



The Community
School

Passages Program



Passages Press

Gardening

by Shelly Matthews

One day, out of the blue, I decided I would love to start a garden. Not just any garden - a vegetable garden. But I had no clue where to start, how much I should plant, or even how to plant. So, I took a small amount of advice from Janet, my neighbor, and added a little common sense, and started my first vegetable garden in June.

Never in a million years did I expect planting a garden to be so backbreaking. I never wondered how a garden grew or what the gardener did. I never said, "Hey, this cucumber looks delicious. What did the plant look like?" Or, "How long did this take to grow?" I never wondered how many bugs ate the leaves or how much water was needed. I didn't care. It was far too easy to grab one off the shelf at the grocery store.

I chose to do this as a project for the core skill *Create Something* because I needed to do something for me and my family. I'm a stay-at-home mom with no license; I needed to find something I enjoyed and could benefit from. I'd always loved other people's gardens; they always seemed to make a yard come to life. They brightened up the area and presented such vibrant colors. Our yard was bare, but a perfect candidate for a garden. I also thought that the idea of my own fresh vegetables seemed pretty damn cool! But where was I going to start?

Honestly, I started by just thinking about it. What would I want in my garden? Where would I plant it? What did I need for it? How big would I make it? This year we decided to go fairly small, although we had a large area rototilled by Larry Jackson. He did a wonderful job clearing out bushes, weeds and huge rocks. We had quite a mess to begin with. Michael and I cleaned up the soil because it was filled with old batteries, glass, toys, huge rocks and papers. We removed quite a bit of junk. Michael and I do not have a rototiller, so we raked it clean. Days went by, and the weeds grew very tall, probably to three feet by the time I decided to do anything about it. Weeding took us a few hours one evening, but I have kept it up ever since. My feet have trampled over that soil thousands of times by now.

I didn't have to buy anything for the garden. My next-door neighbor Francine insisted on giving me seeds. She felt it might be a good idea for me to experiment this year. I agreed. I wanted to be comfortable with it for next year. Francine gave me four tomato plants, a package of summer yellow squash, butternut squash, pickling cukes, green beans, two types of onions, and a celery plant. Next year will be different. I will be planting pickling cukes, regular cucumbers, tomatoes, peas, carrots, green beans, broccoli, lettuce, onions, celery, butternut squash, zucchini, and green peppers. I

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would like to make homemade spaghetti sauces and salsa. I am also thinking of freezing vegetables. This would be something that I could do that I would be proud of. I would be happier knowing that I contributed something meaningful to our family.

The middle of June is when I planted my seeds. Because squash is a vine, I decided to put those at the sides of the garden. My tomato plants are in the middle along with the celery plant. On the left side of the tomato, I have green beans and planted directly next to those are the pickling cukes. The onions are together in two separate rows on the other side of the tomatoes.

I had no idea where to begin or how. Janet said there were a few ways to plant. She suggested loosening the soil and mounding it up. I then scooped a small amount out of the middle and put the root end in and then covered it loosely. I also learned that as soon as you plant something it

should be watered so the seed can sprout.



Because I had never planted before I decided to make a path the length of the garden, loosening the soil and mounding it up to put seeds in about two inches from the top. I did this

with a small gardening spade, the kind you hold in your hand, for the first two rows of onions. Never again will that happen! If I knew then what I know now, I would not have done it in that manner. I never said that I wanted a sore back, looking like the “Hunchback of Notre Dame” for the next two days! So, I smartened up and decided to use a regular shovel to cut rows down the length of the garden. It was a lot quicker, less sweaty and a heck of a lot easier. Don’t ask why I hadn’t thought of doing so in the first place.

It took me two days to plant all the seeds. I usually had other things to do in the morning, but as soon as Brandon went to school, Little Michael and I went out and planted. Those two days planting

those seeds gave me great excitement. It also gave me time to myself. Time I could spend by myself but for my family. Yay!!! I did it!

