

# NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY GARDEN



## NEWS



MAY 2011

### JUNE INSPECTION

Your plot(s) must be worked by Sunday, June 5; otherwise, the plot(s) will be assigned to a prospective gardener on our waiting list. Inspection teams will walk through the Garden on the afternoon of that day.

Your plot(s) should ❶ be reasonably free of weeds, ❷ have seeds, sets, and/or plants in place, ❸ have a visible sign clearly indicating your plot number(s), and ❹ contain a compost pile (at least the beginning of one) if you took the compost credit.

One tomato plant in a sea of weeds won't do the trick, but you don't need to have every square inch cultivated or planted. The teams just want to make sure that your plot is being gardened.

If your plot is unworked, we will send you a notification by mail that it is being reassigned to a person on the Garden wait list. 🌿

### GARDEN NEWS

#### WE WELCOME 40 NEW GARDENERS

to the Garden this season. Returning gardeners should welcome them and remember that, if they seem to be breaking a rule or transgressing a guideline, it's from ignorance, not malice. Say hello, introduce yourself, and rehearse the rule in a pleasant way.

**SPRING CLEANUP DAY** at the end of April was blessed with great weather and a fine turnout of

enthusiastic volunteers. The tool shed was cleaned and reorganized, broken tools discarded and good ones put in place, and mowers put in working order. Hoses were checked out and distributed to all 14 spigots. Two compost crews worked miracles with the community piles. Invasive garlic mustard was pulled up. All in all, a good day's work and a Garden ready for the season.

#### SPECIAL THANKS TO

◆ **Molly Hale**, who has volunteered to be our water czarina this year. You'll find her article elsewhere in this Newsletter, telling you what she has done – and what you should do if you have a problem with spigots, hoses, or water.



### 2011 GARDEN CALENDAR

June 5

LAST DAY TO GET  
YOUR GARDEN PLANTED

July 17

RAGWEED / WEED WALKTHROUGH

October 16

LAST DAY TO CLEAN UP  
YOUR GARDEN FOR WINTER

October 22

FALL CLEANUP DAY

#### GARDEN COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Third Monday each month  
@ 6:30 P.M. at the Rec. Dep't.

◆ **Johanna Halbeisen**, who has set up the schedule for tool shed volunteers.

◆ **Gloria Santa Anna**, who has instituted a new and greatly improved system for recording community service. See her article, "In the Cloud," in this Newsletter for instructions on how to utilize the system for reporting your hours.

◆ **Kathryn Stout**, for her stalwart work in tackling the Jerusalem artichoke-infested compost pile.

**JIM McSWEENEY** – arborist, horticulturist, and gardener of his own 40 acres – talked on May 14 about natural methods of pest control. A brief summary of his advice would include: 1) Little works for weeds but weeding. Vinegar will kill annual but not perennial weeds. Glyphosate-based herbicides do work, though many gardeners do not regard them as natural. 2) Spinosad-based insecticides (e.g., Monterey Garden Spray) work well on a variety of insect pests in the larval form. Spray on a regular basis, every 14 days or so, to control flea, squash, bean, and potato beetles. 3) In a small plot (like our 20' x 20' plots), crop rotation probably makes little difference in controlling insect pests.

#### CHECK THE BULLETIN BOARD

for community service tasks. Schedules for tool shed monitors, yard cart and wheel barrow monitors, gas-tank fill-up persons, and

other tasks are posted. Wherever there is a blank spot, you can sign up to do the assigned task. 🍀

## RESPECTING BOUNDARIES



Although gardeners don't own their plots – they rent them season-by-season – the boundaries of each person's gardens should be respected by all who use the Garden. You should not enter another gardener's plot without permission. That goes for your children as well. And your dog. Recently-observed examples of gardeners who didn't observe this sensible guideline include:

- ▶ Gardener A brought his dog to the Garden, leashed it, then let it lie down in a neighbor's plot.
- ▶ Gardener B dumped debris from his plot onto a neighboring plot.
- ▶ Gardener C went into another gardener's plot looking for an animal she had seen running through the Garden.

