

Spring 2009

NAGA Newsletter



In these difficult economic times, it is always good to go back to our "roots"

Alongside a backdrop of commercial businesses on one side and a natural sanctuary on the other side, our allotment gardens flourish on Viewmount Drive with an ever increasing number of committed gardeners, like you and I whose plots grow, year after year, some of the healthiest organic vegetables, plants and flowers (and weed too!). As we all go through these difficult economic times and the desire for food security, community and organic gardening becomes more and more of demand that our waiting list is again very long!

The physical landscape of Viewmount gardens has changed a lot. New plots (and more gardeners) were added last year. The Viewmount Park Improvement Project (VPIP), under the direction of the previous Chair, Bill Nye, has materialized. What was once a dump site has turned to become one of the beautiful slopes in any city's park. Thanks to Lee Coates and the many other volunteers who participated in every aspect of this project. Compost bins were all cleaned and ready for your gardens' residues for the season. Thanks also to Steve Fournier and his donated time and equipment. Individual lockers were all repaired and painted. Thanks to Tenna Premaratne, John Ohari, Frank Ernhofer, Sonny Fernandez, Ian Reid, Kazimierz Senkowski and many other volunteers who donated their time and paint. Soil rejuvenation experiment that was approved at 2008 AGM meeting was very successful and rewards were greatly felt by all participant gardeners; thus an experiment worth repeating.

The sense of community gardening was well and alive again due to volunteers' participation which is very important in our organization. Every year, we call on volunteers to come out and help in all facets of our work: from staking plots to cleaning, trimming, composting, painting and planting flowers. You will find a complete list of tasks on your renewal application form. Please feel free to tick as many items as you think you can help in. Our many thanks to present and past members of the board (especially the late Walter Saidak who will be missed for sure). Thanks to many other volunteers have shown up consistently every year. Remember: **this is a volunteer-run association not a City-run.** All contributions of skills and time are greatly appreciated. Most needed are some positions that are still vacant on the board of Directors: Vice-Chair, Maintenance Director, and another Director at Large. If you are interested, feel free to contact me or any other Board member. Please review some of the terms and conditions of getting your license renewed as some of them are being ignored, especially that a plot is for the sole use of the registered user and that **produce is for his or her own use and cannot be sold.** I cannot stress more on these 2 problem issues other than our whole organizational existence is based on these 2 facts and any misuse will not be tolerated.

Except for compost distribution, I am very pleased to announce that this has been a very good year. Rain helped a lot (in some cases). Please send back your renewal forms ASAP before the deadline, so that we can call on some of names from our long waiting list. We are looking forward a better and prosperous green season. See you at the gardens.

Board of Directors:

Chairman:

Mike Chebbo 613-226-6164

Vice-chair:

Vacant

Registrar:

Mary St-Jean 613-224-9169

Treasurer:

Benson Kwan 613-723-8624

Secretary:

Hélène Labbé 613-724-6699

Maintenance Director:

Appointed: Steve Fournier

Director at Large:

Denis St-Jean 613-224-9169

Director at Large:

Lee Coates 613-226-9820

Director at Large:

Vacant

Nepean Allotment Garden Association (NAGA) operates the Viewmount Gardens since 1991 and is volunteer-based!

***Mike Chebbo
Chairman***

The deadline for renewing your garden plot is WEDNESDAY, APR.15, 2009. After that date, your garden will be allocated to another gardener. There will be no exceptions or time extensions.

**Annual General Meeting
Wednesday, April 15, 2009 at 7:00 pm**

The AGM will be held again at the lodge in General Burns Park on Argue Drive. Parking is available off Chesterton and Argue drives. Please attend this important meeting. Major proposals will be on the agenda to discuss and vote. Refreshments will be served.

Walter Saidak

One of our founding members passed away on March 5, 09. Walter held an abiding affection for the Association. For more than 15 years he tended his garden, shooed away interlopers, and was ready to offer help to any gardener. Along the way he made many lifelong friends. He will be sorely missed.

More Property Damage

As many of you probably know, vandals broke into our main shed last year. The doors were damaged and the front wheels of our riding mower were stolen. New wheels have been ordered. In addition, it appears that someone drove their car into one of our raised gardens, causing considerable damage. We will need a small number of volunteers to help repair that garden. If you'd like to help, please call Lee Coates, at 613-228-9701.

Compost Program

Rising transportation and supply costs have forced us to discontinue providing gardeners with free compost. Instead of raising the plot rental fee, we are planning to invite a charitable organization to sell compost on-site this spring. The issue will be discussed at this year's AGM, so please come in and participate.

Spring Clean-up

Speaking of volunteers, Spring Clean-up Day will take place Saturday April 25 from 9:00 am to noon and on Sunday April 26 from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Twenty to thirty people are needed to tidy up the place. The more there are, the quicker it will go. Please call Denis or Mary St-Jean, at 613-224-9169.

In early May, a day or so after the tractor has finished plowing the fields, we will need people to drive in the marker stakes. The job requires some bending over. Our telephone committee will be contacting members for these and other projects. Please volunteer.

Our Volunteers

We wish to sincerely thank all the volunteers who helped us during the last season. Many of them have given their time and effort for a number of years, and to those we are particularly grateful. If it weren't for all of you, the grass would remain uncut, the front flower garden would not exist, the stakes would not be painted, placed and taken up each year, trash would accumulate, water would not be flowing, and equipment and buildings would go unrepaired. In fact, the Association has thrived because of you.

Happy Gardening!