Planting seeds was just the beginning. Seeds need to be watered in order to survive and turn into healthy green plants. I began by watering twice a day. I did not have a hose, so I had to fill up a bucket and go to the opposite side of the house and fill it from the spigot. I read an article that claimed if I were to water once a day that would be plenty. Each night I had to go around the house about fourteen times and walk up and down each pathway watering the seeds. This took one hour and fifteen minutes each evening.

I know that doing the water like that sounds rather frustrating and boring, but it was a different feeling for me. It gave me time to unwind for the day, and being out in my garden was relaxing and really truly calming. I would think about the things our family had done for the day and what we were going to do for the week. I would imagine my children inside doing things with their daddy, knowing they were well loved and safe. Sometimes I would be angry and blow off steam by being in my garden. Other times I would be feeling upset or feel overwhelmed if Michael and I had an argument. But my garden was my stress reliever.

I don’t really want anyone in my garden helping me. I would appreciate the offer, but it is almost like a stranger asking to change your child’s diaper or hold them while you do something. What a nice gesture, but no thanks. I feel as though something might happen to it, like veggies getting pulled up or stepped on. I feel like a mother to my garden. It is my creation. It is my responsibility. It needs to be nurtured just like kids do. I chose a spot where it could be provided with sunlight and get the nutrients it needed. I provided rich soil and fertilizer like a very warm blanket under which to thrive. I provided the water. I protected the plants from pests, animals and weeds to ensure its safety and give it a good environment.

So now let’s talk about weeding. That’s a real time consumer! *Neverending* is the most accurate word. I weed every day or so (unless it rains). If I don’t and just let it go, I end up having

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one extremely busy day. Once a week I rake down the walkways and, since my grandmother provided me with a handheld rototiller, I use that at least once a week, mostly on the weekends. Weeds grow fast and sometimes look like other plants. When my plants first started coming up I couldn't tell the difference between the two, so to solve that problem, I took out every weed that wasn't exactly in a spot I'd planted, like on the edges of the garden. Weeds spread in from the edges, so beware.

Next year Michael and I decided to plant the garden in a different spot. Yes, our garden is doing well, but it is not being provided with enough sunlight. In fact, it only gets a few hours of direct sunlight a day and most plants require more than this. Next year planting will be a lot easier, because I've got experience. We will have more things to plant, but I will know how much to water, fertilize, weed and de-bug.

One of the greatest things about having our garden is sharing it with Little Michael. He is my one who enjoys the outdoors. He always points to the garden and will not stop until he has heard what each plant is. Every time we're outside, he walks along with me and we point out each vegetable plant. I tell him what veggie will grow from it and what color they will be. Soon enough he will be able to taste them. I personally think that straight from the garden is the absolute best! Michael and Brandon will hopefully help me when they are older. I want them to know these things, because I never had the chance when I was growing up. I am hoping to pass on my gardening skills to Brandon and Little Michael, from generation to generation. I hope that they will enjoy gardening for both the veggies and for pure pleasure.



Martin Luther King

by Jane Tarbox

Ever since I was little my mom talked about Martin Luther King, Jr. She always used to say how great and brave he was. She used to say, when he talked it gave people goosebumps. I never really knew whom she was talking about.

In about sixth grade we studied a bunch of people and Martin Luther King, Jr. was one of them. This is when I learned about a lot of great things he did and why my mom talked about him.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was born January 15th, 1929, in Atlanta Georgia. He was born Michael Luther King. Then, when he turned about six years old, his parents renamed him Martin Luther King, Jr. after his father. His father's name was Martin Luther King, Sr. and he was a pastor. Alberta King was his mother and she was a schoolteacher. Martin also had two siblings.

King went to public schools until he went to college. He went to Morehouse College in 1944, not planning to be a minister, until he met Dr. Benjamin Mays. He was a scholar. Dr. Benjamin had such good manners. He convinced King that a religious career was a good career for him. Four years later he received his bachelor's degree. After this, King went to Crozer Theological Seminary. This was in Chester Pa. This is where King won the J. Lewis Cozer fellowship and most outstanding student of his class. King then received his doctorate degree in 1953.

