



WENDY SCHMIDT
BETWEEN THE ROWS

The benefits of community gardens

Community gardens can be fun. Recently I got to visit one with my niece in Edmonds, Washington. She has her own section, and her garden buddy has another section.

The community garden is in a suburb of Seattle. The garden consists of between 15 and 20 raised beds, each about 3 or 4 feet wide by 20 feet long or so.

Individuals take care of and plant whatever they wish to plant. Several were planted with at least half flowers — sunflowers, different varieties, nasturtiums and other edible flowers, various types of cucumbers, summer squash, and tomatoes. There were even some pole beans climbing an arrangement of tall poles tied together as a teepee. One garden featured pumpkins for Halloween, and an artichoke, and a bay laurel bush and other herb and spices.

It would be nice to have community gardens in La Grande and Baker City. There are several vacant lots around that would look nicer with gardens growing on them.

Several of the raised beds in Edmonds were being grown for the community to come and help themselves and harvest what they need with produce which could be picked whenever things got mature enough to harvest and as the need arose for supplemental fresh food for their tables.

Each gardener/renter/ farmer could plant/weed/harvest their own space and be responsible for watering. Netting was often a plot feature designed to keep out deer and rabbits.

Having community gardens enabled those living in apartments to have a garden when gardening was never possible for them before. It also beautified the vacant lots and created friendships between people with the same interests. Not to mention the food and mood-elevations from flowers.

I'm not sure whether that Seattle suburb furnished the water, whether rent was charged, or how the raised beds got built, but it seems like a great public project for an organization wanting to do community service. There's a whole winter ahead to plan the garden for anyone interested in spearheading a worthwhile thing like growing healthy food.

Wendy Schmidt is a longtime gardener who has been a Master Gardener since 1997. She lives in La Grande.



Linda Gassenheimer/TNS
Late summer salad supper.

VEG OUT

This veggie salad supper is perfect for late summer

By LINDA GASSENHEIMER • Tribune News Service

When I see the markets filled with summer vegetables, I can't wait to make them into a salad. To turn this salad into a vegetarian salad supper, I added some black beans, edamame and avocado. You can add your own combination of vegetables, using this recipe as a guide for the amounts needed. I use fresh oregano to add extra flavor to bought oil and vinegar dressing.

Corn kernels from corn on the cob are used for the salad. Just husk the corn and stand the cob on end in a bowl. Using a sharp knife, cut downward as close to the base as possible. Continue cutting the kernels all around the cob.

Edamame can be bought either already shelled in the refrigerated case, frozen shelled or frozen in pods. To use the frozen ones in pods, microwave them for 1 to 2 minutes and squeeze the beans out of the pods.

Helpful Hints

- You can use any fresh herbs such as basil, cilantro and/or parsley instead of oregano.
- To help ripen an avocado, remove the stem and place it in a paper bag in a warm spot.
- You can use frozen corn kernels instead of fresh ones from the cob.

Countdown

- Cut off the corn kernels and microwave them.
- Prepare remaining ingredients.
- Assemble salad.

Shopping List

To buy: 2 ears corn on the cob, 1 avocado, 1 bunch fresh oregano, 1 bag washed, ready-to-eat lettuce, 1 container cherry tomatoes, 1 container edamame, 1 can reduced-salt black beans, 1 container croutons and 1 bottle reduced-fat oil and vinegar dressing.

LATE SUMMER SALAD SUPPER

Recipe by Linda Gassenheimer

2 cups corn kernels from 2 ears corn on the cob
1/4 cup reduced-fat oil and vinegar dressing
1/4 cup fresh oregano leaves

4 cups lettuce
1 cup halved cherry tomatoes
1 cup edamame
1 cup reduced-salt black beans, drained
1 medium avocado, skin removed and cut into 1-inch cubes.

1 cup croutons

Husk the corn on the cob and cut off the kernels. Add them to a microwave-safe bowl and microwave on high 1 minute. Measure dressing into a small bowl and add half the oregano leaves. Save the remaining leaves for a garnish. Divide the lettuce between 2 dinner plates. Add the corn kernels, cherry tomatoes, edamame, black beans and avocado. Mix them into the salad. Spoon the dressing over the salads. Add the croutons and sprinkle the salad with the remaining oregano leaves.