There are more subtle ways in which gardeners invade others'



Patricia Taylor

space. For instance:

▶ **NOISE.** Long, loud cell phone conversations overheard are extremely annoying to others. Playing loud music may offend some. And, if you have wind chimes, please disable them when you leave the Garden – they can drive others bonkers.

▶ **CIGARETTE SMOKE.** The Garden is a **no-smoking zone**. Please don't smoke even in your own plot; your smoke drifts into your neighbors' plots.

▶ **PLANTS.** Raspberries and blackberries, mint and oregano, will travel with ease from where you have planted them into the next plot. Keep such invasives in the center of your plot; be vigilant to see that they stay there. Large shrubs and trees may send roots into the next plot, as well as shade them. Be mindful of the effects of your planting on your neighbors.

▶ **SPRAYS** for controlling weeds or insect pests. Be aware that not every gardener is accepting of the products you choose to use. Don't let spray from your plot drift into an adjacent plot. Don't spray along the boundary that separates your plot from one in the same 4-square.

Gardeners should also respect the boundaries of their own plots. Boundaries should be clearly defined, and grass growing at the edges of plots should be cut down. Items such as tools, bales of straw, and bags of compost should be kept inside plot boundaries, not in the paths. 🍀



## DOGS IN THE GARDEN?

### LETTER TO GAZETTE EDITOR:

If you've traveled on Burt's Pit Road recently you are sure to have seen a flurry of activity in Northampton's Community Garden. It is the time of year when gardeners are preparing the land for a season of fresh vegetables and flowers, as well as a space for connecting with nature and other people in the community.

We write to remind dog owners that dogs should be kept on leash when walking past or into the Community Garden. First, the Garden and the roads around it are part of Northampton, and City leash laws are in force.

But, more important, we ask you to be mindful of the work that goes into maintaining a garden, and that it can be ruined by a dog running through, or worse, using the garden as a toilet. We look forward to this season and to living harmoniously with our doggie neighbors.

Sincerely, The Garden Committee,  
Northampton Community Garden

### CITY OF NORTHAMPTON; GENERAL LEGISLATION SECTION 128-9

#### Running at large; restraint of dogs. [Amended 8-17-2000]

A. No person owning or keeping a dog within the City shall allow such dog to roam at large upon the land of another, except if it is on the premises of another person with his or her permission, nor shall they allow such dog to roam at large on any portion of a public highway or any public property, nor shall an owner or keeper restrain a dog on his/her own property so as to permit said dog to extend onto public or private property or to create a danger to the public safety.

B. The owner or keeper of a dog in the City which is not on the premises of the owner/keeper or upon the premises of another with the permission of said person shall restrain said dog with a chain or leash of sufficient material and strength as necessary to restrain the dog and shall be held by a person capable of controlling the movements of the dog. The chain or leash shall be of a length which prohibits the dog from being a nuisance to persons nearby or causing damage to public or personal property. 🍀

## RED BAG COMPOST BAGS

Please **save** the red plastic bags (in good condition) from Ed McGlew's lovely compost so Ed can re-use them. There's a spot in the garden shed for the bags; someone from the garden committee will return them to Ed. 🍀

## YOUR NEW TOOLS ARE YOUR FRIENDS!

You might have noticed new tools in the tool shed – shovels, rakes, weeder, cultivator, hoes, edger, and stake hammer – eleven in all. We selected the tools based on inspection of our current ones and your input from the registration survey. We replaced the tools in the poorest condition and bought additional ones when there were not enough. We also provided options – both long and short handle shovels, for instance. So overall, the tools will be in better condition, more available, and with more options. The tools are fairly heavy duty for durability and often have fiberglass handles for longer lasting use.

However, we still need to be careful

when using them! Already, one hoe has been broken. Granted, it was the one less expensive hoe we bought to provide a lightweight option, but inspection indicates that it was used improperly – either in hardened soil or to pry something.

