

## Was the Ground Always That Far Away?

By Janet Myers

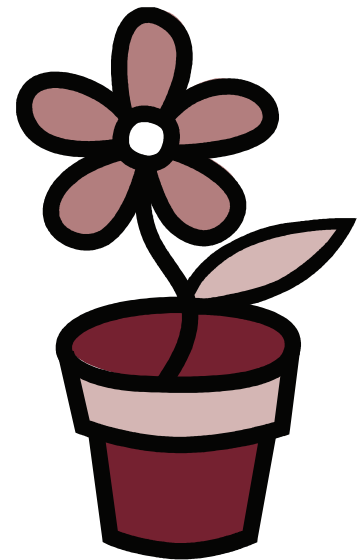
Do you find yourself spending less time enjoying the garden because it's become too hard to get up from planting and weeding? Or do you find that your hands just don't work like they used to? Perhaps you don't live in a home with enough outdoor space for a "real" garden. You don't need an acre of land or to work on your knees to get the benefits of gardening. With a container garden you can still enjoy tasty, fresh vegetables, the joy of playing in the dirt, the smell of fresh herbs, and the beauty of colorful flowers.

Container gardens, like their gardeners, come in all configurations. They can be modest or flamboyant, small or large, sheltered or sunlit – or any combination. You can keep a garden on the windowsill or fill a whole yard with containers at just the right height for easy work.

The basics for a container garden are: a convenient location, a suitable container, the right soil, an interesting plant, the right light conditions, and regular watering. Begin by surveying your environment and your interests.

- Decide what types of plantings you want – ornamental, edible, or both (yes, you can mix them!). Don't forget about color and form.

- Decide where you want to put a garden – on a sunny balcony, in a shady doorway, on the kitchen window sill. The site will determine the kinds of plants you can nurture. If you have lots of space in the sun, you can grow full-sized tomatoes or hibiscus plants. If you have only a window sill, you may want pots of pansies or kitchen herbs.



- Find suitable containers. Containers, especially for outdoor plantings, need adequate drainage so your plants don't drown or rot after a rain. For large plantings, you'll want to choose fairly lightweight containers – they'll weigh a lot after you add soil and the plants mature. You may want to look for self-watering containers to reduce how often you need to carry a watering can or haul out the hose.
- Purchase the right kind of soil. Regular soil from a yard or garden is too heavy for container gardens, and it may carry weeds and diseases. Garden centers carry a variety of potting soils: some are mixed especially for vegetable gardening, some include additives to help retain water, and many are organic. The garden center staff can help you find what you need. You may want to buy fertilizer as well.

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# News From the Board Chair

Greetings,

In January Nokomis Healthy Seniors welcomed two new members to the Board of Directors: Sandra Smith and Tess Larrabee. They both have a “heart for seniors”. Please see page 5 for their introductions.

In April NHS hosted its annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon. A savory lunch was followed by sweet treats as the volunteers who make NHS a success were honored for the invaluable work they do. Thank you to all our volunteers!

The Board continues to develop a meaningful strategic plan. In January we asked ourselves, “Do we need to revise the Nokomis Healthy Seniors goals to reflect the current senior care climate?” After a thorough evaluation of the needs of our seniors we found the answer was “Yes”. Our revised mission statement reflects a broadened scope as NHS: *Nokomis Healthy Seniors connects seniors of the greater Nokomis area to affordable health and wellness services creating a community for a lifetime.* We’re pleased to be working to adapt to the changing needs of the seniors of our community.

Summer is just around the corner, and that means it’s time for grilled hot dogs and brats! Once again, Bergan’s SuperValu has teamed up with NHS for a fundraising event over 2 weekends: July 30th & 31st and August 27th & 28th. Stop by Bergan’s at 47th and Cedar Avenue to pick up a tasty dog and support NHS. Interested in volunteering for this event? Please give us a call at the NHS office: 612.729.5499.

Happy Spring!

