



Plots Are Available

Plots are currently available for new gardeners. Call Mary Smithey at 375-5224 or Karen Stith at 634-4433 for registration information.

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

March-April 2021

"The Garden Father" Shares Online Garden Advice

Larry Stebbins, aka "The Garden Father" has been teaching vegetable gardening classes in Colorado Springs for a number of years, packing as many as 300 people into the auditorium at Horace Mann Middle School for four separate sessions each spring. When Covid-19 came along last year, Larry created four videos in lieu of the in-person classes and posted them on YouTube as a gift to the community.

These videos (plus a short one on flowers) have something for everyone, from novices to veteran gardeners.

"Growing Great Warm Season Veggies" <https://bit.ly/30Mf36f>
 Tomatoes <https://bit.ly/3tlGjoo>
 Seed Saving, Corn, Eggplant and Peppers <https://bit.ly/390ZqVV>
 All About Growing Great Squash, Cukes, Beans and More!
<https://bit.ly/3vsEgAS>
 A Little Bit About Flowers in the Garden <https://bit.ly/3rVzA4q>

YouTube carries some of Larry's older videos as well. (Go to www.youtube.com and search for "Larry Stebbins".) Some of them relate to Pikes Peak Urban Gardens, the organization he founded. It built a network of twelve urban gardens.

He also maintains a website at www.thegardenfather.com where he posts regularly on his gardening blog. His book, *Backyard Vegetable Garden Guide*, is available on this website.

Covid Update

The Social Distancing Requirements that gardeners followed last year will continue when the garden opens in April.

Gardeners and visitors are obliged to wear a mask at all times inside the garden fence and must maintain a ten foot distance from each other to avoid spreading the virus.



Larry Stebbins

Larry is a passionate educator and promoter of vegetable gardening. This year he has launched a program to help 40 food-insecure families. See article in January 12, 2021 *Cheyenne Edition* "Colorado Springs Garden Father Launches Backyard Garden Project to Help Food Insecure Families". Go to: <https://bit.ly/3cEs2wa>. Thank you, Larry. You are a much loved and trusted member of the Colorado Springs garden community.

Best Vegetables to Grow in a Community Garden Plot

Some plants require a lot more time and attention than others. Here's a link to a good new article from the Creative Vegetable Gardener website that can help community gardeners make good choices: <http://bit.ly/3loxYqM>

Megan Cain is an avid gardener and enthusiastic instructor. But keep in mind, she is in Wisconsin and we are in the high desert southwest.

Notes for New Gardeners

The early bird rarely gets the worm at the Charmaine Nymann Community Garden! Be careful with early planting. Watch the veteran gardeners

Planting out cool weather seedlings such as broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage and kale purchased in a garden shop is OK in the last part of April, but they must be covered with a plastic milk jug or other protection until they start to grow vigorously. Get jugs by asking/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 in May when 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 updated BCGA Garden Handbook is emailed to gardeners with their plot assignments. It lists recommended planting dates for different vegetables.

Walls of Water. Experienced CNGC 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 plant protectors (the brand name product is best) should be purchased as soon as possible, since they can be hard to find later in the spring. They can be re-used for many years and are available at garden centers, big box stores and also online.

Garden Calendar

April 10-11 — Orientation for New Gardeners on Zoom at 10 a.m. Saturday, 2 p.m. Sunday.

April 17 — Garden Opens (weather permitting)

May 29 — Plant and Tool Sale 9 am

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 Garden Center 10%
- Ace Hardware (Uintah Gardens only) 15% on purchases and 50% on tool sharpening.

The 2021 badges will be available on the day the garden opens



If you have a King Soopers Loyalty (discount) Card you can link that card to Bear Creek Garden Association to help raise funds for the goats, and it costs you nothing. Here’s how:

Get a discount card from the service desk. If you don’t already have an account, go online to: www.kingsoopers.com and set up your personal account. Next, go to “Kroger Community Rewards” at the very bottom of the webpage to link your card to Bear Creek Garden Association. Our number is T1166.

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
Todd Hegert 329-8873

Email: bearcreekgardenscs@gmail.com

Website: www.bearcreekgardens.org

Facebook: Bear Creek Garden Association

2021 Garden Badge Features CNCG Butterfly



The 2021 badge is made from a photo taken at the garden last summer by Heather Moser. Our garden naturalist, Brenda Holmes-Stanciu, has identified it as an Eastern Tiger Swallowtail butterfly. And she says it’s a girl!

Heather commented that the butterfly was really showing off for her as she took photos at the garden.

Plant These to Support Pollinators

Dill, fennel, oregano and parsley support both the immature and adult forms of butterflies.

Some plants that attract bees include alyssum, basil, borage, calendula, cornflower, cosmos, mint, oregano, snapdragon, sage, verbena and zinnias.

More Spring Garden Classes

Phelan Gardens is offering spring garden classes ,both in person and virtually (online):

- Mar 20 -Seed Starting Success
- Mar 27 - Soil Secrets
- Apr 3,4,15 - Structuring Your Garden for Abundance
- Apr 17 - Principles of Organic Gardening
- May 1 - Tomato Lab

The charge per class varies from \$10 to \$25 and in-person slots are limited. More information is at www.phelangardens.com . Located at 4955 Austin Blvd., Colo. Spgs.. Phone 719-574-8058

Plant a Row (or two) for the Zoo and Food Rescue

When planning out what to plant, remember that the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo and Colorado Springs Food Rescue start picking up donated produce every week in the last week of July.

