



DOWLING COMMUNITY GARDEN

SPRING 2008
GARDENING NEWS AND VIEWS

newsletter

Spring Planting Date: JUNE 1

 Gardens must be planted by Sunday, June 1, 2008

Plots must be prepared and at least half planted by this date. If not, your garden space will be considered abandoned and it will be reassigned, with no refund. Some delicate varieties may be planted later (see *Spring Gardening Tip, next page*). This rule exists so that gardeners on our long waiting list may still plant this season.

Upcoming DOWLING EVENTS

DOWLING'S PLANT SALE. Mark your calendars – our popular plant sale will be held on May 10. Our growers have hunted through countless catalogues and online offerings from seed companies to provide you with an astonishing array of heirloom and hybrid tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, and lovely old-fashioned annual and perennial flowers. Expect to find over 200 varieties of vegetables, flowers, and herbs. Come early for the best selection. For more information, visit the web site: www.DowlingCommunityGarden.org.

Saturday, May 10, 11 am-2 pm in the garden.

PLAN AHEAD! 65TH ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL OF FOOD AND GARDENING. Heirloom Festival, our summer celebration of great-tasting food and interesting plants, will be held in mid-August. This is also Dowling's 65th year of operation!

Our pepper tasting last year was quite popular, so look for more great sweet and hot peppers for sampling. The festival will continue to offer a large variety of heirloom tomatoes to taste and evaluate, and present information on saving seeds, gardening resources and sustainable agriculture.

You are encouraged to plant tomatoes and peppers to donate samples to the festival. Let us know if you are growing unusual or high-performing heirlooms; we'll feature them on display.

Saturday, August 16, 10 am-1 pm in the Garden.


Dowling Gardeners GET AROUND!

COMMUNITY GARDENING RESOURCE FAIR. The third annual resource fair was held on March 29, presented by Garden Works. Keynote speaker Will Allen from Growing Power in Milwaukee spoke on the power of gardening to transcend differences, build community, create beauty and provide healthy food. Dowling gardeners presented information on heirloom varieties and how to save seeds; a Dowling gardener even won a very nice raffle item! The resource fair is a great opportunity to meet other gardeners and learn about garden projects in the metro area.

SEED SAVERS EXCHANGE. Dowling gardeners are listed in the 2008 Yearbook, offering seeds to SSE members around the world (Dowling gardeners are members, too.) If you'd like information about Seed Savers Exchange, or how to be part of Dowling's seed-saving program, call 651/255-6607.

About Your SERVICE COMMITMENT

Each Dowling gardener is expected to assist with the chores that keep this garden running. All gardeners except those assigned to the water barrel filling task will receive notification of assigned task and coordinator contact on a postcard. Barrel fillers will receive a notification and schedule mailed by the task coordinator. Please be responsible about completing your assigned tasks.

 Gardeners are required to perform 4 hours minimum in service to the garden each season

REPORT YOUR SERVICE HOURS. The way that you report your hours will be specified by the coordinator of the task you are assigned. Some coordinators will be using a drop box for you to report your service hours. The box is on the inside of the shed door, and forms are with it. If your coordinator specifies using the box, just fill out a form after you have done a period of service, and drop it in the box. It is strongly recommended that you complete and drop a form for service done in a given day on the same day. You should keep a running total of the time you have submitted, so you know that you have fulfilled your four-hour obligation.

All service hours *must* be completed by November 2 and reported by November 16, 2008. Only reported hours verified by your coordinator will be credited. You are responsible for reporting and tracking your service hours. If your coordinator does not assign service sufficient to fulfill your four-hour obligation, you are responsible to contact the coordinator in a timely manner and request additional duties.

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SPRING CLEAN-UP Saturday May 3, 10 am - Noon

We will clean up debris, get out water barrels, and complete other seasonal chores. If your service assignment is clean-up, plan to attend. Bring garden tools (rakes, wheelbarrows, shovels, pruners), weed trimmers, lawn mowers, trash bags, garden gloves.

Free seeds will be available for pick up. Also bring usable garden items that you no longer need for Swap Day (but you must take home with you any items not claimed by others!)

WATER SYSTEM DEMONSTRATION AT 11 AM. Come to a demonstration of Dowling's water system, and the proper techniques to care for system components.

ATTENTION NEW GARDENERS. You are encouraged to attend the clean-up – this is a great opportunity to meet other gardeners. At 10:40 there will be a brief orientation (*please meet at the shed*), followed by a demonstration of the water system. You will also find out about tools in the shed available for use, and expected care of community resources.

