



Florida Master Gardener Awards of Excellence Instructions

Each county is allowed one entry per category. Although your Master Gardener Coordinator may have been heavily involved in this effort, only the efforts of the Master Gardeners themselves are to be evaluated. Points will be deducted if it is perceived that most of the effort or submission of entry forms came from the Master Gardener Coordinator.

Only efforts made **between August 1, 2013 and August 1, 2015** will be considered by the judges. Only new or re-certified active Florida Master Gardeners are eligible. In the event your entry does not take top honors in this category this year, we would encourage you to improve your submission and resubmit your entry again should you *repeat or continue* this project. If your project has won in **any** year, it **cannot be re-entered** again, despite any significant changes in format or participants.

Judges for the awards shall be appointed by the State Master Gardener Coordinator, University of Florida. Decisions by the judges will be final.

ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN ELECTRONIC FORMAT IN THE FOLLOWING MANNER:

- Application form, photos and supporting materials must all be in PDF format and packaged into one document.
- Entry Form
 - 1 form per entry
 - Typed
 - Signed by Master Gardener Coordinator
 - Appropriate category checked
- Award Application
 - 12-point font
 - NOT to exceed 3 pages in length (must include 150-word project executive summary)
 - Supporting materials (where requested) are not included in the 3 page limit
 - No more than 8 photographs in addition to 3 pages of text

Please complete and return this entry form by **August 1, 2015** to Wendy Wilber.



Florida Master Gardener Awards of Excellence Entry Form

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY AUGUST 1, 2015.

County	Sumter	Project Name	North Sumter County Community Garden at UCC @ The Villages
Project Start Date	Fall 2014	Project End Date	June 2015
Project Master Gardener(s)	Peggy Reineking, Diane Reynolds, Nick Brown, Larry Boyce, Greg Hill, Rich Selvar, Mary Ellen Brown, Karen Dempsey, Peggy Fisher, Anne Grewe, Kathy Morelock, Janice Niccolai, Jean Powell, Theresa Ratti, Stephen Turnipseed, Cindy Vinarski and Robert Williams		

CATEGORY: Indicate only one category per entry form. You must assign your entry to a specific category to be considered for an award in that category. Entries are limited to the categories indicated below.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Beautification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal Communications
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Demonstration Garden	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Service to 4-H and Other Youth
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Educational Materials Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diversity
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	County Displays/Exhibits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communications
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outstanding Master Gardener Team
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Outstanding Master Gardener**	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Review the applicable category entry form for exceptions to the general submittal rules above.

Below completed by the County Master Gardener

I approve the submittal of this project: <small>North Sumter County Community Garden at UCC @ The Villages</small>		
Jim E. Davis		July 31, 2015
Master Gardener Coordinator Printed Name	Master Gardener Coordinator Signature	Date

Please complete and return this entry form in PDF form by **August 1, 2015** to Wendy Wilber.



Florida Master Gardener Awards of Excellence Diversity and Inclusion

This award category recognizes projects that target a special public with respect to age, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, spiritual practice, and other human differences. The major difference between this category and the others is the emphasis on targeting the public's demographics (e.g., age, sex, racial group membership), psychographics (e.g., likes and dislikes, values, beliefs), and preferred means of receiving information (e.g., radio, community newspaper, in a language other than English).

See the Award of Excellence Instructions for submission rules. For this award application, cover the following in your 3-page narrative.

- Summary (5 points)
 - A descriptive summary of your project. Your application will NOT be judged without this summary included.
 - Provide a list of all Master Gardeners who participated in this project and their roles.
- Scope of Project (20 points)
 - Who were the target audiences who might benefit from this project? List community partners if applicable. Provide the budget for the project. Describe the problem or opportunity you faced (e.g., non-English speaking people displaced by natural disaster) and the strategies you used (e.g., targeted media, positive message, spokespersons, collaboration) to address those problems or opportunities.
- Accuracy and Clarity (20 points)
 - Project is clear and accurate and citations provided.
- Educational Value (25 points)
 - How was the educational message used in the horticulture program? How many times was the educational message used (examples: copies distributed, website page views)?
- Outcome (20 points)
 - How many people participated in the project and what were their duties? Provide a written account with pictures (optional). Describe the publicity received. How was the project distributed? What was the potential impact on the community or audience? How did you evaluate this program? Did the audience participate in any other extension programs?
- Learnings (10 points)
 - Describe any challenges you encountered or things you might change if you were to do the project again.

