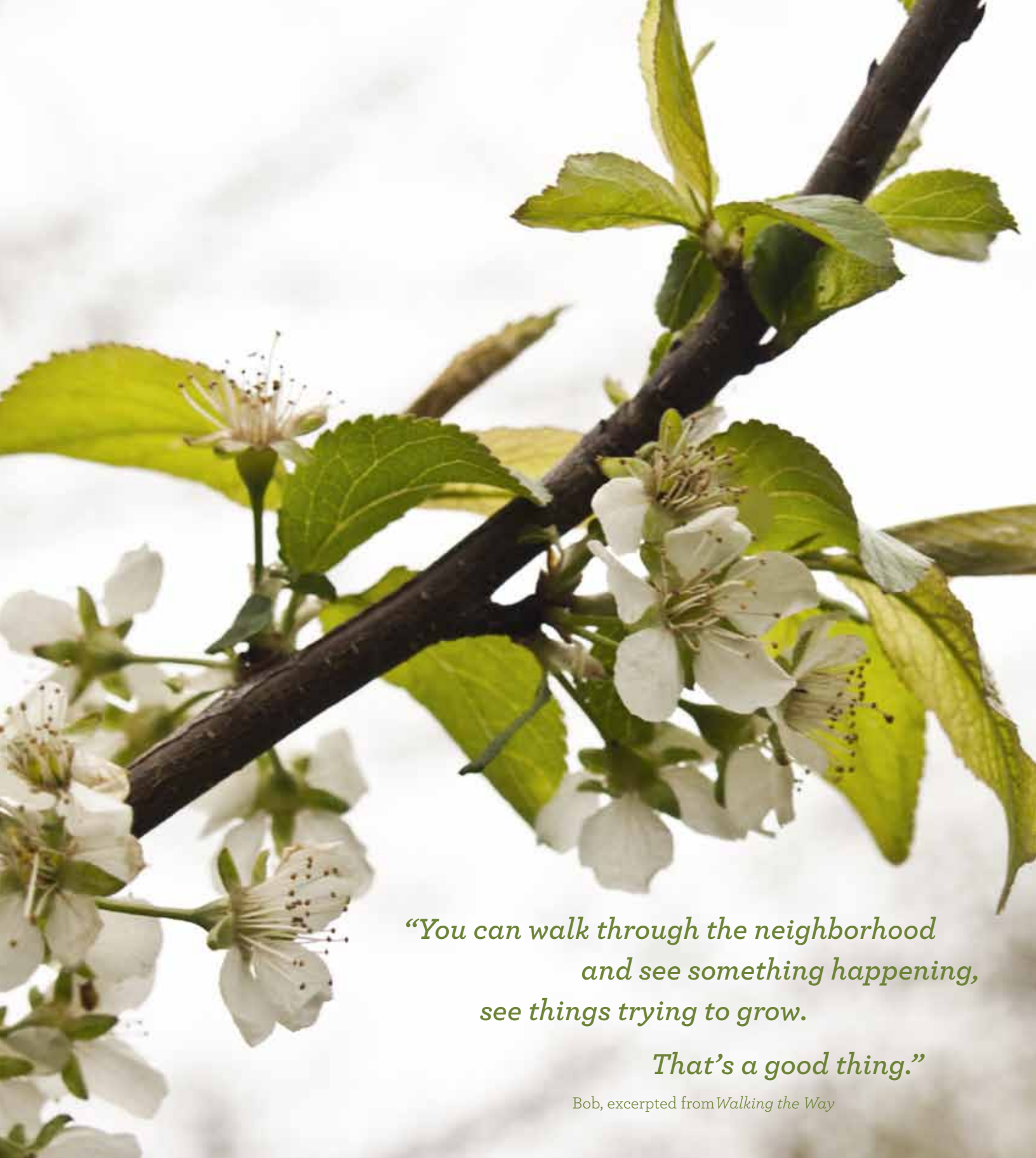




The Brightmoor Farmway

*A Collection of Stories & Recipes
from Neighbors Building Brightmoor*





*“You can walk through the neighborhood
and see something happening,
see things trying to grow.*

That’s a good thing.”

Bob, excerpted from *Walking the Way*



"Community offers a sense of belonging and call for us to acknowledge our interdependence."

To belong is to act as an investor, owner and creator of a place....
To feel a sense of belonging is important because it will lead us from conversations about safety and comfort to other conversations, such as our willingness to provide hospitality and generosity....
This will not occur in a culture dominated by isolation and its correlate, fear." *Peter Block*

“Acknowledging our interdependence”—what a novel idea in our Western society. I love the song that is sung in many of our Black churches, “I need you to survive.” Minimally, if we are to survive the unraveling of our present community and to re-create a new community, we have to be purposeful in not only acknowledging but also living out our interdependence. Interdependence requires trust, trust requires a level of familiarity, and familiarity requires getting to know one another. Getting to know one another requires conversation and conversation requires hospitality. Hospitality requires generosity in time and resources.

In order to belong we have to overcome our fear and be courageous enough to start trusting our neighbors. We have to look at our community as a place where we are willing to invest for the long term, a place we have ownership in, a place which we— together with our neighbors—can shape into our home.

Here on the Farmway, we do a lot of our gathering around food, and we hope you enjoy our stories as you gather wherever you are around the food cooked from our recipes.

I am grateful to our friends at the University of Michigan for creating this beautiful visual embodiment of the principles that guide our small community. They have been wonderful guests on the Farmway and have left us with a beautiful piece of history to share for years to come.

Riet Schumack

The Brightmoor Farmway



area had its start back in the Roaring Twenties: the neighborhood was originally built up for the multitude of blue-collar autoworkers migrating into Detroit. A developer named Burt Eddy Taylor was at the forefront of it all, building small affordable one-story houses with outhouses in the back. In 1926, Brightmoor became an official neighborhood of Detroit while the city was experiencing immense growth. For 50 years Brightmoor was a thriving working class neighborhood with strong family and community life. But in the early seventies that started to change. People started moving to the suburbs. Many houses became rental properties, the drug, crime and prostitution rate increased, and with the birth of crack cocaine in the eighties, the downward spiral increased at a great rate.

By 2006, the 21 blocks of the Neighbors Building Brightmoor target area was over 50% empty, and, like the rest of Brightmoor, blighted, ugly and dangerous. Riet Schumack and Sheila Hoerauf came together with an initiative that aimed to fend off crime and provide a healthy and productive environment for the youth in the neighborhood, especially during the summer months. It was named the Brightmoor Youth Garden. In 2007 and 2008, the project turned into a market garden, allowing the youth involved to earn money from their hard work by selling the crops they grew. They now sell 25 different varieties of vegetables and herbs at the Northwest Detroit Farmer's Market.

The families involved with the Brightmoor Youth Garden saw the positive impact the project was having within the community and decided to set up a nonprofit community organization in 2009 called Neighbors Building Brightmoor (NBB). In 2011 they were granted 501c3 status. Projects they have worked on include the "House Art" Project, which covers the ruins of houses with beautiful paintings, quotes, and artwork produced by the community and visiting artists. These initiatives are powerful efforts to regain the hope that had once faded away.



Asked to think about how to introduce this book, kids involved with the Youth Garden wrote:

*We started with nothing.
Now, we have a community.*

Through dedicated neighbors and hard-working individuals, the Brightmoor Farmway area became a vision of friendship, growth, and opportunity. With hands-on efforts and what nature gave us — empty lots, abandoned buildings, and unused soil — we created Neighbors Building Brightmoor. Here, we brighten the community with our ideas, our voices, and our commitment for a better future. These are the recipes and stories of the ambitious and devoted residents of our little community, who continuously maintain and shape the beautiful place in which they live.

Brightmoor Farmway

- 1 Brightmoor Youth Garden
- 2 Rouge Valley Plain Nature Area
- 3 Schumack Farm
- 4 River View Farm
- 5 Myra's Bird Haven
- 6 Brightmoor Youth Garden Beta Garden
- 7 Curtis Green Park and Outdoor Stage
- 8 Gwen's Edible Playscape
- 9 Serenity Community Garden
- 10 Kaboom! Playground, with outdoor classroom, adult fitness track and picnic area
- 11 Eliza Howell Park and Nature Trail
- 12 Lyndon Greenway Trail Head Park
- 13 Hubert Elementary Field and Summer in the City Mural
- 14 Char's Butterfly Trail
- 15 Second Chance Community Garden
- 16 Lamphere Orchard
- 17 Louisa Mays Seed Park
- 18 Lamphere Community Garden
- 19 Unity Community Garden and Park
- 20 Where the Wild Things Grow Native Planting Park
- 21 Jacob's Garden
- 22 Old Dude's Community Garden
- 23 Lady Bug Lane Community Garden
- 24 Dolphin Street Orchard
- 25 Dewey's Park
- 26 Dolphin Street Market Garden
- 27 Johannes Treedome Park
- 28 SBA Garden of Love Community Garden
- 29 Pingree's Potato Patch
- 30 Summer in the City Pond
- 31 Ulster Community Garden
- 32 Chatham Community Garden
- 33 Wild Earth Market Garden
- 34 2012 Potato Patch
- 35 Community Pumpkin Patch
- 36 Beaverland Community Garden
- 37 Beaverland Market Garden
- 38 Rabbit Run Community Garden and Orchard
- 39 St. Christine's Soup Kitchen, Community Service and Community Garden



a note on the making of this book

When Amy Roggenburg, a public policy student at the University of Michigan, became involved with the Brightmoor Youth Garden Partnership she wanted to bring something to the community that it did not have — something that could be marketed, to positively represent the neighborhood and strengthen their own sense of “community.” An avid food lover, she thought: *why not a cookbook?* A preliminary email went out and the responses were overwhelming — everyone had a story and recipe to share. It soon became apparent that it was not the recipes that would shape this book, but rather the stories.

The neighbor profiles that follow were written by University of Michigan students enrolled in a section of English 125 entitled “Food, Justice, and Community,” taught through the Michigan Community Scholars Program, a learning community on campus dedicated to community service, diversity, and academic excellence. The writing students traveled to Brightmoor one Sunday afternoon in October 2011, had a neighborhood tour with Riet Schumack, and visited with neighbors, recording their stories and their recipes. The profiles are based on these conversations. We are grateful to all of these students for their curiosity and concern about food systems in Brightmoor and greater Detroit and for the enthusiasm and respect with which they conducted these interviews.

The book design, watercolor illustrations, many profile portraits, and some additional photographs in this volume are the work of University of Michigan students enrolled in a Winter 2012 engagement course at the School of Art & Design entitled “Detroit Connections: Design Collaboration.” These students, too, had the pleasure of spending time in Brightmoor and at potlucks with the wonderful community of Neighbors Building Brightmoor. They also had the challenge of creating an integrated whole out of the many strands — from the community and University of Michigan collaborators — of this project. Their care, patience and thoughtful visual choices are much appreciated.

What started out as a small, almost inconceivable idea, has become a book brimming with voices of the Brightmoor community — and an opportunity for neighborly ties between the Brightmoor and University of Michigan communities.

Amy Roggenburg, BA, UM Public Policy 2014
Christine Modey, UM Sweetland Center for Writing
Hannah Smotrich, UM School of Art & Design







*“The relationships
always come first.”*

Riet Schumack

sitting on the grass and enjoying the breeze passing through the neighborhood, says, “We want to be part of the solution to this neighborhood, and help recreate a community in Brightmoor.” Riet and her family moved to Brightmoor five years ago, with the hope of reestablishing a functional community and improving people’s lives. Ever since she got there, she has played an active role in promoting local food production and supporting the youth in the community. When I was interviewing Riet, she patiently explained all the different activities going on in the neighborhood and the reasons behind them. As the organizer of various projects going on in Brightmoor, Riet has a clear idea of how to promote changes in the neighborhood.

