



STONE SOUP NEWS



CATS HAVE SANCTUARY

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This is Stone Soup's second issue. We have kept this name because it does reflect the diversity of contributions which members are making to revive Carrie McCracken TRUCE Garden. For future issues garden members should be prepared to contribute views and issues they feel are important to the growth of the newsletter and the garden. If you don't contact us we will contact you. As a few folks, found out this time. LOL so those of you with the talent to help-step up!!! Please! We are developing fast and need more administrative input and clout.



In our last issue, we noted the problem of cats claiming the whole garden as their territory; with the shanty; erected by a local resident as their shelter. Having been put in charge of solving this dilemma I made contact with an older nearby garden to see how they were dealing with their cats. I was introduced to someone who donated a cat shelter; and given other helpful leads. Progress was slow; by winter with only one shelter box, the shanty was extended; in protest.

As the focus for the new year was to increase food production; there was a growing demand by some of the members to expel the cats.

I was at my wits end. The cats needed to be spayed, neutered and inoculated. Then Yvette Cruz entered the picture. This woman found out what was needed and she hit the ground running. Both she

and her Uncle Manny trapped the cats, had them treated; kept the cats till they were ready to be released, found placements for the kittens; and then started to build the structure you see pictured above.

Yvette is a cat rescuer and animal lover. She has a decade of experience in feline rescue work. She knows about feral cats and I am learning a great deal from her. She is my hero. She didn't hesitate; she did what had to be done; and I am grateful to her as we all should be.

Yvette says that "Cats are the new green. Cats have their place in gardens as they deter rats from infesting." She knows that there is no overnight fix, however, the nuisance of cats can be curtailed. They can be part of an organic balance within the garden. Unauthorized feeding must be discouraged and deterrents like pepper solutions; and netting need to be used to keep the cats away from planting beds.

Yvette also understands that feral cats are not just a garden problem; but also a neighborhood problem. She reached out to neighbors on the surrounding streets. By linking up with other rescuers she was able to find a craftsman who built shelter boxes. She and Manny have transformed the new shelter to a state of functionality.

Now, we need people to be understand, that as inviting as the sanctuary is; it is not for us. Feral cats are afraid of humans and if they see us in their territory they will not come near it. Other cats that are not spayed or neutered will come in and we'll be right back where we started, a new population to be trained.

Yvette has put us in a position to be humane to the cats as well as meet the sanitary needs of the people in the garden. So let's adjust to her practical set of rules, which will soon be posted.

By Marilyn Moseley

BUILDING THE GARDEN TO GIVE

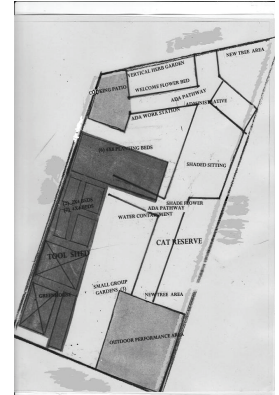
HARLEM HUGS!

Honoring the neighborhood's rich and diverse human history

Uniting residents and workers for a greener community

Growing food and floral produce; and hosting community events

Serving community nutritional, educational, and recreational needs



Thank you all for expressions of encouragement and support.
Please consider becoming a contributor of Harlem H.U.G.S.



CARRIE MCCrackEN TRUCE GARDEN DUTCH FLOWER POWER PLANT SALE & SEASON OPENS



Pictured far left: Key members chat with Ray Figueroa at May 9th Plant Sale

Above left: Max and Sage return

Above Right: Ivy leads pruning effort; and gets help

Left: Dutch flowers did bloom this spring— bulbs and plants burst forth

Plant Sale held Mother's Day Weekend

Members of the CMTG Steering Committee sponsored a plant sale on May 9th, the day before Mother's Day.

Plants were bought from CENYC; picked up and displayed for purchase at the garden. Co-contacts Marta and Steve were assisted by family and friends to get this first time fundraising venture going. It wasn't a big financial success; but with many logistical lessons learned. We hope to have more plants for sale in July. It

gave us plants acquired through our own effort.

