

Knox Receives AmeriCorps Funding to Revive the Green Crew

The Knox Parks Foundation is pleased to announce that we have received substantial AmeriCorps funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service. This funding will enable Knox to bring on 13 full time members for its Green Crew youth conservation corps on October 1. Jack N. Hale, Executive Director, said, "AmeriCorps support will provide the stability and capacity necessary for us to really improve the beauty and productivity of the city."

The Green Crew carries out a wide variety of projects, including Hartford Blooms, creation of community gardens, maintenance of public spaces such as the Ancient Burying Ground, and other beautification projects. Our Green Crew program will aid young people in developing marketable skills while improving the appearance and productivity of Hartford's green space. The Green Crew assists citywide volunteer efforts and educational programs.

AmeriCorps is a network of national service programs that engage more than 50,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet critical needs in education, public safety, health and the environment. "During the January 2002 State of the Union Address, President Bush called on Americans to commit at least 2 years—4,000 hours over the rest of a lifetime—to serve our country, communities and neighbors. In its ninth year of service, the Connecticut Commission on National and Community Service, in partnership with the Department of Higher Education has supported community engagement and volunteerism since the inception of National Service and AmeriCorps," said the Commission's Executive Director, Jacqueline Johnson. "This year the Commission is proud to support a new environmental program and Hartford's

only youth conservation corps—the Green Crew AmeriCorps, a program of the Knox Parks Foundation. Green Crew will provide up to 18 individuals the opportunity to spend a year serving in Hartford communities. In return, AmeriCorps members receive an education award of up to \$4,725 to help defray the cost of college tuition or pay back qualified student loans."

Although the Corporation provides a substantial portion of the funding, the Knox Parks Foundation is still responsible for raising half of the program's costs, over \$150,000. One of the ways that Knox raises money for this program is by performing landscape beautification and maintenance projects for non-profit organizations. Providing a wide variety of projects for our Crew members to participate in also increases the educational value of the program. If your organization would like to learn more about bringing the Green Crew to work on your project, please call our Horticultural Director Ron Pitz at (860) 951-7694.

Photo by Mary Crean



At right: City of Hartford calls on the Knox Parks Foundation to aid in traffic-calming efforts at the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch.

The Green Thumb Print

The newsletter of the
KNOW
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And What a Garden Party it Was ...

By Donna Gordon, Community Network Builder

On Monday, September 8, 2003, Niles Street Garden hosted Knox's second annual Community Gardeners Party. The party was a culmination to the season's planting. It provided a vehicle for people getting together sharing food and fun. Everybody who came brought a yummy dish to share, some even made with vegetables from their gardens. We also had awesome appetizers donated to Knox by Pastis Restaurant. Thanks so much Pastis! A community garden party gives folks the opportunity to visit another garden and also gives one garden a chance to shine. The party on Niles Street certainly did both, and the momentum keeps growing... It was loads of fun and who knows, next year the party may even be in your community garden.



Admiring the flowers at the annual Community Gardeners Party at Niles Street.

Photo by Mary Crean

DEP Funds Creation of Two New Habitats for Hartford's Butterflies

By Ron Pitz, Staff Horticulturist

In keeping with our goal to create educational and demonstration gardens here on our grounds, and one of my personal goals, which is to replace the front lawn at the Knox building with plantings that are beneficial to wildlife, we applied for two Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) grants.

The grant would provide 462 native plants and shrubs to create two Urban Wildlife Habitats that would provide a food and shelter source for butterflies and hummingbirds. Our plan was to install one of the gardens in front of the Knox office, and one in front of the Mary Mahoney Village Greenhouse on Vine Street in Hartford.

The proposals were sent in November of 2002, and on a rainy, chilly day at the end of this past May, I received a congratulatory call from DEP Wildlife Biologist, Peter Piccone. Since planting the gardens in July, six varieties of butterflies have been observed at the Knox office. These gardens are important because they replace valuable wildlife habitats that are being lost due to increasing development. We would like to thank Bill Grotehaus, Roberta and Arthur Hodge, Lexina



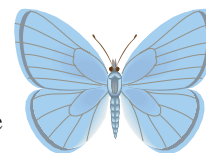
Community Gardens Growing with Knox Parks Foundation

By Donna Gordon, Community Network Builder

This past spring, the vision of developing a community garden on-site at Knox finally came to fruition. Knox Parks Foundation Community Garden is small but powerful. As of this date we have 4 gardening plots, and a varied constituency. The garden is comprised of an established Hartford couple, a single father and his daughter, and a group of families from the suburbs. Some of the vegetables from the garden will be used for people's individual bounties, and some will be donated to local soup kitchens. And so we thank our pioneers, for their vision, initiative and energy in getting the garden started. And we know that next season we hope to make Knox's Community Garden bigger as we continue to grow....

Bailey, Elaine Fontanez, Corinthia Brown, Saschelle Johnson, and the young women from Gray Lodge Shelter for Women for helping us plant 462 plants in two days!

For a list of plant species or more information on creating a wildlife habitat please contact Knox Staff Horticulturist and Master Wildlife Conservationist, Ron Pitz at 951-7694 or Peter Piccone, Urban Wildlife Biologist, DEP Wildlife Division at 860-675-8130.



The Green Thumb Print

The newsletter of the
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2ND PAGE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: What Do You Value?

