



Community Gardens of Dane County Community Action Coalition for South Central WI Inc.

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Late Summer E-Newsletter

August 18th, 2010

Special Points of Interest:

- Help cater the new s- letter to community gardeners
- Feed the hungry right from your own garden plot
- Support the community gardens funding increase
- Learn how to make your green thumb even greener

Inside this issue:

Plant A Row For the Hungry Campaign	1,3
Gardens Update	2
Garden Funding Increase	2
Classes Offered	3
Urban Horticulture Day	4
Volunteer Opportunities	4

A New Type of Newsletter

Michelle Shively

As many of you have heard by now, Patty Zehl has come to the end of her VISTA position at CAC. As Patty's replacement, I am excited to be working on the Food Pantry Gardens program as well as the writing of this E-newsletter. In the past it has been a resource for announcements and information about upcoming events. While I do plan to continue making this information available through the newsletter, I would like to shift the focus of the newsletter back to our own community gardens.

Over the past two weeks, I have spent time visiting some of the many community gardens around the Madison area. In my travels and explorations I have discovered what great

diversity of gardens and community groups we have- after all we do have over fifty gardens in Dane County. I would like the Newsletter to become a mechanism of sharing and learning for gardeners and garden leaders. This is where you all come in. I would love to hear from you about what is going on in your garden. Sharing a problem that your garden overcame may help other gardens avoid those issues. I would also love to hear about any personal stories of how the community gardens have impacted your life and communities. Perhaps you may think you have the biggest zucchini in Dane county, and would like to show it off! Your stories are all welcomed, and I look forward to learning about the gardens on a more



Pictured above are massive Hillbilly tomatoes from a plot in the Truax community garden. These beefsteak tomatoes can grow up to two pounds.

personal level, so please email or call me with your information. I can be reached at mshively@cacscw.org or 246-4730 ext. 234.

Use Your Surplus Harvest to Feed the Hungry

Are you running out of room and ideas for all of the squash and tomatoes that keep coming from your garden? CAC has the solution for you! In an effort to increase the summer supply of fresh produce at Dane County food pantries, CAC has introduced the *Plant A Row for the Hungry* campaign (PAR), a national people-

helping-people project initiated by the Gardener Writers Association. Its aim is to enlist the nation's 78 million gardeners in helping feed the hungry by donating fresh produce to area food banks.

It's easy to become a part of the Madison area campaign. Individual gardeners are en-

couraged to grow extra produce. The additional fresh fruit and vegetables are delivered to a local food pantry or meal site by the gardeners or through an organized garden collection. All donations should be clean, good quality and at the correct stage of ripeness.

Continued on page 3.

Gardens Recommended for Funding Increase– Show Your Support!

The Conference Committee for Neighborhood Programs in the city of Madison Community Development funding process has released their preliminary funding recommendations for 2011 and 2012. Recommendations in the Strengthening Madison Neighborhoods category includes **\$56,328** for CAC's Community Garden program. This recommendation reflects an increase of approximately \$12,640 from CAC's 2010 funding allocation. (NOTE: This increase comes after several years of almost flat funding despite significant program growth) Overall this allocation amounts to 1% of the total being granted.

If you believe that this decision to support the fantastic growth

in community gardening is the right one please voice your support!, A **public hearing** for the funding recommendations of the CDBG Committee, Community Services Committee and Conference Committee is scheduled for **September 16th at 5:30 at the Madison Labor Temple, 1602 South Park Street.**

If you are unable to attend or do not like speaking in public, written comments, electronic or otherwise, are welcome as well. They can be sent to: CDBG@cityofmadison.com or to City of Madison CDBG Office. P.O. Box 2985 Madison, Wisconsin 53701-2985

Community Gardens Update

The community gardens staff members at CAC (Jason, Joe, and Nicole) have had a busy summer! Aside from our normal summer activities working with community gardeners and garden leaders, we held two fun leadership development and outreach events in July. On July 12, Bridge-Lake Point-Waunona community gardeners welcomed us into their garden for a garden leaders gathering. BLPW community gardeners led us in a panel discussion of how to help new gardeners succeed, with great ideas and participation from all in attendance. Dr. Brian Hudson from the UW-Madison Plant Disease Diagnostics Clinic talked about plant diseases and treatments for common community garden vegetables. Notes from the gathering were previously sent out over the garden leaders and gardeners' listservs, and can be found by clicking [here](#). If you have an idea for a garden leaders gathering or would like to host a gathering at your community garden, contact Nicole at 246-4730 x208 or nicolec@cacscv.org.