Ray Figueroa, former TRUCE garden leader, who organizes gardens in the South Bronx for ASPIRA, came by; bought plants and was pleased to see the garden open again.

Planting season is in full swing at the garden. Space and boxes are limited; as people see

what's going on and want to participate. We are in an experimental stage. Space designs may change next year as we accumulate new members. Boxes may have to be shared and a fee charged. Because we received soil supplies late; things weren't structured as originally planned.

But our garden evolved; and we have been able to give space to all who were serious...and persistent.

Neighbors are reacting positively...

CMTG GARDENING NEWS

On January 15th Marta and Marilyn (pictured right with Dyanne Norris of Green Thumb) along with Steve registered the garden at Harlem Children's Zone on 125th Street. The CMT Steering Committee needed ten members to apply to steward this green space for the community; under the rules of Green Thumb. We now have access to workshops and other assistance. Green Thumb's calendar is available online. We need members to attend workshops.



Thank s to City Year (Americorps) and Bain & Company volunteers ;for their hard work helping us build a garden to give Harlem H.U.G. S. They constructed the deck for our performance area, new benches ,new planting boxes, and cleared spaces for planting. (see photos on page 4)



Citizen's Care Committee Inc. is a long time neighborhood non-profit provider of senior citizen and child care services in housing authority facilities. They have joined the garden . We are also seeking to involve other nearby service groups. It was Mr. Nero's idea to have a grilling area for outdoor dining. He also had input into the redesign of the garden and assisted with transportation to the last supply pick up.



Pictured left: Mrs. Mildred Miller, Event Chair with Mrs. Louise Gadson , Director, and Mr. Bob Nero, Board Member at the senior center's fantastic Pre-Mother's Day Celebration.

Also, there is now a Citizen's Care planting box in the garden. There, he hopes to have area pre-school kids and seniors gardening together, soon.



NEEDS AND DEEDS

If you have skills or ideas about features of the garden, come to a committee meeting and express your views.

We wanted a water feature in the garden; so, Ivy and Steve purchased a fountain which is displayed at the fence. It is solar powered, which is an element the garden needs more of. It is also fragile. Is there someone out there with pottery skills?

Last year a donation was made through C.O.R.E. of concrete steps and now we have used them to line new planting spaces and define our cooking area. If you see discarded materials you think would fit into the landscape don't be apprehensive. It never hurts to ask. One man's garbage could be our garden's treasure.

Special shout outs to Royland , Matt, Teena, Max, Michelle, Denise, LaMont, Patrick, and Jeffery who pruned trees , filled planters, and cleared planting areas..

We finally got our compost, but need an expert to take over that aspect to make sure we are always in supply.

Sally recently volunteered to help with thank you correspondence; an important task for any organization. What will you do?

Having worked with a school garden; new member, Lisa Mason (below), came to us after Ivy spoke with her about the garden. Lisa is experienced in reaching out to businesses for donations. Of course we'll be asking her to help her new garden do the same. Stone Soup!!



THOUGHTS IDEAS AND INFO



The garden has come a long way since last year and things have been accomplished with a lot of help and cooperation. However, we still have much more to complete to make this space a viable and successful asset for and to the community.

Those who showed interest last year were asked to step up and contribute their time and energy . We encourage adults to bring their children to learn about gardening and agriculture.

The hours of the garden are:
SATURDAY & SUNDAY
1PM-7PM

These hours will change as members become more available during the week. We would like the garden to be open as much as possible to give access to the public to come in and enjoy the space.

Groups in the community are invited to have events in the garden. Just contact Steve or Marta.

Steering Committee meetings are held every second Saturday of each month. They will be held in the garden or other locations to be determined and announced. Do you have access to a site for holding a garden meeting? Let us know. Does your group want to be informed about the garden? Invite us and we'll be there.



IN OUR GARDEN...

