

Planning a Harvest Walkabout

How we did it: After soliciting interest within our neighborhood (we suggest email, Yahoo Group, flyer distribution, etc.), we put together a team to organize the event and mapped out the following tasks:

1. Determine date and time for the event [our area was defined as within the boundaries of the neighborhood association].
2. Create event description/invitations to send to neighbors via Yahoo Group (*see page 2*).
3. Find hosts for 2-3 refreshment stations.
4. Find cul-de-sac or space for final gathering area.
5. Solicit donations/raffle prizes from local garden shops.
6. Contact local farm stands/community gardens about participating.
7. Collect brochures, flyers and other items of interest for 'building community' table.
8. Create map highlighting donor and refreshment stops.
9. Create downloadable (PDF) sign for garden donations, post on association website.
10. Ask for a tentative head count/RSVP for walkers and donors.
11. If necessary, purchase beverages [water, iced tea, lemonade, juice boxes] and snacks [in the end, all were homemade, including lemonade and iced tea].
12. Contact local newspaper about media coverage.
13. Invite local senior centers or convalescent homes. [Idylwood contacted us; we recommend your reaching out to them!]
14. Invite local city council.
15. Print signs, pick produce, set up driveway stands and community table(s).
16. Solicit feedback from neighbors [what went well, what could be improved] – offer raffle prizes for all feedback entries.
17. ENJOY the fruits of the harvest and fellowship with neighbors!

harvest walkabout

Please join us for another Italian-style 'passeggiata', a walk through Cherryhill Neighborhood to socialize with neighbors and share some of the bounty from our gardens.

Bring a bag or basket and join a progressive afternoon stroll at (___ location) or make ad hoc visits to marked 'bounty' stations in the neighborhood to collect home-grown veggies and fruits for your evening dinner or the next day's lunch. Garden offerings will be found on participating neighbors' front driveways so be sure to look for canopies, umbrellas, blankets and tables featuring a "Harvest Walkabout Offering" sign (donors may obtain a downloadable PDF sign from our website).

We know it hasn't been the best year for produce so don't worry if you haven't much (or even anything) to contribute. It's more of a community building event and a way to show our children how neighbors come together to celebrate harvest season. Even if it's just for a bit, we hope you'll participate!

We'll have two refreshment stations offering cold drinks and garden samples (stations will be marked on the event map). If you would please bring your own re-usable cups or bottles it will help us keep the event as green as possible. We are also looking for donations of a few (simple) garden-inspired appetizers for our drink stations.

Plan to make your final stop along (___ location) so we may conclude the event with a little recipe swapping and socializing. We'll post a map on our association website, by noon on Saturday so you'll know where to visit!

Lastly, to help those less fortunate, we will collect any leftover produce donations and bring them to Full Circle Farm for their weekly donation to local shelters (if anyone wants to volunteer for this task, please let us know!).

Thank you!

Your Co-Chairs

Kathy Besser and Barb Grimes

Harvest Walkabout 2010 Wrap-up

Kudos to everyone who made our first Harvest Walkabout such a success! To the gracious refreshment stand hosts and all who donated or participated - you rock! If anyone incurred any expenses for the event, please let us know; we have grant funds to cover purchases.

Kathy dropped off SIX bags of produce to Full Circle Farm this morning; they were really excited about our contribution. This will be added to their normal delivery to local shelters so please tell your kids that they were doing a measure of good while having so much fun!

In honor of them (and you), we'd like to present a few 'superlative' awards (no prizes, just glory!):

Most involved street: Elderberry (with at least 4 stops)

Best lemonade: Tie between Yorktown/Elderberry (great sales job, girls!)

Best sweet treat: Syracuse (Thanks, Shelley for the amazing home-baked cookies!)

Best savory treat: Rockefeller (cherry tomatoes with feta, balsamic and basil - great recipe, Nina!)

Best location: the EXTENSIVE gardens at Idylwood - they showed us everything!

Most coveted item: apples (Elderberry and Yorktown)

Most unusual item: Egyptian onions (Rockefeller)

Most plentiful item: lemons (practically everyone!)

Best hit or miss: grapefruits (Valley Forge)

Best hosts: Nina and Dan McQueen, for setting out tables, chairs and organizing a FABULOUS raffle!

If you can think of other superlatives we should award, please let us know!

Here are two terrific comments we received as part of our raffle (which encouraged a bit of feedback):

"This was such a fantastic event! I really enjoyed meeting new people and we'll have a great salad tonight!"

(In response to: what did you like about the event?) "Everything, particularly the fellowship: meeting new people and renewing old friendships." (In response to: what else would you like to see us do?) "More things like this that keep us mixing. Maybe progressive parties or dinners?"

If anyone else has any comments or suggestions, please chime in!

We apologize for the confusion about the location of Idylwood - thanks everyone for being so accommodating about the mess-up. Next year, we'll be better organized!

Lastly, to further strengthen our neighborhood relationships, we'd like to encourage you to support the following groups who provided information for our 'building community' table (and would love to hear from you!):

FULL CIRCLE FARM

www.fullcirclesunnyvale.org

Farmstand Hours: Wed&Fri: 2pm-7pm, Sun: 11am-3pm

Don't forget the upcoming 'Harvest Dinner' on September 23rd. A small group of us are planning to go, if you want to join us (and carpool), please speak up!

Tickets may be purchased at

http://www.fullcirclesunnyvale.org/?page_id=1202

HIDDEN VILLA RANCH

Native Plant Sale on Saturday, October 16th from 10am-3pm at Hidden Villa Ranch, 26870 Moody Road, Los Altos. For more details, please visit www.cnps-scv.org.

COMMON GROUND

Common Ground is an organic garden supply and education center in Palo Alto. It is open M-F 10am-5:30pm and Sat/Sun 10am-5pm. Please help support this amazing local resource center. For more details, please visit

www.commongroundpaloalto.org.

Thanks again!!

Kathy Besser and Barb Grimes
Harvest Walkabout 2010 Co-chairs