



fenway victory gardens

The Richard D. Parker Memorial Victory Gardens

America's Oldest Victory Gardens, est. 1942

Fenway Garden Society
Summer Newsletter 2009

Enter The Mayor's Garden Contest!

All amateur Boston gardeners are invited to enter the annual Mayor's Garden Contest!

Take home the coveted Golden Trowel Award or win an honorable mention for your garden. Applications can be submitted online at the URL listed below, or by sending a physical application form with photos. Entry forms are available, just ask any FGS board member.

All entries must be RECEIVED by July 17th, 2009 at 5 p.m. Finalist notifications will be made July 24th, with judges visits on July 28th and 29th. For additional information, contact (617)961-3039.

Apply Online At:

http://cityofboston.gov/parks/gardencontest/gardencontes_active.asp



Fens Fest Planning

As the gardening season moves into full swing, it is time to start planning for FensFest, the annual garden festival will be held on September 12, 2009, with a rain-date of September 13.

This year the FGS received a grant from the National Land Trust Foundation, for \$3,000 to fully fund FensFest. This is about double the amount usually budgeted for the annual garden festival, so this year will be very special.

Three FensFest planning meetings are scheduled by the flag pole. Please join us for some or all of these meetings!

- June 20 Saturday [already took place]
- August 1 Saturday
- August 22 Saturday.

During the planning meetings discussions will involve garden judging, food, drinks, equipment rental, music, location, prizes, awards, and more.

We look forward to seeing you!

Garden Trash Management

The trash is being collected less frequently this year due to budget constraints at the Parks Department, and all over the city. You can help by making trash collection and storage more efficient!

If you have lots of old wood, bundle it for easy disposal. Old fencing can be wound up and attached to form a compact bundle. Discarded furniture can be broken down and bundled with twine.

Please remember the trash barrels are for rubbish only, and the compost heap is for garden clippings and trimmings only. Please keep trash out of the compost piles, and compost out of the trash cans.



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How Does the Fenway Garden Society Work?

The FGS is an all volunteer organization with a volunteer governing board of 5 members. The leadership board elections are held at the winter annual meeting. The President, Treasurer, and three Vice Presidents work together to publish a newsletter, maintain the treasury and fund raise, serve as liaison between the parks department and gardeners, assist with garden tasks such as gate building and tree maintenance, plan all-garden meetings and events, and tend to all general garden business.

Area directors are a vital part of leadership, and chosen at the winter meeting as well. Area directors help to maintain communication between the board and individual gardeners, they are active in organizing gardeners and providing guidance, enforcement and feedback.

Some people take on garden maintenance independently. These private operators are key to the successful maintenance of the park!

Arthur Mattuck maintains the flowers by the rock, and fixes and maintains the wheelbarrows in the summer. He watches over the gardens during his twice daily visits.



Joan Murphy maintains the public herb garden and picks up trash. She has also been seen pulling weeds out of pathways, and straightening up the trash barrel areas.

Clair Flury has cleaned up park litter tirelessly for many years.

"Tom" is a Fenway resident, and he can be seen picking up litter in the gardens almost daily. He also tends to many trees along Boylston St. on an ad-hoc basis clipping suckers and pruning club roots for trees that might otherwise receive little attention.

Volunteers and private operators are the life blood of parks in the Fens. How do you fit into this network?

Three Basic Level Sponsors Step-Up

These local businesses support the FGS and offer exclusive 10% savings when you show your membership card. Please support these fine establishments.

Walk Hill Florist – 530 American Legion Highway. For directions call (617) 522-1293.
"Get tomato plants, shrubs, statuettes, and more"

Economy Hardware — 221 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston: (617) 536-4280
<http://economyhardware.com/>

Pemberton Farms — 2225 Mass Ave., Cambridge, 1-800-551-7327
<http://pembertonfarms.com>

Plant Nursery For those who are unfamiliar with the plant nursery, this is a place to share plants! The goal is for gardeners to plant unwanted or extra annuals or perennials for other gardeners to take and enjoy in their own gardens.

Please avoid planting invasive plants or prolific spreaders in the nursery, this includes daylilies, lily of the valley, or spiderwort. Once you have brought in plants, please plant them firmly in the soil, and be sure to water them in well. A hose is available for watering the plants, so please do not remove the hose.

