

The magazine that aims to inspire, inform and invigorate women

OUTDOORTM WOMAN

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A few
POINTERS
to get started
RUNNING

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UP SPRING
GOBBLERS**

**How GOLF
Helps to Build
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CAMPING
Survival Gear
for Spring

**Take Your Family
on a Crappie Trip**
From an Expert Angler

COMPLIMENTARY



This is the LIFE We PLAY

By Candace Cooper Murray

“Coop! Pass me the ball! I’m open!” These are words I’ve heard countless times over the years. That feeling of passing the ball, setting up a teammate for an imminent goal gives elation to the soul. I was introduced to the game of soccer at age 5. With two brothers and a neighborhood full of boys, soccer was my equalizing ground. Growing up in Florida, we played outdoors year-round. Soccer, biking, football, roller hockey, swimming, and skateboards, you name it, we played it. At the end of the day, soccer was the sport for me. Soccer was the sport that filled my dreams.

Soccer taught me teamwork in grade school; it gave me discipline through high school. It even opened the door for a scholarship to college. Soccer brought me to Queens University of Charlotte and it was the opportunity to succeed in education. It forced me to make sacrifices, to sweat, to have stamina and train for endurance. Soccer introduced me to teammates and to best friends. It taught me leadership and humbleness. It’s given me laughter and memories galore.

At age 30, the game I love is still giving. I like to believe it keeps me forever young. No matter how much goes on during a hard day’s work, soccer gives me release, it gives me freedom. Playing the game makes an average day, a grand day. I am a wife, a friend, a sister, a daughter, and a nurse. I am many things, but at the foundation of my identity, I am a soccer player. It defines me.

After graduating with a Nursing Degree, and joining the working world, I spent my vacation days traveling and exploring some of the rawest lands my eyes had ever seen. Visiting “third-world countries” is a life-changing experience. It was a personal evolution of how I viewed the world around me. Passion brewed for travel beyond the coveted United States bubble that I lived in. Each time I saw an area where people were struggling day to day with simply sustaining food, water and shelter I wanted to serve more. Mission trips became an avenue for travel that purposefully contributed to humanity. During my 20’s, I crossed borders into Guatemala, Nicaragua, Honduras, Mexico, The Dominican Republic and even ventured into West Africa spending time in Senegal and The Gambia. It was in these experiences that I realized how influential the game of soccer is around the world. I don’t

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care what race, young or old, male or female or if you are rich or poor, soccer is a common language. It is also so much more. For people living each day in dismal environments, a spark of hope is present while playing soccer. The significance of the game became clear to me, but most eye opening of all was the recognition of disparities due to poverty. A soda can, trash wrapped in twine, or even a coconut is the closest thing to a soccer ball for many kids. Barefoot and dribbling the ball over rocks is the norm, shoes are not. Team jerseys with numbers and even a matching color are considered pure luxury.

The foundation of Peace Passers began in January of 2008 with my brother Caleb and a small group of friends. We shared love for the game and passion for people. Since soccer had given so much to us over the years, what could we do to give back? Realizing the surplus of equipment in the USA among youth soccer clubs, high schools, colleges, former players, is astounding. Kids outgrow shoes and they get new jerseys every season. It’s our culture, it’s what we do. Peace Passers provides a way for people to donate their new and used soccer equipment. Through collaborative efforts with mission teams, sports ministries and other global non-profits, the gear reaches communities around the world that would otherwise not have access to proper equipment. Essentially we are recycling, and putting the gear back into play.

Peace Passers has collected over 10,000 soccer items and connected gear to 30 different countries across the globe. The organi-

zation serves as a unique platform for young players to lead community service projects and many kids have held birthday parties encouraging their friends to bring soccer balls instead of gifts. This is a tangible way for young players to recognize that they have the power to share the game with others, and quite frankly it becomes contagious.

