

## Community Garden Locations

### Chaverim Garden (Eastside)

5901 East 2nd Street  
Site Coordinator-Signa Roswall  
520-750-8439; alamo@dakotacom.net

### Corbett Garden (Eastside)

5948 East 30th Street  
Site Coordinator-Naniola Smith  
520-760-8579; naniloasmith9@msn.com

### Presidio Garden (Midtown)

Off Fort Lowell and Country Club  
Site Coordinator-Sally Coulthard  
stan@coulthard.net

### Wilson Garden (Midtown close to UA)

3331 North Wilson  
Site Coordinator-Melissa Urreiztieta  
520-320-9814; melissa.u@earthlink.net



## Garden Photo



Hatch, New Mexico has nothing on these beautiful peppers. They like the heat and don't seem to mind the mosquitoes. The gardeners however, are a different story.

# Community Gardens of Tucson

2940 North Santa Rosa Place  
Tucson, Arizona 85712  
520-795-8823  
[www.CommunityGardensofTucson.org](http://www.CommunityGardensofTucson.org)

# Community Gardens of Tucson



Volume 7 - Issue 5

a bimonthly guide to community gardening activities in the Greater Tucson area

September/October 2006

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## CONTACTS

### Administrative Director

Andy Stevens  
520-990-1459  
andy@solvomassage.com

### Education Director

George Brookbank  
520-888-4586  
GeorgeBrookbank@msn.com

### Treasurer

Pete DiCurti  
520-299-5581  
dicurti@msn.com

### Newsletter Editor

Dianne Stevens  
520-990-7254  
dianne@bluestockingdocs.com

### Steering Committee

Gary Cooper - 520-751-6769  
Bob Ishmael - 520-572-6315  
Shirley McReynolds - 520-408-0659  
Angela Powers - 520-293-2817  
John Swanson - 520-882-9102  
Signa Roswall - 520-745-8439  
Gwen Curiel - 520-327-0578

## Exotic Greens for the Fall Garden

by John Swanson

The fall season is soon upon us, and when night time temps dip into the 50's followed by lower daytime temperatures, we begin to think of those cool-season red and green lettuce varieties and that yummy, fresh-picked spinach that often adorned our salad plates in late fall, winter, and spring last year. As some of you know, there are many other leafy greens that we should try that will broaden out garden palates. Arugula is becoming popular as a salad ingredient, and its peppery flavor gives it the nickname "the salad spiker". Easy to grow from seed, it can be a cut-and-come-again item, or grown for bunching. (*hint: sources tell me it makes a great and unique pesto*) Out now are lots of new, leafy radishes that are grown for their leafy tops and not their swollen roots. Try some of the seed houses like Johnny's Select Seeds, Territorial Seeds, or Evergreen Seeds as sources for these quick growing varieties. Fresh beet greens are really great in a salad. Sow them thickly and cut them either as a baby-leaf green or in the more mature leaf stage; as a bonus they will keep growing. "Bull's Blood" beet has a dark rich red color to it, and looks spectacular in a salad.

Dandelion greens are on the bitter side, but definitely worth a try because of their nutritional value. The modern cultivated Italian varieties are upright, more refined, and definitely not your mother's wild dandelion greens. Cooked or raw, they are delicious and good for you. My favorite way to prepare them is to coarsely chop a bunch, and toss them together with tomatoes, anchovies or sardines, and parmesian cheese. Serve chilled with just olive oil, a little garlic, and pepper as dressings. Escarole is another favorite with thick fleshy leaves with a bitter sweet taste and a crunchy texture. Use as a salad green or in escarole soup. There are lots of possibilities with this easy to grow green.

Now lets get really exotic! Mache, or corn salad, is a refined, small-leafed green that grows in low clumps and is probably best sown in November in the Tucson area. Mache has a nice texture and is very popular in Northern Europe. On the wild side is Miners lettuce, or Claytonia: a somewhat crunchy, heart-shaped green, that is tolerant of cold, but not widely grown. Then there is Minutina. From my January trial planting in Tucson in 2005 it performed well. It looks like a coarse grass and has a somewhat bitter, grassy taste. Umm....interesting!

These exotics have already found their way into the trendy restaurants in New York City So get on the bandwagon and try them! Generally the growing season for these greens runs October through April in the Tucson area, so try one or two this year. I forgot to mention a whole host of exotic Asian greens to try, but we can discuss that at another time.