In 1952 King met his soon-to-be wife Coretta Scott. She was an aspiring singer. They had four children together.

King helped lead the civil rights movement. Here are some things that he did that I think are really great. He was the leader of the bus boycott on December 1st, 1955, which lasted over a year. He gave so many speeches and he had his voice heard even though he knew that white people would focus on him. He was also a minister. He helped organize marches. When his house got bombed and everyone wanted to fight the people that bombed his house, he told them not to fight back. These are just some of the great things he did.

Out of all the things Martin Luther King, Jr. did in his life, the greatest thing I think he did is he gave people a lot of hope and reason to believe. He helped people stand up for what they believed in. Martin Luther King, Jr. changed a lot of things when he was alive. He gave his whole life to his family and civil rights. He let people know his hopes and dreams and he wasn't afraid. This is why I think Martin Luther King, Jr. is so great and now I know what my mom was talking about.

The Source of Teen Violence: an opinion by Jasmin Rutter

I believe that certain music and TV shows and video games *don't* lead to teen violence or teen murders or unwanted teen sex. I also believe that these songs or TV shows *don't* lead to teens doing drugs and drinking. Yes, teen boys may think it's cool to listen to songs that are about killing and "popping off guns," but I don't think this would lead them to actually kill someone. A girl may think it's cool to have her clothes a little tight and may think it's cool to have guys look at her the way they do when she dresses like that, but I don't believe that it is going to lead her to having unwanted sex or that it's going to lead her to using her body/sex to earn money. I do believe that teens listen to these types of songs because they think they can relate to it, and it's an escape from the stress in life. My opinion is just that - an opinion, and it doesn't really mean anything, but if you think about it, this makes sense. I think all parents should stop and think about what they listened to as teens and why they listened to it. That way they will start to have an understanding of why their teens listen to the music they listen to. Parents need to remember what they were like as teens and what they tried as teens - like smoking and drinking.

My beliefs probably won't make it to the newspaper or to TV, but if it ever did, then I think it may make parents and society look closer at the problem of teen violence and unwanted teen sex. Teens may drink and smoke and do drugs as an escape from life and the stress in life. Society needs to stop blaming TV and music and video games for

the things that teens do. Teens are just that - teenagers, and they are going to experiment with things in life, whether parents want them to or not. We parents need to remember that we were once teens, and that we experimented with things that our parents either didn't know about or didn't approve of. If society was to take away the music and the TV and video games I think we would all find that teens are going to still continue to experiment with drugs and alcohol and tobacco. Society will find that teens are curious about their maturing bodies and are curious about sex, so they want to experiment with it and try new things. After all, life is all about trying new things and making mistakes so that we learn better and make the right choices the next time. Without the music and TV and video games society will find that teens are still depressed and still think about killing people that pick on them either in school or out on the street.

Society needs to look at the household environment and see how the teen is being treated and see if one of the parents is an alcoholic or is an abuser. A teen that comes from an abusive violent home will most likely end up becoming an abuser or being violent or end up in abusive violent relationship, because it's all the teen knows. Society also needs to look at what the teenager is witnessing from parents. If the parents are drinking and doing drugs, then the teen will take it as drinking, smoking and drugs are ok to do, because their parents or role models are doing it.

My beliefs are just that - mine. They are an opinion and only that, until proven to be a fact. I think society really needs to do more investigating in the households of the teens and witness what the teens are seeing and being raised around. If society was to actually take away the music and other elements for a while, then we will probably find that teens are still going to continue with what they are doing. Music, TV and video games don't make teens pick on other people and make teens depressed about life. These elements don't control how a teen feels and how teens deal with their feelings. I honestly think that these elements may help the teen get away from the real world for a few moments and within that few moments it gives the

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teen time to think about the situation and how they can make it better. Think of it this way - an infant escapes by sucking on a pacifier or carrying around a blanket. Does that make the infant violent or angry? Do those elements help the infant adjust to life and realize that the world is an ok place? Now, if you apply that to the way teens are, then society will have a better understanding of why teens smoke or why teens listen to that certain type of music. You can't blame sex on any element in life but sex itself, because it can't and won't go unnoticed; it's just one of those things that can't be avoided, kind of like growing old and dying.

