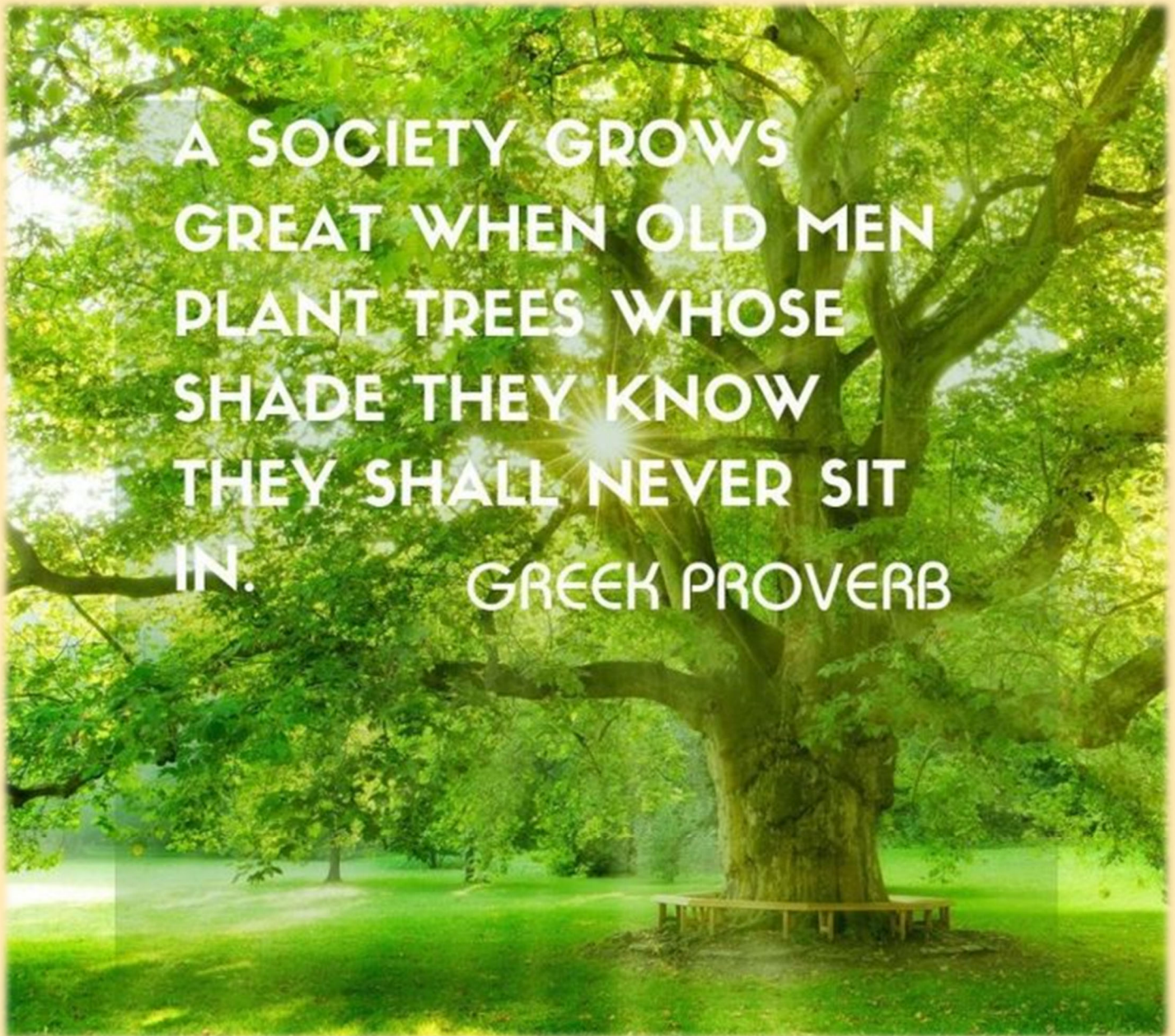




Environment Newsletter

District 410E - April 2023



A SOCIETY GROWS
GREAT WHEN OLD MEN
PLANT TREES WHOSE
SHADE THEY KNOW
THEY SHALL NEVER SIT
IN. GREEK PROVERB

Sensory gardens are all about engaging the five senses: touch, smell, taste, sound, and sight. And there are plenty of ways to do this to transform any environment into one that's interesting, stimulating, and immersive.

