



The GreenThumb Print

GreenThumb News and Topics of Interest to Community Gardeners in New York City

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The bulletin of GreenThumb, a program of City of New York Parks & Recreation

Gardening with Your Community

Chris Stewart of Berry Street Garden in Williamsburg, Brooklyn does not call himself only a musician, he is an educator as well. He is a teacher at Pratt Institute, but twice a week he spends time in a garden classroom interacting with students from P.S. 84. Chris Stewart is what anyone would call a gardener who is dedicated to his community.

"I wanted to get the school involved with the garden," said Chris. "I want kids to know about their environment".

Many of New York City's young children do not know how food is grown. Chris saw an opportunity for GreenThumb's community gardens to play a special role in providing children a more enlightened view of where their food comes from and debunk the notion that carrots don't naturally grow with plastic wrapped around them. Chris contacted Assistant Principal Pat Jelen who introduced him to Roberto Moskowitz, the Science teacher of P.S. 84. Within weeks, 4 groups of students from kindergarden to 2nd grade were walking down to Berry Street Garden for half an hour of "play time" every Monday and Friday morning. The students spend the half hour digging, planting, watering, mulching, composting and transplanting.

They are amazed at the transformation from seeds to a full-grown plant. "The children just love it," said Roberto Moskowitz. The kids have developed such a love for gardening that they have insisted on continuing their education despite the school year coming to a close. This has inadvertently helped to increase membership at Berry Street Garden where students' parents have joined the garden so their kids can continue gardening outside of school. Of course, the parents have developed a liking to it as well.

Chris Stewart developed an idea that has helped the school and the community at large. The benefits of the partnership between P.S. 84 and Berry Street Community Garden ensures a long-term positive relationship with the school.

Chris Stewart with the help of long term members Jonny Mendez, Tony Caleagno, Tahir, David Kidd, Anika Imago, and Kenny Natton are GreenThumb gardeners who are truly dedicated members of their community.



Students listen intently to the benefits of adding compost to the soil.



Students learn how to plant seeds directly into the soil.



The kids are happily "digging for worms" and learn about the importance of earth worms in the garden.

Brooklyn Borough President Proclaims July 19, 2003 First Quincy Street GreenThumb Garden Day

Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz proclaimed Saturday, July 19th, 2003, "First Quincy Street GreenThumb Garden Second Annual Community Health Fair Day in Brooklyn". Markowitz presented the Proclamation to Herbert Tibbs and the members of the First Quincy Street GreenThumb Garden for, "extraordinary commitment to promoting community health and well-being through the development of responsive and outstanding services for all Brooklynites".

In just three short years, the members of First Quincy St. have established a thriving community garden in their neighborhood. However, it has not been an easy task to outreach to the community. "A lot of people in the area seem so engrossed in survival issues, they don't seem to have enough energy to garden or take care of themselves", says Herb Tibbs, president of the garden.

In time, members of local organizations including an adolescent group home, black veterans group home and Uzima (a residence for persons with HIV/AIDS) joined the garden. Members of these local groups have gardens boxes they tend to that help to enrich their lives.

The Garden's long term goal is to establish themselves as a community resource center. In keeping with this goal, First Quincy Street Garden holds an annual Health Fair in July. "It is hard for people to think about health unless they feel pain," laments Herb. Last year, in the First Annual Health Fair, a local resident got screened for prostate cancer and advised to conduct further tests which revealed he needed surgery to remove the tumors. Thanks to the Health Fair, the local resident is now fine.

The 2nd Annual Health Fair was also a special day to celebrate the opening of the garden's 1,000 gallon capacity rainwater collection system. Herb regards First Quincy St Garden not only as a community resource but also a natural resource. Herb exclaims, "the rainwater collection system is phenomenal because one cannot fathom how much water is wasted when using municipal water. If people could get a picture of the impact this has, they would get a rainwater collection system and water bills wouldn't be so high."

First Quincy Street Community Garden is testament that gardens play a vital role in providing health and welfare services to the community. "I can't believe people can't connect the dots," Herb says.

