



WEEKLY WEEDER

July 20

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Image by Iris Slevin

Help at Sunshine Saturday: Accessibility Garden

To provide more people the opportunity to garden, Sunshine is expanding the accessible/raised bed area from 3 to 10 beds with 4 designed specifically for wheelchair bound gardeners. Volunteers are needed this Saturday 8 to 10 am to help level and prepare the area for putting down decomposed granite.

If you are available this Saturday from 8:00-10:00am and willing to help with leveling and preparing the area for putting down decomposed granite, please contact Jim Willmann (jhwillmann@gmail.com).



7/17/23 Harvest by Kerry Drake

Kerry's Vegetable Art

When Kerry Drake creates, her dining room table is the canvas and a day's harvest from her plot is the medium. Kerry—who joined Sunshine about five years ago and has been the Board Secretary since the summer of 2020—has rules when she creates her stunning harvest faces: (1) work quickly, (2) only use veggies from her plot (although sometimes there are too many to fit; she is contemplating an all-body

piece), and (3) allow the cat to “help” by snacking on beet greens.

Kerry began making the faces during the pandemic and uses them as an art prompt for the preschool children at All Austin Cooperative Nursery School. After a veggie face is created and photographed, she washes, bags and refrigerates her produce for meals or sharing with neighbors. Some veggies even wind their way back to Sunshine to cool in the trailer as a Micah 6 donation!

What is your favorite thing about Sunshine?

“The sense of community—being alone together in your own plot, with the opportunity to commune and converse with other gardeners. I also enjoy gardening in the middle of the urban environment; it is a gift to be able to garden in the middle of the city on TSBVI land and to not lose too much to birds and squirrels because of their options from other lush plots. Sunshine is so much better than trying to harvest successfully at home.

What did you do with the face pictured above?

“I made this [carrot soup](#) from the NY Times Cooking site, using my carrots and leeks. And tonight I am planning two recipes, a Polenta Tomato Pie and Bell Pepper Flatbread, from *The Southern Harvest Cookbook: Recipes Celebrating Four Seasons* that I bought on my recent trip to North Carolina. — *Submitted by Kristin Phillips*



Emergency stock of Electrolyte Powder Available for Gardeners

According to KXAN's weather caster, Kristen Currie, Austin has never been this hot for this long. Wednesday's forecast of 107 degrees is the 10th consecutive day of 105 degrees or more and beats the record set 100 years ago of 9 consecutive days of over 105 degrees.

Gardeners! Stay safe in this heat! We have put electrolyte powder packets in the cool room, should any of you experience a heat related reaction. We don't want anyone to experience water intoxication-- where one tries to cool off by drinking too much water too quickly. Electrolytes can help replenish what the heat takes out of you better than water. You can find the ingredients of the powder and the instructions (one packet in 16 oz of water) in the cool room of the trailer.

Stay safe and hydrated, Sunshine Gardeners! From the SCG Board — *Submitted by Kerry Drake*

Mosquitoes in the Garden

Dump Standing Water, Please

While Austin is fortunate to have a large colony of insect-devouring bats, they cannot eradicate all the mosquitoes in town. Mosquito larvae are aquatic, so gardeners can keep down the mosquito population at Sunshine by eliminating standing water in their plots and common areas. Doing so will not only reduce the nuisance of being bitten, it can help prevent the spread of disease.

Despite the current weather turning the ground hard and dry, there are places for mosquitoes to breed at Sunshine. Please be sure items like buckets, saucers under potted plants, watering cans, and lipped lids on storage containers are dumped, especially after plots are watered or a rain shower. Buckets may also be stored upside down when not in use. Bird baths and watering bowls should be emptied out and the water changed at least once a week. According to Texas A&M AgriLife extension, “under favorable conditions, some mosquitos can complete their entire life cycle in only 8 to 10 days,” so changing water in containers weekly or more can prevent the larvae and pupae from growing into mature pests.

Mosquitoes serve as vectors for many diseases. One disease, West Nile virus, is of particular concern since it is the leading cause of illness in the continental US from mosquitoes. A pool of water on Grover Street (a street just west of Sunshine and TSBVI) was tested in 2020 and West Nile virus detected there. While many people who get infected with West Nile virus remain asymptomatic, the Center for Disease Control notes about 1 in 5 exhibit fever and other symptoms while 1 in 150 develop a serious disease. Texas Health and Human Services counted 485 cases of West Nile virus in Texans in the past five years, including 65 fatalities. Older adults have an increased chance of developing the more serious form of the disease.

Please do your part to keep the mosquitoes at Sunshine to a minimum. To learn more about mosquitoes in an interactive way, visit [Texas A&M's Mosquito Safari](#)—

Submitted by Maria Beach

Garden Education by Ila Falvey

Excellent advice from Mary Kay of Backbone Valley Nursery
[What to do When Plants Wilt - Backbone Valley Nursery](#)

Garden Notes from Marsha Riti

The lovely icons for this section were created by Marsha Riti



Heat Advisory

Summer is here so please take caution when working in the garden. Stay hydrated, wear sunscreen, and a hat. Also, remember we have a "cool room" in the trailer where the AC is running, and there are popsicles in the freezer. Please read this article from the CDC about [Heat Stress Related Illness](#).



Service Hours are Due

Sunshine Community Garden and TSVBI service hours are due at the end of this month. If you are unsure how many hours you have left to work please check the [Green Binder](#).



General Workday

Details coming soon



Beautification Committee Workday

Need service hours? There is always a workday every Sunday (9-12pm) in the flower beds around the trailer. Hosted by Matthew Johnston.



Kid's Garden!

Thanks to the volunteerism of Sunshine gardeners, Sunshine is ready to get young members of the community gardening. While there is more to come, in terms of tools for the kids and shade areas, the beds are ready for the kids to start planting!

Gardeners who made contact about sponsoring a child aged 5-11 will be contacted soon by the Children's Garden Zone Coordinator, Pam Kirby. We still have some available beds for children. If you are a garden member in good standing and wish to sponsor a child who would enjoy gardening in his or her own 3x3 bed, contact [Pam](#) for further information.



OMG, Cars, slow down!

Please drive slowly (3 MPH) in the garden. There are cats, kids, and gardeners who use this space, and we need it to be safe for everyone.



Mowers and Weed Whackers

Don't know how to use the gas or electric grass cutting equipment? Please contact:

Steve Camp (electric mowers / weed whackers)

Ray Porter (gas mowers)



More grass than garden?

Please clean up your plot. If you have health issues that are keeping you from working on your plot contact your Zone Coordinator or the Vice President for assistance. Also, if you'd like to fallow your plot for the rest of the summer, posted below is how to do that (taken from page 28 of the Handbook). Please make sure your Zone Coordinator or Vice President knows you are fallowing your plot.

Fallow Season or Cover Crop

Occasionally, members may choose to leave a plot fallow for a season. This is a good practice to provide the soil a break. Fallow plots should be cleared of plants and weeds, then covered completely with compost and then cardboard, a thick layer of leaves, or other material that allows water to permeate. Avoid using plastic as it creates a good environment for fire ants underneath, and water pools on top. An alternative to a fallow season is to plant a cover crop to serve as green manure; this can be turned under at the end of the season to condition the soil. Consult the literature or local garden center for details on this technique for soil improvement.

Contact both Kristin Phillips & Maria Beach to contribute the Weekly Weeder.



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