




Welcome Back to Another Year of Gardening!

Hello to returning Dowling gardeners, and to those who are just joining us. We hope you will have a successful and rewarding season. Please review the rules and service commitment information, fully complete the Rental Agreement form, and return it with your payment by March 1.

The garden is run by a small group of volunteers who meet monthly to plan activities and improvements, tackle ongoing management issues, and serve as liaisons with the community. You are welcome to join us; call the Dowling phone line at 651/255-6607 if you have questions or want more information.

GARDEN RENT is Due March 1!

For garden plot rental, please send \$ _____ and the signed agreement form by March 1, 2004.

 Plot rentals received after March 1 and before March 15 will be charged an additional \$5.00, so get yours in on time!


Registrations will not be accepted after March 15; your garden will be forfeited and given to the next person on the waiting list.

Please call 651/255-6607 right away if you don't want a garden space this year; we have a waiting list of gardeners. Make your check payable to **Dowling Community Garden**.

Plot fees have been increased to reflect the cost of operating the Garden. Insurance, communications and maintenance costs have gone up considerably, and income from plot fees has not been sufficient to cover expenses.

Reminder: SERVICE COMMITMENT of 4 Hours for Each Plot

Dowling is a large community garden and requires help from everyone to keep it going. From seasonal clean-ups to water barrel filling, flower bed maintenance, shed repair, phoning, mowing or special projects – there's a job for every gardener!

 Gardeners are required to work 4 hours each season, per plot. Please select the activities that best suit you (from the list on page 3) and indicate your choices on the Rental Agreement. In the event that many gardeners sign up for the same activity, requests will be filled on a first-come/first-served basis.

Gardeners are responsible for keeping track of service hours. Call the Dowling phone line, 651/255-6607, and let us know your name, activity performed and when, and time spent. All service hours must be completed by November 30, 2004.

Spring Planting Date: JUNE 6

 Gardens must be planted by Sunday, June 6, 2004

You will be contacted and may forfeit your plot if your garden is not planted in a timely manner.

What's NEW in the Garden?

- Look for a *bulletin board* to be installed on the shed. We'll post the current newsletter, garden rules, and seasonal information. If you have gardening-related notices you'd like posted, call the Dowling phone line at 651/255-6607.
- We'll begin the "*Gardener of the Month*" award! Do you have an interesting gardening style? Plant unique varieties? Have a colorful garden or tidy plot? We'd like to recognize gardeners and their hard work. A garden will be selected in July, August and September. (If yours is selected, we'll call and ask for permission.) Look for a sign in the award-winning plot.
- Two *benches* will be installed in the Garden this spring. Future plans include perennial flower plantings around them. Also look for a *bike rack* near the shed.
- Garden "*Swap Day*" at Spring and Fall Cleanups, to recycle usable gardening items that you no longer need.

Dowling Nominated for MSHS AWARD!

The Dowling Community Garden has been nominated for an MSHS State Greening award. The specific award we will be receiving will be announced at the Minnesota State Horticultural Society Awards Banquet February 21 at the Center for Northern Gardening. Look for more information in the next newsletter or on the web site!

Reminder: NO PESTICIDE/HERBICIDE Use at Dowling

Since June 29, 2001 the use of pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides have been 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, click on "Garden Rules", then click the "Pesticide Information" link.

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SPRING GARDEN CLEAN-UP

May 1, 10 AM - Noon

Come meet your gardening neighbors and help prepare the common garden areas for a new season. We will clean up debris, get out the water barrels, repair the shed, and complete other seasonal chores.

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!)

DOWLING COMMUNITY GARDEN RULES

In the spirit of community and to clarify everyone's part in this Garden, these basic rules have been developed by the Dowling Garden Committee. Some of these rules have been requested by the school, others are Minneapolis ordinance or Minnesota law, some exist to ensure that we fulfill our obligations to neighboring residents and other gardeners at Dowling. When you rent a plot, you agree to follow these rules and actively participate in garden activities.

Rules 1, 2 and 3 require strict compliance. Gardeners who violate these rules will be contacted and will immediately forfeit their garden plot. Gardeners who violate other rules will be contacted, and may forfeit their garden plot if problems are not resolved (see "Procedures" below). If you commit 3 violations in a two-year period, you will be contacted and your plot forfeited. Rental fees will not be returned to those whose plots have been forfeited due to rules violations.