“The relationships always come first,” said Riet while answering my questions about how she began the community projects when the neighborhood was still in devastation. Riet spent a significant amount of her time building relationships with people in Brightmoor. She worked to become friends with everyone in the neighborhood, understand their difficulties, and try to figure out ways to solve their problems. “As you talk to people, they come up with ideas for their own projects, and then what you do is just try to help with their projects with whatever resources you have,” explained Riet. With her strong bond with people living in Brightmoor, Riet was able to figure out a way to support them and keep people in the community

devoted to many different projects. “It all starts with relationships and continues with relationships,” Riet concluded.

In terms of the goals that Riet seeks to achieve for the community, she focuses on improving the most fundamental needs of people: food. “People living in the community really lack access to fresh food. Most of the kids in this neighborhood grew up by eating fast food or food products from liquor store, which are mostly artificial. Without a decent market nearby the community, people can only get expensive and unhealthy food,” said Riet, while talking about her motivation to start the local farming project. She perceives local farming as a great solution to provide a cheap and fresh food source to Brightmoor. By doing so, Riet hopes the community, as a whole, can be more productive. “In 10 years, we hope that we will be ready to feed whoever needs to be fed here, so we don’t need to rely on vegetables or food from the other side of the country or even other side of the world.” While promoting the idea of local food production, Riet set a perfect example by planting vegetables and raising animals, such as chickens, rabbits, and goats, in her backyard. She enjoys eating self-produced fresh food and shares her farming experiences with others. “Just last weekend, we gathered kids from the community and made pumpkin pies together by using the fresh pumpkin grown in my garden,” said Riet. “We want the kids to know that we can actually make the food on our own, and the food we make by ourselves not only tastes wonderful but is also very healthy.”

It all starts with relationships and continues with relationships.”

Besides promoting local food production and healthy dining habits throughout the neighborhood, Riet also focuses on introducing a pleasant lifestyle for Brightmoor. “Part of my mission is to demonstrate that you don’t have to have money to be happy,” said Riet, when we talked about issues of poverty in the neighborhood. “In fact, one of the advantages of this community is that it is poor. Poor people tend to have more time, compare to the rich and busy people, to join activities in the community, to get involved.” Unlike what people generally associate with poverty, unemployment, social problems, and shame, Riet sees the potential labor and devotion that unemployed people are able to offer to the community. By “taking advantage” of the high unemployment rate of the neighborhood, Riet organized many community activities and tried to make the best out of people’s free time. During weekends, Riet commonly held community barbeques and picnics with food made from local gardens. People gathered to enjoy the sunlight and appreciate the food offered by their community. For learning and career experiences, Riet held workshops that helped anyone in the neighborhood, including the youth, to start farming in empty lots. In addition, she organized art lessons for kids and let them create art works that now decorate the community. “There are just so many things you can do to create community and create beauty without having to spend a lot of money.”

One of Riet’s favorite recipes for community gatherings is a traditional Dutch dish, **Hutspot**. “It feeds a lot of people and it’s non-threatening,” Riet jokes. “Once I explain that it’s just potatoes, carrots and onions, they dare to eat it – and they love it!” *interview and profile by Tai-Kuei Huang*

Hutspot

Ingredients

- 6 lbs. of potatoes, peeled and quartered
- 3 lbs. of carrots, cleaned and shredded
- 2/3 cups powdered milk
- butter
- salt
- pepper

Directions

1. **Cook** the potatoes and carrots in one pot until potatoes are done.
2. **Drain**, reserving 2 cups cooking liquid.
3. **Pour** liquid into bowl; add powdered milk (or replace all liquid with milk), butter, salt and pepper and mix.
4. **Add** back to the potatoes/carrots and mix to make a mash like mashed potatoes.
5. **Serve** with smoked sausage or fried eggs.





Sheila Hoerhauf

and her family moved to Brightmoor in 1991, initially having no desire to live there. They had lived on the west side of

Detroit, but they bought their current house in Brightmoor when family friends were moving away and wanted a Christian family to live in their old home. After “listening to God,” Sheila, Mark, and their one-year-old daughter moved to Brightmoor. They had very little knowledge of the impact they would make on the community and how it would evolve throughout their time there. Twenty years later, though, Sheila has “accomplished what God wants [her] to do” and she has seen tremendous change within the community.

“Brightmoor’s been around for a long, long, long time. It hasn’t always been a healthy area. In order to [make improvements] you just have to step up as a neighbor and say ‘Hey, we demand that you do something about this.’” Sheila identified problems shortly after her arrival to Brightmoor, and she was not afraid to take action. “The squeaky wheel makes the most noise. We got the ear of the police department, and finally we saw change.” At the time, the community was unaware of Sheila’s inner determination to permanently change things for the better. Her small but noticeable actions within her first years in the community foreshadowed her future involvement in the neighborhood.

“*Small components contribute
to making a thriving,*

“The only thing about that is that we have to work as neighbors to lay hold of everything that has been done. The neighbors have to say ‘Hey, this is a good thing — let’s keep it up.’” In Sheila’s opinion, Brightmoor is slowly but surely becoming a community. It takes “one block and person at a time being concerned about their neighbors and having knowledge of one another” to create a community. Progress has been slow, but lately Brightmoor has been taking a turn for the better.

Sheila’s favorite pastime is gardening. Growing her own food allows Sheila to provide healthier food for her family. “When you grow your own food, you know where it comes from. I’ve always had a garden. I think I just took it up another level when [our neighbor] Riet Schumack and her family moved over here.” Sheila’s passion for gardening, in addition to Riet’s fresh perspective, helped to make Brightmoor what it is today. After observing many children’s interest in gardening, Sheila’s and Reit’s families created the Brightmoor Youth Garden in 2006. The children who choose to participate learn about gardening through the Greening of Detroit and, under the supervision of Sheila and other volunteers, have the privilege of planting and selling their own vegetables.

Brightmoor still has miles to go in terms of becoming a better place in which to live, but people who share Sheila’s character traits will be able to make this happen. In the twenty years she has been a member of the community, Sheila has seen the transition from a drug dealing and prostitute-filled area to an area with stunning murals and thriving gardens.

Sheila received her recipe for **Cheesy Potatoes** from her mother-in-law. Her family typically eats it at Thanksgiving, but they also make it in the summer and fall. Sheila’s husband and three children love this dish! It is a great side dish to go with a meal. *interview and profile by Rachel Forche*

Cheesy Potatoes

Ingredients

- 2 lbs. hash browns, thawed
- 1 pint (16 oz.) sour cream
- garlic powder, Lawry’s season salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 8 oz. cheddar cheese, grated
- ¼ lb. margarine or butter (1 stick), melted
- Ritz crackers, crushed

Directions

1. **Place** hash browns in a low deep dish (make sure potatoes are thawed).
2. **Mix** together sour cream, onion, cream of chicken soup, cheddar cheese, butter, garlic powder, season salt and pepper.
3. **Cover** top with Ritz cracker crumbs.
4. **Cook** at 375° degrees for 1 hour uncovered.



healthy and safe community.”



“*I wanted to live in a place*.....

.....
*Carole
Hawke*

a high school teacher and a regular volunteer of the Brightmoor Youth Garden project, says, “The biggest reason was for the kids.” Four years ago, Carole decided to move from another area in Detroit to Brightmoor because she wanted to live in “a place with common goals and visions with neighbors.” A few of her friends live in Brightmoor. Ever since she settled down in the neighborhood in 2007, Carole has been an active volunteer in the youth garden. Although she had very little experience in gardening prior to her involvement with the project, her knowledge and passion to help children has made her a vital member of project.

The aim of the garden is to offer the children of Brightmoor a chance to work during summer. “If you’re under thirteen, you can’t get a job in the city, so the garden is a really good opportunity,” she explained. The children are taught how to grow different kinds of vegetables and sell their products in the market; all the profit they make is split among them. Through the process, children learn about the work ethic, as “they see the whole process from start to finish, so if they don’t do a good job in any one part of the process, then [they] don’t sell as much.” Carole believes this is a useful lesson for the children because “they can see a direct relationship between how hard they work and how much money they make.”

Although it was initially a challenge for volunteers to gather a sufficient group of children who show up regularly, Carole’s passion for and commitment to the children and the project has definitely paid off. Some of the first children who worked in the garden, who are now old enough to work in the city, are “some of the hardest and most faithful workers because they’ve had that experience.” It benefits the children as well as the local economy.

Carole’s effort and time put into volunteering at the garden along with other volunteers have not only helped young children in Brightmoor, they have also boosted the spirit of their community as a whole. Ever since the garden project started, “the neighbors begin to sense that they can change things and the neighborhood doesn’t have to be hopeless,” Carole stated. The growing sense of unity is shown clearly at weekly meetings, the neighbors are becoming more involved and concerned about the well being of the whole community.

The project, originally aimed to teach young children, has also perpetuated a secondary effect: it has inspired people in the community to come together. At weekly meetings, “Rather than saying what are they going to do about this, we always try to say we.” This forming of unity has definitely changed the attitudes of the neighborhood. “Instead [of] looking at all of the things that are not going to happen, [we ask] what are the things that can happen if we do something?”

with common goals and visions
as my neighbors.”

Carole’s devotion and contribution to the project and community has brought hope and unity to the community. Her biggest hope and vision is to “see the kids who are involved in the garden project [become] successful in the future, and young people in this community will value work and also have the opportunities to work” as “we’ve watched them grow up and we’ve been a big part of their lives.” Carole’s vision is an inspiration for people in Brightmoor—her selflessness, devotion, and commitment have changed the lives of many children.

When asked to contribute a favorite recipe, Carole chose to share **Sweet Potato Burritos**. According to Carole’s son James, “They’re tasty. They’re hearty. You don’t really miss the meat that much.” When she asked herself why they love this recipe so much she decided, “It’s quick and easy to make after work. We can eat it for leftovers or make a large batch for a big group. It’s delicious. What’s not to love?” *interview and profile by Tiffany Leung*