Gratefully,  
Sharon Rodi, Board Chair

## Container Gardening continued from page 1

- Choose plants or seeds. If you plan to start from seed, you’ll want quick germinating ones for this year: marigolds, lettuce (and many other greens), radishes, nasturtiums, annual herbs. Next spring, you might want to start tomatoes or petunias inside in March. If you are planting an ornamental container, consider how it will fill in. Many designers suggest planting three types of plants in a container: thriller (something tall and eye-catching), filler (medium and bushy), and spiller (low and cascading). Make sure all the plants for one container need the same light and watering conditions.

Just to get you started thinking about what you could plant, here are some ideas:

- A sunny spot will allow you the most variety. You can grow cherry-type tomatoes and a number of “patio” vegetables, almost any herb, petunias, geraniums and many more flowers.
- For partial shade, consider lettuce and other greens (some of the chards have gorgeous stem colors!), cool-weather vegetables like radishes and beets,

bush beans, nicotinia, fuchsia, pansies, and even some pot-suitable perennials such as coral bells.

- For deeper shade, you can choose coleus in many colors, large and small-flowered begonias, impatiens, toxemia, “spikes” of various types, and ivies.

Local gardening centers have helpful staff, suitable plants, and even ready-planted containers; they’ll also be able to provide comfortable, light-weight tools. Check out: Mother Earth Gardens at 3738 42nd Avenue South; Minnehaha Falls Nursery & Landscape 4461 Minnehaha Avenue; and Southside Farm Store at 1534 East 38th Street.

Here are links for more information: [www.bit.ly/nhsgarden1](http://www.bit.ly/nhsgarden1) lists tips for creating an accessible garden; [www.extension.umn.edu/Garden/](http://www.extension.umn.edu/Garden/) is the U of M extension’s website; learn how to choose tools at [www.bit.ly/nhsgarden2](http://www.bit.ly/nhsgarden2); and find vegetables that are suitable for containers and get instructions at [www.bit.ly/nhsgarden3](http://www.bit.ly/nhsgarden3). Carry On Gardening is a lovely website from a British organization called Thrive; it has all sorts of gardening tips for people with disabilities, [www.bit.ly/nhsgarden4](http://www.bit.ly/nhsgarden4).

# It's Spring!! Let's Exercise!!

By Cathy Bray, RN

We all know exercise is good for us. But sometimes we need to be reminded about why it's so important.

**FACT:** The loss of strength attributed to the aging process is often caused simply by the absence of physical activity.

**FACT:** By the age of 75 one in 2 women and one in 3 men no longer engage in any physical activity.

Regular physical activity has many benefits:

- Helps lower blood pressure
- Reduces feelings of anxiety and depression
- Helps with weight control
- Maintains muscle, joint, and bone strength
- Improves balance which prevents falls
- Reduces arthritis pain and stiffness
- Boosts energy levels
- Improves sleep
- Adds fun to your life!!

Remember, exercise does not have to be strenuous to make a difference.

If you are starting a new exercise program or you have not exercised in a while, you should talk to your doctor if the following conditions apply to you.

- You have lung disease
- You have liver or kidney disease

- You have diabetes
- You have arthritic conditions

Seniors who have not been active in the past should start slowly with moderate activity (5-10 minutes) then gradually increase the time each week.

- Walking is considered moderate exercise that can increase your fitness level.
- Join a senior exercise program. Ask a friend to join with you because the added support can keep you on track.
- Walk at a mall.
- Swim at your neighborhood YMCA.
- Come to the exercise class offered by Nokomis Healthy Seniors at Bethel Church Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 until 10:45 a.m. Sometimes there's a walking class at this time, too, so you can take your pick of activities and move at your own pace. These classes are free (although a \$1 donation is greatly appreciated) and transportation is available.
- We are now offering a yoga class for seniors on Wednesdays from 10 to 11 a.m. at Bethel Church.

I hope this article will encourage you to start exercising so you can enjoy the benefits.

