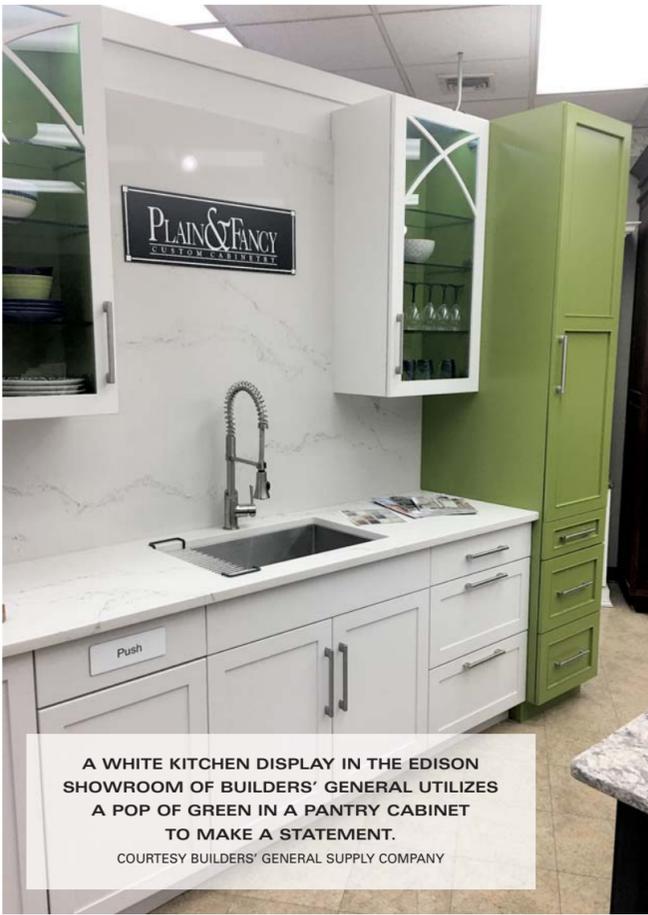




HOME
and
Garden

THE TWO RIVER TIMES
THE WEEK OF MARCH 30 - APRIL 6, 2017



A WHITE KITCHEN DISPLAY IN THE EDISON SHOWROOM OF BUILDERS' GENERAL UTILIZES A POP OF GREEN IN A PANTRY CABINET TO MAKE A STATEMENT.
COURTESY BUILDERS' GENERAL SUPPLY COMPANY



NEMO TILE + STONE IN RED BANK SHOWS HOW A PALE GREEN GLASS TILE IN A BATHROOM DISPLAY CAN CREATE A SOOTHING ENVIRONMENT.
NIKOLE J. GHIRARDI

BRING SPRING INDOORS WITH COLOR

BY ELIZABETH WULFHORST

AN AVOCADO. A Granny Smith apple. A freshly mown lawn. Nature provides a bounty of beautiful greens for our visual enjoyment. And green is a color closely associated with spring and new beginnings. That is why Pantone, the world-renown color authority, has chosen "Greenery" as its 2017 Color of the Year.

Pantone calls Greenery "a fresh and zesty yellow-green shade that evokes the first days of spring when nature's greens revive, restore and renew." They consider it "nature's neutral" and "a refreshing and revitalizing shade," a color which invites us to slow down, breathe and relax.

Each year Pantone selects a color representative of world-wide cultural trends. According to a statement on the company's website by Leatrice Eiseman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute, "Greenery bursts forth in 2017 to provide us with the reassurance we yearn for amid a tumultuous social and political environment. Satisfying our growing desire to rejuvenate and revitalize, Greenery symbolizes the reconnection we seek with nature, one another and a larger purpose."

How can you bring this outdoor color into your home? Carefully, cautions Jennifer Jacob, a kitchen and bath designer with Builders' General Supply Company, who has 18 years' experience working with clients. "I would use it sparingly," said Jacob. She recommended starting with a neutral palette and adding in green as a focal point. "It goes nicely with browns, whites and grays," she said.

Jacob said she pays attention to the Pantone color trends and this year is no exception. She sees green showing up as accents, in a special cabinet or backsplash tile.

+ Stone, agrees that a kitchen backsplash is a good place to utilize the color green since it "visually pairs well with food." But it also works well in the bathroom, she said, where "shades of green evoke a fresh, clean feeling." Michael-Battaglia explained that commercial establishments like spas often use green because it is "known as a therapeutic color."

