

# Proposal for a Retirement Home Garden

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## Abstract/Summary

This proposal is to obtain permission to begin construction of a wheelchair accessible garden at the Dahlonega Retirement Home. Included is a budget, design, and task schedule. We have considered specialized challenges that we might run into in executing this project and present solutions.

## Introduction

Dear Owner of the Dahlonega Retirement Home,

I have personally visited the Dahlonega Retirement Home many times and have enjoyed the privilege of getting to know the residents. This past summer during one of my visits, I noticed a flower garden on the back lawn. This garden adds esthetic beauty to the establishment, but how incredible would it be to have a garden that will not only provide beauty for the residents to *look* at, but will actually allow residents of all different functioning levels to maneuver *in* the garden, smelling, touching, even tasting the products of their own hands?

I see the residents who swarm whenever an outside face enters the building and who are enthusiastic about taking part in activities. My hope is that service groups will volunteer to regularly spend time working with the residents to care for the garden, providing community and activity for the residents.

I am aware that the employees who care for the residents keep busy, and I do not intend to burden them with further responsibility. On the contrary, I expect that the garden will be a way for the residents to keep busier and happier, decreasing the tension that sometimes arises when people occupy close quarters together for extended periods.

The garden project will set the Dahlonega Retirement Home apart from any other retirement home in the Lumpkin County area because the garden will be much more than the landscaping other nursing and retirement homes display. This garden will get the residents and the community directly involved with the garden and each other, providing beauty to the establishment and a greater sense of purpose and interconnectedness for the residents.

## Technical Discussion

### **The Problem**

There are two characteristics that can be seen at almost any retirement home: 1) Residents are almost always looking for ways to occupy themselves. 2) Whether it is a children's choir or a visiting relative, residents come to life when new faces walk through the door. Unfortunately, retirement homes are often forgotten by communities and the residents become bored and isolated. As a result, members of the community's older generation can become depressed, irritable, and lonely.

## The Solution

A wheelchair accessible garden at the Dahlongega Retirement Home will give its residents daily activities and the fulfillment of caring for something dependent on them. The garden will also encourage the community to become more involved with the Dahlongega Retirement Home. Bringing in service groups is not only practical for caring for the garden, but will also bring new faces to the Dahlongega Retirement Home, raising the spirits of the residents (especially those who cannot leave the facility) and spreading the word that the Dahlongega Retirement Home does not just care *for* their people but also cares *about* their people.

## Challenges and Solutions

One concern is the limited mobility of some of the residents. Because of this, we will customize the garden design to accommodate residents who might have limited mobility. The garden beds will be built at three heights. One large bed will be at the center of the garden at ground-level for those residents with the greatest degree of mobility. Four raised garden beds will be at standing height for those residents with more limited mobility. Four additional raised garden beds will be three feet high for those residents that are wheelchair bound. These wheelchair level garden beds will have a twelve inch deep cut out (as shown in figure 1) to allow gardeners in wheelchairs to pull up close to the boxes. The pathways will be four feet wide to allow the passage of wheelchairs down every row. The paths will be made of rubber mulch which can be laid out in matted rolls so that the chips do not spread outside of the garden and so that the pathways allow easy rolling for wheelchairs.



Figure 1: Raised Bed

## Needs

For this project to be a success, certain contributions and materials will be necessary. The initial construction of the garden will require a considerable amount of labor, and in addition to the volunteer groups, someone with knowledge in woodworking and construction will need to join our team. We will pursue contacts for this need as the project progresses. Supplies will need to be collected for construction and upkeep of the garden. We will contact Home Depot and Ace Hardware about donating wood, rubber chip matting, and soil. When the Farmer's Market opens, we will contact members about donating seeds and plants. Although our desire is to receive much of the materials as donations, we realize that a certain amount of funding will be necessary for any materials we cannot get donated. For

this, we plan on partnering with Connectability. Connectability is a non-profit organization that organizes events and assistance for adults and children with special needs. Many of the residents of the Dahlonga Retirement Home have taken part in these events, and the facilitator of Connectability has already shown an interest in being a part of implementing the garden project. Connectability has already started constructing its own garden at its Dahlonga office and has a garden budget that, if we partner with them, can be partially invested into the garden at the Dahlonga Retirement Home.

