



# Cornucopia

*Network of New Jersey, Inc.*

**April 2011**

## Open Garden Tour on April 17th

by Pat Kenschaft

CNNJ will be hosting an organic vegetable garden tour on Sunday afternoon, April 17 beginning at 2:00 PM. Spring-summer gardens are just beginning at this time, but April gives folks time to use ideas in planning their own. Four experienced gardeners will be opening their gardens: Necole Fabris, José German, Judy Hinds, and me.

José, at 69 Grove Street, Montclair, has already planted peas, onion and carrots and has

parsley, collards and garlic from last year. He raises 40-50 pounds of potatoes a year, and starts will be visible. In his cold frame he has beets, arugula, and Swiss chard. Veggies grow in garden raised beds, table beds four feet over his sunny driveway, and water beds, a hydroponic setup of large pipes where water and nutrients circulate around plant roots. He is president of Green Harmony Now, which provides sustainable landscaping

*continued on page 8*



*The cold-frame in Pat Kenschaft's garden was growing Chinese cabbage in the December Open Gardens Tours. What will be growing in April?  
photo by Moe Casey*

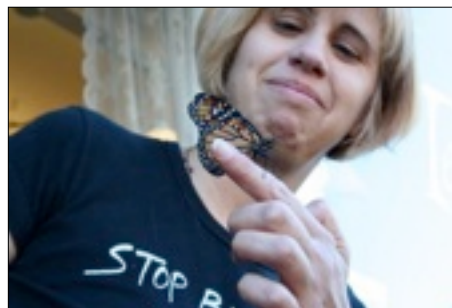
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## We dedicate this issue to Leigh Davis 3/14/58 – 3/3/11

by Barb Conover

The newsletter team and the CNNJ family mourns the sudden loss of our editor, webmaster, friend, and fellow activist, Leigh Davis (aka "Prairie Fyre"), of Highland Park, who died suddenly and unexpectedly on March 3rd.

Leigh was so much more than just CNNJ's webmaster and newsletter editor: she was an inspiration to all who crossed paths with her, maybe even to many of you who only knew her from her byline in these newsletter articles. Inspirational both because of the incredible variety of projects she tackled, and because she took them to completion. She saw a need or an injustice, *continued on page 4*



*photo by Bruno & Greta Orti*

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## Memories of Bob McLean

by Pat Kenschaft

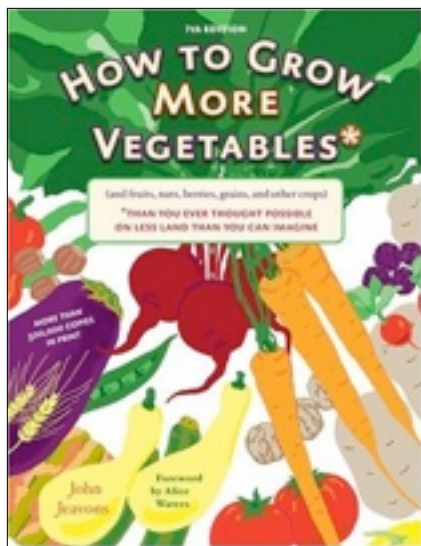
Bob McLean, whose garden many Cornucopians visited at 51 Gordonhurst Avenue, died shortly after midnight in the early morning of March 18th.

Bob was born Feb 16, 1925. He graduated from Lafayette College and the University of Michigan dental school and was drafted as a dentist into the air force during the Korean War. He told me he had started gardening when he was five. He begged his mother for seeds, and has been gardening ever since — in the same plot! He told me he moved into the *continued on page 7*

# Have you fed your soil lately? An approach to sustainable gardening

by Jackie Piemonte, MS

Long before Monsanto decided to conquer the market on saving the world from hunger, the ancient societies of Greece and China were busy planting crops in a manner that produced maximum food on minimum soil acreage. The techniques they developed focused on building a healthy soil, and utilizing the existing ecosystem to its fullest advantage. This method of gardening is referred to as biointensive and can be used by anyone with a plot of land no bigger than a bathtub. Of course, feel free to try it on whatever size garden you might have.



