



Inside this issue:

*Project News* 2  
*Grant Updates* 3  
*Partnerships* 4

Our mission

Friends of Burlington Area Community Gardens (FBACG) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the continued growth and success of community gardening in Burlington, VT. FBACG works with volunteers, neighborhood groups, partner organizations and civic agencies to create new community garden sites and to develop garden-based education and volunteer programs. Our mission is to preserve and expand neighborhood gardens, protect open spaces, and promote community food security for the city of Burlington and its citizens.

*Volunteers Ingrid Gillespie and Bonnie Hudspeth planting this spring at the Lakeview Garden. Tomatoes from the garden will be donated to the Food Shelf through Plant a Row for the Hungry.*

## *From Gardens for All — to All for Gardens*

When Tommy Thompson founded Gardens for All in 1973, he recognized that the ability to have a garden satisfies a basic human need and desire to be connected to the earth.

Thompson began his work by talking with civic leaders and organizations who could help provide the land, resources, and funding to make his dream a reality. Within just six months, 13 new community garden sites were started in and around Burlington—and an amazing 500 garden plots were tilled and planted.

In celebrating the 30th anniversary of the first community garden in Burlington (Cliffside 1972), we look back to the founding efforts of Tommy Thompson—and ahead to our work together to create and enhance neighborhood gardens

that provide places of beauty, recreation, and sustenance.

As gardeners, we depend on the plot of land entrusted each year to our care and stewardship. The land nurtures us, and we give back by replenishing the soil and by using and sharing what we have grown.

In the same way, Burlington's garden program is revitalized through the support of the community—and by the many ways that our gardening experience benefits others.

Friends of BACG is working to build on Tommy Thompson's legacy, in ways that will grow and sustain our community gardens for present and future generations.

In this inaugural FBACG newsletter, and in the stories that follow, we hope that you,



*Tommy Thompson (1917-1983) at work at the community garden in the Intervale that now bears his name.*

our readers and supporters, will be inspired by the enormous potential of gardening for social change in our community.

***If we can then work together, reaching out with a rake, a hoe, and a helping hand, the dream of "gardens for all" and the spirit of "all for gardens" will become both vision and reality.***

## *Lakeview — A New Community Garden*



For the second year in a row, demand for community garden plots outpaced supply this spring, with all 370 youth and adult garden plots in the city sold out by May 10. A waiting list at Burlington Parks and Recreation quickly swelled to 20 households in search of garden space.

Acting on a lead, FBACG

volunteer Ingrid Gillespie located a former garden site behind a Howard Community Services group home on North Avenue. The site had access to water and parking, and is located on land owned by the Catholic Diocese of Vermont.

With permission of the Diocese and Burlington Parks and Recreation, FBACG worked

# Lakeview Community Garden (continued from page one)



with Howard Community Services to lay out the Lakeview Community Garden and to till and plant a small kitchen garden providing group home residents with the opportunity to enjoy fresh produce.

A load of Intervale topsoil was delivered to the site after tilling then spread by gardeners and volunteers. The garden was staked out on May 31 and opened for planting.

Although the Lakeview Community Garden is BACG's smallest site with just four plots, there is space to double the garden area for 2003.

Hill's Hardware, Colchester Agway, and Recycle North generously contributed hoses,

fencing, and sign material for the new site, while Lakeview gardeners chipped in to provide essential volunteer labor and supplies.

BACG's summer intern, Bonnie Hudspeth, created a colorful sign for the garden and is tending a half plot to grow veggies for the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf.

The Lakeview Community Garden is BACG's first new garden site since 1998, and it

serves as a model for future community garden development in Burlington.



A bucket brigade spreads Intervale compost at the Lakeview Garden.

## BACG Receives a Fertile Boost

Thanks to a generous \$2000 grant from the Pecor Family Foundation, all ten BACG gardens received a boost of Intervale Compost this spring to improve soil fertility and garden yields.

With encouragement from FBACG and the BACG Advisory Board, Burlington Parks and Recreation Director Wayne Gross applied to the

Pecor Foundation for funding to obtain the compost and begin building topsoil across the BACG system.

FBACG coordinated logistics for compost distributions and worked with Parks and Recreation and the Department of Public Works to secure the use of city trucks for deliveries.

The Intervale Foundation provided a bulk rate for the

compost, which enabled 113 cubic yards to be delivered and spread on the gardens.

Through the efforts of Starr Farm gardener Joe Benoit, and DPW equipment, an additional 170 yards of accumulated soil and compost were spread on the sandy Starr Farm soil, and five truck loads of rotted manure were delivered from Colchester to the

WVPD community garden site at Ethan Allen Homestead.



Joe Benoit at Starr Farm

## Patchwork — Discovering the People of a Community Garden



Beret Halverson, a 2002 UVM graduate, is writing a book of stories reflecting the gardeners of BACG.

During the winter months, 175 BACG gardeners received an interesting survey in the mail from Beret Halverson, a UVM senior researching the cultural diversity found within our community gardens.

After receiving more than 50% of the surveys back, Beret selected 20 respondents for in depth interviews.

Beret completed her thesis project in June and is working as a summer intern with FBACG during July and August. The goal is to compile her research into a documentary book highlighting the cultural and horticultural stories of eight BACG gardeners.

Beret's internship is funded through pledges and a gener-

ous grant from the Burlington Community and Economic Development Office.

