

## MEMBERS' BULLETIN

## Greetings

Welcome to our new gardeners, and welcome back to all the familiar faces!

Our big leap last season, from being under the aegis of Nepean Parks and Recreation to running the allotment garden operation on our own, was a runaway success. There was great cooperation among the members, we did well financially and were able to return the generous start-up grant we received from the City of Nepean.

With your individual and cooperative participation, the future of the Association seems assured. There's always need for help in maintenance. If you would like to lend a hand cutting grass or on other routine jobs, please get in touch with Ian at 225-4510.

113 plots are in use by the Nepean Garden Association this year. The 1992 directors are Ron Black, Wally Clarke, David and Rosaleen Dickson, Keith and Lila Hird, Ian Reid, Nancy Rooyackers, and Denis St John. If you have any questions please contact the maintenance director, Ian Reid, 225-4510 or the registrar, David Dickson, 829-2955.

*Too much?*

As the season progresses, we may find ourselves with more produce than we need, while lots of people in the city never have enough to eat. We can share our bounty with the less fortunate through the Shepherds of Good Hope who use fresh produce of every variety for their soup kitchen, 233 Murray at King Edward. You may take your extra produce there or phone 230-8210. They'll come and pick it up if you can't take it to them..

## Help Wanted - Sign-maker

Ron and Denis are looking for help in updating the sign at the gardens. The job requires someone who can hand-letter, someone who has a router, and a sander. Any volunteers? Call Denis at 224-9169 or Ron at 820-3689 if you would like to help.

## Rocks

The gardens are stony, right? As you remove the stones, collect them in a bucket or basket and drop them over the wire fence at the back of the property not in the laneways between plots.

Volunteers mow the lawns and laneways, keeping down weeds and making the whole area look wonderful. When they come upon a rock they have to stop and pick it up, or, if they don't notice it, it can break the lawnmower or, worse, cause harm to an operator or bystander.

The mower belongs to the association and if it has to be repaired, or replaced, the fees could go up next year or we might all be assessed extra this year. Nobody wants people to be hurt, and nobody wants the association to have to go to needless expense. So, please, keep rocks and stones off the grass.

## Water

All watering must be done by hand. Water is our largest expense. Soaker hoses and automatic sprinklers are enormous water wasters and are not permitted.

If you see someone leave water running from a tap, or from a hose, or sprinkler not held in their hand, it is your responsibility to remind them this is against the rules. If nobody is there and water is just running, or spraying, unattended, **turn off the water.**

Even aside from the cost, good citizens know that water must not be wasted!

P.S. PLEASE NOTE -- WE HAVE A WAITING LIST

If you must abandon your garden, call Ian (225-4510) or David (829-2955) immediately.

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*For a weed-free garden*

Suggestions by Ian Reid

Weed and couch grass seeds will not grow when placed at least 6 inches below the earth's surface, so bury all unwanted living plant material 6 inches underground.

To bury this living plant material, clear all the living material from an area, about 6 feet by 20 feet (the full width of your plot).

Then dig a 3 foot wide trench, 6 inches deep, the full 20' across your plot and pack all the living plant material into this trench, covering it with 6" of clean earth. Continue with this process until all the living material is buried.

The living plant material will decompose in about two months and the roots of your new plants will feed on this enriched soil.

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Another idea is to cover the whole garden area, 20' x 30', with opaque black or brown plastic to prevent the rays of the sun from reaching your garden. Without sun, plants die in about six weeks. Don't use clear plastic, it stimulates growth.

Cut little round holes in the plastic and plant your new plants through these holes which must be very small because grass, weeds and everything else living in the soil will try to grow up through them.

Plants that evolved in hot tropical climates do well grown through plastic, including beans, corn, okra, peppers, pumpkins muskmelon, watermelon, cucumber, tomatoes.

It will take about 48 plastic bags of the 26" x 36" size, slit down the side and across the bottom, to cover your plot with a single thickness of plastic.

To keep the wind from blowing your plastic away, dig a little trench an inch deep, just under and inside the perimeter of the plastic. Each sheet of plastic uses the same trench as its adjoining sheet so there is a small overlap. As each is laid, anchor it by filling its trenches with soil.

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You can obtain a weed-free garden by following either of the above strategies. Or you might well try using both.

Half the plot could be planted under opaque plastic while the other half could be planted after burying the living plant material 6 inches under the surface. Thus the plants that grow well under plastic, as well as plants that don't do well under plastic, can flourish.

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If you have already planted your garden, you may wish to lay opaque plastic between the rows to control weeds and prevent evaporation, conserving soil moisture.

All plastic used thus as a mulch must be opaque. The colour and surface properties of the plastic change the albedo (reflectibility). Black or brown plastic work the best.