



# Community Gardener's Companion

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DULUTH COMMUNITY GARDEN PROGRAM

## SUMMER ISSUE

The MISSION of the Duluth Community Garden Program is to strengthen the Duluth area community and foster self-sufficiency by providing access for all to food production and preservation resources and promoting sustainable gardening practices

### Strawberries and Rhubarb: Recipe Blast from the Past

by Sharon L. Rogers

I love making things with simple ingredients so as to have the different tastes and textures blend just right with enough flavor, color and texture to form a composition to my liking. This is amazingly easy, particularly if you use food that is fresh and currently in season locally.

I also love antiques and books, and have blended this love together with antique cookbooks. At the turn of the last century, many of our ancestors still cooked with wood and coal, and it was just assumed that one would go out and harvest what the land had to offer at each particular time of year. Some fares, like chickweed and sorrel, sour dock, pepper cress and dandelion were soup and salad greens. Purslane is a nutty addition to salads and a great soup thickener. Many of us remove these from our modern gardens as 'weeds' although they are edible and were, at one time, considered part of everyday seasonal meals. These items can still be found, likely running rampant through someplace where you really don't want them. Try putting some of these aside as you weed and taste them. The spring and summer varieties are more tender and taste especially good in soups. They can be blanched and frozen or canned as you would spinach.

In the cookbooks that I have, the most wear and tear is in the fruit, dessert and canning sections. I know where my genetics come from as I see the stained, dog-eared and torn pages near the sweet recipes, particularly the ones where the ingredients can be found abundantly wild and put together at little cost.

Strawberries grow wild throughout our area. And most of us, if we don't have our own rhubarb, certainly know someone who has some to share or even of an old, abandoned garden space that we might like to think of as our own 'secret' supply.

In looking through one cookbook from 1918 and in my grandmother's cookbook from 1933, I thought I'd share some of the simple and inexpensive delights our great grandparents were eating. It's strawberry and rhubarb season so here are some easy, inexpensive recipes many of you will enjoy.

*(continued on page 2)*

Strawberries & Rhubarb. . . . .	1 - 2
Save & Exchange Seeds. . . . .	3
July/August Calendar. . . . .	4 - 5
Artisan Bread. . . . .	6
LSC Update. . . . .	7
Strawberry Hill. . . . .	8
Notices. . . . .	9



Excerpt from,

### “Ode to Strawberries”

*these are the red luminous stars of the garden, the glorious galaxy of luxuriant summer, the conductor in a symphony of fruit, a flowing waterfall of honey on the tongue, like the reviving allegro movement of late-spring mountain rivers*

*this extravagant deluge of delight shared with close friends--- hearts fine-tuned to the touch of grace & fruit of the boundless harvest, how the taste of fresh strawberries & the rippling streams of laughter with people we love can make us embrace & savor our lives.*

~ Steve Dupre

1918:

Rhubarb Roly Poly: 2 cups flour, 4 tsp. baking powder, 1 t. salt, 2 Tbsp. shortening, 1 cup milk, 2 Tbsp. butter, 2 cups Rhubarb chopped fine, 2 tsp. cinnamon, ¼ cup sugar. Sift flour, baking powder and salt. Rub shortening in with fingertips. Then add milk gradually. Turn out on flowered board (pastry cloth) and pat into oblong shape. Spread with softened butter. Toss rhubarb with cinnamon and sugar and spread over base. Roll as for jelly roll, pinch ends well and bake in moderate oven (350 degrees) until browned. Serve with cream. Other fruit may be used with this recipe. If you are cooking with coal you must lower the temperature by 85 degrees and cook in a slower oven. Be sure to allow for longer time in the oven.

If you try this one, make sure that the seam is tucked under the roll and really pinch the ends tight to seal in the filling. You can mix a few strawberries in for part of the fruit if desired. Also, if you have no pastry cloth, a clean ironed (cotton) and slightly dampened flour sack or pillowcase works well. We used these when I was a child.

Strawberry Rhubarb Breakfast Topping: In double boiler, place 4 or 5 cups rhubarb cut fine and a little water and cook down until soft. Add juice of one orange if desired and sugar to taste. Cook until thick and translucent. Chop 1 or 2 cups fresh strawberries and stir into rhubarb mixture after it has cooled. Spoon topping generously over shortcake, waffles or pancakes.

