



1/11/21 Email to BCGA. "I have watched 'A Garden Experience —Growing Organic' numerous times and find it to be an invaluable source of inspiration and information in regard to community gardening. "How exciting that your film, and now podcast, have impacted those in the U.K. as well! It's so refreshing to see something so pure and good spreading around the world at such an unsettling time."
 - Chelsea, Fisher's Island, New York

January-February 2021

British Garden Show Features Charmaine Nymann Garden

In December, the Charmaine Nymann Community Garden was featured on an hour-long British radio show called "Digging the Dirt – The Allotment Show with Russ and Jake".

Show hosts Russell Parry and Jake Cosford had seen the 30 minute film about the garden, "A Garden Experience – Growing Organic" streaming at <https://amzn.to/3piMIPq> and were so enthusiastic about it that they got in touch with BCGA to ask if they could do a show about it.

They interviewed Karen Stith and filmmakers Nancy Bentley and John Atkinson about the operation of the garden and the making of the film. Anyone who has seen the film will enjoy hearing Nancy and John talk about their experiences in the garden as they spent two years collecting film of the gardeners and hearing their personal and garden stories.



Russell and Jake both rent "allotments", a form of community garden in the U.K that dates back to 1809 when Free Gardens were established in Great Somerford to enable the poor to grow food. The gardens were extended and called "Victory Gardens" during WWII. The land is owned by the municipality.

Russell lives in Lancashire, where he is employed as a food safety consultant. Jake, a teacher at a school for disabled youth, lives and gardens in Derbyshire. Jake has a large allotment, with five greenhouses and outdoor growing space as well.

Their monthly show about allotment gardening has become one of the most popular gardening shows on radio not only in the U.K., but also in New Zealand. The two met while playing in a band and discovered their mutual passion for digging in the dirt. For more about the show, see their website at: <https://bit.ly/36akorh>

Russell and Jake were particularly interested in exploring the way the film captures the relationship between the gardeners and the land and what the experience of gardening in community means to the gardeners.

The December 19th show is available is available as a free podcast at: <http://apple.co/2J7QZFS>

Plots Available

Individuals interested in renting a plot at the garden are asked to call Karen at (719) 634-4433 as soon as possible to get registration information.

Plots available for new gardeners are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis, starting on March 1.

Plot sizes and fees are:
 20 feet x 20 feet \$ 75.00
 20 feet x 40 feet \$120.00

The plot fee includes water and spring tilling. First year gardeners pay a \$25 cleanup deposit which is returned if the plot is completely cleared off at the end of the season.

The garden is scheduled to open on April 17, weather permitting, and will close on October 17. More information can be found on its website: www.bearcreekgardens.org.

Starting Seedlings Indoors

For advice about starting seedlings under lights, first check out the chart of planting times for starting vegetables indoors in the BCGA Handbook at



pages 22-23 and seed starting information at pages 25-27. The Handbook can be found on the garden website.

Follow this link for an article about growing seedlings by the CSU Extension Service: <https://bit.ly/39e4xt>.

For a good article on growing microgreens indoors for salads, see: <http://bit.ly/2SDF0R6>.



Russell and Jake were surprised to learn that there are no storage sheds at our garden (because it is located in a public park) This December photo shows sheds, one of which was a WWI air raid shelter, at Russell's allotment community in Lancashire.

Garden Calendar

The February Potluck and March Garden Class are postponed until 2022.

April 10-11 — Orientation for New Gardeners on Zoom

April 17 — Garden Opens (weather permitting)

May 29 — Plant and Tool Sale

June 22—Potluck Dinner 5:00 p.m. Outdoors. Details to be announced.

Social Distancing Requirements, including masks, will continue to be in effect at the garden in 2021.



“A Garden Experience – Growing Organic” is continuing to stream on Amazon at <https://amzn.to/3pjMIPq>

The price went up slightly after the first of the year, to \$1.99 for one showing and \$4.99 for purchase. Alternatively, the DVD of the film can be purchased for \$20 from the distributor, Chip Taylor Communications: <https://www.chiptaylor.com> .

Bear Creek Garden Association

BCGA runs the Charmaine Nymann Community Garden (CNCG) located in Bear Creek Regional Park in Colorado Springs, Colorado. It is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit corporation.

Individuals can rent plots to grow organic vegetables for personal use and donation to friends and charities.

Contact us: Karen Stith 634-4433

Email: bearcreekgardenscs@gmail.com

Website: www.bearcreekgardens.org

Facebook:

Bear Creek Garden Association

Gardeners Recommend Favorite Seed Sources

On a winter day, go online and browse the seed company websites that are recommended by some of our BCGA gardeners. It will be fun to try something new this year.

Be aware that varieties adapted to the dry, high altitude conditions in Colorado Springs come from seed companies in the Southwestern U.S.

An example of such a small, farm-based seed development company is High Desert Seed and Gardens, located in Montrose, Colorado.

<http://www.highdesertseed.com>

Baker Creek Heirloom Seed Co. (Mansfield, MO) Provides rare and unusual heirloom vegetable varieties. They publish a stunning printed catalogue: <https://www.rareseeds.com/>

Burrell Seed Co. Colorado's oldest seed house, founded by D.V. Burrell in 1896. Vegetable varieties suited to Colorado include Rocky Ford melons. <https://burrellseeds.us>

Johnny's Selected Seeds (Maine) Huge list. www.johnnyseeds.com

Kitazawa Seed Company, (Oakland, CA) America's oldest seed company, specializing in Asian vegetables since 1917. One of the best. <http://www.kitazawaseed.com>

Native Seeds/SEARCH (Tucson, AZ) A seed-saving and sharing cooperative that focuses on plants native to the southwest. It promotes agricultural diversity in the southwestern U.S. and northern Mexico. <https://www.nativeseeds.org/>

Penn and Cord Mountain Seeds. (Westcliffe, CO) Penn and Cord Parmenter have been developing vege-

“It May Feel Like Winter, But It’s Time to Shop for Seeds”

The 2021 garden season has begun, with the arrival of seed catalogues and updating of the many beautiful websites offering seeds online.

