



The GreenThumb Print

GreenThumb News and Topics of Interest to Community Gardeners in New York City

February 2002

The bulletin of GreenThumb, a program of City of New York Parks & Recreation

18th Annual GreenThumb GrowTogether

Spring is right around the corner and so is the 18th Annual GreenThumb GrowTogether conference. We hope you are as excited to attend as we are planning the biggest gardening event for New York City community gardeners! Mark Leger, our events planner and a Brooklyn community gardener, has been very busy organizing this event for his fellow gardeners.

This year's GrowTogether theme, submitted by Manhattan community gardener Carolyn McCrory, is "GreenThumb Gardens: Rooting for Harmony". The winning T-shirt design which will reflect the GrowTogether theme will, of course, be the brainchild of a fellow community gardener. Look for the winning T-shirt design at the GrowTogether.

You can get one of these T-shirts for free. All you have to do is pre-register by March 10th, 2002. Look for

registration forms in your mail. They're on their way! Remember, you must send in your pre-registration form and \$3 to be guaranteed a free T-shirt and lunch ticket. If you do not pre-register, you will have to pay \$5 at the door and will not be guaranteed lunch nor receive a free T-shirt.

The GrowTogether will be held Saturday, March 16th at Hostos Community College in the Bronx. There will be exciting new additions from new workshops, to free garden gear and more kids activities than ever this year. We look forward to seeing you all there!

Citizens Committee For New York City

Outreach to your community and increase your garden membership. Resolve issues and improve relations within your group or neighborhood. Sharpen your leadership and organizing skills. Be a community leader. Citizens Committee for New York City (CCNYC) can assist your group in addressing the aforementioned issues or other issues specific to your group.

CCNYC was founded in 1975 by the late senator Jacob Javitz to improve the quality of life by providing the necessary skills for neighborhood citizens to be neighborhood leaders. CCNYC works with over 12,000 block, youth, faith-based, tenant and other grassroots organizations throughout the city to help sustain strong leadership in neighborhood organizations and strengthen communities.

The Neighborhood Leadership Institute, a program of CCNYC, offers free workshops and grants to neighborhood leaders to hone the skills and acquire the knowledge to build a better community for themselves.



Hostos Community College, will host the GreenThumb GrowTogether again this year.



Specifically, these workshops and grants can help garden groups to become effective leaders in their community. Some of the workshops and grants offered which are helpful to garden groups include:

Organizations Structure and Processes - How can you assure the success of your organization? Building a solid foundation for your group that everyone understands is essential for carrying out projects efficiently and successfully and helping your group grow. We will discuss the building blocks of successful volunteer organizations and you will learn how to develop decision-making processes, bylaws and committees for your organization.

Conflict: Interpersonal and Group Dynamics - Conflict is an inevitable part of life. It is a common phenomenon in many volunteer organizations. Managed properly, it can play an important role in the growth and development of your group. Learn the general causes and types of conflict and explore several models for preventing conflict and managing it when it occurs.

Building Blocks Awards support the work of volunteer neighborhood groups that are relatively new. It supports organizing and outreach efforts, communications projects (e.g., newsletters, public awareness campaigns), and model projects that use creative approaches to resolve local problems (e.g., block clean-ups, outreach to youth, block parties) and more. **Grants up to \$500.**

Mollie Parnis Dress Up Your Neighborhood Awards are small grants that support projects to clean up, green up and beautify our city's neighborhoods. These grants support activities ranging from murals and block sweeps to community gardens and graffiti removal. **Grants up to \$500.**

CCNYC is an invaluable resource to garden groups or any community group seeking assistance to better their quality of life, their leadership roles and their community. The workshops and grants listed are only a fraction of what is offered. You can learn more about CCNYC and the workshops and grants offered at www.citizensnyc.org or (212) 989-0909. CCNYC will also be conducting a workshop at the 18th Annual GreenThumb GrowTogether on March 16, 2002 at Hostos Community College in the Bronx.

Master Composter Certificate Course from Brooklyn Botanic Garden

Become a neighborhood composting expert! Help spread the word and show people how compost can make our streets green and reduce our garbage. The Master Composter certificate program consists of 25 hours of classroom training that includes two field trips and 30 hours of community service in compost education and promotion. Participants may fulfill the service requirement by assisting Brooklyn Botanic Garden compost staff at events or by designing outreach activities according to their interests: teach classes at schools, build compost bins at community gardens or provide workshops at block parties, etc.