1. **Pay the rent** for your plot by the time designated in the spring newsletter.
2. Gardeners must **perform 4 hours of service** to the garden each season, per plot. Report to the Dowling phone line when service time has been given (see *Service Agreement for more information*).
3. **Use of pesticides and herbicides is prohibited** in the garden (per Minnesota law; visit the Dowling website for more information – www.DowlingCommunityGarden.org).
4. **Plant your plot** by the time designated. Unplanted plots will be assumed abandoned and forfeited.
5. **Clean up your garden plot** by the time designated. Remove dead plants, take down seasonal plant supports, store items neatly on your plot.
6. **Your plot is not transferable.** You may not permanently give your plot to another person. A one-season temporary transfer is possible, notify the Dowling Garden Committee, 651/255-6607.
7. Keep your garden **neatly weeded** on a regular basis. Weeds may not become taller than 8 inches (according to City Code.) Weeds are a major complaint of neighbors and other gardeners.
8. **No trees are allowed** in garden plots; if any grow up, please cut them down.
9. You are responsible for the **path** next to your plot. Paths must be kept clear of weeds, rocks, garden plants, and be level so that a cart or person can pass through. Work with your garden neighbor to share this task. There is a push lawn mower in the shed you may use. Do not use carpeting, roofing materials or other non-organic materials on common pathways.
10. Do not place **rocks** on paths or grassy areas, or the school compost pile. Put rocks within the confined rock area on school lawn (near path at east end of garden).
11. There is a large **compost** area on the east side of the orchard along the fence. Follow school's posted instructions for use. If you compost on your plot, keep pile neat and properly made to prevent odors. Do not place garden debris anywhere else on the property, in garden pathways or common areas. Do not place non-compostable items or trash in school compost area.
12. **Fences** surrounding the Garden are school property and must not be tampered with. Do not remove fencing on Dowling Street entrance. Do not grow plants on or through the

perimeter fence. Maintain a 1 foot buffer between garden plants and the fence. Use landscape fabric and/or woodchips to create this buffer. 46th Avenue ploholders must keep the fence area clear of plants/weeds outside the fence up to the sidewalk.

12. **Keep the garden attractive** for neighboring residents. Place bags of leaves on your plot, not next to the main fences or in the paths. Bags must be kept neatly stacked. Use wood or white fencing; no orange plastic snow fences, please.
14. **Respect the school property.** Don't dump anything in the woods, and do not bring motorized vehicles on school property.
15. **Do not pick fruit or vegetables** from another plot without permission. Many gardeners will happily share their excess produce if asked.
16. Report any **change of address** or telephone to the Dowling phone line, 651/255-6607.
17. Keep your **pets** out of other gardens; clean up after your pets on school property.

Procedures for Rules Violations

Violation of rules 1, 2 or 3 is grounds for immediate plot forfeiture. The Garden Planning Committee has established these procedures when other Garden rules have been violated:

First rule violation: The gardener receives a phone call to explain the problem, and has one week to resolve the problem.

If the problem has not been resolved at the end of the week, the Garden Planning Committee sends the gardener a letter. This letter will re-state the problem and give one additional week to resolve the problem, and lets the gardener know that if the problem is not corrected, the plot will be forfeited.

If the problem is still unresolved one week after the gardener receives the letter, the gardener receives written notice that the plot has been forfeited and the rental fee will not be refunded.

For a **second rule violation** (within a two year period), the gardener receives a letter and has one week to resolve the problem. The gardener will be considered on probation; an additional violation means plot forfeiture.

For a **third rule violation** (within a two year period), the gardener receives a letter stating the plot has been forfeited.

Questions about rules? Call the Dowling phone line, 651/255-6607.

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All products in toxicity categories 1-2-3 are prohibited at Dowling. (*Don't have internet access? Call the garden phone line, 651/255.6607, and leave a message with your name and number, 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 website or call for copies.

