



DOWLING COMMUNITY GARDEN

JUNE 2003
GARDENING NEWS AND VIEWS

newsletter

Help Celebrate your Garden's 60th Birthday!

Save the date – Saturday, July 12 – for a special day of gardening activities and fun! A celebration is planned to commemorate Dowling's history and showcase some of the exciting things that take place in our community garden.

OUR HISTORY Dowling Community Garden began during World War II as folks turned to planting subsistence gardens in the city to show solidarity and self-help. Longfellow resident and long-time Dowling gardener Rose Pearson recalls the groundbreaking for the "Victory Garden" in 1943. It has grown from a handful of gardens to over 180 plots serving more than 200 gardeners.

Dowling gardeners live in Longfellow, but also come from other Minneapolis neighborhoods, Eden Prairie, Bloomington, St. Paul and Mendota Heights. We are culturally diverse (look around at all the interesting gardening styles!), of all ages and abilities, who have come together to share a love of gardening.

ABOUT THE CELEBRATION Activities are planned throughout the day. Mayor Rybak, other city officials, and the community at large have been invited to join us. Please come and show that Dowling is an asset to the community.

A Master Gardener will be on hand to answer your gardening questions from 10:00 – noon. This is a good time to learn about bugs or weeds that are bothering your garden, or more information about healthy garden practices.

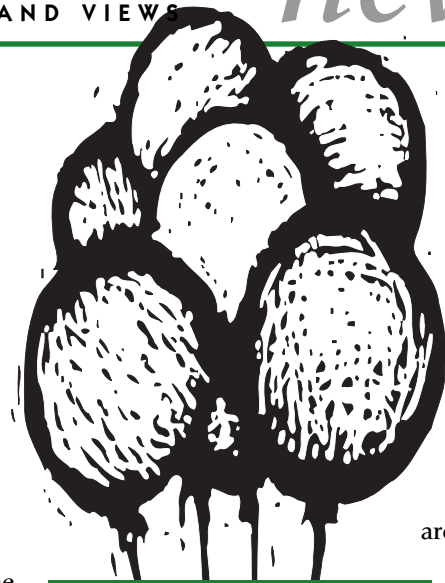
From 10:30 – noon, there are tours of the demonstration plots on the northeast side of the garden. Dowling received federal/state grant money to showcase organic community gardening practices; our plots demonstrate using cover crops, and growing and saving seed from heirloom tomatoes. Organic foods will be served during this time.

At noon we'll cut the birthday cake and serve lemonade.

At 1:00, we'll raffle a basket of fresh produce and flowers, and other gardening items donated by local merchants.

Throughout the day we'll offer tours of the gardens and informational handouts about insects, other gardening-related organizations and gardening practices.

HOW YOU CAN HELP In these times of budget tightening and program cutting, it's really important that we demonstrate



60th
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION
SATURDAY
JULY 12
10am – 3pm



to the community what a great asset Dowling Garden is for gardeners and the surrounding neighborhood. Please help by:

- ☞ Making sure your plot is free of weeds and is looking its best on the 12th
- ☞ Attending the celebration
- ☞ Lending a hand with set-up, giving tours, serving refreshments (see below)

We NEED HELP!

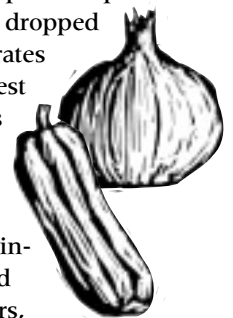
We will need your help to make this Anniversary Celebration a success. Volunteers are needed to help set up and take down a small tent, set up tables and chairs, serve refreshments, provide information about Dowling Garden, give tours of the gardens, clean up the grounds after the event. Call the garden phone line, 651/255-6607, to let us know how you can participate.

What to Do with SURPLUS PRODUCE

Dowling Community Garden is implementing a program to distribute surplus and donated produce from your garden to community organizations providing food and meals to those in need. Beginning in July, Dowling Community Garden will pair with two area organizations, Loaves and Fishes and The Aliveness Project, to distribute this food.

HOW IT WORKS The produce will be picked up twice a week by garden volunteers and dropped off to these organizations. Coolers and crates will be available under the eaves on the west side of the garden shed on the pickup days of Tuesday and Sunday. You may place items in the containers any time during the day, but it would be best to harvest as close to evening as possible in order to maintain maximum freshness. Food will be picked up at dusk, stored overnight by our volunteers, and delivered the next day to the chosen organization.