In closing, I really strongly believe that society needs to take a step back from the music and all the other things they blame teen violence and hate crimes for and look at the teen as a whole, meaning looking into their household and the history of mental diseases or just history itself. A child can't help it if their parents hit them or abused them. Teens look up to their parents and, like I said before, if the teen sees that their role model is drinking, using drugs, is violent or abusive, then the teen will think it's ok and will want to either do better or be just like their parents. Society needs to stop blaming it all on the music and other elements and start with the parents or household first.

XTW XTreme Wrestling

by Nick Halliley

Since as far back as I can remember, wrestling, otherwise known as sports entertainment, has been the love and passion of my life. I grew up watching the WWF World Wrestling Federation, now known as WWE World Wrestling Entertainment. While I was growing up the big names in wrestling were Hulk Hogan, Andre "The Giant", and "Macho Man" Randy Savage, among others. They all had their own gimmicks. Gimmicks are the roles they play and how they react to the audience. WWE reached its ultimate greatness during the attitude era with such talent as Stone Cold Steve Austin, The Rock, Triple H, Shawn Michaels, etc. Now the big WWE Superstars are

John Cena, Triple H (still), Shawn Michaels (still), Batista and more.

In 2001 a friend of mine, Tim McCrohan, and I decided to start wrestling once a week in his backyard. It was all good and dandy. His ring name was LiveWire. I was and still am X-ercist. A few months later we found a third XTW Star, Steve Theobald, ring name Steve Divine. One of Steve's friends caught wind of XTW and wanted to join. Steve's friend Devin (can't remember his last name) became Mannix. Mannix wasn't a real good grappler, but his unorthodox style made him very unique in XTW. He had a move called the Tumbleweed in which he would just roll at you - it was hard to stop him, because he was kind of big and he'd do it about six or seven times in a row. Steve was the best damn high-flyer XTW has seen yet. Other XTW Star ring names from this era include: D-Nice, Xtreme J, Damien, Morpheus, Big Will, D, Sage, Red Dragon and Psycho.

XTW started off as Xtreme Teen Wrestling. That was a good start. In 2003, however, Tim decided he didn't want the responsibility of "owner", his exact words were, "It's too much like a job and not fun anymore." So he gave XTW to me. I decided that XTW needed a little bit of a change and it couldn't be called Xtreme Teen Wrestling anymore, because I was going to be twenty soon. After many failed name attempts I just decided to capitalize the t in Xtreme and make it XTreme Wrestling. Also in 2003, XTW moved from Taunton, Massachusetts to Hope, Maine when me and a friend, Damien moved up here. Damien's ring name was Morpheus, the god of sleep. Morpheus was the biggest powerhouse in XTW history to date. While wrestling at the park in Hope, we picked up a third wrestler, Harold Main, ring name Magic. Then Damien and I moved to Camden and started wrestling here. Some of the other XTW Stars that have wrestled in Maine are: Spike, Joker, Pyro, Darkside and Tank.

Currently in the world of XTW, there are three usual XTW Stars: Me (X-ercist), Magic and Tank. We are always looking for more XTW Stars or fans or others that can help XTW get moving somewhere.

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There are two championships in XTW that are both vacant right now due to lack of wrestlers. The XTreme title is like our World title. Past XTreme champions include LiveWire (2x), X-ercist (2x), Steve Divine (1x), Morpheus (1x) and Darkside (1x). The other title speaks for itself; it is the HardKore championship, yes I know I spelled hardcore wrong. Former HardKore champs include: Mannix (2x), Damien (1x), Morpheus (2x) and Magic (1x).