# George Says . . .

by George Brookbank

These next two months are ideal times for starting our winter gardens. We can sow seeds of root plants such as beets, turnips, and radishes, and we can sow seeds and also set out plants of cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, and lettuce. If we hurry we can get our own Thanksgiving dinner from bush beans and corn and maybe zucchini squash.

But all of this depends on us having the space to cultivate and improve our soils with steer manure or compost, ammonium phosphate and sulfur. We won't have that space if our gardens are full of cantaloupe, peppers or eggplant. Each one of us is on the horns of this dilemma and each of us will have to decide whether to pull out or plant afresh.

In the past we have offered a sort of solution to this overlapping of summer and winter opportunities. (It happens again in the spring when we want to set out summer type plants) It was suggested that each gardener use one side of their plot for summer things and the other side for winter things. It wasn't an idea that took hold, but it's worth mentioning again because our rototiller can effectively do the work for us. Think about it!

Our good gardener, Vladimir at the Wilson Garden, showed us how to get quick harvests of greens, which includes lettuce, cabbage, kale, broccoli, and so on. He sowed a square part of his plot with seed as if he were starting a grass lawn. Starting now, the seeds germinate quickly in the warm soil. He harvested by clipping with shears or scissors when the plants are five inches tall. The plants continue growing and allow another clipping every four or five weeks. One of our Presidio gardeners sowed seeds of broccoli recently and they came up quickly. She will transplant those seedlings when they are big enough and it shows that, in spite of the hot weather, we can start winter gardens any time now.

If you want to eat full-grown lettuce don't plant head lettuce, but use the leaf kinds. Don't be in a hurry to start because, although the seedlings will grow quickly they will be bitter when mature. Wait till the end of September for leaf lettuce.

You'll be able to make succession plantings or seedlings during these two months, but in November it will be too cold for a quick germination and growth. Depending on the weather seeding and planting time will start again in February or March, but of course we'll be wanting to be setting out tomatoes and peppers and the space problem comes us again. If you like onions, your Steering Committee will be giving you onion plants sometime in November, so keep some space available.

This last spring I was asked to carry out a variety trial on spinach. Unfortunately I didn't do well--the water system failed at Presidio and I didn't know about it until too late. I found out that Razzle Dazzle and Galaxy did well, but many gardeners know this already. I got poor results from Rembrandt, Melody, Whale, Space, Palco, and Long Standing. But perhaps the fault lay with me. If you want to grow spinach you'll need to talk up varieties with your fellow gardeners.

Meanwhile your Steering Committee suggested I carry out a trial of broccoli varieties and I looked through catalogs for kinds that have these characteristics: Heat tolerance, early harvests and power to produce plenty of side shoots after the main head is cut off. As soon as the seeds arrive I'll sow directly in the garden plot in order to get an early start. I might do a second sowing at the end of September, so if you have a recommended variety please give me a call.

~George

# From The Garden

## Tiller Time

a short note from George

The cultivation season is coming and there may be gardeners who would like to get an early start on cool-season vegetable planting and sowing.

The rototiller is ready but it is a bit temperamental because if we allow gasoline to dry out in the tank or carburetor the residue of gum makes it hard to start and keep running.

Proper maintenance calls for emptying the tank after use and running the machine until the carburetor is emptied. This is a chore if we use the rototiller for only one person at a time. I'd like to have a minimum of three people call for its use so if you have the urge, please get at least two other people to join in. I'm glad to come out and get your plots ready, without having to wait for the scheduled monthly meeting date. My phone number is 888-4586.

In this way we can be sure of keeping the rototiller running without having to take it to a shop where they'll take everything to pieces and boil them--and then charge us a big bill.



## The Surprising Lemon Cucumber

by Patti Hartmann, Chaverim Garden

Lemon Cucumbers were one of the discoveries I made while gardening at the Chaverim Garden. My partner Bruce Plenk really liked them and thought it would be fun to try to grow them. We put them in the garden last year and planted just about six seeds. Were we ever surprised! They vined all over the garden and were so prolific that we stopped counting at over 100 cukes. This year they came voluntarily and we are knee deep in lemon cukes again. But this is not a bad thing.

Cucumis sativus is a baseball-sized cucumber variety producing bright, lemon-colorful fruits. The flavor is a bit sweeter than normal cucumbers. They are very easy to grow and the fruits mature faster than most cucumbers. The exact origin is unknown but it probably comes from Russia. An heirloom was introduced in 1694 by Samuel Wilson of Mechanicsville, Pennsylvania. It was once a well established variety in Australian markets as it is rust- and drought-resistant. Seeds Savers Exchange sells this variety. You can order it at [seedsavers.org](http://seedsavers.org).