While Michael-Battaglia stays current on the Pantone trends, she notes that every client is different when it comes to their tile needs. "Green in general is a very fresh color and is always popular." Nemo Tile + Stone typically stocks the softer shades of the color, especially in glass and ceramic tiles, but they are happy to assist clients with bold color choices as well.

Home décor elements that are less permanent than tile or cabinetry can be a good way to incorporate green if you aren't sure of the color.

"Green has always been a strong color in interior design," said Virginia Tesi of Virginia Tesi Design. "In 2017 it is coming back strong, from lime green to emerald." Bold choices can work in a pillow or throw, or an accent chair or piece of art. Even when it is not the main color, explained Tesi, it is popular in botanical prints or wallpaper. "It's the color of life so it's hard to get away from it."

Tesi recommended adding green the natural way – bringing plants inside. "It's more important than ever to have live greenery in your home," she said. "As a designer, I have always used live plants to add to the esthetic of a room, layering behind a chair but leaning into the art behind it."

No matter how you choose to use it, green can be as welcome a color inside your home as it is in the outdoors. "It adds color, warmth and hominess," said Tesi. "Nothing else can do that so well."



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Katie Michael-Battaglia, design director for Nemo Tile



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GARDEN CONSULTING SERVICES GROW

AT ONE TIME only the wealthy could afford to hire talented individuals to design and maintain their property's gardens. But now, whether you're growing oregano or orchids, live on an estate or a quarter acre, personal gardening consultants are affordable and available to help your piece of nature look its best.

Garden consultants can design, create and even maintain garden and landscape beds, sharing their knowledge and horticultural skills.

Sickles Market in Little Silver introduced custom gardening services last year after identifying a potential demand among home and business owners. Their hunch was right on target. Many of their customers had a desire to maximize their outdoor living areas, but lacked basic gardening knowledge and/or the time to make it happen.

"It's all about getting the most out of their outdoor living areas," said Natale Siclair, garden lifestyle consultant at Sickles Market. "Whether they own a mansion or a small ranch or a business, it's all about making the owner smile each time they see the garden throughout the year." Siclair said he does not focus just on the warmer seasons either. When designing, he projects ahead and considers how the outdoor area will look in winter as well. "There are bushes and trees that have interesting barks and berries," he explained, saying that selecting the right plants gives year round color and interest.



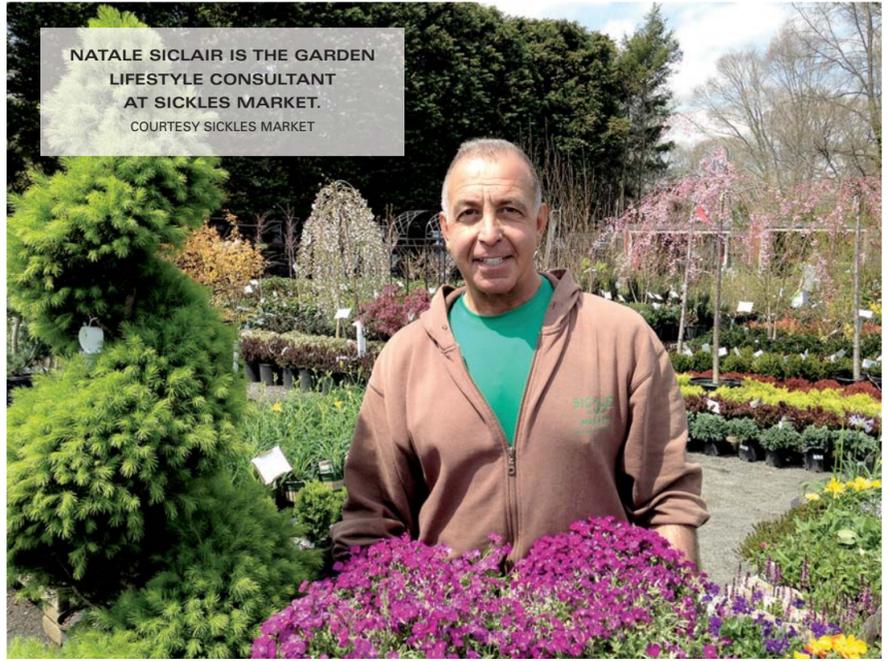
NIKOLE J. GHIRARDI

Customers who used the services say their homes and businesses are now more enjoyable and they have more time to relax with their friends and families.