Dowling Garden Offers HEIRLOOM SEEDS

Dowling Community Garden was the site of several demonstration gardens in 2003, showcasing organic gardening practices. These demonstration gardens were funded by the Environmental Protection Agency and the MN Office of Environmental Assistance, and administered through MN Green/Minnesota State Horticultural Society. Plots contained heirloom varieties of tomato, eggplant, pepper and marigold; seeds were saved, and this year Dowling will be offering seeds through the Seed Savers Exchange and the Flower and Herb exchange in Decorah, Iowa. We will also be listing seeds with Seeds of Diversity Canada, a seed saving organization based in Toronto. Varieties include *Cherokee Chocolate*, *Neves Azorean Red*, *Polish*, *Marianna's Peace*, and *Brandywine* tomatoes, *Listada de Gandia* eggplant and *Tashkent #1* marigold.

In 2004, we hope to save seeds of other varieties and welcome your participation. If you have a family heirloom you would like to save seeds from and offer to these seed saving organizations, leave a message with your name, phone number, and seed variety on the garden phone line, 651/255-6607. Visit the web site (www.DowlingCommunityGarden.org) for information on saving tomato seeds and photos from the demo plots. (*Special thanks to Joan and Eric for helping save Marianna's Peace and Neves Azorean Red seeds, and to Roger and Judith for helping save Cherokee Chocolate tomato seeds.*)

Please Plan for SURPLUS PRODUCE!

As we start a new gardening season we want to encourage you to think about our community as you plan. Last year, volunteers collected produce twice weekly throughout the harvest season for distribution to two social service providers in South Minneapolis – The Aliveness Project and Loaves & Fishes. The fresh produce was much appreciated!

We'll be collecting food this year, with hopes for a larger shared harvest. We had great donations in late summer when tomatoes, cukes, zucchini and other bumper crops rolled in; we would love to share things earlier in the season. Consider planting early spring greens, carrots and peas (to name a few) to share. Any donations are appreciated; anyone interested in participating in this project, or if you know of an agency or group who could use fresh produce, please contact Emilie Liepa at 612/724-9065. Look for information about this season's distribution schedule in the next newsletter.

How to RECYCLE Gardening Items

DON'T LEAVE THEM BY THE SHED! If you have usable materials you no longer need, call the Garden Committee, 651/255-6607, and we will post a notice in the bulletin board on the shed. Or bring them to Swap Day, at the Spring and Fall cleanups.

2004 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

JANUARY 10

Dowling gardeners gathered to swap seeds and place seed orders. We shared information on recommended varieties, seed starting and growing methods. This is a yearly event; look for a postcard in late December with information.

MARCH 1

Completed and signed Rental Agreements are due. Make sure you have indicated your service area(s) and included your plot rental payment.

MAY 1

Spring Clean-up, 10 AM-Noon at the Garden / Swap Day

JUNE 6

Your garden must be planted by this date. Unplanted plots will be assumed to be abandoned. You will be contacted and may forfeit your plot if your garden is not planted in a timely manner.

OCTOBER 16

Fall Clean-up, 10 AM-Noon at the Garden / Swap Day

OCTOBER 16

Harvest Potluck Dinner

NOVEMBER 7

Your garden must be cleaned up by this date. Remove dead plants to compost pile and take down seasonal plant supports. Arrange leaf bags neatly on your plot.

NOVEMBER 30

Service hours must be completed by this date.

Dowling Garden WEBSITE

WWW.DOWLINGCOMMUNITYGARDEN.ORG Dowling Garden's web site is a valuable resource for gardening information. It is also Dowling Community Garden's window to the world, giving others the opportunity to learn who we are and what we're doing. The site includes our mission statement, recipes, gardener of the month, garden history, special projects, favorite links, newsletters and a lot more. We welcome your participation in making this the most relevant and informative community gardening web site possible. If you have articles you wish to contribute, photos, graphics, garden tips, recipes or ideas, please email Charlie at cbowler@mn.rr.com. (*Special thanks to Charlie for designing and maintaining the web site!*)

GARDEN Reminders

FENCES. Keep all plants off the perimeter fence, and keep 12 inches between your plants and the fenceline. 46th Avenue gardeners need to weed outside the fence to the sidewalk.

