

Camden City Garden Club, Inc.
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The Community Gardener

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www.CamdenChildrensGarden.org

April 2010



** The Camden Children's Garden is now open Friday, Saturday and Sunday 10 am - 4 pm for the 2010 season, and Thursday by reservation. All existing group reservations will be honored. The Garden offices are open all year round. **

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Good News From the 9th and Sylvan Community Garden

Last fall, the Camden City Garden Club gave away over 30,000 cool weather vegetables, and at least ten varieties are still going strong in the gardens. A few weeks ago at the 9th and Sylvan garden, community gardener Lily Rivera was munching on broccoli that she had planted last fall!

Lily and her fellow gardeners, Ken and Maryann Burg are excited to be gardening again this year at the garden at the corner of South 9th St. and Sylvan St. in Morgan Village. Since the garden was started in early 2009, things have been changing for the better in that neighborhood. People are noticing the care that these gardeners are putting into the land, and others are starting to invest in the area too. In fact, two adjacent lots to the garden have recently been cleaned, and the city-

owned, previously abandoned house right next to the garden was recently purchased and it will soon be a rental property. The garden is now filled with people from the neighborhood who can't wait to start giving back to the community through gardening.



The 9th and Sylvan Community Garden. In the background is a formerly-trash-strewn lot that has been recently cleaned.

Plant This Month

Chives	Arugula
Leeks	Garlic
Potatoes	Onion
Bok Choi	Peas
Mustard Greens	Radish
Cabbage	Turnip
Kale	Broccoli
Rutabaga	Carrots
Lettuce	Beets
Spinach	



Harvest This Month

Baby Lettuce
Baby Arugula
Peas
Spinach
Kale
Broccoli
Chives

NEXT GARDEN CLUB MEETING: MONDAY, April 19, 2010 @ 5:30 pm!

Volunteers Needed for Family Festivals



April 24 and April 25

12 noon to 4pm

Earth and Arbor Days Family Festival.

Celebrate the 40th

Anniversary of Earth Day!

This festival includes planting activities, a ladybug release, and crafts and educational activities to help celebrate Mother Earth.

May 8 and May 9

12 noon to 4pm

Butterflies, Birds, and Cinco de Mayo Family Festival.

Visit the live butterflies inside the Philadelphia

Eagles Four Seasons Butterfly House, celebrate the return of Monarchs from Mexico, and enjoy the Mexican traditional holiday Cinco de Mayo.

This event includes crafts, education, a planting activity and a colorful cultural celebration.



As a volunteer, you will interact with children and their parents at the education and craft stations positioned around the garden.

Open Garden Day at Genesis New Beginning in Christ

The Camden Children's Garden and the gardeners at the Genesis NBIC Community Garden will be hosting an "Open Garden Day" on Saturday, April 17th from 10 am to 12noon. All gardeners in the Camden City Garden Club are welcome. This event will be an opportunity for the gardeners to show off their hard work and share their success stories with other gardeners in the city. There will be refreshments provided, a children's activity, and staff from the Camden Children's Garden will be present to answer your gardening questions. It will be "Open House" style, so come by the church any time (505 Liberty St.) between the hours of 10am and 12noon. We hope to see you there!

Welcome New 2010 Garden Club Members!

- ◆ Carmen Aquino
- ◆ Robert Lairmore, Joyce Calzonetti, and the Gloucester City Community Gardeners
- ◆ Kathleen Fletcher
- ◆ Chris and Cassie Haw
- ◆ Jonathan Latko, Erica Kruk, and the Cooper Grant Community Gardeners
- ◆ Sue Piliro and the Francis House Gardeners
- ◆ Wilberto Valentin and Elsie
- ◆ Jonathan Muse and the Omega Community Garden

April Club Meeting

The next Camden City Garden Club meeting will take place on Monday, April 19th, 2010, at 5:30pm.

The topic of discussion will be Spring Salads and Healthy Salad Dressing, and there will be a demonstration and food tasting. There will also be veggie transplants available to take home, and packets of Campbell's Tomato Seeds and coupons for Campbell's soup available.



