

Almadale Farms Newsletter



Santa's Visit to the Clubhouse



We think this was one of the best turnouts that we've had in the past few years! All the children enjoyed the lollipops and toys that were given out by Santa and his helper, **Colton Lind**. We had the cutest babies take their first pictures with Santa. We even had one family bring their dog to take his photo with Santa! The families enjoyed Christmas music, cookies and hot cocoa, while meeting new neighbors and making new friends. A festive time was had by all!

A special thanks to **Daphne Winton, Cooper Phelan, Lynette Lind, and Colton Lind** for their help.



Almadale Angels Open Their Hearts to Help Others

A great big thank you to everyone who participated in the **Big Brothers-Big Sisters (BBBS) Adopt a Family Christmas Program**.

We were able to provide everything on the Akins list and more! Our Almadale neighbors did an amazing job with shopping and bringing everything wrapped. On your behalf I purchased 40 gifts for teens for the BBBS Christmas Party and made a donation to cover other expenses BBBS incurred.

I tried to adopt another family but they already had 23 families adopted this year, at least 10 more than the last couple of years. I don't know whether the economy is recovering or if we're just all glad we're not in that situation.

Now about our Akins Family. This was the neediest family we have adopted in the last 9 years. I was so sad for a couple of days after delivering it took me a while to process what we saw and what all of you did to bring some hope to this family. Even if it is only for a week. One of our neighbors also got her office involved with adopting the Akins so there were 5 of us delivering.

There are at least 12 people living there and there were 17 of us in their living room about the size of my master bath. Tasheka Akins' sister and kids live there and her handicapped brother Mario. We usually let the kids open a gift but there were so many there I decided to let Tasheka decide how to distribute it between all of them. The beds, bedding and tree were delivered a few days earlier.

Our sweet **Daphne Winton** noticed the information about the handicapped brother and offered some of her late husband's stuff if Mario (31 years old) could use it. I called and found out he has been a paraplegic since the age of 16 from a gunshot wound and they would like anything we could help them with. I didn't mention in the previous note that he was in a diaper when BBBS interviewed the family (also when we delivered) and it turns out that he could go to the bathroom on his own if he had a raised toilet

seat and rails. Daphne had the seat so I bought the rails with the donated money. Something we wouldn't think twice about getting but it was beyond their reach. He also didn't get his allotment of adult diapers for the month so I bought those too.

Daphne had some handrails that could enable Mario to drive a car and I asked him if he knew how to drive and he said yes he just needs a car. One outside their house had a flat tire and no plates and the other VERY OLD truck only had one of 3 windows in it. He looked so hopeful but I just knew it would never happen for him.

The whole visit was like that. They live mattress to mattress in the rooms to provide a place for them to sleep. Someone donated a used vacuum but there was not a rug in the home. The linoleum was totally worn off in most areas of the house. The good part of the day was Ms. Akins' face and hugs for all of us and seeing the kids run joyfully to their rooms and jump on their new mattresses and of course knowing that we made a difference for even a day.

We needed 3 beds for the Akins family and we got 5. I found out that BBBS has a waiting list of people who need beds so we provided bedding for other families also.

An Almadale Family donated a living room set and another family donated 5 used TVs. The Akins family got one of the TVs with their 1st VCR and they were excited.

Thanks again for all your support of this wonderful program. You will receive your donation sheet directly from BBBS. Happy New Year! **Rene Platten** 861-4183



Children's Vegetable Gardens

Will Stafford



This article is a belated reply to an Almadale Farm neighbor who called me approximately one year ago regarding vegetable gardens for children and specifically what vegetables would be the easiest to grow. This is a subject that is very close to my heart.

When I was a young boy growing up in the 40's.....during the WWII era...almost everything seemed to be in short supply. As part of the war effort, the government rationed foods like sugar, butter, milk, cheese, eggs, coffee, meat and canned goods and especially gasoline. Labor and transportation shortages made it very difficult to harvest and transport fruits and vegetables to market. In order to minimize these problems, our government encouraged Americans to plant "Victory Gardens."

My family and I were very fortunate—we lived in a small town in Gibson County and gardening was not a novel idea. While most Victory Gardens were relatively small, my dad had a 1/2 acre garden and we always ate well. In order to encourage and promote my sister's and my interest in gardening, he gave each of a full row in which we could plant and grow our own vegetables. We were also expected to care for them. I remember well that my first interest was in strawberries. As a result of my dad's early encouragement, I developed a life long passion for all forms of gardening. I'm beginning to see a renewed interest in gardening by parents and children. Almadale Farms is no exception.

