



OUR MISSION:

TO PROVIDE EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND RESOURCES TOWARDS TRANSFORMING THE LIVES OF INDIVIDUALS AND STRENGTHENING THE CARBON VALLEY COMMUNITY.

2025 Brigit's Bounty Board

Jacquelyn Thomas, President (January thru July)

Michelle Mrsan, Vice President (January thru July)

Michelle Mrsan, President (August thru December)

Kristie Conroy, Treasurer

Jeff Nieusma, Secretary and Property Warden

George Andrews, Member at Large

Tim Backus, Member at Large

David Whelan, Member at Large (January)

2025 Brigit's Bounty Coordinators (Volunteers)

Jerry Van Sambeek, Garden Coordinator (Non-voting)

Ginger Miller, Grants, Education, and Training (Non-voting)

Brigit's Bounty Community Resources (BBCR) was established as a Giving Garden in 2009 and incorporated in 2011 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization serving the Carbon Valley and greater Weld County area. Brigit's Bounty Giving Garden and Orchard are located on the NW corner of the St. Brigit property at 110 Johnson Street, Frederick, CO. BBCR helps families by donating its organically grown produce to the community directly and through partnerships with regional aid organizations and health centers. We are also dedicated to working with the community to provide hands on opportunities for garden education with the goal to teach everyone about where food comes from while providing direct food assistance.

BBCR has partnerships with the Weld County Youth Conservation Corps (AmeriCorps and Teamwork, Innovation, Growth, Hope, and Training TIGHT), Weld County Food Bank, Week of Hope, Frederick Meals on Wheels, Scout Troop 62B in Erie, CO and Scout Troop 73G in Firestone, CO, Brigit's Village, and others. BBCR relies on help from community volunteers to maintain the garden and support our programs. Our volunteers and food recipients come from all different ages, races, religions and walks of life. With the help of St. Brigit and the local communities, BBCR continues to expand its outreach to those in need within the local communities.

In 2025, we saw a number of enhancements to Brigit's Bounty Giving Garden and Orchard.

- In the production area, the original 44 beds were reorganized to 38 beds to improve access and output. In all but 2 of those beds BBCR planted new combinations of vegetables or different cultivars of tomatoes in an effort to increase overall production.
- The additional 12 raised beds in the events area are usually planted with plants that are directed towards educational programs. In 2025, these beds were irrigated and planted to furnish pollen and nectar for the bees and other pollinators.
- Power was run from Brigits Village to the chicken coop and the new irrigation system, with thirteen zones throughout the garden and orchard.
- Outside the main production area, three new areas were cleared and had a layer of leaves tilled in before planting potatoes (by the chicken coop), tomatoes (by mulberry tree), and a mix plot of peppers, tomatillos, sweet corn, and pole beans (by the entrance). The areas established in 2023 were tilled and made into a pumpkin-squash patch (SW corner) and melon patch (NW corner of orchard). These five areas contributed substantially to the increase production in 2025.
- The orchard was renovated as Bryce Namiot's Eagle Scout project. The orchard was expanded on the east side and fifteen 4 – 5 foot tall apple trees were planted:
 - (5) semi-dwarf 'Sweet Sixteen'
 - (4) 'Frost Bite'
 - (3) 'Snow Sweet'
 - (3) 'Honey Crisp'

These were recommended by Bryce's Grandfather, an organic orchardist in western Colorado. The apple trees were donated by George and Marica Andrews. Decomposed manure, weed barrier (7x7 ft square), and irrigation lines were placed around all trees and remaining grass over seeded with red and alsike clover.

- Lavender was planted around the north and east sides of orchard as a permanent source of pollen and nectar for the two beehives.

Apple tree survival was excellent, however, the majority of the lavender was lost during the spring drought before irrigation was installed.

- Steve Hack, our bee keeper volunteer, purchased two new queens with swarms in 2025. Unfortunately, one swarm rejected its queen and did not produce new bees or honey.
- Soil samples were taken in the fall from the 42 raised beds, the 5 flat beds, and the orchard (but not the raspberry patch) fertility needs to be checked after removal of grass sod.
- BBCR tried to convert the abandon vineyard to a raspberry patch with six cultivars donated by Stark Bros in Missouri and replants from an abandoned raspberry patch. The effort was minimally successful and in the future more weed control and irrigation emitters are needed around each plant to help this area thrive.
 - The following red cultivars (raspberry plants) were planted to maximize harvest:
 - Nova (June 25)
 - Heritage (July 10, Sept 1)

- Caroline (July 10, Sept 20)
- Latham (July 15), Encore (July 20)
- Anne Yellow (August 1, Sept 15)

Production records were kept during the growing season as harvested fresh weight, over 4000 lbs of produce was donated in 2025. Harvest distribution was as follows:

- 3,200 pounds to Weld County Food Bank (Greeley)
- 75 pounds to Frederick Meals on Wheels
- 185 pounds to Brigit's Village common area
- 410 pounds as Harvest Sharing
- 80 pounds to the Mobile Food Pantry (Dacono)
- 150 pounds of damaged produce taken by volunteers.

