

# GARDEN NEWS

*Spring 2014*

Spring finally came this year, sprouting flowers like tulip, allium, crocus, forsythia, hellebore, columbine, iris and peony. Lettuce, spinach, pea, scallion, asparagus and radish were also early garden edibles. Not only did the plants take off, so did the garden's growing space. Thanks to Mr. Dudar, Mrs. Moeller, and Mr. Wick's classes for planning, constructing, and painting **two new raised beds!** Mr. Wick's 6<sup>th</sup> graders also singlehandedly planted **Dr. Villanti's Sweetbay Magnolia** (*Magnolia virginiana*) donated by the PTA. It's not easy digging through rocky soil but these students showed real grit! 6<sup>th</sup> grade also helped man the garden's **Health Fair** table, showcasing their greenhouse-grown seedlings.

Next time you see something growing, crawling, buzzing, blooming or flying in the garden, we'd love to hear about it. Jot down your observations (and comments or questions) in the new waterproof notebook in the Ed Shed's **garden mailbox!** Did you know the garden is an ideal space for celebrations? **Screen Free Week** kicked off their activities this spring with an after-school picnic in the garden. Class parties (for birthdays or special holidays) are also no-fuss, no-mess done outdoors in the garden!



Garden mailbox, Dr. Villanti's Magnolia, 6<sup>th</sup> grade greenhouse-seedlings at Health Fair, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade painting new garden bed.



*New Garden Education Shed interior pictures. Garden sink to be moved outdoors, temporarily stored in shed.*

## **Spring Garden Month Highlights**

**K** - Kindergartners got creative this spring making trellises for their sugar snap peas and planting lettuce, spinach, and greenhouse seedlings in their class bed. They also planted nasturtium and zinnia flowers in the beds by the elementary entrance. Mrs. Wilde's class made charts in their journals to draw/label 2 living and non-living items they found in the garden. Students also brought in snacks that had seeds for a show & tell 'taste test' in the garden.



**FIRST** - Replanted the colorful tires, boots & cans from last year and planted greenhouse seedlings in their class bed. Students measured and divided beds, also measuring between each pea seed, with 2 rows 24 inches apart: math and science in action (spinach, lettuce, radish, carrot seeds also planted). Students safely transplanted the banana plant back outdoors and had fun turning over rocks in search of roly polys or pill bugs. Did you know pill bugs are distantly related to hermit crabs? They're both crustaceans!

**SECOND** - Planted sunflowers and learned about Greek nature myths (Helios, god of the sun!) They also planted radish and lettuce in their class bed. Mr. Peparo's class used the garden to practice measuring, graphing, and comparing different crops as they grew over a period of three weeks. During visits students came to appreciate the delicious nutritiousness of pea shoots, planted as a cover crop last fall. Students continue to express disappointment that the cover crop was turned over and no longer available for snacking!

**THIRD** - Every third grader went home again with a cabbage plant this spring as part of the Bonnie Cabbage Program. Third graders also researched and planted Nation Beds: Mrs. Satterlee's class did Brazil, Mrs. Pray China, Mr. Dudar Africa, and Mrs. Moeller Europe. Each class also tasted traditional dishes made with fruits and vegetables from these countries/continents. Third grade also added a raised cucumber bed to the garden, made from a laundry basket!

**FOURTH** - Fourth grade planted edible plant parts (roots, leaves, seeds) but this time used the square foot gardening method. Mrs. Windel's class had a geometry lesson in the garden. They plotted a grid with x and y axes, measured the two sides of the plane, calculated area and perimeter, then found the coordinates that matched each student's square and planted their choice of vegetable seeds in their garden 'square'. Students also replanted the Three Sisters bed with corn, beans, squash and salmon fish heads!

**SIXTH** - Planted their greenhouse-grown seedlings (tomato, eggplant, pepper, basil, zinnia, Malabar spinach, marigold, lettuce) and transplanted overwintered tender perennials in the garden. They also dug over compost, helped clean up the garden (raking debris etc.) and released beneficial baby praying mantises they had hatched in the greenhouse!

