



## Manhattan Community Gardens

### A Message from the President

I'd like to thank the new board members: Pam Been-Redeker, Jennifer Guilford and Chuck Marr for making the choice to be on the Garden Board and to be the stewards of the MCG. My thanks also go out to the retiring members Jerry Vestweber, Wilma Shuman and Bob Brown, whose contributions will be remembered; I hope they all enjoy 2008 as simple gardeners. 2008 will be my last year on the board, and my first year as President. I'm looking forward to working with my fellow board members in actively contributing to the development of the MCG. My priorities will always be in line with doing whatever I can to represent each gardener, and increasing their success and enjoyment as gardeners in the Manhattan Community Garden.

Growing season is weeks away, and the seed catalogs are piling up...but will the weather cooperate? I'm still planning on having my potatoes in the ground by St. Patrick's Day, if the soil temperature is warm enough. Don't miss the very informative article *Growing Better Potatoes* in this newsletter, written by Chuck Marr, K-State Professor (Emeritus) of vegetable crops. Chuck has agreed to co-chair the Newsletter & Education committee with me, and he has some fabulous ideas to provide our gardeners with current garden information in his weekly new email *Hot Topics*, and secondly in educational opportunities co-sponsored by the Riley County Master Gardeners and taught right in our community garden. To get up-to-date information on the presence of current pests and diseases in our garden, planting dates, notification of deliveries of straw, compost and wood chips and much, much more...be sure to provide your email address during garden sign up.

Another exciting development is the expansion of the *Crop Walk* committee to *Garden Socials & Crop Walk*. One of the board's goals for 2008 is to increase the opportunities for gardeners to get to know one another, and Lynda Bachelor, Chairperson for this committee enthusiastically agreed to take on this responsibility. For more information, don't miss her article in this newsletter, which includes the upcoming 2008 Garden Social dates.

One more long awaited project for 2008 is the creation of three separate 3-bin composting sites scattered throughout the MCG for use by all our gardeners. Jennifer Guilford the Chairperson for the *Compost & Mulch* committee needs help to make this happen. To find out more about her ideas, read the article on committee #1 in this newsletter.

Happy gardening!

→ *Patty Zehl, President Manhattan Community Gardens*



## MCG Dates to Remember:

- **2008 Garden Sign Up for Returning Gardeners**

Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday 7 pm to 8:30 pm

Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>, Saturday 10 am to noon

Join us at UFM to sign up for 2008 garden plots. All plot rental fees, deposits and tilling fees are due at time of registration. Returning gardeners must sign up by Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>, or risk losing their plots.

- **2008 Garden Sign Up & Orientation for New Gardeners**

March 5<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday 7 pm (*Must be present at 7 pm for orientation*)

March 8<sup>th</sup>, Saturday 10 am (*Must be present at 10 am for orientation*)

Join us at UFM to sign up for 2008 garden plots. All plot rental fees, deposits and tilling fees are due at time of registration. New gardeners must attend the orientation, which is followed by sign up.

- **Spring Garden Cleanup & Orientation – March 29<sup>th</sup>, 9 am to noon**

All gardeners are invited to join us for workday projects to improve our commons area. Chuck Marr will also be repeating his *Garden Orientation Presentation* for any new or returning gardeners by the large shed at 10 am.

- **Spring Plant Swap – April 26<sup>th</sup>**

Rejuvenate your flower garden by dividing your perennials and then trade them for something else. The Swap is from 11 am to noon, at UFM. You can also bring herbs, houseplants, seeds and gardening magazines to swap.

## Upcoming Garden Shows:

- **Salina Home & Garden Show – Feb 8<sup>th</sup> thru 10<sup>th</sup>** Held in the Bicentennial Center
- **Kansas Garden Show – Feb 15<sup>th</sup> thru 17<sup>th</sup>** Held in the Topeka Expo Centre
- **Manhattan Area Garden Show** Held in Pottorf Hall at Cico Park
 

Friday, Feb. 22 <sup>nd</sup>	5:30 pm to 7:30 pm	(Children's night)
Saturday, Feb. 23 <sup>rd</sup>	9 am to 5 pm	
Sunday, Feb. 24 <sup>th</sup>	noon to 4 pm	
- **Wichita Area Garden Show – March 5<sup>th</sup> thru 9<sup>th</sup>** Held in Century II