Anyone is welcome to randomly water plants in the nursery on hot days, and the plants will surely be appreciative!



Sponsor the Newsletter

Gardeners are loyal customers and tell their friends.

A sponsor of the Garden Society will enjoy a steady stream of business from gardeners, their friends, and their families.

It does not matter what type of business; hardware and supply store, florist, nursery, restaurant, clothing store, grocery store, and more - this highly targeted group of gardeners will know your business as a sponsor, and a place they can feel confident spending money locally, while supporting the Victory Gardens.

We encourage local businesses and organizations, to contact us regarding sponsorship.

If you are a gardener and know a local business owner or staff, please sign them up!



STAND OUT IN THE COMMUNITY WITH YOUR AD HERE

Basic Business Program Participation

Offer FGS members with an ID 10% [or other fixed %] off of purchases at your establishment. Receive a printed mention in each newsletter regarding the discount. The newsletter is read cover to cover by more than 425 targeted gardening members.

Sponsoring Business Program Participation

Offer members with an ID 10% [or other fixed %] off of purchases plus sponsor the newsletter for \$100 per issue [published quarterly] and receive a 1/4 page ad for your business. The newsletter is read cover to cover by more than 425 targeted gardening members.

Ultimate Business Program Participation

Offer members with an ID 10% [or other fixed %] off of purchases plus sponsor the newsletter for \$100 per issue [published quarterly] and receive a 1/4 page ad for your business. The newsletter is read cover to cover by more than 425 targeted gardening members. Plus, make a tax deductible contribution to the FGS Endowment Fund, or Annual Fund, of \$1,000 or more to help to secure the future of the Victory Gardens.

Become a Business Sponsor of the Victory Gardens

By tapping into a highly targeted group of over 425 City of Boston residents that actively garden in the neighborhood, you can harness the Garden Society's collective purchase power. Contact Richard Rogers richard@richard-rogers.com

All members of the FGS receive the Victory Garden Newsletter, and all members receive an ID card.



Watering and Irrigation:

We are hoping to make big changes to the irrigation system and modernize the water mains this fall, or spring 2010.

As part of a long-term plan to reduce water usage, the timer installed is now saving hundreds of thousands of gallons of water per season. Handle removal has also saved lots of water.

You can get a handle from your area director or board member.

Also, be sure you are not watering with water timers or automated sprinklers hooked up to the main water lines. Gardeners have been found using hundreds of gallons of water with automated systems that are running even during the heaviest of rain.

Parking!

Parking in the gardens is to be reserved for drop-off of heavy or bulky items only. There is no standing.

If you must bring your car into the gardens, use ONLY the paved path. Leave your car on the nearest black top surface and do not drive on ANY grass, or up to your own garden, ever.

Problems with taking your car off of the paved path:

- Number One Source of Broken Water Mains
- Driving Over Tree Roots Kills Historic Park Trees

You will notice rangers and police are now ticketing cars in the park on a regular basis—Gardeners who regularly bring cars into the gardens will be targeted.

Aphid Ranching - 101

Seasonal gardening tips

Nature is amazing, and sometimes a little alarming, like when the ants enslave the aphids! This happens every year in the gardens.

As the summer warms up, the ants and aphids can be seen at the tops of flowers and plants where the aphids make a sticky 'honey-dew' that the ants like to eat. The ants will protect their aphids, much like a rancher protects his livestock.

In the winter the ants will bring the aphid eggs into their underground nest, to protect them from the winter cold in preparation for hatching in the spring. Taking this into consideration, it seems that gardeners with mid summer aphid problems might consider removing the aphid infested plants where the ants are 'ranching', as one more step to protection against aphids.

Of course one must balance this desire for insect control against the benefits that ants provide, such as pollinating flowers, and eating the eggs of fleas or other pests. Aside from their benefits, ant colonies have long been interesting to children and adults alike.



Prolific Perennials:

Do you have a perennial garden with actively doubling plants? If so, by all means, share!

The great thing about growing perennials is that they will double themselves every few years, eventually outgrowing the garden space. Share this bounty with fellow gardeners by taking the time to dig and separate our extra plants, and replant them into the plant nursery for other gardeners to enjoy.