"Sickles gardening makes it not only unique, but hassle-free," said Karen Piacentini, Rumson. Piacentini, a busy mother of two children, said she loves gardening but could not find the discretionary time to layout her perennial garden. Piacentini wanted the focus of her perennial flower garden to attract pollinators and to look different than a run-of-the-mill flower garden. "After a brief meeting with Natale where we discussed the goal and location of the garden. They installed it as the plants came and provided maintenance throughout the summer."

While some clients enjoy doing the work themselves and only need an overall game plan with a priorities guideline, others opt for garden experts to do all of the planning, installation and maintenance.

A much larger garden design undertaken by Siclair and his team was the campus beautifica-



NATALE SICLAIR IS THE GARDEN LIFESTYLE CONSULTANT AT SICKLES MARKET. COURTESY SICKLES MARKET

tion project at Red Bank Regional High School sponsored by the Buc Backer Foundation. President Carmelina MacPherson said the organization wanted to create a better environment for students, faculty, parents and community. Improvements were made at various focal points such as the entrance's center island, various signs and a back patio enjoyed by the students.

"We wanted to help support school pride but there was nothing special about the landscaping," said MacPherson. "Natale and his team helped us maximize our budget while giving our landscaping a much needed facelift. The kids love the improvements."

Garden experts identify plants in the client's landscape and their care, including pruning, fertilizing and plant maintenance. Services also include designing, installing and maintaining vegetable, perennial, herb or rose gardens, as well as interior plants and maintenance care.

In addition, they can help create outdoor living spaces featuring fountain and garden accents, or adding ponds and water features.

"Through a century of doing business, we have learned to adapt to the evolving needs of our customers' changing lifestyles," said Bob Sickles, owner. "Our customers put in long work weeks and it is important to have their homes and businesses comfortable and beautiful so on weekends they can focus on relaxing and spending time with friends and family."

Another gardening and landscape specialist, Tim Malone of Guaranteed Landscaping, Inc. in Middletown, helps clients set up indoor and outdoor gardens as well as greenhouses and says easy-to-care for floral gardens are always in demand.

Clients run the gamut from transplanted city dwellers to longtime gardeners who no longer have the time or desire to spend hours planting and pruning. Malone's service will suggest which plantings would fit best and where, and helps set them up with raised gardens, soil, irrigation and paths and fencing if needed.

Malone and other landscaping services can provide clients a full-service maintenance. With their Ever-Bloom Program, Malone and team will ensure a client's home is always adorned with the season's colors. "We help provide basic maintenance on people's gardens," said Malone, pruning and weeding on a regular basis. "There are a lot of rules of thumb for when is the proper time for pruning."

He finds that most homeowners prefer to tend to their own vegetable gardens. "I leave it up to the homeowners because I can't really maintain it for them," he said. And often the client's children get involved and enjoy growing the vegetables. But Malone will build beds, provide the potting soil, and make sure the garden is deer resistant.

No matter the size, scope or taste, a gardening consultant can find the right fit. "We'll make sure it fits them - their ability and their lifestyle," Malone said.



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IN THE GARDEN

GARDENERS CAN GET their hands dirty and enjoy nature throughout Monmouth County and beyond this spring. Here are a few of the offerings from local clubs and organizations to bring out the green thumb in everyone.

AMERICAN LITTORAL SOCIETY will host a beach grass planting event on Sandy Hook from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, April 1. Everyone is invited to help plant American beach grass on dunes in need of restoration at the South Maintenance Area. If possible, bring a stick or shovel to help with planting. Event will be held rain or shine. Dress for the weather.

littoralsociety.org, 732-291-0055, info@littoralsociety.org

Join **WATERSPIRIT** from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. April 1, at Stella Maris Retreat Center for Planting, Eating & Spirituality, a morning of interactive workshops about organic gardening, nutrition and cooking. \$15 per person, \$35 per family.

981 Ocean Ave, Long Branch, waterspirit.org/StellaMaris

The **MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM** is hosting a Gardening & Pruning Workshop from 9 a.m. to noon on Wednesday, April 5 at the Thompson Park Visitor Center, for prospective volunteers. The workshop is a great way to prepare for Drop-In Volunteer Days, gardening opportunities at various county parks where volunteers assist with pruning, weeding, planting, and more, at their convenience.