On August 11, 2007 there was supposed to be a big XTW event entitled XTW XTreme XPerience 2007. There were supposed to be all the current wrestlers, plus a lot of old ones, like LiveWire, Big Will, D and Darkside, but it ended up being on the 12th and only X-ercist VS Tank. Some wrestlers I didn't ask to come for several reasons. One - I didn't know how to get a hold of them. Two - Steve Divine in particular told my sister XTW was a fun chapter in his life, but it's over now. Come to find out, the week of the event, that Steve Divine would have wrestled. Three - I just didn't like them or they were no good at wrestling.

Well now XTW is going through another slump. Russell "Tank" Moore is not able to wrestle anymore, for now. His parents gave him an ultimatum, either he stops wrestling or he's out of their house. Also, our referee, Geoffrey Guist, is going back to college. So now we got me, Harold "Magic" Main once in a while and possibly referee Kristen Calnan. XTW needs money, wrestlers, referees, a ring, a place and fans, along with other staff.

I wish I had the money to bring back the greats in XTW being Tim "LiveWire" McCrohan, Steve "Steve Divine" Theobald, Devin "Mannix", Billy "Big Will" Mathias, Mike "Spike" Stickney, Russell "Tank" Moore, Nick "Darkside" Moore, and keep Harold "Magic" Main around. In my opinion all of these XTW Stars, including myself, are the foundation of XTW.

XTW will be back on at some point, so for now, on behalf of XTW and staff I bid a farewell... so sad.

Why Read? Why Write?

by Jasmin Rutter

Reading is a good way to generate or produce ideas because it may bring you as a reader to want to write your own book or novel some day. Of course you would probably start by writing short stories before going on to write a short book or novel and then getting that book or novel published. Reading could also create some ideas for your imagination and imagination is key when it comes to writing. Writing frees your imagination because it gets your ideas out and when writing you are allowed to imagine anything you want and write about anything you want. When you get an idea, write it down and think of ways to continue on with it further and possibly start a short story. When you feel angry or upset, writing about it helps you to feel less angry and less upset. It may also help to write a fictional story or a story about your life. Use your feelings as a character's feelings. That way you won't have to worry about someone finding out that the character is really you.

Reading is good for your brain development and makes you want to explore things that only could be explored by reading. The best way to learn about different things is by reading. The more you want to learn, the more you're going to want to read. Reading is a good way to relax and escape the world that surrounds you.

When I read books about single mothers I feel inspired to write my own story. Whether it's good enough to be published or not is something I don't really worry about. As long as I get my ideas out and on paper I feel good and feel like I can do anything. I really like writing when I'm bored or upset and angry. When I write about what is upsetting me or making me angry, I feel better because I'm venting and letting it out. When I have ideas about things, I put them on paper. That way I can see what I need to do to accomplish a goal or think about better ways to relax and calm down when I'm upset. I write daily and no, not all of it is a book or something I want to turn into a book.

Writing about your ideas and your days will help you to feel better about yourself and your days.

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My best advice is: when you get an idea, write it down and go on with it; if you feel upset or angry, write about it; I promise it will make you feel better. Use your imagination and don't worry about who's going to see it and don't worry about making it into a book. Your writing is yours and yours only until you want to make it public or feel like sharing it. Sometimes it's nice to read about someone else who is having problems and see how they would handle it, whether it's a fiction or non-fiction book. You could take what the character did and use it in your life, or the next time you have a problem see if it helps or not. Writing is a great way to express your feelings and to escape from the crazy world. I love reading and writing.

Book Corner



First They Killed My Father

by Loung Ung

reviewed by Andrea Benito

I just finished reading the book called First They Killed My Father by Loung Ung. This book is a national bestseller. I would recommend it to anyone studying wars or the effects of war.

This book was about Loung Ung and her family and the war in Cambodia. I think she wrote this book to help people understand how war affects people's lives in a major way. She talks about how they suffered, how the Khmer Rouge Soldiers treated them. She also talks about how they had to search for food and were only fed in rations. Eventually, she and her family separate in order to survive. She and her sister were sent to labor camps but then were split up again and her brothers were also at labor camps for boys only. They eventually got away and escaped. She and her brother came to America while the rest of her family stayed in

Cambodia. All in all, the book talks about her struggles and everyone's fights with starvation and their lives and things like that.