The initial preparation of the garden involves a process called double-digging. Using a fork to loosen the compacted earth and a spade to remove the soil, the soil is aerated and space is made for the eventual addition of the cured compost. A set of boards to stand on is useful while digging the trenches and avoiding further compaction of the soil. Finally, creating a healthy ecosystem where the plants, bees and friendly bugs can live is critical. Using non-toxic methods to remove any unwanted diners is one way to ensure that your garden flourishes. Planting compatible veggies together is another. Remember to take future height/shade/sun requirements into account when planning your plot. For further reading on biointensive gardening techniques and choosing plant combinations for your garden please refer to *How to Grow More Vegetables* by John Jevons. 🌱

**Ed. Note:** Jackie is a nutritionist who supports CSA's and enjoys being in her garden.

For starters, biointensive gardening requires a deeply prepared plant bed, a depth of two feet is recommended. In areas where digging two feet deep is not feasible, a raised bed system can be utilized. A diversity of plants is then placed closely together, rather than in rows, providing living mulch, humidity retention and delivering up to four times more produce. In preparing the deeper beds, compost (the gardening scraps and leaves from the prior season, preferably) is added, giving the roots a bounty of nutrients deep in the ground and a more efficient method of retaining moisture in the soil. This process of feeding the soil is critical for maximizing the yield of your garden. Rather than bringing in outside fertilizers of dubious nature, biointensive gardening relies on the premise that the items grown in the garden are for feeding the soil as well as the gardener. In a natural ecosystem this is how the fertility of the soil is maintained.

Compost crops can be grown in the off-planting season specifically to add to the compost pile. In addition to their compost pile contribution, these crops preserve the soil's health via their extensive root systems which remain in the soil after the plants have been cleared. These root systems provide a healthy environment for the microorganisms and earthworms to flourish. Good crops to try are fava beans, vetch, wheat and cereal rye. When planning your garden's placement, consider how the sun will reach these cooler weather crops. Full sun is of course the best choice.

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## Gardening for Life

by José German

On March 15, I did a presentation on behalf of CNNJ about vegetable gardening for the Holistic Moms chapter of Garwood, New Jersey. Alison Fraser, co-leader of *Holistic Moms of Garwood*, invited CNNJ to do the presentation. Her organization generates national awareness, education, and support for holistic parenting and green living by providing nurturing, open minded and respectful local community networks that encourage families to share these ideals and learn from each other.

The presentation, entitled "Gardening for Life," covered all the steps for growing vegetables organically. I provided pictures of various vegetable gardens and responded to questions about soil preparation, composting, recycling, and pest and disease control. The audience was very enthusiastic and expressed interest in CNNJ Open Garden Tours. 🌱





# Testimony for the Child Safe Playing Fields Act, NJ SB 2610

Presented before the New Jersey Senate  
Environmental Committee February 10, 2011

by José German

“Thank you Chairman Smith and members of the Senate Environment Committee for taking testimony on this important legislation.

“As a member of Cornucopia Network of New Jersey, I have been advocating for organic gardening practices for ten years. I am a volunteer at Edgemont School in Montclair, where we have eliminated pesticide use in landscaping. Since pesticide use is especially risky to children, we strongly support the prohibition of lawn care pesticides on playgrounds, recreational fields, and school grounds. As a professional landscaper and experienced gardener, I have seen the benefits of organic lawns and gardens, free of chemicals and poisons.



José German

“Unlike conventional chemical treatments, the organic approach takes a holistic, preventative view instead of reacting to various problems using chemical pesticides or herbicides. Building healthy soil solves many lawn problems, eliminating the need for poisons and harsh conventional treatments. Organic lawn treatments are better for improving the quality of the turf, soil content, and texture and have low environmental impact. Organic lawn treatments are safe for the ecology of the soil and, most important; they are safe for humans and pets.

“Although some experts believe that natural turf management programs are more expensive than chemical treatments in the first two years, at Green Harmony Now, LLC, we have developed our own organic lawn treatments to be competitive with the cost of conventional chemical/poison treatments, even in the first year or during the transition.

