



The GreenThumb Print

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

January 2003

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

GreenThumb Goes Global

As part of a growing trend to give back to the community, the Fukuoka Youth Wing of Japan journeyed 6000 miles to find out what volunteer means through the eyes of GreenThumb's community gardeners. Over 30 young Fukuoka citizens composed of students, housewives and workers volunteered with us for a day.

The passionate group of young public service providers interested in education and the environment toured tirelessly for the short time they were here. For most, it was their first visit to NYC and although they did not get to see much of the sights and sounds of NYC outside of their tightly packed schedule, they experienced what most tourists don't see. The Fukuoka Youth Wing spent 3 days visiting non-profit and publicly funded organizations to learn about public sector work from the Audubon Society, senior centers, public schools, and the UN. Their last stop was with GreenThumb.

The group had heard of GreenThumb's work and were very excited to see the gardens and do volunteer work according to Mariko Wada of M & W Tours who helped organize the group's tour.

The tour started bright and early at the GreenThumb office where Director Edie Stone gave the group a brief history of GreenThumb with the aid of translators Eri Koike, Y. Oda, and M. Imamura. Brooklyn Outreach Coordinator Harold Paynter along with Director of Field Operations Nicole Moorehead led the group into the field with their new GreenThumb T-shirts. Mariko said they loved the T-shirts because it made them feel like volunteers.

GreenThumb brought the group to East New York, Brooklyn where half the group toured United Community Center Garden (UCC) and the other half toured New Vision Garden across the street. UCC grows food for the East NY Farmers markets and is replete with various produce. The group was amazed at the various types of vegetation and were very



Harold Paynter (center) with the Fukuoka Youth Wing of Japan outside of United Community Center and New Vision Garden in East New York, Brooklyn.

excited to learn of plants that grew both here and in Japan. They were surprised to learn that green tomatoes are edible!

The group was most excited about doing some gardening. They were eager to get their hands dirty and helped plant tulip bulbs in UCC and New Vision.

Eliza Butler of New Vision Garden joined the tour and planted some bulbs too. The two groups joined together and did some light maintenance at New Vision. They were particularly interested in Eliza's soundstage and were interested in the daily operations of the garden and the events that are held there. The day ended in the early afternoon due to their packed schedule. Mariko said, "They had a good time. They were ready to do more, ready to work the whole day." We bridged the cultural gap through the commonality of community service.

Non-profit organizations are a relatively new concept

continued on next page...

Community Garden Registration

GreenThumb will oversee licensing of all city-owned community gardens in January 2003. Approximately 114 gardens that will be licensed are under HPD jurisdiction and are subject to possible future sale or development. These gardens will be given a license issued by HPD. The Parks Department will license the remainder of the gardens. All gardens that are currently city-owned will **receive their license from GreenThumb** when they register, regardless of what agency's jurisdiction they are under.

Some preserved gardens may eventually be offered to a private land trust organization (most likely the Trust for Public Land or the New York Restoration Project). These gardens will be licensed by Parks until they are transferred to the land trust. Gardens that are already owned by private land trust organizations must also be registered in the GreenThumb program in January 2003 to continue to be entitled to GreenThumb services, however GreenThumb will not be licensing privately-owned gardens.

Even if your garden has registered in the past it is

necessary to re-register in order to get a license. Re-registration and licensing of all gardens (except those under Department of Education jurisdiction) will begin in January of 2003. Please look in your mail for more information for dates and location.

The registration process will consist of a simple orientation and a question and answer period after which GreenThumb staff will take one garden group at a time and ask a series of questions about the physical garden, the group gardening, and the community. GreenThumb staff will also ensure that the group will meet GreenThumb regulations. If a garden group qualifies to register in the program, a license will be offered to that group to sign.

Gardens on Department of Education property are not required to register at this time. If your garden is on Department of Education property, please contact Tim Rutgers, Education Director, at (212) 788-8080 for EIG registration information.

Fukuoka Youth Wing

...continued from previous page

in Japan and have only begun to gain momentum in the past five years. According to Yoshinori Yamaoka, Secretary and Managing Director of Japan NPO Center, "non-profits emerged out of the context of American culture and social system. Since Japan does not share that same culture and social system, strictly speaking we do not have NPOs." In 1998, a law was passed to "Promote Specified Nonprofit Activities" and the NPO movement has gained speed since.