POLICY CONCERNING NON-PERFORMANCE OF SERVICE

Failure to perform the minimum service can lead to the loss of gardening privileges. Failure to honor your service assignment is unfair to those who complete assigned tasks, and results in additional work for other gardeners. Please be courteous and follow through on your assignment in a timely manner.

As specified in the rules, gardeners who do not complete and report at least 4 hours of service by the 2008 deadline will be sent a violation notice. Any shortfall will be added to assigned service hours in 2009. If the total assigned hours are not fully performed and verified in 2009, gardening privileges will be revoked.

IMPORTANT Reminders

NO PESTICIDES OR HERBICIDES MAY BE USED. Pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides are prohibited at the Dowling Community Garden, per state law and school policy.

Most common commercial products (and most "organics") are not allowed. To determine which products are acceptable or prohibited, go to www.DowlingCommunityGarden.org, and click on "links" on the home page. All products in toxicity categories 1-2-3 are prohibited at Dowling. (*Don't have internet access? Call the garden voice mail, 651/255-6607, and leave a message with your name, number, and the products you'd like checked; someone will call you back.*) Violation of this rule is grounds for garden forfeiture! More information is available in newsletters from August 2001 and July 2002; see the web site or call for copies.

PATHS. Thank you to all of the gardeners who kept the shared pathways mowed or wood-chipped, and clear of overgrowing plants last season. Unfortunately, we still have to employ a work crew of fellow gardeners to mow and cut back plants that obstruct pathways. Please keep your pathways open for carts

PLANT SALES AND SWAPS

Dowling Plant Sale Saturday May 10, 11 am-2 pm at the garden. Sale will feature over 100 varieties of hard-to-find plants: more than 80 kinds of tomatoes, sweet and hot peppers, eggplants, herbs, old-fashioned and unusual flowers.

"Cans for Sam" Plant Sale Saturday May 17, 8 am-2 pm at 3608 38th Avenue South. Proceeds support care and adoption for abandoned animals.

Friends School Plant Sale May 9, 11 am-8 pm; May 10, 10 am-8 pm; May 11, noon-4 pm. State Fair Grounds, Grandstand building, St. Paul. For more information: www.FriendsSchoolPlantSale.com

Longfellow Garden Club Plant Swap Wednesday, May 14, trading begins 7:15 pm, Epworth United Methodist Church (3207 37th Avenue South). Bring perennials and extra flower or vegetable seedlings to share with other gardeners, and plan to take home some new plants.

Arboretum Auxiliary Spring Plant Sale
May 11, 10 am-3 pm. Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, 3675 Arboretum Drive, Chaska.



SPRING GARDENING TIP

Don't plant too early! Wait until the soil has warmed to about 65 degrees before planting seeds of beans, corn, cucumbers, melons, pumpkins or squash; early June is OK. Cold, wet soil can cause some seeds to rot, and nutrients may not be released if temperatures are too low. Tomatoes, peppers and eggplants want warmer soil also. Don't set your transplants out until later in May. Keep them in a sunny, protected place until weather conditions are right for planting.

and wheelbarrows this season (*ideally we should not even need a path maintenance crew*). You might also want to cut back your raspberries and vining crops the way you prefer them pruned. A woodchip barrier is one way to keep pathways from getting muddy and needing mowing. Woodchips are available in the wooded area between the school compost site and the garden.

FENCES. If you garden along 46th Avenue or Dowling Street, keep all plants off the perimeter fence and maintain 12 inches of space between your plants and the fenceline.

PETS. If you bring your pet to the garden, it must be under your control at all times. Minneapolis leash law will be enforced: Call Animal Control to report problem animals (*telephone number is posted on the shed*). Keep your dog out of other gardens. Clean up after your dog and remove dog waste from the garden.

PLOT BOUNDARIES. Don't remove plot stakes, or numbered markers, or expand your garden into the path.

DON'T LEAVE ITEMS BY THE SHED! If you have usable garden materials you no longer want, call the Dowling voice mail, 651/255-6607, to have a notice posted in the bulletin board. Or bring them to Swap Day at spring or fall cleanups (unclaimed items *must be removed by the person who dropped them off* by end of day). Do not leave trash or garden materials by the shed. You must dispose of trash (plastic plant pots, flats, etc.) in your home garbage can. Don't expect others to clean up after you.

RECYCLE Your Plant Pots

AT THE GARDEN. Plastic 4" pots or 4-packs that are still in good condition (this means not cracked or crushed) will be recycled by a Dowling gardener. Note that these are the only sizes accepted; please don't leave other sizes/types of pots. Place them in the drop box on the south edge of plot #134; please don't put any other materials in the recycling box.