So in an effort to protect our investment, here are a few ways to treat the tools:

- ▶ Use common sense.
- ▶ Use tools for their intended purpose. For instance, hoes are for pulling; not prying. Use shovels instead of hoes for loosening hard soil. Edgers are used to cut out borders (again, not for prying).
- ▶ Don't leave tools outside. Not only for security reasons, but to keep them out of the elements (rain), especially to preserve wooden handles.
- ▶ Don't use undue force.

If a tool breaks, please let someone on the garden committee know so that we can find out what happened. This will help us determine if we are buying the right tools for the intended purpose to optimize future purchases. Also, we may be able to get a replacement under the warranty – if we get the information to show that the tool was used properly. (The warranty only applies to faulty workmanship, not misuse.)

Sharing the tools is a key foundation of our community so let's ensure we have good working tools for everyone!

Enjoy, and happy gardening! 🍀

— Rich Aaronson

## LOVE YOUR HOSES!

In an effort to make the garden experience more enjoyable and effective for everyone, I volunteered this year to keep all the hoses in good working order. On the April 29 workday, hoses were distributed to all the spigots. I checked all of them for leaks, fixed the leaking ones, and replaced any ends that were broken. As of Monday, May 2, all the spigots have Y valves and at least 100' of leak-free hose with functional ends. It's BYO when it comes to hose sprayers and attachments. Hoses are expensive, but careful use will extend their life. Please baby the hoses as follows:

- ▶ Some hoses are naturally kinky, but try to avoid kinking them as much as possible.
- ▶ Attach hose to the side of the Y valve that points toward your garden. To face it the right way, you can rotate the Y valve around without loosening it. This avoids making a sharp bend in the hose where it attaches to the spigot.
- ▶ The last person using the hose



## FAUCET AND HOSE ETIQUETTE

- ▶ Please coil your hose after each use, and hang it on the hose rack.
- ▶ Watering cans take precedence at the faucet.
- ▶ Soaker hoses should not be left unattended.
- ▶ Sprinklers are not allowed.
- ▶ If a community hose needs a new washer or has other leaks, please follow up. Washers are usually available in the Garden Shed.

should **turn the spigot off by the main knob** rather than just turning off the little diverter valves.

► Treat the hoses with TLC and wind them up when you're done.

So that I can try to keep the hoses working all season, please let me know if the spigot you use has any of the following problems (when you do, please note the number marked on the spigot):

- A leak in a hose.
- A broken or leaky hose end.
- A leaky spigot. (We know # 12 is leaky and will try to get DPW to fix it.)
- You cannot reach your garden plot with any hose.

Have a great gardening season! 🍀

— Molly Hale (C-7, D-7, G-6)

hellomolly@comcast.net | 585-0791



Patricia Taylor

## HOW TO COIL A GARDEN HOSE (A)

1. Turn off water supply to hose.
2. Go to the end of hose where it connects to spigot.
3. Grab hose at a spot a few feet away from spigot.
4. Bend a large loop, perhaps 3 feet across, in hose.
5. Move down the hose a foot or two in the direction away from spigot.
6. Turn another loop in hose and stack it on top of first loop.
7. Repeat, until entire hose is coiled.

— from eHow.com

## HOW TO COIL A GARDEN HOSE (B)

This video shows how to coil a hose into a figure 8:

[HTTP://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/  
WATCH?V=RRH1RRAYSsM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRH1RRAYSsM) 🍀

## COMMUNITY GARDENERS IN THE "CLOUD"

Hello Fellow Gardeners:

I am happy to say that we have designed a way to record community service hours electronically. I have created an Excel Spreadsheet that you can download using Google Docs. In this way, we a) will use less paper; b) won't have to worry about lost records; and c) will both have a way to keep records in a concise location. The form is quite simple. New gardeners have used it already with success.

Keeping the records on an Excel spreadsheet will also allow me to post the community service hours with your balances (hours owed),

twice a season on our community board behind the shed. I will post the listing by garden plots only to protect people's privacy.

For those of you who really do not like to use computers or who do not have consistent access to e-mails – I have created a paper log, which you will find in the white mailbox. I am hoping, though, that the majority of gardeners will choose to use the spreadsheet and send it via e-mail.