Soccer is one of the world’s most beautiful games. I can’t imagine my life without it, but this isn’t about me. More importantly, it is about giving back to a game that has the potential to influence other lives in so many positive ways. Many people think they have to do big grandiose things to make change in the world, but actually that’s not the case. Multiple small acts of giving collaboratively add up to that huge impact that seems unfeasible. Imagine the smile on a kid’s face kicking a real soccer ball for the first time, or the chills a player gets putting on a jersey before a game. It is in this moment that they have just been given the opportunity to dream. “This is the LIFE we PLAY.”



Visit our website at www.PeacePassers.org
Candace currently lives in Charlotte, NC. If you have equipment to donate or would like to help distribute gear on your next trip contact her at peacepassersinfo@gmail.com
Peace Passers is a non-profit organization tax deductible under the 501(c)(3) code of the IRS.

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Sporting Charlotte

By Nicole Baird

Our typical “girls” weekend includes mud, sweat, sand and soccer. 40 degrees or 100 degrees, you can find us on the pitch with a soccer ball at our feet. We are a group of women unwilling to give up what made us, well, us. Soccer has become a part of our lives in every shape and form; all of us ref, coach, and organize the sport outside of our daily jobs. One of our members even founded a non-profit organization called Peace Passers, whose mission is to collect and distribute soccer supplies to people and communities throughout the world: Peacepassers.org.

We train constantly by running, biking, hitting the gym, snowboarding or hiking—whatever it takes to get us back out on that soccer field because that is where our heart is.

Some single, some engaged and some married— a common thread will unite us forever— kicking butt on the soccer field. We plan important events, say weddings & babies, around what soccer tournaments we don't want to miss.

According to Landon Donovan in an article from Outside Magazine, February edition, Peter Krustup stated “soccer players are among the world's greatest athletes because they run so often at high intensity. Well I would agree and say that our group proves that women not only belong in sports, but can run YOU into the ground!”

When Sporting Charlotte isn't working their 9-5 day jobs, you can spot them kicking butt at soccer tournaments locally and throughout the South East: Listed to the right are some tournament stats.

The Sporting Charlotte Women's Team was formed in 2004 by Nicole Baird, Marissa Baird, and Cori Reese to compete in the Soccer Six Tournament Series. The ladies went on to add 11v11 tournaments to their fixture list and have found an equal amount of success over the years. Their regal collection of silverware speaks for itself in describing the kind of team these ladies have established.

Sporting Charlotte Women recently capped off a fine year by winning the 2010 North Carolina State Cup in the Women's Open Division. They finished off a tough tournament by going undefeated, bringing the club it's third State Championship!!! It was soccer that brought all us together.



6 v 6

- Shamrock Seaside Six Champions 2008 - Savannah GA
- Clearwater Beach Sand Soccer Champions 2008 - Clearwater FL
- NAASTI Cup Champions 2008 - Hilton Head SC
- Shamrock Seaside Six Champions 2009 - Savannah GA
- Carolina Cup Champions 2009 - Charlotte NC
- University of Queens spring tourney Champions 2010 – Charlotte NC

Back to Back:

- 2008 6v6 National Champions- Hilton Head SC
- 2009 6v6 National Champions- Hilton Head SC
- 2010 6V6 National Champions- Hilton Head SC

Full Field:

- North Carolina State Cup Champions 2008- Greensboro NC
- North Carolina State Games Champions 2008 – Greensboro NC
- North Carolina State Cup Champions 2009- Charlotte NC
- North Carolina State Games Champions 2009 – Charlotte NC
- North Carolina State Cup Champions 2010- Greensboro NC

Don't Let Rain Go Down the Drain



©NC Cooperative Extension; Sandy Ridge Community Center Rain Garden in Stokes County

By Wendi Hartup
Natural Resources Agent
Forsyth County Cooperative Extension

Have you ever wondered where all that water goes when it washes off our landscapes into the streets and into the storm drains? There is a common misconception that water traveling into storm drains ends up treated at the local wastewater treatment plant. Instead storm drains empty rainwater filled with all kinds of pollutants (pesticides, fertilizers, engine drippings, street litter, pet waste, etc.) straight into a creek.