Where do junior gardeners and their parents start with their gardening activities? First, pick a sunny location with good soil—six hours of sunlight is minimum. Do not place your garden in a low spot. At night cold air settles in low areas so they will be colder than high spots. The ground shouldn't be too hard (clay) or too sandy. Make sure you can reach your spot with a hose and sprinkler. Watering your garden in the morning is the best time since watering in the late evening will encourage fungus. Your garden should be located away from the shade cast by buildings and trees—especially the root systems of trees, which will steal essential nutrients and water. Tree roots will reach out at least as far as the trees' outermost branches—the so-called drip line.

Soil Preparation. Along with lots of sunlight, a successful vegetable garden requires well-prepared soil. Bad soil can make gardening difficult but any soil can be improved. The soil in Almadale Farms has a heavy concentration of clay which feels slick and does not allow easy growth. However, clay soil can be improved by adding generous amounts of organic matter such as leaves, compost, kitchen wastes, alfalfa pellets, cotton seed meal, soy meal, grass and other organic matter. I've written numerous articles on the subject of improving soil and will be happy to share this information with

you. Since most of you will be starting "from scratch" you may wish to use some of the commercial "top soil" which is widely available. While I rarely use commercial fertilizer, you may want to mix some 5-10-10 fertilizer and lime when you spade up or till your garden plot for the first time. However, soil improvement is a year around affair.

What are the easiest vegetables to grow? I think I've grown just about everything during my long gardening career but I have found the following vegetables to be the easiest to grow. Earliest planting dates are in parenthesis.

Tomatoes. There are multiple varieties of tomatoes but the emphasis for a first time gardener should be on ease of planting, maintenance and heavy bearing. Get a variety of cherry tomatoes such as Tiny Tim. Cherry tomatoes are very hardy and prolific. A stake or wire support should be used. If planted properly, you should have a new crop of tomatoes every two days. Regular tomatoes are not recommended as starters for children. Use transplants. I buy my plants at Russell's in Collierville. (May 1)

Arugula. This is a form of lettuce and is very hardy. Broadcast seed and cover lightly with 1/2" of soil. In the absence of rain spray lightly daily. (April 15)

Radishes. Radishes are root vegetables and exist in shades of red, purple and white. Plant seeds 1/2' below the soil's surface with 1" between each. (April 1)

Potatoes. Get regular seed potatoes or even use those bought in the grocery store. Be sure the potatoes have eyes which look like warts. Cut the potatoes in half—or plant whole—plant approximately 2' deep with the eyes facing upward. A late frost will not hurt potatoes. (April 1)

Spinach. Plant 1" deep for specimen plants or sow for thick growth. (April 1)

Lettuce. Lettuce is very easy to grow. Get the garden variety and sow, then cover with 1/2" of soil. (April 1)

Onions. Use sets. Plant approximately 1" deep. (March 15)

Cucumbers and squash. They are also easy to grow but runners can become intrusive. Use plants that produce the smaller varieties. (May 1)

Remember: Our weather can be very unpredictable and re-plantings are occasionally necessary.

There are many other vegetables but those above are among the easiest. Teaching your child to garden now may just be the beginning of a lifelong interest in a wonderful and restful avocation.



Almadale Neighbor has 2 couches for sale.....one is yellow, two cushion, tight-back with throw pillows. Cut chenille, roll arms. Excellent condition. \$950. The second one is gold two cushion with back pillows and roll arms. \$950 also. Both are in excellent condition. Both custom made from interior decorator shops on the square. I also have a side by side white Kitchenaid refrigerator/freezer. One very small dent in left front door, otherwise absolute perfect condition. \$550. Oriental rug approximate size 10 x 12. Reds and blues. \$300 TV cabinet, 2 doors on front that open, when closed has the appearance of drawers. Grey-green in color with spindle legs. Has a lakeside cabin feel to it. \$300. Call **Connie Nelson** at 229-8235

Lose Weight Challenge with Snap Fitness



Local Fitness Club Introduces "Lose Weight" Challenge Snap Fitness offers motivation, great prizes for 8-week competition

Now that New Year's has come and gone the motivation to stick with those resolutions may be fading.

