

Email: nagagardens@gmail.com

Website: <http://nepeanallotmentgarden.webs.com>

Spring 2012

NAGA Newsletter

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613-226-6164

Vice-Chair:

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Director at Large:

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Director at Large:

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613-523-0024



What was that?

A very odd winter indeed.....

Welcomed for its mildness and lack of snow but was it severe enough to rid us of those pesky pests that plague our gardens every summer? We can only plant our crop, keep a watchful eye and hope for the best in the season to come.

Please remember to **renew your membership** with NAGA and send your yearly fee by **cheque** to the following address:

P.O. Box 65073 Merivale P.O. Ottawa, On. K2G 5Y3

**Deadline for renewing your garden plot is
Wednesday, April 11, 2012**

After that date, your garden will be allocated to another gardener. No exceptions.

Community Gardening In Action

Ranking third largest site among all community gardens in the City of Ottawa, behind Kilborn and Gloucester sites, our Viewmount gardens is a very busy site in the middle of a lively community.

This year, we would like to share some of the good news of this past season: a new sign has been posted

by the City to identify us as a part of the Community Garden Network (CGN), an active involvement from our Ward 9 City Councillor, Keith Egli, who participated in a couple of events organized by NAGA and also helped the NROCRC with their plots throughout the season, a very successful and enjoyable fall BBQ picnic, tidying up our equipment and sheds and many other cleaning tasks. All took place with the help of many volunteers who showed up and assisted in all these events.

However, we are still looking for brighter and more efficient ideas to organize our site and to better administer it. More urgent of all, is to find an energetic Maintenance Director and a Vice-Chair to complete the NAGA Board and to contribute to the wealth and prosperity of this organization.

As active participant in the CGN, and after approaching the City of Ottawa to expand our site further west towards the Fire Hall next door on Viewmount Drive, we submitted an application form to the City's committee to allocate some funds in support of this project. The response was very encouraging and we are able to secure over \$9000 for this project. Your contribution will be very appreciated now: we would need your help in setting up this portion and in getting it ready for the following season. This expansion was necessary to satisfy some of the hundreds of future gardeners who contact us for a plot every day. Inquiries never slowed down even during the cold winter months!

I invite you to come in and participate in the AGM this April 11, 2012, to meet fellow gardeners after a long winter, to share your stories and to discuss ideas for the coming season. **This time, we changed the meeting location to a more presentable and comfortable place in the Tanglewood community**

centre on Woodfield Drive.

Refreshments will be served. Come and contribute to your organization. Your attendance is your opportunity to raise your voice. Hope to see you there.