## Management Information

Below is a list of tasks to be completed. Refer to Figure 2: Task Schedule located below the task list for a potential schedule for the completion of these tasks.

### Proposed Tasks

#### Task 1. *Design garden layout.*

Meet with landscape artist, \_\_\_\_\_ (name deleted), and prepare garden sketch. The sketch will include the layout of the garden beds, flowers and vegetables, and pathways. It will consider available space, practicality, and aesthetics.

#### Task 2: *Research costs.*

Meet with Home Depot contact and discuss costs in order to come up with a budget. Figure out which materials will be donated and which must be purchased. Research additional costs and alternatives and prepare a final budget.

#### Task 3: *Contact Volunteers and obtain commitments.*

Speak to local groups including the Boy Scouts, Garden Club, UNG service and honor fraternities, and 4-H clubs. Meet with UNG Science professors about having students grow plants to donate and volunteer service hours to the project for class credit.

#### Task 4: *Purchase materials.*

Cheyenne Franklin, Kaitlin Hames, and Kimberlee Zabawa will go to the Home Depot store in Canton to purchase and pick-up the materials after they have received funds from both the Dahlonga Retirement Home and Connectability. Donations from the community will be dropped off at the Dahlonga Retirement Home.

#### Task 5: *Build garden.*

Build the garden. Volunteers that have agreed to help with the construction of the garden will be contacted. Cheyenne Franklin, Kaitlin Hames, and Kimberlee Zabawa will be the managing directors. They will answer any questions, make sure tasks are completed on schedule, and supervise the construction of the garden.

Task 6: *Plant vegetation.*

Plant vegetables in the proper place according to the garden layout sketch (Figure 5-located in the appendix).

Task 7: *Maintenance.*

The long-term maintenance of the garden will be completed by various service groups including the service fraternities \_\_\_\_\_ (name deleted) and \_\_\_\_\_ (name deleted). The officers of these groups will report to Cheyenne Franklin, Kaitlin Hames, and Kimberlee Zabawa.

Tasks	Start date	Finish date
Task 1: Design garden layout	11/15/13	12/2/13
Task 2: Research costs	11/15/13	12/2/13
Task 3: Speak with local service groups	12/1/13	ongoing
Task 4: Purchase materials	1/1/14	1/31/14
Task 5: Build garden	2/1/14	4/8/14
Task 6: Plant vegetation	4/10/14	ongoing
Task 7: Maintenance	4/10/14	ongoing

Figure 2: Task Schedule

## Implementation

The sketch we have included in the appendix is a design our team members created with the help of \_\_\_\_\_ (name deleted), a horticulture student at North Georgia Technical College. While designing the blueprints for the garden, we considered the best materials and construction to keep the project economical, handicap accessible, and visually pleasing. We have taken care in planning the layout so that the garden will add value to the establishment while keeping the budget reasonable. We hope to get most of the plants and materials donated to keep costs low. We have already obtained support from Home Depot as they have agreed to supply wood, fence posts, rubber chip matting, soil, and weather-resistant paint for the wood and fence posts at a discounted price which we will discuss further in the Budget.

The plants will be a variety of species that will be planted in cycles so that the garden will continue producing throughout spring, summer and early fall. The garden will be dormant during the late fall and winter months so that residents do not feel a need to be in cold weather. The plants in the sketch were recommended by a horticultural student.

Within Lumpkin County, there are multiple service groups and organizations that can assist with the construction and upkeep of the garden. The University of North Georgia (UNG) contains service fraternities such as Alpha Phi Omega (APO). UNG also offers courses such as Environmental Science which requires students to complete a certain number of service hours. The local Boy Scouts also assist with various service projects. All of these outlets are possible resources for maintaining the garden and bridging the gap between the retirement home and the county. The Vice President of the honors fraternity \_\_\_\_\_ (name deleted) has already volunteered to assist with the initial building of the garden

and possibly the upkeep that will follow (Rogers). As the project progresses and we are able to show our commitment to the project, we will begin contacting more service groups and obtain definite commitments about how much they can assist.

