

Email: [nagagardens@gmail.com](mailto:nagagardens@gmail.com)

Website: <http://nepeanallotmentgarden.yolasite.com>

## Spring 2015

# NAGA Newsletter

### Board of Directors:

#### **Chairman:**

Mike Chebbo  
613-226-6164

#### **Vice-Chair:**

Ron Rogers  
613-228-2909

#### **Registrar:**

Patricia Avendano  
613-912-3664

#### **Treasurer:**

Benson Kwan  
613-723-8624

#### **Secretary:**

Vacant

#### **Maintenance Director:**

Vacant

#### **Director at Large:**

Lee Coates  
613-228-9701

#### **Director at Large:**

Abdallah Anani  
613-523-0024

#### **Director at Large:**

Craig Hamm  
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#### **Director at Large:**

Vince Comunale  
613-225-5525

#### **Director at Large:**

Jayne Huntley  
613-226-7102



It has been another

long, cold winter. Personally I'm getting really tired of cold and snow. However, the signs of spring are here if you look hard enough; the days are longer, the sun is warmer and Costco is full of summer toys and outdoor furniture. The garden catalogues are arriving too, and I've been gloating over the new varieties of vegetables that I'd like to try this year. I hope that you are all looking forward to another bountiful gardening season.

There are some changes to the gardens this year. All of the compost bins and piles have been removed. Members are expected to compost on their own plots. The garbage and recycle bins are also gone. Please take ALL of your waste home for disposal. Hopefully, these changes will make the gardens easier to manage, with less work for your executive and the rest of the volunteers (including you).

**PLEASE** remember to **renew your membership** with NAGA and send your yearly fee by **cheque** to the following address:

**P.O. Box 65073 Merivale P.O. Ottawa, On. K2G 5Y3**

**Deadline for renewing your garden plot is  
Wednesday, April 22, 2014**

After that date, your garden will be allocated to another gardener. No exceptions.

## **Let's Not Forget**

### **(from NAGA Bylaw):**

"The objects for which the Corporation is incorporated are: To administer and maintain allotment garden lots in the City of Ottawa South District; To organize and promote recreational and educational activities and events related to gardening; The gardens are intended for recreational purposed only .....that The directors shall receive no remuneration for acting as such". Under those spirits, I would like to salute ALL current and past Members of the Board for their commitments, efforts, time spent on tasks and meetings. We may be carried over by our day-to-day gardening tasks but should never forget the power and beauty of volunteering. Next time, when you run into one Board member, past and current, please make an effort to say Hi and Thank you.

Every year, we say good bye to some and welcome to others, but we always look for new blood, faces and ideas. Kudos to Helene Labbe and Angus Gray who did their part of contributions to keep this organization alive and well. The proof is in this newsletter reaching you all and in the applications and renewal of memberships year after year. I invite anyone who is interested in contributing just a little more to this organization to come forward. We currently have two vacant positions: Secretary and Maintenance Director, and maybe more open at the AGM. Please think it over and contact me before the coming AGM if you wish to participate on the Board of NAGA.

## **Let's Be Practical in this age of electronic communications (proposed NAGA Bylaw changes):**

From Clause 5.0, Annual General Meeting to take place each year on or about the 15<sup>th</sup> of April, The Board proposes to change such date to "on or about the 30<sup>th</sup> of April"

From Clause 6.5.1, "Meetings of the Board shall be held in February, May, October and the Annual General Meeting, but not less than four times in each year" The Board proposes to eliminate the May meeting but not less than three times in each year.

***If you are a member in good standing, please come to the AGM, discuss, share, comment and vote. That is your right.***

***Mike Chebbo, Chair***



## AGM<sup>ee</sup>ting

Wednesday April 22, 2015 7:00 pm

Nepean Museum  
16 Rowley Ave  
K2G 1L9

Please come if you can.

There will be vital issues discussed that may affect the future of our site.

If you have some spare time, we are looking for new board members. Please volunteer.

New ideas are always welcome!

Refreshments served.

The museum is a very short block north of Meadowlands between Woodroffe and Merivale. The 86 bus (eastbound) and the 86B bus (westbound) service Meadowlands.

There is parking available behind the museum

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## Share Your Expertise

Every year, NAGA welcomes new members to our gardens. Although some of these 'Newbies' bring years of gardening experience along with them, some are as green as the beans they are attempting to grow.

If you are a seasoned gardener, why not share your knowledge with an incoming member? If you are available to answer gardening questions and/or are interested in

becoming a 'go to' person to a member who needs advice, please let us know.

We hope to establish a group of knowledgeable people within our organization who would be willing to advise new members (or old ones) regarding gardening know how.

Contact: [nagagardens@gmail.com](mailto:nagagardens@gmail.com)

## New NAGA Website and Blog

Don't forget, we have a website! Visit: <http://nepeanallotmentgarden.yolasite.com>.

For current events, announcements, and items of interest to gardeners, visit the web log ('blog') at: <http://nagaottawa.blogspot.ca>.

