



The GreenThumb Print

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

February 2003

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

GreenThumb Celebrates 25 Years of Greening New York City

GreenThumb is turning 25 this year. It seems like yesterday we were a wee little organization operating from the Municipal Building at 1 Center Street. Spanning the terms of 5 Presidents, 5 Mayors and 5 Directors, GreenThumb blossomed from maintaining a few gardens to the City-wide greening machine it is today. We didn't do it on our own. We had much help from our hundreds of family members, you, the community gardeners.

This is a very exciting year for GreenThumb as we mark our 25th year greening New York City. We have much planned for the year ahead and we want you to celebrate with us.

The first in a series of exciting events will be the 19th Annual GreenThumb GrowTogether to be held on Saturday, March 22, 2003 at Hostos Community College in the Bronx. Nicole Moorehead, the GreenThumb Director of Operations, is very excited about planning her first GrowTogether. She is pouring a lot of energy into making this a very memorable 25th Anniversary celebration for GreenThumb and our family of community gardeners.

The GrowTogether will start with a surprise opening session guaranteed to keep you buzzing the rest of the conference. The day promises to be fun, interesting and educational for gardeners of all ages with workshops on horticulture, arts and crafts, and the very popular classes on how to build things.

In between workshops, we want you to view special displays of 25 years of GreenThumb history. But we need your help.

Our history includes not only the work GreenThumb has carried out but also the work of the gardeners that have helped to create GreenThumb history. This is why we need you to help us with this special display. We hope to create a sculpture/mural/montage with an amalgam of gardeners' mementos. Be it a photo, old seed packets, or the first glove you wore to break ground on your garden, please bring it to the GrowTogether and help us make this a memorable display.

Information on the GrowTogether will be sent in February with further details. Look for registration forms in your mail. They're on their way! All you have to do is pre-register by March 10th, 2002. 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.

GrowTogether T-Shirt

This year, GreenThumb is celebrating 25 glorious years of community gardening. Because it is such a historical moment in the annals of open space management in NYC, we have decided not to have a T-Shirt Contest. Instead, GreenThumb staff are working on a special T-Shirt to commemorate 25 years of community gardening.

As many of you know, it is GreenThumb tradition that the T-Shirt design is not revealed until the GrowTogether. However, so that you are not completely in the dark but that we do not reveal too much, we are giving you a sneak peek. The idea for this year's T-Shirt was in fact inspired by a gardener who has been with GreenThumb since day one. Allen Nacincik of Williamsburg had in his possession a true GreenThumb artifact at last fall's Harvest Festival at Mt. Prospect Park. We were so thrilled with what we saw that we thought it would be great to make history by incorporating something from GreenThumb's history. Some of you may know what this is already and for those of you who don't - well, know that you will be pleasantly surprised at the 19th Annual GreenThumb GrowTogether. See you on March 22 when the surprise is revealed!

Green Angels Among Us

Manhattan Parks and Green Space Coalition (MPGSC), an organization of greening group leaders in Manhattan, organized by city council districts gave out the Green Angels Award for the first time this year by the . The MPGSC is an advocacy group that seeks to, “raise awareness for quality of green space, government funding and garden preservation... and produce positive channels to work with elected officials and the Parks Department for quality open space”, according to Annie Chadwick of Clinton Community Garden who co-chairs MPGSC along with Jim Dowell, the Executive Director of the Riverside Park Fund.

The awardees, members of the honorary society, Flight of Green Angels are “unsung heroes in the ever-continuing battle to defend and preserve green space in New York City,” raves Irene Smith, one of the creators of The Green Angels Award and Secretary of MPGSC. The Flight of Green Angels emerged out of the “Green Space Revival Meeting”, an initiative of MPGSC Steering Committee members for City Council District 8 (East Harlem/Harlem), Irene Smith and Frances Mastrota of Pleasant Village Community Garden and Alex Brown of Harlem United Gardens. Irene Smith said, “the Green Space Revival Meeting, designed to kick off a winter of activities for community gardens, local parks, playgrounds and green spaces was an energizing and inspirational event attended by green spacers and gardeners in Harlem.”



Francoise Cachelin of Creative Little Garden is a honored as a Green Angel for her tireless work in the fight for open space in NYC.

The initiative was such a success that the Green Space Revival Meeting will be an annual event. Each year, 6 to 8 Green Angels will be inducted into the Flight of Green Angels, with nominations solicited from all greening organizations.

A continuation of the Green Space Revival Meeting includes workshops offered this spring to energize and inspire green spacers and gardeners including 1) Fundraising for Community Gardens and Neighborhood Green Spaces; 2) Making the Memorandum of Understanding Work For Your Garden; and 3) Effective Community Outreach for Neighborhood Gardens and Green Spaces. For more information about MPGSC or workshops, please contact Irene Smith at ismith404@aol.com

A Special Green Angel

GreenThumb congratulates Francoise Cachelin of Creative Little Garden in Manhattan for receiving the Green Angels Award. Francoise has been a GreenThumb gardener for over 15 years and has worked tirelessly and passionately throughout the years for open space in New York City. She is a true pioneer and warrior who settled in the “not-so-favorable” conditions of the Lower East Side in the 1970’s. Determined to turn the area around she founded a “Creative Little Garden” and has been an indefatigable force in its preservation and the preservation of other gardens in the city since. The Green Angels Award recognizes Francoise for her “outstanding leadership and for creating and preserving quality parks and open space”.