“I know that some opponents of the bill erroneously say that organic lawns produce soil compaction, which is not true — and if that was the case, aeration of the soil is the simplest solution for a compacted soil.

“Professional who provide lawn care maintenance

services recommend the aeration of the lawn every second year. Another wrong statement is that the grass will not grow and that will allow the weeds to take over the lawn. As a professional landscaper, I have seen many times the transformation of a lawn treated with chemical and poison that was full of weeds to an organic lawn free of weeds and free of poison and harmful chemicals.

“Organic fertilizers are more efficient than conventional chemical fertilizers. My statement is based on real scientific benefits that are hard to dispute. Organic fertilizers are better for turf building and improve soil texture and content, because they release live beneficial microbial and bacteria into the soil at the same time that promote a natural aeration to increase the amount of oxygen that the plant roots need.

“Thank you for your interest in protecting New Jersey’s children from unnecessary exposure to pesticides. I urge you to vote in favor of this bill.” 🐦

*Very productive vegetable garden with some flowers, showing collard green, carrots, beets, and orange nasturtiums. In the back there is a hedge of raspberries and blueberries. The pergola has grapes.*

*Garden Design and photo by José German*



**Leigh** *continued from page 1*

got mad—and threw herself into it until she *fixed it*. Leigh really showed me just how much impact one person could make as an activist. She was, in short, inspirational.

Leigh changed the world for the better through her activism, teaching and writing. She was loved by all who knew her and her legacy will endure for generations to come. She leaves a huge hole. 🐦



## The Transformation of Leigh Davis

*photo by Una McGurk*

by Trina Paulus

Dear Leigh, since your name is part of my password, I'll have that as a daily reminder of how entwined our lives have become.

There are lots of bible quotes I think of in relation to you, but the main one is from Matthew 5: *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be filled.* May you be truly filled!

I reflect on how we met. It was on December 9, 2006. Three of us found ourselves making videos of an amazing teach-in sparked by the intolerable and unjust passage of the Military Commissions Act of 2006, which removed Habeas Corpus rights from prisoners. It was at Montclair's Congregational Church and our St. Peter Claver peace group helped it happen. We were together with a great group of local peace people that afternoon. Two representatives of the Catholic Worker movement shared their 70 mile Walk to Guantanamo ([www.witnessedtorture.org](http://www.witnessedtorture.org)). A stunning presentation by Joshua Denbeaux of Seton Hall Law School about their difficulties in representing the inmates of Guantanamo followed.

Then Sam Provance spoke by telephone. He had witnessed torture in Abu Ghraib and had been persecuted as a whistleblower. I was powerfully moved by his response to the question, "Where do you find your support now?"

"I guess it's from you guys." I met him only once at the Peace Action luncheon when he had spoken the year before. But we never know the full effect of our actions. They might turn out to be much more valuable in ways we can't guess than results we can see indicate. So too with a life like yours, Leigh.

The last person to speak was the mother of Ehren Watada, the first officer to refuse to go to Iraq because the war was not just and he could not in conscience

*When I look at a caterpillar, I dare believe there's  
a butterfly inside, and that neither  
caterpillar life, nor the cocoon, is the end.  
Leigh is now in or through the big cocoon  
and knows what's on the other side,  
something none of us really know. We just hope.*

lead soldiers into an unjust war. We both made a personal bond with her, and were able to share our finished DVDs with her and her son as he went through the years of his trial, and final dismissal of the case.

You and I met at the end of this amazing afternoon and decided the material was so important that we would spend time to make a video. We spent long days and hours over two months to create it and the documentation that went with it. We gave copies to Peace Action and believed it was delivered to legislators.

In recent years you and I have been partners in many things, such as projects relating to making a film of my book, *Hope For the Flowers*. We've worked continuously to encourage and demonstrate local, organic food production.

And, the schools... where you helped them begin gardens— all of these efforts to strengthen local power and food production! Yeah for front yard gardens!

How many of us will miss you! May your spirit engulf and inspire us to continue to create the world that we know is possible.

