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Contact:

Jory Rolf

Ozark Mountain Legacy

Phone: (417) 598-1314

Email: jory@ozarkmountainlegacy.org

Website: www.ozarkmountainlegacy.org



Becky Allen

Coordinator, Legacy Gardens Project

Phone: (417) 294-5549

Email: ballen@wolves.k12.mo.us

Legacy Gardens “pass it on”

Reeds Spring, MO – August 26, 2014 – The first summer of the Legacy Gardens in Stone County has produced countless stories of gardeners passing on their produce, knowledge, and joy of gardening to their neighbors.

The Legacy Gardens is a community-wide initiative championed by Ozark Mountain Legacy volunteers who are committed to bringing families and friends together to preserve and pass on the quality of life in Ozark Mountain Country.

“Participating in the Legacy Gardens is an opportunity to come together and help our neighbors,” said Dennis Ahlvers, volunteer manager of the St. Andrew Presbyterian Church and Reeds Spring Legacy Gardens. “These gardens have been a blessing to so many for so many different reasons.”

Ahlvers and his wife, Frances, live close to the Reeds Spring City Hall garden and frequently walk over to check on the garden’s progress. He recalls watching a family tend their garden, the parents “passing it on” to their children as they explained how to know when their tomatoes would be ripe enough to pick. When Ahlvers asked if the family would like to participate in the Legacy Gardens next year, they responded unanimously with a loud, “Yes!”

At the St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church Garden in Kimberling City, Ahlvers encountered two sisters, one working a garden plot and one watching from a nearby chair. The woman working in the garden explained that the plot actually belonged to her sister, who was unable to do the physical work because of her medical condition. Both sisters expressed their excitement for the time they get to spend time together at their affectionately named plot, “My Sister’s Garden.”

Gardeners at the Legacy Garden at Lifesong Church in Reeds Spring have “passed on” their bounty of produce by sharing a portion of it with their congregation on Sundays. They also plan to “pass on” a portion of it to the larger community by canning it and using it to prepare meals for the Stone County Loaves and Fishes program this winter.

In addition to produce, Legacy gardeners have incorporated a variety of flowers into their plots. The gardeners at St. Mark Episcopal Church in Kimberling City have created a beautiful layout with uniquely shaped beds that also provides a quiet, reflective space for community members.

The St. Andrew's Legacy Garden has a bountiful crop of marigolds this year. They plan to harvest the seed from the plants later this fall so they can "pass on" the seeds to next year's garden.

"People often ask me who is really in charge of this project, but the fact is that this is the Lord's project," said Ahlvers. "He has made the way, and so many people have benefitted from getting involved. We truly are 'passing it on' to our neighbors."

For more information about how to get involved in Legacy Gardens, please call Becky Allen at (417) 294-5549 or Dennis Ahlvers at (417) 272-0093. For more information about Ozark Mountain Legacy, visit www.ozarkmountainlegacy.org.

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Ozark Mountain Legacy is our area's non-profit organization dedicated to preserving, promoting, and championing our core values of Family, Faith, Friends, Flag, and Future to ensure the continued success of our Ozark Mountain Spirit as we Pass It On to future generations. (www.ozarkmountainlegacy.org)