*The information in this article was obtained from the Center for Disease Control and the Mayo Clinic.*

## Senior Lunch and Movie

Nokomis Healthy Seniors held its first Lunch and Movie on Thursday, March 31st. The turnout was more than encouraging. We all enjoyed the variety of sandwiches donated by Subway at on Hiawatha. It was a great lunch with the addition of various chips, sweets, pink lemonade and coffee. We made a real day of it: blood pressure checks at Nurse Is In, the senior exercise group for many, lunch, and the movie "Up". Smiles and lively conversation made the whole day a delight.

The next Lunch and Movie will be June 30th. Mark your calendars now! As we get closer to the date we'll have sign-up sheets so we can be sure to arrange for enough food. Please join us – the more the merrier!

## Senior profile: Joan Sandberg

By Judy Grimes

A native Minnesotan, Joan moved between Edina and Minneapolis for a number of years, and after becoming a human relations specialist, decided that field was her career choice. She headed for Denver, Colorado, and for about ten years ran her own business there. When she settled down in Minneapolis again, she wound up just two blocks from Nokomis Healthy Seniors. As Joan says, “some people go away from Minnesota, but they always come back”.

Joan took up power walking and running years ago and is now an avid supporter and participant. This philosophy of maintaining a healthy lifestyle served her well when she was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis and she has kept up her walking and running to this day. She attends the exercise classes at Nokomis Healthy Seniors twice a week and has become an enthusiastic recruiter! She is so full of energy I felt like a couch potato of the first order.

I heard high praise for the “great people at Nokomis Healthy Seniors”, who, in addition to taking Joan to and from her doctor visits and physical therapy appointments, shoveled her sidewalk while she was recuperating from knee replacement surgery. As we can all attest, snow shoveling was a monumental task this year, even for able-bodied people! Joan made a point of saying she was touched that Becky, part of the NHS staff, also brought flowers to her while she was hospitalized. As have others who benefited from his dedication, Joan mentioned Wally, and she



admired how much he enjoyed his work and loved being busy. He worried about not having enough to do, she said. He was “a true saint”!

Growing vegetables and herbs in her garden is one of Joan’s favorite activities. She puts her crop to good use with her enthusiastic, adventurous cooking. Her favorite dishes are “anything new”. As she described one chicken dish, which included lemon zest, I could barely think of anything else. She showed me pictures of the stunning array of perennials she also grew last summer.

Joan has a 25-year-old daughter, Sarah, and two wonderful cats that keep her company and share her life: Cubby, a gorgeous silver Persian who is curious and cuddly and Buttons, a brown and white 16 year old who lounged in the oversized chair in the bright and cheerful living room of her cozy home.

I enjoyed my chat with Joan Sandberg and left her home with a desire to GET MOVING!

## #10: Another Clean-A-Thon Success!

By Jo Jacobs

The Nokomis Healthy Seniors Program held it’s 10th Annual Clean-A-Thon on April 30th. It’s always amazing to watch the cleaning teams gathering their buckets of supplies and heading off to their assigned homes. This year the teams gathered pledges to help 14 seniors with their spring-cleaning. This event continues to be a great way to reach out and help seniors within the Nokomis community to stay in the homes they love.

The efforts of these clean teams raised over \$2,000 to support the services of Nokomis Healthy Seniors. We thank the volunteers for all their hard work, the sponsors for their contributions, and the seniors who opened their homes for this great event. Mark your calendars now to join us on April 28, 2012!

## Meet Sandra Smith

By Sharon Rodi

January 2011 was a busy month for Sandra Smith. In addition to becoming a new member of the Nokomis Healthy Seniors Board, she received a Community Leadership Award from the city of Minneapolis. She's modest about the award, saying, "I don't look for awards. I don't have money but I have myself, so I give of myself." If this award can do anything, Sandra says, she wants "people to know children and the elderly need our attention."

