower Cards, Emma Willard Students, Goold Orchard, The Irish Mist

Street Tree Planting Volunteers ~

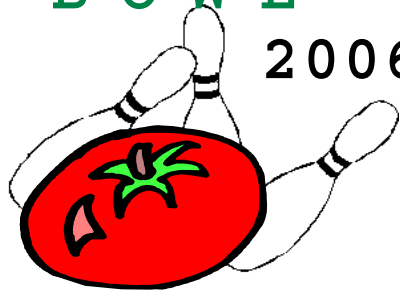
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Jonathan Ouckama	Karen Pierino

Tracey Farley and students from Rensselaer High School
Rebecca Leach and students from Cohoes High School
Jon Getbehead and students from Troy High School

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volunteer - you'll be glad you did!

Each year volunteers and interns play an important role in the success of Capital District Community Gardens' work. This past season, we were very lucky to have two interns and a handful of regular volunteers who made a difference by giving their time to CDCG. One of our new volunteers is Gail Hordines who has been a huge asset to us since she began volunteering as an administration assistant this summer. Gail is a new gardener at the Tech Park site and decided that she wanted to get involved with CDCG in other ways. Gail spends a couple of hours a week at our office and has become a very welcomed face. She is always willing to help out with whatever we have going on and brings a creative attention to everything she does.

Whether helping with mailings, updating our database, researching a special project or grant, or working in the gardens, our volunteers and interns play an active role in making a difference with their time. Join the Community Gardens' team by volunteering in the office, out in the gardens or on a committee. Internships are also available throughout the year. Please call Sara at 274-8685 or email her at info@cdcg.org for more information. ☘



Capital District Community Gardens is extremely grateful to all of our supporters who make the work we do possible. (Donations received June - November 2005)

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on the table

This is a great recipe for your late season harvest. It blends the sweetness of squash with the bitterness of spinach.

Butternut and Spinach Lasagna

Vegetable Filling:

- 2 tsp. olive oil
- 3 c. chopped leek (about 4)
- 1 Tbs. chopped fresh or 1 tsp. dried rubbed sage
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 5 c. butternut squash, peeled and cubed (1/2 -inch)
- 1/2 c. dry white wine
- 1/2 c. water
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 10-oz. frozen chopped spinach (thawed, drained & squeezed dry)

Sauce:

- 3 Tbs. all-purpose flour
- 2 1/2 c. 1% low-fat milk
- 1/4 c. fat-free cream cheese
- 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
- c tsp. black pepper

Remaining Ingredients:

- 1 1/4 c. shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
- 3/4 c. shredded sharp provolone cheese
- 12 cooked lasagna noodles




Vegetable Filling: Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add leek, sage and garlic; sauté 5 minutes. Add squash, wine and water; cover and cook 20 minutes or until squash is tender, stirring occasionally. Stir in pepper and spinach.

Sauce: Place flour in a large saucepan, and gradually add milk, stirring with a whisk until blended. Place over medium heat; and cook until thick (about 10 minutes), stirring constantly. Remove from heat; add cream cheese, nutmeg, and pepper, and whisk.

Combine cheeses and set aside. Spread 1/2 cup sauce in the bottom of a 13 x 9-inch baking dish coated with cooking spray. Arrange 3 noodles over sauce; top with 2 cups vegetable filling, 1/2 cup cheese mixture, and 1/2 cup sauce. Repeat the layers, ending with noodles. Spread remaining sauce over noodles. Cover and bake at 400° for 30 minutes. Uncover and sprinkle with 1/2 cup cheese mixture, and bake an additional 10 minutes before serving. Yield: 8 servings.

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