

Presidents Message

6/30/2020

Normally I would be giving you this message in person at our annual meeting but it is canceled for safety. Nevertheless, the show must go on and it my honor and privilege to be your president and give this report. As this gets sent our online voting is open- please vote!
http://sunshinecommunitygardens.org/admin/ballot_june_2020.php

Our garden is doing fine, financially the plant sale was a huge success (see Carols report) and we can't thank those who helped enough! (Randy Thompson, Linda Booker, all who planted, watered nurtured and sold plants at our such-a-near-thing plant sale) Others continue to help with the constant special projects that slowly improve and maintain our space. Thank you Bob Easter, Janet Adams , Kay McMurray, Robert Jarry, Steve Shultz and all Zone Coordinators. I also want to thank our Directors that are stepping down, Randy Thompson and Linda Booker and our Secretary Noelle Letteri. All have participated in and contributed to the spirited give and take that occurs with a bunch of gardeners at a table.

Our projects and people chug along, yet as a society we still struggle and are being tested by racial injustice, personal economic ruin and deadly pandemic. Our Sunshine community is impacted by this too and its easy to feel lost. I look to the past for inspiration. Lincoln is especially good when he re-grounded the country and its purpose at Gettysburg.

"Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth, on this continent, a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived, and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives, that that nation might live.

It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract.

The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.

It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they here gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

In communications with some of our fellow gardeners, it seems the tenets expressed by Lincoln and our bylaws is unknown or misunderstood. So as one of the living I want to reiterate what we are dedicated to; our purpose and position. Lincoln sums it up and applies to our times.

Our purpose is to provide a space for all people to garden and just to enjoy. We are not a closed garden club of members with a staff that maintains the property. If it is your normal procedure to just pay for the hours you owe, consider a new garden space. We are a organization that is open to all when the gate is open, ideally maintained by all of the gardeners to their ability. The more people we have in and visiting our gardens and the more we can be involved and share with the community the better for the future of our organization and society.

The Covid pandemic has forced us to change some things but there are still plenty of space and opportunity to maintain the property and be involved. If you need help or are unable to get to your plot or know someone who needs a hand please contact your zone coordinator or myself and we will figure something out.

I hope more of you will consider being involved in the running of Sunshine, spreading the word about it, and maintaining our communal TSVBI plot. Vote in and run for election. We want you! For one thing- It's fun! It's rewarding to help on projects! We do good things. This year we have:

- Given \$3000 to local foodbanks to help the unemployed
- Provided thousands of pounds of produce to Micah 6 organization
- From our successful plant sale given \$5000.00 to All Blind Children of Texas our charity that helps visually impaired children and thousands of plants to schools and nonprofit organizations
- Hosted a bunch of classes
- Purchased easier to use battery powered mowers, blowers, and weed-eaters
- Completely rebuilt the front street garden thanks to Betty Chlystek and Matthew Johnston
- Created a Maximizing New Garden Success
- Identified and more clearly marked major common paths
- Systematically replacing hose bids and posts and expanding water service
- Participation in a multi-year pollinator study with UT (info on webpage)

We need help on various projects including creating a curriculum and presenting it to new gardeners.

Thanks! and stay healthy- feel ill/weird? Get tested! It's easy. I've done it.

Happy 4th of July!

Steve Uecker

President Sunshine Community Gardens