



May-June 2018

Change of Owners at Rick's Garden Center

Mike and Gail Estes, owners of Rick's Garden Center, have been good friends and supporters of BCGA since it was founded. In May, they sold their business and retired. We thank them for so many years of good advice, support, and year round discounts for BCGA gardeners.

They have faithfully donated to the Goat Fund, and Mike has presented information on organic fertilizers and pest control at the BCGA spring garden class each year (his handout is included in the Garden Handbook). Mike and Gail are looking forward to traveling, and we wish them a wonderful retirement. They will be deeply missed by their friends at BCGA.

New owners Dan and Jeana Hopper have pledged to continue the 10% discount offered to BCGA gardeners who show their current garden badge at the time of purchase.



Left to Right: Mike and Gail Estes, and Dan and Jeana Hopper

Notes for New Gardeners

Soak It. When garden opened in April the soil was exceptionally dry after months of little rain or snow. It has taken repeated soakings to get water to percolate down to where the plant roots live.

Unless you have planted seeds that are just germinating, it is not necessary to water every day. It is much better to water thoroughly and deeply than to sprinkle the surface. If plants are failing to thrive, their root zone may be too dry. Dig down in a row and find out how deeply your water is penetrating.

Watering Rules. Please be sure you are clear about the watering rules:

1. All watering is to be done using a hand held hose with positive shut-off or a watering can. No sprinklers, drip or other automated systems are allowed.
2. Do not use your hose for any purpose between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. on any day, regardless of the weather. (There is one exception to this rule: you may use a hose to fill walls of water at any time of day during spring planting.)
3. Limit watering to 1/2 hour per day for a full plot, 15 minutes for a half plot. Watering this much every day would be more than is healthy for the plants.

We do not water with a hose in the heat of the day because it is wasteful and expensive. These rules make our garden water efficient. They keep the water bill under control. Even more importantly, the County managers and utility department know we use water carefully and have given us the privilege of watering daily in the past when watering restrictions have been in place during times of drought.

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What to Plant in July

Space opens up in our plots as the summer goes on... greens have been harvested, some plantings have failed. Gardeners can still plant vegetables that mature in a short time, and some of these really love the cooler days of fall before the garden closes.

Phelan Gardens offers small plants, kale, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower and chard, which they have started in their greenhouse specifically for July planting. Brussels sprouts are not recommended as they may not produce many sprouts before the garden closes in October.

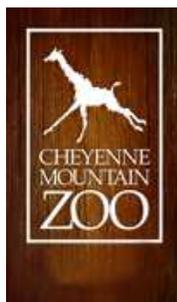
Other vegetables that can be started from seed in the garden for a second round of produce include lettuce, radishes, arugula, spinach, beets (for their green tops or for baby beets), cucumbers and bush beans. Be sure to cover the seeds with Remay and water daily until they germinate.

Two important deadlines:

July 15 - Start locking the garden gate behind you every time you walk through it.

July 31 - This is the last day to spread straw in the garden. On August 1 any remaining bales of straw must be removed and taken home.

Long-time BCGA gardener and Zoo docent Kay Gray was interviewed about her BCGA donation program for the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo. She was featured in an article about Community Gardens and Pikes Peak Ur-



ban Gardens (PPUG) in the May issue of *LIFE After 50*. Several of our gardeners were also mentioned. Read the article by clicking this link.:

<https://bit.ly/2yHkBE5>

Calendar

June 30 — Workday 8-11 a.m.

July 7 — Workday 8—11 a.m.

Remember to bring your own tools for weeding to workdays.

August 22— Summer Potluck at 5:30 p.m. at Gold Hill Mesa Community Room, 142 Raven Mine Drive.

Please Be Kind to Snakes

The bull snakes that live in the garden are welcomed by gardeners because they help to control the mice and gophers.

Please thoroughly read the information sheet about snakes posted on the front fence and also included in the Garden Handbook. Our gardener/naturalist, Brenda Holmes Stanciu, prepared it for us after a gardener who feared snakes killed a big bull snake a couple of years ago.

