



## LGG PRESIDENT'S REPORT AND PLANNING AHEAD FOR 2015

### Where we've been:

From October 2013 up to December 2014 has been a successful time for *Loving Garland Green*. I anticipate that 2015 will be even more successful. It takes a while for any business to establish its presence in a community and *Loving Garland Green* is no different, but we are getting there. Here is a list of a few of our accomplishments:

1. We secured a licensed area of 17,000 square feet of City property at 4022 Naaman School Road. Over the past few years, many other groups have tried to do this and failed.
2. In two and one half months after forming on October 24, 2013 we were successfully registered with the state of Texas as a nonprofit entity on January 15, 2014.
3. In less than 9 months on August 16, 2014, we obtained our certification as a 501 (c) 3 non-profit. *(This is particularly remarkable in light of the fact that almost all such nonprofit organizations are filed with the assistance not only of a CPA but also a lawyer. Not only did we have neither, we also got it right the first time. There were no corrections needed for our information for acceptance. We have an excellent Board of Directors.)*
4. In less than a year we established over 1,500 square feet of garden plots at 4022 Naaman School Road. During May and June of 2014 we were able to provide the Good Samaritans with a steady supply of produce from our garden: Tomatoes, greens and okra primarily. In addition several of our members donated produce from their gardens.
5. Throughout 2014 we supported and participated in numerous community events.
  - Garland Marketplace – the local downtown farmer's market
  - Our own LGG Spring Garden Tour
  - Garland Healthy Living Expo
  - Garland Annual Neighborhood Summit
  - Mosaic Festival
  - Mistletoe Market
  - Lister Elementary School *Jam the Gym Health Fair*

- Fall Trash Bash 2014– *Keep Garland Beautiful*

6. Three of our members (Anita Opel, Robert Opel and Jean Shortsleeve) graduated from the Neighborhood Capacity Management Course offered through the City of Garland.

7. Since our inception as a nonprofit in the state of Texas, *Loving Garland Green* has maintained a positive cash flow and we have paid all our bills on time. Currently we have a positive cash flow of over \$1,000 which is particularly noteworthy since we do not collect dues from our membership which is open to the public.

## **Where we are headed:**

*(Note: all the following are considered suggestions from the President and are subject to adjustment by the Board as well as by members of our member-directed nonprofit organization.)*

1. **Twenty-four** (four foot by eight foot) beds added to the Winding Garden making a full count of 48 beds in our winding garden. making a total of 1,536 square feet of garden plots in this area. Provided that intensive cultivation methods are used this space is sufficient to feed 12 families of four people during our growing season. ([How Many Square Feet of Raised Bed Gardening Do I Need to Feed My Family?](#)) I know that at least one of our members, Kevin, is interested in at least two of these plots ( a 4 by 16 foot long plot).

2. Raise with amended soil and widen the **Senior Citizen's** plot and also the Multicultural Garden as well as our Keyhole Garden.

3. Raise with amended soil and widen what was the pumpkin patch. Perhaps we can plant this with spring greens and then when they are gone about end of May, amend the soil with green manure and plant pumpkins first of July. to be ready by Halloween.

Plant in mounds that are at least 4 feet apart to avoid crowding after the plants start to spread. [All About Pumpkins](#)

## **4. Install Spiral Herb Garden**

. Clear out the area where we grew the Loofahs (including the small bed behind it) and putting in an herb spiral garden in this space. *(We might be able to obtain funding for this as well since it is a water conservation garden format.)*

**5. OUR WATER HARVESTING PROGRAM FOR 2015: Rain barrel irrigation for two square foot gardens.** Let's follow the design that Gene used for irrigating our first square foot garden and enhance it by using a 55 gallon drum with one of those conical rain catchers. (Note: we may or may not use ollas. We could set this up as a manually drip irrigation system too. Let's also set that same system up for the square foot garden that Ed and Becky installed. *Note: for these two projects, we might*

consider purchasing two of the rain barrels designed by Ken Risser as we want to support our local entrepreneurs when we can.