Simply sharing with our friends and neighbors in the gardens will accomplish the same. If a new gardener is setting up next to you, offer extra plants that you have, and help them get started! Perennials that propagate in the garden are sure to be successful for new gardeners, and will increase new gardener retention and enjoyment.

Dead-Head Your Flowers:

Dead-head your flowers for more blossoms! Many plants will flower a second round if you clip off the old blossoms and seed pods before they are fully mature. Flowers are the reproductive system of a plant, and if seeds are not formed, it will flower again in an aggressive attempt to multiply. Some flowers will repeat this cycle all season!

Enrich Your Soil:

Want better plants? Get better soil. Nutrients leach out of garden soil with water flows and sun exposure. Wood chips can also drain nitrogen from our soil. Enrich your soil by adding compost, organic fertilizer like *Neptune's Harvest*, or soil conditioners like seaweed, straw, hair, or composted manure.

Weedy Paths:

Keep your paths clear by pulling weeds and trimming over-reaching plants. We all love the beautiful rose bushes that spill over our fences in the late spring and early summer, so once the blooms have expired, please give them a good firm trim so that paths are kept visibly clear. This makes strolling through the paths easier and safer for everyone.

Control Crab Grass:

In hot summer, be sure to control your crab grass before it goes to seed! If crab grass is a problem in paths, use vinegar to kill vegetation on a massive scale on a hot and dry day. Once the weeds have turned brown and died, remove them.

Manual removal in flower or vegetable beds is most effective before the weeds reproduce. Pick out weeds or crab grass before they go to seed to keep propagation down. Crab grass season starts in earnest in JULY, so now is the time to get ahead of this green menace!



Words from the VP of the Park

“Gardeners’ Responsibilities Extend Beyond Fences”

I am very pleased to see that most hedges have been cut back to the required height, and most of the early flowering shrubs have been trimmed back to the 5’ range. I would like to address the issue that some gardeners may not know, and that is the over growth into pathways in front of each plot. This is the responsibility of the gardener. I don’t want to have to run around with a weed-whacker spreading invasive seeds everywhere. I would ask that each gardener take a look at their fence and neighboring exterior fence lines to be sure they are clear of weeds. Plantings are acceptable, but are subject to vandalism, and trimming by the Parks Department.

Speaking of vandalism, to date this year there has been very little, but where it has occurred in most cases has been in gardens with wide or flimsy gates, or fences with areas to hide in. This makes sight-lines so very important. I have noticed some plots, while in compliance with height, are not with lines of sight. Sometimes it is better to trim things up than cut them down. Think about what intruders are doing when they break into a plot, they want privacy too.

Last, but not least, I would like to recognize the great feeling of community so far this year. I have some volunteers for garden judging that will remain nameless, and this year we will have some major improvements taking place late in the season. Our prospects look very bright, thanks to all the volunteer work put in by our community; no our *society*!!!!

David St. Jean

VP of the Park



Invasive Plants and Prolific Spreaders

Invasive Plants: Please remove and destroy!



GROUND ELDER
Aegopodium podagraria
Spreads via underground creeper roots, and it is particularly difficult to eradicate. If allowed to remain, it will take over fast. Oval leaves have a strong smell when crushed, white flowers appear above foliage in the summer.

PURPLE LOOSTRIFE

lysimachia salicaria
This is extremely invasive and will displace native species. It grows to 3 feet tall with flowering purple spikes at summer's end.



JAPANESE KNOT WEED
polygonum cuspidatum
Also spreads via underground roots that are particularly difficult to destroy. The stems are tall and woody, the leaves are oval and white small flowers bloom in the summer.

JIMSON WEED

Datura Stramonium
Will grow to 5 feet tall with 8 inch leaves and large white or purple flowers. This plant is **EXTREMELY** poisonous, and will spread vigorously through spiky seed pods.



CHINESE TREE OF HEAVEN
Ailanthus altissima
Grows rapidly and will displace native vegetation. Can produce over 300 thousand seeds in a year. This plant will secrete toxins that prevent the establishment of other plants in the area.

BAMBOO

bambusa
Many varieties of Bamboo are native to China, and can grow 15-40 feet tall. Bamboo will grow and spread prolifically in New England. Because it is invasive, it should be discouraged and removed from our gardens to prevent it from displacing native species.



PROLIFIC SPREADERS: You may want these plants, but not everywhere!