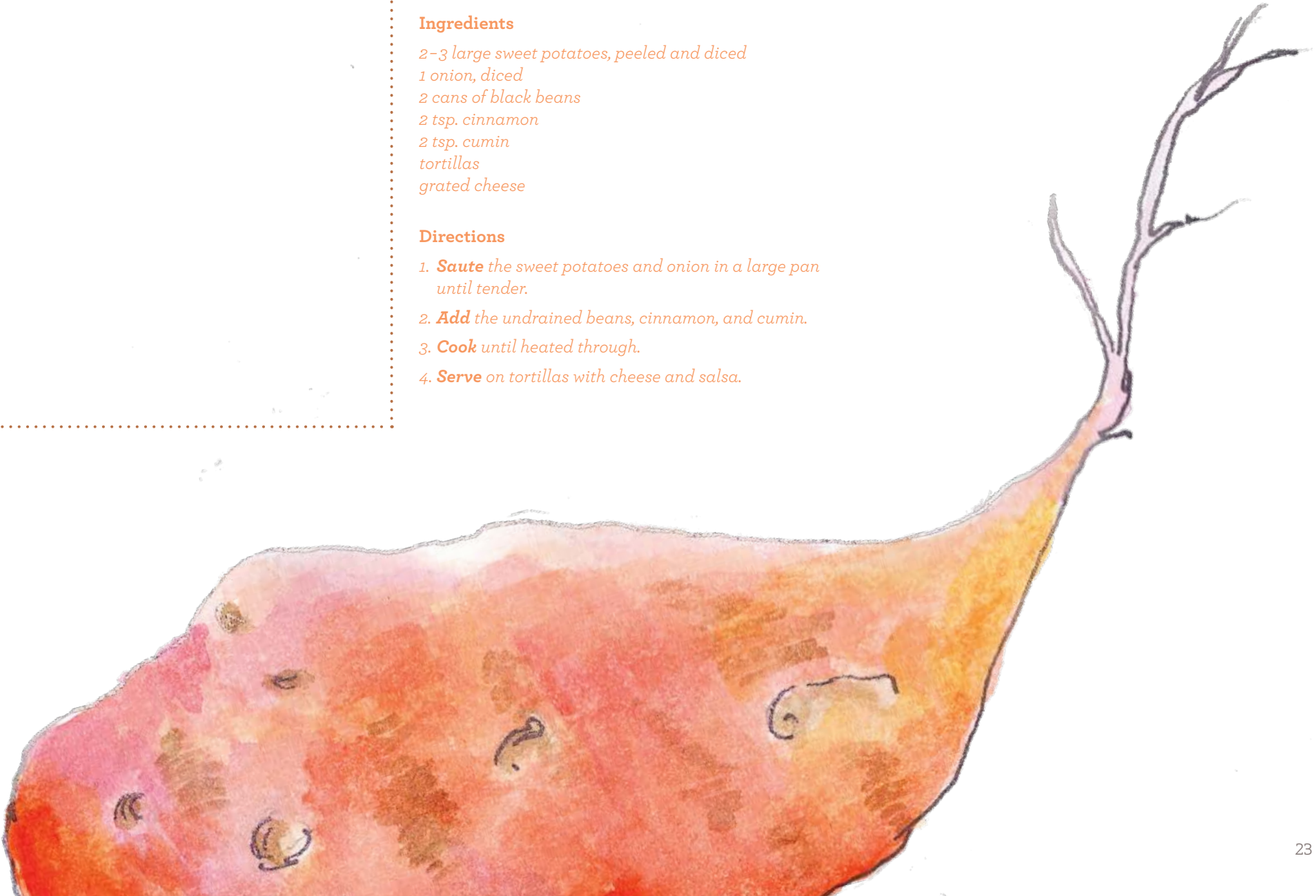
Sweet Potato Burritos

Ingredients

- 2–3 large sweet potatoes, peeled and diced
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 cans of black beans
- 2 tsp. cinnamon
- 2 tsp. cumin
- tortillas
- grated cheese

Directions

1. **Saute** the sweet potatoes and onion in a large pan until tender.
2. **Add** the undrained beans, cinnamon, and cumin.
3. **Cook** until heated through.
4. **Serve** on tortillas with cheese and salsa.





*“I wanna make Detroit
a better place.
I wanna get rid of the
bad name it has.
Urban gardening is
a good way of redeeming
the name of Detroit.”*

Mark David, excerpted from *Walking the Way*



*“It’s just fun to work almost.
It’s not like a 9 to 5 job.”*

James, excerpted from *Walking the Way*





*“You just have to use
what God gave you,*

*Danna
Jordan*

blesses her family and neighbors with food that is considered delicious by all. She prides herself on the fact that her dishes are inexpensive, simple, and “presentable.” Danna Jordan, a devoted, loving, and caring member of the Brightmoor community for almost 20 years, has observed the many benefits of having a community garden that feeds its residents at no cost to them. “I love staying in Brightmoor,” Danna says passionately as we discuss the benefits of having a free source of food within reaching distance of her home. “I love the convenience of the gardens that we have... and, I just appreciate it.”

Danna Jordan and her family, like many others, are devoted to the well-being and success of the Brightmoor community gardens. The time, effort, and passion put into gardening by the devoted residents highlight the desire not only for the gardens to thrive but also for the community to prosper. Danna strongly encourages everyone to take advantage of the much healthier option of eating freshly grown, preservative-free produce rather than resorting to the unhealthy options of fast food and pre-prepared meals.

Aside from the healthful effects the gardens have on community, Danna recognizes the social benefits of having successful programs such as the Greening of Detroit and the Brightmoor Youth Garden program within the community. It is a “tremendous help in our [community],” she says. “A lot of our children would not have learned responsibility or have a sense of understanding of society without them.” The gardens serve as a unifying force in the community as well as a free source of healthy food. “You don’t have to steal... all you have to do is ask and it’s there.”

what nature is out there, take it, and put it

to your advantage.”

Lobster Soup

Ingredients

- 2 lobster tails (medium to large)
- 6-8 potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 1 stalk of celery, diced
- 1 whole onion, diced
- 2 carrots, diced
- Chives to taste
- Pinch of salt
- Pinch of white pepper
- Fish stock or lobster stock
- 1/3 cup of cream or milk

Directions

1. **Sweat** celery, onion, carrots and chives in a skillet until soft. Do not brown.
2. **Boil** potatoes in fish or lobster stock until soft enough for a fork to go through.
3. **Cut** lobster tail into pieces, add to the skillet with the vegetables and steam for about 5 minutes – no longer.
4. **Add** potatoes and cream all together.
5. **Simmer** for another 5 to 7 mins. Season.

A desire for development to continue within the Brightmoor community is apparent in Danna’s tone as she discusses the tremendous progress of Brightmoor. She’s seen the community in both its “ups and downs.” It has raised children who have become outstanding members in society and who have stayed away from the notorious gang activity and violence that occur in Detroit. The downs, she says, occur when the children of Brightmoor don’t come back to their community once they’ve grown up. Because of the youths’ migration out of the neighborhood, the knowledge and positive lessons learned aren’t as strongly reinforced to the youth still living there.

As the price of groceries constantly increases, people have to “learn how to substitute things and make things that taste just as good.” Danna suggests that mushrooms can easily be substituted for beef, and that vegetarian lasagna may taste just as good or even better than lasagna with meat. Flexibility is necessary when options are limited. “You just have to learn how to create a meal.... as long as it looks pretty you’ll eat it,” Mrs. Jordan says. “Now, if you throw something on a plate and it looks sloppy you’re not going to eat it... that’s the first thing you have to learn about cooking, presentation.”

When Danna proudly handed me her recipe for Lobster Soup, she tells me, “I’m a seafood lover... so anything dealing with seafood, I learn how to make a meal out of it.” She has been preparing this simple and affordable dish since she was a child and continues to make it for her family to enjoy. Danna’s resourcefulness is evident in her recipe. She utilizes local herbs and produce from the communal gardens that have served as a unifying force in Brightmoor and kept its youth from succumbing to negative peer pressures, all while keeping the community in good health. *interview and profile by*

Somalia Jones





“Brightmoor is tight knit,

Fred Sanders

A lot can happen in four years, as any high school student will tell you. In four years, people, sometimes even a whole community, can change. During his

four years living in the Brightmoor neighborhood of Detroit, this is what Fred Sanders has seen. Known to the community as Mr. Fred or simply Fred, Sanders “came to the Motor” to live with his brother in Warren, Michigan, after retiring from military service. Most people do not leave the military with a passion for cooking, but Fred Sanders is not like most people. He came to the Brightmoor community at a time when many people were moving farther out of the city and decided to stay no matter what. “When I first came to Brightmoor, it was just DOOMP,” he says, making a flattening motion with his hands, “I didn’t know anybody.”

Suffice it to say that has changed. Under the guidance of Riet Schumack, the Brightmoor Farmway has steadily progressed. Fred is proud to be a part of that change. Several community gardens have been planted and a brand new, beautiful playground has been built in the center of the neighborhood. When he first came, Fred says, “You didn’t see no playgrounds, you’d see stuff torn up.” Now, he says, “Riet throw parties, everybody comes around. You don’t have to worry about the kids on the street... It’s nice to see it.” Not only is it just nice to see, Fred believes that the neighborhood is tight knit, where everybody knows everybody. He pointed to the row of houses to the right of where he was sitting and rattled off the names of everyone who lived in each house.

everybody knows everybody.”

Fred knows many people in the neighborhood, but there is a good chance even more people know him. He can thank his famous spicy fried chicken recipe for that. Fred created the recipe on his own, but the inspiration came from a cooking show he saw on television in the mid-1990s. “I never heard of chicken from an oven before,” he says, so he tried it. “I’m a southerner, so I had to make it spicy,” he admits. Fred had to add spice (2 tsp hot sauce, 1 tsp pepper, 1¼ tsp paprika, to be exact) to the recipe because of a surgery that prohibited him from dousing hot sauce on his food.

The surgery resulted from a parachuting accident he suffered while training in the Army. In 1987, Fred was attempting his 78th jump when it happened. “It” was a jammed parachute that opened late and snapped up all of a sudden, knocking Fred unconscious. “It opened, that’s what saved my life,” he says. After extensive arm and stomach surgeries, Fred moved on to recruiting for the army. “Being there, sitting, like you sittin’, wasn’t cutting it,” he says, “1989, I got out and started doing things I liked, butchering, and all that kind of stuff.”

A butcher by trade, Fred used his knowledge of meats to begin cooking meals. To make the transition to cooking, he needed Riet’s help. She would let Fred come over to the garden and try all different kinds of vegetables. He would use them to create a dish he would eventually perfect. Fred’s dishes, including the **Spicy Fried Chicken**, are mainstays at the local barbeques and parties. He is very grateful for all Riet has done for him and the community saying, “Whenever she needs me, I do what I can. She does good things for me. She made a difference.”

Making a difference anywhere is not easy. It takes time, energy, and effort, and in a place like Brightmoor, the improvements are small, but not unnoticed. In four years, such small changes have improved Brightmoor greatly. The next four years will hopefully bring even more change. Fred Sanders is content continuing to cook, garden, and make a difference in Brightmoor. He likes it, and why shouldn’t he? He lives with his daughter, knows everybody in town, gets to do what he loves everyday, and is a part of a neighborhood that is changing for the better. That is why, Fred says, “Someone asked me [if I] am ready to go again. I said, ‘No I’m 51. I’m getting too old. I’m just gonna let it ride.’” Let it ride, he should, and let it ride, he will.

interview and profile by Matt Burns

Spicy Oven-Fried Chicken

Ingredients

- 2 cups flour
- 2 tbsp. seafood seasoning
- 2 tsp. hot sauce
- 1 tsp. pepper
- ¾ tsp. salt
- 1¼ tsp. paprika, divided
- ½ cup nonfat milk
- 2½ lbs. chicken pieces
- ½ cup vegetable oil

Directions

1. **Preheat** oven to 350°F.
2. **Combine** flour, seafood seasoning, hot sauce, pepper, salt and 1 tsp. of paprika in a large resealable plastic bag; set aside.
3. **Place** milk in shallow bowl.
4. **Dip** each chicken piece in milk, then place in bag and seal; shake to coat.
5. **Pour** oil into a 15 x 10 x 1 inch baking pan.
6. **Place** chicken in pan and sprinkle with remaining ¼ tsp. paprika.
7. **Bake**, uncovered, 1 hour or until chicken is golden brown and cooked through (165°F).
8. **Transfer** chicken to a plate lined with paper towels to drain.





*“I’m becoming more in touch
with the earth...”*

Nicky Schumack & Eric Marcot

In a quiet corner of Brightmoor is a house with a vegetable garden, where Nicky Schumack lives. For five years, Nicky,

daughter of Brightmoor Youth Garden founder Riet Schumack, has been living in Brightmoor, where her boyfriend Eric Marcot also lives. With a passion for community and food justice, this couple embodies the values of Brightmoor’s urban gardening movement.

