

# Community Gardens Report

November 18, 2008

Community Gardens Subcommittee

Bryte and Broderick Community Action Group (B&BCAG)

Many interested community people have voiced enthusiasm and creative community garden ideas. One coming from longtime West Sacramento garden enthusiast and resident Annie King is that we envision and establish West Sacramento as "the City of Gardens". We are beginning right here in Bryte and Broderick. The recent history of gardens in our neighborhoods began with the Japanese Truck Farmers who during the Second World War grew produce for San Francisco on the property between Toodhunter and the I Street Bridge and shipped it to the City on the Sacramento River. There is now a national community garden movement. Fueled by the current economic crisis, food security is a concern as it was during the Second World War when there was a national "Victory Garden movement".

We intend our gardens to not only be community food gardens but also rose gardens, demonstration herb and drought tolerant gardens, gardens at the corner of your block, gardens for children and gardens for seniors. As one of our West Sacramento Master gardeners, Gail Hoffman who coordinates the community garden at Westfield School said yesterday at the first collaborative planning meeting for a Community Garden at Holy Cross (see November 18,2008) "all the gardeners have to do is put the seeds in the ground and they just grow". This statement is a reminder that here in West Sacramento we live on "Yolo Gold" considered the richest soil in the world!

A special thank you goes to David Shpak, Dena Kirtley and Louise Collis for passing along all of the community garden information which passes through the offices. Their efforts have lead to many of the meetings and collaboration opportunities presented here.

**July 24, 2008**

David Shpak and myself visited community gardens at Evergreen, Yolo and Bryte Schools. The gardens were lovely and full of food tended by Laotian, Hmong and Mien families. There were positive comments from David Shpak that the city could see the possibility of community gardens as a part of Parks and Recreation. The generation of the community garden idea would need to be from the community. As we drove by Holy Cross Church, David suggested that implementation would realistically need to involve collaboration with community groups such as our neighborhood churches.

**September 15, 2008**

At the 2x2 meeting of the City and WUSD community gardens was an agenda item for review and a several community members attended gave testimony on the value of community gardens...**see notes from meeting attached.**

**October 2, 2008**

I organized an information gathering community garden tour for myself, David Shpak and Dena Kirtley. We visited 3 of the 7 Sacramento Community Gardens. Bill Maynard, Program Coordinator for the City of Sacramento Community Gardens Project shared his experience of the creation and establishment of the community garden...**see photos and notes attached.**

**November 17, 2008**

Today, we formed an action group between Bryte and Broderick Community Action Group (B&BCAG), Families in Self Help (FISH), Holy Cross Church and West Sacramento Master Gardeners to create and establish a community garden. The primary goal is to provide a garden

location and opportunity for our Bryte and Broderick community to grow food for their families and feed the hungry and provide children the educational opportunity to learn through gardening about food, caring for the earth and cooperation with others. We talked about next steps.

### **Next steps**

- Meet with Sharon Freites of San Pedro Park to discuss potential garden activities and events at San Pedro Park.
- Work with the Historical Society to plan and implement a Spring tour of Bryte and Broderick.
- Continue to identify next steps for the Holy Cross community garden location.
- Continue to identify with David Shpak next steps for cooperation between the West Sacramento Parks and Recreation Department and the community. Our goal is the establishment of beautiful and organized community gardens.

### **Other Community Garden Activities in Bryte and Broderick**

#### Senior Center Garden Project

West Sacramento Youth Coalition director, Michael Minnick and former Senior Center staff person, Mae Denman created and launched a project to establish of a outdoor visiting area and container garden at the Senior Center. The gardens are a series of 24 plus containers so that each senior can grow their own garden of fruits vegetables and flowers. Several planning meetings between Sac Hero youth, community folks, Master gardeners and seniors took place to develop a vision and working plan. Cooperation between City and County agencies, local businesses and volunteers are bringing this vision to fruition. The youth are great with many creative ideas, energy and enthusiasm.

#### **See photos**

#### Yolo County Housing Authority

Adjacent to the Senior Center is another community garden, which serves the residents of Bryte and Broderick especially those who live there in the Yolo Housing. The garden is expanding!

*Submitted to the Bryte and Broderick Action Group by Carol Klesow*