I have created an Excel 97 version which you can access no matter what version of MS Office you have. Here are the directions regarding Google Docs:

- 1) Please use the link to access the Excel 97 spreadsheet;
- 2) Download the spreadsheet as an Excel document in order to input your information;
- 3) Keep a copy for your future use to send me community service updates;
- 4) Here is the link: <https://spreadsheets.google.com/ccc?key=OAhnt5CObzsqAdFo2azZ1cVpDWVZs emlGQnhCZzk2MOE&hl=en&authkey=CMenqfQB>
- 5) You can reach me at [GLORIANOHOCCG@GMAIL.COM](mailto:GLORIANOHOCCG@GMAIL.COM).

Thank you in advance for embracing this new way. I am confident that, once we all get used to it, this system will cut down on any confusion about community service hours served. Thank you. 🍀

—Gloria A. Santa Anna, T5, S5, R5



## RAIN BARRELS

At one time, the Connecticut River was known as America's best-landscaped sewer. While the Connecticut River has certainly improved in quality since then, it still faces significant pollution issues.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has identified stormwater run-off as the most common source of pollution in streams. During rain or snow melt, some of the water filters through the soil to become part of the groundwater. Much of that water, though, runs off our rooftops, yards, driveways, parking lots, and roads and into storm drains. Along the way, it often picks up fertilizers, pesticides, oil and other automotive fluids, yard waste, animal waste, trash, and many other pollutants. In some communities, stormwater is treated at a wastewater treatment plant before entering the River. Regrettably, this is not always the case. Undersized sewer and stormwater systems that are overwhelmed with water during a storm event still dump pollutant-ridden stormwater straight into the River. Sometimes this stormwater even contains untreated sewage.

A partnership between the Connecticut River Watershed Council and Coca-Cola, Inc of Northampton has made it possible for residents, nonprofit leaders and volunteers, and business professionals to use rain barrels to reduce stormwater pollution of the River. Rain barrels collect and store rain water from a roof that would otherwise be diverted to storm drains and streams. Not

only do rain barrels reduce the amount of pollutants in our rivers and streams; they also keep the water onsite for use by home owners. A rain barrel can save a homeowner approximately 1,300 gallons of water in the summer, reducing municipal water use and allowing more water to remain as groundwater. Rain water coming off a roof has not yet picked up pollutants from yards, driveways, or roads, so it is ideal for watering lawns or gardens.

Coca-Cola has offered to donate their used 55-gallon syrup concentrate drums to the Connecticut River Watershed Council for distribution to community groups. The Northampton Community Garden has received a rain barrel for use at the garden shed, and was scheduled for installation at the May 21 demonstration workshop.

While rain barrels certainly benefit the home or business owners who utilize them, they also benefit the community in the form of cleaner water. Every person who boats, fishes, swims, or enjoys a view of the clean river benefits. Each animal, fish, or insect that makes its home in or along the river benefits. And ultimately the Connecticut River itself benefits. 🍀

— Angela Mrozinski

## VALLEY TIME TRADE



Would you like to:

- ◆ Connect people and unmet needs with untapped resources?
- ◆ Provide economic relief through access to alternative resources?
- ◆ Encourage increased community interactions?
- ◆ Foster mutual respect for all individuals in a community and bridge gaps between existing barriers?
- ◆ Promote equality, recognizing that all services are necessary to society and equally valuable?

Then maybe it's time for you to join Valley Time Trade.

Members can earn Time Dollars by performing a service for another member, then using those Time Dollars to buy a service from another member. One hour of service earns one TD\$, no matter what the service.

It's easy: Give what you want, get what you need.

Learn more, and sign up at

[WWW.VALLEYTIMETRADE.ORG](http://WWW.VALLEYTIMETRADE.ORG). 🍀

Please do not turn your car around in our neighbors' driveways on Burt's Pit Road.



Drive down to the ball field to turn.



## CART ETIQUETTE

Garden carts and wheelbarrows are meant to be shared.

Please use them only when transporting material; then return to the central area.