

VOLUME 34

No. 3

JUNE/JULY 2010

EAST NASHVILLE LEADS NEIGHBORHOOD FLOOD RELIEF

[editor's note: Even before the deluge stopped and the flood waters had crested, East Nashville residents Alan Murdock of ArtHouse Gardens and Catherine McTamaney began to plan relief efforts. Catherine tells the story below.]

Alan grew up in Florida, and knew from his own family's experiences with hurricane clean-up that the most immediate needs were usually met by neighbors helping each other. He had the foresight on Sunday [May 2] to realize that there would be a need for basements to be pumped out and put out the call for folks to help.

We call it the bait & switch. I emailed Alan on Sunday and said I was happy to help. He responded by asking if I wouldn't mind hanging out at ArtHouse Gardens on Monday [May 3] to dispatch volunteers to wherever they were needed. By the end of the day on Monday, it was clear that this was going to be a lot more intensive than just answering phones! It's a little like wallpapering your own kitchen, though—once you're in it, you can't change your mind.

There were more than 1600 volunteers total, with more than 500 volunteers on the Saturday following the flood [May 8]. On our first day, we had about 30, then just about 50 on Tuesday, over 100 on Thursday, over 225 on Friday, more than 500 on Saturday (and 973 total that weekend). Some folks came on the first day and never left. Some gave us a few hours when they could. Every little bit helped.

ArtHouse Gardens volunteers served more than 300 homes in the 12 days we were dispatching volunteers. They were concentrated in District 7 (Moss Rose, Brittany, Barclay, Cooper, etc.), in the Village and Electric areas of District 6, and in the Joseph and Neill areas of District 5. The volunteers lifted a lot of carpet, tore out a lot of

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AT THE
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drywall, carried furniture, sorted photographs, delivered food, delivered water, transported survivors to the FEMA center, and transported clothing back to the field. Held a lot of hands. Gave a lot of hugs.

I had no idea I would still be working on this over two weeks later. I think, still, even with the numbers in front of me, that I haven't fully comprehended the extent of this tragedy. I canvassed in some of the neighborhoods most severely affected after our volunteers had finished their work there and was really moved by the work that had been done. It's an extraordinary tribute to the spirit of this neighborhood that we accomplished what we did in such a short period of time.

ArtHouse Gardens closed its operations on May 21, after sending thousands of dollars of supplies to our neighbors in Bordeaux. We continue to encourage volunteers who want to do the work we did here to get in touch with the organizations responding in North Nashville, in Antioch, Pennington Bend, and elsewhere. In East Nashville, we're beginning to transition to working with VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) groups that will help rebuild the homes that were most severely affected. Meanwhile, other volunteers who worked alongside us are helping at the East Nashville Flood Recovery Center on Gallatin Road or up the road at Jackson Park Church of Christ. Both centers have been invaluable in providing services and supplies for families in need.

There was no one kind of person who came out to volunteer. We had volunteers who were experienced contractors and volunteers who took vacation time from their regular jobs to come work with us instead. Old and young, men, women and children... what they had in common was an earnest and generous spirit, a sense that they could offer something, and a willingness to ask, "How can I help?" I was amazed at how people who had been archenemies on the listserv were hugging and laughing together at the end of each day, at the volunteers who came back every afternoon to thank us for making the opportunity to serve available to them, at the selflessness that this neighborhood offered with such grace and goodness. There was a spirit that carried this effort, a sense that people were making the world a better place. When we're hit with a tragedy of this scale, it's easy to be paralyzed by the amount

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of work that needs to be done. In the EN response, we saw that every single action matters. The flood was made up of a lot of little drops of water. The response was the same—small actions adding up to an overwhelming response.

Individuals? How about Richard Burger, the out-of-work electrician who showed up first every morning and volunteered for eight tenhour days in a row before apologizing that he'd be "late on Thursday." His former boss had seen him in some news footage of the volunteer response and offered him a job. He interviewed on Thursday morning, then came back to ArtHouse to volunteer for the rest of the day. Or Max Otterland, who's one of the most abrasive, most obnoxious, most condescending nuisances on the East Nashville listsery, but volunteered every single day, all day, and ended up being one of our team leaders. Davis Watson, a local filmmaker, led teams throughout East Nashville with a one-of-a-kind combination of southern gentlemanly courtesy and a heck of a swing with that sledgehammer. And, of course, Alan Murdock, who gave up his business for two weeks so we could create a command central. He never complained. He never asked when he could have his garden back. He initiated all of it.