The 8th Annual Community Gardens Bike Tour with Mayor Dave Cislewicz was held Saturday, July 24. Bike tour participants visited four lovely community and food pantry gardens in Madison and Monona – the East High Youth Farm, Glendale Elementary garden, Monona United Methodist Church garden, and St. Stephen's Lutheran Church garden, where church

members and gardeners provided riders with a delicious lunch.

Thank you to all the participants and garden leaders and gardeners for another great tour! For more information on this year's tour, check out Mayor Dave's [blog](#) about the bike tour.

In addition to these events, the summer has been full of work helping new community gardens get up and running and assisting with existing gardens. CAC staff have helped 7 new community gardens begin in 2010 in Madison and surrounding areas – Lindbergh Elementary, Badger Road, Meadowood Baptist Church, Allied neighborhood container garden project, Darbo, McCormick, and Southdale. This now brings the Madison area up to a count of 51 community gardens! The majority of CAC Gardens staff members' time is devoted to working with community gardens that support low-income gardeners, but support is given to many other gardens in need as well.

Nicole has been enjoying her summer time working with youth programs at Marlborough and Triax community gardens. Like most gardeners, the kids really enjoy planting and harvesting (and don't really like weeding), but absolutely love watering the garden! Nicole also has been working with Reindahl community gardeners to successfully expand their garden, adding a new no-till area, and helping two new community gardens, McCormick and Lindbergh, start this spring.

Joe has been working hard to help the Badger Road garden succeed despite their late start this year. On the grounds of Fountain of Life church, this newly revived

community garden involves members of three church congregations, as well as neighborhood residents, the gardeners have been enjoying a great first growing season. Joe has helped the new Southdale gardens off to a good start and has been dividing his remaining time among 10 other existing gardens assisted by CAC, particularly gardens that are under threat of development and facing the need to relocate (St. Paul and Sheboygan).

Jason has been working with Darbo Community Garden which not only provides a space for individual gardeners to delve into their passions for growing their own food, increased self-sufficiency and the pleasure of working outdoors, but also collective garden spaces surround the individual garden plots and provide fresh, *neighborhood-grown* produce to the Salvation Army's Food Pantry. Darbo also participated in an exciting new project called [Off the Block Salsa](#).

The Waunona Community garden had a modest expansion this year, adding approximately 3 additional garden plots to its no-till section, one of which was designated as a shared garden space with produce donated to the Bridge Lake Point Waunona (BLPW) Neighborhood Center

Jason also works with Burr Oaks community garden which expanded this summer and installed a new water system with funding from Madison Community Foundation. A HUGE thank you goes out to everyone that came together to make this much needed improvement for the garden a reality!

Feed The Hungry Cont.

If you would like to participate, but don't feel that your garden produces enough, here are a few simple steps to increase your harvest today and create a surplus for the future:

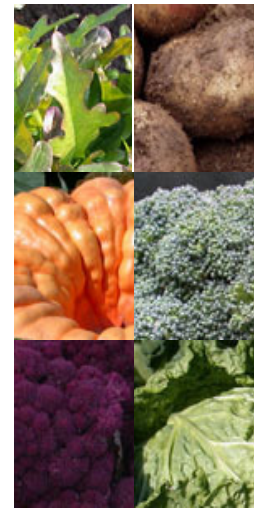
*Wait and harvest more. Let your crops go and grow! Pick 4-inch bean babies for your own table, and let a giveaway portion of the crop mature to 7 and 8 inches. Harvest totals increase significantly when tomato plants are allowed to sucker. This may slow the crop a bit, but it will yield abundance later. For loads of extra cucumbers, zucchini, and squash, allow the plants to mature as 10-inch vegetables instead of harvesting 4 and 5-inchers. The same goes for root vegetables.

*To sustain the extra growth, scratch a little compost or fertilizer into the soil beside the plants designated for increased yields and PAR giving (contact CAC for a list of most needed vegetables).

*Start seeds of the cool-weather vegetables now. The following produce may be started earlier to produce higher yields: lettuce—including mache, arugula, and mesclun mixes; radishes, as well as carrots, parsnips, turnips; and the cabbage group including kale and broccoli.

*A few apples, a snack of tomatoes and a handful of cucumbers may not seem like much, but when the community gardeners join forces, they can deliver big-time!

For a list of local food pantries and meal sites that accept PAR donations or more information on PAR, please contact Michelle Shively, Community Action Coalition for South Central Wisconsin, Inc., Food & Gardens Division, at 246-4730 Ext. 234, mshively@cacscw.org



*UW-Madison
College of*



*Agricultural and
Life Sciences*

Area Classes

Learn about backyard bee-keeping –August 21st

Dane County UWEX Horticulture staff and the Dane County Beekeepers Association are partnering to offer a backyard bee-keeping program to the public. The full-day course will cover beekeeping tasks month-by-month. There will also be some hands-on activities.