805 Newman Springs Road, Lincroft, 732-842-4000 ext. 4283

monmouthcountyparks.com

MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM is hosting several events at Deep Cut Gardens: A Daylily Seminar from 1:30 to 4 p.m. Sunday,

AMERICAN LITTORAL SOCIETY WILL HOST A BEACH GRASS PLANTING EVENT ON SANDY HOOK FROM 10 A.M. TO NOON SATURDAY, APRIL 1.

COURTESY ALS



April 9 where guests can learn how to hybridize daylilies and pick up other fascinating daylily culture tips as experts

share their knowledge and passion for gardening with daylilies. At the Great Spring Perennial Plant Swap from 8:30 a.m. to noon Saturday, April 22, guests can bring plants in 1-quart, 1-gallon or 2-gallon containers and take home the same size and number of plants. Please label all plants. Plant intake is from 8:30 to 10 a.m. And from 1 to 3 p.m. Saturday, April 29 you can Become a Garden Ambassador by spending a couple of hours touring the gardens and learning how to be a welcoming, informative presence on the grounds. Ages 18 and up are welcome. Please dress comfortably for a guided walk through the grounds.

152 Red Hill Road, Middletown, 732-842-4000 ext. 4283

monmouthcountyparks.com

The **DEEP CUT BONSAI SOCIETY** will hold a workshop exhibit for the public from 1 to 5 p.m. Monday, April 10 at Deep Cut Gardens. Members will work on bonsai trees and answer bonsai-related questions.

152 Red Hill Road, Middletown, deepcutbonsaiclub.org

Join the **NAVESINK GARDEN CLUB's** next monthly program will be held at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, April 11, at The Atrium featuring speaker Irene Wanat, Master Gardener, talking about shade gardens. The public is invited to attend free of charge. On Tuesday, May 9 join the club for a trip to Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania. Bus departs at 8 a.m. from the Whole Foods in Middletown with an expected return of 5:45 p.m. \$90 price includes one hour guided tour, voucher for lunch in The Café and free time to tour the gardens and gift shop.

40 Riverside Ave., Red Bank, navesinkgardenclub.org

The **LITTLE SILVER GARDEN CLUB's** next meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, April 13, at the Woman's Club on Rumson Road. On Friday, May 19 members and guests will travel to Meadowbrook Farm, affiliated with the Philadelphia Horticultural Society. The farm features 25 wooded acres with 15 small gardens to explore. The trip will also offer a private tour of the former owner's home with exquisite grounds and interiors. Trip includes bus transportation from Little Silver, all tours and admissions, and a gourmet boxed lunch. \$95 per person. Reservations required. Visitors and community members are welcome to attend.

732-643-8546, littlesilvergardenclub.com

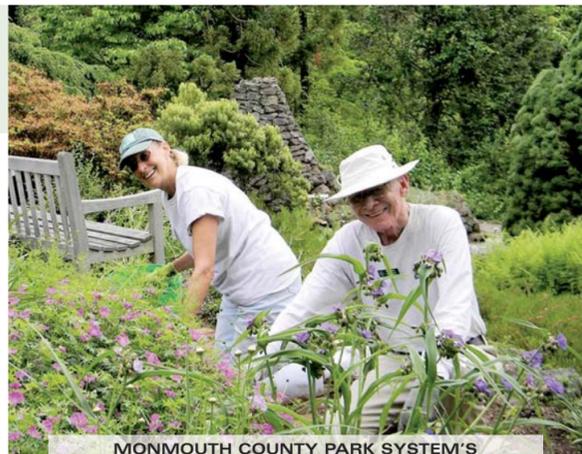
The **MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM** will host a Gardening, Pruning & Butterflies Workshop from 1 to 4 p.m. on Wednesday, April 19 at the Manasquan Reservoir Environmental Center, for prospective volunteers.

331 Georgia Tavern Road, Howell, 732-842-4000 ext. 4283

monmouthcountyparks.com

Lend a hand at the Fair Haven Fields Natural Area on **EARTH DAY** for trail cleanup, planting and more. Participants will meet at the community gardens at 9 a.m. on April 22 to pair off into teams with assignments. Please bring gloves, garden (hard) rakes, leaf rakes and spade shovels, if possible.

cro1972@gmail.com



MONMOUTH COUNTY PARK SYSTEM'S GARDENING & PRUNING WORKSHOP ON APRIL 5 AT THOMPSON PARK.