**Master Gardeners Build a New Community Garden:
North Sumter County Community Garden at UCC @ The Villages**

Summary: In 2014, three Sumter County Master Gardeners launched a community garden with 40 raised plots in collaboration with the local United Church of Christ near The Villages, a community of 100,000+ seniors migrated from northern states. The Church's welcome to all, including the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community, extended to the gardeners. Although MG leaders encountered start-up obstacles in sponsorship and promotion, there were 85 seniors on the waiting list when the first plots were assigned in October 2014. Twenty Sumter County Master Gardeners helped build the garden along with an equal number of community volunteers. The initial ten-month gardening season yielded an estimated 4,000 pounds of vegetables, grown under UF/IFAS principles. Since the garden began, all three local newspapers have run feature stories on the garden. Moving into the second gardening year, 40 gardeners are developing friendships and taking ownership for much of the maintenance of this community garden. **Leadership:** Nicholas Brown, Peggy Reineking Diane Reynolds

Equipment and Transportation: Larry Boyce, Greg Hill, Rich Selvar

Workday Workers: Mary Ellen Brown, Karen Dempsey, Peggy Fisher, Anne Grewe, Kathy Morelock, Janice Niccolai, Jeanne Powell, Theresa Ratti, Stephen Turnipseed, Cindy Vinarski Robert Williams

Scope of Project: One of the project's Master Gardener (MG) leaders, Peggy Reineking, moved to The Villages in late 2013 and joined the 210-member United Church of Christ (UCC) congregation. Almost all of the church members are seniors, and live in The Villages. This congregation opens each service with, "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here". As a result, the congregation is racially-integrated and a third of the members are members of the LGBT community.

Many of the 100,000+ "active adults" in The Villages are experienced and passionate gardeners, but generally unfamiliar with Florida vegetable gardening, and their small manicured lots don't support this. In early 2014, there were no community gardens within 20 miles of The Villages where individuals could grow their own food. Thus, there was an unmet need for gardening education and space.

While undergoing training as a MG in spring 2014, Peggy realized that the five acres of unused flat pasture in full sun behind the UCC church had great potential for a community garden. The pasture was near a connection to the well the Church used for landscape watering. Another MG, Nick Brown, was the Chair of the Sumter County Community Garden Committee, with experience running two other community gardens. Peggy's MG classmate, Diane Reynolds, was also interested in developing a garden. Together, Nick, Peggy and Diane made up a MG Planning Team.

The Church leaders were pleased to allow a community garden to use its land and well water, with the assumption that the funding would come from other sources. The Church attached no religious requirements, and accepted all gardeners as part of the Church's own family. This allows the community garden to freely use the Church facilities for educational meetings and potluck dinners. In addition, the Church helps the garden manager with its financial accounts, "firewalling" the garden funds from the church's operating funds.

Initially, it was challenging to get the newspapers interested in our press releases since the garden had not yet proven itself. However, *The Villages-News*, an online publication, ran a press release in August 2014. Within two weeks the MG Planning Team had more than 80 people on the waiting list for a plot.

The MG Planning Team looked for funding with local merchants, and initially that didn't bear much fruit. In August 2014, we received our first grant from the local Walmart (\$500), and promises of deep discounts from Home Depot. The Sumter County Master Gardeners provided funding for the irrigation and plot materials (\$2,000), and a church member donated funding for the fence (\$2,400). A local tree farm donated soil, and the local utility company delivered wood chips for weed control at no cost. The National UCC organization in Cleveland, Ohio gave a grant (\$700) through their Neighbors in Need program. With these funds, and \$35 annual user fees/plot for the 40 plots (\$1,400 total), we had enough funds to proceed.

Community Garden Start-Up Budget 2014

Pressure treated 2x6 and 4x4 lumber for 40 beds	\$2000
Galvanized screws	100
Hauling (mileage) for donated soil to fill 40 beds	100
Irrigation extension from the church's well, 3 standpoints, double spigots	1500
Perimeter fence	2100
Garden sign with artist-donated garden logo and sponsors' logos	180
Mulch donated by utility company	0
Total start-up costs for	Just under \$6000

Outcome: Our plan was to build 20 plots in a first phase in fall 2014, and a second group of 20 in January 2015. In September, 2014 we had the Church's irrigation vendor bring three water standpipes into their planned locations in the pasture.

We announced the first workday, Friday, October 27, a few weeks in advance to the plot holders, and all 80 Sumter County MGs. Workers were encouraged to bring tools. Home Depot delivered lumber to the garden early on the workday. A combined 35 MGs and community volunteers built the first 20 frames, one-by-one, carried each to its place in the garden, and filled each with soil. The whole process took about four hours. *The Villages-News* ran this story.

The first 20 gardeners began to plant in October 2014. The fence was installed at that time. Harvesting was underway by the end of 2014.

On January 9, 2015 we held the second workday. About 50 volunteers, including 20 MGs, helped build 20 additional plot frames, a frame for plants in hanging buckets, and six compost bins. By invitation of the MG Planning Team, *The Villages Daily Sun*, *The Villages-News*, and the *Sumter County Times* all sent reporters and photographers to this workday, and *The Villages Daily Sun* and *Sumter County Times* ran stories.

