



## Feed Fannin News

*One Community, One Spirit*

Feed Fannin, Inc.

Fall 2017

### Feed Fannin helps our community throughout the year



If the Ada Street Farm is the heart of Feed Fannin, then our volunteers are its soul.

Feed Fannin began eight years ago with one simple vision—to grow vegetables to help feed the hungry in Fannin County. A group of friends got together, and that's what they did. From that humble seed, Feed Fannin has grown.

Now that the fall harvest is underway, you might think the volunteers of Feed Fannin are looking forward to

resting on their laurels until spring rolls around but that's not the case—with Feed Fannin, helping the community is a year-round job.

You see, growing vegetables to feed the hungry is just a part of what Feed Fannin does to make a difference. Throughout the winter months, our volunteers will be working in other ways to help our Fannin County neighbors.

We'll be helping the Family Connection Food Pantry by collecting and buying food, raising money and working at the pantry to supply food to needy families and individuals.

Our Education Committee will be planning programs and lining up speakers for our adult education series to teach folks about growing, preserving and preparing food and other garden related topics.

Feed Fannin volunteers will be assisting our local elementary schools with their youth gardening programs throughout the school year.

Our community garden volunteers will be cleaning and prepping the raised gardening beds at the Ada Street Farm that we rent at low cost to people to grow their own food.

Other volunteers will be planning and preparing for our annual Bowls of Hope fundraiser in the spring.

As for the Ada Street Farm, there are still crops to harvest and a winter cover crop to plant. Then the garden volunteers will start planning for next year's garden.

The volunteers of Feed Fannin are a diverse group of people from different backgrounds and different skills. But they have one goal: to give back to their community. Without them, Feed Fannin would not exist.

If you would like to help us help others, check out the contact information on the back of this handout. Come play in the dirt with us. *K*

### The Garden Club at Blue Ridge Elementary

"If you build it they will come" may be from the movie *A Field of Dreams*, but is has also proven true for the Cool Kids Grow Garden Club and other STEM-based programs at Blue Ridge Elementary School. Generous donations from Feed Fannin have helped to build 21 raised beds at the school. Seventeen of them have been planted with cool weather vegetables or are teeming with berries, annuals and perennials from the spring season before.

Applications for the club were taken in mid-August. Forty-six students vied for 15 spots in the garden club. A random lottery was held to pick the club members.



A garden class at BRES

Nutrition themes are woven into our program whether we are studying science, language or math in the garden. When students grow fruits and vegetables for themselves, they are much more likely to enjoy eating them. They are exposed to healthy snacks prepared by our volunteers.

Students begin the school year by planting the autumn crop and using the crops in lessons. They learn about pollinators from experts in butterflies and bees.

They visit Merciers' Orchard and are taught about growing new plants from seed, grafting or budding.

They nurture their gardens throughout the fall and winter (See next page)



Thank you Feed Fannin volunteers for all you do for Feed Fannin and for your community!

### Blue Ridge Elementary

until it's time to harvest. Students gain a keen appreciation for where their food comes from, and the children come to understand that they need proper nutrition and care themselves, just as their plants do. They learn how humans are dependent on plants and plants in turn are very dependent on pollinators and other beneficial insects. When they feast upon the food they grew, they also learn that they actually do like fruits and vegetables.

Whatever the subject, it comes to life in the hands-on



Young gardeners

environment of a school garden. Students come to see the relationship between effort and reward. They get to see that problems can be solved with perseverance. If a heat wave comes and causes your lettuce to bolt, that's not a permanent failure; you rip it out, put it in the compost bin and plant again.

In this age of fast-moving technology and virtual knowledge, kids need to get their hands in the dirt. They need to be grounded, you might say, and taught the ways of nature. The garden club gives a lifelong skill or hobby. It provides them with a profound and lasting sense of the majesty of nature and a reverence for the sanctity of life.

✍️ Kate George

## A challenging year for the Ada Street Farm garden

They say that adversity makes you stronger because it makes you adapt and find what you are capable of doing. If this is true, then I would say that gardening this year has taught us a few lessons. What we have lacked in numbers, we made up for in consistent energy and effort.

The failed well attempt in early spring left us with a drainage problem and forced us to delay our initial plantings. An extremely wet spring further extended the delays, and wet soil resulted in rotting squash and cucumbers, beetles and disease that caused wilt, and corn smut.