As part of the new civil society initiative, the Fukuoka Prefecture organized and sponsored the Fukuoka Youth Wing educational tour of non-profit operations in NYC. The Youth Wing wanted to take the knowledge from this tour and apply it in their city. The Fukuoka Youth Wing toured with GreenThumb and other publicly funded and non-profit organizations to learn from and use them as models for their own community work.

The Fukuoka Youth Group was scheduled to tour with GreenThumb last year but plans were postponed because of September 11.



Director of Operations, Nicole Morehead (center), Eliza Butler (right) and members of the Fukuoka Youth Wing plant tulips together at New Vision Garden.

The GreenThumb staff thanks the Fukuoka Youth Wing for touring with us and the beautiful fan they presented us from Japan.

GreenThumb is glad to be part of the developing not-for-profit movement in Japan.

Deck Your Garden with Christmas Chips

Christmas is over but you can still put your trees to good use. We encourage gardeners to chip your Christmas trees for use in your garden as compost or mulch. This is a great opportunity to get started on the compost pile you need or add to the compost you have in order to receive soil and compost from GreenThumb. Christmas tree recycling makes good sense. Tree chipping helps reduce waste going to landfills and gives a little something back to nature and the community. The trees are shredded or chipped into tiny pieces and the resulting mulch can be spread in your garden or composted with other organic materials. Mulch helps minimize weeds, conserve moisture, moderate soil temperature, and make your yard look good. You can stock up on mulch for the next gardening season. Mulched plants generally grow much better than similar, unmulched plants in the same garden. This year, your holiday tree will not be picked up for recycling. If you put it out at the curb, it will be picked up by a garbage truck and end up in a landfill or incinerator. Get some mulch for your garden and bring it to any of the locations listed below to be chipped. These Christmas tree chipping events are sponsored in part by the "Waste Free NYC" campaign of Inform Inc., Brooklyn Botanic Garden, the Department of Parks and Recreation and GreenThumb community gardens. Another tree chipping event, The Department of Parks and Recreation Mulchfest will also take place in early January. Unfortunately, dates for the Mulchfest were unconfirmed before publication. Go to www.nycgovparks.org for updates or www.greenthumbnyc.org.

BROOKLYN

Date:	Location:	Time:
January 4, 2003	Prospect Park West and 3rd St.	10 AM - 4 PM
January 4, 2003	Cobble Hill Park (corner of Clinton St. and Verandah St.)	9:30 AM - 1 PM
January 4, 2003	Amazing Garden (Columbia St. and Carroll St.)	9 AM - 3 PM
January 11, 2003	Green-Wood Cemetery (5th Ave. and 25th St. entrance)	10 AM - 3 PM

MANHATTAN

Date:	Location:	Time:
January 4, 2003	Tompkins Square Park (Ave. A & 9th St.)	9 AM - 3PM
January 4, 2003	Washington Square Park (La Guardia Pl.)	9 AM - 3PM
January 5, 2003	Union Square Park (17th St. b/w. Broadway & Park Ave.)	10 AM - 3 PM

STATEN ISLAND

Date:	Location:	Time:
January 4, 2003	South Beach Park, Roller Rink Parking Lot	10 AM - 4 PM
January 4, 2003	Wolf's Pond Park, Cornelia Ave. Main Parking Lot	10 AM - 4 PM
January 4, 2003	Green Belt Native Plant Nursery, 38008 Victory Blvd.	10 AM - 4 PM
January 11, 2003	South Beach Park, Roller Rink Parking Lot	10 AM - 4 PM
January 11, 2003	Wolf's Pond Park, Cornelia Ave. Main Parking Lot	10 AM - 4 PM
January 11, 2003	Green Belt Native Plant Nursery, 38008 Victory Blvd.	10 AM - 4 PM

BBG's Master Composters should be in full force on January 4th at Prospect Park West and at Green-Wood Cemetery on January 11th. They will be happy to instruct anybody needing assistance. Please contact Clifford Rose of BBG if you have any questions at (718) 623-7290. For more information about Waste Free NYC programs in New York City, contact Eve Martinez at 212-361-2400 x 229 or martinez@informinc.org or check their website www.informinc.org/wfnyc_trees.php.