1933:

I first had these at my great aunt's farm in the late 1960's. We also had them at my great grandmother's home. My childhood amusement with a drink called a 'shrub' did not impress my mother. I still find amusement in the name 'shrub'. These are good, especially with flavored or herb vinegars and tangy sparkling waters. Use your imagination. I've also mixed them with wine to make wine spritzers.



Strawberry Fruit Shrub: Dissolve 2 cups sugar in 1 cup cider vinegar. Heat to boiling and pour over 2 quarts of crushed ripe strawberries. Let stand for several hours and stir at intervals. Allow the juice to drip through a jelly bag overnight. Serve on crushed ice with an equal amount of carbonated water.



You can use blackberries, currants and raspberries in this recipe. If you wish to can this recipe, bring the liquid to a rolling boil; pour into jars and process with the boiling water method for 10 minutes.

Sweet Spiced Pickled Rhubarb: 3 pounds rhubarb cut in 1 inch lengths, 7 cups sugar, 1 cup vinegar, 2 tsp. cinnamon, 1 tsp. ground cloves. Mix ingredients and cook slowly on low heat for about 3 hours, stirring frequently. Pack while hot into hot sterilized jars and seal immediately. Use as sauce or serve with meat. This recipe was designed for the glass topped canning jars that had the rubber seal and wire bail. I've found there is enough acid in this recipe to process about 10 minutes in regular half pint jars in boiling water bath and have it keep well for a couple of years. This really spices up a plain rice cake and works for pancakes and waffles.

Enjoy your trip down memory lane!



## Save and Exchange Seed to Preserve Genetic Diversity

by Stacy LaVres

Agriculture uses only 20 plant varieties for 90% of our food, although there are an estimated 30,000 to 80,000 food plants in existence. 95% of the food plants our grandparents ate at the turn of the century are no longer available.

Farmers and gardeners regularly saved their own seeds until the last 50 years, when business interests aggressively campaigned for hybrids. Since hybrids will not breed true, meaning the seed will either be sterile or unlike the parent plant, the grower must purchase seed every season. Hybrids themselves are not the problem. In fact, they may be used selectively as part of a diversified system. However, hybrid seed is more profitable for companies than open-pollinated seed, and as a result countless varieties are being lost.

There is no doubt that hybrids have significantly increased production, so why would anyone want to return to open-pollinated varieties? One reason is that they are genetically diverse, while hybrids are genetically identical. This difference can be crucial when diseases or pests strike. When all plants in an area are genetically the same, what destroys one may destroy the entire population. Genetic diversity improves the chances that some will live.

Hybrids are bred for certain traits that are usually not as important to the home gardener – for example, tough flesh for transporting, ease of mechanical harvesting, and ripening within a short time period. Also, certain breeding programs are choosing strains that will only grow well with pesticides and petrochemical fertilizers.

Sustainable growing needs to encompass the entire cycle, from soil to seed to plant to seed and back to soil. As you save seed from several generations, you will be selecting from plants that grew vigorously, suffered less from pests, and survived drought. The seeds you buy cannot suit your site as

well as the ones you save. Qualities you might select for include vigor, performance, appearance, days to maturity, frost resistance, time of harvest, attraction to beneficial insects, ease of harvest, storage, or preparation, eating quality, nutrition, and marketability.

When searching for seed, first check your neighborhood. You may find plants that are suited to your garden, and sharing and trading with local people can build strong community. Another great source for initially getting seeds and transplants is the DCGP annual sale in May.

Make sure to take notes throughout the season. Record keeping will greatly add to your understanding of your garden, preserve valuable information for future growers, and ultimately save time and stress as you pick plants that require less maintenance and inputs.

Seeds are more than just genetic carriers. Heirloom and open-pollinated varieties reflect years of nurturing and commitment by seed savers from an array of cultures. Passing these tiny storehouses on to the next generation is one of the most valuable gifts each of us can give. Without our help, this beautiful, diverse heritage could be irrevocably lost. Here's to seeds, here's to life!