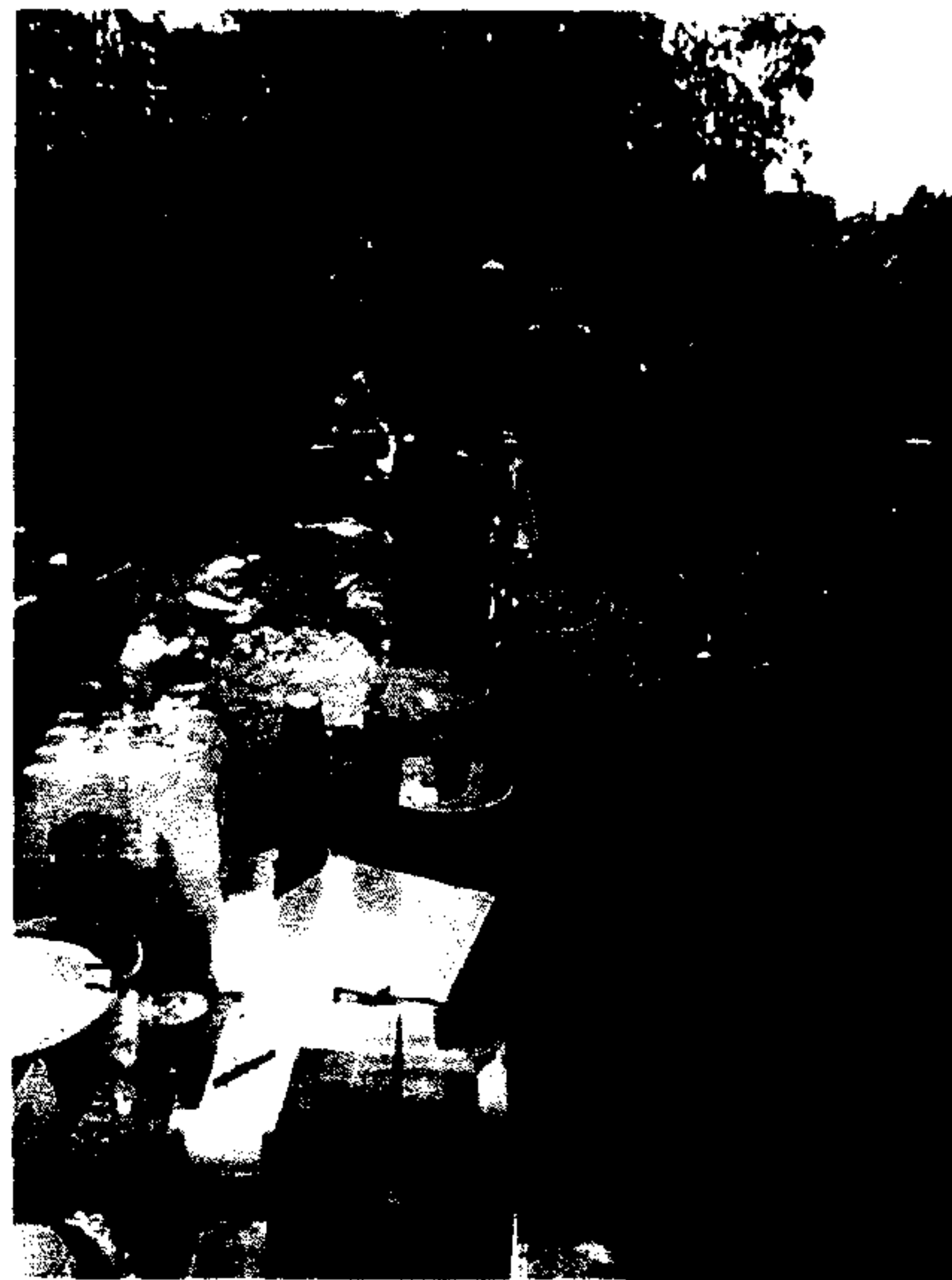
Mike Chebbo

September Picnic

Last September we held our second annual potluck picnic at the gardens in conjunction with the Nepean Rideau Osgood Community Resource Centre (NROCRC). The weather was gorgeous and a good time was had by all. With all the socializing and delicious food, who'd have thought there was also time for a best cookie contest and a guess how many beans in the jar contest. Special thanks to Ward 9 councillor Keith Egli for making time in his schedule to share the afternoon with us. It was great to see him there!

We are looking forward to seeing you at this year's picnic taking place on Saturday September 8th from 2-4pm.

Have your favourite cookie recipe ready!





Unwanted Weeds List

NEW: List Available to NAGA Gardeners for Reference Purposes

At last year's AGM, the issue was raised that we have many weeds growing around the NAGA gardens and sometimes in plot. There was concern about these weeds becoming unmanageable if gardeners weren't willing to control the weeds in their own plots as many will create seeds, pollinate and spread to other plots within the gardens. It was discussed that it can be hard to communicate this issue to those who do not speak English. Cally and Meghann, two of NAGA's gardeners, agreed to work on creating a reference guide with images and universal signs which can be used to identify the unwanted weeds growing around the gardens.

This guide, called "Nepean Allotment Garden Association's Unwanted Weed List", will be available to gardeners to use as a point of reference. It will be kept in the main shed to which you all have a combination for. We are asking that you please keep this guide in the shed so that it's accessible to everyone. There is also a quick reference poster of the "Unwanted Weeds" which you will find on the garden's bulletin board (near the compost). Thank you in advance for helping us to control the weeds in the garden!