PATHS. Keep rocks, weeds and garden debris out of the path; keep the path mowed; and make sure it's accessible for carts and lawn mowers. Keep garden plants out of paths or they will be removed. Don't use carpeting in your path or plot.

PLOTS. Don't remove plot stakes, or expand your garden into path. Cut down any trees growing in your garden.

SEED SAVERS *Exchange at Kelley Farm*

MARCH 7. Learn about saving seeds, historic preservation and heirloom varieties. Heirloom seeds will be available to take home. 2-4 PM, Oliver H. Kelley Farm, Hwy 10 (2.5 miles southeast of Elk River), 763/441-6896, on the web at www.mnhs.org/kelleyfarm. Admission is free for this event.



Gardening CLASSES

FIVE-WEEK ORGANIC GARDENING SERIES. Twin Cities Greening Coalition is sponsoring classes on organic gardening. Cost is \$20 per session or \$80 for all five sessions. Register at 651/501-6347. For more information, visit the GreenSpace Partners site: <http://www.greeninstitute.org/GSP/index.htm>.

Saturdays 9:30-11:30 AM, Battle Creek Recreation Center, 75 South Winthrop Street, St. Paul

- Feb 7 *Organic Gardening and Soil Building Workshop*
- Feb 14 *Valentines Day in the Compost Bin*
- Feb 21 *Boulevard and Front Yard Gardening*
- Feb 28 *Landscape Design and Native Plants*
- Mar 6 *Sustaining Vital Community Gardens*

CLASSES AT CENTER FOR NORTHERN GARDENERS. The Minnesota State Horticultural Society is sponsoring these classes. For cost, times and more information, call 651/643-3601 or go to www.northerngardener.com.

- Feb 10 *Have Fun with Botanical Names*
- Feb 28 *Seed Starting*
- Feb 28 *Seed Starting for Kids*

Longfellow Garden Club PLANT SWAP

MAY 12. Bring perennial plants, extra flower or vegetable seedlings to trade with other neighborhood gardeners. 7 PM, Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Avenue South.

Local Gardening ANNOUNCEMENTS

Check the web site: www.DowlingCommunityGarden.org for other events. Have gardening information you'd like to contribute to this newsletter? Call the garden phone line, 651/255-6607, and leave a message for the newsletter editor.

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

Weeding If you need weeding assistance, contact this Dowling gardener for help (*call for price*):
Madeline Clive 612/721-8854

Soil Testing Call the Minnesota Extension Service Yard & Garden Line, 612/624-4771, for directions on sending soil samples to the University's Soil Testing Laboratory. You can also listen to tapes about lawn and garden care.

Woodchips are available in the woods south of the prairie, or for pickup at these locations: Bossen Field on East 58th Street between 28th-31st Aves; north side of Lake Nokomis between East 50th St and 22nd Ave South; Wabun Park in the lower lot on west side of road; west of Cedar Avenue adjacent to 29th Street between 17th-18th Avenues; and Matthews Park lot at 28th Ave South and East 24th Street.

Compost may be picked up (after April 1) at NRG, 630 Malcolm Avenue SE, 612/331-4610. Call before you go to be sure compost is available, and for current prices.

Manure is available (after April 1) at NRG, 915 N. Albert (*corner of Albert and Pierce Butler*), St. Paul, 651/641-1939. Call to be sure manure is available, and for current prices.

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 open to the public, and cover a wide range of gardening and landscaping topics. Call 612/722-8022 and leave your email address to receive a PDF schedule of meetings.

Informational Web Sites

- Gardening information and specific plant forums:
<http://forums.gardenweb.com/forums/>
<http://www.thegardenhelper.com/plants.html>
- U of M Extension Service, plant culture information:
<http://www.extension.umn.edu/topics.html?topic=5>
- U of M Extension Service, insect and disease information:
<http://vegedge.umn.edu/>

GO TO WWW.DOWLINGCOMMUNITYGARDENING.ORG FOR SEED-STARTING INFORMATION, GARDENING TIPS, RECIPES AND WEBSITE LINKS!

Dowling Community Garden

PO Box 6757
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651/255-6607

Forward and Address Correction Requested

2004 GARDEN RENTAL
AGREEMENT