Recommended Reading:

Seeds of Change – K. Ausubel

Seed to Seed – S. Ashworth

The Heirloom Gardener – C. Jabs

Saving Seeds – M. Rogers

Excerpt from,  
“Garden Song”

*Plant your rows straight  
and long*

*Temper them with prayer  
and song*

*Mother Earth will make  
you strong if you give her  
love and care*

*An old crow watching  
hungrily*

*From his perch in yonder  
tree*

*In my garden I'm as free as  
that feathered thief up  
there!*

~ Dave Mallet

# July 2008



## Notes

*Early July*

**Last chance to direct seed:** Broccoli,  
Bush snap beans, Beets, Rattabaga

**Last Chance to plant transplants of:**  
Broccoli, Cauliflower, Kale, Bok Choy

*Late July*

**Last chance to direct seed:** Romaine  
or head lettuce, Kohlrabi

**Duluth Community  
Garden Program  
206 West Fourth St  
Duluth MN 55806  
218-722-4583**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 NEW MOON ○	2 FARMER'S MARKET	3	4	5 FARMER'S MARKET
6	7	8	9 FARMER'S MARKET	10	11 GARDEN HOT-LINE 3-5PM	12 FARMER'S MARKET
13	14	15	16 FARMER'S MARKET	17 ● FULL MOON	18 GARDEN HOT-LINE 3-5PM 722-4583	19 FARMER'S MARKET
20	21	22	23 FARMER'S MARKET	24 2008	25 GARDEN HOT-LINE 3-5PM 722-4583	26 FARMER'S MARKET
27	28	29	30 FINN FEST	31		

# August 2008



Notes

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

					1 NEW MOON GARDEN HOT- LINE 	2
			DULUTH FARM. MKRKT. 7-12 & UMD 2-4:30		GARDEN HOTLINE 3 -5PM 722-4583	DULUTH FARMER'S MARKET, 7-12, 3RD ST. & 14 AVE E.
MIDSUMMER ORGANIC FOOD FEST. 10-3, WHOLE FOODS			FARMER'S MARKETS		GARDEN HOTLINE 3 -5PM 722-4583	FARMER'S MARKET
			FARMER'S MARKETS		GARDEN HOTLINE 3 -5PM 722-4583	FARMER'S MARKET
			FARMER'S MARKETS		GARDEN HOTLINE 3-5 pm	FARMER'S MARKET

\*Please see page 9 for more information on these events.

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218-722-4583

*Would you like to have a directory of the Northland's local farmer's markets and CSA's?*

*Contact the Lake Superior Sustainable Farming Association (218)393-3276 or stop in the garden office for your own copy of the 2008 Local Farm Products Directory.*

## **Artisan Bread in Five Minutes a Day**

**Authored by Jeff Hertzberg**

**and Zoe Francois;**

**Recommended by Julie**

**O'Conner**



Thomas Dunne Books (St. Martin's Press), 2007; <http://www.artisanbreadinfive.com>

Every so often I discover something that I feel obligated to share with the people I believe will appreciate it. This book is amazing and it's available at half.com and amazon.com for less than \$20.

My friend introduced me to this book while he was forming a loaf of dough and getting it ready to bake. I was surprised to learn baking bread is part of his daily routine. One of the authors is a friend of his, and he said that it really does only take 5 minutes a day! I decided to give it a try.

I got the book and carefully read the first couple chapters that explain the concept, techniques, tools, and why you'd want the tools they recommend (but don't sell, to my pleasure... makes them more credible to me). I mixed up my first batch of dough, which took less than 10 minutes, start to finish. I let it rise for 2 hours, then put it in the fridge overnight (recommended for the first time you make the bread, but it can be baked immediately after that first rise is complete).

Each batch of dough will make 4 loaves (but you can halve or double the recipe), the big secret is that the dough can store in the fridge for up to 2 weeks, so you can mix the dough, keep it in the fridge and

just bake what you want anytime within 14 days! You can also par-bake the loaves and freeze them, or you can freeze the dough for several months without ruining it.

The '5 minutes a day' refers to the time it takes to prep the dough for baking, and they aren't kidding. It does need to rise and bake, but there is no proofing, no kneading, no monitoring the rise, nothing. It's simple, quick, easy and the bread is INCREDIBLE. I baked my first loaf tonight and it is just short of heaven. They recommend baking a loaf a day, and I think it's because if we baked 3 loaves, we'd eat 3 loaves a day. It's really, really good.

There are probably 125 to 150 recipes in the book, and every last one of them sounds totally amazing. They are all variations on the same three or four 'base' recipes that are simple and quick. You can add herbs, cheeses, spices, oils, fruits, whatever you want to the base recipe and you'll have the delicious bread of choice at your fingertips.

Personally, I plan to use this recipe to make people at potlucks and dinners think that I'm totally amazing and have my act tooo-gether! Really, to show up with a warm, fresh-baked loaf of bread? Mmmm.

Enjoy!

Julie

# Land Stewardship Committee Update

by Dan Kislinger

The Land Stewardship Committee (LSC) is a functioning committee of the Duluth Community Garden Program. We are comprised of 2 to 3 members and we work with the executive director and the program coordinator to implement garden program policy.

