



March-April 2020

## Message to our Gardeners

### COVID-19

The Bear Creek Garden Association offers sympathy to those who have experienced illness in their families, death of a beloved family member or friend, loss of work and income, and anxiety over the uncertainty that lies ahead. Because gardening is a wonderful, healthy outdoor activity, we are hoping to open the garden, on April 25<sup>th</sup>, or perhaps after some delay.

As of Tuesday, March 30, there is no way to know how the pandemic will affect our community a month or two months from now.

### Notes:

The New Gardener Orientation scheduled for April 4 has been cancelled. Alternative ways to provide this orientation are being considered.

In order for the garden to be open, Bear Creek Park has to be open.

Anyone unable to garden because of COVID-19 can receive a plot fee refund, even after opening day.

Please practice social distancing in the garden, and avoid sharing tools.

The June 6th plant sale is still on the calendar but may have to be changed or cancelled. (N.B. this is a new date.)

We will continue to keep you informed and we ask that you keep us informed, too, about how this virus situation is affecting you and your family.

If you have comments or ideas to share, please send an email to: [bearcreekgardenscs@gmail.com](mailto:bearcreekgardenscs@gmail.com)

Our good wishes to everyone in this difficult time,

Board of Directors  
Bear Creek Garden Association

## 2020 Garden Badge Features Cashmere Goat



The new CNCG badge shows one of Lani Malmberg's cashmere goats eating a branch of teasel, photographed on a snowy November day at the garden. Thank you to Bill Walter of Creative Awards who has been providing our badges for many years.

Gardeners purchase badges and keys for \$2.50 each on Opening Day.

### Garden Center Discounts

The garden centers that provide discounts to our gardeners will honor the 2019 badges until the 2020 badges become available. The badge must be shown at checkout to receive the following discounts.

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

Rick's Garden Center—632-8491  
[www.ricksgarden.com](http://www.ricksgarden.com) — Currently open for ordering by phone and curbside pickup. Re-open to walk-ins and Nursery on April 11.

Good Earth Garden Ctr. — 473-3399  
[www.goodearthgardencenter.com](http://www.goodearthgardencenter.com)  
Current limits: 10 visitors on the property at a time; 2 inside the store. Call to place an order for curbside pickup.

## Notes for New Gardeners

The early bird rarely gets the worm at the Charmaine Nymann Community Garden!

Planting out cool weather seedlings such as broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage and kale purchased in a garden shop is OK in the last week of April, but they must be covered with a plastic milk jug or other protection until they start to grow vigorously. Get jugs by dumpster diving at Starbucks.(!) Cut off the bottom and a little of the top, stake down in the garden so they don't blow around. Don't use clear plastic containers — they heat up too much on a sunny day.

Don't hurry into planting tender tomato, pepper, eggplant and tomatillo plants too early, when sub-freezing temperatures are still likely in our area. Tender plants can be set out around the first of June. Likewise, hold off on planting seeds for beans, squash and corn until the soil has a chance to warm up. Chilling can permanently damage these vegetables. They may survive, but they probably will not produce well.

The BCGA handbook is being mailed to new gardeners in early April. It lists recommended planting dates for different vegetables. Be sure that any plant purchased in a garden shop is protected until it settles in.

Wall of Water. Experienced CNCG gardeners know that a tomato plant must be protected with a Wall of Water in order to survive and thrive at this garden. Peppers love them too.

Sun, wind and cool temperatures will take a heavy toll on greenhouse-raised plants that are not provided with this protection.

Wall of Water protectors (the brand name product is best) are in short supply everywhere as of April 1. Dan Hopper at Rick's will carry an alternative product from Dalen called Season Starters. Check this product out online at <https://bit.ly/39uG93S> Dan expects stock to arrive soon and is accepting phone orders for Season Starters He says they are not available in red.

