Blue Mountain Eagle
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Home, Garden & Outdoors

Community Garden: A growing interest

Prosperous project is in its seventh season

By Cheryl Hoefler
Blue Mountain Eagle

JOHN DAY — It's a place where gleeful gardeners gather

The John Day Community Garden, located on the Third Street Extension across from the Grant County rodeo fairgrounds arena, comes alive with activity most Saturdays from March through October, and many other days during the week.

The agricultural enterprise, which was planted in 2010, sprouted quickly under the enthusiasm of local gardeners and seven seasons later, has grown into a prosperous project. The garden benefits not only those who rent and work plots there, but the entire community, with events, surplus produce, and a pumpkin patch in the fall.

The efforts of all involved help support shopping local and providing fresh produce for the community.

Several features have been added to the garden over the years including raised beds, a cob oven, tool shed, a kiosk message board and a banner sign

All the garden's plots — about 40 — have been sold for the 2016 season, although more can be built if anyone needs one. Garden staff are looking into possibly building more beds for the future.

Other future plans include adding a stand pipe for irrigation purposes and a handicapped accessible bed. The group also hopes to partner more closely with Oregon State University Extension.

Past president John La Liberte said they hope to create a strategic plan and "come up with a footprint on what we want it to be five years from pow"

An orientation/community party kicks things off in March or April each year, with new and veteran gardeners meeting to spruce up the garden, make growing plans, share seeds and ideas and sharing a meal of soup and bread from the cob oven.

A harvest fest and pumpkin giveaway usually finish off the season in October.

Fees are \$25 for a 5x20 plot or \$15 for a 5x10 one, which includes use of the watering supply and garden shed of tools.

The John Day Community Garden is headed by president Susan Garner, treasurer Christy Sweet and secretary Becky Carey.



Eagle photos/Cheryl Hoefler

The John Day Community Garden, which sprouted in 2010, is a growing enterprise located on the 3rd Street Extension in John Day.



Patty Ross fills her bed with a variety of vegetable seedlings.



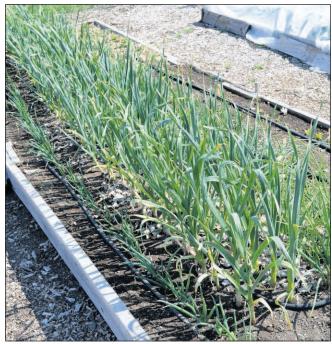
Susan Garner waters her bed of freshly planted produce.



The message kiosk at the community garden helps relay information among gardeners.

Garden members will have a booth at the John Day Farmers Market "Spring Festival" on Saturday, June 18, with drawings for several prizes and gift baskets, many of which are donated by local businesses and individuals. This is the group's main fundraiser which helps purchase items needed to expand and improve the garden.

The group will also have a booth at the Grant County Health Fair the day before,



Green onions are plentiful in this raised bed at the community garden.

selling tickets for the draw-

For information about the drawings or to donate a prize, call La Liberte at 541-620-0719.

For more information about the garden, email johndaycommunitygarden@gmail.com or visit the John Day Community Garden on Facebook.



John La Liberte brings in a riding mower to help tackle springtime's overgrown grass and weeds around the garden.



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