As of June 2015, 60 individuals are actively gardening in the 40 plots; all are seniors, and about a fifth of them are octogenarians. Several are lesbians, and several are foreign-born. The Church's 210 mostly-senior members are proud supporters. The Church always shares press opportunities with the garden.

We estimate that entire garden produced 4,000 pounds of vegetable in the 2014-15 growing season. In July the gardeners cleaned up the plots, to recommence on September 11, 2015.

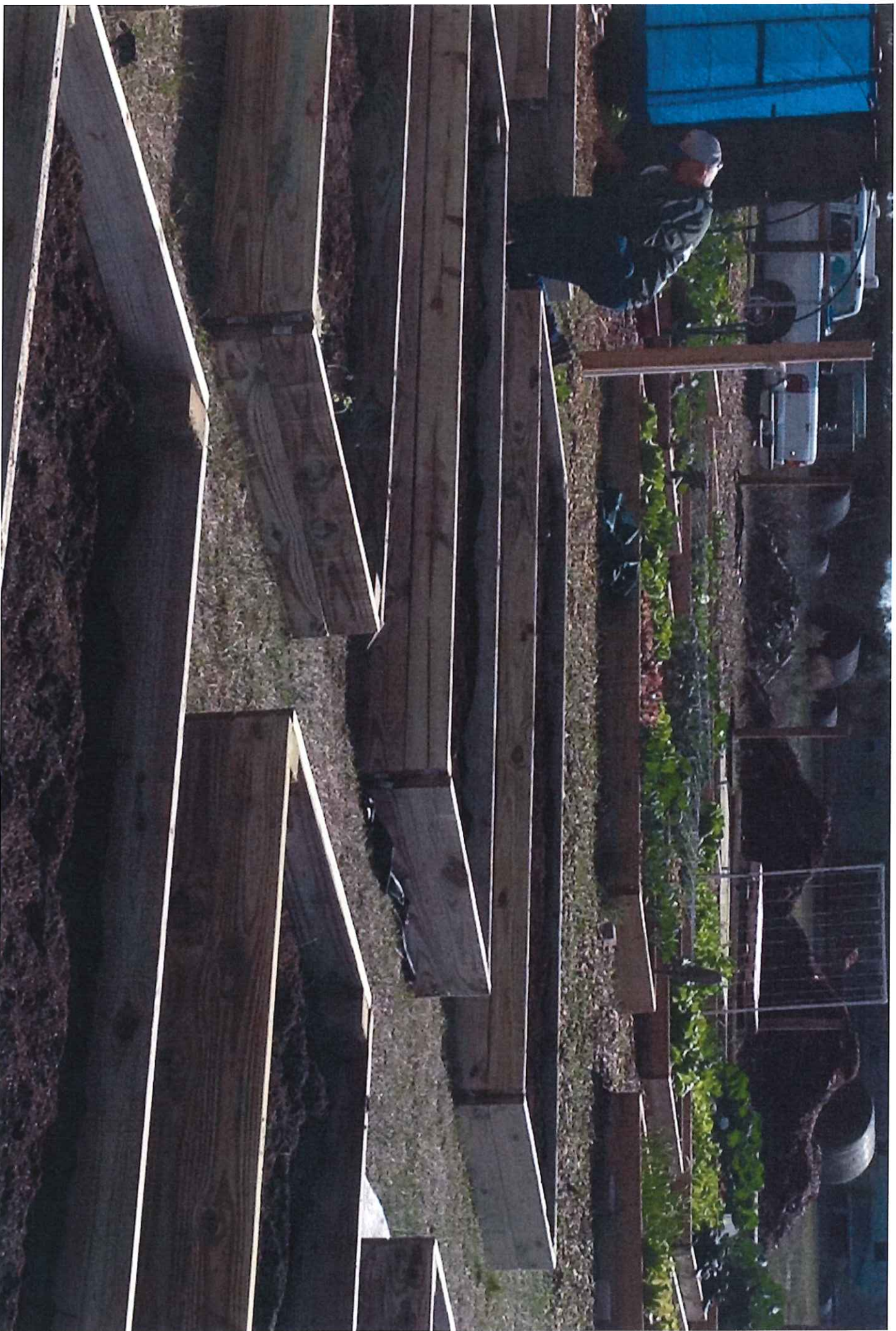
Educational Value: MGs provided training to community gardeners several ways. First we handed out copies of the Sydney Park Brown et al vegetable table at three education meetings. Nick Brown also created five MG demonstration plots where he grew a wide range of vegetables in a number of different soil-enriching media. In addition, the MGs taught gardeners to contribute to compost and manage it. MGs taught and lead the gardeners in barrier and chemical weed control strategies.

Several participating community gardeners attended the Sumter County Ask the Master Gardener sessions on vegetable gardening featuring Lesroy Samuels, a popular local credentialed agriculturalist.