AT MOTHER EARTH GARDENS. Plastic pots will be accepted all season; look for recycling bins in late April. Check to see what sizes and kinds of pots you can recycle. Mother Earth Gardens is located at 3738 42nd Avenue South.

Dowling's WEB SITE is a Useful Resource

WWW.DOWLINGCOMMUNITYGARDEN.ORG Need information about starting seeds? Want to see back issues of newsletters or read about Dowling's start as a Victory Garden? Having problems with insects in your garden? Visit our web site for gardening advice, recipes for a bountiful harvest and much more!

We would like to display your favorite Dowling photos on our upcoming gallery page. Please email your Dowling garden photos to dowgarden@gmail.com.

WATER SYSTEM *Expansion Planned*

by Jeffrey Loesch

Last year, new outlets in the Dowling underground water system were installed near the center of both the north and south gardens. These outlets made watering much easier for those of us with plots in the middle or western side of the garden. Still, unless you were fortunate enough to have a plot near the new or existing outlets, you had a fair amount of hose to drag. In addition, with only two outlets each in the north and south areas, there was sometimes competition for access.

To address these issues, the Garden Committee applied for and received another grant from the Longfellow Community Council to further extend the water system. By the time you receive this newsletter, or soon thereafter, the Minneapolis school district plumbing department will install five new outlets in the system. These will be located along the central north-south paths of both the north and south garden areas. In the south area, there will be new outlets near the shed and at the south garden area boundary. In the north area, a new outlet will be installed at the south end of the central path. This outlet will be useful not only for plots on the south edge of the north garden area, but for plots across the central entrance area in the northwest part of the south garden area. Additional north area outlets will be installed near Dowling Street and at a path intersection between the existing central outlet and the new Dowling outlet.

Altogether, almost 500 feet of new underground pipe will be installed. When the project is completed, there will be 4 outlets in the south garden area and 5 outlets in the north garden area. The objective is to have every plot be within 100 feet from a water outlet. As part of the project, new bayonets have been purchased. Using the Y fittings attached to each bayonet, it will be possible for up to 16 gardeners to water at once. Bayonets for the south area will be kept in the shed (as they are now), and those for the north area will be kept in the hose box near the raised beds. Please note that bayonets for the two garden areas are not interchangeable. Bayonets from the shed must be used only in the south garden, and those from the hose box must be used only in the north garden. (Please make sure you put bayonets back in the right place!) Attempting to use the wrong bayonet may damage the outlet, rendering it unusable for your fellow gardeners.

Installation of the additional outlets will require trenching the entire length of the main north-south paths in both garden areas. The school district plumbing department and the path maintenance group will attempt to restore the paths as well as possible. Please bear with us while this work is done – then enjoy the new, more convenient water access.

Ways to FEED THE HUNGRY

2008 PRODUCE DONATION PROGRAM. Dowling is again encouraging all gardeners to donate their extra produce to feed the hungry. Garden workers will deliver these vegetables to local food shelves and meals programs. Please don't let your vegetables go to waste – pick them promptly and donate extras. Also consider growing more than what your family needs, and contributing the rest.

IMPORTANT DOWLING DATES

MAY 3

Spring Clean-up and Swap Day, 10 am-Noon

MAY 10

Dowling's Heirloom Plant Sale, 11 am-2 pm

JUNE 1

Your garden must be prepared and at least half planted

AUGUST 16

Dowling's Heirloom Festival, 10 am-1 pm

OCTOBER 11

Fall Clean-up and Swap Day, 10 am-Noon

NOVEMBER 2

Service hours must be completed

Your garden must be cleaned up. Put dead plants on compost pile, take down seasonal supports and arrange leaf bags neatly.

NOVEMBER 16

Deadline for reporting 2008 service hours

JANUARY 2009

Seed swap and placing a group order for seeds by mail. Email or postcard notices are sent out in late December.



The food shelves have been very grateful to Dowling for our contributions. Produce pick-ups will occur in early morning, three times per week during the peak production months of June through September. Place your produce (in good condition) inside the coolers, located on the west side of the shed. Look for the pick-up schedule on the shed bulletin board and on the web site later this spring.

HEIRLOOM DEMONSTRATION GARDEN. This garden, located in the north area along the main paved path (near the yellow bench), is a showcase for trialing heirloom vegetables and flowers. Each season, seeds are saved from select varieties and offered to Dowling gardeners and the public at our summer festival and other events, and to international seed-saving networks. Vegetables not needed for seed-saving are donated to the food shelf each week during the growing season.