Nicky and Eric got involved with the Brightmoor Community Garden through Nicky’s mom. “She always wanted to have a farm,” Nicky says about her mother. In fact, Riet did have a farm in Ohio, where Nicky was born. However, she sacrificed it to move to Ann Arbor for her husband’s education. So, 20 years later when the family was inspired to move to Brightmoor, Riet got her second chance. Five years later, community gardens have begun to overtake Brightmoor. “For my mom, this has been a realization of her dream,” Nicky says.

Nicky and Eric represent the younger generation of people who are moving into Brightmoor. This group of people is inspired by the gardens that have begun to pop up all over Brightmoor and by the way the neighborhood uses the food it produces. “I get most of my food from gardens and markets in the area,” says Nicky. Some of her fresh produce and eggs come from gardens in the neighborhood, and she tries to buy whatever else she can from the local farmers markets in Detroit. Detroit is often described as a “food desert.” However, that doesn’t really seem to have an effect on her household. Nicky agrees with Eric when he states, “In our house, we just grow it.”

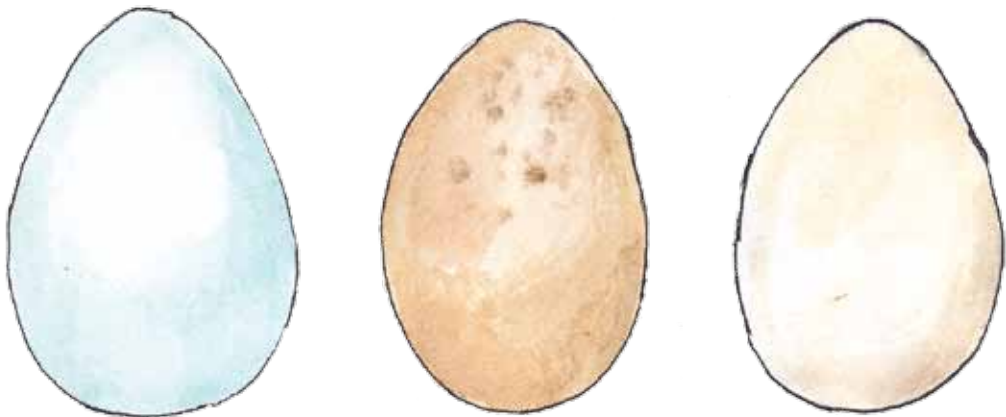
it gives us what we need to live.”

In Nicky and Eric’s house much of the food that they cook is made using ingredients from their garden. “I try to grow everything,” Nicky says, “but the only things that grew this year were kale, tomatoes, and jalapeños. And I hate jalapeños.” The variety of produce Eric and Nicky can collect from gardens and markets is vast, but Nicky says her favorite food to use is zucchini. “I put it in everything,” she says from **Cheesy Veggie Bake** to more obscure dishes such as **Zucchini Brownies**.

In their relationship, both will tell you that Nicky does the cooking. However, when she is not making a meal, Eric will make his go-to favorite food: **Marcot’s Famous Eggs**.

Using eggs from Riet’s chickens and hot sauce made from Nicky’s jalapeños, he composes his dish. “I could eat that for every meal of the day, every day, and be completely satisfied,” he says.

Eric and Nicky also love seeing the kids in the community become involved in the gardening projects put on by the Brightmoor Youth Garden. They both help out during mass volunteer days



Marcot’s Famous Eggs

Ingredients

- 2 large eggs
- 2 slices of pepper jack cheese
- ¼ cup of medium salsa
- 5-10 drops of chipotle hot sauce
- 4 sandwich sliced dill pickles
- 2 slices whole wheat toast, buttered
- canola oil
- salt

Directions

1. **Place** frying pan on high heat,
2. **Coat** bottom of pan with canola oil.
3. **Crack** eggs and drop into pan.
4. **Cook** eggs covered until tops of eggs begin to turn white.
5. **Sprinkle** with salt.
6. **Place** pepper jack cheese on top of eggs.
7. **Cover** and turn off heat. When cheese is melted, place on plate.
8. **Top** eggs with salsa and pickles.
8. **Add** hot sauce to taste and serve with toast.



Nicole’s Zucchini Brownies

Ingredients

- ½ cup of vegetable oil
(or ¼ cup oil plus ¼ cup apple sauce)
- ¾ cup sugar
- ¾ cup honey
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- ½ cup oats, ground to flour in blender
- ½ cup white flour
- ½ cup cocoa powder
- 1 ½ tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 cups shredded zucchini (or any other summer squash)
- ½ cup nuts (optional)
- ½ cup chocolate chips (optional)

Directions

1. **Preheat** oven to 350° F.
2. **Beat** together oil, sugar, honey, and vanilla.
3. **Mix** in flour, cocoa powder, baking soda, and salt until just blended.
4. **Fold** in shredded zucchini, nuts and chocolate chips.
5. **Grease** a 9x13 baking dish and spread batter evenly in it.
6. **Bake** for 25-30 minutes, until sides begin to pull away from the baking dish and the middle is no longer shiny.

Nicole’s Cheesy Veggie Bake

Ingredients

- 1 medium eggplant
- 1 yellow zucchini
- 1 green zucchini
- 1 large red onion
- 3 tomatoes
- 1 cup Gorgonzola cheese, divided into 2 parts
- 1 tsp. dried basil or ½ cup fresh chopped basil
- 1 tsp. dried oregano or ¼ cup fresh oregano
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. chili powder
- olive oil

Directions

1. **Preheat** the oven to 350° F .
2. **Thinly slice** the eggplant, zucchini, red onion and tomatoes.
3. **Place** eggplant in the bottom of a 9x13 baking dish.
4. **Drizzle** with olive oil, salt, spices and herbs.
5. **Layer** the green zucchini on top and sprinkle with ½ cup gorgonzola, salt and olive oil.
6. **Layer** the yellow zucchini next and drizzle with olive oil, spices and herbs.
7. **Layer** the tomato next, followed by the red onion.
8. **Sprinkle** with olive oil and the remaining spices, herbs, and cheese.
9. **Cover** with aluminum foil and bake for 30 minutes.
10. **Uncover** and bake for an additional 15 minutes.

Excellent served alongside fresh bread, pasta, grilled chicken or fish.



and work at one of the local community gardens. Because Brightmoor is an urban neighborhood with urban crime, parents tend keep their children inside. In fact, it was not until the youth garden started being built that a lot of kids began to play outside and enjoy living in their community. “I never realized how many kids were in this neighborhood until last summer,” says Eric. Nicky also mentions how excited the kids get when they return home from a day of selling their produce at the Northwest Farmers Market. Both Eric and Nicky comment on how different their neighborhood feels and the sense of community that has taken over Brightmoor ever since the gardens began to spread from the original youth garden. Nicky adds that more and more “market gardens” have begun to be built around the neighborhood by families. They will take what they grow in their backyards and sell it at farmers markets.

Of course, not everyone living in Brightmoor is able to pursue the more sustainable way of life that Nicky and Eric value. Most people have no access to a grocery store and rarely eat fresh food besides what they can get from the community gardens; most of what they eat is processed and unhealthy. For things to change, it’s only a matter of more people becoming involved. Brightmoor needs more people like Nicky and Eric, people with a passion for food justice. Nicky states that if

enough people like this move to Brightmoor they might even have the possibility of starting a food co-op funded by government grants.

The choice to live sustainably as Nicky and Eric do is obviously harder than normal living, and Nicky admits that they sometimes struggle, too. So why do they choose to do it? “I think there’s a lot of value in knowing where your food comes from... toiling for it to come... and just becoming more in touch with the earth and how it gives us what we need to live,” Nicky says. Eric and Nicky say that there are new people moving into Brightmoor who are excited and ready to take the sustainable food movement to the next level. As for Nicky and Eric’s future plans for Brightmoor? “Well, we’re planning a wedding in Brightmoor,” Eric says, “over in the Eliza Howell Park. It’s kind of our main project at the moment.” *interview and profile by Megan Goldstein*





*“I’ve already kept my little corner
on the earth clean
and now it’s stretching out.
I see more people are just like me—
getting involved that care.”*

Craig, excerpted from *Walking the Way*





*“My hope is for Brightmoor
to be a model*

*Craig
Reinke*

had on a pair of jeans with dirt stains on the knees, a plaid flannel shirt with a vest and a hat to block the sun. He had just been gardening. From under his hat, peeked his

greying hair, the result of age and stress, matched by the unshaven scruff on his upper neck and chin. I shook his middle-aged hand caked with mud in each crease. He spoke many words that afternoon in the brisk fall air, but Craig Reinke’s whole mind-set can be summed up in one simple sentence. “It makes more sense to eat what you grow.”

Born into a family in which gardening has been a long time tradition, Craig has lived his whole life in Brightmoor. “I don’t feel like I belong livin’ in the city,” he said. Craig owns and cares for three gardens, two across the street, and one that takes up the majority of his yard. Craig grows everything from asparagus to eggplant to raspberries — the raspberries he adopted because it was his grandfather’s favorite plant to grow. For Craig, it is the tomato plant.

“Antique tomatoes,” to be specific. Craig enjoys growing tomatoes for their variety, and it doesn’t hurt that they have a high value in the market. Craig goes “head over heels” when he really gets involved with something, which explains why his eyes light up when he explains how great it is for the people of Detroit to have accessibility to fresh, good-priced produce, all because of the farmers market. It is here that he sells his produce. “All you can find in the stores are wrinkly tomatoes,” he observes, and nobody wants wrinkly tomatoes.

for what the rest of the city could do
if they all put their hands together.”

A few years ago, Craig filled out the Grown in Detroit application and added to it the \$20 it modestly asked for. “All that for \$20.” All what? The you-scratch-my-back-I’ll-scratch-yours relationships, both with the co-op and its members, which would provide him with the resources to expand his few plants into three gardens overflowing with luscious asparagus, eggplant, raspberries and, of course, tomatoes: a good profit, as well as a new sense of hope.

That hope has been tested many times, though. Once a dry wall finisher, Craig’s income was cut when he was laid off. He became reliant on odd jobs here and there. “Kinda hard to have good spir-its... It just doesn’t seem like this city’s ever gonna get better,” he says. It has gone from “good, to real bad, to a warzone.” And now it’s in the aftermath. But he cuts his grass, keeps his own little corner of the world presentable, “but then someone kicks the trash over.” I can hear pain in his voice, but there is still a strong resilience sparkling brilliantly in his eyes.

He is resilient, yes, but also a realist. Craig “re-gathers” himself after each discouragement knowing his hope for Brightmoor to be a “model for what the rest of the city could do if they all put their hands together and do something” may never be fully realized. He acknowledges that urban

gardening takes a lot of time and effort that most people working full time are unable to invest. Craig himself puts around 30 hours per week into his gardens — “but it’s all gonna take time.”

His realism has not prevented him from enjoying friendships he’s made in the process. One of his most memorable days gardening and selling was when he met an “older Black gentleman, Mr. D,” whose tomatoes weren’t ready. Craig’s were overflowing that day, so they paired up and made more money than usual just in that one day, and in doing it “had the best time.”

Craig’s cooking is inspired by the harvest from his gardens. As he describes the recipe for his aptly named **Whatever’s Available Soup**,..... he suggests using “whatever you got at the time... It’s never the same soup twice.”