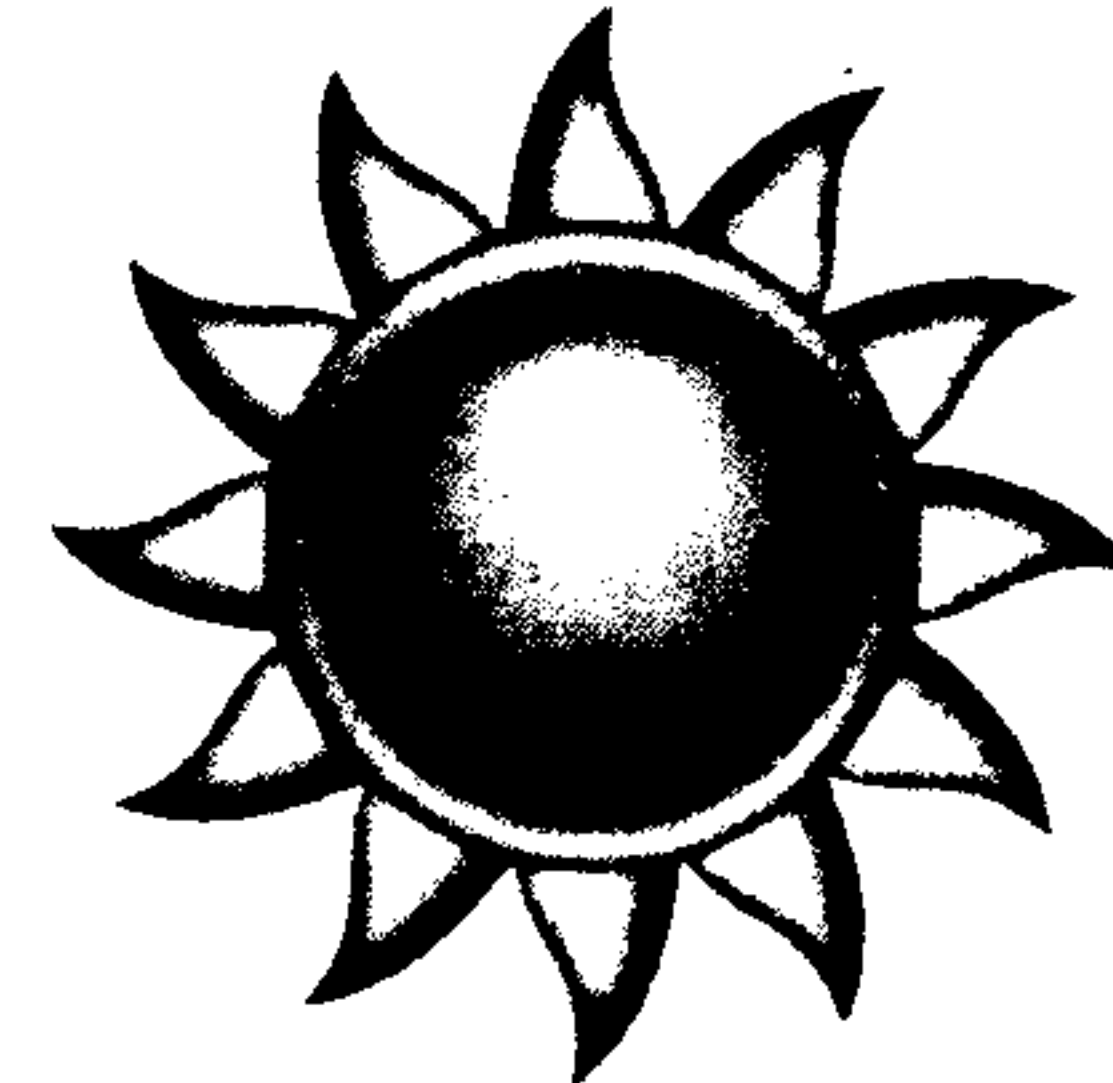
Did You Know?

All micro-organisms need carbon for energy and nitrogen to create more microbes. Different mulches contain different ratios of carbon and nitrogen, called the C:N ratio. A C:N ratio of 20:1 (20 parts carbon to one part nitrogen) provides enough nitrogen for both micro-organisms and plants, assuming the soil isn't already nitrogen deficient.

Generally, vegetative material, such as kitchen waste and grass clippings, fall below the 20:1 threshold, while straw (80:1), sawdust and wood chips (400:1) have a much higher C:N ratio and are more likely to deplete the soil of nitrogen. However, this deficiency is temporary, and as microbes die, the nitrogen bound up in their bodies is released, enriching the soil over time.