The changes in the wooded areas surrounding the garden left woodland critters looking for new homes, and our garden proved to be quite popular. In case you have wondered, YES, ground hogs do eat cabbage! They ravaged our cabbage, and we had very little cabbage to give to the pantry. On the positive side, no ground hogs went hungry! Oh, by the way, ground hogs like sweet potato vines too!

All these challenges affected our yield of produce. But we have fought back with second crops of squash, cucumbers, corn, cabbage and pumpkins. We are still harvesting second crops and have 1200 sweet potato plants yet to harvest in mid-October. Our Forge Mill garden partners will also be harvesting their sweet potatoes soon. This will add large numbers to our final total which currently is around 3,000 lbs.

When the harvest is finally over, we will till the soil and add compost according to any requirements revealed by soil testing. For those of you not familiar, we provide a garden layout each year to NRCS and comply with its rotation requirements as part of our organic gardening plan. We are working on ways to address some of this year's challenges as we plan our crop placement for 2018.

I am grateful for those volunteers who managed to work a day or a few days in the garden this year, but I am extremely proud of a very few dedicated volunteers who managed to persevere through the garden challenges this sum-

mer. Their positive attitudes, sheer determination and stubbornness to admit defeat kept the garden growing in spite of the obstacles.

Some may consider this a failed year but I consider it a success because we were challenged beyond our knowledge and often beyond our physical ability. Yet we pressed on, studied, researched and experimented in order to adapt. We did our best in spite of the conditions.

We learned so much! A constant reminder of WHY we do what we do and WHY we have a garden has been our focus. We showed up three days a week at the garden to work harder than ever for six months. That is commendable! Produce was taken to the food pantry 2-3 times per week.

This level of commitment is such a great example to the community as well as tourists who see us working as they pass by on the train. We hosted the FFA volunteers when they came to work in the garden, and we look forward to working with our new neighbors even more in the future.

Bravo to ALL the garden volunteers! You are the greatest group of friends and the hardest working people with the biggest hearts! A harvest celebration in honor of all volunteers is being planned for late October following the harvest.

Time will tell how the sweet potato harvest will impact our produce totals this year.

Thank you to Feed Fannin members, friends, and partners such as Faith Presbyterian and their Forge Mill Garden and Cherry Log Christian Church garden and Jim and Meredith

Yacavone for their produce contributions. I would invite all of you to plan now to plant a few rows, a raised bed or a few containers next year on behalf of Feed Fannin for donation to Family Connection Food Pantry.

Thank you to everyone who offered encouragement and moral support. We hope to see YOU at the harvest celebration and in the garden in 2018.

✍️ Kathy Beck, Garden Coordinator



Kathy Beck and Guy Gooch discuss the finer points of tractor driving



FFA volunteers helping in the garden

*Come play in the dirt with us!*

## New programs, Master Gardener collaboration on tap for Education Committee for 2018

The Feed Fannin Education Committee held two very successful classes in August and early September, continuing the Feed Fannin mission to inform, educate and train members of the public who want to learn to be more self-sufficient in growing, preserving and preparing their own food. Over the summer, the committee also began to cultivate plans for an exciting collaboration between Feed Fannin and the North Georgia Master Gardeners.

On August 12, 15 people gathered to hear a very informative talk on "Organic Pest Management" given by Russell Honderd, who started and runs the King of Crops farm owned by Atlanta popsicle company King of Pops in Winston, Ga. Honderd, who cares for a mix of annual fruits and vegetables, perennial canes and bushes used to make the popular icy gourmet King of Pops treats, discussed the pros and cons of various organic treatments for pests, barriers, deterrents and traps, and also which insects and microbes are beneficial to growing plants.

Dr. David Busch presented a program on "Winter Gardens" that was attended by 25 people on Sept. 9 at the University of North Georgia Blue Ridge campus. Participants received some very interesting handouts on what to plant when for fall/winter gardens in the Southern Appalachians and planting in tune with the phases of the moon. Dr. Busch discussed which plants are hardy and which ones require more protection from the cold than others, as well as winter chores that will set the stage for spring gardens. He also described how to plant corn in February that will be ready to pick and eat in June.