I think I relate to Loung in this book. At one point, they have captured a Khmer Rouge soldier and are torturing him. Now, if I had been in the same situation as every victim of that war, my response would be the same as Loung's. They had already killed the soldier and everyone was talking about it and Loung said, "Why couldn't they make him die more slowly." I definitely would want serious revenge on someone who put me through all of what this woman went through.

In conclusion, I had a hard time reading this book. It is very depressing and some of the details you shouldn't exactly read on a full or empty stomach. However, it was an all right book.

Hide

by Lisa Gardner

reviewed by Jaynie Butler

Hide. I don't think there is a more appropriate title for the murder mystery novel written by Lisa Gardner. That's exactly what the book is about - hiding. Hiding from what, though? Annabelle Granger, or so she always thought was her true name, wonders the same thing throughout the chaotic life she survives with her father, who she wasn't sure was crazy or not, and her mother who she thought for sure had to be crazy to stand their lifestyle.

The family moved from town to town every few weeks using different aliases each time. Her parents never told "Annabelle" why or from who/what they were running from. She finds out more and more about herself and the past as she grows older and a homicide case opens up that holds the secret to her entire world.

I don't know about the author having a message to get across or not. I think that Gardner wrote this novel with the intent of suspense and entertainment. I couldn't put it down!

I learned a lot of things from this novel. One: you never know who to trust; two: you can

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never be too prepared. Another thing I learned that I thought was quite an important point is that just because things seem to be more than a coincidence doesn't mean that they are.

Where the Heart Is

by Billie Letts

reviewed by Jasmin Rutter

This book is a fictional autobiography. The book is about a young pregnant teen, Novalee who gets left at Wal-mart in a state where she doesn't know anyone or anything around her. So she is forced to hide in the Wal-mart until it closes and hides again until they open. She later meets a man named Forney who becomes her friend. One night Novalee went into labor while living in the Wal-mart and Forney jumped through the window to help her. While Novalee and her daughter Americus were in the hospital they became famous and Novalee's name and picture was on the front page of the newspaper. Also, while in the hospital Novalee's mother Mama Nell showed up and told Novalee that she would help her and the baby with an apartment and anything else they would need. Mama Nell did help and did get them a house. Novalee got a job at the Wal-mart, so she was able to pay her bills. Later on a tornado hits their house. Novalee, Americus, and Forney did not get hurt. Americus's father Willy Jack showed up and wanted to see his daughter. Novalee and Forney split up and he moves away. Toward the end, Novalee finds Forney and they do get back together.

The character that I thought I related to is Novalee because she was a young teen when she got pregnant and so was I. At the end of the book there is a paragraph that I really liked. "Novalee smiled then at her seventeen-year-old self turning on the other side of the rain-streaked glass and she tried to hold her there. But the girl spun away into the light, the place where her history began." I liked this because it shows how Novalee was once a scared young teen and has now turned into a strong brave young woman. It also shows that she is letting go of her past, ready to focus on the future.

Harry Potter And The Deathly Hollows

By J.K. Rowling

reviewed by Misha Taylor

This book had my undivided attention from the very beginning. I was worried for Harry and his faithful friends. I kept turning page after page until the early hours of morning, scared that the next page would hold something ill for the three.

Be prepared to feel a lot of excitement, sorrow and even some happy surprises. One thing you can count on is many adventurous journeys. If you even start to foretell the future of this book - don't, because you won't even be close to what actually takes place.

It's good for your brain to pretend. No matter how old or how young you are, imagining gives you a sense of your youth. I also believe that these books will be read years from now. I plan on reading them to my son.

I felt a lot of anticipation to read the last Harry Potter. Just knowing that it would be the last of the Harry Potter saga made me want to read it even more. I haven't had such an exciting read since forever.

2007-08 WORKSHOPS

Beginning October 10th all workshops will be held from 10 am - 12 pm on the second Wednesday of every month.

If you need babysitting and/or transportation, notify your one-to-one at least 2 days in advance.

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