

Local Dirt

Nov/Dec 2002

The Newsletter of the Berkeley Community Gardening Collaborative

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Member Gardens:

Arts Magnet/ Whittier Elementary
Berkeley Alternative High
Berkeley Youth Alternative's
Garden Patch
Ecohouse
The Edible Schoolyard
John Muir Elementary
Karl Linn Com. Garden
LeConte Elementary Farm & Garden
Longfellow Middle School
Malcolm X Elementary School
Northside Com. Garden
Ohlone Community Garden
Oxford Elementary School
People's Park Garden
Peralta Com. Garden
Rosa Parks Elementary School
School of the Madeleine
Spiral Gardens/Urban Garden Institute
Strong Roots Gardens
Thousand Oaks Elementary
U.C. Berkeley-Student Garden
Willard Greening Project
Washington School Garden

Affiliates and Supporters:

Alameda Co. Food Bank
Americorps
American Community
Gardening Association
Berkeley Ecology Center
CALCorps
Center for Ecoliteracy
City of Berkeley
Occidental Arts & Ecology Center
West Berkeley Neighborhood
Development Corp

Did you know?

**Berkeley Community Gardening
Collaborative lends gardening tools to
Community and School Gardens
Call 883-9096 to arrange pick up**

**Natives: Why are they important
and how do we grow them?**

**Learn about Natives with BCGC
gardener Mike Menning**

Tour the Ohlone Greenway project

At the next

BCGC meeting

Saturday, Nov. 2

11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**-meet at Peralta Community Garden-
(where Peralta and Hopkins meet)**

**also: a California Native Plant
Society representative &**

**if you wish, a hands-on portion of the meeting with
CHIA, California Habitat Indigenous
Activists- help members with seasonal
"potting up"**

**Potluck Brunch
-BYO eating utensils-**

Compost Corner

By Marcy Greenhut

Notice: Compost will be available for pick up in the Marina, the 3rd Friday of Nov., Dec. and Jan. from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. There will be no delivery nor will a front loader be available.

Compost has been delivered by the Collaborative the last Friday of every month, except November, December and January to Community and School Gardens in Berkeley. I have been

gathering information from all of you to share with the city as we determine how we can offer more to everyone.

Currently, the last Fri. of the month, from 8:45 – 11:45, a front loader will load your truck for you. From 11:45 to 2:45 that same day, the compost "corral" is open, but without the front loader. You are invited to come down and take as much compost away as you can for your school or community garden. The City asks that if no one is there to open the gate or load compost into your truck that you *call 644-6566*, the Corporate yard. Please record this phone number. The marina staff is not responsible for the compost operation.

Edible School Yard Has Manure for your Garden

If any schools or community gardens need horse manure to give their own compost a boost, they should contact Kelsey Siegel at 332-8458, kelsey246@earthlink.net. A horse farmer delivers to Edible by the truckload fairly frequently. He will deliver to other locations, but you have to be able to take large quantities. If gardens need small quantities (garbage bin size to pickup truck size) you are welcome to come by the Edible Schoolyard and load up. It's an alternative to driving up to Tilden.

Ohlone Greenway Natural and Cultural History Interpretive Exhibit *by Karl Linn*

The exhibit's three new public art installations, which were dedicated and celebrated in late September, were an outgrowth of the successful building of the Peralta, Northside, and Karl Linn community gardens. The exhibits use art installations, interpretive signs, and coastal prairie habitat restoration to tell the many-layered stories of the place and its inhabitants in a lively and engaging manner. The first installation is the Peralta Gateway Adobe column, which commemorates the Californiano-Hispanic period with informative images and text. Colorful tiles with Mexican motifs painted by children adorn an attached bench. The second is the Agricultural Era exhibit under the shade of ornamental pear trees at the Nielsen Street cul-de-sac, which features four steel cutout cows with distinct personalities, swiveling tractor seats, and signage. Neighbors have responded by adding cow bells, and children play "milk the cow." The third, a 72-foot long-collaborative mural, depicting

transportation and migration from pre-settlement times to the present, has become a picture story, engaging passers-by young and old.

Effective collaboration between a grassroots team of neighbors, artists, and volunteer professionals, the City of Berkeley, BART, and the BEA-FEW Foundation made the project most enjoyable for all involved.

Do you use e-mail as a communication tool?

If so, send me your e-mail address: imgreen@jps.net I'd like to set up an e-mail "listserve" that would be used ONLY for gardening and Collaborative-related messages. There may be important messages between newsletters that we can send your way. e-mail makes that easier.

Ceramics Workshop at Peralta

A Ceramics Workshop is being offered by Rita Pettit at the Peralta Community Garden (Peralta and Hopkins Street in Berkeley) on the following dates: Thursday October 24 from 6 -7 pm for Hand Building ; Saturday November 16th from 1 - 2 pm for Glazing only. Attend both sessions to make and glaze; one session to glaze only.