COURTESY MCPS

Members of the **GARDEN CLUB OF FAIR HAVEN** are prepping for the 2017 Annual Plant Sale on Mother's Day weekend, 4 to 7 p.m. Friday May 12 and 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 13 at the Fair Haven Fire House. The sale will feature member-grown perennials, unique specialty shrubs, lush hanging baskets, garden boutique and Master Gardener's help table.

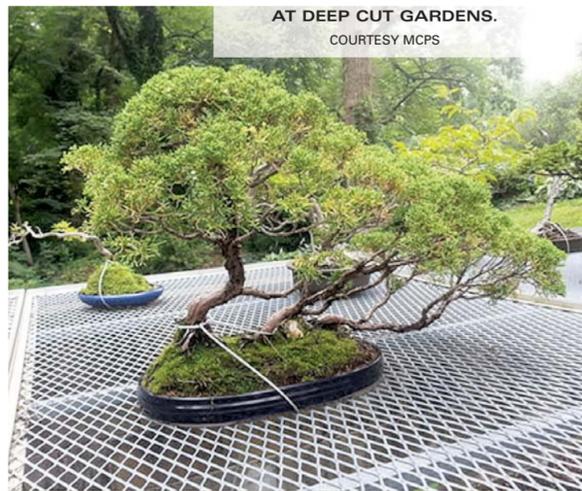
645 River Road, Fair Haven

GARDEN CLUB R.F.D., a member of Garden Club of New Jersey, the Central Atlantic Region and the National Garden Clubs, Inc., welcomes new members to share a love of gardening. The upcoming Annual Plant Sale May 12 and 13 will feature hydrangeas along with Lavender "Phenomenal," a plant that was named a "Must-Grow Perennial" by Better Homes & Gardens. In addition, a Master Gardener Help Desk will answer gardening questions.

951 Middletown Lincroft Road, Middletown, 973-452-4846

THE DEEP CUT BONSAI SOCIETY WILL HOLD A WORKSHOP EXHIBIT FOR THE PUBLIC APRIL 10 AT DEEP CUT GARDENS.

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MONARCH ON ASCLEPIAS



GOLDFINCH ON CONEFLOWER

GARDENING WITH NATIVE PLANTS

BY DAVID SAIDNAWEY

AS SPRING DRAWS near, gardeners everywhere become restless and start thinking about what to plant in their yards. If you're one of these people and are not familiar with the benefits of native plants, consider adding them to your garden planning this year. Here are some helpful hints for selecting plants that will attract hummingbirds, butterflies, backyard birds and other wildlife to your yard.

Some of you may be asking "Why native plants?" Native plants are great for the environment. They are the plants that grow naturally in the particular region where you garden. They're also what local wildlife depend on for survival, and don't require intense fertilization because you're planting them where they belong. Non-native plants often crowd out native plants and become invasive because the natural conditions that keep them in check just aren't present outside of their growing area.

Native plants include perennials, vines, grasses, shrubs and trees.

Here are a few perennial suggestions to help attract birds and wildlife to your yard.

First on that list are our beloved Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. These little jewels migrate to our area every April through October. One of their key food sources is nectar from flowers, although their diet also consists of spiders and spider eggs. Hummingbirds have long beaks and tongues to lap up nectar, so they prefer flowers that are tubular in shape. They are naturally attracted to red-colored flowers, although that includes a color range from orange to purple. Native perennials that attract hummingbirds include Bee Balm (Monarda), Cardinal Flower (Lobelia cardinalis), Columbine (Aquilegia) and native Honeysuckle (Lonicera sempervirens), to name a few.

You can also attract butterflies with native plants. Don't just think about adult butterflies when you think about plants to attract them. Caterpillars also require host plants for survival. Monarch butterfly caterpillars, for example, are completely dependent on Milkweed (Asclepias). Adult butterflies prefer flat-topped or clustered flowers, like Phlox, Swamp Milkweed (Asclepias tuberosa), Goldenrod (Solidago) and Blazing Star (Liatris), to name a few.

Birds like Goldfinches are also attracted to seed-producing plants in your garden. Purple Coneflower

(Echinacea purpurea) is a particular favorite.

Don't forget about native bees. They're natural pollinators that are facing a tough time for a number of reasons. Consider bee-friendly flowers like Anise Hyssop (Agastache).

Of course, this list only scratches the surface. If you want to learn more, visit a local nursery that specializes in native plants. Master Gardeners of Monmouth County, your local Garden Club, NJ Audubon and the Monmouth County Parks System are just a few of the many organizations that are here to help.