I am so grateful for knowing you, and think you satisfied more than most, the great and singular commandment which is the basic law of all religions, "Love one another..."

In peace always, Trina 🐦



# The **FOOD ISSUES** Pages

by Trina Paulus

As we began to think about the content of this newsletter, I became concerned that I wasn't as up-to-date with the whirlwind of food related issues abounding to properly do our traditional Food Issues Pages. I sent out an SOS for someone who might be more fully engaged with the horrendous FDA and USDA and administration permissions to plant genetically engineered crops without any controls whatsoever already this spring! (This was against court orders for full environmental review regarding the alfalfa... and permissions have been given as well for commercial unregulated production of an ethanol producing GE corn, and GE sugar beets.)

Leigh volunteered, and thought of the title "Monsanto Roundup," which, of course, is a play on words. The newsletter team thought that was great, so we now present you with:



Trina inside the butterfly tent photo by José German

## A Short Roundup of Monsanto Horrors

presented to you by the FDA, USDA, and the US Administration...

The goal that was set by Monsanto and the other genetic engineering (GE) companies about 15 years ago was to make genetically engineered crops so pervasive in the environment that we would not be able to get away from them. This effort is well on its way to success, but with significant resistance as well.

None of the promises made about GE have turned out to be truthful. Pesticide use has not been reduced as was promised, rather it has exploded. The oft-repeated claim that we need GE food to feed the world has not proven true. Quite the contrary! With most crops, the yield is less than with regular seed and often has other dire effects including total crop failure. The first one I think of is the death of sheep in India from eating the stubble of genetically engineered cotton, though there were no ill effects in previous years when they were sent into the fields to eat this stubble of normal cotton.

Check out [www.seedsofdeception.org](http://www.seedsofdeception.org) for more on the ever growing reports of crop failure and health consequences.

In the original protections put in place to keep GE and regular crops separate, it was considered safe to have just a few feet buffering between the two. Even though the barrier is now greater, it is nowhere near

enough to possibly protect non-genetically engineered or organic crops from being pollinated by wind, bees and butterflies.

## "Organic Elite" bow to GE

In the wake of this, a self-appointed cabal of the "Organic Elite," spearheaded by Whole Foods Market, Organic Valley, and Stonyfield Farm has surrendered to Monsanto, and will no longer oppose the mass commercialization of GE crops.

[www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_22449.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_22449.cfm)

This has prompted an outcry, since many of us feel this is tantamount to surrender and the inevitable death of the organic movement. Why should we accept genetic pollution of organic crops anymore than we should accept illness from secondhand smoke? That was the case when smokers ruled.

## "Agriculture At the Crossroads" Report

I would like to refer you again to this major report that I have written about in these pages for the last several years. It is available online as

[www.agassessment.org](http://www.agassessment.org). I have a four-minute video about it on my website [www.hopefortheflowers.org](http://www.hopefortheflowers.org).

This global agricultural report, released in April 2008, has been covered up by the Big Ag consortiums and biotechnology companies. These companies were the ones who asked the World Bank and the UN agencies to sponsor this four-year study involving over 100 countries and 400 experts. All stakeholders were represented including women, indigenous and small farmers as well as the usual government and corporate controllers and all were asked the big question: "how will we feed the world in the years to come?" When they saw the results were different from what they expected, the big boys pulled out two months before the release of the study.

The answer was clear and strong. *It will be small-scale organic farmers that will feed the world in the future, and big agriculture and genetic engineering will have little role.*

Well the big guys determined not to let this conclusion become known. They seem to be working harder than ever to control governments and foundations such as the Gates Foundation which is funding GE projects throughout Africa as part of the mis-named "African New Green Revolution." The struggle is intense in most places.

## What to do?

Search out and join one of the groups organizing against the GE crop releases that can never be recalled. Food and Water Watch, the Organic Consumers Association, Seeds of Deception. We hope each one of you take this issue to heart. Join in before this new onslaught of unregulated major crops are planted this spring. Thanks!