**Where are 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades? Where are you High Schoolers?** The garden is perfect for hands-on exploration and identification of plant types and parts. Studying monocots and dicots? Leave the textbook behind and head outdoors for examples of some real live angiosperms!



Mrs. Hocker's first graders weeding their class bed in preparation for planting; Mrs. Satterlee's finished third grade 'Brazil Bed'!

## **THEME BEDS: OLD & NEW**

This spring saw the return of an even roomier Living Vine Fort, the Three Sisters Bed, Native Plants, Useful Plants, Sensory Bed, Herb Bed and a combo bed of Tropical and Seuss-like Plants. The carnivorous plants are also back - including a native Venus Flytrap (*Dionaea muscipula*)! New this year is the 'Bread Bed' showcasing grains such as millet, soy, amaranth, oats, rice, rye, wheat, sesame, and sorghum. Also new are the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Nation Beds (with plants from countries of Brazil and China, and continents Africa and Europe) and the butterfly courtyard's Climbing Vines bed.

## **FARMER in the CLASSROOM**

The addition of *Farmer in the Classroom*, aka Carolyn Llewellyn, to Haldane's Farm to School program gets more kids into the garden tasting more vegetables like beets, parsnips, carrots, sweet potatoes, etc. Spinach and lettuce were featured program veggies this spring. Students saw these plants growing in the garden, sampled different varieties, learned about the cultural and culinary histories of these crops, then ate them in several different forms. They loved Carolyn's signature blueberry-spinach power smoothie! Many children who insisted they did not like these vegetables were later heard asking for seconds, thirds, and even fourths. Thanks to HSF for funding this wonderful program.



## **EDUCATION SHED COMPLETE!**

The Ed Shed is now officially done, inside and out! Complete with grade-level storage buckets, potting table, tool racks, books and lesson ideas, we expect the shed to be a fabulous resource for every teacher, garden parent, and student using the garden. To celebrate we didn't do a traditional red-ribbon-cutting ceremony but a red ladybug release party! With HSF members on hand, kids let hundreds of beneficial ladybugs loose in the garden...

We invite teachers and staff to tour the new Ed Shed and ask them to share shed photos and projects in years to come. (FYI, the garden's old plastic shed will be repurposed by The Walter Hoving Home.) Big thanks again to HSF and the entire community for helping to fund the Ed Shed's construction.

## **WANT to HELP?**

The garden committee is looking to partner with other area gardens (public, private or school) and non-profit organizations for ideas, collaboration, workshops, etc. Connect with us if you want to help support student inquiry in school gardens by sharing plants, information, and resources.

## **BIG THANKS to...**

- The continuing support and original garden start-up grants from **HSF and HHLT...**
- **Laurel Rimmer** for selecting and transporting the Sweetbay Magnolia tree, generously donated by **Haldane PTA**. Thank you PTA for all you do!
- **Paul and Theo Henderson** for constructing the new courtyard structure for vines!
- **Paul Henderson, Beth Sigler, & John Hedlund** for interior shed design & construction.
- **Charles Day & Wave Hill** garden in the Bronx for willow branch donations.
- **Carolyn Llewellyn and Hudson Valley Seed Company** for garden seed fundraiser.
- **Kathy Gordineer** for coordinating PTA Mother's Day Plant Sale fundraiser.
- **Carina Frantz** for design and construction of the living willow fort!
- Outdoor garden sink donation thanks to **Steve and Mary Bates**.
- **Foodtown sushi bar** for the fish head donation!

### ***Haldane Garden Committee***

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

**Contact:** [info@growinghaldane.com](mailto:info@growinghaldane.com) **Visit:** [www.growinghaldane.com](http://www.growinghaldane.com)

**fb:** facebook/growinghaldane



**The ladybug release party was a big hit with both young and old!**