Growing up in Chicago, her family moved to Minneapolis in 1959. Sandra's career as a math teacher, nurse and business administrator prepared her for volunteer involvement in causes supporting the community, children and seniors. Her activities range from tutoring children, transporting NHS seniors, and

acting as a charter school board member and community board member.

Listening to her schedule one wonders how she finds time to relax by seeing movies, reading, or walking. She also enjoys listening to the radio having grown up listening to radio shows such as George Burns and Gracie Allen and Inner Sanctum and watching favorite television shows like The Honeymooners.

Sandra comments on her life: "I have met interesting people on my journey."



## Volunteer Profile: Tess Larrabee

By Lynn Radecki



Tess Larrabee is very familiar to many of the seniors participating in Nokomis Healthy Seniors programs. She has been involved with Nokomis Healthy Seniors for the past four years and is the nurse checking blood pressures at the weekly "Nurse Is In." She also goes to four other sites in the neighborhood to check blood pressures for NHS. Tess has been involved by volunteering with the annual NHS Clean-A-Thon and Fall Frolic, and in January Tess agreed to share her skills as a

member of the Board of NHS.

Tess was born and raised in New Orleans and started her nursing career there. While working in the hospital in New Orleans she met her husband, a Minnesota native, who was doing his medical internship. After he was finished with his internship they moved to Minnesota where Tess continued her career at St. Mary's Hospital. Once their family started to grow with two children, she stayed home to take care of their daughter and son. She returned to work as a nurse for Minnesota Visiting Nurse Agency and through MVNA became involved with NHS.

Tess brings to the NHS Board her diverse nursing experience and a passion for working with

seniors. She truly enjoys her nursing role with NHS and the seniors think very highly of her. "I believe in the NHS program and what they do for the seniors. I feel the social outlet for seniors is a very important part of their lives. I wish there were more programs like this to help seniors." She looks forward to being involved with the NHS Board and working toward the mission of connecting seniors to affordable health and wellness services, creating a community for a lifetime.

When Tess is not working with NHS, she enjoys being with her family, cooking and gardening. She also enjoys camping and has taken many camping trips with her family. She is currently helping her daughter with planning her wedding this June.

Welcome, Tess!

# Kristen's Korner

Welcome, spring! It has been a difficult and LONG winter but the birds are chirping and the grass is getting greener by the day. Nokomis Healthy Seniors held the 10th annual Clean-A-Thon on Saturday, April 30th. Please look for the article in this newsletter to hear about how it went. We thank everyone who participated!

This spring we're starting something new: Health Programs at Nokomis Square Cooperative. Everyone is welcome at these events; please see the program information on page 7 for information.

Although spring is just arriving, we're thinking about summer days and hot dog sales!

NHS and Bergan's SuperValu will once again be teaming up for the annual NHS Hot Dog Sale fundraiser. On July 30 & 31 and again on August 27 & 28 we'll be grillin' the red-hots and brats in front of Bergan's at 47th & Cedar Ave. Stop by to see us!

We're in no rush to think about the autumn, but we do want to tell you that our Fall Frolic event will once again include a book sale. If your spring cleaning turns up books that you'd like to donate to the sale, please bring them to the NHS office and we'll take it from there. There will be more upcoming information in the next newsletter regarding the Fall Frolic so please watch for it.

## Calling All Writers!

Nokomis Healthy Seniors invites our loyal readers to contribute to the Share the Health newsletter. Whether it's a report on something going on in the neighborhood that other seniors should know about, or a piece of poetry to treat the mind, we would like to hear from YOU! We welcome authors of all types – give us a call at 612.729.5499 if you have something you'd like to share.