The course will be taught at the Dane County UWEX office at 1 Fen Oak Court on Madison's east side from 9:30 to 4pm on Saturday August 21, and the cost is \$40 per person. Space is limited, so registration prior to the day of the program is recommended. Call 608-224-3715 or contact Lisa Johnson at lisa.johnson@ces.uwex.edu to register.

Class: Making Homemade Jams & Jellies - August 21

Learn to make delicious jams and jellies with produce from your own garden or the local Farmer's Market.

Time: 02:00 PM

Location: Christ Memorial Church, 2833 Raritan Rd., Fitchburg

Cost: \$15*

Sponsored By: Fitchburg Fields
For more information: <http://fitchburgfields.org/main/index.php?id=48>

Class: Solar Drying: Veggies, Fruits & Flowers - Aug 24

Time: 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Cost: \$15*

Offered by the West Madison Garden Staff
West Madison Agricultural Research Station Trial and

Demonstration Garden

There is free parking, but a donation is requested. The garden is supported through donations and grants.

For more information: <http://www.cals.wisc.edu/westmad/>

Class: Canning Tomatoes & Salsa - September 4

Learn to can tomatoes and salsa that tastes better than what you get from the store, but come from freshly picked produce from your own garden or the local Farmer's Market.

Time: 09:00 AM

Location: Christ Memorial Church, 2833 Raritan Rd., Fitchburg

Cost: \$15*

For more information: <http://fitchburgfields.org/main/index.php?id=48>





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online: [www.cacscw.org/
gardens/index.htm](http://www.cacscw.org/gardens/index.htm)



Community Action Coalition

CAC is a community action agency, which is a non-profit organization established under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, part of President Johnson's "War on Poverty". Our mission is to develop the economic and social capacities of individuals, families, and communities to reduce poverty in Dane, Jefferson, and Waukesha Counties. Since its founding in 1966, CAC has engaged communities in the struggle to eliminate poverty. By creating and operating a wide variety of programs through specialized divisions, we strive to enhance the skills, knowledge and capacity of people experiencing poverty so they may improve their social and economic circumstances.

Want to Make Your Green Thumb Greener?

Join us this Saturday, August 21st from 10am-3pm for the annual Urban Horticulture Field Day at the University of Wisconsin - Madison's West Madison Agricultural Research Station's - Trial and Demonstration Gardens located at 8502 Mineral Point Rd.

It's a great place to get new ideas and answers to perplexing problems, sample fresh produce, and tour one of the area's most extensive collections of flower and vegetable varieties. CAC will also be there with more information about our community gardens and Plant-A-Row program.

The field day is sponsored by UW - West Madison Agricultural Research Station staff, researchers at the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, University of Wisconsin-Extension staff, and Master Gardener Volunteers. Admission and parking are free.

Get Involved With Madison Area Community Gardens

How Can You Help CAC Community Gardens?

There are many volunteer opportunities available assisting the community gardens in the Madison area. Read more about the [current opportunities](#). For more information, email [Jason Clay](#) or call (608) 246-4730 ext. 209.

Join the City of Madison Community Gardens Committee

The City of Madison Community Gardens Committee (CMCGC) is currently seeking new citizen members to represent community gardeners in Madison. Representatives of certain city committees (Plan, Parks and CDBG), citizen gardeners, and staff (from the Mayor's office and Community Action Coalition) comprise the committee. Membership is open to any Madison resident who has an interest or role in Madison's community gardens. The committee meets monthly (except in the summer months). All meetings are open to the public, with Hmong and Spanish interpreters available to facilitate participation by all attendees.

The CMCGC was established in 2005 and given

the charge of preserving, expanding and enhancing opportunities for community gardening in Madison. The committee works to raise the visibility of community gardening and create better understanding of its many benefits. The committee fosters collaborative partnerships and leverages limited resources by harnessing support for gardens from within the community and multiple units of city government. The Community Gardens Committee provides an invaluable public forum -- a place where garden advocates and city government work together to build a productive and sustainable system of community gardens in Madison.

Next meeting: Tuesday, September 28, 5-6pm
Where: City-County Building, 210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Rm. 108

For more information about the Comm. Gardening Committee: [http://
www.cityofmadison.com/residents/
communitygardens/index.cfm](http://www.cityofmadison.com/residents/communitygardens/index.cfm)

If you are interested in being a member of the City Community Gardens Committee, please contact Nicole Craig at nicolec@cacscw.org or