



"A Garden Experience", a film made at this garden in 2018, is available for streaming at www.amazon.com

May-June 2022

Garden Namesake Passes Away at 92

Charmaine Nymann, for whom our community garden is named, died on April 18 in Phoenix, AZ at the age of 92. An excellent gardener, Char rented her plot at the garden shortly after the El Paso County Parks Department built the garden in 1976.

Several later, the El Paso County Commissioners considered closing the garden because it required more time and expense to maintain than the Parks Department and the Master Gardeners who were managing it could provide. The garden was filled with tools, compost piles, decorations and clutter, considered unsightly by the Commissioners.

Char led a large group of gardeners to a County Commissioners meeting and urged them to let her form a nonprofit corporation, the Bear Creek Garden Association, so that the gardeners could run the garden themselves.

The commissioners agreed, and BCGA was formed in 1985. Char served as president of BCGA and manager of the garden from 1985 until her retirement in the fall of 2013.

Char became concerned about herbicide being sprayed near the garden in 1998 to control noxious weeds. She discovered Lani Malmberg, a new goat herder, when Lani was interviewed on the TV show "Good Morning, America". Char persuaded Lani to bring her goats to Bear Creek Park



Charmaine Nymann with Goats

in 1999 to eat the broad-leaved noxious weeds in twenty acres around the garden so that spraying herbicides in that area could stop. Lani's goats have subsequently returned to the park yearly to manage weeds.

Lani and 600 goats were at the garden in December 2021 for their 23rd annual grazing. Char was very proud of the garden, and was totally in love with the cashmere goats and her goat grazing program.

When Char retired from the garden, the El Paso County publicity office made a short film about her passionate volunteer work which can be viewed on the BCGA website at www.bearcreekgardens.org/history

Click here to read the story that our favorite reporter, Debbie Kelly, wrote for the *Gazette* on April 20, 2022: <https://bit.ly/3vPP0KE>

Please Secure Your Stuff!

Use long pins (6" pins work well) to pin down your landscape fabric and Remay. Pin or stake your milk jugs and stake down the watering can well inside your plot, not along the aisle where it can stick out and trip people.

Secure your belongings, including rolls of wire, so they don't blow around the garden when high winds come up. We have recently had some complaints about damage to other gardeners' plants from blowing equipment.

First Work Day—May 21

Runs from 9:00 a.m.—12:00 noon. Please mark the work days on your calendar – on the third Saturday of each month. Bring your own tools, and sign in and sign out to get credit for work done. At the May workday we'll be weeding around the garden and parking lot and building some berms across east-west aisles. Each person who rents a plot is responsible for doing four hours of volunteer work during the garden season.

Straw Orders Due May 27

Please use straw mulch on your plot. It is not required, but it keeps the soil cooler, retains moisture and makes it easier to walk on the plot without getting shoes muddy. When it is turned under in the fall it contributes vital organic matter to the soil. Plots that have been amended with straw each year are much easier to turn with a shovel in the spring.

If you didn't already order and pay for straw on opening day, mail your check to BCGA, P.O. Box 38326, Colorado Springs, CO 80937 right away. Straw is \$10 per bale. Your check must be received by May 27. Checks received after that date will miss the order and will be returned. Mail at least a week before the deadline preferably at the 8th Street pos office.

The straw will arrive around June 8-9. The bales will be piled on the BCGA plot by the truck gate. Please check your name off on the list on the gate



John Poyzer, Chuck Thompson and David Ridnour moving straw.

when you take your straw and move your bales to your plot promptly.

The bales are barley straw, from Bartlett Hay and Feed Co. It will contain some barley seeds, which will sprout looking like grass. Pull them and put them on your plot as additional mulch. The barley sprouts are much easier to pull than the tough weeds.

Garden Calendar

May 21—First Garden Workday 9:00 a.m.—12:00 noon.

May 28 — BCGA Plant and Tool Sale 9:00—12:00 at the garden.

August 14 — Summer Potluck 12:30 p.m. Gold Hill Mesa Community Room and Patio. Save the Date

Claim Your Discounts!

