

Dear gardeners,

Welcome to the 2016 growing season at St. Thomas Community Garden.

This is the first in an occasional series of news and notes that I hope will give us the chance to keep in touch throughout the season.

A few housekeeping items:

- There are hoses at each of the three hydrants for your use. Please be sure to coil the hose when you are finished to keep it safe from the mowers.
- The pile of compost on the concrete pad is for your use in topping off your bed/s. The new beds have all been filled with the leaf mulch, but for best results feel free to add the compost.
- The pile at the west of the garage, covered with plastic, is composted horse manure. It is available for your use. Just be aware that horse manure can be weedy.
- Unfortunately, we do not yet have the capacity to store tools on site. However, you are welcome to use anything you find that is left out.
- Help yourself to the tomato cages stacked beside the garage.
- Please remind children to stay on the paths and avoid walking in the beds or climbing on the bed walls. Invite them to watch for butterflies and other pollinators! See if they can identify the plants they see.
- The paths make a three circuit labyrinth - follow the wide, wood chip path that you enter from the main gate. Soon there will be an information box installed, with labyrinth walking guides and other information.
- We hold monthly work sessions on Saturdays from 10-noon to do general maintenance and improvements. I'll keep you posted on the dates. You are welcome to participate.
- Feel free to let the group know when you will be out of town or otherwise unable to water or harvest your garden plot. There is always someone glad to help cover. Just say the word.
- The fruit trees will need to be watered every week in the absence of rain. If you are willing to be in the "waterer" rotation, please let me know.
- Last one out, please be sure to latch the gate!

Coming events:

- Saturday, April 30 from 10-Noon Tree Planting Demonstration with the Bloomington Community Orchard. We will be planting 8 apple and pear trees donated by the Community Orchard Partner Planting Program. Bring a shovel if you have one. If you plan to attend and are interested in the fruit tree giveaway, contact Aileen Driscoll at partnerplantings@bloomingtoncommunityorchard.org
- May 8 and 15, 9:45-10:45 St. Thomas Annual Plant Sale. Garden and landscape plants and flowers available. Proceeds support ECHO www.echonet.org
- May 21, 10:00-Noon "Haiku in the Garden: A Workshop on Noticing and Wondering". This drop-in workshop for all ages is designed to connect our eyes and our insight with what's happening in the garden. This is a practical garden skill! Led by Bloomington storyteller,

Pamela Grenfell Smith. There is no charge for the workshop. For more information and to register, contact communityseeds474@gmail.com.

Finally, if you have any gardening questions, problems, tips, or plants to share, please feel free to be in touch.

See you in the garden!

Marie F. Fleming

St. Thomas Community Garden volunteer