Tommy Murphy is a retired Jersey City, NJ, fire captain. He saw the flood on the news in New Jersey and contacted Hands On Nashville. He was officially assigned to the East Park Community Center but, when he



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arrived there (after 24 hours on a Greyhound bus!), they quickly realized his skills were better in the field than filling out the FEMA paperwork. He walked in to ArtHouse a little after 11AM on Monday morning [May 10], grabbed a sandwich, and was in the field demoing drywall by 12:30. He worked in East Nashville for four days before the firefighters stole him from us, but he came back to my house this past weekend to help us build a new treehouse for our kids. He said, after two weeks of demolition, he was ready to build something up!

Next steps—here's the lesson I learned in all of this: no matter how strong the official infrastructure, there will never be anyone closer to respond when you're in need than the person next door. I hope our neighborhood, and all of our neighborhoods, will build on the momentum of this response to strengthen the relationships that were created in the flood response. There are tragedies of all sizes—big ones that flood out communities and little ones that happen in our lives all the time. Whether we choose to respond, and whether we do so with the same enthusiasm and generosity that this community showed since May 1st, defines us far past the tragedy.



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July 13th - <u>Biker Games</u> - Come have some fun on your bike! Dinner at 6:30pm games immediately after. Fun, food and fellowship, an event for the entire family!!

August 10th- <u>Meet the FAITH Riders2</u>— Another opportunity to get to know us. We'll meet at Inglewood Baptist Church (across from Sonic) 6:30pm for dinner, fellowship after that.

Every Sunday Morning Join Us For FAITH Riders Fellowship Hour at 9:30am Shelby Ave. Baptist Church 11th & Shelby Ave. Come as you are, everyone is welcome For More Information Visit us www.ShelbyAveFAITHRiders.com

ORGANIC GARDENING GROUP SPROUTS IN EAST NASHVILLE

By Reggie Miller

East Nashville Crop Swap is a new club for backyard gardeners that aims to share not only the fruits (and veggies) of its labor, but also ideas and resources to help everyone's thumbs become a little greener.

The group meets regularly to exchange seeds and advice, with plans to eventually trade the excess fruits, vegetables, and flowers they have produced with each other. Their only 'rules' are that no money exchanges hands, and everything must be grown organically.

The idea is to not only build a stronger gardening community in East Nashville, cofounder Tara Jo Kirk says, but to share healthy food while reducing waste. She adds that gardeners of all experience levels are welcome.

"This was my first year of having a real garden, and I knew I would probably have too much of some things and not enough of others," Kirk says. "I have already learned so much from other people in the group. We are here to help each other figure it out and get better, which is a lot of fun."

The group usually meets on the first and third Mondays of each month at 6:30 PM at Pizzereal. Recently, the group toured the Holtkamp Greenhouses on Lischey Ave. instead of their regular meeting. They plan to add different events as the group grows, and meet more often once their gardens are producing.

"Now that the weather is nice and our gardens are growing, we would like to have our meetings at our members' houses," Kirk says. "You know, show up to check out what they're doing, and trade our spare produce while we're there."

Other proposed events include touring organic farms in the region, volunteering with members to help build raised beds, and salsa-making competitions – made only with ingredients fresh from your garden, naturally.

For more information, you can find East Nashville Crop Swap on Facebook, the East Nashville and Organic Gardening in Mid TN Google groups, and Twitter.

Additional Resources:

Organic Gardening in Middle TN Google group link: http://groups.google.com/group/organicgardeningmidTN

The East Nashville Farmer's Market is every Wednesday from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. (May through October). The East Nashville Farmer's Market's website is http://www.eastnashvillemarket.com/.

ArtHouse Gardens has a garden/veggie group. For more information visit their website: http://www.arthousegardens.blogspot.com/

ORGANIC QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

I have heard many people ask various questions about what it means to be "organic" and the following is a list of four of the most asked questions:

1) What is organic?