"GROWING GREEN" Garden Party Fundraiser!

On **Friday, June 11, 2010**, the Camden Children's Garden will present "GROWING GREEN," the theme of our Fifth Annual Garden Party Fundraiser. The Party promises to be a highlight of the spring season - with educational demonstrations during the cocktail hour, a short program honoring generous individuals and organizations with the *Champions of Children Award*, delicious food, both a live and silent auction, and a chance to experience the Garden on a beautiful evening.

And **YOU CAN HELP** by purchasing tickets, purchasing an add in our program book, or by donating items for the auction (such as gift cards, new household or garden products, or tickets to a sporting event, performing arts event, or museum). For more info, contact vfrick@camdenchildrensgarden.org.

Our new caterer is *The Tortilla Press* of Collingswood, NJ. Chef and owner Mark Smith is well known for his commitment to local farmers, his cooking demonstrations at the Collingswood Farmers Market, and from his experience as the lead chef with the "Dinner Under the Stars" event. He also highlights locally grown, seasonal produce in his restaurants.

Upcoming Garden Workshops

There are several fun and informative workshops coming up this year at the Camden Children's Garden! All Saturday workshops are **FREE** for Camden City Garden Club members.

Sat. April 24, 2pm

Water Conservation, Composting & Mulching.

This workshop is held during the Earth and Arbor Days Family Festival; participants will learn how to reduce, reuse, and recycle materials from their gardens.

Start Your Own Sprouts!

This spring, try sprouting your own seeds and beans! Sprouted seeds and beans are a lot more nutritious than seeds in their dormant state because the proteins and vitamins in the

growing plant are more digestible to humans. Small seeds like alfalfa are delicious on salads and sandwiches, and larger sprouts like mung beans are great in stir-fries.



Equipment:

- ◆ Wide-mouth glass jar
- ◆ Cheesecloth
- ◆ Rubber band

Ingredients:

- ◆ Seeds or beans
- ◆ Water

Start out with a small amount of seeds or beans; you'll be surprised at how large the sprouts will be! Place a teaspoon of seeds in the glass jar and add water to cover. Cut a piece of cheesecloth to cover the mouth of the jar and secure with a rubber band. Let the seeds soak in the water overnight, then drain through the cheesecloth in the morning. Rinse with water twice a day and eat them when they get large enough for your needs. Enjoy!

Photo by Erica Smith

Gardening Tip of the Month: Avoid Soil Compaction

Everyone knows that plant roots need water to grow, but did you know that they also need air? Healthy soils have air spaces that allow water and air to reach plant roots. When we step on the soil in our garden, we squeeze those spaces closed, and our crops suffer from lack of air. This is called "soil compaction," and you should avoid it if you want to grow healthy and productive crops in your garden. Here are a few tips for maintaining healthy soil in your garden.

- ◆ Never step into your garden beds.
- ◆ If you have beds that are too large to reach across, lay a piece of plywood across the bed and step on that instead. The wood will distribute your weight across the bed and lead to less soil compaction.
- ◆ Build your garden beds so they are no more than four feet wide, and so they can be accessed from all sides. A person is able to reach about 2 feet into a bed, so you should be able to reach all of your plants.
- ◆ Try not to work your soil when it is wet and rainy. The soil will compact more when it is soaked with water.
- ◆ If you have successfully avoided stepping in your garden beds all season long, there is no reason to dig the soil up and turn it in the spring. This can disrupt the soil structure and ruin the air pockets that supply air and water to the plant roots. Just pile more compost on top and plant away!

If you have an announcement, anecdote, recipe or story that you want to share with other gardeners, please feel free to call or email the garden (easmith@camdenchildrensgarden.org) and we will include it in a future newsletter!

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"The Community Gardener" is a publication of the Camden City Garden Club, a 501 (c)(3) private, non-profit organization, registered in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The Camden City Garden Club is the operator of the Camden Children's Garden on the Camden Waterfront.



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Come Outside And Play!