

Keep Irving Beautiful Newsletter



Community Gardening in Irving

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Community gardening has become a very popular nation-wide trend and is a great way to bring people together in a healthy, beneficial activity. Here in Irving, that trend is catching on, and in the past few years, several community gardens have been started. KIB has partnered with the Gerald Taylor Community Garden at Bear Creek Church since its groundbreaking in December of 2012, and was among the first adopters of one of the raised beds. First planting was Spring of 2013, and the garden has been thriving ever since. They also have a children's learning garden, and the young church members participate in activities like painting the beds. A plot is leased for \$15 per quarter, and is open to anyone who wants to garden, not just church members. At any given time, you might find a variety of tomatoes and leafy greens growing, as well as okra, peppers, and many other vegetables. Gardeners are asked to give back to the community by sharing some of what they grow with local food pantries. If you are interested in leasing a bed at the garden, located at 2700 Finley Road, contact the church at 972-257-0206.



Produce abounds all over Irving, at the Irving North Christian Sacred Ground, Gerald Taylor Memorial and North Lake College Community Gardens (clockwise from left).

Irving North Christian Church has also started a community garden on their property at 2901 North MacArthur called "Sacred Ground." The goal is to create a community through organic gardening that also teaches about green living, composting and rain harvesting. Raised beds of various sizes can be reserved for a \$50 annual fee. The garden maintains an active Facebook page where gardeners share

tips and challenges, post pictures of what they have grown or offer to share their bounty. Like the Gerald Taylor Garden, Sacred Ground asks that all participants donate a portion of their harvest to a food pantry such as Irving Cares. For more information, please contact the church at 972-255-8525.

North Lake College is becoming known as a leader in college green initiatives, and one of those is their campus community garden. The garden is maintained on a regular schedule by the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. All students and staff are welcome to assist in the upkeep of the garden, which has been in existence for several years. They donate produce from the garden to students and staff, and last year that amounted to 450 pounds of fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs.

Did You Know?

This month we share natural gardening tips from Earth911.com. Some things you can try are:

- **Attract Friendly Bugs:** Planting a row of sunflowers or marigolds will draw "good guys" like ladybugs and lacewings which eat aphids
 - **Companion Planting:** Combinations like cucumber and radish, tomatoes and chives, or carrot and spring onion are some examples of beneficial pairings
 - **Set Up a Compost Bin:** This introduces microorganisms that will help aerate the soil and break down material to further plant growth, and serves as a natural alternative to chemical fertilizers.
- Happy Gardening!



Volunteers from Land Design and Contech (above) partnered with KIB to plant 129 trees over two days at the tree farm. This is a project made possible through a \$5,000 tree planting grant from the UPS Foundation and Keep America Beautiful in 2015. There's more good tree news: KIB just received a 2016 grant, and will plant trees at Bird's Fort Trail Park in October.

Join us for the 25th Annual Trash Bash

One of KIB's signature events is the annual Trash Bash, which has become a tradition for many of our volunteers over the years. This year's event is special for several reasons, one of them being that it is our 25th annual Trash Bash! Yes KIB started hosting a Trash Bash the year it began, 1992, and has held one each year ever since. For some extra fun, we will be partnering with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for a "Trash and Treasures" event in celebration of their 30th anniversary. And as has been our custom for the past few years, the event is also part of National Public Lands Day, celebrated on the last Saturday in September each year. Not

only is the Trash Bash a cleanup, but we also will have educational activities provided by our favorite naturalist and fossil expert, Jon Halsey, and reptile aficionado Barry Allen. Free blood pressure screenings will be provided by North Lake nursing students, and there will be prize giveaways and a hot dog and chip lunch. Please register by September 19, online at www.KeepIrvingBeautiful.org, or just scan the QR code to the right and submit the form.

See you on September 24!



Last year's Trash Bash (above) had more than 580 volunteers. Join KIB this year for the 25th annual Trash Bash at T.W. Richardson Grove on September 24.