She describes the difference between bull snakes and rattlesnakes. Gardeners have never seen a rattlesnake in the garden. Rattlers generally prefer dry, sunny hillsides.

Bear Creek Garden Association

BCGA runs the Charmaine Nyman Community Garden located in Bear Creek Park East, Colorado Springs, Colorado. It is a Colorado 501(c)(3) tax exempt nonprofit corporation.

Members of the public can rent plots to grow organic vegetables for personal use and for donation to friends and charities.

The gardeners grow and donate thousands of pounds of produce to the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, the Springs Rescue Mission and Colorado Springs Food Rescue each year.

Contact us: John Poyzer 576-2664
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Website: www.bearcreekgardens.org

Facebook:

[Bear Creek Garden Association](https://www.facebook.com/BearCreekGardenAssociation)

Killdeer Nesting in the Garden



The killdeer are pretty, brown, black and white ground-nesting birds in the plover family. Simple nests holding 3-4 eggs appear in the garden in June and July.

If a gardener or a predator approaches, a nesting killdeer performs a conspicuous distraction display, dragging itself across the ground as if injured, tail fanned out, calling out pitifully and moving steadily away from the nest. When the human or predator moves away from the nest, the killdeer flies off.

The babies can run as soon as they hatch, and are delightful to watch as they forage for bugs or run to hide under the mother's wings. Please be careful not to disturb nests or upset the protective parent birds.

GARDENER ALERT:
As you leave, LOOK AROUND. If you are the last one out, Lock the Gate!! The garden has been repeatedly left unlocked recently.

Plant (Another) Row for the Zoo and CSP Food Rescue

We already have gardeners who are awash in spring lettuce, kale and other greens. Don't let anything go to waste! Donate your excess produce to the Zoo and to Colorado Springs Food Rescue, and, even better, plant a few extra vegetables to give away.

Kay Gray has posted a list of vegetables suitable for the Zoo animals on the two north garden gates.

In July, these organizations will start picking up vegetables at the garden once a week, on different mornings. Make sure the produce is clean and fresh, with no dirt or roots. On the morning of pickup (or at the earliest, in the cool evening before) place produce on the tarp that will be spread out by the truck gate where we keep wheelbarrows.

Gardeners will be notified when pickups begin.

Thank you, Cheryl

Thank you very much to new gardener Cheryl Osteros, who spent significant time this spring updating the BCGA website. She has corrected calendar information and has put all of the newsletters from 2015-2018 onto the home page of the website as a resource for gardeners. See her work by going to:

www.bearcreekgardens.org

She also perked up the Bear Creek Garden Association Facebook page. Gardeners are encouraged to "like" it and also to post on this page.

Notes for New Gardeners (cont.)

Mulch. Several new gardeners have brought in wood-based mulch (bark chips, cedar chips, gorilla hair) which they have been obliged to remove from their plots. Wood products damage a plot by robbing the soil of nitrogen as they decompose. Other prohibited mulching materials include hay, grass clippings, leaves, pine cones and pine needles.

Straw and also the aged horse manure from Sandy Matthews's nearby stable are welcome because they are organic mulches that enrich the soil as they break down. If you missed the big order of barley straw from Bartlett's Hay and Feed that arrived in early June, bales of straw are still available at Rick's and other garden centers. Straw will bring a few seeds with it. Pull barley sprouts as they emerge.

Char used to shake loose straw in big black plastic garbage bags to let the seeds fall to the bottom before she spread the straw on her plot.

Become a Friend of the Goats!

BCGA is planning to bring back the herd of weed-eating goats in the fall for their 20th annual grazing in Bear Creek Park. BCGA raises \$10,000 per year to bring them to the park.

You can support the BCGA Goat Fund by using (and reloading) a King Soopers Gift Card. Thirty-eight gardeners and other Friends of the Goats in the community are now using them. For details, and to get a card, send an e-mail to Bonnie MacLachlan at bearcreekgardens@yahoo.com or call her at 720-276-5151.