As finances allow, we will purchase specific tools that will make the upkeep of the garden as strain-free as possible for residents. Such tools will compensate for residents' limited strength and mobility. Thrive, a non-profit that promotes the therapeutic benefits of gardening, has published a useful website which provides tips and tool ideas that accommodate common struggles for gardeners with disabilities. For example, Thrive recommends using a curly hose which is lighter and easier to manage when watering (Thrive).

## Qualifications/Experience

Cheyenne Franklin, Kaitlin Hames, and Kimberlee Zabawa are English Majors with a concentration in Writing and Publication. They have experience in technical writing and research and are also members of the International English Honor Society. Cheyenne has gardened since the age of seven. She has been a volunteer with Connectability (a non-profit for special needs adults and children) for four years. While serving with Connectability, she has worked with many of the residents from the Dahlonga Retirement Home and understands the needs of individuals with disabilities. Kimberlee and her family plant, grow, and harvest a vegetable garden every year, and Kaitlin helps to maintain a vegetable garden, a variety of seasonal plants and trees, and two horses on her family's 16-acre property in Loganville, Ga.

### Collaborators:

- \_\_\_\_\_ (name deleted) is a student at North Georgia Technical College and plans to graduate in 2014 with a degree in horticulture. She has taken part in multiple class projects that require her to design and sketch landscape blueprints. She also took part in the 2013 Planet competition where students are given an allotted time to create a landscape design which satisfies the specific needs of a client.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (name deleted) is the current Community Captain for the Home Depot Store in \_\_\_\_\_ (location deleted), and leading up to her role as Community Captain, she has served as Cashier, Head Cashier, Customer Service, Sales Specialist, and as Lead Generator, all spanning over the course of 8 years. She also serves as Volunteer Coordinator at Home Depot and has led Home Depot in supplying materials to a variety of causes and projects, notably the Stars of Hope Georgia Project based out of Ellijay, Ga, and also Kid Workshops sponsored by Home Depot every Saturday.

## Budget

Apart from the Wood, Fence Posts, Weathershield Paint for the Fence Posts, and Rubber Chip Matting, all of which we will purchase from Home Depot at a discounted price with funds provided by the Dahlonga Retirement Home and Connectability, we will receive all other materials including Fertilizer,



Soil, Plants, a Water Hose, and other gardening materials through donations from the local community and also from service fraternities at UNG-Dahlonega Campus.

Apart from the materials we will need to complete the project, the fraternities \_\_\_\_\_ (name deleted) and \_\_\_\_\_ (name deleted) and Connectability have also agreed to donate their time and services to construct the garden and to maintain it. Figure 3 and Figure 4 lay out the anticipated costs for supplies.

Supplies/Materials	Supplier	Cost Estimate (Per Unit)	Cost Estimate (Total)
<b>Wood</b>			
<b>2" x 6" x 7' (48)</b>	Home Depot	<b>(Consolidated into the Bolded Pieces/Prices)</b>	<b>(Consolidated into the Bolded Pieces/Prices)</b>
<b>4" x 4" x 4.5' (24)</b>	Home Depot	"	"
<b>2" x 6" x 4' (12)</b>	Home Depot	"	"
<b>2" x 6" x 2' (8)</b>	Home Depot	"	"
<b>2" x 6" x 5' (8)</b>	Home Depot	"	"
<b>2" x 6" x 12' (8)</b>	Home Depot	"	"
<b>4" x 4" x 1.5' (6)</b>	Home Depot	"	"
<b>4" x 4" x 3' (24)</b>	Home Depot	"	"
<b>2" x 6" x 6' (56)</b>	Home Depot	"	"
<b>2" x 6" x 5' (16)</b>	Home Depot	"	"
<b>2" x 6" x 8' (8)</b>	<b>Home Depot</b>	<b>\$4.68</b>	<b>\$37.44</b>
<b>2" x 6" x 10' (12)</b>	<b>Home Depot</b>	<b>\$6.45</b>	<b>\$77.40</b>
<b>2" x 6" x 12' (36)</b>	<b>Home Depot</b>	<b>\$7.82</b>	<b>\$281.52</b>
<b>Fence Posts (22)</b>	Home Depot	\$3.97	\$87.34
<b>Paint/Fence Post Treatment (48)</b>	Home Depot	\$4.77	\$228.96
<b>Soil/Fertilizer</b>	Community Donations	\$0	\$0
<b>Plants- Flowers/Vegetables/Trees</b>	Local Farmers' Market/Donations from UNG Service Fraternities-_____ (names deleted), the Community	\$0	\$0
<b>Rubber Mulch Roles (25,8)</b>	Home Depot	\$6.97, \$18.97	\$174.25, \$151.76
<b>Other Gardening Tools</b>	Community Donations	\$0	\$0
<b>Water Hose</b>	Community Donations	\$0	\$0
<b>All Materials</b>	All Suppliers	Total	Total w/ Tax
		\$1,038.67	\$1,100.99