### 2008 MCG Board Members

<u>Name</u>	<u>Committee</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
Patty Zehl, President	Newsletter & Education	537-8306	pzeh1@ksu.edu
Susan Peterson, Vice President	Records	537-0372	slpete@sbcglobal.net
Pam Been-Redeker, Secretary	Flower Bed Maintenance	537-8298	donredeker@sbcglobal.net
Linda Teener, Treasurer	Finance	539-8763	lteener@ksu.edu
Lynda Bachelor	Garden Socials & Crop Walk, Flower Bed	539-9508	bachelor@ksu.edu
Brad Debey	Rules & Safety	587-8183	bdebey@yahoo.com
Jennifer Guilford	Compost & Mulch	443-2769	jlguilfo@ksu.edu
Chuck Marr	Newsletter & Education	539-6825	cmarr@ksu.edu
Bruce McCallum	Grounds Maintenance & Tilling	539-1016	brucemacks@yahoo.com
Stoner Smith	Equipment Maintenance	539-3821	sbsinks@aol.com

*(Please do not call MCG Board Members after 9pm)*

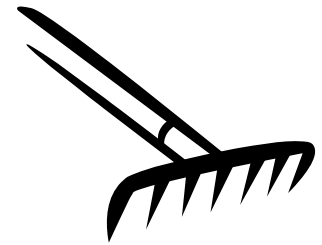
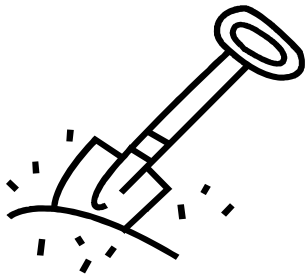
# Getting Dirty for New Orleans – Rebuilding their Community Gardens

October 9-12, 2008 is the date for the American Community Gardens Association (ACGA) annual conference. This will be a unique conference...all who attend will help New Orleans rebuild their community gardens! In Algiers, Metairie, the 7th and 9th wards, and in other parts of New Orleans, the volunteers will help restore school, neighborhood, medicinal, therapy, and senior gardens. In addition to the restoration project there will be educational workshops, lectures, and keynote speakers on many gardening topics.

The Manhattan Community Garden is a member of the ACGA. Don't miss this opportunity to help fellow community gardeners in New Orleans during this unique working conference. Be part of the healing and rebirth while creating memories that will last a lifetime! If you're interested, please call or email me. I'm gathering a group of community gardeners, horticulture students and anyone else interested in this once in a lifetime opportunity. I'm just formulating the plans, but I hope we can all travel together, eat and find a place to stay together while volunteering and learning in New Orleans.

→ *Patty Zehl, President Manhattan Community Gardens;*

532-3193 day, 537-8306 nights  
or email me at: [pzehl@ksu.edu](mailto:pzehl@ksu.edu)



## Upcoming Spring UFM Garden Classes:

To register for any of the following UFM classes: call UFM at (785) 539-8763 or register online at: [www.tryufm.org](http://www.tryufm.org)

### **Home Landscape Design – Feb. 6<sup>th</sup> to Feb. 20<sup>th</sup>**

Learn the basics of landscaping your home! Wednesdays 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at the Pottorf Hall in Cico Park. Gregg Eyestone instructor, individual fee \$21.00, couple fee \$30.00. UFM class code #08AEN08.

### **Gardening 101: The Basics – March 28<sup>th</sup>**

This class will answer questions about site selection, soil types, what to plant when, pest control and how to deal with temperature extremes in Kansas. Friday 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at the UFM greenhouse. Colleen Hampton instructor, fee \$12.00. UFM class code #08AEN05.

### **Containers: Great Versatility – April 4<sup>th</sup>**

This class will cover the science and art of growing plants in containers – the pots, soil, maintenance, plant selection (annuals and perennials), and design. Friday 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at the UFM greenhouse. Colleen Hampton instructor, fee \$12.00. UFM class code #08AEN24.

### **Landscaping with Kansas Native Plants – April 5<sup>th</sup>**

Learn how to incorporate native Kansas plants into your landscape. Saturday noon to 4:00 pm at the UFM greenhouse. Jeff Hansen instructor, fee \$42.00. UFM class code #08AEN51.

## What MCG Committee Will You Be On?

The Manhattan Community Garden needs help to allow it to run smoothly. All gardeners are required to participate in one committee each year, and committee selection is made during the garden signups. Each committee chairperson has provided information on what his or her committee will be doing in 2008 to help you make your decision.

