

“Citizens in Action: Down to Earth Community Garden”
St. Albans Messenger, August 10, 2009
by Holly Creeks

The Down to Earth Community Garden was established in 2009 and has 13 plots being cultivated by local families and individuals. The purpose of the garden is to provide gardeners an opportunity to grow organic vegetables and flowers of their choosing in an area that is shared by other gardeners. A secondary benefit, although some might argue the primary benefit, is to facilitate a sense of community—be it friendship or educating one another about gardening.

We made available 12 raised beds and 2 larger plots, with all but one plot rented by April. A small fee was collected with the applications. Water is provided on site as is a 3-station compost unit and a small tool shed. The garden sign is visible from a distance and has a bulletin board used by gardeners to communicate information of interest.

Last fall we were awarded a garden mini-grant funded through a Successful Communities grant awarded to Friends of Burlington Gardens by the Vermont Community Foundation. This money was used to prepare the soil for the spring planting. We’ve recently been awarded money from the New England Grassroots Environment Fund which will be used to enclose the garden with a fence. In addition, we’ve had generous support from a local St. Albans Coop farmer and from Ace Hardware. Community members and avid gardeners have also contributed to our success, and we owe many thanks to City School for their generosity in giving us the land to garden.



This has been a summer of gardening challenges starting with several late frosts. Then we had the wet and cloudy days with little sun. Once the squash and cucumber plants started we had our first experience with hungry garden insects—the cucumber beetles. Finally, after many rounds of weeding our garden is now producing prolific quantities of beans, lettuce and greens, onions, squash, zucchini, herbs, and radishes. Sweet corn and tomatoes are ready to burst into maturity any day now.

Gardeners are responsible for harvesting their own crops. All gardeners participate in some volunteer hours at the start and end of the season.

On Tuesday, August 11th at 7 p.m. we will give tours of the garden to all of our kind and generous supporters, and we’ll also give those interested in learning more about the garden an opportunity to visit and have their questions answered. Please contact Holly Creeks for more information at 802.524.2011 or come to the soccer field area behind City School.

The garden beds are available on a first come, first served basis. We will be taking applications for next summer in September. Current participants will have first dibs on space.

Holly Creeks, site coordinator
Down To Earth Community Garden
St. Albans, Vermont