



## *Sowing the Seeds of Sustainability*

530 Bay Shore Drive, Oshkosh, WI 54901

[growingoshkosh@gmail.com](mailto:growingoshkosh@gmail.com) [www.growingoshkosh.org](http://www.growingoshkosh.org)

### **Thank You for Helping Us Grow!** by Dani Stolley

Greetings and Happy New Year!

First of all, I'd like to say THANK YOU to all our friends, partners, donors, volunteers, staff, and the board of directors for a wonderful 2015! We couldn't have gotten where we are today without ALL of you, and I am eternally grateful! (A very special thank you to the John E. Kuenzl Foundation, whose generous support over the last three years has helped us grow exponentially!)

This past year—our fourth farming at the Hooper Community Center—was both highly successful, and extremely emotional. The farm literally grew by leaps and bounds, which allowed us to grow TWICE as much food as we did in 2014, and we'll continue expanding the farm in 2016, to provide even more fresh, healthy and affordable food for those who need it most. One of these farm expansions will be a very special, beautiful and inviting Hope and Healing Garden, specifically designed with cancer patients, survivors and their families in mind. (Here comes the emotional part...)

In June, I lost a 41-year-old friend to cancer, and in his memory, we raised over \$6000 which will be used to design and build an expansion of the Webster Stanley School Garden as well as the healing garden at the farm. (A sincere thank you to everyone who donated in loving memory of Dr. Michael Milam.)

Then in September, tragedy struck again. Bob Bohlman, our dear friend and Facilities Manager, learned he had Stage 4 lymphoma, which left us heartbroken. Bob lost his battle with cancer on November 24, 2015, but his legacy will live on forever in Oshkosh. Every school garden to date was not only built by Bob's hands, but the lumber used to create them was a generous donation to us from Bob. Instead of building a log cabin for himself (a dream of his) he donated \$10,000 worth of lumber to us two years ago so we could grow Oshkosh. Bob poured his heart, blood, sweat, and tears into the farm and spent thousands of hours making sure children in Oshkosh had a special garden places to grow and learn in. Bob was an irreplaceable and invaluable friend and GO family member and I, personally, will miss him every day.



### **Upcoming Events**

**January 6, 2016**

Please join us from 4-7PM at Becket's Restaurant for a Celebration of Bob Bohlman's life.

But despite our tremendous loss, we are poised and ready for a tremendous 2016! Thanks to the J.J. Keller Foundation, we'll be building a community Hope & Children's Garden at the Christine Ann Center so residents and their children have access to fresh, organic, healthy food and flowers, as well as educational programming. We'll also build Community Hope Gardens at Court Tower and other low-income housing projects throughout Oshkosh, getting us closer and closer to fulfilling our mission of feeding and teaching Oshkosh's most at-risk populations.

As 2015 draws to a close, we are thankful for everything you do to help grow Oshkosh and wish you the very happiest and healthiest of new years! See you next year!

## School Garden Expansion & Building the Children's Learning Garden

by Jenn Sattler

2015 was a year filled with expanding our educational opportunities through two avenues: School Gardens and the on-farm Children's Learning Garden. Both of these programs focus on making healthy food easily accessible for students while teaching them many facets of gardening and nutrition and through them we've reached almost 6,000 area children.

At the close of 2014, Growing Oshkosh had begun School Garden Programs at three elementary schools and one middle school. This year, we placed gardens at three more elementary schools and one middle school, effectively doubling our School Garden Program. Currently, every elementary school and two middle schools that feeds into North High School has their own set of gardens. We have an ambitious goal to add at least three more elementary schools in the spring of 2016, beginning with Roosevelt, Smith, and Franklin and continuing until all schools within the Oshkosh Area School District has their own set of gardens.

Along with increasing schools that have gardens, we began construction on our on-farm facility for education: Growing Oshkosh's Children's Learning Garden. The garden was built over the course of the summer, and its completion is expected to be finished in the spring of 2016. Our goal with this space is to welcome students ranging from 3K to high school to our urban farm and give them an open environment to explore learning about food, nutrition, farming, and nature. The Children's Learning Garden will be open May through October every year for field trips, summer camps, workshops, tours, and family events with all of the food, flowers, and herbs grown in the space available for the students (and their families) who visit.

Many exciting educational opportunities are growing in Oshkosh, and if you would like to be part of our educational team, please contact me at [growingoshkosh@gmail.com](mailto:growingoshkosh@gmail.com).

### Executive Committee

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Ski's Meat Market

#### Don Stolley, Vice President

Owner, Stolley Studio, Ltd.

#### Courtney Lasky, Secretary

Local Food Advocate

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### Staff

#### Dani Stolley

Founder/Executive Director

#### Jennifer Sattler

Youth Program Manager