

The Growing Center

A Non-Profit Horticultural Therapy Center

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Dear Friends,

Thank you for your interest in The Growing Center. Since you may not be familiar with The Growing Center, allow me to give you some information that will get you better acquainted with us.

The Growing Center is a non-profit charitable organization 501(c3) located in Frederick Pennsylvania, about 55 miles northeast of Philadelphia. We offer horticultural therapy programs, with a focus on youth at risk, the physically and mentally challenged and senior citizens in the community.

In addition we have various community outreach programs. The Growing Center works closely with area school districts utilizing both the classroom and on-site visits for school students. These students include preschool up through senior high school. We enthusiastically educate these future gardeners in organic and chemical free gardening techniques. We also promote the advantages of composting, and being environmentally responsible, earth friendly gardeners. In addition to these programs, using horticultural therapy applications, we offer adult monthly stress reduction classes to the general public.

We recently implemented a community service program geared toward Junior and Senior High school students that are having discipline issues in the classroom. These students are not yet in the legal system but have behavior problems that are leading to suspension or expulsion from school. This is a successful early intervention program. Participating in our programs is considered a privilege. Our goals are to teach these particular students cooperation, consideration of others, self respect, and improve their self -esteem. We let them know some one really cares about them and where they are headed in life.

Now a little about our Healing Garden. After much planning and hard work, we are now seeing our Healing Gardens become a reality. This is a four-acre area adjacent to our greenhouses where we have planted colorful gardens, built a beautiful gazebo, installed a pond with a waterfall, benches and shaded areas. The Healing Garden is, and will continue to be an ongoing project. With most of the work being accomplished by volunteers, students, youth groups, and scout troops, this is truly a community effort. There have been weddings held in the gazebo and several weddings and special events are booked for the spring and summer! The Healing Garden is a place for everyone to find a quiet refuge from the very busy world we live in. The goal is for everyone to experience the wonder of a safe, peaceful retreat. This entire project will be handicapped accessible and will accommodate those with physical disabilities, including hearing and visually impaired.

We have designated an area of the Healing Garden for the local chapter of Parents of Murdered Children (parents or family members who have lost a child through an act of violence). A memorial garden measuring 12'x12' is selected by a family. The family honors their loved one by adorning the garden with flowers and mementos. This provides the families a place other than a cemetery to reflect on the loving memories they have of their child. Here they can focus on the life their loved one lived, instead of their death. These families have deeply touched our hearts and reaffirm the meaning of the name "Healing Garden".

The Growing Center, at the request of the American Cancer Society, conducts several Cancer Survival Workshops throughout the year. These workshops are very popular and are attended by hundreds of cancer survivors, their families and caregivers. We always come away from these workshops humbled and feeling honored to have helped these real life heroes.

Civic organizations such as The Lions Club, Kiwanis Clubs, Masons, Rotary, AMBUCS, and Women's League, to name a few, regularly invite The Growing Center to their meetings, where we present "The story of The Growing Center". We are warmly received and many of these organizations show their support through financial donations.

Truly the backbone of our programs are our volunteers, these volunteers include church youth groups, scout troops, senior high students, local civic groups, and individuals.

We do not charge a fee for our horticultural therapy program sessions. We rely entirely on donations, grants, contributions and the generosity of our community.

The Growing Center has so much to offer the entire community! We continue to develop in many ways to meet the challenges and needs of those we serve.

Please consider becoming a member of The Growing Center and giving you financial support. Your help will help many others in return.

Sincerely,
Linda M. Boyer
Executive Director
The Growing Center