This cucumber is very versatile. In an article by Judy Shobeloff, it's noted that not only can they be used in salads, but also because of their size they are more portable and work well as a snack. You can bite into them like an apple if you want, and they are great for backpacking. You can put them in sandwiches instead of tomatoes because they are not wet. You can also slice them and combine with yogurt or sour cream. Add some dill, green onion, and garlic and you have a great summer salad. Of course, you can always thinly slice a cold lemon cucumber and put them over tired or puffy eyes. They are the perfect size. But whatever you do, I know you will enjoy this surprising little cuke.

The recipe below is from the article by Shobeloff from the Moscow food co-op newsletter

**Lemon Cucumber Salsa**  
1cup lemon cucumber ¼ cup red onion  
¾ cup Roma tomatoes diced  
1 Tbsp. jalapeno peppers, minced (+/- according to heat desired)  
¼ cup red wine vinegar  
1 Tbsp. fresh mint chopped  
Juice of half a lime  
Salt/Pepper to taste and combine in a bowl.

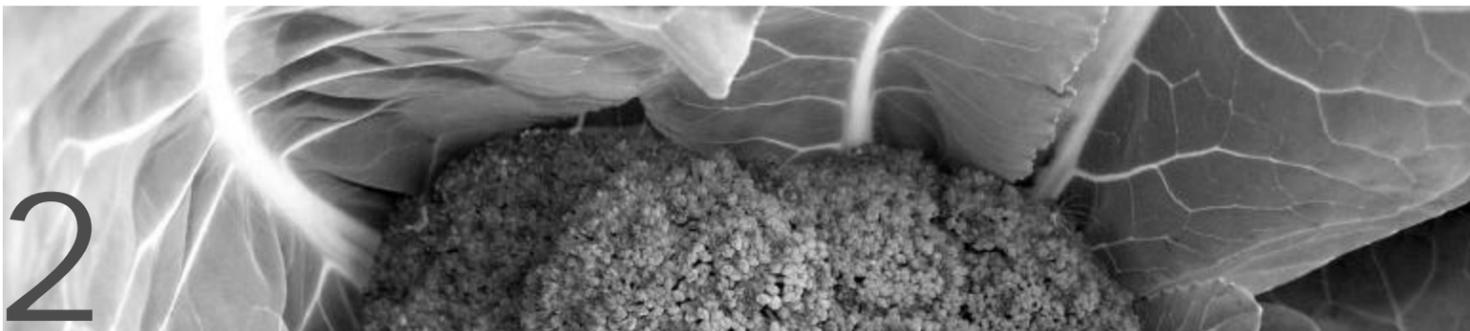
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Keith Cooper  
Operations Manager

4555 S. Palo Verde, Suite 151  
Tucson, Arizona 85714  
520.748.9094  
FAX 520.747.2938  
kcooper@agpaloverde.com

As always, we extend our warm thanks and appreciation to our friends at AlphaGraphics who not only make the publication of this newsletter possible, but make it beautiful as well.



# Director's Cut

# A Planter's Guide

to September and October

## It's Fall Potluck Time . . .

by Andy Stevens

Paul and Melva, our ever-gracious homeowners at the Corbett Garden, have agreed once again to host our garden potluck. It seems as though we haven't scared them off just yet! The usual suspects will be in attendance, but we'd love to have a huge turnout for this, our first evening potluck in a while. The potluck will take place on October 21st and will start at 5pm. The volunteers will begin setting up the tables and other necessities from 4-4:30pm, so show up early if you'd like to lend a hand. Please bring a dinner and/or dessert dish and chairs. The Community Gardens of Tucson will supply water, lemonade, and tableware. Your administrative director is also the coordinator for the Corbett garden right now, so contact him if you have any questions or concerns. Please let your garden coordinators know as soon as possible if you will be attending and how many folks are in your party, so we can plan for drinks and place settings. See you there!

The gardens are soaking up the rains, but much to our chagrin, so are the bermuda grass, pigweed, and other ruthless weeds. Knock them down and get rid of them where you can. Just don't put any of it in the compost bins! Grass and weeds don't make for really good compost here in the gardens.