Studies have shown that any nitrogen deficiency from high-carbon mulches exists at the soil surface, which can affect shallow-rooted plants, such as annual flowers and **vegetables**, more than perennials, shrubs and trees that have deeper root systems. In most cases, an application of nitrogen would be beneficial to the plants and soil microbes when a high C:N ratio mulch is applied.

Let the sun shine!





Plant growth stimulants

provide a key hormone or organic element that influences growth in a particular way. They're different from fertilizers you use to provide a supplemental meal for plants, although some stimulants may also contain plant nutrients. Stimulants can be applied to any kind of plant and have no toxic properties. If you use them for spring planting, be sure to follow the instructions and amounts recommended on commercial packages or in the notes below. You can also provide the same amounts of stimulants to established plants already in the ground.

Timing is important when using growth stimulants. They can safely be offered when buds have opened and the first flush of foliage is underway. But don't use stimulants after the first week of August on established plants or new plants. Tender new growth produced late in the season might not have enough time to harden before deep frost arrives.

Bone meal, super phosphate and triple phosphate are rich sources of phosphorus, and stimulate root growth and bud set. Phosphorus is one of the three main plant nutrients in standard fertilizer formulas (nitrogen—phosphorus—potassium). Bone meal is extracted from steamed animal bones and has the lowest phosphorus content (expressed as 0-11-0) and won't burn roots. It can be mixed into a planting hole to provide slow-release rooting stimulation over several months. Super phosphate (0-22-0) and triple phosphate (0-33-0) are extracted from rock and have sufficient phosphorus to burn roots if not carefully applied.

Granular transplant solution is a commercial transplant fertilizer sold as dry granules that are soluble when mixed with water. The formula is very high in phosphorus (often 10-52-10) and stimulates root growth and bud set.

Liquid concentrate transplant solution has a lower amount of phosphorus (10-15-10), but contains indole butyric acid (sometimes referred to as IBA), a rooting hormone plants manufacture naturally in spring. It's a powerful root stimulant and helps plants overcome transplant shock.

Transplant solution with Vitamin B1 is a low analysis of plant nutrients (usually 0-2-1) with the addition of thiamin (Vitamin B1). Naturally produced by plants, thiamin increases metabolism, affecting the rate at which plants

consume essential nutrients to produce energy, and results in improved overall growth performance. Vitamin B1 is also sometimes combined with naphthalen acetic acid, a growth hormone, in commercial transplant solutions.

Alfalfa is a nutritious grass used for animal feed. It provides sufficiently mild amounts of nutrients (5-1-2) that won't burn roots when mixed into planting holes. More important, it contains triacontol, a fatty acid that is a potent stimulant of overall plant growth. Alfalfa grass can be purchased in bags, tied in small bales, or in compressed pellet form from animal feed companies or urban pet stores. Any of these forms is suitable for planting holes.

Epsom salts is magnesium sulphate, a combination of 9.8% magnesium and 6% sulphur, and can be purchased in a drug store. Epsom salts strengthens the crown of a plant and stimulates buds to sprout new wood from the base. This is particularly helpful in increasing the number of blossom-bearing canes on a rose plant or other flowering shrub. Approximately one-half cup (125 millilitres) of Epsom salts mixed in water or scratched dry into soil above plant roots can be given in mid-spring and again in mid-summer. New ornamental and vegetable plantings can also be given Epsom salts.

Kelp meal and seaweed extract solutions are rich in growth-promoting hormones called auxins, gibberellins and cytokinins. They increase blossoms and yields in fruit, vegetable and flowering plants, as well deepening petal colour and enhancing scent. Kelp and seaweed also improve seed germination, increase storage life of fruits and vegetables, strengthen frost resistance in hardy plants and build resistance to insects and fungus diseases. Dig kelp meal into soil around plant roots, or dilute seaweed extract in water and deliver as foliar feed by spraying it on leaves several times during the growing season.