Garden Calendar

- Apr 25 — Opening Day (If possible)
- May 16 — Workday 8 a.m.—noon
- June 6 — Plant and Tool Sale  
(new date)
- Jun 16 — Fundraiser for the Goats at  
Goat Patch Brewing  
Company
- Aug 17 — Summer Potluck

Plots are Available

Anyone interested in renting a plot at the Charmaine Nymann Community Garden can call Mary Smithey at (719) 375-5224 or Karen Stith at (719) 634-4433 soon to get registration forms.

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

Plot sizes and fees are:

- 20 feet x 20 feet \$ 75.00
- 20 feet x 40 feet \$120.00

For more information, see the BCGA website: [www.bearcreekgardens.org](http://www.bearcreekgardens.org).

FYI—Bathrooms Closed

As of March 31, Bear Creek Park is open, but the bathrooms are closed until further notice.

Bear Creek Garden Association

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

Members of the public can rent plots to grow organic vegetables for personal use and for donation to friends and charities.

The gardeners grow and donate thousands of pounds of produce to the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, Colorado Springs Food Rescue and other charities each year.

Contact us: Karen Stith 634-4433  
Mary Smithey 375-5224

Email: [bearcreekgardenscs@gmail.com](mailto:bearcreekgardenscs@gmail.com)

Website: [www.bearcreekgardens.org](http://www.bearcreekgardens.org)

Facebook:

Bear Creek Garden Association

Larry Stebbins Turns to YouTube to Deliver Third Class



After teaching his first two spring vegetable growing classes at Mann Middle School in January and February to enthusiastic audiences of nearly 300 people, Larry Stebbins was obliged to cancel the final class in his three-part series in March because of the coronavirus shutdown.

This intrepid Colorado Springs educator immediately turned to YouTube to provide that class to the community. The following message is from Larry:

Are My Old Seeds Viable?

Seeds stored in a cool dry place can remain good for a long time. Large seeds like squash are famous for longevity; small dry seeds like lettuce and carrots are less so. To test your seeds:

- Moisten a paper towel with water.
- Place ten seeds on the towel.
- Fold up and seal in a plastic bag.
- Keep in a warm place, not in sun.
- Check for sprouts after 3-8 days.

If 6 or less sprout, they might not grow into vigorous plants. Buy new seed. Here's a little video by Joe Gardener: <https://bit.ly/341BIBD>

A Note About Straw

On Opening Day, gardeners can order and pay for bales of straw that are delivered in June. (1 bale for a half plot and 2 for full plot, or more.) The price is usually less than in garden stores. In 2019 it was \$10.00.

"A Garden Experience" is Still Streaming on Amazon

This lovely film about the Charmaine Nymann Community Garden is now streaming on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). The film traces the garden year, and the impact that growing vegetables in a community garden has on the gardeners themselves.

"I am offering my garden class, via YouTube, free to all. It is published in four parts. I am doing this due to the extraordinary events that are happening in our community and around the world. We all need to eat and there is no better way than to grow your own food. Share this series of videos with your friends and family. As always, if you have any garden questions, send an email to: [Larry@thegardenfather.com](mailto:Larry@thegardenfather.com)

"Also for more in depth, timely veggie information, visit my free blog site. Scroll down to the beginning of the seasons to see what I did at that time of year."

Blog: <https://bit.ly/2JpM7bw>  
Website: [www.thegardenfather.com](http://www.thegardenfather.com)

Larry's YouTube Videos  
(each about 15 minutes)

- 1 — Growing Great Warm Season Veggies and More
- 2 — Tomatoes
- 3 — Seed Saving, Corn, Eggplant and Peppers
- 4 — All About Growing Great Squash, Cukes, Beans and More!

Thank you, Larry.

Gardeners Present Class at Bear Creek Nature Center

Gardeners Sharlene Arellano, Bill Harmon Don McFadden and Larry Booth offered tips on seed starting at home, plant protection in early spring and square foot gardening at their annual public garden class at the Nature Center on March 7. Lorri Voss from Rick's Garden Center discussed organic fertilizers and pest control and displayed an array of safe products.

*The Gazette* published a story about this class and the Charmaine Nymann Community Garden in Bear Creek Park on March 18.

See the article at: <https://bit.ly/2UUTJF>

"A Garden Experience"

