

GARDEN NEWS

Winter 2014

March roared in like a lion, but bulbs are beginning to sprout - a sure sign of spring at last! The garden committee has been planning for the new growing season and students have been busy 'gardening' even when it was too cold to go outside. Here is news from beyond the polar vortex...

Thanks to a HSF grant, Haldane's Farm to School Initiative expanded this January to include **Farmer in the Classroom**, a companion program to Chef in the Classroom. Each month Carolyn Llewellyn, parent and farm educator from Glynwood, visits a different classroom bringing in fun, hands-on activities featuring the vegetable of the month. This January: Beets! Students examined beet seeds, pulled up real beets still growing in the garden, ate cooked and raw red & golden beets and hard boiled eggs dyed pink from pickled beet juice. Carolyn showed students how to cut heart stampers out of beets to make designs using beet ink. A great Valentine's Day idea!

The Haldane **Greenhouse** was put to the test this winter and performed beautifully... Mr. Wick's 6th graders successfully grew spinach for the cafeteria salad bar! See photos next page. Thanks again to HSF, PGC, and Haldane's facilities crew for getting the old greenhouse functional again.

Newsletters too infrequent? Now you can follow the garden on **facebook** for photos, project updates, and relevant articles. Like us at [facebook.com/growinghaldane](https://www.facebook.com/growinghaldane).

Great news for teachers! The garden website now features several links with garden activities directly aligned to **common core standards** for each grade level. You'll also find an online **calendar** where you can schedule your class time in the garden: www.growinghaldane.com. Be sure to let us know your plans for spring - fill out this year's **Intake Form** or talk to your Garden Parents so your class is guaranteed growing space.



Mrs. Hocker's 1st graders making turtle seed planters, now planted and lined up along windowsills.



Clockwise from top: spinach growing in greenhouse flats; trays ready for serving in the cafeteria salad bar; Mr. Wick's 6th graders getting ready to harvest; and students cutting leaves from stems.

WINTER ACTIVITIES

Haldane students planted bulbs indoors and out (paper whites, tulips, daffodils), made birdfeeders, composted cafeteria scraps, observed pumpkin decay over months, made seasonal weather observations, gathered mature seed pods from garden plants, made Thanksgiving decorations from collected dried plant parts, read books about plants and gardens, and more...



From 1st grade garden parent Heidi Stephens, describing the indoor class activity above:

*“In January we used a **Life Lab** guided activity. This tied in well with Common Core objectives and lessons already taking place in class. We brought several items in for students to observe, including an air plant, an uprooted amaryllis, a potted plant, rocks, pinecones, and a metal grasshopper. The children were asked to investigate whether the items were plants or not plants, and they each wrote and illustrated charts to demonstrate their findings. We had a spirited debate about whether one of the rocks was really just a rock (or could it be a mussel shell?), and Mrs. Hocker encouraged the children to think like scientists and consider the evidence before drawing conclusions.”*

SPRING PLANS

Given the success of October garden month, the garden committee will help organize a **Spring Garden Month** with activities and lesson ideas for each class grades K-4, most likely in May. There will also be a new theme bed in the garden this spring: the **‘Bread Bed’** will grow grains commonly eaten across the globe so students learn more about important staple food crops.

Plans are underway to build out the new **garden shed interior** with cubbies, potting table, tool racks, etc. to be followed by an official ribbon-cutting ceremony with HSF as guest of honor!

The PTA has donated a **Sweetbay Magnolia** tree to be planted in the garden in honor of retired superintendent **Dr. Villanti**. The Magnolia planting is tentatively scheduled for April 25th, Arbor Day.



INDOOR PLANT UPDATES...

Mrs. Comerford's first graders (left) have been taking excellent care of Haldane's **Red Banana** tree (*Ensete ventricosum* 'Maurelii'). They have discovered that reading to the banana every day during "Dear Time" is helping it grow! These young scientists have figured out what research studies prove: pay attention and plants thrive, neglect them and plants die.

Mr. Wick's sixth graders sowed a second crop of cutting lettuce post spinach harvest and hope to also serve this in the Cafeteria's salad bar! **Lettuce** (*Lactuca sativa*) belongs to the Aster plant family and was first cultivated by the ancient Egyptians who bred it from a weed into a plant grown for its tasty leaves. Lettuce spread to the Greeks and the Romans, who gave it the Latin name "*lactuca*", from which the English word "lettuce" is derived.

HELP NEEDED!

Please contact us if you can assist with building out the shed interior, donate construction materials, install an outdoor sink, or design/construct a courtyard **Pergola** for vines and gourds.

The garden committee is always looking for new members to join and help out 'behind the scenes'. Contact us if interested. You don't have to be a gardener - there are many ways to support the garden: fundraising, construction, outreach, grant writing, lesson plans, research, etc.

THANK YOU to...

- The continuing support and original garden start-up grants from **HSF and HHLT**...
- Philipstown Garden Club (**PGC**) for their renovation of the Haldane greenhouse.
- **Dar Williams** for greenhouse soil donation.

Haldane Garden Committee

Beth Sigler, Melany Campanile, Carina Frantz, Diana Geller, Kory Riesterer, Yvonne Mee, Danielle Pack McCarthy, Carolyn Llewellyn, Sandy McKelvey, and Laurel Rimmer

Contact: info@growinghaldane.com **Visit:** www.growinghaldane.com
fb: facebook/growinghaldane

Garden Intake Form 2014 school year

*Please submit forms by March 15th via e-mail or PTA mailbox

Grade/Class:

Teacher Name:

Contact e-mail:

Please check what you will need this spring:

Full raised bed

Half raised bed

Shared grade-level raised bed

Theme bed (along the school building)

(theme beds not recommended for edible plants)

Do you need a garden parent to assist you?

(we recommend first asking class parents to help find one)

Materials needed? (Pots/Seeds/Soil?)

Need to speak with someone from the garden committee about your project?

How else can we help? Suggestions for what you'd like us to grow in the garden? Ideas of how the garden could better support your curriculum?