A summary of the vegetables grown in 2008 and how they performed will appear in the fall newsletter.

MINNEHAHA FALLS NURSERY AND LANDSCAPING

offers a one-time 10% discount on plants
with this coupon. Good for 2008.

Thank you to our local Garden Centers!

MOTHER EARTH GARDENS green • grown • goods

offers a one-time 10% discount on plants
with this coupon. Good for 2008.

Gardening CLASSES AND EVENTS

FREE SEMINAR AT MOTHER EARTH GARDENS. To register, email karen@motherearthgarden.com or call 612/724-2296. 3738 42nd Avenue South, Minneapolis.

Spring Composting. The mysteries of the compost pile, solved. Wednesday, April 23, 7 pm.

THE ARBORETUM GARDENING SCHOOL. These classes are offered at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. For more information, call 952/443-1422 or email ArbEdu@umn.edu.

Choosing Specialty Perennials. This series covers new and old varieties, how best to grow them, unusual plants in containers.

Using Native Plants in the Garden. Saturday, April 26

Container Gardening. Saturday, May 3

Iris: Rainbow Colors for the Garden. Saturday, May 10

Peonies: The King of Perennials. Saturday, May 17

Planting in Late Spring. Explore unique gardening styles.

Gardening with Herbs. Saturday, June 7

Daylilies: The Genus Hemerocallis. Saturday, June 14

The Moonlight Garden. Saturday, June 21

Lilies: The Genus Liliium. Saturday, June 28

COMMUNITY EDUCATION CLASS. To register, call 612-668-4828. Roosevelt High School, 4029 28th Avenue S, Minneapolis.

Growing Herbs Indoors and Out. Perennial and annual herbs, containers and planting, soil and light requirements.

Wednesday, April 30, 6:30-8:30 pm.

EARTH DAY WATERSHED CLEAN-UP. Come to one of 36 cleanup sites and help keep Minneapolis beautiful. For more information: 612/230-6484 or www.minneapolisparcs.org.

Saturday, April 19, 9:30 am-noon

ARBOR DAY ON THE MIDTOWN GREENWAY. Volunteers are needed to plant native trees and shrubs for the 8th annual Arbor Day on the Midtown Greenway. For more information contact Theresa Nelson at theresa@midtowngreenway.org.

Saturday, April 26, 9 am-noon at Midtown Greenway just east of Hiawatha Avenue.

ART IN BLOOM. Minneapolis Institute of Arts presents a 4-day festival that celebrates art and fresh flowers. 3400 Third Ave. South, April 30-May 4, www.artsmia.org for more information.

GARDEN RESOURCES

Rototilling Contact these individuals for garden rototilling at a reasonable cost (*call for prices*):

Clarence Day 612/724-4973

Jeff Wagner 612/722-8920

Soil Testing Contact the University of Minnesota Soil Testing Lab, 612/625-3101 or soiltest@umn.edu, for directions on sending soil samples.

Woodchips are available in the wooded area between the school compost site and the garden, or for pickup at these locations: 36th Street and West River Parkway; Wabun Park in the lower lot on west side of road; Bossen Field on East 58th Street between 28th-31st Avenues; north side of Lake Nokomis between East 50th Street and 22nd Avenue South; and west of Cedar Avenue adjacent to 29th Street between 17th-18th Avenues.

Compost will be available at the garden again this season. Look for the pile on the edge of the woods. It goes fast, so check the area often!

Horse Manure is periodically available on the edge of the woods. Dowling gardener Steve Dosch will deliver manure to a spot near your garden. Contact him directly to discuss quantity and cost: 612/729-1865.

Longfellow Garden Club meets on the second Wednesday each month, 7 PM at Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Avenue South. Meetings are free, and cover a wide range of gardening and landscaping topics. Call 612/722-8022 for more information.

Informational Web Sites

• Gardening information and specific plant forums:

<http://forums.gardenweb.com/forums/>

<http://www.tomatoville.com/>

• U of M Extension Service, plant culture information:

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/topics.html?topic=5>

• GardenWorks – local community gardening resource:

www.gardenworksmn.org or call 612/278-7123

• Mother Earth Gardens – check 'links' page for resources:

www.motherearthgarden.com

GO TO WWW.DOWLINGCOMMUNITYGARDENING.ORG FOR SEED-STARTING INFORMATION, GARDENING TIPS, DOWLING HISTORY & MORE!

Dowling Community Garden

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Return Service Requested