Bain & Company Service Day through Americorps/ City Year



THE PERFORMANCE AREA



PLANT SALE PICKUP



PLANTING and WATERING



PRUNING and WEEDING



FRIENDS & FAMILY
ON
MEMORIAL DAY

CREATING A THREE SISTERS GARDEN

Rediscovering the system of native forest agriculture

Native peoples from different parts of North America have used a wide range of agricultural techniques. Perhaps the best known is the inter-planting of corn, beans, and squash together – a trio often referred to as the "three sisters." The three sisters way of planting originated with the Haudenosaunee tribe. The story goes that beans corn and squash are actually three Native American maidens. The three, while very different, love each other very much and thrive when they are near each other.



Corn is the oldest sister. She stands tall in the center.

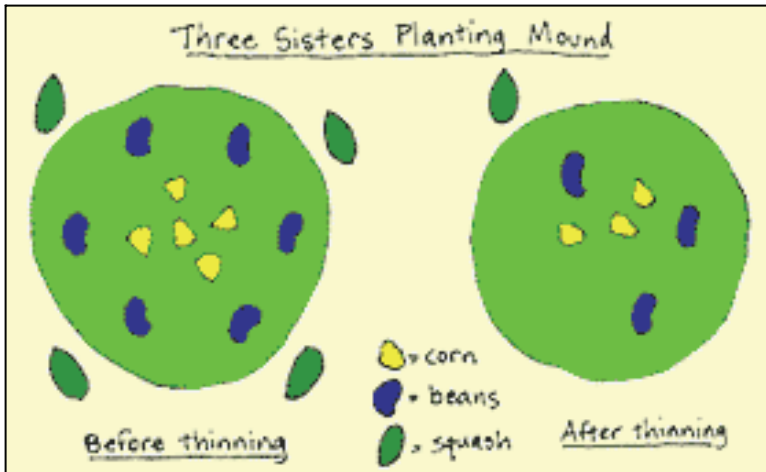
Squash is the next sister. She grows over the mound, protecting her sisters from weeds and shades the soil from the sun with her leaves, keeping it cool and moist.

Beans are the third sister. She climbs through squash and then up corn to bind all together as she reaches for the sun. Beans help keep the soil fertile by converting the sun's energy into nitrogen filled nodules that grow on its roots. As beans grow they use the stored nitrogen as food.

In a three sisters planting, the three partners benefit one another. Corn provides support for beans. Beans, like other *legumes*, have bacteria living on their roots that help them absorb nitrogen from the air and convert it to a form that plants can use. (Corn, which requires a lot of nitrogen to grow, benefits most.) The large, prickly squash leaves shade the soil, preventing weed growth, and deter animal pests. The three sisters also complement each other nutritionally.



A small three sisters garden box is located near the front of our garden. Garden members are planting "Three Sister" crops in their spaces. These are good nutritious foods, suitable for forest agriculture. We hope this garden display will inspire a keener interest and appreciation of our Native American predecessors.



We can learn from the wisdom and techniques of the Indigenous people, who first farmed this area, we now know as Harlem. While it is not feasible for us to live as the Original People did, long ago. We can adapt many of their practical and naturally based plant solutions to some of our modern ecological challenges. Also, their developed moral sense of the unity of Nature is a good ethical groundwork for good land use decision-making.

In keeping with our theme; to honor the neighborhood's diverse human history; I am seeking volunteers to sponsor a Native American Day for the garden this Fall.

Contents compiled by Steven Kidd

Most of the material for this article was culled from various internet sites. Studying history can bring us to a more reasoned and sympathetic approach to addressing current issues. For instance: did you know that most of the first Black landowners were given land titles to create an armed buffer zone against the Native people seeking to reclaim their traditional, rotating use of the land? Or that Harlem was Jewish before it was Black? Or that the first roadways; in this area were built by African slaves? And, that New York was a financial center and benefactor of the Slave trade?

