Levittown Public Library Builds Hydroponic Garden

Levittown Public Library is introducing an indoor hydroponic garden to grow vegetables, herbs, and fruit. This new addition supports the library's continuing sustainability mission. The garden was launched on March 4 and currently resides in the Teen Room. It will move throughout the building, accompanied by signage to allow patrons of all ages to learn about the farmstand firsthand.

Hydroponic gardening, a popular development in the field of controlled environment agriculture, is a method of growing plants without soil. Instead, water, light, and nutrients are funneled through a self-contained unit that allows multiple plants to grow at once. This type of gardening can be done indoors, regardless of weather conditions, and with a significantly smaller footprint; Experts estimate that hydroponic farms use up to 90 percent less water than traditional farms.

The hydroponic garden is made possible, in part, by a grant from the Pollination Project and additional funding through the Levittown Library Foundation. The grant was awarded to Christina Reed, a student at Stony Brook University studying Economics and Sustainability. Ms. Reed is an intern and point person for the project, handling the garden's startup and leading instructional sessions for Library staff and patrons.

Ms. Reed estimates most of the plants will grow in six-week cycles. The garden's first harvest of butter and romaine lettuce, cilantro, parsley, and spinach was donated to the food pantry at Saint Bernard's Roman Catholic Church. Future crops will also be used for educational programs that will be open to the public, including cooking and baking programs and STEM events for children. The farmstand will make good on its name, as the Library also intends to open it up for the public to help themselves to the latest yield. Further donations will go to those in need.

(Contributed photo)

Access to fresh food is a luxury for many Long Islanders, as a recent report from the New York State Department of Health finds that more than 1 in 5 Long Islanders worry about having enough money to afford nutritious meals. Nearly a quarter of Nassau County residents report food insecurity. Levittown Public Library hopes their garden will help close this gap.

For additional information, visit the Levittown Public Library website at www.levittownpl.org

—Submitted by the Levittown Public Library

Saladino Honors Fallen Law Enforcement Officers With Fraternal Order Of Police

Oyster Bay Town Supervisor Joseph Saladino (third from right) joined the New York State Fraternal Order of Police to honor the brave first responders who have made the ultimate sacrifice. At their Annual Memorial Ceremony, the Fraternal Order of Police inscribed the names of 72 law enforcement officers on their Memorial Wall, all of whom passed away in the line of duty. Supervisor Saladino thanked this amazing organization for their commitment to ensuring the sacrifice of law enforcement is never forgotten and recognized NYSFOP President Michael Essig for his exemplary leadership. Also in attendance were New York State Senator Steve Rhoads (second from left), Nassau County Legislator Rose Walker (fourth from left), and former New York State Assemblyman Mike LiPetri (first on right).

—Submitted by the Town of Oyster Bay

(Contributed photo)

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