

Garden project underway at Hambright Elementary School

BY ADRIAN ESCHENWALD

On Feb. 10, students and volunteers from Penn Manor High School delivered several raised beds to Hambright Elementary School, 3000 Charlestown Road, Lancaster. The delivery was the first piece of a venture to install an interactive garden for the school's students. The Hambright Elementary Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) has partnered with nonprofit The Edible Classroom for the project, and students and teachers from across Penn Manor School

District are contributing to it.

The raised beds were constructed by students from Penn Manor High School who are in the Intro to Agriculture Mechanics class. Now that the beds have been delivered, Hambright students' next goal is to fill them with dirt. Once the soil is delivered, each student will gather to fill the beds one bucket at a time. "That's the next part of the adventure. All of the kids are so excited about the project; it'll be a whole school party when we fill the beds," said Lauren Weaver, a member of Hambright PTO.

The idea for the project came after Lauren's daughter, Emma, attended The Edible Classroom's summer camp. Emma is a fourth-grader at Hambright Elementary School and began her own fundraising efforts for the project by selling golf balls at a local golf course with one of her classmates. Lauren began sharing ideas on how to support the project with Emma's teacher at school, and the excitement for the project spread. Now, nearly a dozen teachers are independently fundraising alongside the PTO.

"It's an exciting project that's bringing us all together. Things have been challenging the past couple years due to the COVID-19 pandemic and cancellation of our events," Lauren said. "It's nice to have the support."

The Hambright PTO will cover the maintenance fees for the project and has begun to collect recyclable materials to raise money. Some teachers at the school are engaged in grant writing and other community fundraising methods, while the garden club organizes fundraising events.

Many of Hambright Elementary School's fundraising efforts are to cover the expenses for The Edible Classroom's curriculum. The school has over 600 students and hopes to provide each class with a lesson from The Edible Classroom. "The kids are so excited to have something outside in the area where they take their breaks," Lauren said. "Fourth-grade students have even been doing their own advertising by making videos to spread the word."

On Friday, March 24, the garden club will host a bingo night at the cafeteria of Hambright Elementary School. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m. and the game will begin at 6 p.m. The event is open to families of students at Hambright Elementary School and their children. To pre-register for the event, visit <https://tinyurl.com/35wtf4x3>.



Students and volunteers from Penn Manor High School deliver garden beds to Hambright Elementary School.

Passing around postcards

BY ADRIAN ESCHENWALD

On the third Monday of each month, the Lancaster County Postcard Club meets at the Farm & Home Center, 1383 Arcadia Road, Lancaster. During the meetings, which are open to the public, members gather to discuss postcards on a wide variety of topics. Each meeting features a specific theme and includes a talk from a guest speaker who focuses on that theme.

In January, the club creates a schedule of which themes will be incorporated throughout the year, and the topic of the club's meetings can be anything from railroads to boats to hometowns. For its meeting in January, the club had members share postcards relating to their favorite holidays. On Feb. 20, the topic of the meeting was cartoons and humor, and attendees participated in a member's market to buy and sell postcards.

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Lancaster County Postcard Club members peruse different postcards during their February meeting.

Toward spiritual health

BY ANN MEAD ASH

Veronica Jimenez, lay counselor, volunteer prison chaplain, and author of the Sound Mind Awareness curriculum, is known for the classes she teaches at churches and recovery houses and for her counseling ministry. Jimenez's journey to this place, however, has been hard-won and filled with twist and turns.

Originally from the Bushwick neighborhood of Brooklyn in New York City, Jimenez suffered abuse from an early age. "I learned shame and rage very early," Jimenez recalled, noting her situation created the "perfect storm for mental

illness." "I wasn't a healthy kid," she said. "My heart, soul, mind, and spirit were all affected." When Jimenez was a teenager, her anger became such an issue, she was sent to live in a girls' home for a year. "That's where I developed a heart for the incarcerated," she said.

Around age 11, Jimenez remembers attending a Metro World Child Sunday school run by pastor Bill Wilson. "That's where I first heard that God has a son named Jesus who loves children," said Jimenez, who noted that at that time the grace of God first touched her life. "I still lived in a bad environment, but I learned to pray," she said.

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