Morning Glory or Bindweed can be seen growing up many a fence in the victory gardens. It is wise not to allow growth, although the variously colored flowers can be quite beautiful. It is best controlled by removing vines that wrap around fences or plants, avoid spreading the seed.



Lily of the valley grows low to the ground and will produce beautiful bell shaped flowers on slender stalks in the late spring. Will spread through an underground network of roots or by seed. Digging up the roots and plants for removal is sufficient.

Day Lilies are ubiquitous in the victory gardens. Producing beautiful yellow to orange lily spikes in early summer, they will rapidly double in size creating dense foliage. For best results, remove extra plants and keep foliage trimmed.



Wisteria is a beautiful flowering vine often seen in purple and white. While it may take 3—5 years for the vine to first flower, it will can easily take over when given another 3 years. It is best maintained by severe monthly pruning, and by removing and destroying all seed pods. This will extend the flowering cycle throughout the year.

Strawberries come in many varieties, with variable size and taste. One thing they all have in common is the ability to prolifically spread throughout the garden space! Strawberries can be contained in pots, or by trimming all plant runners when they appear in the summer.



Compost Pile News

For the first time in recent memory, we are using our own compost! Previous years have seen our litter laden compost piles removed by truck and disposed of as hazardous waste. This left us with the burden of purchasing additional finished compost for use in our gardens.

During the last 3 years, the leadership team, headed by current president, Tim Horn, has started managing our compost in rows that are turned 4 - 8 times per year. In June, we ground up all of the compost and plowed last year's stock into large piles in each composting area. We are mixing NITROGEN with the compost and covering it with black cloth to 'cook' as a hot compost pile during the summer. Once the pile cooks for July, August, and September, we will be able to uncover at least two piles in October for addition to our gardens.

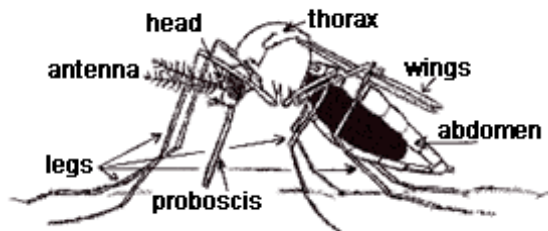


One of the four piles is ready for use now! Compost area #3 (along the stone dust road between Center and Park section) currently has one pile that is cooking, and a second pile that is ready for use. So go ahead and take some of this rich composted soil for use in your flower and vegetable beds.

In addition to enriching our garden soil with home grown composted soil, this 'black gold' can be used to raise the level of your garden. Those who tend plots in the lower portions of Center section are familiar with the task of raising garden soil levels to help avert flooding in the rainy spring, or early summer. While adding soil is less convenient in the busy summer gardening season when our plants are fully grown, we expect two compost piles to mature in October. This compost will be perfectly timed and available for autumn garden work.

If you wish to take part in the magical conversion of plant material waste to composted soil, please join the compost committee at the next garden cleanup!

Pond Mosquito Control



Garden ponds are beautiful, but can be a prime source for mosquito breeding. To keep your garden and pond free of mosquito infestation, be sure to implement some natural mosquito controls within your pond!

1. Mosquitoes breed in shady water so keep watery areas shaded by trees or tall plants to a minimum.
2. Pond animals, if chosen carefully, will eat mosquito larvae. These include frog tadpoles, goldfish, minnows, and guppies. As an added bonus, some garden frogs and toads will eat slugs.
3. Be sure to remove excess organic matter from your pond. This decomposing matter will cause your pond water to "foul" producing the kind of microorganisms that mosquitoes LOVE to eat. This foul stagnant water may also kill your pond fish.
4. If you have a clear water bird bath, be sure to clean it on a regular basis to prevent algae buildup that can lead to mosquito breeding.

Friends at the Gardens

'Who are your friends at the gardens?'

Joan Murphy and Phyllis

Haynes often seem inseparable. Richard Dunshee and Jose Anaya are always checking in with Richard Barry; the three of them spend time together outside the gardens, and in the winter too!

After a few years in the gardens we all develop our own groups of friends and social circles. In each section, garden neighbors keep an eye on each other, and update nearby gardeners when it's time to break for lunch. When we have not seen people for a while, we ask their garden neighbors for news.

