

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Legacy Gardens growing in Stone County thanks to United Way grant and community support

Reeds Spring, MO – March 27, 2014 – The Legacy Garden project in Stone County is the latest community-wide initiative championed by Ozark Mountain Legacy volunteers who are committed to bringing families and friends together to improve the quality of life in Ozark Mountain Country.

Volunteers from area churches, schools, and businesses have come together in support of the project's primary objectives – to teach people how to grow healthy food for their families and to donate a portion of the food grown in the Legacy Gardens to the Stone County Loaves and Fishes program.

“I have so many good memories of gardening with both of my grandmothers, and I am passing that love of gardening to my own grandchildren” said Diane Pope, Life Song Church Legacy Garden Coordinator. “I want the Legacy Garden project to help further our church’s mission to care for the families in our community.”

Kimberling City’s St. Mark Episcopal Church and St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, partners in the Loaves and Fishes effort, have joined together again to develop Legacy Gardens at both of their church locations and at Reeds Spring City Hall on land donated by the City of Reeds Spring.

“I am excited that the garden plots will be offered to the general public at no cost to them,” said Dennis Ahlvers, volunteer from St. Andrew Presbyterian Church. “I was a farmer for many years who enjoyed seeing my crops grow; I would really like more people to experience the thrills of how much food the Lord will make grow if we just get things started.”

Thanks to a \$1500 United Way grant and generous contributions of time and resources from local partners, Legacy Gardens is on its way to providing ample space for people to grow their own food. Currently, Legacy Gardens has 21 garden plots in four locations in Kimberling City and Reeds Spring.

“The most exciting part of this project has been watching it come to life as folks have jumped on board to make it successful,” said Dave Liebenow, volunteer from St. Mark Episcopal Church. “It is amazing how God has brought people together for a common goal.”

Meeks Lumber provided low-cost lumber to construct the Legacy Gardens beds, and Gibson Vocational Tech Center students, under the instruction of Sonny Young, constructed them. Hansen’s Tree Service donated the top soil and other building materials for the Legacy Gardens, as well as transported the constructed garden beds to the sites. And, Reeds Spring High School botany students and the Youth Empowerment Group (YEP) have begun growing “starters” that will be replanted in the gardens later this spring.

EarthWise Recycling Center, another local Ozark Mountain Legacy initiative, is donating compost material that is generated at the center by composting food waste from Reeds Spring schools and Silver Dollar City for use in Legacy Gardens.

“I have really high hopes for this project. The thought of having gardens to help feed all of our folks in this area is just so exciting,” said Becky Allen, Botany teacher at Reeds Spring High School. “I would love to see Legacy Gardens spreading all over Stone and Taney counties as more churches and neighborhoods see the value for the people in their areas.”

For more information about how to get involved in Legacy Gardens, please call Becky Allen at (417) 294-5549. 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)



Legacy Garden volunteers and Reeds Spring High School students preparing one of the garden sites.

Front row: Melissa Nichols, Katie Bowen, Elaine Fischer, Diane Pope, Rob Griffith, Becky Allen, Misty Curtis, Kaitlyn Daniels.

Middle Row: Mason Patrick, Ali Bowen, Hannah Ziegler, Trenton Blevins, Alex Chandler, Kris Pace, John Baltes, Kristian Dahlquist, Kayla Dahms

Back row: Michaela Kahnert, Charisse Morrison, Hannah Hinsley, Vince Palmiere