

*ARCHIVE*

# NAGANEWS

Nepean Allotment Garden Association Bulletin

Spring 2008

## **Notice of Annual General Meeting**

**Tuesday, April 15, 2008**

**7 pm**

**Community Hall, General Burns Park**

*Parking is available in the lot off Chesterton Drive, across from Frank Ryan School, and in the lot at the end of Argue Drive. Please try to attend. A number of announcements regarding the future will be made, and a new Board of Directors will be elected. In addition, a special guest from Just Foods Ottawa will make a presentation. Tea and coffee will be served.*

### **NAGA BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Chairman**

Bill Nye                                723-0320  
[thenyes@rogers.com](mailto:thenyes@rogers.com)

**Vice Chairman**

Mike Chebbo                        226-6164  
[mchebbo@gmail.com](mailto:mchebbo@gmail.com)

**Treasurer**

Benson Kwan                        723-8624  
[Benson.kwan@rogers.com](mailto:Benson.kwan@rogers.com)

**Secretary**

Helene Labbe                        724-6699  
[herodotushe@yahoo.ca](mailto:herodotushe@yahoo.ca)

**Registrar**

Mary St-Jean                        224-9169  
[les.stjean2@rogers.com](mailto:les.stjean2@rogers.com)

**Maintenance Director**

Terry Ingratta                        225-8082

**Director/Publicity**

Denis St-Jean                        224-9169  
[les.stjean2@rogers.com](mailto:les.stjean2@rogers.com)

**Director**

Lee Coates                            228-9701  
[leecoates@rogers.com](mailto:leecoates@rogers.com)

**Director**  
Vacant

*The AGM mentioned above will be my final meeting as Chairman. The ten years I have been NAGA Chairman have gone quickly. It has been an enjoyable experience and I thank the members of the Board for their help and support.*

*I am proud of the improvements that have been made since 1992 when NAGA took over from the City of Nepean. I am pleased that the number of gardens and gardeners has increased, but more importantly I think, the sense of community amongst our members has begun to develop through working together on various projects for the betterment of the gardens. I am confident that the next Chairman and his Board of Directors will continue to make even more improvements and that the membership will support their endeavors.*

*Thank you to those who have served on the Board of Directors with me over the last decade as well as the gardeners who came out time after time to help out to keep the gardens running smoothly.*

See you at the gardens,

*Bill Nye*

IN MEMORIAM  
**CARL VUYLSTEKE**



Last fall we lost a good friend and dedicated volunteer when Carl passed away. Ever ready to lend a hand, especially when our aging plumbing sprang a leak, he always had a smile and a friendly 'hello' for his fellow gardeners. We remember often calling him in a panic about a geyser springing up somewhere on our land, and could he fix it? By the time we returned from our phone call, Carl was already squatting on the ground with his toolbox at his side, quietly repairing the leak.

We will miss you, Carl.

## **OUR EQUIPMENT SHED**

The smaller of the two sheds at the end of our main parking lot contains tools and equipment for the use of our members. There are rakes, spades, hoes, wheelbarrows and other implements for you to borrow. There is a combination padlock on the door. If you do not know the combination, ask another gardener or any member of the Board of Directors. Please share the information with other gardeners, only.

## **EMAIL**

In order to receive up-to-the minute information pertaining to the gardens, please make certain you provide us with your email address on your renewal form.

## LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

Take a look at the western end of the gardens next summer. You may remember that the small forest that bordered the back corner of the area contained many dead and dying trees, and that ugly trash ranging from bedsprings to old tires once littered the embankment.

All that disappeared last fall when the forest was cleared, tons of soil were trucked in, and the surface graded. Not only do things look a lot nicer, but the project has given us space for a few more gardens. In addition, folks who have been tending gardens near the old forest will now have a lot more sunshine bathing their crops.

Come spring, the grounds will be further improved when some low-growing trees will be planted strategically along their southern edge. Since heavy vehicles were used during the project, a few gardeners may find the area a bit muddy for a while. We ask that cars not be driven in that location until it becomes re-established.