## DO YOU KNOW THE SERVICES WE OFFER?

### Home Care by RNs and Home Health Aides

- Assessments and health teaching
- Personal care --bathing assistance and light housekeeping
- Medication management

### Blood Pressure Clinics/ Health Education

- Nurse Is In* blood pressure clinic every Thursday morning with pedicures
- Congregate Dining
- Blood pressure clinics at Standish Green Apartments (open to residents and nonresidents)

### Senior Helpline

- Referrals and resources for almost any need
- Handyman help

### Support Groups and Education

- Caregiver support group
- Low vision support group
- Monthly health programs

### Transportation

- Medical/dental appointments
- Flu shots
- Prescription pick-up
- Voting
- Food shelves

### Volunteer Matches

- Friendly visiting
- Grocery shopping

**For information on any of these services, please call the NHS office at 612.729.5499**

# Health Programs and Other Notes

Now the Health Programs  
are at Nokomis Square, too!  
**All are welcome!**

**May 25** Don't Be a Victim of Medicare Fraud!; Kathy Green, A Little Help Inc.  
**1:30 p.m.** Faith Lutheran Church, 3430 East 51st Street

**June 8** Scam Protection from an Expert; Gary Johnson, Better Business Bureau  
**1 p.m.** Nokomis Square Cooperative, 5015 35th Avenue South

**June 29** Simple Secrets and Tools for Looking and Feeling Great at Any Age; Nancy Vest, Home Instead  
**1:30 p.m.** Faith Lutheran Church, 3430 East 51st Street

**July 13** A Passport to Travel and Learning; Elderhostel/Road Scholar  
**1 p.m.** Nokomis Square Cooperative, 5015 35th Avenue South

**August 10** To Sleep or Not to Sleep; Abigail Holley, MD  
**1 p.m.** Nokomis Square Cooperative, 5015 35th Avenue South

*These programs are free  
and open to the public.  
Beverages and treats will be  
provided. If you need a ride  
to any activities please call  
the NHS office.*

## Nurse Is In

You can get your blood pressure checked, consult with a nurse or schedule a pedicure. You can also just stop in to chat over a cup of coffee and baked goods. The clinic is free, but there is a \$28 charge for a pedicure.

**When:** Every Thursday morning from 9 a.m. to noon at Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church, 4120 17th Avenue South.

## Exercise Classes

NHS offers various exercise classes Monday-Thursday at Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church, 4120 17th Avenue South.

**Walk Your Worries Away:** Mondays, 1 to 2 p.m.

**Exercise:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 to 10:45 a.m.

**Chair Yoga:** Wednesdays, 10 to 11 a.m.

*All classes are tailored to each participant's abilities. A donation of \$1 for walking and exercise is appreciated. Yoga is \$2 for yoga per class.*

## Blood Pressure Clinics

*These blood pressure checks are free and open to the public.*

### Standish Green Apartments

2210 East 40th Street

The fourth Thursday of every month at 12:30 p.m.  
Open to all community members.

### Holy Cross Lutheran Church

1720 East Minnehaha Parkway

The first Thursday of every month at 12:30 p.m.  
The church has Congregate Dining every weekday.  
If you would like to make a meal reservation, call Evelyn at 612.729.6668. The cost of the meal is \$3.

## Support Groups

These groups are free and open to the public.

### Low Vision Group

Nokomis Square Cooperative, 5015 35th Avenue South

The second Thursday of each month at 10:00 a.m.  
Julie Rindelaub from Vision Loss Resources facilitates.

### Caregiver Support Group

Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church, 4120 17th Avenue South

The last Thursday of the month at 1:00 p.m. This group is open to anyone who is a caregiver for a loved one.



## **NOKOMIS HEALTHY SENIORS**

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## **Get Your Red Hots!**

Each summer Nokomis Healthy Seniors holds two weekends of hot dog fundraising madness in cooperation with Bergan's SuperValu. This neighborhood grocery store has sponsored this event for seven years, helping NHS raise funds to support services to area seniors.

This year we'll be grilling them up outside Bergan's front door. Please stop by and show your support for NHS by purchasing a brat or hot dog, chips and a soda to round out the experience. To-go containers will be available if you want to take your meal on the run.

### **Mark your calendars:**

**Saturday, July 30 & Sunday, July 31  
and**

**Saturday, August 27 & Sunday, August 28**

**Hope to see you there!**