The garden is a wonderful place to be with your friends, or to make new friends. If you enjoy people at the gardens, get their email, or phone number, and expand your friendship for year-round enjoyment.



Change of Address ?

When you move, or change your email address, please let us know!

Three ways to update your address:

- Easiest way: <http://fenwayvictorygardens.com>

- Leave a Voice Mail: 617-267-6650

- Or mail to: FGS; PO Box 230038; Boston, MA 02123

If you are not currently receiving email from the Fenway Garden Society, please add your email to the list!



Fenway Garden Society Summer Newsletter 2009

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED:

P.O. Box 230038
Boston, MA 02123

2009 Board Members:

President:
Timothy Horn

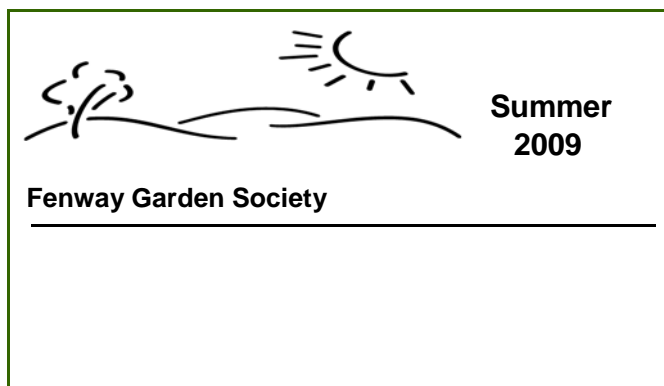
Senior VP of Administration:
Michael Rosa

VP of Communications and
Development:

Treasurer:
Andrew (Skip) Naumnik

Vice President of the Park:
David St. Jean

Deliver
TO:



The Fenway Garden Society is a non-profit organization that oversees the Fenway Victory Gardens. We are located on 7 acres in the part of the Emerald Necklace known as the Fens. We have approximately 425 members gardening 500 garden plots, and are the oldest remaining Victory Garden in the country. The Fenway Victory Garden Newsletter is aimed to keep our garden community up to date on the latest happenings at The Fenway Garden Society and surrounding community.

Please send comments, suggestions or submissions online through our website at <http://fenwayvictorygardens.com>

On the web at <http://fenwayvictorygardens.com>

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

July

4-Fourth of July Party 2 PM

9-Board Meeting

TBA-Garden Inspections
18-All Garden Cleanup #4

August

1-Fens Fest Planning Meeting

TBA-Garden Judging

6- Board Meeting

22-Fens Fest Planning Meeting

September

6-All Garden Cleanup #5

TBA-Garden Inspections

10-Board Meeting

12-Fens Fest (Rain Date 13)

October

8-Board Meeting

18-All Garden Clean-up #6

TBA-Final Garden Inspections

November

12-Board Meeting

December

5-All Garden Meeting 10 AM

NOTE: All Fens Fest
Planning Meetings are
held near the flag pole.

Random things to remember

It is summertime and the living is easy. A few things to remember to keep it easy ...

1. The grassy area between the Muddy River and the back road is not ours to use. The only exception is the woodchip pile, it was put across the road in dispute and should not be there. Be mindful of nesting turtles and other wildlife in the area.
2. When bringing vehicles into the park, park them on the paved road ONLY. Many of the grassy areas near the road have fragile, easy to collapse irrigation pipes under them.
3. Close faucets even if there is no water in the system, and report leaks quickly. You can report leaks at the FGS website.
4. If you see something that makes you uncomfortable, call the police – a police report is a powerful tool for removing undesirables from the park. You can request a call back telephone report if you prefer. Please send a copy of your report to the board.
5. No cooking, fires or barbecues in the park without the appropriate permit from the city, period.
6. Keep the sightlines down paths wide open – it's a crime deterrent. Plants growing past fences and outside of gardens are subject to beheading if impeding sightlines.
7. Be nice to city and state workers in the park, as well as to visitors! Stop the police and trash collectors and just say, "Thank you, you do a really good job."

Contributing writers:

A special thank you to the content contributors:

- Victoria Stock: victoria@notelevision.com
- Richard Rogers: richard@richard-rogers.com
- David St Jean: dvdstjean@yahoo.com
- Marie Fukuda

If you would like to contribute contact us online at :
<http://FenwayVictoryGardens.com>