Over in the southeast corner of the forest, near the back fence, we have built a compound designed to store our stakes, fencing, containers, and other paraphernalia at the end of the season. This, too, should help make Viewmount Gardens more attractive. Your cooperation will be appreciated, as we have received a few complaints from nearby residents about the sometimes messy appearance of some plots.

## DEADLINE FOR RENEWALS

Once again, we want to remind you that the deadline for renewing your garden plot is April 15; sooner, if possible. After that date, your garden will be allocated to another gardener. There will be no exceptions or time extensions. As usual, there is a long waiting list of persons wanting a plot. Some have waited two or more years, and it would be unfair to deprive them of their opportunity to obtain a garden.

## FEE INCREASE

For the first time in NAGA history, we have found it necessary to increase the rental fees for our gardens. At the last AGM rates were increased to pay for grass cutting. They are minimal and still the best bargain one could hope for. As of this season, the fee schedule will be:

Large annual:	\$30	Small annual:	\$15
Perennial:	\$15	Raised:	\$15

Seniors' rates are set at \$25 for the large plots and \$12.50 for all other gardens.

## A FEW RULES TO REMEMBER

Tall plants are the target of our reminders this time. First, in order not to cast unwanted shade on your neighbor's garden, please keep tall-growing plants at least one meter away from the edges of your plot. You can, of course, grow smaller plants in those areas. Some gardeners have been planting corn, pole beans and other longish crops in rows along the centre of their plot. It works very well and looks neat.

Cornstalks do not compost well when placed in the compost bin, and must be left in your garden at the end of the season. Cut the stalks into two-inch (5 cm) pieces and scatter them on your plot. They will be turned over by tractor in the fall and again in the spring.

On the other hand, sunflower stems are woody and take forever to compost, and are therefore banned from our gardens.

## 'WEED' THIS CAREFULLY

Ralph Waldo Emerson was obviously not a gardener when he wrote: 'What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered.' The bane of every gardener is the tenacious, prolific, and all-round pesky weed. Weeds will thrive in drought, flood, frost, and even darkness. We may sometimes win the battle against them, but never the war.

So, what to do? Gardening guru Ed Lawrence has some suggestions, most of which involve elbow grease. Here is a couple, gleaned from his book, "Gardening Grief and Glory":

As soon as you can this spring (which may be late, given the amount of snow to melt away), get out to your garden with a good, stiff, fine-toothed rake and scrape the soil along its length. Remove any weeds that have been uprooted and then rake your garden across the width. Many of the remaining weeds will have been weakened or killed by having a significant part of them torn away.

Other weeds, such as some knotweeds and dandelion, will quickly grow back if even a small portion of the root has been left in the ground. Diligent and frequent hoeing is the solution here. Make sure your hoe is sharp and run it just below the soil surface, severing the roots cleanly, rather than tearing them, which could encourage more rapid growth. Good luck.

## THIS YEAR'S VOLUNTEERS

But for our volunteers, NAGA would have long ago come to nothing. We would like to thank the following for their unselfish contribution to the Association. If you would like to lend a hand, please contact any Board member.

Water: **Abdalla Anani**

Staking: **Terry Ingratta**

Newsletter: **Denis St-Jean**

Park improvement: **Lee Coates**

City liaison (plowing): **Lee Coates**

Compost (city): **Mike Chebbo**

Work weekend: **Bill Nye**

Grass maintenance: **Kazimierz Senkowski**

Volunteer coordinator: **Mary St-Jean**

Telephone committee: **Walter Saidak;**

**Giselle Thomson; Chris Garnett; Betty Paul**

New gardeners' briefing: **Denis St-Jean**

E-mail coordinator:

**VACANT – please volunteer**

Shed supervisor: **VACANT – please volunteer**

## SPRING CLEANUP

All members are expected to participate in our annual spring clean-up, to be held **Saturday and Sunday, April 26 and 27, from 9:00 am to noon**. Bill Nye will be the charismatic leader of the crew. You will be reminded by telephone as the date approaches.

## NEW GARDENERS' BRIEFING

At an appropriate date in mid-May, Denis St-Jean and/or Bill Nye will acquaint all new gardeners with the services, equipment and rules of garden maintenance on our site. Our telephone or e-mail committee will notify you of the time and date.