This year, the local Snap Fitness is helping members stay on-track and to shave off those unwanted holiday pounds with their "8-Week Lose Weight Challenge". To help members get started on their path to better results, the club is also offering this limited time joining offer: 8-Week Trial Membership for \$59, plus 2 FREE Personal Training sessions.

"This is one of the toughest times of the year when it comes to reaching your fitness goals," said **Alison Lenz, Snap Fitness owner in Collierville/Germantown**. "The initial excitement from New Year's has worn off, and now the key is finding the motivation to stick with it. We help take away the excuses by offering a nearby club that's easy to get to and open 24/7 so you can work out on your schedule and low monthly dues and the ability to join month-to-month so you don't have to make a long-term commitment. Plus with our 8-week challenge, we make losing weight fun and rewarding, helping you get the results you want."

Located at 9947 Wolf River Blvd, the Collierville Snap Fitness offers 24/7 access via electronic key card entry, along with the industry's best cardio and weight training equipment for a quality workout experience at an affordable price.

The competition kicks-off March 1, and runs through April 21. It's free for all Snap Fitness members to participate, and includes a recommended workout plan, regular, private weigh-ins and a number of great local and national prizes for winners.

Member can also get ahead in the challenge faster with Snap Fitness' brand-new easyFIT program, designed to help you get the results you want both in and out of the club. easyFIT offers more tools to stay motivated and reach goals, including goal-based exercise and meal plans, activity tracking and much more.

For more information on the challenge as well as Snap Fitness' special joining offer visit www.snapfitness.com. To arrange a tour of the club or get more information, call 901-457-7351 or visit www.snapfitness.com/colliervilletn.



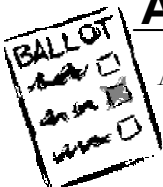
Almadale Farms Progressive Dinner

Barbara Parkhurst

Almadale Farms is going to have a Progressive Dinner the end of February. If you are interested in participating, please call me by February 20th and sign up. We need one home to host for appetizers, a few homes to host for entrees and one home to host desserts. We have done this in the past and had a wonderful turnout! What a GREAT way to get to know your neighbors! Let me know if you would like to be a part of this fun experience.

Barbara Parkhurst
861-5054

Annual Homeowners' Meeting



Almadale Farms Annual Homeowners' Meeting will be **Thursday, February 17th**. You will be electing a Board of Directors for 2011. Mark your calendars to attend and learn what's happening in the neighborhood!

Madonna Circle — A Tradition of Giving for 75 Years

Madonna Circle, a city-wide Catholic women's organization, was founded in 1936 to promote service, fellowship, spiritual growth, and to help the less fortunate members of Memphis community.

Our Antiques, Garden and Gourmet Show held every February, has raised over two million dollars for charities ranging from the Elvis Presley Trauma Center at the Med to the Alzheimer's Association to Porter-Leath.

We are celebrating our 75th year with a Charity Gala and Silent and Live Auction on Saturday, **April 9, 2011 at the Hilton Memphis**. This year the primary recipient of funds from the Gala will be **Page Robbins Adult Day Care Center**.

Page Robbins Adult Day Care Center provides exceptional weekday care for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of memory loss and the frail elderly while providing much needed relief for the care givers. Page Robbins is an independent non-profit agency. Funds received from Madonna Circle will be used to offer financial aid assistance to families who would not be able to afford the care or who are significantly struggling to provide this care for their loved ones.

We hope that you will be part of our efforts to benefit Page Robbins this year. Please consider donating an item or a certificate for the Auction. To order tickets or to the Gala or to make a personal donation call **Nancy Williams** at (901)568-8133 or email her at 4kids4us@bellsouth.net. Tickets are \$100 per person.

For more info call **Almadale Farms neighbors: Sharon Brawner** (854-9369)



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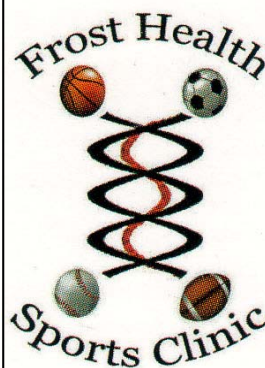
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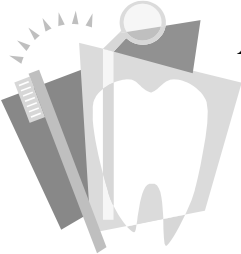
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