



Gardens for Humanity

Our mission is to develop and share our relationships with Humanity and Nature through gardening, art, and education.

November 2022

Dear Members and Friends,



When a child excitedly exclaims, “I will never look at a flower the same way again!” you know something has changed within them. The act of carefully observing is the key to knowledge. When knowledge evokes emotion it is transformative – it is a small awakening!

This year we have started a series of *Learning Garden Classes and Clubs* that stimulate this awakening. Our garden and art coordinators, Sarah Grover and Joan Bourque, with their team of garden and art teachers, provide activities where children are free to explore with their hands, senses, minds, and hearts. Gardens and art are fun ways of involving children to take the time to observe, nurture, experience, enjoy new life unfolding, and examine it closely.



“I feel so happy when we talk about gardens, flowers, butterflies – and making the artwork makes me so peaceful!” – 4th grade student



Our programs for kids support our mission to *develop and share our relationships with Humanity and Nature through gardening, art, and education*. Through working in the garden, creating multi-media art, exploring music, acting in skits, and making poems and stories about Nature and gardens, kids experience the joy of seeing something as if for the first time. This changes the way they see themselves and the world.

“I amazed myself that I could write poetry, and I was so happy to learn about pollination!” – 5th grade



Partnerships, Sponsorships, and Mentorships: *Gardens for Humanity* provides a leadership role in the growing movement to revive and encourage local food production. As a member of the *Verde Valley Food Policy Council*, we are helping lay the foundation, values, and priorities for a secure local food system. We mentor home and community gardens, central to this movement.

Our current projects include:

- *Art and Environmental Education*
- *School Gardens in Sedona and the Verde Valley*
- *Verde Valley Seed Library*
- *Sustainability Education and Teacher Training*
- *Community Gardens*
- *Verde Thumbs Garden Club*
- *Handicapped Accessible Garden Designs*
- *Local Food System Strategies and Policies*

Sustainability, the health of our environment, and solutions to climate change are all intertwined with where our food comes from. Through the *Sustainability Alliance* we are a strong voice for creating a just, healthy, and fair food system. We advocate growing and choosing food that makes a positive impact on land use, water, energy, and ecosystems; regenerates the soil and habitat; and respects traditions.

Verde Valley Seed Library: In 2015 we started the seed library with our board member Janice Montgomery, founder of the *Verde Thumbs*. The collection now has many seed packets with seeds grown, saved, and shared by local gardeners. These highlight beloved varieties that are successful and adapted to our region. The packets are labeled with where they were grown, creating a virtual “seed map” of our region. The library is thriving with more visitors each month contributing to a vital gardening community.



The Verde Thumbs Garden Club:

We serve as a sponsor for this community of gardeners that shares the challenges and joys of gardening in the high desert. Through monthly gatherings and a large and active Facebook group they are a source of passion, learning, and useful tips for novice and master gardener alike. The club is a source of knowledge, encouragement, and friendship.

We are grateful to the many supporters who have helped *Gardens for Humanity* to create, fund, improve, and maintain our gardens, art and education programs. Join us and continue to plant seeds for the future by making your donation online or in the envelope provided. Visit <http://gardensforhumanity.org/donate/> to donate securely online.

With warm regards,

Richard Sidy, President