Figure 4: Budget Chart

**QUOTE**  
 Store 0145 CANTON, GA  
 2200 RIVERSTONE BLVD  
 CANTON, GA 30114

Phone: (770) 720-8910  
 Salesperson: DT49K9  
 Reviewer:

Page 1 of 2 **No. 0145-221884**

**QUOTE**

2013.12.02 15:13  
 Prices Valid Thru: 12/09/2013

**SOLD TO**  
 Name: **TEAM DEPOT MARCELLE** Home Phone: (770) 356-4395  
 Address: 2200 RIVERSTONE BLVD Work Phone: (770) 720-8910  
 City: CANTON Company Name:  
 State: GA Zip: 30114-5635 County: CHEROKEE Job Description: GARDEN PROJECT 20X40

**CUSTOMER PICKUP #1** **MERCHANDISE AND SERVICE SUMMARY** We reserve the right to limit the quantities of merchandise sold to customers.  
 REF # W08 SKU # 0000-515.664 Customer Pickup / Will Call

REF #	SKU	QTY	UM	DESCRIPTION	PI	TAX	PRICE EACH	EXTENSION
R01	0000-168-335	48.00	EA	2X6-8FT #2 PRIME PT WEATHERSHIELD /	A	Y	\$4.77	\$228.96
R02	0000-256-276	25.00	EA	4X4-8FT #2 PT /	A	Y	\$5.97	\$149.25
R03	0000-161-713	8.00	EA	2X6-8FT #2/BTR KD-HT SPF /	A	Y	\$4.68	\$37.44
R04	0000-161-721	12.00	EA	2X6-10FT #2/BTR KD-HT SPF /	A	Y	\$6.45	\$77.40
R05	0000-161-756	36.00	EA	2X6-12FT #2/BTR KD-HT SPF /	A	Y	\$7.82	\$281.52
R06	0000-129-430	22.00	EA	8FT LANDSCAPE TIMBER /	A	Y	\$3.97	\$87.34
R07	0000-196-098	8.00	EA	4X6-10FT #2 PT /	A	Y	\$18.97	\$151.76
							<b>MERCHANDISE TOTALS</b>	\$1,038.67
SCHEDULED PICKUP DATE: 01/01/2014								
END OF CUSTOMER PICKUP - REF #W08								

**TOTAL CHARGES OF ALL MERCHANDISE & SERVICES**

Policy Id (PI):	ORDER TOTAL	\$1,038.67
	*** CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ***	
	TOTAL	\$1,100.99
	BALANCE DUE	\$1,100.99

NOT VALID FOR MERCHANDISE PICKUP

FOR WILL CALL  
 MERCHANDISE PICK-UP  
 PROCEED TO WILL CALL OR  
 SERVICE DESK AREA  
 (Pro Customers, Proceed To The Pro Desk)

Figure 5: Home Depot Supply Receipt

## List of Sources

Garrett, Shannon. *The Dahlonaga Retirement Home Garden Sketch*. 28 Nov. 2013.

Nichols, Mary. *Interview for Gamma Sigma Sigma*. 2 Dec. 2013.

Robustelli Strong, Marcelle. *Donation/Cost Estimates for Materials from Home Depot Store Canton*. 2 Dec. 2013; *Interview for Credentials*. 3 Dec. 2013.

Rogers, Amy. *Interview for Phi Sigma Pi*. 28 Nov. 2013.