We also had 70 jars of honey given to new residents of Brigit's Village or distributed to members of St. Brigits. Harvest Sharing includes pick your own and donation to members of St. Brigits.

Total documented volunteer time exceeded 2600 hours in 2025. Records show we had at least 84 volunteers working in the garden, supporting the garden on the board of directors, attending local events, grant writing, administrative duties, and school visits.

Our volunteers include:

- Week of Hope: 2 adults and 6 - 7th graders
- Boy Scout Eagle Project: Bryce Namiot with 6 scouts and 4 adults
- The TIGHT crew: 70 supervisor and 108 youth visits. Youth visits averaging 3 hours per visit and four visits per youth.

Demographically we estimated nearly equal number of males and females with 60% under twenty-six and 11% over fifty-nine years of age. Minorities accounted for about 32% of the participants.

BBCR did not have an Education and Training Coordinator for most of the year and most of the education and training occurred in the garden and orchard. Educational opportunities included identification of less common

vegetables and sampling raw edibles with Week of Hope participants and instruction on proper way to plant root bound trees with BSA Troop 72. Jerry Van Sambeek provided training on growing, harvesting, and tasting of raw edibles throughout the year to the TIGHT program participants. Towards the end of the year, Ginger Miller began work with several schools to reinstate some of the past educational programs within the local schools.

Events that BBCR volunteers participated in included:

- The 2025 Carbon Valley Volunteer Fair: January 25, Jacquelyn and Jerry Orchard renovation: March 22, 23, and 30
- Carbon Valley Resource Fair: June 7, Jacquelyn and Jerry
- United Way of Weld County orientation: March 24, George
- St. Brigit's Ministry Fair: September 21 and 28, Jerry and Ginger

- Week of Hope: June 7 to 10, Sarah B and Christina S
- St. Brigit's workday: August 17
- Fall Harvest Sharing: Kristie and Greg
- Growing of bedding plants: April - May, 4 many volunteers)
- Bedding plant distribution: May 18, Jean Elliot, most Board members
- Honey distribution: December 7, Jerry

To support the BBCR program, we applied for several grants and held several fundraisers. United Way of Weld County Collective Impact Grant for \$3,500 is a yearly grant, continuing the wonderful support that the United Way has provided for BBCR. We applied for \$1,000 from United Power and received \$2,000. We applied for \$20,000 from The Front Range Region of the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado to build a storage shed and start a community fridge program and will receive \$10,000 in 2026 along with another \$10,000 from fundraising matches.

Other revenue to support the BBCR activities included:

King Soopers Fight Hunger bag sales: \$505

Donations from plant sale: \$710 for 165 plants

Honey donations: \$160

Sale of our Golf Cart: \$1,200

BBCR received substantial gifts in kind from Firestone Pediatric

Dentistry and Orthodontics: \$515.84 in tools and supplies thru www.myregistry.com

George and Marcia Andrews: 15 grafted apple trees

Stark Bros: 18 raspberry plants

Red Wagon: 268 high-quality bedding plants

CETC: 1,308 surplus \$2 bedding plants

Botanical Interests: 140 packets of outdated seeds valued at \$3-\$6 each Deneuve: 300 ft2 of decking and tomato stakes

A & R Tree & Landscaping: A crab apple tree

Steve Hack: 2 Honeybee colonies that produced seventy 8 oz jars of honey Donny Evaszich: dumpster space for disposal of weeds

Major expenses to support the BBCR programs included purchase of used riding lawn mower for BBCR and St. Brigits, \$1,200

Electric walk behind mower: \$240

Non-potable water for irrigation: \$425

Tools and equipment: \$1,400

Telephone, \$157

BBCR had some Board Member Transitions in 2025 and after many years of service on the BBCR Board, David Whelan asked us to accept his resignation at the January 2025 annual meeting.