

NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY GARDEN



NEWS



SEPTEMBER 2015



GARDEN NEWS

FALL CLEANUP DAY 2015

Come to the Garden on **Saturday, October 10**, 10–12 and 2–4, to help get it ready for winter. If you need community service hours, this is a great time to help out.

FALL INSPECTION

Fall Inspection is scheduled for **Sunday, October 18**. Read on to learn how to prepare for the inspection and what the inspection teams will be looking for. Please remember that failure to pass the inspection means that you won't be able to renew your plot(s) for next year.

REGISTER FOR 2015 SEASON

Plot **renewal forms** will be mailed in early December to all gardeners who have passed fall inspection (see story below) and fulfilled their community service requirements.

These forms will allow you to:

- 1) renew registration of your garden plot(s) for 2016, and
- 2) request an additional plot (or plots).

Also included will be a questionnaire, in which the Garden Committee asks how you think we could improve the Garden. 🌱

FALL PLOT CLEANUP

All gardeners must clean up plot(s) in preparation for winter. The deadline for cleaning your plot(s) is Sunday, **October 18**.

If your plot does not meet the guidelines described below, you will receive an e-mail (or written notice) saying what further needs to be done. There will be a "second-chance" inspection on Sunday, November 1. If your plot fails both inspections, you may not register for 2015. If it passes the 2nd inspection, you may register, but there will be a \$10 fee, payable with registration.

There will be no extensions of the October 18 deadline. Your plot(s) will be inspected on November 1; if your plot(s) pass, you may register but will owe the \$10 fee.

WHAT IS FALL INSPECTION?

Around 2 P.M., teams of volunteers will be checking plots to make sure the guidelines for fall cleanup have been met. They will be looking to see whether:

- ✓ You have **cut down** all dead plant material and properly disposed of it. (Compost it in your own plot or in one of the community compost piles. Do not leave old tomatoes, squashes, etc., lying in your plot uncovered, as this attracts animals. Put diseased plant material in plastic bags and toss into the dumpster.)
- ✓ You have **cut down** tall grasses and weeds around your plot, to no more than 6" tall. (This is important; if not cut, they will send unwanted seeds into your plot and others' plots as well.)
- ✓ You have **cut back** perennials



2015 GARDEN CALENDAR

FALL CLEANUP DAY
Saturday, October 10

SOIL TESTING
Saturday, October 10
(see Master Gardener article)

FALL INSPECTION
Sunday, October 18

2ND INSPECTION
Sunday, November 1

GARDEN COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Third Monday each month
@ 6:00 p.m. at the Rec. Dept.
(or in the Garden during nice weather; call to confirm)
All gardeners are welcome.

where appropriate. (The point of this is to prevent unwanted seeds from invading others' plots.)

✓ You have **disposed of** all paper and plastic debris, paper and plastic bags, and plastic plant pots. (Left in your plot, they blow all over the Garden and across the street into our neighbors' yards.)

✓ You have **removed** all tools, watering cans, etc., if not in use; you have taken hoses home or coiled them and stored them flat; you have removed plastic furniture. (Some of these items will blow around the Garden and

be lost to you and become a nuisance to someone else. All will deteriorate from being exposed to weather.)

✓ You have **laid flat and anchored** securely any stakes, tomato cages, etc., that you leave in your plot.

✓ You have **firmly anchored** any structures – arbors, trellises, birdhouses – that remain in your plot.

✓ You have a **visible, legible sign(s)** showing your plot number(s). 🍀



Bluebirds by Frankie Dack



DOGS IN THE COMMUNITY GARDEN?

Several gardeners have contacted the Garden Committee about the announced ban on dogs. Their arguments have convinced us that we should relax the rules so that gardeners may bring a dog to their plot — *if the following guidelines are followed:*

- 1) Your dog *must* be on leash while in the Garden.
- 2) Your dog *must* be in your plot only.
- 3) Your dog *must* be quiet — no jumping on passersby, no barking at gardeners or other dogs.
- 4) Your dog may *not* urinate or defecate (except in your plot — where you will, of course, pick up the poop).

If there is a complaint to the

Garden Committee from other gardeners that these guidelines have not been observed, you will lose the privilege of bringing your dog to your plot.

With this set of guidelines, we have tried to balance the desires of non-dog-owning gardeners with those of dog owners. Let us know if we have succeeded. 🍀

NOTES FROM THE DEMONSTRATION GARDEN: SEPTEMBER 2015

WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

Our “Q and A Mailbox” brought us a short note that made our day. Jeff at L8 wrote “My daughters and I love the Community Garden”. We agree...we’ve loved our time this year at the Garden.

Starting in a cold rain in April, we’ve rebuilt two of our three raised beds. The third is yet to come, scheduled for the end of the month. We now have the start of an herb garden in the smallest bed, with the strawberries relocated and thriving next to the blueberries. Raspberries, meanwhile, are producing a second crop. A small fall crop of kale and arugula occupies the other new bed, still largely filled with the remnants of a bumper crop of cherry tomatoes and the last of the summer squash. Interestingly, while the summer squash in the raised bed was beset by powdery mildew (controlled by removing diseased leaves), the tomatoes again demonstrated greater resistance to blight, probably because they were off the ground.



Bluebird by Frankie Dack

Our best full sized tomato was a volunteer plant; the worst was a very disease prone Mr. Stripey heirloom. We’ll save seeds from the former, and won’t replant the later.

All told, we harvested and donated to the Northampton Survival Center several hundred pounds of lettuces, cucumbers, summer squash, basil, cilantro, onions, garlic, sweet and Hungarian peppers, green beans, carrots and cabbage. And we had a wonderful time doing it!

Our last task of the season will be **SOIL TESTING** on the morning of fall clean-up day, **October 10**, from 10 to 12. We’ll be near the storage shed and the new pergola. Bring us a small soil sample from your garden plots, and we’ll test for pH. And we’ll try to answer any gardening questions you might have about this year in the garden or planning for next year! Meantime, enjoy these last days of the growing season. 🍀

—Carol Wasserloos

NORTHAMPTON COMMUNITY GARDEN

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WE'RE ON FACEBOOK!

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