Craig’s urban gardening story is one of clear success. One could attribute his success to his striving for self-actualization, but to him, it’s all matter of fact: “It makes more sense to eat what you grow.” *interview by Cara Adelson and Marli Siegel, profile by Cara Adelson*

Tina’s Cole Slaw

Ingredients

- 2 carrots
- ½ head of medium-sized green cabbage
- ½ head of medium-sized red cabbage
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ cup cider vinegar
- salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. **Grate** carrots.
2. **Shred** or finely slice cabbage.
3. **Whisk** together mayonnaise, sugar, and cider vinegar.
4. **Mix** all ingredients together and stir to distribute dressing and season with salt and pepper.

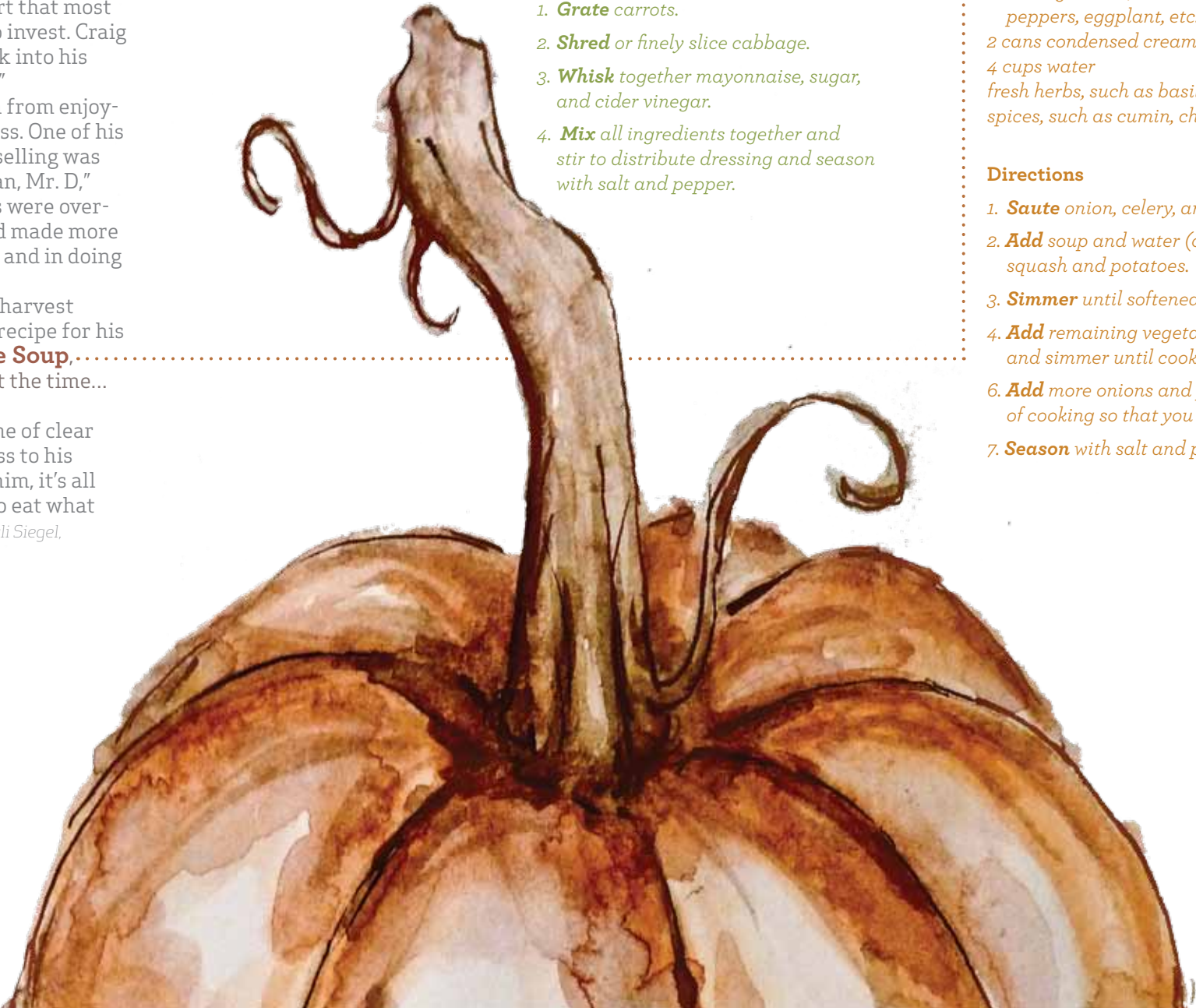
Whatever’s Available Soup

Ingredients

- 1 onion, diced
- 2 stalks of celery, diced
- 2 carrots, diced
- 4 cups of winter squash, pumpkin, and potatoes other vegetables, such as stem ends of kale, peppers, eggplant, etc.
- 2 cans condensed cream of mushroom soup
- 4 cups water
- fresh herbs, such as basil, thyme, oregano, etc.
- spices, such as cumin, chili powder, coriander, etc.

Directions

1. **Saute** onion, celery, and carrots until tender.
2. **Add** soup and water (or milk and water), squash and potatoes.
3. **Simmer** until softened.
4. **Add** remaining vegetables, herbs and spices and simmer until cooked.
6. **Add** more onions and potatoes near the end of cooking so that you can see chunks.
7. **Season** with salt and pepper.





“I have no illusion of perfection,

Jess & Jeremy Kenward

A shared desire for a close-knit community brought Jeremy and Jess to Brightmoor, and they couldn't have

found a better place. Prior to living in Brightmoor, Jeremy lived in a different gardening-oriented community in Hamtramck, Michigan. Although Hamtramck had its perks, it was time to “settle down for the long haul.” Like most Americans, this meant that Jeremy needed a home to raise a family, a means of providing for his family, and a good environment to live in. Based on Jeremy's specific wants, Brightmoor was perfect. He could use his land to grow food for his family and to sell at the Eastern Market. He wanted his son raised in a culturally diverse area varying in age and race. Anyone who has walked the streets of Brightmoor could vouch that it is a very diverse community. And so he made the move.

From the outside, the Kenward home is pretty similar to other homes in the neighborhood. What distinguishes the Kenward property from others on the block is their garden. On a plot of land next to their home, Jeremy and Jess have created their personal garden called Wild Earth. The huge yard was transformed into a field for crops including an apple tree, various bushes and sprouts, tomato vines, and a tunnel designed to let lettuce and other mixed greens grow during the winter. Each row of vegetables is meticulously lined up, using the yard as efficiently as possible.

I just want to live and make good choices.”

For the Kenwards, the garden is their lifeline. Aside from eating the produce they grow with just about every meal, Jeremy sells the majority of the food to Eastern Market and other farmers markets. After selling and using all the crops they need, the Kenwards distribute whatever is left to their neighbors in need of assistance. This ties into the strong sense of community in Brightmoor. Jeremy and Jess feel it is their obligation to help their fellow community residents, whether by giving out food or lending a helping hand on the community garden projects.

First and foremost, Jeremy and Jess's goal in living in Brightmoor is to make ends meet in an environment that they deem fit for raising a family. But when they have the time, the whole family helps out on the community projects. "We have pretty healthy boundaries," claims Jess in reference to not being too consumed in the community. Even though the community projects are a great way to get involved in the community, Jeremy and Jess realize that there needs to be some separation. "We're idealists, but we're people," Jeremy notes, "Sometimes life happens." Living off the land gives the family the opportunity to be together more often. "I have no illusion of perfection. I just want to live and make good choices."

Jess and Jeremy share their appreciation of locally grown food and community through their meals. The ingredients for **Seasonal Stir-Fry**..... may change depending on what is ripe at the time of cooking, but it's always delicious and there is always enough to share with the neighbors.

interview and profile by Andrew Geller



Seasonal Stir Fry

Ingredients

1 tbsp. olive oil
½ lb. wild mushrooms
2 small zucchini, sliced
2 beets or 2 carrots, sliced
½ red onion, sliced
1 quart sugar snap peas or green beans
½ to ¾ pound kale or other greens,
stems removed and leaves chopped
½ head broccoli, chopped
2 fat cloves garlic, minced
quinoa or rice, cooked
½ can coconut milk
3 tbsps. tamari
2 to 3 tbsps. cumin or curry powder
salt, to taste
cayenne pepper, to taste
parmesan cheese, to taste
sriracha sauce, to taste

Directions

1. **Heat** oil in a large skillet or wok.
2. **Sauté** the beets or carrots briefly.
3. **Add** coconut milk and tamari, bring to a boil, and cook for 2 minutes to soften vegetables.
4. **Add** mushrooms, zucchini, onion, peas or beans, broccoli, and garlic.
5. **Cook** until vegetables are just beginning to soften.
6. **Add** cumin or curry powder, salt, and cayenne, if desired.
7. **Add** kale and quinoa. Heat for one minute.
8. **Remove** from heat.
Allow to stand until kale looks darker.
9. **Add** parmesan and sriracha sauce to taste.





“Even though the area may look like we’re in despair,

*Cleo
Anderson*

Many people look at Detroit and see desolation. Cleo Anderson, however, sees possibility. “Even though the area may look like we’re in despair, we’re not in despair, because we all goin’ to pull together, and we goin’ to make it,” he says. Anderson has been a part of the neighborhood renewal process in Brightmoor since its beginning, allowing him to witness the determination of his tight knit community. Anderson expressed his confidence that with Brightmoor’s determination they will get Detroit out of the slump it is in, save their community, and keep their small society thriving.

Brightmoor’s ability to flourish was limited by the neighborhood’s inaccessibility to fresh food. To solve this problem, Anderson and his family, along with their neighbors, have begun to grow fresh produce in gardens in their yards. Anderson’s garden provides his family with some of their favorite foods. Although he is just beginning to take part in gardening, Anderson’s goal is to eventually become self-sustainable and to live off the land. “More people need to realize that the resources from a small garden can actually help them out a lot.” The impact of gardening on Anderson’s family has been immense; they not only eat higher quality food, but it costs them less money to get the food. “(If) I can save five dollars by growin’ some collard greens, that’s five dollars that I don’t have to give somebody else.” Anderson also loves knowing where his food comes from and that it is fresh. “I don’t know where half the stuff in the grocery store comes from,” he said. Overall, the benefits of gardening have outweighed the costs for Anderson and his neighbors.

we're not in despair,
because we all going to pull together,

and we going to make it.”

The gardens have not only improved Brightmoor economically, by allowing families to save money, but also socially. If you are willing to help tend the garden, then you can share in its harvest. “If you need [food], if you put in a little time to help me with it, take what you need, I don’t have a problem with it.” Anderson enjoys the taste of collard greens and says “they are hard to come by.” However, he can walk down the street and easily obtain them from his neighbor Scott. Anderson says many of his neighbors have helped him out when he was in need, and he would never hesitate to do the same for them. The community shares everything equally, including their crops. The gardens have prompted people in the neighborhood to reach out and help each other.

Gardening began Brightmoor’s community revitalization, but the movement spread like wild-fire to other aspects of the neighborhood. Across the street from Anderson’s house is the neighborhood’s newly built park. In Anderson’s opinion, the new park has been the best contribution to the neighborhood. Living right across the street from the park allows Anderson to keep an eye on his children and the needs of the park. Anderson’s pride in the new park becomes apparent by his willingness to mow and tend the grass in the large area since the city does not provide these services. Anderson explains that the park has brought the neighborhood together. In his opinion, the park

takes care of the neighborhood, so he takes care of the park. “It is new families and old families that benefit from the park,” Anderson says. “We have been neighbors, and we have not known each other, because none of us really had any reason to really get to know each other.” The park not only draws people together, but also gives many people a reason to stay in the community. Before the park was built, Anderson’s family almost moved out of Brightmoor. It was the park and the sudden community involvement that kept them tethered to their neighborhood.