**Pathchwork — Discovering the People of a Community Garden** is scheduled for publication in December and will be available through Friends of BACG. For more information, contact FBACG at FriendsOfBACG@aol.com.

## *New England Grassroots Environment Fund aids New Garden Development*

Chittenden County is expected to grow by more than 100,000 people in the next 30 years, placing mounting pressure on the remaining “unclaimed” open and green spaces in the City of Burlington and surrounding areas.

As Burlington’s population density increases, there is growing clamor from gardeners, neighborhood groups, and civic and youth organizations for accessible community garden sites.

Recognizing this need and

opportunity, FBACG has received a grant of \$2373 from the New England Grassroots Environment Fund to create an inventory of potential new community and neighborhood garden sites in Burlington *and* to advocate for their creation.

FBACG’s successful proposal was based on our work to incorporate as a nonprofit organization, gain a broad-base of support, and establish a city-wide commitment for expanding Burlington Area Community Gardens (BACG).

With land large enough to support “farm style” community gardens in short supply, FBACG will be researching potential garden sites at schools, residential facilities, parks, and community greenways. Neighborhood supporters will be identified, as will potential cooperating partner organizations.

An example of a potential new garden is shown in the photo (right) of the McAuley Square housing project off Mansfield Avenue. In June,

FBACG director Jim Flint met with McAuley Square staff and residents to develop a plan for the site, which for many years was a neighborhood garden. The plan includes an oval area with raised beds for flowers and veggies.



## *Ronald McDonald House Charities Grant funds Children’s Discovery Garden*

Through a \$3,000 grant awarded to FBACG by Ronald McDonald House Charities, several hundred Burlington



area kids are attending a free “Arts in the Garden” summer program at the Children’s Discovery Garden at Ethan Allen Homestead. The grant also provides funds for volunteer training, outreach, and to refurbish the Secret Garden, Butterfly Garden, and entryways.

FBACG is working closely with the Children’s Discovery Garden leaders to implement

the RMHC grant and to develop community resources to support future educational programming.

The Children’s Discovery Garden is free and open to the public throughout the summer and fall. This year’s theme is Peace and Healing of the Earth, with four circular garden designs created by and for kids of all ages to enjoy.



*A winning garden design by Elena, Bianca, and Marcella Melloni*

## *CDBG Grants improve and expand Rock Point and WVPD gardens*



This spring, FBACG received a \$4350 Community Develop-

ment Block Grant to upgrade the Rock Point (left) and Winooski Valley Park District (right) community gardens.

Grant funding will be used to install a new underground water system at Rock Point and to extend the existing water system at WVPD. The grant will also purchase 180 yards of compost enriched topsoil and

create 20 additional garden plots on land that had gone fallow due to soil depletion.

FBACG applied for the CDBG grant through the Ward 4 & 7 NPA and faced tough competition with many worthy neighborhood improvement projects city-wide.

The grant was the largest ever received to support BACG.



*Chris Ciardelli is a long term gardener at the WVPD site.*

# *FBACG's Growing Partnerships*

## **Partner Organizations & Agencies**

Burlington City Council  
Burlington Mayor's Office  
Burlington Parks and Recreation  
Cathedral Square Corporation  
Catholic Diocese of Vermont  
Champlain Valley Agency on Aging  
Childcare Resource  
Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf  
Community Justice Center  
Episcopal Diocese of Vermont  
Ethan Allen Homestead Trust  
First United Methodist Church, Burlington  
Flynn Elementary School PTO  
Garden Writers Association of America  
Intervale Foundation  
Lake Champlain Sea Grant Program  
National Gardening Association  
Recycle North  
University of Vermont Environmental Studies  
UVM Master Gardeners  
Vermont Community Botanical Garden  
Winooski Valley Park District  
YMCA After School Program

## **FBACG In-kind Donation Wish List**

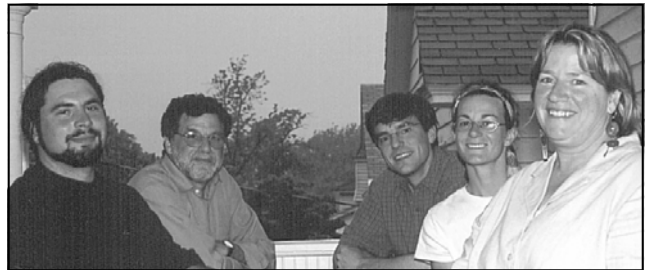
(donations are tax deductible at fair market value)

Internet ready IBM-compatible computer  
Color SVGA Monitor  
HP laser or inkjet printer  
Office supplies (copy paper, manila folders, etc)  
Tool shed or large wooden storage boxes  
Garden tools or carts in good repair  
Pickup truck—1994 or newer

## **Foundations and Granting Agencies**

Americorps VISTA Program  
Community and Economic Development Office  
Housing and Urban Development (HUD)  
New England Grassroots Environment Fund  
Pecor Family Foundation  
Public Safety Project  
Ronald McDonald House Charities

## ***Friends of Burlington Area Community Gardens 2002 Board of Directors***



*(from left) Jules Fishelman, Huck Gutman, Josh Brown, Colleen O'Brien, and Kristine Flynn*

## ***FBACG Staff and Volunteers***



*Plant sale volunteers  
(from left) Maggie Ryan, Liz Rogers, and Laura Kadish*



*Executive Director, Jim Flint*



*Wheelock Farm community gardeners and First United Methodist Church volunteers at the compost bucket brigade*