I recently spoke with Phillippe down at the Tucson CSA (Community Supported Agriculture). I don't know how many of you have ever heard of CSA, but it's a pretty neat idea. I feel that the Community Gardens and CSA operations compliment each other. Here's how it works: consumers purchase shares of the overall produce that's supplied each week. Instead of farmers being up to their eyeballs in debt to the bank, they use the subscription money to fund their operations and stay in business. Every week, subscribers go down to the preset location, sign in, and pick up their allotment of produce. It appears to be a good thing and from the customer standpoint, looks to operate like a well-oiled machine.

Dianne and I watched a movie not too long ago about an interesting character who went from conventional farming to a CSA farm after he, well, lost the farm. A family farm that his grandparents had started. It dealt him quite a blow to have to sell his equipment and farm, but it's a good story about a positive outcome and how folks all across the country are getting back in the position of knowing where their food comes from. The name of the movie is *The Real Dirt On Farmer John* - check it out if you get a chance. There's also a website out there called [LocalHarvest.org](http://LocalHarvest.org), it has a lot of information about CSA farms and farming methods.

Enjoy today, because it's the only one that you'll ever get.

~Andy

## Broccoli Trials This Fall

by John Swanson

George Brookbank, TCG educational director will be growing out different varieties of broccoli this fall to observe their growth and production. We will watch and wait and share the results with each other later this year or early next year. Why not try growing some broccoli varieties along with George this fall? Plant some seed in September or transplants in October of a variety you choose. Later, measure the heads at maturity. After harvesting the main head, pick and count the side rosettes over the next month or two, then record and note your results. This will be an interesting experiment to share with each other and with future gardeners.

### What Is It?

Cast back to earth by Zeus, the then mythological goddess Cynara was said to have been transformed into the plant that we know today as *Cynara scolymus* (*SIN-uh-ruh SKOL-ee-mus*). Almost 100% of the domestic production of this member of the thistle family now takes place in California.



Vegetables	Sep 1-15	Sep 15-30	Oct 1-15	Oct 15-30
Artichoke				
Arugula				
Asian Cabbages				
Asian Leafy Greens				
Beet				
Broccoli				
Broccoli Raab				
Bush Beans				
Corn (Early variety)				
Cabbage				
Carrots				
Cress				
Cucumber				
Dandelion Greens				
Endive				
Escarole				
Kholrabi				
Leek				
Lettuce				
Peas				
New Zealand Spinach				
Radish				
Squash (summer)				
Swiss Chard				
Turnip				
<b>Herbs</b>				
Basil				
Chervil				
Chives				
Chinese Chives				
Cilantro				
Dill				
Epazote				
French Tarragon				
Leaf Fennel				
Lemon Verbena				
Lemon Grass				
Marjoram				
Mint				
Oregano				
Parsley				
Rosemary				
Sage				
Shiso				
Stevia				
Thyme				

**LEGEND**

Unwise To Plant

Sow Seeds

Plant Seedlings

Plant Seeds and/or Plants

## Sep/Oct Lunar Phases

Waxing Half Moon  
Sep 14 Oct 14



New Moon  
Sep 22 Oct 22

Waning Half Moon  
Sep 30 Oct 29



Full Moon  
Sep 7 Oct 7



**Note: Quality Herb Production is best achieved with filtered sun/open shade during hot months.**

# Article of Interest

## Francis Land House Kitchen & Herb Gardens

by Signa Roswall

On a recent trip to Virginia Beach, VA we visited Francis Land's partly restored, mid-18th century plantation house and its immediate grounds. The original plantation had boasted 1000 acres, and the first income crop the Land family tried to raise was tobacco. This turned out not to succeed due to a problem familiar to us here in Tucson - too much salt in the soil and groundwater. In the case of Virginia Beach, the salt source was proximity to the Atlantic Ocean, not an alkali desert, as here. On discovering that tobacco wouldn't be a successful money-maker in his area, Mr. Land switched to wheat, which tolerated the salty conditions and supported the family.

Early plantations were spread far apart, with no nearby shopping, so a family had to provide its own foods and herbal remedies for both its members and its slaves. (Slaves, however, were expected to mostly fend for themselves, and were allotted a small garden space near the slave quarters to grow what they could.)

After touring the house, we stopped by the herb garden, which was smaller than the kitchen garden and just behind the house off its southeast corner. It was completely fenced with white pickets, except for the wall of a garage that you see in the photo on the right, which was added in the 1930s by a much later owner. The fence was both for security from theft and for keeping out wandering livestock that would trample and nibble the food the family depended on.

Herbs were planted all the way up to the fence, and walkway gates were placed in the center of the north, east and south sides. The gates were locked with ball and chain locks, so we couldn't enter to see the plants or their labels up close. Sage and rosemary were recognizable without labels, but there were many other herbs that remain "anonymous".