*Thrive: Using Gardening to Change Lives*. Thrive. 2013. Web. 20 Nov. 2013.

# Appendix

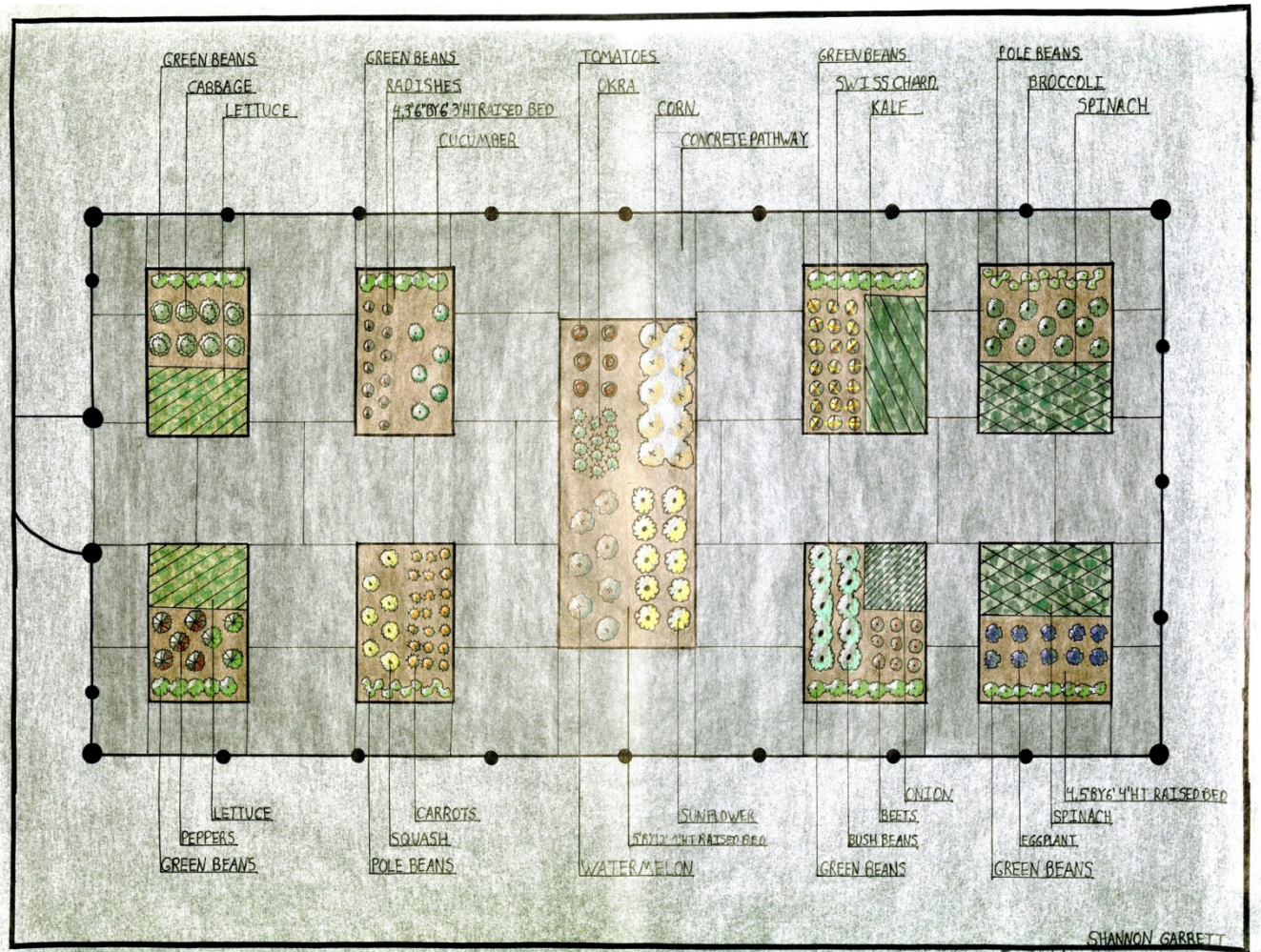


Figure 6: Garden Sketch