Course training takes place Wed., Mar 27-May 8, 6-9 pm, and field trips take place Sun., April 7, Sat., April 13 and Sat., April 20 (times tba). The community service (outreach and education) must be served within one year for successful completion of the certificate.

For an applications or for more information, please call the Compost Help Line at 718-623-7290 or visit www.bbg.org/compost. Applications due February 27, 2002. Limited to 15 participants. There is no charge for this course.

Free Workshops for Community Groups

Members of community volunteer groups are invited to attend the following Partnerships' workshops being held this winter around the city: To register, call Charlotte Kaiser at 212-360-8180.

Building Alliances: Working with Elected Officials
Groups are most effective when they have the aid and support of others-elected officials, Parks, the Police, the Community Board, neighboring block and merchant associations, etc. Attend this workshop to learn tips on building alliances with public officials.

Tues., Feb. 5, 6:30 - 8:30pm, Stonehenge, Staten Island
Tues., Mar. 19, 6-8pm, St. James Recreation Center, the Bronx

Money Matters: Fundraising for Parks (and Garden) Groups
Techniques for approaching businesses, individuals and foundations for support, including tips on writing grant proposals. The workshop will feature a presentation by a community group that has successfully raised money for a park. Parks (and garden) groups only, please.

Thurs., Feb. 7, 6-8pm, Litchfield Villa, Prospect Park
Thurs., Feb. 28, 6-8pm, The Overlook, Queens

Free Compost Deliveries to Community Gardens!

The Compost Project of the Queens Botanical Garden in association with The NYC Department of Sanitation is pleased to offer free compost deliveries to Community gardens. Community gardens in the 5 boroughs may request a free delivery of 5 or 10 cubic yards of NYC compost. The rich soil amendment has been made from autumn leaves and Christmas trees collected by NYC Department of Sanitation. Deliveries are made via dump truck and gardens need a space and gate large enough for an 8' wide dump truck.

Civic associations, schools, hospitals and religious groups dot our boroughs with beautiful gardens that are the pride of our neighborhoods. Many groups have already received this rich soil amendment but not all eligible gardens are aware of the program. If you garden would like to receive a free compost delivery please submit a written request including the following: Name of garden and sponsor group if different from garden name; address of community garden; name and telephone# of contact person. Requests may be faxed to Queens Greening Project at (718) 463-0263 or mailed to Queens Botanical Garden, Queens Green Project, 43-50 Main Street, Flushing, NY 11355. Individual private gardens are not eligible. If you have any questions about this program or about the many compost workshop offered during the year, please call (718) 886-3800 x223.

“The Earth laughs at him who calls a place his own”
-Hindustani

Did you know....

Violets were first cultivated by the Greeks around 400-600 BC. Around the same time in nearby Italy, the Romans were also cultivating violets and like the Greeks grew them for herbal remedies, as a food sweetener and even made wine from them. The ancient Greeks used violets in many herbal remedies to induce sleep, calm violent tempers, and alleviate upset stomachs. The sweetness of the flowers was thought to cure headaches and they were used by the Romans to brew a fragrant tea to treat hangovers. In ancient China, poultices were made from violet roots and leaves to relieve swelling and inflammation and the ancient Egyptians used a violet poultice to treat tumors.

Herbal remedies composed of violet flowers, leaves and stems first made hundreds of years ago by ancient civilizations are still used today to cure modern ailments! Modern herbalists use an infusion of *Viola odorata* flowers and leaves to make a cough syrup and as a gargle to relieve inflammations of the gums and mouth. Recent research has shown that violets contain salicylic acid (natural aspirin) which substantiates the use of violets for centuries to relieve pain and headaches. Next time you have a headache, try wearing a violet garland around your head! Or perhaps brew a tea from the entire plant,

like the ancient Romans, to treat those nasty hangovers or to help with digestive disorders (see recipe below).

There are over 900 species of violets but practically all of them have the same medicinal value. Violets are deep-rooting outdoor plants that enjoy partial shade to full sun. The flowers bloom from September to March.



Tea: Steep ¼ cup dried or fresh herbs in 1 cup of water for 10 min. Strain, flavor to taste. Take in ½ cup doses twice a day.

A GreenThumb Loss

James Cleveland Worth, a much revered and beloved GreenThumb gardener passed away in December. Mr. Worth was a founding member of the Georgia Avenue Community Garden, in East New York. Not only was he an asset to the garden but to the community as well. GreenThumb sends its condolences to the family of James Cleveland Worth. He will be missed.