



Spectacular Garden in Middletown

There is a very special garden in Middletown that you might never find it if someone didn't tell you about it. It is a rooftop garden on top of the Community Health Center at 675 Main St. This garden is a most peaceful setting, smack dab in the center of Middletown, framing beautiful views of the surroundings; the Arrigoni Bridge, the Connecticut River, the vast green riverbanks and the Middletown skyline. The Haddam Garden Club visited this garden on September 11 and was very impressed!



It was the brainchild of Mark Masselli, founder and CEO of Connecticut-based Community Health Center, Inc. It was designed by David Miller of Robert Olson and Associates out of Cambridge, MA to help mitigate the effects of climate change by utilizing green space on top of the urban building. The soil is engineered to suit the unique environment and all the water is either captured or recycled.

Unlike other rooftop gardens, which are often simply planted roofs, this installation is a fine example of a garden that would be stunning even at ground level! There is a completely glassed in pavilion that accommodates 45 or so and is used for meetings, classes and events for the health center and the surrounding community. There is also a half dozen bistro tables on the east side of the promenade to sit a spell and soak up the calm—or eat lunch. By the way, the public is welcome from 12-1 on Fridays June through September.

The garden is surrounded by a promenade with interspersed stones for drainage. There are areas of perfect lawn, a vertical garden forming a wall around the mechanicals of the building, trellises for vines and an assortment of raised beds holding annual and perennial flowers (very pollinator friendly), as well as vegetables, and grasses. The plants on the walls form a DNA strand! How medical! Every aspect was designed with a purpose and each plant was carefully chosen. Most all of the original plants have survived and flourished.

Besides being simply a beautiful garden to enjoy, it is also used therapeutically by ARC. Once a week, for years now, 5-6 ARC clients come and work side by side with members of the Middletown Garden Club forging relationships beneficial to all concerned. This is all while maintaining the gardens and harvesting the herbs and vegetables. Each year they donate a significant amount of produce to Amazing Grace food pantry.

Some information for this article came from "A Healthy Outlook" by Tovah Martin; photographed by Kindra Clineff; The Jan/Feb 2019 issue of Horticulture Magazine p44-51.



The next meeting of the Haddam Garden Club will be at 10:00 on Oct 9 at the Community Center in Higganum. The program will be on drying and pressing flowers by Anna Gianelli. The public is invited to attend the program portion beginning at noon.

Recipe from 'Digging In', the cookbook by the Haddam Garden Club

DIXIE CROSSROADS CORN FRITTERS Submitted by Clare Hoover

Serves 8 or more people

1 cup flour

2 eggs beaten

1 TBS baking powder

1 cup whole milk

4 TBS melted butter

4 TBS sugar

½ tsp salt

1 cup whole kernel corn, drained

Enough oil for frying

Powdered sugar

Sift flour, baking powder, salt and sugar together. Combine eggs, milk and butter. Fold egg mixture into dry ingredients. Add corn last. Heat oil to 350. Drop batter by tablespoons into the hot oil. Deep fry for about 5 minutes, turning until they are golden brown. Watch carefully as they brown quickly, especially if flat. Sprinkle with powdered sugar and serve warm. Recipe can be halved.