In chemistry, it refers to a substance that contains carbon. [1] In horticulture, an organic farm and/ or garden keeps and restores the fertility of the soil ecosystem without the use of toxic and persistent pesticides and fertilizers. Furthermore, organically produced foods must be grown or raised without the use of antibiotics, cloned animals and/or their products, genetic engineering and other excluded practices, irradiation, sewage sludge, and/or synthetic hormones. [2]

Therefore, all organisms involved in the agricultural, including horticultural, processes are organic substances.

2) How do you know if a food, product, and/or seed is organic?

A certified organic food, product, and/or seed will contain the "USDA Organic" or another approved label and it will also include the name of the organic certifier. [3]

3) Why purchase organic food, products, and/or seeds?

Purchasing certified organic goods ensures the continuation of the organic agricultural industry, especially when you buy your goods from local suppliers. And it allows you to avoid genetically modified organisms (gmos) which The American Academy of Environmental Medicine (AAEM) has recommended that people avoid. [4]

4) What advice can you offer?

Use certified organic seeds best suited for you biological region (bioregion). Test the soil that you will use to grow your crops. Make sure that you examine the biological genetic diversity (biodiversity) of the soil micro- and macro-organisms present in your Earth. Practice plant biodiversity and companion planting so that plants grown close together can provide some mutual benefit.

[1] Schubert, L. and Veguilla-Berdecia, L. A. (1972). Chemistry and Society. Allyn and Bacon, Inc., Boston.

[2] http://www.ota.com/definition/quickoverview.html

Organic Trade Association (OTA): Quick Overview of Organic Agriculture and Production

[3] ibid

[4] http://www.aaemonline.org/pressrelease.html

The American Academy Of Environmental Medicine Calls For Immediate Moratorium on Genetically Modified Foods

http://www.aaemonline.org/gmopost.html

Genetically Modified Foods Position Paper: The American Academy Of Environmental Medicine (AAEM)

Irucka Embry of EcoC2S wrote this article & more information on organic gardening and other services can be found online at http://www.ecoccs.com.

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BASS PARK: LOCKELAND SPRINGS POCKET PARK

16th and Holly next to the Firehouse #14

Neighbors are discovering Bass Park and firefighters are participating in the garden. If you haven't visited Bass Park yet come on by, enjoy, see the progress, and volunteer. Bass Park is a neighborhood project-created by neighbors-funded by neighbors-work completed by neighbors. The purpose of Bass Park is to promote community by providing a place to meet, share, learn, and connect in the center of our neighborhood. Last year we cleared the large cedars blocking the entrance, planted trees, established a demonstration garden, and set up the cistern to collect water off the firehouse roof.

So far this year we have planted the demonstration garden and the firefighters along with volunteers are caring for it. We have plans for this year, and progress will depend on fundraising and volunteers. One project is to remove the old asphalt parking area that spells water directly into the storm drain, converting half to green space and the other half to pervious concrete. This project is an example of the eco-friendly approach of Bass Park. The city has agreed to remove the asphalt, and the Concrete Association has volunteered the labor to install the pervious concrete. We need to remove and haul off the underlying gravel (could be good fill), spread the proper underlayment for the pervious concrete, spread dirt and plant grass for the green area. All activities will need to be coordinated so the firefighters are without off street parking the least amount of time. The estimated cost for materials is \$5,000 with all work donated.

Other projects we would like to complete this year are: build a shed for the garden, build a small stage, commission the tomato art and start the community garden. Each project needs someone to take the lead and fundraising. Please let us know which project you are interested and ideas for fundraising. You may email me at gloria.j.hausser@gmail.com with your ideas, suggestions.

Advanced notice: we are working with a planner for a cool event at Bass Park in 2011. Bass Park Co-Chairs Gloria Hausser, Mary Vavara

PRESIDENT'S CORNER BY ANNA NEAL

I know that each of us have been affected in some way or another by this disaster....whether it be your home flooding, your garden disappearing, your office closing, or even having your favorite park (Shelby) close. This is not the first time that this neighborhood has experienced disaster. Although I did not live in the neighborhood in 1998 when the tornado hit, I have heard stories of the devastation, and the way that the community came together in its relief efforts.