Native plants may take a little more effort to find, but be persistent. Your birds, butterflies and other wildlife will appreciate the efforts, and you're also doing a great thing for the environment.

David Saidnawey is the owner of Wild Birds Unlimited, Middletown. He has been an avid lover of birds and nature for more than 15 years.

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IT STARTED AS A GARDEN BUT BECAME A STEM

ATLANTIC HIGHLANDS – Ever since the Tiger Patch Learning Garden, commonly called the Tiger Patch, got its start in 2011 at Atlantic Highlands Elementary School (AHES), the program has been a student favorite.

Now, almost seven years later, garden time is coveted by parents, students, teachers and staff alike. It is used across all curricula, including the core STEM subjects – science, technology, engineering, and math. “The list of projects and programs that GoSprouts.org and the learning garden have brought to the school gets longer every year and we always look forward to the innovative ideas it brings to our students,” said school principal, Janet Walling.

For parents, Laurie Brekke and Hope Hanlon, co-founders of the nonprofit GoSprouts.org that launched the learning garden, a big catalyst in program ideas is their partnership with the Navesink Garden Club, who adopted GoSprouts.org as one of its junior gardening programs in 2013. Most recently, the garden club approached GoSprouts.org to see if they could

work with Atlantic Highlands Elementary School students to submit “creations” in the Garden Club of NJ flower show.

Brekke and Hanlon, who also sit on the board of the Navesink Garden Club, quickly saw that this project was a perfect opportunity marrying art, engineering and creative problem-solving. They then recruited art teacher Caroline Northrop to engage her 6th grade Challenge Art students to participate. The Navesink Garden Club sponsored the 14 participating 6th-grade students and also provided some direction and guidance on their floral designs after the students created Lego “containers.” The students enjoyed working in a more abstract medium and let loose their creativity. Their hard work paid off; they won four blue ribbons, four red ribbons, four white ribbons and two honorable mentions.

“The Navesink Garden Club has been instrumental in helping us expand our reach within AHES in a number of ways,” said Hanlon. “They introduced the American Littoral Society beach grass program to our 4th grade classes which we have continued to coordinate with science teacher, Mrs. Dana Bellantoni, for the past four years and this year, one of their members has procured a donation of organic seeds for our spring garden planting.”

Navesink Garden Club member Gotti Kelly also encouraged the school to submit its learning garden to the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society 2016 Gardening & Greening Contest, where they won a coveted Blue Ribbon among more than 300 entries. “These women are phenomenal and we would be lost without them,” said Hanlon about the garden club members. “Every season we look for unique seeds or varieties of plants that would be interesting or fun for the kids. Whether it’s sizes, colors, shapes – we change it up every season. The seeds that we are choosing this year will allow for the students to design and build structures and trellises to support their growth. We’re hoping to create a ‘STEM challenge’ between the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th graders to see which structure can elicit the most crops. This is where education meets play and that’s where we definitely see our students thrive.”

GoSprouts.org is also working

with technology teacher Patti Shea to install a certified Monarch Waystation. Waystations provide resources necessary for monarch butterflies to produce successive generations and sustain their migration. The Navesink Garden Club has also recently installed a certified Monarch Waystation at the Monmouth Museum, providing another opportunity to partner with the school.

Shea hopes to take her students to see the installation and gather critical input from the garden club on how to make her students’ garden a success. Her goal is for the waystation to not only teach students about the importance of Monarch butterflies, but also to allow for more cross-curricular teaching across STEM subjects. “The potential for my students to use the Waystation is enormous,” said Shea. “I’m working on a plan to have students do research and help provide input on a grant application. They could also track sunlight and other data to determine the best location for the waystation. When we include the students in projects from end-to-end, it gives them a unique sense of ownership.”

Superintendent Susan Compton realizes the benefits of the learning garden. “The Tiger Patch resonates with our teachers as it helps cross boundaries from structured learning to more hands-on, self-directed activities,” she said. “The students work individually or in teams, depending on the project, and the garden provides an opportunity for the students to strengthen their creative problem-solving skills. They also have the added benefit of working in an engaging outdoor learning environment. This alternate location gives the students a chance to ‘re-set’ if you will, and our teachers see the long-lasting benefits indoors. That’s something that few other schools can say.”

The Tiger Patch continues to be run entirely by parent volunteers and financially supported through fundraising, plant sales and PTO donation; there is no expense to the school or community.



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