Willow tea is also a good source of auxins, gibberellins and cytokinins. In spring, cut six-inch (15-centimetre) lengths of willow tips with swollen buds (the buds contain the hormones), crushing them slightly with a hammer, and soak them in boiling water. When the water has cooled, strain out the twigs and use the tea to soak seeds and water plants into their new holes. Use the willow tea immediately or freeze for future use. Because this is a homemade material it's difficult to control or measure potency, but try working with a ratio of one thick handful of willow tips to two quarts (two litres) of boiling water. Any specie of willow has the same strong rooting hormones.



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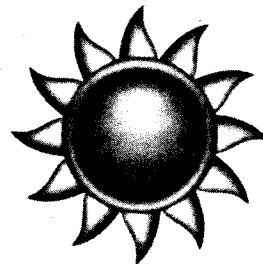
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Let the sun shine!





AGM^{eeting}

Wednesday April 11, 2012 7:00pm

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE!

**Tanglewood Park Community Centre
30 Woodfield Drive, Nepean**

This is the time to speak your mind!

On the agenda:

- New project to extend the number of plots westward.
- Purchase of new ride-on mower.
- **Proposed increase in fees for plot rental.** Vote required.
- Free compost availability.

Refreshments served.

Need to get in touch?

Email: nagagardens@gmail.com

Our website:

<http://nepeanallotmentgarden.webs.com>

We'd love to hear from you!



Compost / Straw

Free compost will be available to gardeners this year. Advance notice for this event will be posted on the bulletin board on the shed. Notice will also be sent via e-mail.

Bales of straw will be sold, on-site, to interested gardeners again this year. Date to be determined.

Be garden proud!

Encourage your friends and neighbours to join us for our yearly appraisal of the land. Bring the kids. Little hands can help too!

Spring clean up of the allotment gardens will take place on the following dates:

Saturday April 21, 9:00am to 12noon

Sunday April 22, 1:00pm to 3:00pm

Much Appreciated

Did you notice how tidy and organized the storage shed became last season? Shelving and hooks were installed to make tools easier to find and easier to replace, making life a lot simpler for gardeners when they're searching out that needed tool.

The transformation occurred over the course of a weekend thanks to an intrepid member: Neil Thompson who took on this task with gusto, leaving order and a tidy space in their wake.

Many thanks and let all those who make use of that space show their appreciation by leaving it as tidy as they found it. Yes!

Special Thanks / Sad Goodbye

Members of the Board were sad to hear of the passing of founding NAGA member Al Martin, this past winter.

Al Martin was a great gardener. He rented plot no.93 from 1988 to 2011. In the early years of the gardens, the City of Nepean operated Viewmount gardens.

In 1990, the City of Nepean stopped funding the gardens as the plots were subsidized \$5000 per year. At that time, the rental fee was \$48 per plot. With these high fees, only about 50 plots were rented per year.

When Al discovered the City's plans to stop funding the gardens, he started writing and telephoning City and elected officials. Al also invited other gardeners to write and telephone the officials to continue funding the gardens.

Due to public pressure, mainly as a result of Al's efforts, the City held a public meeting on March 19, 1991. At the meeting, the City Official, Mr. Paul Kemp said that the City would turn over the land at Viewmount Park with the existing wooden lockers and underground water system to a non-profit volunteer group.

At the recess, the late Walter Saidak, Al Martin and Ian Reid met and decided that they would form the nucleus of such a group. When the meeting reconvened, Al stood up and told the City official our plans. Al then invited interested gardeners to gather in an adjoining room to make plans for the non-profit volunteer group to form a garden Association.

On March 25, 1991, Al Martin chaired the appointed Interim Board of Directors meeting and on March 27, 1991 Al Martin chaired the Appointed Nepean

Garden Association Steering Committee Members.

Although Al soon resigned from the Chair position for health reasons, he was an active member of the Association. Every spring, Al could always be counted on at the yearly AGM to offer us his words of wisdom and experience when problems were discussed. His suggestions never failed to make us consider alternatives to solving problems and reminded us of past solutions to recurring issues.

At the gardens, Al was usually accompanied by his wife Barbara. Al and Barbara were a sociable couple, always having the time to socialize with any gardener who happened to be nearby.

So, thanks Al, from friends and gardeners at NAGA for your esteemed contributions. May your garden in the sky be filled with sun and just the right amount of rain.