Yield 2 servings.

Per serving: 486 calories (34% from fat), 18.1 g fat (2.1 g saturated, 8.2 g monounsaturated), 2 mg cholesterol, 22.1 g protein, 67.7 g carbohydrates, 22.8 g fiber, 248 mg sodium.

The stirring story of the WWI Spruce Squadron

By JENNIE HAGEN
For EO Media Group

I never met my grandfather. He died from injuries sustained while working in the woods we now know as the Tillamook State Forest. He was a hard-working man, one with strength of character, and one who loved his family. He never intended to stay in Oregon but had hoped to return to his home of Boulder, Colorado, after the war. His family headstone now rests with other relatives. But his military headstone lies in the same cemetery, in a seldom visited area. It simply reads: "John L McDonald, Oregon, PVT 103 Spruce Sq, World War I, March 10 1897, Oct 7 1948."

As World War I raged in the European theater, a striking problem arose for the Allies. There weren't enough spruce trees to meet the demand for the growing number of aircraft that needed to be rapidly built. The solution? The Pacific Northwest in the United States. Oregon and Washington forests were ripe with the kind of timber that

was desperately needed to continue the aerial assault on the Germans. And so, the Spruce Squadron was born.

The Allied nations were attempting to produce enough aircraft to keep the skies occupied over the front lines in France. The lumber industry in the United States had been supplying the Allies with spruce timber, especially important to the construction of wing spars and other aircraft parts. But as 1917 led into 1918, the logging industry was losing men to the draft. These labor shortages caused the flow of aircraft spruce to nearly disappear.

It was then that the Army formed the Spruce Production Division (SPD) with the goal of increasing the flow of airplane wood; the Army would provide men to work in the forests and mills. The production of timber for aircraft and ship building increased as spruce, fir and cedar were logged.

These Army men worked with the civilians in the forests and mills and received the same



Carla Stenberg/Contributed Photo

The gravestone for John. L. McDonald, who served in the Spruce Squadron during World War I.

wages (minus their military pay). They additionally built and worked in a special wood production plant at Vancouver. They were able to supply the type of wood needed for the airplane manufacturers, as most mills in the US were not setup for that type of production.

Roads and railroads were built wherever they were needed to reach the spruce stands along the Pacific coast. The SPD men learned to operate the railroads, they learned to drive log trucks, and they learned how to cut the timber so desperately needed in

Europe.

The Army enforced minimum requirements for work hours, lodging and food. The government contractors hired to oversee the work were regularly inspected by Army staff. There were labor issues and those who spoke out against the government were removed from the lumber work force. Many soldiers built their own barracks, others lived in tent cities.

A great number of the soldier workforce wanted to go "over there" and take part in the fighting, but their labor was needed in Oregon and Washington.

By November 1918, approximately 28,000 soldiers were working with about 100,000 civilians. Of these, about 18,000 soldiers were engaged in logging, construction, and mill work. Another 4,000 worked at the lumber mill in Vancouver. And 4,000 more soldiers were permanently assigned to the Vancouver Barracks, their job was to help with supply, HQ operations, etc., and as an armed force designed to maintain peace in the volatile labor environment of the logging industry. Some were also sent to fight forest fires.

The Spruce soldiers experienced isolation problems as many of the small camps were far from towns with little to no communication from the outside world. Smaller soldiers were frequently moved as logging and construction was completed or new projects areas were started. Many were not able to receive mail from home as they had no address. The soldiers at the Vancouver Barracks were more fortunate as they had a physical address to receive mail. And many

chose to stay after the war effort had ended.

My grandfather never went back to Colorado. Instead, he chose to stay in the area he now called home. There were still many good jobs in the forests he grew to know so well. He settled in Tillamook and continued to work in the woods, as he'd become a supervisor of a timber crew and was known as an excellent and fair boss.

He broke a lot of hearts that day in October 1948. My father stayed in Tillamook and raised his family there, too. And now you know the rest of my story.

Want to learn more? Most of the information regarding the Spruce Squadron is taken from "The U.S. Army Spruce Squads in the First World War," written by Bob Swanson. Bob has devoted years to compiling information and research about the Spruce Squadron, and his website, www.swansongrp.com has a tremendous amount of information regarding the SPD.

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