The Education Committee's last class of 2017 was held on Oct. 7. With the summer gardening season over, Feed Fannin founding member Zora Ugolini Herr led a workshop on "How to Build a Scarecrow" at the Ada Street Farm for anyone wanting to decorate their homes or businesses for the fall. Zora's assortment of fabulous adult and juvenile scarecrows were displayed on the Feed Fannin float in this year's Fourth of July Parade in Blue Ridge—she is very talented at making these creations.

Meanwhile, the committee is already hard at work planning at least six different classes for 2018. In February or March, Ginger Montgomery of Quinn's Nursery will be back for another presentation sure to inspire participants to rev



Zora Herr teaching a class on how to build scarecrows

up their preparations for spring planting. Also on tap throughout the spring, summer and early fall are programs on everything from growing berries, herb gardening and gardening for older adults to more about winter gardening.

This past August, the Education Committee met with the North Georgia Master Gardeners to discuss joining forces to help educate local residents on gardening related matters. The Master Gardeners will be presenting two classes about using native plants for your home landscaping.

For several years, Feed Fannin has worked with the Master Gardeners to collect and save vegetable seeds to provide to local gardeners through a display at the Fannin County Public Library.

Feed Fannin offers these classes to the public for free, though we do ask for a small donation of money or canned food which we donate to the Family Connection Food Pantry.

We're looking forward to an exciting series of educational programs in 2018. If you would like to become a Feed Fannin volunteer and help with our educational programs, please contact us at 706-946-1001 and leave a message. We promise we'll get back to you.

*Diane Payne*

## Feed Fannin at the Fourth of July Parade



**Be a Feed Fannin Volunteer and help us help others**



## Two Great Ways to Keep Up With Feed Fannin

Facebook

Our Website



**Feed Fannin**  
 Founded in 2009, Feed Fannin is a volunteer organization working together to educate and encourage our community towards self-sufficiency while providing food for those in need. We are committed to eliminating hunger in Fannin County and the Cooper Basin.  
**Key Activities**  
 Our diverse group of volunteers apply their time and energy to help Feed Fannin through:



You can also help by donating to Feed Fannin



### Feed Fannin Gift Form

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Would you like to be added to our email list to receive information about Feed Fannin? Y\_\_\_\_\_ N\_\_\_\_\_

Amount of gift donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Need a tax receipt? Y\_\_\_\_\_ N\_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to:  
 Feed Fannin, Inc

Mail form and donation to:  
 Feed Fannin  
 P O Box 1085  
 Blue Ridge, GA 30513

**YOUR GIFT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!**

**Feed Fannin Inc.**  
 P O Box 1085  
 Blue Ridge, GA 30513  
 Phone: 706-946-1001  
 (Leave message)  
 Chair: Connie Galloway  
 Email: feedfannin@gmail.com  
 Website: feedfannin.com

### OUR MISSION

*Working together to educate and encourage our community towards self-sufficiency while providing food for those in need.*

### OUR PROGRAMS

**Ada Street Farm** – We grow food at our Ada Street Farm and elsewhere to feed the hungry in Fannin County.

**Community Garden** – We also manage a community garden at the Ada Street Farm that provides space for local residents to grow fruits and vegetables.

**Food Pantry** – We support the Food Pantry by providing volunteer workers, food, and money to mitigate the costs of feeding the hungry in Fannin County.

**Adult Education Classes** – We provide information, education, and training to those who want to learn to be more self-sufficient in growing, preserving, and preparing their own food.

**Youth Education** – We support and help fund gardening programs in the Fannin County elementary schools.

### Be a Feed Fannin Volunteer

If you're into helping your community and having fun we would love to have you join us! We need your help more than ever. You don't have to like gardening to be part of Feed Fannin. There are many other ways you can help our mission and our programs.

To volunteer, contact Barbara Ferer at feedfannin@gmail.com or call (706) 946-1001 and leave a message. If you would like to speak with our Chair, Connie Galloway, call (706) 946-1001 and leave a message.



### Remember Feed Fannin in Your Future Plans

You can remember Feed Fannin when you make a bequest of assets in a will or trust, which could be a specific amount of money or assets, a percentage of the money or assets, or the residual money or assets of the estate. Ask us about it by emailing us at feedfannin@gmail.com or calling us at (706) 946-1001 and leaving a message.