And why is it that even after a small rainstorm there is a ton of water coming out of the pipe that empties into our creeks? Let's just think about all the streets, buildings, and other hard surfaces where vegetation like trees, grass and shrubs was removed. Concrete and asphalt do not allow rainwater to soak into the ground (a process called infiltration). Decades of precipitation data show in an average one inch storm approximately 0.625 gallons of water will fall on a one square foot area of hard surface. In the Piedmont Triad, 95% of our rainstorms are 1 inch or less and we get over 40 inches of rain annually. So to put it another way a typical home has 3,360 square feet of hard surface, (includes rooftop and driveway) which means that every rainstorm could yield 2,100 gallons of storm water, or over 40 baths!

We may not be able to control the amount

of rain we will get, but we can reduce and even slow down storm water runoff. Think about any time you've driven into a rural community and noticed small grassy ditches in everyone's front yard. Someone once told me, “If you can mow them and they don't have trash... we call them swales.” These swales control runoff and allow infiltration to replenish ground-

water. Natural processes and microbes in the soil filter and break down pollutants. If you live in the city, ordinances most likely will not allow you to construct a swale next to the road but you can incorporate a rain garden into your landscape.

Benefits of Rain Gardens:

- Easy to design, install and maintain
- Provides aesthetic appeal to landscape
- Provides habitat for wildlife, butterflies and beneficial insects
- Absorbs nutrients and some heavy metals
- Enhances infiltration, stabilizes soil, and minimizes runoff to storm drains

Rain gardens work much like the swale, but are designed using water-tolerant plants and mulch. Storm water is diverted from downspouts, parking lots, driveways and in some cases the road to a spot in the landscape where a 6-8 inch depression is dug, like a bowl, to capture the first inch of rain. You can incorporate numerous plant options, including selecting for color or attracting wildlife and butterflies. Rain gardens are essentially an attractive water infiltration device.

The best way to locate a spot for your garden is to watch how the rain washes across the landscape or out of your downspouts. You may have many places suitable for a rain garden but a downspout is an easy place to start. Just make sure you locate your rain garden

downhill of homes, septic systems or well-heads! Also remember to call before you dig so you don't hit any underground utilities (1-800-632-4949 or 811 in NC).

Once I've figured out where I want to locate a rain garden, I observe the landscape for certain characteristics: sun, shade, moist soil, very clayey soil, etc. so I am choosing the right plants for the right place. I pay close attention to how the soil drains or doesn't in some cases. There's nothing wrong with picking several locations but to properly select plants you need to dig a one-foot-deep hole at each spot. Fill the hole with water a few times and measure how long it takes for the test pit to drain. If the test hole takes less than 12 hours, select more drought-tolerant plants. If the test hole takes more than 3 days to drain, you need to select wetland or water-loving plants.

Next, I try to figure out how much area is draining to my spot for the rain garden size. If the back of your house only has one downspout and will drain to your rain garden, the size of the house's drainage area would be ½ the roof's square footage. Then the engineering is done for you and you divide by 20. Here is an example story problem for those who love math. A portion of a 60 ft x 60 ft house (4 downspouts total) and 500 sq ft of driveway runs off to the rain garden location. What size rain garden would be sufficient? The homeowner will end up with a 70 sq ft rain garden that could be 5 ft x 14 ft or 7 ft x 10 ft. Then you dig out your rain garden to ensure it will pond 6 inches on top of your mulch, put in plants and enjoy. A great reference manual is available online (<http://www.bae.ncsu.edu/topic/raingarden/>) with full instructions, construction tips and plant suggestions.

North Carolina State University, Department of Biological and Agriculture Engineering has conducted over a decade of research on rain gardens (also called bioretention); leading the Southeast into a new era for storm water management practice options. You can browse the website (<http://www.bae.ncsu.edu/stormwater/>) for further information and look for upcoming trainings or contact your local county's Cooperative Extension office to find out if they are holding a rain garden class.