



## *De's Dazzles – PLANTING A GARDEN (MUSICAL) IN 9 BASIC STEPS*

- 1. Decide what you'd like to plant.** I learned early on if you won't eat a vegetable, don't grow it in your garden! The same holds true for a director choosing a musical/play, direct what you like!
- 2. Choose a location.** My garden was too far away, so I neglected to weed & water it! A garden needs a perfect location: easy access for picking, watering, & caring for your plants. The same is true of a musical, the director picks a place that is easily accessible & provides the necessary items (sound equipment, costumes, props, lights, set) to nurture growing young actors.
- 3. Plan your garden beds.** I planted more than I had time to manage! Vegetables? Flowers? Raised Bed? Decisions are made before auditions are even held! How many youths can we cast to fit our stage? What kind of costumes? Where do we find/rent/buy costumes? What is required to build & paint a set? Where do we find props to fit the specific time era? Oh my! Just like a garden, start small, because you can always add more props, costume pieces or scary lighting!
- 4. Invest in basic garden tools.** I don't use a trowel to dig a deep hole! The right tools can make gardening a pleasure instead of a chore! One thing we use frequently is the sound system, it needs to be loud enough for all on stage to hear, but not so overbearing that we can't hear the performers during a performance.
- 5. Prepare the soil.** Organize, communicate, & prepare ahead of time! Well-drained, fertile soil is preferred over rocks, sand & clay. Roots need good soil to produce well. The director prepares the cast by giving them a schedule of rehearsals, mp3's, & their script.
- 6. Choose the right seeds or transplants.** How many carrots can you really eat? How much space does your garden have? How long do seeds take to mature? The director decides the right person for the right character based on talent, vocal range, projection & tone, characterization, commitment, maturity & more. A person with a really sweet angel soft voice probably would not make a loud wicked witch character very well even though that is the part they desire.
- 7. Plant with care.** The plants I have purchased usually come with basic planting instructions, how deep to plant them, how much water, etc. The scripts come with basic minimal instructions: character enters cheerfully, or character drops their plate of food. The director adds to these assisting in character development.
- 8. Nurture your garden.** My band teacher taught me "how you practice is how you will perform on stage." Make time to tend your garden and water during the growing season! During the weeks of rehearsals, a performer must attend the scheduled rehearsals & practice at home! Did you know for a one-hour rehearsal, a director will spend about twice that amount of time, planning that rehearsal!
- 9. Enjoy your harvest!** Oh, fresh tomatoes, corn on the cob, canned green beans and homemade applesauce are some of the best foods I have ever tasted! After weeks of weeding, watering, pruning, then comes harvesting! Same with a production! After 14 rehearsals for Frozen Jr. the cast is ready! Our young actors have respect for props, admiration for new friends and characterization has blossomed! The cast is confident, competent, & connected!

Rain or Shine our cast's garden grew in theater etiquette, positive attitude, inspiration, & motivation to give their best! Director Cheryl Thompson, Sound Tech Bonnie Goodson-Gibeau & stage manager, myself look forward to seeing you at Frozen Jr on June 16 & 17!

*De Heaton, 6/9/22*