The community of Brightmoor works together to grow and tend the gardens. The neighborhood children also contribute to managing the gardens. Gardening offers youth a way to meet and interact with other children while learning new skills. “My kids used to love video games,” Anderson said; however, he now sees his two sons working outside in the gardens more often than he sees them playing video games. “The silence without videogames has been beautiful!”

Many of the vegetables Anderson harvests from his garden are used in the Andersons’ meals. Anderson said that his wife insists that their family sit down and eat dinner together. Anderson was kind enough to share a recipe his entire family loves. To the Anderson family, **Peach Cobbler** signifies togetherness. *interview and profile by Katie Allis*

Peach Cobbler

Ingredients

- ½ cup butter
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ tsp. nutmeg or cinnamon
- ½ tsp. baking powder
- 1 cup milk
- 4-6 fresh peaches

Directions

1. **Melt** the butter in a 11x9 baking pan.
2. **Mix** all of the dry ingredients with milk.
3. **Pour** this mixture in the pan with the butter.
4. **Pour** a pot of boiling hot water over the peaches for 30 seconds to shock them. (This makes them easier to peel.)
3. **Peel** and slice the peaches.
5. **Spread** your peeled and sliced peaches evenly on top of the batter.
6. **Bake** at 350° for 35 minutes.





*“No one has the same talents
or same gifts.”*

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Marvin Tywan Bell

Marvin Tywan Bell's house was like a small jewel; though it was humble, one could tell the owner spent a lot of time grooming the

property. The grass was freshly mowed, the house was painted within the last few years, and the windows didn't have a spot on them. Behind a wooden fence stood a barking dog and in the driveway rested a four-door car.

Tywan is in his early thirties, roughly six feet tall, and of medium build. He sported an unzipped black jacket and jeans on account of the chilly weather. As he walked, he smiled at his surroundings, appreciating the sunny day in Brightmoor.

"This neighborhood has always been very diverse," he said. "The rest of Detroit doesn't really mix like this place." Tywan moved here back in 1989 with his parents. He was a ten-year-old child back then, looking for some friends and a home. Tywan had lived in many areas of Detroit as a child. No area struck him like Brightmoor did. "Before the gardens, you couldn't move into the neighborhood and immediately be a part of the community. Now, anybody can be accepted right away."

Gardening has benefited Brightmoor beyond bringing the people together. It has also instilled cleanliness. In fact, Tywan is a major proponent of maintaining a tidy neighborhood. "If you can kick it, you should pick it up," he said. "Your community is your home." He believes that this is one of the main reasons why Detroit is in such a dire situation. "Our generation puts too much responsibility on the government. Own your community; it's our job to improve things."

When we come together
we can get a lot more done.”

Tywan has attempted to take care of what he owns. Everything from his gardens to his dog is healthy. “He looks bad, but deep down he is a nice dog. If you locked up anybody, didn’t feed them or treat them with respect, that person would turn dangerous. Pit bulls get a bad reputation when they are really good dogs.” Tywan pointed out the similarities between pit bulls and gang activity in Detroit. He talked about how gang members grow up in horrible environments and their basic human needs aren’t fulfilled. Sometimes they don’t have a home, food, or even a semblance of a family. Tywan believes there is no easy solution to this problem, but there is still hope.

“Food expresses how different we all are,” Tywan said. “At the same time it shows how we are all the same. Food is different combinations of the same stuff. We are all eating the same thing in the end.” He wishes that others could see things this way. All over Detroit, people live in an individualistic world. “No one has the same talents or same gifts. When we come together we can get a lot more done,” he said. Tywan believes that Brightmoor’s success can be attributed to everyone coming together and using their best qualities in cooperation. He believes that if the people of Detroit collaborated more they could solve issues such as police brutality.

Concerning the abuses committed by police, Tywan believes that “color of skin doesn’t really matter... black, white, or any other color, it doesn’t matter.” He believes that Detroiters can fix problems like this through cooperation. “People need to be more proactive. It only takes a few leaders to make a difference.”

Tywan shared a recipe for **Stuffed Zucchini** which he says came originally from his Italian cousin. He grows zucchini in his garden and loves to make this dish because “it blends vegetables and meat so well.”

Marvin Tywan Bell’s philanthropic attitude coupled with his determination to be a leader is exactly what the city needs. “Detroit has lost self-ownership.” He believes that the people of Detroit need to be reminded of their role within the city. Mr. Bell gazed at the garden next to him and smiled as he said, “Hopefully [the next] generation will do a better job than mine. You all look promising enough.” Tywan then stood up and began the trek back to his house. On the way, he bent over and picked up a small piece of trash from the road.

interview and profile by John Klimkowski

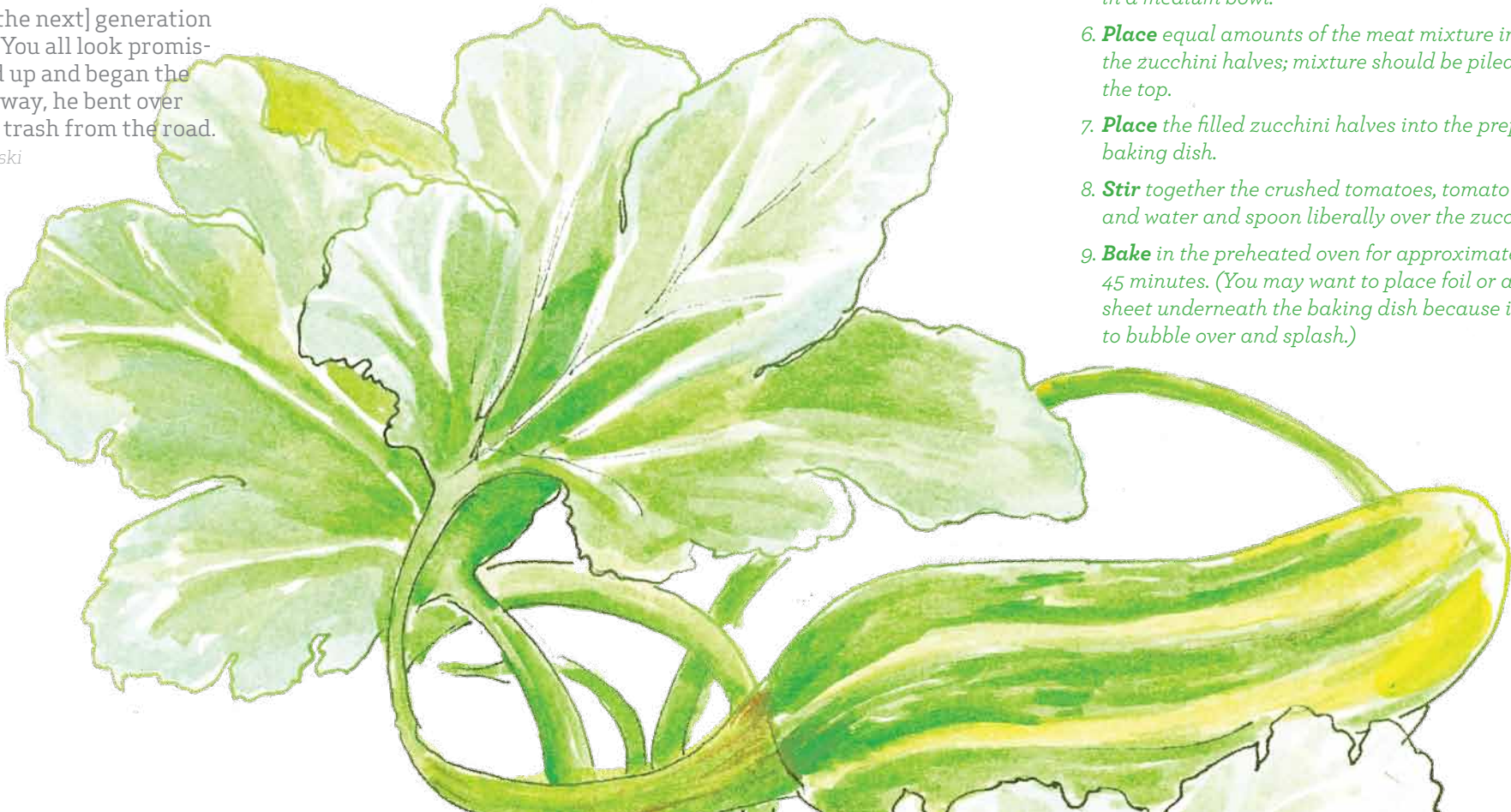
Stuffed Zucchini

Ingredients

- 4 medium zucchini
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 lb. Italian sausage
- 1 small onion, chopped
- ½ cup dried bread crumbs
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 (28 oz.) can crushed tomatoes
- 1 (10.75 oz.) can condensed tomato soup
- 1 cup water

Directions

1. **Preheat** oven to 350° F.
2. **Grease** or spray a 13x9 inch baking dish.
3. **Cut** the zucchini in half lengthwise. With a spoon, scoop out the seeds.
4. **Chop** and reserve about ¾ of the seeds for the stuffing.
5. **Mix** together the ground beef, sausage, chopped onion, bread crumbs, egg and the reserved zucchini seeds in a medium bowl.
6. **Place** equal amounts of the meat mixture into all of the zucchini halves; mixture should be piled up over the top.
7. **Place** the filled zucchini halves into the prepared baking dish.
8. **Stir** together the crushed tomatoes, tomato soup, and water and spoon liberally over the zucchini.
9. **Bake** in the preheated oven for approximately 45 minutes. (You may want to place foil or a cookie sheet underneath the baking dish because it tends to bubble over and splash.)







“Everyone that’s around here now is very friendly. I’ve got people I don’t even know driving by and waving at me when I sit out on the porch.”

Kenneth, excerpted from *Walking the Way*





*“My favorite part of Brightmoor
is the giving.”*

Claudia Fay

“Cookbooks are my obsession,” said Claudia Fay, as I sat on a plastic bench on her porch on a brisk fall day. She beamed as she pet her beloved dog Phoebe and told me about the years

she spent in the kitchen. Claudia has collected over a thousand cookbooks that she “loves to thumb through all the time,” and she has written six of her own. Claudia worked at Meijer for thirty-two years, and her workplace inspired many of her recipes.

Claudia moved to Brightmoor in 1989 with her sister, Trina, who now lives next door. Five years ago their mother, Dorothy, moved across the street, and one year ago their sister Delilah moved two houses down. Claudia explained that “this is a family block and we all take care of each other. It is very nice to live this close to family.” Each of the women has her own personal garden that she tends, and often various members of the community stop by to help them take care of their plants. Recently, two helpful neighbors mowed Claudia’s grass, a composter was installed in her backyard, and her garden was weeded and turned over before she planted new crops. This year she expanded her garden and planted tomatoes, cantaloupe, and eggplant.

Food is something that Claudia enjoys, and with community gardening she does not have to stress over obtaining produce. “I love to cook big meals that bring my neighbors together,” she said, but recently Claudia has found that she is more connected to her neighbors through the Neighbors Building Brightmoor gardens than through her delicious food. “The gardening has really brought the community closer. There are so many new friends I’ve made since becoming involved.”

They give their time
and their patience to me.”

Cheese Balls

Ingredients

- 8 oz. cream cheese
- 1 jar Old English cheese spread
- 1 jar Roka Blue cheese spread
- 1 tbsp. dried minced onion
- 1 cup of walnuts or pecans, chopped

Directions

- 1. **Mix** cheeses together with onion.
- 2. **Form** mixture into a ball.
- 3. **Roll** in nuts.
- 4. **Refrigerate** until firm.
- 5. **Serve** with a box of onion crackers.