Our mission is to help organize the gardeners at each garden site so they can keep the sites functioning optimally, help and learn from each other, and be good neighbors in the surrounding community.

We also function as liaisons between the City of Duluth, Saint Louis County and other owners of the garden sites. The Duluth Community Garden Program also owns four sites. The committee has been in existence for about two years now.

There are 17 separate garden sites scattered throughout the city. The largest is the Cook home site with about 80 gardeners but there are a number of smaller neighborhood sites with less than 10 plots. This adds up to about 200 individual plots.

It would be overwhelming for the small committee to deal with all the sites all the growing season. Last year we established a system of site contacts to help the committee keep informed on individual garden sites. We used those contacts to help organize cleanups and to communicate with the community clubs and others in the immediate neighborhoods. We continued this system of site contacts this year.

This year we identified four sites to start the process of changes that impact the most people and need the most work. Those sites were: Riverside, Emerson, Strawberry Hill and Sixth Street. For the most part the overarching concerns at each site are deer damage, shade from surrounding trees, relationship to the surrounding neighborhood, and access to water.

Our main activity is organizing spring and fall clean ups with site coordinators at the sites around the city. These are great times to

make contact with fellow gardeners, work and solve problems together. The committee members usually participate in the cleanups too. These are satisfying events. The transitions are always notable from the beginning of the cleanup to the end. Have you ever tried to till a plot without making any footprints? It's a challenge.

Last fall we summarized our water requirements to the Laurentian R & D Council and prioritized our sites by the number of gardeners. We have identified the Cook home site as a candidate for shallow wells for the gardeners and are examining the feasibility and costs of this project. We also are exploring a joint effort with the Arrowhead Garden people to provide them with water too. We are continuing to work with the Laurentian R & D Council to develop a strategy to best package the effort. Their role is to assist Duluth Community Garden Program to apply for grants to fund the project.

The executive director, Carrie Slater Duffy, is working with LSC for sponsorships for individual garden sites. We are concentrating on fencing and water access primarily. Each site is different. Carrie has put together cost estimates to quantify the needs and is approaching local businesses and churches to introduce the ideas to them.

The committee always welcomes fellow gardeners to sit in on our meetings and if interested become part of the committee too.

Please contact me, Dan Kislinger at 724-6482 evenings and 279-2404 days, or e-mail me at [dan.kislinger@lhbcorp.com](mailto:dan.kislinger@lhbcorp.com)

*Tired of mowing at your site?*

*Having trouble keeping up?*

*Talk to other gardeners at your site about expanding gardens and planting low-maintenance perennials.  
Get creative!*

*Stop by the office to borrow grass-cutting implements.*

## Strawberry Hill: Putting the “Community” in Community Gardening

The Strawberry Hill garden site, located at 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. W. and 6<sup>th</sup> St., is a prime example of community gardening in action. The transformation that has taken place there since last season is something all community gardeners can be inspired by.

Last year the site had three or four active gardeners engaged in a constant battle against the invasive tansy, the rampant deer, and the drought conditions. Those gardeners decided to get together and pool their resources to try to solve some of these problems. This spring, thanks to the energy generated by these committed gardeners, all twelve plots are being gardened with vigor!

Now most of the gardeners plus a few other recruits from the community meet once a month to share their visions, resources and ideas. They've organized themselves; they've designated a facilitator, treasurer, and secretary. They have committees to focus on the design of the site and fundraising. So far they've accomplished a lot: they had a very successful site clean-up in the spring, they've all pitched in what they could to purchase water tanks that don't leak, they've committed to raising the funds to pay for the use of water from a nearby fire hydrant, they've enlisted the help of community members with technical skills in design and contour mapping in order to create a detailed map of the site, and they've reached out to neighbors for resources and support in their efforts to make the garden site a valued focal point of the neighborhood.

Their end goal is to grow a crop of committed gardeners who will maintain not just their personal plot but the common space of the entire site. Everyone agrees that the first step to make that happen is a fence to keep out the deer. With a permanent fence in place, gardeners will feel more secure about investing time and resources in their plot. A better-maintained garden site will be more welcoming to neighbors passing through on walks or looking for a good place to have a picnic. Neighbors will get to know gardeners, expanding the pool of resources and ideas, making a stronger community, and transforming the site from an eyesore to an asset.