Francoise, along with 5 other “unsung heroes”, N.Y.S. Attorney General Elliot Spitzer, NYC Parks & Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe, NYC Council Member for District 8, Philip Reed, Dr. Frances Mastrota, Council Member, Community Board #11, and GreenThumb’s very own director, Edie Stone were each given a framed original photograph (each one different) by Diane Downs, a professional photographer who has captured the beauty and timelessness of East Harlem’s community gardens for 15 years.

Free Workshops for Community Groups

Members of community groups working for parks are invited to attend free workshops being held this season in all five boroughs. The following is a list of some workshops:

Money Matters: Fundraising for Parks Groups

Learn how to approach businesses, individuals, and foundations for support. get tips on writing grant proposals. hear from a community group that has successfully raised money for a park.

Wednesday, February 26, 6-8 pm, Staten Island
(Stonehenge, Clove Lakes Park, 1150 Clove Rd, b/w Victory Blvd & Forest Ave).

The Buck Stops Where? Fostering Leadership Skills for Community Groups

How can your group identify a new leader? Important qualities to look for include maturity, a proven track record of commitment to the group, an ability to work well with all kinds of people, and a good sense of “the big picture.” Attend this workshop to learn how to identify strong leaders and ensure a smooth transition from one leader to another. **Thursday, February 13, 6-8 pm, Queens**
(The Overlook, Forest Park, 80-30 Park Lave, Kew Gardens).

GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS WORKING ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS IN NYC

The Citizens Committee for New York City and the Mary Flagler Cary Charitable Trust invite neighborhood groups in low-income areas to apply for 2003 Neighborhood Environmental Action Program (NEAP) grants which help support innovative solutions to local environmental problems. NEAP provides vital financial and technical support to volunteer-driven community groups working to preserve, protect and improve the urban environment of New York City's low-income neighborhoods. Since its inception in 1987, NEAP has provided grants totaling more than \$750,000 to over 200 organizations to support projects ranging from lead poisoning prevention to river restoration and waste management education. Grants up to \$5,000 to approximately 20 local grassroots organizations are awarded annually. The application deadline is February 13, 2003. There will be two "clinics" to provide answers about the NEAP program and discuss applicants' projects. For more information or to request application forms, please contact jkatz@citizensnyc.org, call Jessica Katz at (212) 989-0909 x 413 or download the application from our website. Want more information about our other grants & free leadership-training workshops? Check our website: www.CITIZENSnyc.org

...continued from previous page

Grantwriting 101

Writing grant proposals can seem intimidating, but it's all in how you tell the story. Learn the basics, get a step-by-step guide to writing a proposal, see sample proposals, and hear from a park group leader who's written successful grant proposals.

Wednesday, March 19, 6-8 pm, Staten Island (Stonehenge, Clove Lakes Park, 1150 Clove Rd, b/w Victory Blvd & Forest Ave).

Making Friends: Working with Elected Officials

Park groups are most effective when they have the aid and support of elected officials, Parks, the Police, the Community Board, and neighboring block and merchant associations. Attend this workshop to learn tips on building alliances with these and other public officials. **Thursday, March 6, 6-8 pm, Central Park** (The Arsenal, 64th St & 5th Ave), **Tuesday, March 11, 6-8 pm, Brooklyn** (Litchfield Villa, Prospect Park, 95 Prospect Park West at 5th St).

These are only some of the workshops offered. For more information, to register for a workshop, or to receive workshop materials, please call the Partnerships for Parks Technical Assistance Program at (212) 360-8180. Dates and times are subject to change. Please go to www.itsmypark.org for up-to-date information.

FREE COMPOST CLASSES AT THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

FREE composting classes conducted by Master Composter Jodie Colon of Bronx Green-Up will be held this winter at The New York Botanical Garden. Composting is an environmentally-friendly way to promote healthy soil, improve plant growth and drought tolerance, and recycle food scraps and yard waste that would otherwise go to landfills.

Classes will be held on the second Wednesday of the month from 7:00 - 8:30 pm in the Watson Building at the New York Botanical Garden. Classes are FREE and open to everyone - a great opportunity for homeowners, apartment dwellers, community gardeners and educators to learn practical tips and techniques from other composters.

Space is limited, so please call 718-817-8543 or e-mail jcolon@nybg.org to reserve a seat for a class. The Winter 2003 Schedule is below.

February 12th - Let's Talk Compost: Sharing Your Expertise with Others

March 12th - Worm Bins Made Easy and Composting Indoors

April 9th - Compost Made Easy

For details, or to register for one or more classes, e-mail jcolon@nybg.org or call 718-817-8543. If you belong to a community garden or school in the Bronx and would like a class at your site, please call Bronx Green-Up 718-817-8026.

HEALTHY SPROUTS AWARDS FOR SCHOOL GARDENS

The National Gardening Association and Gardener's Supply Company have partnered to support schools and community organizations that use gardens to teach about nutrition and explore the issue of hunger in the United States. Each of 25 programs receives an award package of seeds, tools, garden products, and educational resources for growing a vegetable garden. Five of these programs also receive \$500 cash and a \$200 gift certificate to the Gardener's Supply Company catalog. The selection of winners is based on the demonstrated relationship between the garden and nutrition education and hunger awareness. At least 10% of the food produced from the program should be donated. Applications may be downloaded from www.kidsgardening.com. Deadline is February 28, 2003