There are over a thousand different titles on gardening to be found in the Pikes Peak Library District catalog. All are free to use with your library card. Check the digital borrowing, as there are more than 200 digital (download the book at home) titles available. Use the digital lending on the left hand side of the screen, scroll down to “Electronic Format,” and click the boxes that are of interest.

If you are new to town, count on learning to garden all over again. The last frost date in the spring is roughly May 13-18, the first frost date in the fall is around September 26. That leaves a 134-day growing season. This does not account for hail, cold wet days, and broiling hot and dry conditions – each has less than optimal effects on whatever you are trying to grow. Look for plants that mature quickly (under 60 days), have smaller fruit, and that may include varieties that you are not familiar with.

Can’t wait for warm weather? Sprout some radish seeds between moist paper towels. Watch how they change and grow each day. Sprout other seeds, like corn and lettuce, then compare and contrast. Which is bigger? Which grows faster? Why?

In your own yard, look for a sunny spot. If you are growing vegetables, you need at least eight hours of sunshine each day. Big containers on the patio or driveway, with the right amount of care – and lots of water, can be perfect garden locations.

The Colorado State University Extension website and office (ext.colostate.edu/menu_garden.html) are excellent sources of information. There are hundreds of Colorado State Extension fact sheets available, and all can be printed from home. Do look for the “print fact sheet” icon, to get a good copy. Do read fact sheet no. 7.220 – “Colorado Gardening: Challenge to Newcomers.”

PlantTalk Colorado is a service of the Colorado State Extension, and offers plant advice in both printed and spoken script forms. Your older, auditory learners will love to listen, and you can print the information for the visual family members.

Plantelect.org selects plants that are adapted for the Colorado growing conditions. While these are ornamental plants, it is worth including them in any landscaping plans.

Keep a simple family gardening journal – invite your family to write and draw about what they observe in the garden. Include new flower buds, insects, and butterflies – add some photographs and you will have completed a wonderful book that everyone can read and remember your summer gardening adventures.

Dig into Gardening!

Featured Family:

The Geislers live on several acres in the Colorado Springs west side community. They share their days with chickens, bees, and two turkeys. Paul, Wendy, and two also garden and planted a new orchard last year. Each year the entire family works together to plan, plant, care for, and harvest the garden. The Geisler’s recommend attending Pikes Peak Urban Gardening programs for a successful Rocky Mountain garden.

Wendy spent her early adult years serving in the Peace Corps, teaching in a 2nd grade classroom, and developing curriculum. She has a passion to teach her own children using real life experiences and also uses iPad apps to enhance the children’s Science and Social Studies lessons. Her favorite are Petersons Inventions that cost only $1.99 each!

Wendy shares that with these apps, the children “have to use pulleys, levers, and gears to make a machine work. It’s developmentally appropriate for younger kids and super fun. In Simple Rockets, you build a rocket and learn to fly it. In Simple Physics, you use basic trial and error to complete a project on a budget. Geography is a fun topic to practice continued on page 3
The Streak: How Joe DiMaggio Became America’s Hero
by Barb Rosenstock (2014)
The summer of 1941 – war is spreading through Europe. Joe DiMaggio is about to begin a summer like no other. This picture book biography is all about his streak of 56 games straight with hits, a record that has never been beaten. Great information at the end of the book.
Ages 6 - 12

When and Why Did the Horse Fly? Knowing and Using Question Words
by Cari Meister (2014)
Lighthearted series covering sentence types, shades of meaning, punctuation, and question words. Each book is mostly a story, using the concepts that are explained on the last page of the book.
Ages 6 - 10

Preserving America
by Nate Frisch (2014)
The six new books cover National Parks: Death Valley, Everglades, Grand Canyon, Great Smoky Mountains, Yellowstone, and Yosemite. Books are not long at 46 pages of reading material, yet contain varied and interesting information.
Ages 9 - 12