Show your 2022 garden badge to get discounts on everything at Rick's Garden Center (10%), Good Earth Garden Center (10%) and Ace Hardware in Uintah Gardens (15% on purchases, 50% on tool sharpening).

How Much Did it Rain at the Garden?

The Weather Underground has a weather station near the garden which reports recent rainfall and provides local forecasts. Here is the link: <https://bit.ly/3wHdxjA> Scroll down to the list of "Nearby Weather Stations" and choose Crown Hill Mesa. The site provides frequent updates.

New Helper

Any plot owner who invites a new person to participate in gardening activity on their plot must first provide BCGA with an original signed and notarized Unconditional Release before that person does any work on the plot.

This is a legal liability requirement, and we take it very seriously.

There is one exception: a friend who will water your plot for you while you are out of town on a vacation does not need to sign a release. The friend is not to do anything but water when you are out of town.

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: Todd Hegert 329-8873

Email: bearcreekgardenscs@gmail.com

Website: www.bearcreekgardens.org

Facebook:

Bear Creek Garden Association



There are so many different kinds of kale, curly, strappy, even frilly! Photo by www.adaptiveseeds.com

Plant and Tool Sale—May 28

This event is not open to the general public. It is just for our gardeners, and it's a great opportunity to pick up used tools and equipment.

If you have tools and/or garden equipment to donate, please put them on the BCGA plot on Friday, May 27 or bring them to the sale before 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 28.

If you have extra plants to give away, please bring them to the sale early in the morning before the sale begins so that volunteers have time to put prices on them.

The money raised by the sale goes to the Goat Fund.

FREE SEEDS! Hundreds of packets of vegetable seeds from 2021 have been donated to BCGA. Pick up all the seeds you want at the Plant and Tool Sale. Thank you, Doug!

**A Hidden Gem—
Sunset Greenhouse**

Sunset Greenhouse, located at 1023 Sunset Road in Colorado Springs, was Char's favorite place to purchase tomato and pepper seedlings. They carry a wide range of quality plants in a quaint atmosphere. Many of the plants are hand seeded and are varieties not available elsewhere.

Sunset is a local, family-owned business which has been located in a downtown neighborhood for over 70 years. It is open only in the spring.

Check out its Facebook page, or, to read about its history, go to the website: <https://sunsetgh.com>

Notes for New Gardeners



Dry Soil Conditions – Watering.

When the garden opened, the soil was bone-dry. It had been warmer, windier and drier than usual, making planting difficult. Water your plants thoroughly and often. Do not expect seeds to come up unless they are covered with Remay (fabric) that is pinned down tightly and watered at least once and preferably twice per day.

Planting. When planting broccoli, cabbages, kale, tomatoes, peppers and other plants purchased at garden shops, dig a generous hole, fill it with water and wait for it to soak down, then do that a second time before planting.

Water well after planting. Greenhouse-raised (and home-raised) plants can't stand up to the wind and sun at the garden at first. They must be protected by a wall of water or a milk jug. Plants planted without protection might survive, but they are not likely to thrive and produce well. Beware of cold nights and don't plant too early.

Water. The water at the garden is city water, so you can drink it. Please use water wisely by watering in the morning and evening, not in the heat of the day. Help to keep the BCGA water bill down by not wasting water. The watering rule described in the garden rules is suspended for now, but it is still best to water before 10 or after 4 p.m. Always disconnect your hose when you leave.

Leaks. If your hose is leaking at the faucet (or at the nozzle end) it probably needs a new washer, readily available at ACE Hardware. It's probably not the fault of the faucet! Don't create muddy areas near faucets.

Wire Pins. Some of the wire pins that are used to hold down weed cloth are left in the ground in the fall. Spring tilling can leave them exposed on the surface. Watch for them and pick them up. Don't go barefoot in the garden!

Berms Across Aisles. Please create and maintain berms across the east-west aisles near your plot. They must slow the flow of water in a rainstorm to protect gardeners at the east end of the garden from being flooded.

Clutter in the Spring. Gardeners often leave bags of soil amendments, rolls of wire fencing, piles of stakes and other supplies on their plots during May as they are setting up their plots. Try to get these items set up/spread out as soon as possible so that by the first of June all equipment on the plot is either protecting or holding up a plant.