What these events have in common is the way in which our neighborhood faces disaster. I have watched our neighbors reach out to one another and to those outside of the neighborhood to offer aid and support. It makes me proud to be surrounded by such civic neighbors. I want to recognize our neighbors Catherine McTamaney and Alan Murdoch at ArtHouse Gardens, who have been key leaders in East Nashville relief efforts.

Councilman Jamie Hollin has designated a special account at First Tennessee that will be used for relief efforts in East Nashville. The Lockeland Spring Neighborhood Association has made a donation to this fund, and I encourage others to give if they are able. Thanks and Bravo to all.

THE GREEN WAGON

1100 Forrest Ave • thegreenwagon.com by May Hwen

If you want to make a positive difference in your environment, The Green Wagon has plenty of ideas on how to do just that. The all-green general store not only sells all kinds of household items and gifts like Alchemy of Sol soap and Purely Clear makeup, but it also offers green consulting, particularly for weddings and events. Talk to Jennifer Casale, owner, about the environmental effects of certain products you may be considering to purchase. You'll be advised to buy local as much as possible to reduce the carbon footprint that comes with cross-country shipping. The staff, including Jennifer who used to have waist-length hair, have all just recently taken some action to help the environment in a unique way. They buzzed their heads for an organization called Matter of Trust, which uses donated hair to soak up oil from major oil spills. Another buzzy change is that the Green Wagon will be opening a cafe inside the store within a month. Stay tuned for that, and don't forget to look for Green Wagon products at your local Farmer's Market.







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NEXT LSNA GENERAL MEETING AUGUST 26, 2010

The next LSNA Meeting will be 6:30 PM on Thursday, August 26, at the East Branch Library.

EVERY THURSDAY ~ CRIME PREVENTION MEETING

11:00 am at Beyond the Edge. Everyone is welcome; come for fifteen minutes, or stay and have lunch. For more information call Bob Acuff at 228-3582 or email at bacuff@MSN.com.

LSNA WEBSITE

Visit the http://www.lockelandsprings.org regularly to get updates about what LSNA is doing and what is happening in Lockeland Springs.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

LSNA welcomes questions or feedback about The Fountain. If you are interested in contributing articles, want to advertise in our newsletter, or have feedback, please contact Steve Hall at sghall@comcast.net.

LSNA LISTSERV

To stay in touch with events and announcements in the neighborhood, visit our listserv at http://groups.google.com/group/lockeland-springs/.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- August 3: Night Out Against Crime
- •August 14: Tomato Art Fest
- August 26: Next LSNA Neighborhood Meeting.
- Stay tuned to the LSNA listserv and www.lockelandsprings.org for more details!

LSNA NEEDS VOLUNTEERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Steve Hall at sghall@comcast.net.







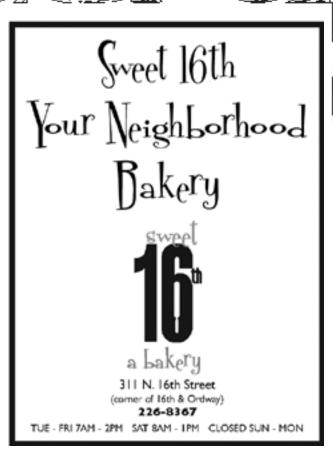
THE WILD COW

1896 Eastland Ave • thewildcow.com by May Hwen

"The act of putting into your mouth what the earth has grown is perhaps your most direct interaction with the earth." These are words from Frances Moore Lappe, a hero of the vegetarian movement and also, naturally, to our friends at The Wild Cow. You get a sense of conviction in the staff at this restaurant, which serves up 100% cruelty-free vegetarian and vegan fare. A free and wild cow is their symbol of choice, a response to the inhumane treatment of animals in today's factory farms. Here's an idea of what's on the menu: start with the hummus plate, served with fresh, raw veggies and tortilla chips. Then try one of their biggest hits, the Wild Reuben, with your choice of marinated and grilled tempeh or tofu. Pick up a raw cookie for dessert, and we'd recommend sharing it because it's intensely rich and sweet. If you like veggie burgers, come in on a Monday night for the new Burger and Beer Night. You'll get a soy-free burger and a high-alcohol vegan beer for just \$10. Co-owners John and Melanie Cochran love seeing familiar faces, so become a familiar face at The Wild Cow and interact with the earth!











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