

COGAMI

COmmunity-GArden-of-Mayne-Island

"Gifts From the Garden"

Glenda Jackson, the famous British actress turned Member of Parliament, was asked recently what she was doing during the global financial crisis. She replied, "I am spending a lot of time in my garden." I laughed when I heard this because it so precisely mirrored my own response. When life is chaotic and the world seems full of stress, I long for nothing more than to put my hands in the dirt, gaze upon a beautiful flower or leaf, or munch on a carrot harvested from some lovingly-tended earth. A garden and the opportunity to grow some plants showers us with a bounty of blessings -- beauty, an intimacy with nature, fresh air and exercise, a sense of productivity, nutritious food, joy, grounding... I know I am talking to the "already converted" because gardening is clearly a passion here on Mayne Island. Just look at the many beautiful home gardens, the Japanese Gardens, the new park at Felix Jack Rd., and the thriving community garden, or Cogami, at the Community Centre. Cogami offers all of the 'gifts' I've mentioned, and more – the list could go on and on. Obviously, by the enthusiasm shown by the gardeners at Cogami, these gifts are valued and appreciated. We are now at full capacity, with a Waiting List for 2009, and it is clear that if we do not want to turn people away, we need to expand.

As a program of the M.I. Community Centre, the garden is inclusive and open to all. To encourage this, in our expansion plans, we will be designating an area to be available to the Food Bank, and will be building a raised bed that could be utilized by someone with physical limitations. Our aim is to accommodate, to the best of our ability, anyone who wants to be involved.

Of course, this expansion will require enthusiasm, energy, and money. Cogami gardeners definitely have plenty of the first two, but unfortunately, the 'money part' is harder to come by. So, a group of us are busy, planning fundraising events, looking into grants, and researching a donor program. Our first fundraiser is scheduled, and will be a fun and tasty event – mark your 2009 calendars NOW! On January 31, plan to come to the Community Centre to celebrate the Chinese New Year, with a delicious Chinese dinner and a Silent Auction of items and services provided by Cogami gardeners. Watch for more details and posters in January.

"Gifts To the Garden"

Cogami has been the recipient of many wonderful gifts lately.

On Sept.6, Brian and Colleen Dearden sponsored a Community Dance (great fun, with a great dance band!), and donated the proceeds to Cogami. Thank You Brian and Colleen!

On Nov. 8, the Art and Craft Fair held at the Community Centre raffled a lovely Gift Basket filled with items from the various vendors, and donated the raffle money to Cogami. A big Thank You to all who donated their beautiful (and tasty) products!... and to those who bought tickets!

In the November MayneLiner, the community garden put out a request for a greenhouse or shed, and received within days the offer of 2 greenhouses, greenhouse glass panes, 2 sheds and leads on a number of other useful items. We are already preparing a site to place a wonderful little greenhouse (see photo) at the Garden, donated by Carole and Michael Buchan - Thank You for your generous gift! Then, in January, we will be getting another greenhouse structure, donated from Michael Crovato. Our sincere gratitude to all who have responded to our request! Re-cycling is a good thing, and all will be put to good use.

On that note, we are also looking for donations of fencing posts, fence wire, and water storage tanks (all for the garden expansion). If you would like to assist in helping Cogami grow by making a donation of materials, labor or money, please contact Vicki Turay at 539-9946, or Becky Hardey at 539-3167.

Enjoy the upcoming holiday season, and remember - "When Heaven falls to Earth, it becomes a Garden".

Submitted by Becky Hardey, Vicki Turay