CarrieMcCraken/TRUCE
Community Garden

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**We're working on
a website!**

STONE SOUP NEWS

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Community gardening is an example of citizens in action. To volunteer to make a difference, based upon one's skills and beliefs is one of the privileges of truly liberated men and women. It is a gift to the future which everyone can give. Every offering has value; whether large or small, seen or unseen.

To sustain a community garden a broad segment of the neighborhood must become involved on a scale that is both, comfortable and affordable. This is what we found in the past year and hope to carry us forward into the next. Enjoy and Join us!.

Please address your comments and future contributions to Marilyn Moseley via email:
stonesoupnews117@yahoo.com



NOTES & QUOTES

"America is dying because they forgot the instructions on how to live on earth."
If you are not spiritually connected to the earth, you will not survive. Everything is spiritual. Water and air are sacred. Our DNA is made of the same DNA as the tree. The tree breathes what we exhale. (and) when the tree exhales, we need what the tree exhales so we have a common destiny. We are all from the Earth".
"You should learn to plant something; that's the first connection. You should treat all things as spirit; realize that we are one family.
There is no end to life."
Hopi Native American

Clarence "Pee Wee" Murray is a long time resident of Harlem and grew up in the area of 117th and St. Nicholas. He knew Ms. McCracken and would help her whenever she needed him. When asked why he participates in the garden Pee Wee said " The garden was a part of the community for so long because of Ms. McCracken and when it was no longer in use it was a sad situation. I'm just glad to be a part of the garden and to give honor to Ms. McCracken and I just like helping people".
Anyone who has needed a hand for any gardening task knows that Pee Wee Murray is a key force in the garden's rebirth. As Bob Nero said, "He's worth his weight in gold." Surely, Ms. McCracken appreciated his assistance, as we all do.



community
It doesn't work until U get in the middle of things
commUnity



Matt DeGennaro doesn't live in the immediate neighborhood of the garden, so he rides his bike to the area. He says this spring he was inspired to get more involved through conversations

JOHNNY APPLESEED RETURNS BY BIKE



with Marta, and Steve. He's made a very special impact with repeated donations of trees. Talk to him a little more, though, and you will see that he does have connections here; and that he is making a statement by his actions.

Matt will tell you, for instance, that he chose the fig tree first because of an Italian-American tradition. His family were East Harlem residents and his dad was an elevator mechanic, who worked at 131 St. Nicholas for

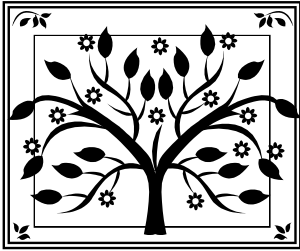
years when the neighborhood wasn't so great. He hints, with pride, that his father is happy to hear that the neighborhood is improving and that his son is making a contribution at the garden.

In addition to the fig tree, he has planted two apple, two apricot trees, a hazel nut tree as well as a blackberry bush and he intends to plant more. Installing trees is a long term act of faith, that there is a real chance for those trees to ma-

ture and bear fruit. Matt is a true preservationist. Looks like he's got a little Teddy Roosevelt in him.

If the garden is preserved, there will be a legacy of nutritious fruits and nuts available to the neighborhood because of Matt. He understands what we mean by "STONE SOUP". He's done more than his share to help build a garden to give **Harlem H.U.G.S.**

By Steven Kidd



"I feel that the garden is the right space for community with a common ground. It is the only place in our neighborhood, that I know of, where newcomers and old-timers can meet each other, listen and spend time with one another while working towards a goal. The garden is a truly unique space."

Michelle Jackson
Steering Committee Member



Green hose marks potential ADA pathway through garden.

THERE IS WORK STILL TO BE DONE



We can build wheelchair accessible work tables

Good people are being kept out of a public space. Will you help let them get in?

"People must prove to the people...

A better day is coming; for you and for me. With just a little bit more education and love for our nation; we'll build a better society. Now some of us would rather cuss and make a fuss, than bring about a little trust. But we will bring a better day if only you will listen to what I have to say"...

Curtis Mayfield "Choice of Colors"



The entrance to the garden is not accessible to wheelchairs