**There are seven committees to choose from:**

### 1) Compost & Mulch Committee

Goals for the Compost & Mulch committee this year will include installing 3-bin composting sites at three different sites around the garden. Volunteers will be needed to maintain the composting sites, turning the piles, adding new material, etc. but more volunteers are welcome to participate. I anticipate that this will be a group process rather than individual where a small group of volunteers and I will meet at the garden on a weekly basis. Distribution of compost will be on a participation basis. Other activities for volunteers include attending a workshop to learn about the composting process, and helping to build the bins (simple wooden pallet design), and educate other gardeners about what and what not to add to the compost pile. Any ideas for improving the composting process are welcome!

→ *Jenny Guilford, Compost & Mulch Chairperson*

### 2) Flower Bed Maintenance Committee

The perennial flowerbeds are located on the border of the North Garden and around the sheds. Watering assistance is also needed for the Southeast garden along 8<sup>th</sup> street and the garden in the main parking area along Riley Lane. In past years the North garden and Shed gardens have featured a spectacular array of iris, peonies, butterfly milkweed, coneflowers, liatris, and daisies. Committed volunteers are needed to help bring the gardens back to their former glory. Each member of this committee would be responsible for an assigned section of a flowerbed. Your duties would include cleaning up trash, weeding and deadheading. Members will receive monthly reminders and suggestions' regarding what needs attention. If you are interested in full-sun perennials and prairie wildflowers, this is the committee for you. Experience is not required.

→ *Pamela Been-Redeker and Lynda Bachelor, Flower Bed Maintenance Co-chairs*

### 3) Equipment Maintenance Committee

Committee members will help to clean, repair and do regular maintenance of all the MCG tools and equipment that is stored in the two sheds. Experience is required.

→ *Stoner Smith, Equipment Maintenance Chairperson*



## 4) Garden Social / Crop Walk Committee

Committee members will help plan and coordinate three socials in 2008 to provide opportunities for gardeners to meet each other. We also plan our participation in the citywide October Crop Walk. For further information on Garden Socials, see article in this newsletter.

→ *Lynda Bachelor, Garden Social / Crop Walk Chairperson*

## 5) Grounds Maintenance & Tilling Committee

This committee does the tilling for the gardeners that pay the tilling fee to have their plot tilled in the spring. The plot must be cleared and ready to till, as we will not clean off plots. When plots are tilled depends on the weather and availability of volunteers.

Volunteers must be able to run the tiller that is locked up for use by committee members only. I try to limit the number of plots that a person tills to three or four. Also I try to assign them to areas where they have their own plots. Volunteers may till their own plot at no charge.

→ *Bruce McCallum, Grounds Maintenance & Tilling Chairperson*

## 6) Newsletter and Education Committee

This committee provides information and communications to participating gardeners in several ways. A bi-monthly newsletter provides information on gardening activities, information on making your garden more productive and enjoyable, and things gardeners need to be informed about. We are also exploring ways to provide timelier, current information on garden pests and problems through a weekly email communication, *Hot Topics*. We are also exploring other educational possibilities, co-sponsored by Riley County Master Gardeners, such as *Lunch and Learn* sessions in the garden, demonstration and *Show and Tell* opportunities, or other ways of providing information to gardeners. Some committee members will also participate through "manning" the MCG booth at the Manhattan Garden Show.

Committee members will assist in providing ideas and information for the newsletter, encouraging others to contribute, organizing and conducting educational events, and evaluating the things we are doing for their timeliness and effectiveness. A few face-to-face meetings may be needed, but frequent communication by email is expected.

→ *Chuck Marr and Patty Zehl, Education and Newsletter Co-chairs*

## 7) Records Committee

The purpose of the records committee is to keep the records of the community garden up to date on a year-to-year basis. The committee maintains the Community Garden Plot map and other records.

→ *Susan Peterson, Records Committee Chairperson*





## Putting “Community” back into the “Gardens”

Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup> at noon

Wednesday, June 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm

Friday, August 1<sup>st</sup> at 8:00pm

How would you like to know more about a gardener in the North garden? Or have you ever wondered how the gardener next to you cooks their Jerusalem artichokes? Have you ever wondered what the name of the jade-colored sunflower is growing in someone’s garden? All of us will have an opportunity to ask and perhaps get answers to these questions this year!

The Garden Board has added “Garden Socials” to the Crop Walk committee this year. These informal gatherings will give opportunities for our gardeners to meet each other and enjoy the “fruits of our labor”. So mark the dates on your calendar.