Rita is a gardener at Peralta and a ceramics teacher in the Berkeley Schools with years of experience teaching clay work. Her last workshop at Peralta was a delight. People made beautiful clay peices for their gardens and homes.

Please join us for this creative family activity:
Fee: \$10, call 665-8466 with questions or to reserve a spot in the workshop.

A special project with this class tentatively planned is to create "peace" tiles to attach to the BART wall.

Hope to see you there. *Carole Bennett-Simmons*
Peralta Community Garden Coordinator

Non-meetings (?) with BCGC

Have I given you my e-mail address yet? It's imgreen@jps.net. Please e-mail me your ideas for future BCGC gatherings. (You can call me at 510-652-9462 if you prefer) I have been collecting ideas for future gatherings and am starting to implement them with our next event being about Natives, as noted on the 1st page. Notice the next gathering is on a Saturday, a departure from Monday evenings, so we can appreciate each other's gardens.

A common element I'm hearing from most of you has been to not only hold meetings (oops, didn't mean to use that word) at other gardens, but to learn from our fellow gardeners. Thus, Mike Menning, a BCGC Natives enthusiast is up first. You will have the opportunity to learn from hands-on planting, with members of CHIA, California Habitat Indigenous Activists, who will hold a working meeting at the same time we are there. We can join them for brunch & share ideas after our tour! Here's the other gathering ideas we've got so far. You can rate these, and/or give me other suggestions for workshops, tours, etc.

- 1) Talk with an elder in a community garden (59th St. is the likely site for this one)
- 2) Learn how to incorporate art in the garden: funding, artists, design, etc. (at Peralta perhaps?)
- 3) Tour member gardens: share our unique interests and skills- We can visit more than one in a day- a Saturday in the Spring- or we can visit one at a time.
- 4) Seed/ling swap meet

Our next regularly scheduled gathering will be the 1st week of January. Perhaps Sat., the 4th?

You all have great ideas. What are yours?? - - -

Marcy Greenhut

What are your "Open Hours"?

One gardener at our last gathering requested that I print all the garden open hours, so a fellow gardener knows when the best time is to stop by and find you there. Contact me with your open hours, and I'll print them all in the next newsletter. I am considering a separate mailing with updated garden information, including the hours, if I get a really good response! Marcy 510-652-9462, imgreen@jps.net

May I Invite Myself to your Garden Meeting?

I want to hear how the Berkeley Community Gardening Collaborative can better serve member garden(er)s. I know that I am not reaching all gardeners with this newsletter, nor with Collaborative meetings. I am calling a lot of you, e-mailing some of you. Now, it has been suggested, and I think it's a great idea, that I attend your garden meetings. I realize we are coming into the rainy season (I'm waiting.....), and your garden may not meet real soon. But, maybe you can tell me when you think your next meeting will be. I will record garden meeting times, for either Beebo or I to attend. Did I give you my e-mail? imgreen@jps.net

How Berkeley We Were!

There were four of us (2 of us children) handing out free seed packets at the How Berkeley Can U B parade Saturday September 29th. Did you see us? In all, we gave away 990 packets of seeds! There were all kinds of flowers, perennials, vegetables and herbs. I, my 10 year old son (on skateboard, of course), another Malcolm X Elementary School (Garden) parent and her daughter, equipped with little red wagon, buckets of seeds and signs telling everyone to "grow your own", handed out seed packets with a bright yellow leaflet with BCGC information and a thank you to the 3 Berkeley nurseries who donated the seeds: Dwight Way, Berkeley Hort and Westbrae were very generous. Support them and BCGC!

News from People's Park, Berkeley

The Community Advisory Board of People's Park in Berkeley is looking into expanding the Children's Play Area in this historic park. We are seeking the input of community members to help guide us in this process. Surveys for adults & children are available in the People's Park recreation office. If you would like to volunteer to become a part of the community group that will be helping this project become a reality or if you have ideas or need further information please contact: Dana Merryday (510)464-4615 or dana_merryday@yahoo.com.

There are also several plots available in the community garden at People's Park. You can find out about these and other park news or history through Dana Merryday. Thank you for your interest and support!

Tai Chi On-Going in Peralta

Mondays and Wednesdays in Peralta Community Garden (Peralta at Hopkins), you can participate in a Tai Chi class for only \$5. 6:00 p.m. is beginners, 6:30 for intermediate. Star Fire teaches. Call Carole for info: (510) 527-6708.

Master Gardeners at Farmers' Markets

Alameda County Master Gardener volunteers staff a *plant doctor* table, most Saturdays at the Berkeley Farmers' Markets. Bring your sick plants.....More info about Master Gardener programs: 510-639-1275