Learnings:

1. Proactively inviting all of the local newspapers to our biggest workdays has been very successful in getting us publicity.
2. The community gardeners would like even more education. Lesroy Samuels has consented to be the NSCCG Advisor for the 2015-16 gardening year, and we hope to have monthly learning sessions, open to the public, using the garden as a lab.
3. We need to be sure potential community gardeners, especially seniors, are fully informed before they are assigned a plot. Gardening in Florida is not physically easy.
4. Because we have seniors, we need to create small teams to look out for each other in case of absence. The teams can also maintain an assigned part of the common area.

NSCCG Phases 1 and 2 January 2015



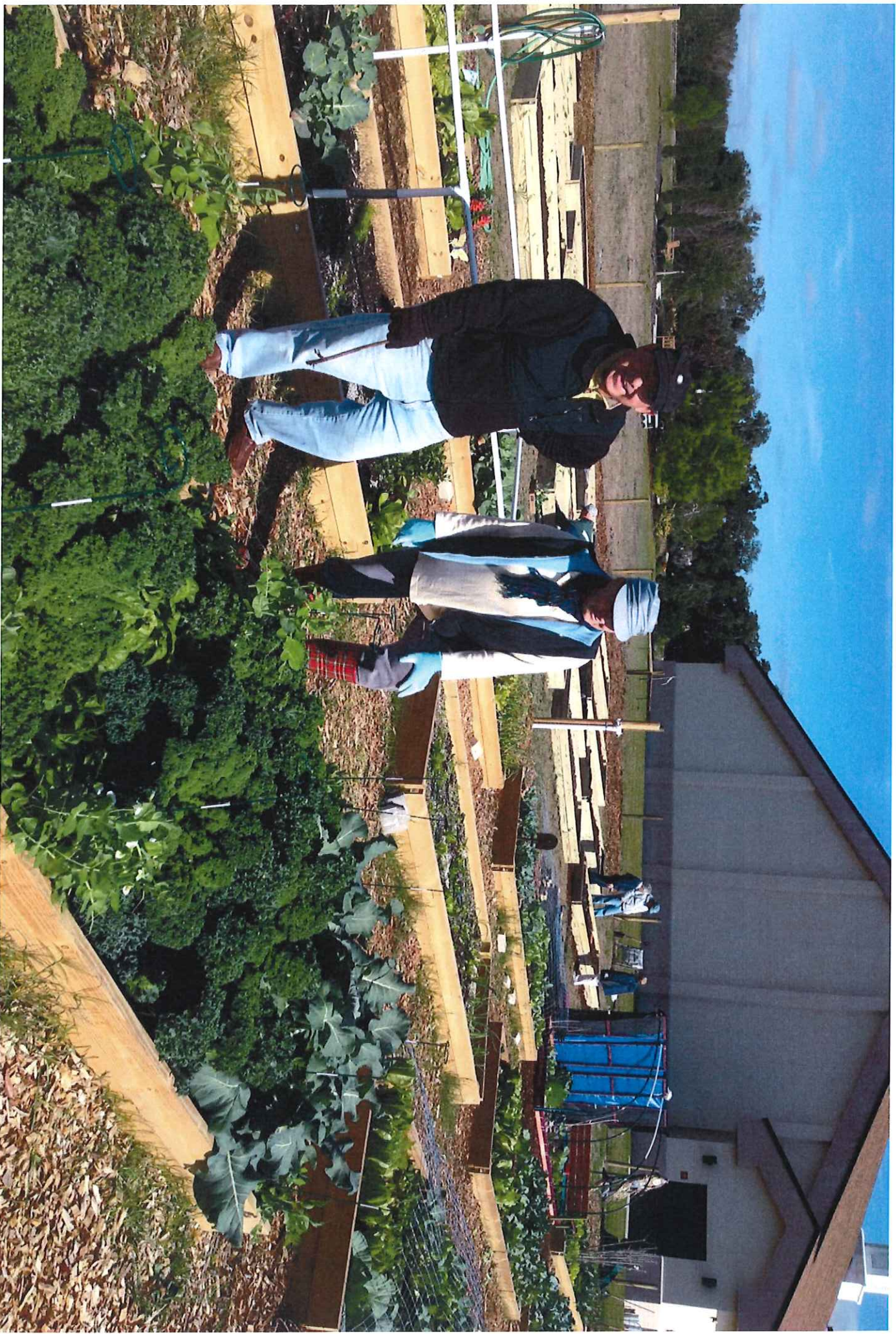
Peggy Reineking & Rich Selvar Phase 2 Jan. 2015



Community Gardeners Phase 2 Jan. 2015



Happy NSCCG Gardeners Jan. 2015



Pastor Blesses NSCCG and Gardeners January 2015