All the socials will take place at the gardens with good food and company. BUT we need volunteers to help plan and coordinate the socials. Sign up to help on this renamed committee (Garden Social/Crop Walk Committee) at our Spring Garden Sign Up for new and returning gardeners. I’m looking forward to meeting more of you at the Garden.

→ *Lynda Bachelor, Garden Social / Crop Walk Chairperson*

### New Gardener Orientation

Gardeners signing up for garden plots for the first time will be experiencing a new method this year. Instead of a ‘drop by and sign up’ period, new gardeners will be offered an orientation presentation. This presentation will be provided by MCG Board Member Chuck Marr and will consist of an overview of the gardens and gardener responsibilities, how to find your plot, using shared tools and equipment, and gardener events and activities. In addition, sources of gardening information as well as a brief primer on gardening in Kansas will feature planting times, soil preparation and fertilization, general pest control practices, harvesting and garden ‘questions and answers’.

It is hoped that this orientation will result in fewer abandoned garden plots and new gardeners becoming part of the ‘community’ of the community gardens more quickly and easily.

Returning gardeners are also invited and encouraged to attend if you are interested.

#### Times and locations are:

<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>March 5<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm</b>	<b>UFM</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>March 8<sup>th</sup> at 10 am</b>	<b>UFM</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>March 29<sup>th</sup> at 10 am</b>	<b>MCG by Sheds on 9<sup>th</sup> St.</b>

→ *Chuck Marr, K-State Professor (Emeritus) of Vegetable Crops and MCG Board Member*

## Valuable Information from Past Newsletters

Manhattan Community Garden newsletters from 2006 and 2007 issues are available online by visiting the “community garden” section of the UFM website at [www.tryufm.org](http://www.tryufm.org)

There are many articles that I would love to reproduce in future newsletters, but I simply don't have the space. To help you locate articles that are pertinent to what is happening in your garden as the season progresses; I will include a summary of a few topics from past newsletters.

### Dec. 2006/Jan. 2007 Issue:

- Catalog lists
  - Two pages of gardening catalogs with phone numbers and Internet addresses
- Indoor Seed Starting
  - Includes information on:
    - Germination information: light, water, temperature and oxygen
    - Requirements of starting seeds: media, seeding, watering, temperature & light
    - Transplanting and hardening plants
    - Seed requirement table for germination
- Useful Horticulture Internet Web Sites



## Wanted Digital Photo's of the Manhattan Community Garden

If you have digital pictures of the community garden, would you please share them with me? I'd like to use them in the newsletter and for an information picture board to be on display at the Manhattan Garden Show in February. Please email to Patty Zehl: [pzehl@ksu.edu](mailto:pzehl@ksu.edu)

### F.Y.I. – What's Happening at the MCG?

#### → New water faucets

Former MCG President Jerry Vestweber has agreed to oversee the addition of four new water faucets, two in the North garden and two in the Southeast garden. This project was originally meant to be done in November of 2007, but has been delayed due to the weather. Existing water lines will be extended, following the paths between garden plots. The four areas selected had insufficient faucets for the number of plots present.

#### → Removal of walnut tree in North garden

This tree is slated for removal within the next six weeks, and will allow expansion for a few more garden plots. The Compost & Mulch committee plans to locate a 3-bin compost bin on the site this year; with the intent to improve the soil quality prior to allowing it's use as garden plots.

#### → Concrete slabs will be removed from East garden, along 8<sup>th</sup> street by March 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### → Shed locks change mid-February. New code will be on your new application form.



## Growing Better Potatoes

One of the easiest crops to grow in a Kansas garden is potatoes. Potatoes thrive in cool weather so it is important to plant them early – St. Patrick’s Day or earlier if the soil can be worked. Potatoes are a tuber- which is a swollen, underground stem. Thus, potatoes don’t form on the roots of the plant but form along the main stem of the plant- above the roots. Therefore, to produce an abundance of potatoes the lower portion of the plant stem needs to be covered- usually about 8-10 inches is enough. This is usually done by ‘hilling’ or throwing a loose mound of soil along the row to cover a portion of the stem. As the potato plant grows taller, throw more soil until you build this 8-12 inch ridge of soil. In this loose soil is where an abundance of potatoes will develop. They will be well shaped and easy to dig.

Potatoes are planted from a ‘seed piece’- actually a tuber cut into sections. The section needs to be about 1 ½ to 2 ounces in size. An average potato cut into 4 pieces is about right. Cut the seed 3-4 days before you are ready to plant and keep the cut pieces in a warm place (75-80 degrees). This encourages the cut surface to ‘heal over’ so the seed piece won’t rot in the ground. Seed pieces should be planted 1-2 inches deep to get them growing as early as possible then ‘hill’ them as the plants grow.