By Richard R. Rendeiro

I am writing this column on September 11, so my thoughts are naturally colored by the events of two years ago. That terrible day changed all of us. For some, it has meant a life of looking over their shoulder to see where the next threat will come from. For others, it has led to a greater appreciation of each moment of every day. For all of us, however, it was a wake-up call that life can be short, and that it is important to take stock in what you value, and work to maximize yours and others appreciation of those attributes.

The Knox Parks Foundation is composed of people who share similar values, and wish to promote them. We are a very diverse organization, with members covering every bandwidth of society's spectrum. We are not going to discover a cure for cancer, or resolve the Middle East crisis. But, with the support of all of you, we will make our region a

Five past presidents gather at current president Rick Rendeiro's home to rekindle their connections with the Knox Parks Foundation.

more beautiful place to live and work, teach our children about plants, science and the value of hard work, educate those who have fallen between the cracks so that they can become proud and self-confident members of our society, provide an opportunity for those in need to grow food for their pantries, and help folks ages 3 to 103 continue to appreciate the beauty, mystery and excitement of all things horticultural. Come join us.



Photo by Mary Crean

Betty Knox Society

By Mary Crean, Development Director

Betty Knox was an energetic and creative woman who was devoted to her gardens and to the renewal of the City of Hartford. The foundation that she established in her name in 1966, just months before her untimely death was dedicated to these two passions.

Betty's vision was to beautify the city with growing things. Her mission was to improve the beauty of Greater Hartford, to increase the awareness and appreciation of horticulture, and thus to enhance the physical and environmental condition of the people in the City of Hartford and the region.

Today, more than 37 years later, we have created a philanthropic society to honor the dedication and mission of Betty Knox. We call this exclusive group the Betty Knox Society. The Society recognizes those individuals who make a gift to the

Knox Parks Foundation in their estate plan through a bequest by will, life insurance, real estate, retirement accounts and various life income vehicles. Chaired by Board Member, Margie Kreidler, the Society is a philanthropic keystone that will assist us to build a stronger foundation for the future.

Won't you be a member?

The future is already upon us. And with it has come new challenges, new ways of horticulture, new methods to educate and train our youth, teachers, community gardeners, children and teachers. We need your help.

Can you find within yourself the dedication and spirit of Betty Knox? Won't you be a member of the Betty Knox Society and be a partner with Knox so that we can grow with the future?

If your answer is yes, then please call Mary Crean at the Knox Parks Foundation Development Office (860) 951-7694 ext. 15. Thank you for your commitment and support.

Thanks to these area businesses ...



Also, The Knox Parks Foundation would like to thank the following local businesses for feeding our 30 volunteers on the United Way Day of Caring:

- Synder's Deli, • Subway,
- Stop & Shop, • Shaws

See story on 4th page, "Have You Heard the Buzz?"

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The newsletter of the
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3RD PAGE

Learning in the Garden

By *Jacquie Berger, Program Manager*

This summer was a time for curiosity to blossom and knowledge to grow for youth of all ages. Through a partnership with the Trinity Urban Leadership Program, the Knox Parks Foundation was able to work with two creative and talented interns: Elizabeth Guernsey and Sacha Kelly. These two hardworking young women led our educational summer programs and made horticultural learning activities available and accessible to a diverse population of Hartford Youth.



Trinity Intern Elizabeth Guernsey

Junior Gardeners

Through an ongoing partnership with OPMAD (Organized Parents Make a Difference), Knox offered a second summer of gardening activities to 24 Hartford 3rd – 6th graders. Some of the highlights of this four week program included going on an insect safari, growing “hairy” rye-grass caterpillars, getting up close and personal with worms and harvesting their own radishes!

Have you Heard the Buzz?

Our summer classrooms came alive with the excited hum of active minds as Becky the beekeeper unveiled Knox Parks’ newest addition, a demonstration hive with over 5,000 honeybees. Ted and Becky Jones of Jones’ Apiaries have generously donated a beautiful glass-sided hive so students and visitors can observe the fascinating little workers at home. Interpretive posters demonstrating the life-cycle of the honeybee and job of the beekeeper are also on display. Thank you Ted & Becky!

Plant and Soil Scientists

Knox was happy to build a new partnership this summer with the Gray Lodge Shelter for Women, and to offer a group of 6 at-risk girls the unique opportunity to learn hands-on about plant and soil science. The young women who participated in our 6-week summer program earned high school lab science credits, were taught to approach science from many different angles, including experiments, arts, and entrepreneurship, and gave something back to their community by participating in a variety of service projects.



Trinity Intern Sacha Kelly



Beekeeper Becky Jones, of Jones’ Apiaries, introduces enthralled OPMAD students to Knox’s new demonstration beehive.

A Special Thanks

This summer has proved once again what the incredible power of volunteerism can do. All together Marie Perkins, Erin Convertito and Evan Crean spent over 100 hours this summer working with our youth program and working with youth in a community gardening program which desperately needed the time and attention of a few caring individuals. These three dedicated individuals did more than just give up their sunny summer mornings and afternoons, they made a difference in the lives of urban youth by investing their attention, patience, and kindness. In addition to their emotional generosity, they gave knowledge, led productive activities, and introduced children to the earth by helping them to make things grow. For that they have earned their gratefulness, and ours.

At left: One of our star volunteers, Evan Crean, teaching gardening to students from the Dutch Point Boys and Girls Club at Good Shepherd Church Community Garden.



Photo by Mary Crean

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