Here’s a *New York Times* article describing the way seed companies were swamped with orders last year as the pandemic triggered intense interest in Victory Gardens. The journalist urges gardeners to shop early for their seeds in 2021. See <http://nyti.ms/3oj3htx>



Seeds From Italy Online Catalogue 2020

tables suited to Colorado mountain growing in Westcliffe for many years. They’re well known in the Colorado gardening community. Go to website: www.pennandcordsgarden.com/

Pueblo Seed & Food Co. (Pueblo, CO) (Formerly known as Farm Direct Organic Seed) from Hobbs Family Farm and other growers in the Arkansas River Valley east of Pueblo and in Northern New Mexico. Seed is certified organic, open pollinated and non-GMO. (Rick’s Garden Center is expecting to carry it again this year.) www.farmdirectseed.com

Seed Savers Exchange (Decorah, Iowa) Provides heirloom, untreated, non-hybrid, non-GMO seeds. SSE identifies varieties that are not commonly available to the public and makes every effort to offer these varieties in its catalog and Exchange. See: www.seedsaversexchange.org

Seeds From Italy Imported Italian favorites from veteran seed company Franchi. Small catalogue, excellent seed. www.growitalian.com

Territorial Seed Company (Oregon) Organic seeds, also garden supplies. www.territorialseed.com

Terroir Seeds (Chino Valley, AZ) Heirloom and open pollinated seed. Since 1993. Good Garden advice. Sign up for monthly seed newsletter. www.underwoodgardens.com

There is more information on seed companies in the BCGA Handbook.

Handbook Renovation by Master Gardener is Complete

BCGA gardener Mary Beth Edwards has spent significant time this winter reviewing and revising the BCGA Handbook. Some of the older sections have been revamped, with



Lady Bug—adult, eggs, larva

more information and much better photographs. Tables are clearer and easier to read and there are links to multiple websites.

Mary Beth is a member of the nationwide Master Gardener program, having completed her training in Tennessee. When she and her husband moved to Colorado Springs in August, 2017 she quickly located the community garden and rented a plot. The next spring. Those who have plots nearby have enjoyed her cheerful energy and friendliness, as well as her good advice (but you have to ask for it!)

BCGA thanks Mary Beth for making the Handbook more informative and complete, and for her careful attention to detail. This renovation was long overdue. Gardener comments are welcome.

The handbook is now available as an Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) file, which will be sent to all gardeners with their plot assignments. It will also be shared with the public on the garden website .

Garden Badge Provides Discount

Now is a good time to shop for supplies and get tools sharpened before the spring rush. Remember to show your 2020 garden badge at checkout to receive these discounts:

- Rick’s Garden Center 10%
- Good Earth Greenery 10%
- Ace Hardware (Uintah Gardens only) 15% on purchases and 50% on tool sharpening.

BCGA thanks our friends at these garden centers for offering the discounts. The 2020 badge will be accepted until the garden opens on April 17, when the 2021 badges will be distributed to current gardeners.

Starting on April 17, gardeners must show the new badge to get a discount.

Pandemic Shortages

So many people have started growing vegetable gardens during the pandemic that garden shops were overwhelmed in the spring and summer of 2020.

Not only seeds, but also garden tools and equipment were in short supply. It’s reasonable to assume that this will continue this spring. It would be wise to purchase seeds, seed starting trays, Walls-O-Water, Remy, weed fabric, bean poles, hand tools and hoses soon.

Garden Classes Offered Online this Year

Some of the garden classes that are usually offered in person are going online in 2021. Here’s a sampling.

Denver Botanic Gardens

Amazing Vegetables A to Z—a series of four 2/12 hour classes online starting at 9:30 a.m. on March 17, March 24, March 31 and April 7. They cover 1. Planning; 2. Planting; 3. Extended Gardening; 4. Pests, Problems and Harvesting. The catalog says:

“This is the class that will hone your skills as an amazing vegetable gardener. It is designed to take beginners to a new level and remind intermediate gardeners of the success strategies that always work when we go off course and forget the science of what got us to success in the first place.”

You can take the entire series (\$120 for non-members and \$110 for members) or sign up for single classes (\$35). Sign up soon at: <https://bit.ly/2KL8v3k>

CSU Extension—El Paso County

Offers “Lunch & Learn” classes online at noon on Wednesdays for \$10.00. The session is also recorded, can be watched later.

Feb. 3 – Gardening in Colorado for Newcomers

Feb. 10 – Planning Your Vegetable Garden From the Ground Up

Feb. 17 – Starting Seeds Indoors

Sign up: <http://bit.ly/3iMDDfr>

Phelan Gardens

Phelan Gardens is not doing classes, but will be posting some videos online. Keep an eye on their website: <http://phelangardens.com/>

Help Us Bring the Goats Back in 2021 — Become a Friend of the Goats — Donate to the Goat Fund

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phones: (home) _____

(cell) _____

E-mail address: _____

Please make checks payable to Bear Creek Garden Association. BCGA is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

Mail to Bear Creek Garden Association, Post Office Box 38326, Colorado Springs, CO 80937