The Neighbors Building Brightmoor program has changed Claudia’s life. “I have seen the community become more vibrant and come together,” she said. The cohesion she witnessed was fostered by the frequent potluck meals and community parks and gardens. She vividly remembered the town putting together an animal farm so the young Brightmoor residents could experience a zoo in their backyard. When Claudia talked about the community growth she could only use one word — “wonderful!”

When I asked Claudia what her favorite part of Brightmoor is her response was clear and heartfelt, “The giving. They give their time and their patience to me. Gardening has extended my family to include more than just my mom and sisters,” she said. As Claudia told me about her recipes, she gave me detailed instructions not just on how to make her dishes but on who to enjoy them with. Included in this cookbook are five of Claudia’s famous dishes:

Cheese Balls (a Brightmoor favorite),
Oven Roasted Potatoes,
Old Fashioned Cucumber Sandwiches,
Roasted Pineapple (Claudia’s mom’s favorite),
and **Pumpkin Rice Pudding with Apple Pecan Sauce**. With Claudia’s recipes, “you’re going to need your hands and you’re going to get a little messy.” *interview and profile by Alison Bloch*

Oven Roasted Potatoes

Ingredients

- 6 medium potatoes
- ¼ cup melted butter
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- 1 garlic clove, minced

Directions

- 1. **Preheat** oven to 375°
- 2. **Peel** potatoes and cut into chunks.
- 3. **Place** potatoes in 12x8 or 13x9 inch baking dish.
- 4. **Combine** all seasonings together with the butter.
- 5. **Pour** butter mixture over potatoes.
- 6. **Toss** to coat evenly. Mix well!
- 7. **Bake** at 375° for 55 minutes or until crisp, lightly brown and tender.
- 8. **Stir** twice during baking.

Old Fashioned Cucumber Sandwich

Ingredients

- cucumber
- Party bread (or thin bread cut in small squares)
- butter
- mayonnaise
- Italian seasoning

Directions

- 1. **Slice** cucumber very thin.
- 2. **Spread** butter on the top slice of bread and mayonnaise on the bottom slice.
- 3. **Layer** cucumber on the bottom slice.
- 4. **Sprinkle** cucumber with Italian seasoning.
- 5. **Cover** with top slice of bread and lightly press together.



Pumpkin Rice Pudding

Ingredients

1 (16 oz.) can pumpkin
½ cup raisins
1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
¼ tsp. salt
1 ½ tsp. cinnamon
½ tsp. ginger
⅛ tsp. cloves
1 beaten egg
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 (12oz.) can evaporated milk
3 cups cooked rice (extra long grain)

Directions

1. **Combine** pumpkin, raisins, sugar, salt, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, egg and vanilla in a bowl.
1. **Mix** well.
2. **Stir** in evaporated milk gradually.
3. **Mix** well, then stir in cooked rice.
4. **Pour** mixture into a buttered 2 ½ quart baking dish.
5. **Bake** at 350° for a minimum of 35-40 minutes.

Apple Pecan Sauce

Ingredients

1 cup apple juice
¼ cup packed brown sugar
1 tbsp. cornstarch
½ cup chopped pecans
1 tbsp. butter

Directions

1. **Combine** apple juice, brown sugar and cornstarch in a small sauce pan.
2. **Stir** until the cornstarch is completely dissolved.
3. **Bring** to a boil, stirring constantly.
4. **Reduce** heat and simmer for 1 minute.
5. **Stir** in the pecans and butter.



Roasted Pineapple

Ingredients

1 pineapple
juice of 1 lime
sugar
oil

Directions

1. **Preheat** oven to 400°.
2. **Peel** and slice pineapple.
3. **Place** onto a cookie sheet.
4. **Pour** lime juice and sprinkle sugar over pineapple.
5. **Top** off with some oil.
6. **Bake** for 12 minutes and serve!



*“There are lots of possibilities here
and just a great spirit.”*

Bill & Billie Hickey

Looking to downsize and simplify their lives and to become more involved in urban agriculture, Bill and Billie Hickey moved to

Brightmoor in June of 2010. When Bill reflects on his first visit to Brightmoor, he admits that he saw only the negative, instead of focusing on all the potential Brightmoor has to offer. Billie recalls trash piled up in empty lots, burned out homes, and neglected lawns that grew over the curbs into the street.

Bill and Billie looked past signs of urban decay to see the potential in their new home. Growing up in the countryside, Billie felt the endless potential of Brightmoor's open land when she looked at the tall trees and vast blue sky through the windows of her new home. With her optimistic attitude, Billie saw Brightmoor as a neighborhood primed for change, with the help of many already involved residents.

Since the Hickeys have moved to Brightmoor, they have witnessed a significant change. The number of people involved in the community amazes Billie. "There are people now on almost every street on the Farmway who are working together on things," she says. Bill observes his neighbors gardening together, cleaning up lots, boarding up vacant houses, sharing tools and lawnmowers, and just stopping by to talk.

Bill and Billie work on the community garden next to their home and have gotten many children on the street involved. The garden is a peaceful place, where respect for plants, insects, and each other prevails. In addition to eating fresher and healthier foods, the kids are also developing "a realization that they don't have to be dependent on others for their food," Billie says.

Colcannon

Ingredients

1 ½ lbs. potatoes
1 ½ cups milk
6 scallions
1 ½ cups boiled green cabbage* or kale
1 tbsp. butter
1 tbsp. parsley, chopped
pepper and salt

Optional: 3 oz. of grated sharp cheddar cheese to make the American version.

*In some districts, the cabbage is omitted.

Directions

1. **Boil** potatoes and mash.
 2. **Add** boiling milk and scalded, chopped scallions.
 3. **Beat** until fluffy.
 4. **Toss** the cooked cabbage, finely chopped, gently in the melted butter.
 5. **Add** to the potatoes, together with the parsley, and fold well.
1. **Season** generously with pepper and salt. Makes 6-8 servings.

“Traditionally, colcannon is always served at Hallow’s Eve. A miniature thimble, horseshoe, button, silver sixpence, and wedding ring are each wrapped in white paper and dropped into the mixture. These foretell the fortunes of the finders. If your portion contains the ring you will marry and live happily ever after. The silver sixpence denotes wealth, the horseshoe good fortune, the thimble a spinster, and the button a bachelor.”

The Art of Irish Cooking,
Monica Sheridan, ed.



Magenta and Orange Slaw

Ingredients

Slaw
3 large or 5 medium sized carrots
1 large or 2 medium raw beets (red or golden)
3 tbsp roasted almonds

Dressing
¼ cup rice vinegar
2 tbsp. plain yogurt
1 tbsp. lime juice
salt and freshly ground black pepper

Directions

1. **Peel** and shred the carrots and the beets.
2. **Chop** the almonds.
3. **Combine** the ingredients for the dressing.
4. **Mix** the dressing into the slaw.
5. **Serve** immediately or refrigerate.

Bill shared a recipe that connects him to his Irish heritage on his father’s side. Ironically, it was his Polish aunt, who married into the Irish side of his family, who gave him a treasured cookbook called “The Art of Irish Cooking.” Bill loves to make **Colcannon**. He says of the dish, “This is very Irish and far nicer than it sounds.” His American adaptation includes the addition of cheddar cheese.

Billie’s recipe, **Magenta and Orange Slaw**, is one of her favorites because of the beautiful colors of the raw carrots and beets. She admits, “I’m really into color!” She grows both vegetables in her garden and loves making the slaw during the summer. Billie believes the flavors are more alive in dishes that use raw vegetables.

Sharing food, garden tools, and the work of community building, Bill and Billie Hickey are deeply enmeshed in the Brightmoor neighborhood and celebrate its continued progress. Billie notes that when neighbors come by to help, “it really [feels] like a wonderful explosion of energy and hope.” Bill hopes that neighbors will continue to depend on and be generous with one another. “There are lots of possibilities here,” he says, “and just a great spirit.” interviews and profile by Julie Ramus and Sara Pizzo







“The idea is that when people go by they see this explosion of color and life and just see something that looks really special that hopefully brings a smile.”

Jeremy, excerpted from *Walking the Way*





“All I wanted is just
a little piece of land,

Myra
Jessie

Myra opens her door with a warm, friendly smile, and at that moment, all the nervousness I had of interviewing her went away. She quickly leads me to the dining table in her kitchen. She had laid out some kale as well as some other greens for dinner that night as she has done for many nights in the past.

Myra holds a small journal in her hands. Inside she has written many of her recipes. Accompanying each recipe is a memory or story that she shared with her son. Each of these recipes signifies the strong connection that the two share with food. Myra insists that her son, who is now grown, still loves cooking. They often compare recipes and share them with each other.

Myra single-handedly raised her only son. She worked full time as a truck driver for many, many years. She believes that she was able to show her son a masculine side by working in a male-dominated field. He would be able to see her feminine side when she would dress up as well as when she would cook. She would often cook with him to take his mind off other things that were going on in their lives.

On one of these days, Myra spent a “day doing everything an eight-year-old liked to do.” When the day was finally coming to an end, her son decided he wanted to stay up longer instead of going to sleep as his mother wanted. Before she thought of a way to calm him down, he asked in a very sweet voice, “Can we do something fun? Just me and you? Can we sit on the porch on and watch some stars? Drinking some shakes?” Myra couldn’t resist and sat with her son Myron on the porch for the rest of the night. She laughed aloud lightly after reading the story. I could almost feel her happiness as she reflected on the memory of that **Shake**.

Shaking Up Stars

Ingredients

- ½ gallon of ice cream (any flavor)
- 2 (22 oz.) cups or glasses
- 1 spoon
- 2 straws

Directions

1. Stir ice cream with your spoon until desired smoothness.
Yes people, stir not blend.

a little house, and some water running through it.”

Myra begins another story. When there would be other people in Myra’s life, Myron would sometimes begin to feel insecure about his role in the house. He would suddenly start wanting to take out the trash, wash the car, and clean the garage. So then, the two of them would have a day just to themselves. They would go to the market and get “a couple of steaks, a big baked potato and toppings.” Myra would put on Myron’s favorite TV show for him. They would then cook all of the food together and begin eating. Making “**Man of the House**” would make Myron “feel like a king.”

Myra’s food has not only allowed her to connect with her family but also with the Brightmoor community. She often buys vegetables that her neighbors have grown. She doesn’t care “if it’s not big enough or if it doesn’t look right” and recently purchased purple string beans from one of them. Gardening has always been a passion of Myra’s. When she was a young single mother, she would often turn to gardening as a form of therapy and relaxation. It would also provide her with a distraction when she had to watch people her own age go out while she took care of her son. She takes pride in the fact that she was able to take responsibility and not rely on her parents for support. Her parents were not willing to help her. They never volunteered to take care of son while she was working, so she had to make arrangements on her own. When Myra was explaining this to me, however, I did not hear a hint of resentment or frustration. Instead, I was able to see her strength and perseverance of her spirit.

Another amazing characteristic of Myra is her optimism. She doesn’t seem to let her struggles get in the way of her hope for the future. A little piece of land, a little house, and some water running through it – that’s all Myra wanted. She is able to have all of these things in Brightmoor. This has inspired Myra to organize a clean-up for the river running through Brightmoor. She strongly believes that if they’re able to clean up the river, fish and other wildlife will return to the Brightmoor area. She says that the work being done within the Brightmoor community has inspired her to come up with ways in which she can give back. She has also taken over the garden across the street and weeds it as much as possible. She feels good about the work she is doing and believes it’s such a contrast from “working to pay bills.” The beauty within Brightmoor provides hope for her as well.