Our Zoo gardener, Kay Gray, has put together a detailed chart of which zoo animals like/love which kinds of vegetables and herbs. This chart appears in the Garden Handbook and will also be posted on the fence once the garden is open.

Short Notes...

Teen Gardeners From Zoo.

The Zoo Education Program will have a plot at the garden this summer where teenage participants will learn about growing vegetables, soil issues, water and ecology. We welcome the leaders, Austin Kennedy and Russell Friedman, and their youthful gardeners.

Horticultural Art Society Huge Spring Sale Will Span Four Weekends

The Horticultural Art Society (HAS) cancelled its May plant sale last year because of Covid. This year HAS is back, with a plan to spread the sale over four weekends (Apr 30—May 22), with stock from multiple growers. The sale features shrubs, native plants, roses, herbs and vegetables. More information is online at: www.hasgardens.org/plant-sale



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

This 30-minute film about the Charmaine Nymann Community Garden was made by local filmmakers Nancy Bentley and John Atkinson. It has been shown at several film festivals. In the US and abroad.

Garden to Classroom—Caterpillars, Veggies Bring Lessons to Kindergarten

My name is Brenda Holmes-Stanciu and I have been a Bear Creek Gardener for over 10 years. I began through the encouragement of Kay Gray, who was a frequent volunteer in my kindergarten classroom. She would share pumpkins and carrots with my class (and yummy zucchini bread with me). My now teenage daughters were then given space in my ½ plot to just dig and make a mess while I experimented and discovered (through trial and error) better ways to help things grow in this community garden.

As my young daughters grew, they were encouraged and spoiled by both Kay and master gardener, David Ridnour. Dave also came to my classroom with his ENORMOUS pumpkins and then was also wrangled into being a volunteer. These friendships have blossomed and both these individuals continue to be a wonderful influence on my students and my daughters.

As gardeners, we are able to watch the magic of growing things and (hopefully) share our product with our family and friends. However, I wanted to share with you another way the garden has benefitted others. This is an excerpt of my application for the CAST (Colorado Association Of Science Teachers) award. I received the 2019 Elementary Science teacher of the year award for the work I do with my students, and much of it is connected to the garden.

"In the beginning of the school year I am striving to build community with my new group of kindergarteners. I take advantage of the students' interest in living things and their enthusiasm encourages their peer students to become natural scientists. We begin our lifecycle research by smelling various plants until finding the one specific as a food source to a particular butterfly species ("pickle plant" also known as dill).



Black Swallowtail Caterpillar on Dill Plant



Brenda Holmes-Stanciu

"We document the plant and place specimens in our science notebooks. The caterpillars arrive next and with great excitement they record their development. We watch brief videos that show the same species and others so we can discuss color and caterpillar body shape differences. The children discover that they need to draw as a scientist and only use the colors they see, which can be very difficult when you have access to your favorite colors.

"The children make predictions, research the magical metamorphosis, and celebrate when the black swallowtail butterflies emerge. We reflect on their predictions and discuss why the butterflies are all similar in color (rather than being monarchs, etc.). The butterflies enable us to discuss and enjoy activities pertaining to symmetry, camouflage, mimicry, and "watch out I am yucky" warning colors. We perform color mixing experiments to squash paint our own symmetric butterflies while others use cubes and grid paper to demonstrate their current understanding of symmetry. They have acted out the life cycle and beg to perform the bug body part song. We documented the sequence as a first writing activity.

"The class is convinced our writing of the first, then, next, finally last sequence of the butterflies' metamorphosis is the reason our first butterfly was inspired to emerge. We are able to judge this lesson's effectiveness as the students are still making connections and remain very enthusiastic despite the length of time a butterfly's sequence naturally takes and their own age appropriate lack of patience. The students are comforta-

bly using correct science vocabulary because they love the subject matter and want to explain it to each other and visitors to our room. Their drawings clearly demonstrate their understanding of the metamorphosis.

"Our discussions about plant life cycles allow us to begin using descriptive words to attempt to label the ridiculous vegetables from my large garden. Using words such as tiny, enormous, bumpy, smooth, curved, straight (carrots and zucchini and cucumbers work especially well for our comparison discussions), the children help to record what they see and feel. We also will use these vegetables to estimate and then compare weight and measurement, giving us the opportunity to use even more tools such as scales, rulers, and tape measures.

"Pumpkins are named and carried around the classroom like vegetable babies. With no allergies, we



also do taste comparisons: Yellow and purple vs. orange carrots, kale chips versus Swiss chard, lemon cucumber vs. normal cucumber. Tomatillos are peeled and guacamole is enjoyed. We incorporate all the senses, as children are encouraged to be risk takers through their peers' enthusiasm. Kale chips repeatedly become the requested class treat. Throughout all I am modeling the scientific process as I voice my wonderings out loud and we discuss our predictions and best guesses."

So if you see a tall gardener wandering the garden peering into dill and carrot plants, I am on the lookout for "dill worms" for my inquisitive students. No zucchini is TOO big when it is being used to help emphasize the word "enormous", and no carrot is too small when used to emphasize "tiny" or "muy pequeno".

My students, while smelling, feeling, observing and tasting, don't even know how much they are learning.

- Brenda