The Fruits of our Labor

On behalf of the Genesee Valley Garden Group, I would like to thank the Wellsville Daily Reporter, Olean Times Herald, and Cuba Patriot for taking the time to come visit our garden, learn about our project, and cover our story in the local news. We cannot stress enough the importance of community involvement in this project and without the help of our local papers our story may not have been heard. This project has been a dream for many of us over the years, and to now see it come to fruition is so very satisfying. Your coverage allows us to share our success with others throughout our area.

This project would have continued to be just a dream had it not been for the overwhelming support of everyone involved. The Garden Group is thrilled to have the support of our district and its gift of space to create this garden, as well as providing materials to build the raised beds. The Genesee Valley staff has been supportive throughout the execution of the plan and has offered assistance when needed. We also appreciate the efforts of Chris Graham, Fred Grusendorf, and Zach Guilford, who built and filled the beds, and installed the fence to protect our plants. To say the community has been supportive is an understatement. The donations received from Nicholson’s Pharmacy, Belmont Betterment Association, Belmont American Legion, Gallmann’s Hardware, Dr. Simons Dentist Office, Belmont Rotary Club, Olean Walmart, Hannigan’s Green House & Zajicek Family, East Wind Nursery, Angelica Lions Club, and the Belmont Sheriff’s Department allowed us to move forward with this endeavor more quickly than we thought possible.

The Genesee Valley Garden Group started with a handful of Genesee Valley staff members who were interested in improving the appearance of our school. This handful of individuals continues to grow in number, as others share the same interests and goals of the original group. Our “Community Vegetable Garden” is and will continue to be a source of learning for students and adults. Through this hands-on experience, gardeners will learn how to prepare a garden and enjoy a healthier life style with fresh grown vegetables. As we live in an area with a strong agricultural history, the cultivation of our land as a source of food production is truly natural.

Today, three months later, the Genesee Valley Garden Group is reaping the fruits of its labor as we begin to harvest some of the cucumbers, broccoli, squash, and tomatoes awaiting us in the garden. Mr. Chris Gyr, Genesee Valley technology person, has already commented on the tasty broccoli he was able to enjoy from the garden. Gracyn Graham, daughter of Garden Group Coordinator, Erin Graham, cannot wait to take trips to the Genesee Valley Community Vegetable Garden with her mom to water and weed the plants. Genesee Valley educator Lynn Kunz has toured the garden with her students this summer. She looks forward to the opportunity to harvest snacks from the garden as they become ready to pick. Enjoying the natural beauty of something so small as a seed growing into a healthy vining plant filled with fresh and juicy cucumbers gives us a sense of wonder at any age.

The community, students, and Genesee Valley staff are invited to visit this special place and partake of the fresh produce whenever it is available. Feel free to pick a weed or two if you are so inclined! This garden belongs to everyone and will benefit from every loving hand.

Sincerely,

Mary Guilford
GVCS Garden Group President