*continued on page 6*

## Food Issues *continued from page 5*

*The good news: More and more countries are seeking to be free of GE contamination. I was so grateful to read this March 2011 report from the UN which strongly affirms the 2008 conclusion:*

### UN: Organic Ag Can Double Food Production in 10 Years

*from Organic Consumers Association*

"To feed 9 billion people in 2050, we urgently need to adopt the most efficient farming techniques available. Today's scientific evidence demonstrates that agroecological methods outperform the use of chemical fertilizers in boosting food production where the hungry live — especially in unfavorable environments."

"To date, agroecological projects have shown an average crop yield increase of 80% in 57 developing countries, with an average increase of 116% for all African projects. Recent projects conducted in 20 African countries demonstrated a doubling of crop yields over a period of 3-10 years."

*– Olivier De Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food and author of the report "Agro-ecology and the right to food," published March 8, 2011.*

[www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_21105.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_21105.cfm) 🐦

### Roundup Horrors 'Round the World

*From: Institute of Science In Society [www.i-sis.org.uk/](http://www.i-sis.org.uk/)*

#### Mad Soy Disease Strikes Brazil

Dr. Mae-Wan Ho shares information that does not seem to be heard or understood by those encouraging Roundup Ready crops.

They call it "mad soy disease" in Brazil, where it has been spreading from the north, causing yield losses of up to 40 percent. It is incurable.

This is the latest GMO fiasco to surface. Check out the i-sis reports on the 'meltdowns' in the US and China, and 'Argentina's Roundup Human Tragedy.' The same article reveals that **US scientists identified more than 40 diseases associated with glyphosate** (Roundup is glyphosate) and glyphosate-tolerant crops.  
[www.i-sis.org.uk/madSoyDiseaseStrikesBrazil.php](http://www.i-sis.org.uk/madSoyDiseaseStrikesBrazil.php)

#### USDA Senior Scientist Sends "Emergency"

**Warning** to US Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack on a new plant pathogen in Roundup Ready GM soy and corn that may be responsible for high rates of infertility and spontaneous abortions in livestock. Pretty scary letter!  
[www.i-sis.org.uk/newPathogenInRoundupReadyGMCrops.php](http://www.i-sis.org.uk/newPathogenInRoundupReadyGMCrops.php)

#### South America Fights Back!

*from: Organic Consumers Association, OCA*

In South America, the Brazilian Government has launched a GM-free soy program to help farmers access non-GM soy seeds. In Argentina new research has exposed that the herbicide Glyphosate (Roundup), used on the majority of GM crops grown worldwide, could have severe negative impacts on human health. [3] This has led to bans on spraying of the herbicide near peoples' homes. In Uruguay, local areas are declaring themselves GM-free.

Friends of the Earth International's Food Sovereignty coordinator Martin Drago said, "Farmers and citizens in South America are bearing the burden of ten years of GM crops with widespread health disasters and rising costs.

"The myths on which the biotech industry is built are crumbling.

"The havoc wreaked across South America shows that this technology is not compatible with sustainable farming. It is a wake up call for the rest of the world to move towards more ecological methods of farming."

[www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_22756.cfm](http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_22756.cfm) 🐦

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#### We'd like to hear from you!

[CornucopiaNJ@gmail.com](mailto:CornucopiaNJ@gmail.com) to let us know:

- what you care about
- articles you'd like to see or contribute
- if you would prefer to get the newsletter via email.

#### Ed Notes:

- The Newsletter is available online! [www.cornucopianetwork.org](http://www.cornucopianetwork.org)
- Pat Kenschaft's blog: [patsorganicgarden.blogspot.com](http://patsorganicgarden.blogspot.com)



**Bob** *continued from page 1*

house when it was new and he was two years old.

He was my mentor, and was certainly the most experienced gardener I ever knew. When I started gardening in 1978, he took me around his garden and gave me many ideas. He taught me to keep carrots through the winter in the garden by putting bags of leaves over them in late December. This is much easier than harvesting them in the fall and putting them in a cold cellar. Even this past winter I ate a steady supply of garden carrots, thanks to Bob.