First Quincy Street gardeners were really surprised when Marty Markowitz presented them with a proclamation. Herb was, "not aware that it was going to happen and it really gave us a boost."

Congratulations to First Quincy Street Community Garden for their well-earned recognition.



Borough President Marty Markowitz (right) presents Herb Tibbs (left) with the Proclamation declaring Saturday, July 19th, 2003, "First Quincy Street GreenThumb Garden Second Annual Community Health Fair Day in Brooklyn".



Members of First Quincy Street Community Garden cut the ribbon on the giant 1,000 gallon capacity rainwater collection system.

Summer of Rain Water Collection Systems

The Water Resource Group have been very busy building the 18 rainwater collection systems they hope to complete by the end of the summer. Since June, Americorps members of New York Restoration Project with material and technical assistance from GreenThumb, Council on the Environment of NYC, Green Guerillas, and the NYC Soil and Water Conservation Group have completed 6 systems.

The Water Resource Group will hold a reception to celebrate the unveiling of a high-tech rainwater collection system designed by New Yorkers for Parks Community Design intern, Sarah Cohen on Tuesday, August 12 at Prospect Heights Community Farm, 252-256 St. Marks Avenue, in Brooklyn. For more information, please contact GreenThumb's Brooklyn Outreach Coordinator Alice Brooke Wilson at (212) 788-8060 or Manhattan Outreach Coordinator Susan Fields at (212) 788-8078.

Scotts Give Back to Grow Awards



Through its Give Back to Grow® corporate caring initiative, The Scotts Company celebrates and honors individuals who take pride in giving back to their communities through gardening. The fourth annual Scotts Give Back to Grow® Awards provide support for — and promote participation in — gardening that grows community pride.

The fourth annual Scotts Give Back to Grow® Awards is now accepting nominations. The deadline for all entries is December 5, 2003. All winners will be announced on or before February 9, 2004.

NOMINATION CATEGORIES

Scotts Classroom Gardener of the Year - Salutes elementary through high school teachers who have integrated a school gardening program into their curriculum.

Scotts Good Neighbor Gardener of the Year - Salutes gardeners who donate produce to feed the hungry in their own communities through Plant a Row for the Hungry program, a national campaign of the Garden Writers Association of America.

Scotts Urban Greenup Gardener of the Year - Salutes volunteers working in an urban area who have successfully used community gardening to address the various challenges of an inner-city neighborhood.

Scotts Community Beautification Gardener of the Year - Salutes volunteers who have helped beautify a main street, park or neighborhood within their city limits, and in the process significantly contributed to community pride.
[Download Nomination Form](#)

PRIZES

Each winner will receive a \$5,000 cash prize and public recognition for their work. Each of two finalists in each category will receive a \$2,500 cash prize and public recognition for their work.

For more information on the Scotts Give Back to Grow® Awards, please call 1-800-551-5971 and ask for a Scotts Give Back to Grow® Awards representative.

GreenThumb Harvest Festival Saturday, September 13 Hattie Carthan Community Garden

Save the date! GreenThumb invites you to celebrate a special year of gardening on Saturday, September 13, at Hattie Carthan Community Garden. As part of the year-long 25th Anniversary Celebration, GreenThumb is putting together extra fun events for the Harvest Festival. Some activities include:

Game Cart

Ice cream cart

The Ballon Man

Music DJ

**Food, food, more food
and more!**

GreenThumb will also be giving Thank-you gifts to gardeners who submit an entry for the Harvest Festival Competition, in addition to the regular prize ribbons.

So please join us and look for more information on the Harvest Festival in the mail!

GreenThumb Gardener Paralee Scott Passes at 77

Paralee (Williams) Scott, long time GreenThumb gardener of Better Community Garden Extension, passed away in early May.

Paralee was a hard-working woman. She worked as a School Aide for the New York City Board of Education and for many years as a Private Nurse for babies. Some of her favorite pastimes were ministering to people, reading and studying her Bible daily with her prayer band members, working in her community garden in which she was the founder and president of and lending a helping hand to whomever needed it.

GreenThumb sends condolences to the family and friends of Paralee Scott. Ms. Scott's presence will be missed.