Potatoes come in several skin colors- red, white, and russet. Flesh color can vary from white, yellow, pink or blue/purple (the pink or blue/purple color is water soluble and will fade when cooking to white). There are a number of varieties to choose from that differ in earliness, skin color, size of the vine or plant, flowering and flower color, and tuber size and shape, and cooking characteristics. As a general rule, red-skinned varieties are some of the earliest. Varieties such as Viking, Red Dale, Red Norland (or Dark Red Norland) are good ones for Kansas. White varieties include Norchip, Superior, Irish Cobbler, and Kennebec (this variety produces large, smooth tubers but is late and easily sunburns). Russet potatoes that are good for baking (they have a starch texture that gives them a mealy, crumbly texture when baked) include Norgold Russet or Norkotah. Yellow-fleshed potatoes include Yukon Gold and Delta Gold.

Potatoes are ready to dig when the vines start to die- usually in early to mid July. As soon as the vines are 1/3 to ½ dead, dig the potatoes, brush them gently to remove most of the soil, and put them in a warm, dry, dark location for 1-2 weeks to dry the skins. Then, move them to a cool, dark location (below 40F is best if you can find it) for storage through the rest of the season. I’m still eating stored potatoes from my Yukon Golds and Vikings from last spring.

Finally, about the flowering thing, potatoes produce flowers and sometimes small, green round fruit depending on the variety. Some flower profusely while others don’t flower at all and some have white, pink, blue, or purple flowers. Flowering or flower color has nothing to do with ‘what’s under the ground’ so don’t worry about other gardeners potatoes doing something that yours aren’t. It doesn’t make any difference.

→ *Chuck Marr, K-State Professor (Emeritus) of Vegetable Crops and MCG Board Member*

Articles written by Patty Zehl, unless otherwise noted. Please send any suggestions for future articles to: [pzehl@ksu.edu](mailto:pzehl@ksu.edu)





## **Community Gardeners: Help Fight Hunger in Riley County Join the 2008 Plant a Row for the Hungry campaign!**

Plant a Row for the Hungry (PAR) is a national program that encourages local gardeners to fight hunger in their communities by pledging to grow and donate part of their harvest to local food banks or other organizations in need of fresh fruits and vegetables.

PAR is a people-helping-people campaign made up of local volunteers from community gardens, Master Gardeners, garden clubs, nurseries, garden centers, churches, schools, 4-H groups, farmer markets, local farmers and businesses. The Manhattan Community Garden Board has agreed to be a PAR partner.

### **How can you participate in PAR?**

- **Join the planning team:** This is a new campaign that needs people with ideas to establish PAR in Manhattan. The 2008 PAR campaign will be introduced Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Manhattan Garden Show. The successful implementation of this program will provide a lot of fruits and vegetables to people in need in the Manhattan area beginning in 2008.
  - **Pledge to grow more:** Plant extra fruits and vegetables in your MCG garden, and help to encourage other individuals to pledge to grow a little more and donate that produce to PAR.
  - **Tend an existing PAR plot or start a PAR garden:** The Master Gardener demonstration garden located in the Manhattan Community Gardens is being adopted for the PAR program. Before joining PAR, it donated 341 pounds of vegetables in 2006, and 537 pounds in 2007 to the Flint Hills Breadbasket. Your help is needed to plant, care for and harvest the produce from the demonstration garden. Help is also needed to encourage, aid or train other community groups, schools, neighborhood associations and religious communities, to help plant, maintain, and harvest their own PAR plots.
  - **Spread the word:** Help recruit other organizations, businesses and gardeners to participate in the PAR program. Pass out PAR pledge cards, take photos, print an article about PAR for the local media.
  - **Organize drop-off days:** Help organize collection sites for donated produce in your neighborhood, at a local business, or at a religious institution or school. Help coordinate volunteers to staff drop off sites to weigh in produce received and deliver donations to the Flint Hills Bread Basket.
  - **Participate in harvesting:** Help organize volunteers to glean vegetables from local farms, and to collect unsold produce from the farmers market.
- **Ready to get involved? Please contact: Patty Zehl, [pzehl@ksu.edu](mailto:pzehl@ksu.edu), 532-3193 or 537-8306**

Manhattan Community  
Gardens c/o UFM  
1221 Thurston Street  
Manhattan, KS 66502

## What's Inside?

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