**IBC CONTAINER INSTALLATION FOR PART OF WINDING GARDEN** (As for our watering system in the winding garden, I'm hoping we can install at least four IBC containers as these hold 250 to 350 gallons.) *Note: this we could fold into our overall rainwater harvesting project whereby we install four IBC containers in the winding garden along with a drip system to provide water for three of the four by eight garden plot sections back there. We would keep records of the water collected and used for this section of the garden as well as for the two square foot gardens.*

**6. Set up the structure in the area where we will grow hops.** (Note this structure can be poles or a square trellis. Here is one place to order hop rhizomes.

<http://www.thymegarden.com/Rhizomes> here is a link to info on growing hops that provides a quick overview.

[http://lovinggarlandgreen.org/files/8814/1702/1875/Hops\\_in\\_the\\_Backyard.pdf](http://lovinggarlandgreen.org/files/8814/1702/1875/Hops_in_the_Backyard.pdf)

*Note: I would like to see this be a project in and of itself whereby records are carefully kept and this can be information we later share with the community. Basically it is an experiment to see if 1) hops are a viable as a commercial crop that we can grow in this area and 2) if their quality is such that they will make good beer. Perhaps we can twist Daniel 's arm into heading up this project and his craft brewing might be a test for the hops quality. If we were to seek grant money for this project, it would be pitched as a test for the commercial value of a crop not currently grown in our community, but offering possibilities. We can possibly obtain funding for such a project.*

**7. Set up the Loofah tunnel structure in the garden** (late February, early March) We have already established proof of concept that 1) Loofahs do thrive in the Garland area and 2) there is a local market for them. At our Garland Marketplace in August or Sept. we sold all 12 loofahs at \$2.00 each.

*Note: This one too I think we can create as a project in and of itself whereby records are closely kept and then the information later shared with the community. I think we can obtain funding for this project too.*

*We want to do all we can to make the value of growing plants more readily apparent to the residents of our local community.*

## **8. Another Urban Garden Program**

We already have demonstrated success with this program. Our main shortcoming with this program is not the desire and/or need for residents. There is a huge interest in our community for people who will assist them in establishing a garden in their yard. We

have proven that many more residents want this program than Loving Garland Green is currently able to provide.

We need:

- 1) Funds for soil and seeds
- 2) To establish a better recordkeeping system and follow-up of participants
- 3) More people power to assist us with the installation of these gardens.
- 4) A LGG member who is willing to head up this program.

### **9. Another Neighborhood Garden Program**

There is also a need for this program in our community as well. We hope to begin working with the Good Samaritans at the first of the year on establishing a spring garden at their site through involvement with their neighborhood. Also, one of our residents, Nancy Ghirla, editor of *The Messenger*, has mentioned that she would be willing to be active in creating a neighborhood garden located on City property directly across from Roach's Feed and Seed Company. This, I would think, would be a project that all the downtown merchants could get behind. There is lots of opportunity for urban farming in the down town area. Among other possibilities that we might explore in our third year are vertical gardens on the sides of a building(s).

For the *Another Neighborhood Garden* program, at least at the moment, my concern is that we could spread our membership too thin.

For the coming year, LGG's number one priority is getting the **Garland Community Garden** even more firmly established. This will be our calling card—a place where people can go and see what can be done with a local, plant-based economy. I would really like to see the majority of LGG's energy directed our second year at the Garland Community Garden. We are hoping also that from the springboard of this showcase of what is possible to be able to support at least indirectly, entrepreneurs in our community who are exploring ways to earn income from plants grown in our municipality.

### **10. Tiny Homes—Establishing Microvillage Communities in Garland**

This is a program that I'm, hoping we will be able to at least make some sort of movement in the direction of seeing tiny homes getting started in our community. I know a lot of cities are moving forward with similar projects—primarily using these tiny homes for the homeless.

This is good, but I would like to see the concept of tiny homes and sustainable living presented at a level to appeal to a much broader market than just the homeless. A tiny home is a great investment for many senior citizens. For example, those who currently live in 1,200 square foot homes paid for and no positive income beyond social security, could sell their homes and invest in a three-tiny home micro-village that would be equivalent to the value of their old home. The difference being: They would have positive cash flow, from renting the two tiny homes of at least \$1,600 a month.

And there are lots of other financial scenarios that could be projected. Tiny homes are not for everyone, but they certainly have a much broader market base than just the homeless.