I felt Myra’s kindness personally when she invited me to dine with her anytime that I returned to Brightmoor. “Anytime you want a home-cooked meal – let me know what you want,” she said with a smile. *interview and profile by Aya Mimura*

The Man of the House

Ingredients

- 2 (8-10 oz.) choice steaks
- 2 large Idaho potatoes
- 1 (8 oz.) bag of shredded cheese
- 1 bottle of Hormel bacon pieces
- 1 bottle of steak sauce
- 2 tsp. of sea salt and cracked pepper

Directions

1. **Season** steaks with salt and pepper.
2. **Cook** to desired doneness, about 3-5 minutes each side.
3. **Place** potatoes in saucepan and fill with water, covering potatoes.
4. **Boil** for 45 minutes and remove.
5. **Cut** potatoes down centers.
6. **Load** potatoes with cheese or bacon.
7. **Dowse** steaks with steak sauce as desired.





*“I look outside and I see this,
it gives me hope,*

*Angela
Watson*

and her son Alex live in a yellow house among rows of run down structures and cluttered yards in Brightmoor. Angela, who works as a dealer at a casino in downtown Detroit, moved to Brightmoor when she was a toddler and has called the neighborhood home for over thirty years. Over that time, the once upbeat and family oriented Detroit neighborhood has transformed into a crime-ridden town. Often times, Angela doesn't even feel comfortable allowing Alex to go outside alone. "It's gotten worse and worse," she said. "There are very few occupied houses. When I drive around, every single day I am in disbelief this is the same neighborhood."

What's ironic about Angela's story is that her family originally moved to Brightmoor because it was a safe, close-knit, working class community. It was the kind of place, Angela noted, where neighbors left their doors open and children constantly played outdoors. But Angel (as she is commonly known in the community) watched Brightmoor transform right before her eyes with the rise of crack cocaine in the late 1980s. As crime increased in the neighborhood and drugs became more prevalent, families fled.

"When you see it happening it's crazy, because you wonder what you can do to stop it, but the reality is there's nothing you could have done," Angel said. "The drugs and crime ran everyone away. We don't let our kids outside. Nobody's been outside for years."

The changes in Brightmoor forced Angel to give up many hopes she once had for herself and Alex. She said that she dreamed of being able to walk her son to school, but the neighborhood school shut down before Alex entered preschool and now he

takes a bus every day. She dreamed of her son having sleepovers with neighborhood friends and her house being the place where all the neighborhood children would hang out at and play. Just like her son, Angel grew up an only child but said she never felt lonely or as if she was "missing something" because there were always children for her to play with. But because there are so few families in the community today, Alex isn't surrounded by friends as Angel was as a child.

Though Angel is deeply saddened by Brightmoor's decline, she remained committed to her neighborhood, refusing to move and fiercely optimistic. The recent developments in the community have greatly improved her outlook. The positive changes, she said, are in large part because of the efforts of Riet Shumack, a Brightmoor resident committed to bringing the community together through an urban gardening movement. A garden now grows across the street from Angela's home.

"When I wake up every day I look outside, I see this garden and I smile, because it gives me hope that I am not alone in my beliefs, which is something I haven't had in a long time," she said.

More freshly grown foods are just what a community like Brightmoor needs, particularly because many residents are struggling economically and may not always have enough to eat. Because there is no local grocery store, many people don't have access to quality foods. Angel has to drive to another town to get to Meijer or Wal-Mart to buy groceries, but those without cars are out of luck. She feels that in order for the gardens to truly have a positive impact, there should be signs informing residents that they are allowed to pick whatever they want to take home.

which is something I haven't had in a

long time.”

As more people become involved in the Brightmoor gardening movement, it is also possible that the community might come together to eat. Angel has fond memories of eating dinner with neighbors as a child, especially when they barbequed together. Angel, who still loves barbequed foods, remembers that once during a major power outage, all the neighbors brought out their meats to grill together before they spoiled.

The community has positive attributes that will hopefully draw families back to the area. It is the farthest northwest neighborhood within the city limits and has great freeway access. Angel loves the feeling of living in a relaxed, country atmosphere in the middle of a big city and notes that some neighbors do still look out for one another. Angel in particular has always stuck by the values, such as loving your neighbor, protecting one another, saying hello, lending and borrowing, and treating others with kindness, that were once so prevalent in Brightmoor. “I know how good it can be when everyone is doing that,” she said. “So despite the lack of people I do what I can.”

Angel says that living in Brightmoor has shaped the person she is today, an individual she describes as eclectic, kind, diverse, street smart, and who understands the value of close friendships. As she continues to go through life, Angel is hopeful that she can show others the potential that Brightmoor has through her own actions. “I feel like I am a positive reflection of this area,” she said. “I feel like I’m a good example of what this area once was and what it could be.”

The recipes included here come from Angel’s extended family. The first, **Dale’s Lasagna**, was a special occasion meal from Angel’s childhood, that was served on her birthday or other times when the family was able to splurge on ingredients. Unlike most lasagnas, it is made without ricotta cheese and can be made equally well with turkey or beef burger. Another, **Dora’s Beef Stroganoff** was a household staple. This delicious recipe, from Angel’s grandmother Esqualine Lord, feeds a crowd at little expense. *interview and profile by Jessica Gelfarb*

Dora’s Beef Stroganoff

Ingredients

1 package beef tips (you can substitute 2 lbs. hamburger or turkey burger for variety or cost)
1 bag wide egg noodles
1 large can of cream of mushroom soup
1 cup sour cream
¼ stick butter

Directions

1. **Cut** beef tips into bite-sized pieces.
2. **Fill** large pot with water and bring to a boil.
3. **Melt** butter in a large skillet.
4. **Cook** beef tips on medium heat for about 15 minutes, until beef is browned. Cover to speed browning.
5. **Add** noodles to boiling water. Prepare according to package directions.
6. **Drain** noodles and return to pot.
7. **Add** soup and beef to noodles and stir.
8. **Cook** on low heat for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
9. **Fold** in sour cream and serve.

Serves 6–8 as a stand alone dish. Very filling.

Dale’s Lasagna *by Dale Mogolis*

Ingredients

1 box lasagna noodles
2 lbs. hamburger or turkey burger
1 large jar spaghetti sauce
1 bag shredded mozzarella cheese
1 bag shredded colby cheese
1 bag shredded mild cheddar
1 small onion, diced

Directions

1. **Preheat** oven to 350°.
2. **Mix** together all 3 bags of cheese in a large bowl.
3. **Fill** a large dutch oven or stock pot with water and bring to a boil.
4. **Cook** hamburger or turkey burger and onion in a large skillet on medium heat until meat is browned, approximately 10 minutes.
5. **Add** noodles to boiling water and prepare according to directions on package.
6. **Drain** and set aside.
7. **Combine** spaghetti sauce and meat with onions in a large saucepan and cook on medium heat until sauce is hot, about 5 minutes.
8. **Lay** 3 or 4 noodles lengthwise in a 9” x 13” casserole dish to cover bottom of dish.
9. **Ladle** meat sauce over noodles until covered.
10. **Sprinkle** cheese by the handfuls to cover meat sauce. This is the first layer.
11. **Repeat** process two more times.
12. **Lay** noodles on the top the same way. Add remaining meat sauce and cheese. The top layer should be very cheesy!
13. **Bake**, uncovered, for 30 minutes. You may want to place dish on a cookie sheet to catch drips.
14. **Remove** from oven and let set for 10–15 minutes. Serve with buttered bread or garlic bread.

Serves 8





*“[The kids] are growing,
and I’m growing,*

Gwen Shivers

It has been thirty years since Gwen has arrived in Brightmoor, but it is hard to find traces of the difficult history of Detroit in her demeanor. Instead, her

bright smile, warm lively voice, and hearty laughter reveal a collected yet hopeful heart. Through her words, it becomes clear that Brightmoor is a part of who she is. “It’s been a lot of challenges living over here,” she confesses, “but we’ve made it through it, you know. I’m still here, so, the challenges were, I think, only to make us stronger”.

Such optimism befits a woman who makes her livelihood caring for children. She first began running her daycare as volunteer work: while young mothers studied to receive their GEDs, Gwen stepped in to help watch their children. It was not long before it became a business. Now, during the summer, she has her hands full with ten to fifteen kids per day.

As if that is not enough, Gwen also takes care of a garden, “Gwen’s Edible Playscape.” She can barely contain her laughter while explaining how the garden first came to be. It all began with the neighboring gardens in Brightmoor. Gwen had made it a habit to take small excursions to these gardens with her daycare kids. They were pestering her constantly to take them to the gardens, so she thought it would be nice to have one just for them.

But how did it become “edible”? The kids were taught that they could eat many things from the neighborhood gardens — and even some flowers. Gwen, bursting with laughter, says, “they think they can eat everything!” She realized then that whatever garden she made for the kids should be edible and educational. Now, through the help of

and we're learning together.”

Riet Schumack, any passerby can witness Gwen’s vision turned reality in the organized mulch paths and leafy islands of her “playscape.”

Though Gwen started gardening as a child, it is clear that every step of the gardening project has been a learning process for her kids, and for herself. It is “much easier to garden now, than back then,” she exclaims, noting how gardening methods and techniques have changed. She chuckles as she describes an obsessive fascination with the way compost “turns back to dirt.” And thanks to an ‘Urban Roots’ class she took recently, her garden is flourishing and in great shape.

Gardening has also given Gwen a better understanding of healthy eating and caring for her body. She says that since her work with gardening began, her favorite foods have changed drastically: greens, cucumbers, strawberries... she cuts the list short but professes her love for garden produce. Gwen declares that the process of changing her diet required much adjusting and looking at things

differently; ultimately, it has affected the kids positively, too. She laughs again as she declares, “Now instead of saying ‘let’s go to McDonald’s,’ they say ‘peanut butter jelly!’”

Gwen is a family woman who can talk endlessly of holiday cookouts, fish fries, and Southern soul food (she recalls her **Famous Sweet Potato Pie**..... recipe effortlessly), but she is here in Brightmoor, the neighborhood she loves, caring for the kids, caring for the people. She praises increased communication within the community and takes it as a sure sign that there has been growth here. “[The kids] are growing, and I’m growing, and we’re learning together,” she says about the garden, but the sentiment applies equally to the larger scheme of things. Our interview comes to a close as Brian, one of the kids in her care, runs up calling Gwen by her daycare title, “Lady! Lady! Lady! Mom said I’m getting big!” and it seems a shrewdly apt ending to it all. *interview by Hannah Ryou and Alexis Stepanek, profile by Hannah Ryou*

Gwen’s Famous Sweet Potato Pie

Ingredients

- 4 large (3-4 lbs.) sweet potatoes
- 2 sticks of butter, melted
- 1½ tbsp. flour
- 1 (14 oz.) can Eagle Brand condensed milk
- 4 cups of sugar or to taste
- 6-8 eggs
- lemon or vanilla flavoring
- 4 graham cracker pie crusts
- nutmeg and cinnamon to taste

Directions

1. **Boil** and skin sweet potatoes until soft.
 2. **Mix** all ingredients together until lumps are all out and consistency is nice and creamy, almost like peanut butter. Try to pull out strings from sweet potato.
 3. **Pour** into 4 regular or graham cracker pie crusts.
 4. **Bake** at 375° at least 30 minutes or until crust is brown.
- Makes 4 pies.



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