



April 2025 Newsletter

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April is

NATIONAL NATIVE
PLANT MONTH



Kickstart Your Volunteer Hours!

Spring Cleaning – Let's Keep the Momentum Going!

Thank you to everyone who came out for our first volunteer event of the season! It was a big success, and we got a lot done, but there's still plenty of work left to make our garden thrive this season.

We know you're eager to get your hands in the dirt, but it's a bit too early for planting just yet. In the meantime, we've got lots to do: spreading woodchips, painting stakes, tidying up, and more.

Join us again on **Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to around 2:00 p.m.: April 26th and May 3rd** (weather permitting).

No sign-up needed—just stop by, pitch in, and be part of the garden community! Stay as long as you like, and when it's time for a break, we'll have the grill going with hot dogs (and veggie dogs) and other refreshments to keep you fueled and ready to help.

Looking forward to seeing you there and working together to keep our garden growing strong!





Thursday, May 1, 6:00 pm

**Garden Classroom (just inside
the garden gate, behind Ben
Franklin school)**

Welcome to your first season with us! Whether you're brand new to gardening or just new to *our* garden, we've got you covered.

Join us for an orientation meeting where you'll learn everything you need to know for a successful season:

- Who's who – meet the garden crew.
- What's what – tools, rules, and garden guidelines made easy.
- What's where – learn your way around the garden layout and facilities.
- How to get started – a few tips from prepping your plot to planting your first seeds.
- How to stay involved – volunteer opportunities, events, and where to find help.

Bring your questions and your curiosity. We'll bring the info to get you growing!



Monday, May 5, 7:00 pm

**Mary Queen of Peace Parish
Center Cafeteria, 4427 Pearl Rd.
Enter from the rear parking lot.**

Join us for important updates on the season ahead!

Garden Operating Committee members and the Garden Coordinator (that's Greg!) will be on hand to answer questions, share updates, and hear your ideas and concerns.

We'll cover upcoming events, plant, sweet potato and seed potato availability, volunteer opportunities, and garden rules. We'll also ask for your input in choosing a date for this year's Harvest Potluck and Annual Meeting.

A 50/50 raffle and free seeds will be available as well as [drum roll] **the season's plots chart.**

Whether you're new to the garden or a longtime grower, your participation helps make our garden stronger. **All gardeners are highly encouraged to attend.**



Thank you to everyone who made our recent fundraiser such a success! Whether you donated a prize, baked a treat, volunteered your time, or came out to join us, we're deeply grateful for your support. Thanks to you, we raised vital funds to keep the garden growing strong. Your generosity helps us maintain the space and continue providing thousands of pounds of fresh produce to local food pantries. It was a wonderful night of community, and we couldn't have done it without you! Prize donors are listed [online](#). Please patronize our local businesses and thank them for their generosity.

USDA's gardening zones

Although the USDA recently updated its Plant Hardiness Zone Map to reflect climate shifts, our garden's zone has stayed the same. Still, many areas have changed, and you might find it interesting to see how things have shifted around us. You can explore the updated map here: <https://apps.npr.org/plant-har...>



Planting for Pollinators



April is Native Plant Month—a perfect time to think about supporting local pollinators! Despite funding cuts to Pollinator Partnership, we're committed to continuing our pollinator habitat project as best we can. Watch for volunteer opportunities! Also, all Gardeners are encouraged to grow nectar plants in their plots to attract butterflies and other pollinators. Every plant helps!

Early Pollinators Are on the Move

Even in April and May, pollinators like bumblebees, mason bees, and certain butterflies are active and looking for food. Early blooms—like dandelions, violets, and fruit tree blossoms—provide critical nectar and pollen. If you're cleaning up your home garden, consider leaving some leaf litter and hollow stems in place a little longer. Many native pollinators overwinter in these spots and need time to emerge safely.



Sign up!

Make sure to [create an account](#) on SignUp.com. We will use this platform again this year to sign up for volunteer opportunities.

Open opportunities will be on our website under "Volunteer Ops."

Make sure to check your email, the website, and Remind for opportunities throughout the season.

All volunteer time will be logged in the volunteer book found at the garden. Time is logged under the main gardener name.



Text message notifications

Reminder about Remind

We use Remind, a free text messaging app, to communicate announcements and reminders quickly and efficiently — straight to your phone (or your email). Never miss out!

More information and **easy sign up details** [on our website](#).

Calendar



Our calendar is still in process. Stay tuned for more garden event dates and details.

Use Remind, check the [website](#), check bulletin boards. Here's a preview:

- Pre-season cleanups – Saturdays, April 26, May 3, 10:00 a.m.–
- First Timers meeting – Thursday, May 1, 6:00 p.m., Garden classroom.
- Season Kick-Off Meeting – Monday, May 5, 7:00 p.m., Mary Queen of Peace Parish Center Cafeteria, 4427 Pearl Road. Enter from the rear parking lot.
- Garden opening – Saturday, May 17 (the "creek don't rise" date)
- Pedal for Prizes – Saturday, May 17 (our Garden is a "stop" on this [community event](#))
- Ice Cream Social – Wednesday, July 23, 6–8:00 p.m.
- Cuyahoga County Fair – August 5–10
- Harvest Picnic and Annual Meeting – September 6 or 7?
- Garden closing – Saturday, October 11, 4:00 p.m.

Shortly, we'll post the lineup for our top drawer **Music in the Garden Series**. Meanwhile, mark your calendars for the **first and third Saturdays** of June, July, August, September, 6–7:00 p.m.



REMINDER

Everyone working in the garden must have a **waiver on file**. All main gardeners filled out a waiver when completing their application. If you are a co-gardener and have not filled out the form, you can find the link below.

<https://form.jotform.com/25051...>

Garden Operating Committee Monthly Meetings

Your Garden Operating Committee meets year round! Unless otherwise indicated, committee meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at

Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation
4274 Pearl Road, rear entrance.

All gardeners and members of the public are welcome to attend!



Ben Franklin Community Garden

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A program of
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