He told me once he puts out garbage only once a month. "And then I have to go all around the house and pick up anything I can, so it's enough for the garbage men to notice." Fred tells me his telephone was a black dial phone, "a true museum piece." Bob didn't waste much. He drove the car his mother bought new in 1972 until recently. He and Fred liked discussing investments.

When Fred and I moved here in 1975, his mother was still living, and we went to her

funeral long ago. Since then he has usually had a dog, but not recently. We are grateful to José German for writing an article about him in the December 2010 issue of this newsletter, which Bob happily showed around.

José German and Dave Wasmuth told us that Bob said his his favorite charity was the Brooklyn Botanical Garden. He donated money and also did volunteer work and research there. He was a

devoted supported of the BBG. So we suggest that donations in his memory can be sent to [www.bbg.org/](http://www.bbg.org/) or BBG, 900 Washington Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11225

He also told Fred that the Central Asian Institute was a favorite charity: CAI, P.O. Box 7209, Bozeman, MT 59771. The CAI is led by Greg Mortenson, author of *Three Cups of Tea* and *Stones into Schools*, about his activities starting schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan. We highly recommend both books.

We, the neighbors, and many gardeners, will miss Bob very much, but I am thankful for his long, inspiring life. 🌻



*photos of Bob and his garden by José German*

**Cornucopia Network of New Jersey** survives entirely on volunteered time and your donation. Please send your dues (\$15 individual or \$25 family) with your contact information. We welcome volunteer time and donations as well. Thank you!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Can we send our Newsletter only by email? [ ] Yes [ ] No**

## April Open Gardens *continued from page 1*

services and advice: [greenharmonynow@aol.com](mailto:greenharmonynow@aol.com), 973-233-1106.

Necole, at 8 Prospect Place, West Orange, grows nearly all of her family's summer produce and donates her excess bounty to Toni's Kitchen. In April she should show chard, pac choi, broccoli, and spinach. She may have "potato buckets" out. She uses volunteer plants and does not believe that vegetables must grow in rows. *Directions:* Take Harrison Avenue to the West Orange end (Main Street). Left on Main Street. After the next light, make an immediate right on Prospect Place. The second house on the left is number 8.

Judy, at 156 Rhoda Avenue, Nutley, has 150 square feet in partial shade that uses the "Square Foot Gardening" approach. How far up will the peas and carrots be? Come see! We'll compare transplants with direct-seeding of early spring greens. Also, we'll talk about organic soil amendments and compare several batches of compost and leaf mold. New this season: rain-barrel set-up. *Directions:* Take Watchung Avenue to the end and turn left. Turn right at the second possibility onto Coeyman Avenue, then the fourth left onto Stanley, and then immediately left onto Rhoda.

156 is on the right with a very large oak tree in the front yard. 973 661-0067 [j.hinds7@verizon.net](mailto:j.hinds7@verizon.net)

I will have environmental displays in the front yard at 56 Gordonhurst Avenue, Montclair. The displays and the other three gardens will stay open until 5:00 PM, but visitors will not be allowed in my back yard after 4:00 PM. I have raised all the family's vegetables year round for decades with no poisons, commercial fertilizers, or power machinery. I have used a hose only once in the past four years. Lettuce should be abundant in mid-April and, hopefully, some collards, kale, and pac choi. My cold frames will probably be gone by then, so you'll see beans and corn planted next to the house. Garlic will be abundant. Pea plants should be promising amid tomato plants still in walls-of-water that, with luck, will keep woodchucks off the peas again this year. Visitors who bring containers may dig strawberry, oregano, fern, and vinca plants. Trowels will be available, but you may bring your own. If you would like to be on my gardening email list, contact me at [kenschaft@pegasus.montclair.edu](mailto:kenschaft@pegasus.montclair.edu).

Cornucopia's next organic garden tour will be Saturday, May 14, beginning at 2:00 PM. 🐣

**Ed. Note:** *Attending the Open Gardens? Take your camera and send up photos!*



Web: [www.cornucopianetwork.org](http://www.cornucopianetwork.org)

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