By thinking carefully about features that will enlighten *all* the senses, even a tiny area can be transformed into a soothing and engaging space.



Sensory gardens invite visitors to touch, taste, listen and appreciate their surroundings. Stimulating the senses can trigger memories and lift the spirit, or calm and relax the soul.

Spending time in a sensory garden can improve sleep and wellbeing and by encouraging a focus on textures, tastes and sounds, can increase mindfulness and mood.

What's more, a sensory garden can encourage people of all ages to spend more time outside, with all the benefits that fresh air and sunshine bring.



But whatever you choose, remember to always plant what is suitable for the garden of the community you have in mind, and only grow things that will survive in that particular climate, without copious amounts of watering or adjusting the conditions (see Ecocircle concept) Consider how much maintenance will be needed and available before selecting plants.



Try growing edible vegetable crops as part of your raised garden bed ideas. In doing so, you'll encourage everyone to interact with the sights, smells and tastes of nature's harvest. All the flowering herbs make great additions - think rosemary, lavender, and thyme.

Raised beds, as well as tall pots and trellises, will also help to bring the plants within reach.



However, remember to consider safety elements, depending on who your garden is aimed at. Beware of mixing edible and non-edible plants. It might even make sense to exclude poisonous, prickly and thorny plants altogether.



Feel good story of the month:

Old apartheid police station a place of hope amid grim daily life in Sharpeville

The Sharpeville Massacre of 1960, in which 69 people died, is commemorated on Human Rights Day. The township, 75km south of Johannesburg, has potholed roads and problems with water supply and refuse collection.

The museum commemorating the massacre and the graveyard where those killed by the police are buried are in a dilapidated condition.

But the old police station is a hive of activity. Since 2020, the Kitso Information Development Centre has been housed here, offering computer and life skills courses to residents. The computer courses are accredited by the Media, Information and Communication Technologies Sector Education and Training Authority.



A big, white sign at the main gate of the police station welcomes visitors to the centre with its motto "empower inspirationally".

People come from all over the township, including three informal settlements, says centre manager Nicho Ntema.

"We also run a nutrition programme, providing one hot meal per day to community members, as well as breakfast and lunch for students attending our courses," says Ntema. It provides about 270 plates of food a day.

High unemployment, poverty and food insecurity are ever present in Sharpeville.

Monyane Matsose (31) completed the life skills and computer training programme in 2022 and is now responsible for the centre's vegetable garden. Vegetables are donated to residents in need and used in the kitchen for the daily meals.

"Before coming here, I didn't know anything about growing and planting seedlings. Kitso helped me learn about agriculture. I have learnt skills that will help me improve my life," says Matsose.



Kitso secretary Nkapu Ranake says the centre is funded by the Department of Social Development. She said Kitso would like to expand the number of courses offered and cater for older as well as younger people.

- Daily Maverick

Going Natural

Everyone can 'go natural' and make their own cleaning products. All one needs is white vinegar, bicarbonate of soda, water, and a bit of elbow grease. Not only are these ingredients cheaper than other products on the market, they come in fairly large containers from your local supermarket



General cleaner - white vinegar+bicarb+water

it even foams, and cleans just about anything

Odour-remover - bicarb

sprinkle it on carpets to soak up smells and then vacuum;
place it in a cup in your fridge or cupboards

Loo freshener - water mixed with essential oils,

or just add plants to a room: they act as air filters

Basic bleach - hydrogen peroxide

oven cleaner - dampen oven surfaces, sprinkle bicarb over

surfaces and leave overnight;

for stubborn dirt, use steel wool

Mildew zapper - 2 tsp tea tree oil with cups

water

just spray on surface and leave.

- Source: Sprouting forth

Environment Calendar : April - June

22 April:	Earth Day
02-08 May:	Compost Awareness Week
03 May:	Migratory Bird Day
20 May:	Endangered Species Day
22 May:	World Biodiversity Day
27 May:	Otter Day
05 June:	World Environment Day
08 June:	World Oceans Day
17 June:	World Crocodile Day
21 June:	Giraffe Day