We at the Community Garden Program would love to see this sort of thing happening at all of our 16 sites. As an organization we would love to be able to provide each site with fencing, water, and more fertile soil, but we do what we can with our limited resources. What we can provide for gardeners is a 20 by 20 foot chunk of land, tools, seeds, and plants. But to have a vibrant, successful community garden, you need more than that. You need community. You need what the gardeners at Strawberry Hill have created for themselves. You don't need money or expert gardening skills as long as you have community. If you have community, if there's enough people willing to share the skills and resources that they *do* have, you'll be moving in the right direction to leap over the hurdles (like hungry, cavorting Duluthian deer jumping the five-foot fence around your garden plot) that keep your garden site from becoming the lush, productive, urban paradise it was meant to be. Happy Gardening!!

Katie Hanson

Program Coordinator

Duluth Community Garden Program

### Community Gardener's Companion

News of the Duluth Community Garden Program

*206 West Fourth Street*

*Duluth MN 55806*

*218-722-4583*

*duluthcommgarden@yahoo.com*

*www.duluthcommunitygarden.org*

Executive Director: Carrie Slater Duffy

Program Coordinator: Katie Hanson

Board of Directors: Dan Kislinger, President; Stacy Lavres, Vice President; Kate Nicoletti, Secretary; Carol Hill Perkins, Treasurer; Christine Dean; Gloria Piche; Sharon Rogers; and Marian Syrjamaki Kuchta

## NOTICES

DCGP is looking for a donation of a new or used **tent** to provide a shady rest area that can also house buckets, tools, etc at a community garden.

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Call the **Garden Hotline** or stop by the DCGP office and talk to Master Gardener Bob Norstrom every Friday from 3pm to 5pm, starting July 11th. Get your questions answered before the weekend! **Call 722-4583.**

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### Farmers Market at UMD

If you would like to market your produce at the Farmers Market at UMD, you may participate once during the season without being a member of the Sustainable Farming Association. If you are a community gardener, call Deb Shubat at 726-7258 about participating in the market.

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**Do you have extra tools or supplies** that you could donate to the garden program? Our wish list consists of a wheelbarrow, scythes and other grass cutting implements, gloves, and all those extras useful to gardening.

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Do you know of local events interesting to gardeners? Want to swap labor, supplies, tools, seeds or plants?

Call the Garden Program office at 722-4583 to place your item in the newsletter.

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**The Midsummer Organic Food Fest** will be held at the Whole Foods Co-op on August 2nd, 10am to 3pm in the front parking lot. It is the kickoff for the Locavore Challenge. Download an entry form for the Local Ingredient Recipe Contest at [www.wholefoodcoop.org](http://www.wholefoodcoop.org)

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**Duluth City Chickens** advocates for making it legal to raise chickens in your back yard. Watch for action on this during the summer from the city council. Website at [duluthcitychickens.org](http://duluthcitychickens.org)

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Terry McCarthy is looking for metal poles to stake small, newly planted trees.

Call 727-1882

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### SFA Farm Products directory

<http://www.lakesuperiorfarming.org/FarmProductsDirectory.aspx>

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The Sustainable Farming Association will be holding its annual **Harvest Festival at Bayfront Festival Park**, September 6th & 7th. Go to <http://www.lakesuperiorfarming.org/HarvestFest2008.aspx> for more information.

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For an online look at past issues of the newsletter go to [www.duluthcommunitygarden.org](http://www.duluthcommunitygarden.org)

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**Check the website for upcoming Cannery Classes!**

# Duluth Community Garden Program

plant•a•lot



206 West Fourth Street  
Duluth MN 55806

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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The Garden Program thanks its supporters:

A.H. Zeppa Family Foundation

Laurentian Resource Conservation & Development

SMDC Health System

United Way of Greater Duluth

Whole Foods Co-op

WLSSD



**Please notice the membership date on the label. If it is expired, this is your last newsletter. Please contact the Garden Program office for renewal.**

## BECOME A GARDEN PROGRAM MEMBER

*Not sure when to renew? Check the expiration date on your address label!*

Member benefits include:

- Gardening and food preservation education and equipment use
- Five issues per year of *Community Gardener's Companion* newsletter
- Discount at annual seed sale
- The satisfaction of supporting the Duluth Community Garden Program's work.

Memberships:

Affordable \$10\_\_\_\_\_ Sustainable \$50\_\_\_\_\_ Lifetime \$500\_\_\_\_\_

Seedling \$25\_\_\_\_\_ Perennial \$100\_\_\_\_\_ Other\_\_\_\_\_

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The Duluth Garden Program is a 501(c)3 non profit corporation.