Paved walks crossed the herb garden north-to-south and east-to-west meeting in the center at a round, raised planter made of rocks. At the east side was a weathered wooden seat large enough for two or three people. I could imagine the lady of the house seated there catching the breeze on a hot summer morning, perhaps with some embroidery to occupy herself, or directing the picking and sorting of herbs for drying or for the day's cooking.

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The kitchen garden, where vegetables were

grown for family use, was much larger and just south of the herb garden, separated by a small swath of lawn. Both gardens were in view of the house, again as a safeguard against loss. The kitchen garden is now fenced by white pickets on only three sides, though it had been fully fenced in the old plantation days. We were able to enter its gates. It was laid out exactly like our CGT gardens, with aisles on all four sides and down the center, as well as between the plots, and with the center aisle running east to west so that the plots got good sun exposure their full lengths. The garden consisted of 24 plots (I think -- I didn't count them!) Three or four of the plots were lying fallow, perhaps waiting for a later crop or just "resting". We were told the garden is tended by volunteer members of a Virginia Beach garden club.

Beautiful artichokes were in full production - the plants much more succulent than any I've seen in Tucson, probably due to the much higher humidity in Virginia. Both "winter" and "summer" crops -- as we consider them -- were flourishing at the same time. The cabbages were about done, but there were both younger and older broccoli plantings, along with lettuce, garlic, onions, tomatoes, peas, bush and pole beans, corn, soy beans, beets, carrots, turnips, leeks, and more. I didn't see any berries or melons. Unlike here, during winter a Virginia kitchen garden wouldn't have been producing.

We're fortunate here in Tucson to be able to double- and triple-crop, so that we can produce our own fresh vegetables and fruits pretty much year-round, even though we need to raise different crops suited to each of our seasons.



# Garden Reports



## Presidio Garden

It was a good morning to wonder at the powerful growth that a little rain and sunshine can bring. We all got to see how Darlene's cucuza squash finally overpowered an old trellis that we all thought was too ugly to die. Stan was getting ready to divide up some of the catch of the day from his patch of prolific Armenian cucumbers as Darin and Darcy arrived.

## Wilson Garden

The garden hums along in the heat and wish our homeowner a speedy recovery after some recent skeletal repairs. We look forward to seeing more gardeners from the other gardens at our meetings soon and hope that some of "the regulars" can make it down from the cooler elevations to pay us a visit.



## Chaverim Garden

For those of you old enough to remember the first running of the movie *Mister Roberts* from 1955, these ladies should be put in for the The Order of the Palm medal, the same as awarded to Henry Fonda's character, for expedient removal of this troublesome monocot.

## Corbett Garden

George and Darlene may as well have been discussing the finer points of *Punica granatum* (and in Greek!) at the garden recently because Cady was just looking at the odd round things hanging above George's head. In the background, Bill and Lucy's basil is coming on strong.



# Community Garden Calendar

## September 2006

- 1 Corbett Garden Meeting 8:00am
- 9 Presidio Garden Meeting 8:00am
- 14 CGT Steering Committee Meeting at Darlene Schacht's, 2940 N. Santa Rosa, 9:00am. All CGT members invited.



- 17 Chaverim Garden Meeting 8:00am
- 23 Wilson Garden Meeting 8:00am

## October 2006

- 7 Corbett Garden Meeting 8:00am
- 12 CGT Steering Committee Meeting at Darlene Schacht's, 9:00am. All CGT members invited.
- 14 Presidio Garden Meeting 8:00am
- 15 Chaverim Garden Meeting 8:00am



- 18 Deadline for Newsletter Submissions
- 21 Garden Potluck at the Corbett Garden *showtime* 5:00pm
- 28 Wilson Garden Meeting 8:00am

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# Community Garden Activities



Clockwise from top left: George and Debra solve the world's problems one square foot at time. For those of you who garden at Chaverim, come check out the weeds at Presidio -- they almost dare you to go near them with a hoe. Give them an inch of rain and they'll take a mile. Jim and Lucille discuss the delicacies of desert toadstools at Chaverim. Of course, George eventually noted that there's a chance that they may be edible, but he also said he'd rather have someone else try them out just in case . . . Sam Wymer's been hiding out in the shade over at Corbett under the Pomegranate tree. Contrary to what your eyes may be telling you, he hasn't shrunk any, those limbs are just hanging low with fruit.

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