Surplus produce pickup days are every Tuesday and Sunday. Please utilize this service to pass along food in excess of what you personally can use. You may contact Emilie Liepa, the surplus food coordinator, (612/724-9065) if you are having trouble harvesting your plot, or will be away for a period of time and will not be able to harvest. We have volunteers willing to help harvest in order to share the bounty of our gardens! Thank you all for considering those in need.



Historic STEVENS HOUSE Gardens

In early May, the Stevens House volunteer organization contacted the Dowling Garden Committee, requesting that our gardeners assume responsibility for the gardens at Stevens House. Built in 1850, Stevens House was the first house in what became Minneapolis. The small white house, surrounded by a picket fence, is now located in Minnehaha Park south of the Falls. Charles Bowler and Jeffrey Loesch took responsibility for the gardens this season. They planted historical and heirloom varieties of tomatoes, corn, potatoes, carrots and other vegetables that were known to have been grown in the 1850's. Labels for each vegetable variety and a sign giving credit to the Dowling Community Garden for planting and maintaining the gardens are planned for later this summer.

More on GARDENING ASSISTANCE

We goofed; the language used in the Service Commitment description led some gardeners to think that weeding and watering would be provided when they went on a planned vacation. This service is available only for unusual circumstances when you are unable to find someone to care for your garden on a short-term basis, such as a family emergency or illness.

Ask your gardening neighbors for help with weeding and watering when you're on vacation; they may be very willing to help in exchange for your assistance when their vacation time comes up.

So What's with All the RULES?

The Planning Committee understands that some gardeners are upset with increased rules, and the service commitment and reporting hours to the phone line. Here's why it's so important for your participation.

We garden on space rented from the Minneapolis Public Schools. There is pressure on public agencies to look for all ways to save money, and the Dowling site is attractive to

developers (one came forward a few years ago with plans to build townhouses on the site.) It is critical that we demonstrate how valuable the Dowling Garden is to the community, and that we are responsible renters.

This means that we have to be careful to follow all directives established by the school system, state law and city ordinance (*these make up 8 of our 17 rules*). We need to be sensitive to the neighbors across the street and make sure that the gardens are attractive (*3 rules*). In the past, there have been complaints to the school about garden appearance.

All this takes effort; previously, fewer people volunteered than were needed to complete the work. The service commitment is a way to make running the garden more equitable; everyone shares in the work. We ask you to report your hours as a way to keep track of what jobs have been completed.

We welcome your participation in managing the garden. If you'd like to join the Garden Planning Committee, please call the garden phone line, 651/255-6607, and let us know. Meetings are the third Tuesday each month.

Reminder: NO PESTICIDES or Herbicides

Weed and insect killers, and fungicides, are prohibited in Dowling Garden, per state law. Failure to comply with this rule is grounds for immediate plot forfeiture. For more information about this rule, go to www.DowlingCommunityGarden.org or refer to the February 2003 newsletter.

Good Gardening PRACTICES

Don't throw your weeds in the common pathways. Keep paths free so lawn mowers and wheelbarrows may easily pass.

Be aware that buckets and depressed areas in plastic mulch may be breeding grounds for mosquitoes. Keep buckets turned upside down, punch holes in plastic mulch so water may drain.

Do not store unused carpeting in your plot. There have been complaints about unsightly piles of carpeting.

Needed: WATER COORDINATOR

We're looking for a gardener willing to coordinate water barrel filling for next season. You would work with the current coordinator to learn the system this summer. Call the garden phone line, 651/255-6607, and leave your name and number.



SUMMER GARDENING TIP

Intercropping Plant a cover crop around your existing plants in mid-July to provide a living mulch. Till the cover crop into your soil at the end of the season to provide nutrients for next season's garden.

GO TO WWW.DOWLINGCOMMUNITYGARDEN.ORG FOR GARDENER PROFILES, HISTORY, GARDENING TIPS, RECIPES AND WEBSITE LINKS!

Dowling Community Garden

PO Box 6757

Minneapolis, MN 55406

Forward and Address Correction Requested

60th Anniversary Celebration Schedule

10:00 - 12:00	Master Gardener answers your questions
10:30 - 12:00	Organic gardening demonstrations: Cover Crops, Heirloom Seed Saving, organic food samples
12:00	Birthday Cake and lemonade
1:00	Raffle of fresh produce basket, garden items
All day long	Garden tours, information about gardening