If you have gardening stories or helpful information you can share it with the world by submitting it to blog.

See you there!

## 6th Annual Picnic

In hope of better weather, the picnic will be held in August this year. The timing is still to be determined so look for an email announcement and notices at the garden with the date and time.

It's a great opportunity to meet your neighbours, exchange gardening ideas and relax too, knowing that you've accomplished another season of great gardening.

## NAGA and Invasive Plants

In 2014 NAGA dealt with the invasive plant commonly referred to as Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*). A beautiful plant which is not native to N. America. We are hoping that remnants of this plant do not resurface in the garden this year. If they do appear they will be removed quickly. This plant is so invasive that it has been declared ILLEGAL in many jurisdictions. In this case the gardeners knew what plant they were planting but were unaware of it being listed on the invasive species list. We only became aware of its nature upon seeing several media broadcasts about its local influence. See for example <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/hunting-the-invasive-himalayan-balsam-in-ottawa-1.2718441> and [http://www.thestar.com/news/insight/2012/08/24/himalayan\\_balsam\\_pink\\_flower\\_though\\_beautiful\\_is\\_also\\_invasive.html](http://www.thestar.com/news/insight/2012/08/24/himalayan_balsam_pink_flower_though_beautiful_is_also_invasive.html) as two examples.

The situation of the NAGA garden, less than 40 metres from Nepean Creek, a tributary of the Rideau River system, is an additional factor to take into consideration, over and above of the general invasive nature of the plant. Furthermore, the plant is considered noxious in several jurisdictions (Canada and abroad), and is listed as a known invasive in Southern Ontario (i.e. Ottawa). The NAGA land is public land, and the Board is responsible for the care and stewardship of the garden such that it is not harming the community. The Board of Directors will not allow any known invasive plant (as listed by invasive plant councils / monitoring agencies / regulatory bodies, legislation, etc) to be present within the NAGA boundaries.

### Know What You are Planting!

Another plant caught our attention last year and we could not identify it. With help from the Ontario Invading Species Program (<http://www.invadingspecies.com/invaders/plants-terrestrial/>) we were able to identify it as a potential weed but not invasive as it is native to the area. The main point, however,

is that the gardener did not know what the plant was. **All gardeners should be well aware of exactly what they are planting**, particularly if it is new to them.

### Allowed plants, but invasive (Mint, horseradish)

The most common plants in this category will include Jerusalem artichoke (sunchoke), mint (a perennial) and horseradish. Mints will grow 10–120 cm tall and can spread over an indeterminate area. Due to their tendency to spread unchecked, some mints are considered invasive. Horseradish left undisturbed in the garden spreads via underground shoots and can easily become invasive. Gardeners should grow these plants in containers that contain the roots and the container can be buried in the ground.

## Taking Vacation This Summer?

### Are serious issues keeping you from your plot?

Gardening is rewarding, but it is a lot of work to keep a garden tidy. Weed control keeps the garden looking good for the community and is also a courtesy to adjacent plots; they don't want *your* weeds to propagate to *their* plot. But sometimes, life takes over, and you just can't get to the garden for a week or more, and the weeds will grow, and grow rapidly!

If you are going on vacation during the gardening months, please have somebody help you out during your absence. As a last resort please notify a Board member that you are going to be away for a period. In this case the Board may be able to enlist help to keep the weeds *controlled* while you are away. At least the 'weed patrol' will be aware why there may be a problem.

Unfortunately, if you find yourself dealing with a serious family issue, illness for example, and you cannot keep up with your



garden plot while you deal with this, please look for help from a friend or other gardener to *control* the weeds in your plot. If that is not possible, as a last resort please let a member of the NAGA Board know. We do not want or need personal details. But we *might* be able to *help* you keep the weeds under *control* while you deal with much more serious issues.

To contact the Board, please email:  
[nagagardens@gmail.com](mailto:nagagardens@gmail.com)



## Compost / Straw

Once again, free compost will be available to gardeners this year. Advance notice for this event will be posted on the bulletin board on the shed. Notice will also be sent via e-mail.

Bales of straw will be sold, on-site, to interested gardeners again this year. Date to be determined.

## Spring Start Up

Come and chat with your friends and neighbours. Join us for our yearly appraisal of the land and preparations for the gardening season. We've got lots to do!

Volunteers will be eligible for a \$5.00 Voucher, which can be redeemed, next year, to reduce their plot rental fee.

**Spring clean-up** of the allotment gardens will take place on the following dates:

**Saturday April 25, 10:00am**

**Rain date: Sunday April 26, 11:00am**

## Weed Patrol Update

The Board of Directors (BOD) of the Nepean Allotment Garden Association (NAGA) reminds all members that garden plots are to be maintained and gardened according to the Terms and Conditions of License (TCL), which is signed by each member. The reasons for enforcing these terms are not arbitrary - they are for creating a garden which is much easier to administer and maintain, to promote good and organic gardening practices, to prevent the spread of weeds and insect infestations, to create a pleasant atmosphere for all members in the garden, to work within the legal framework of NAGA's agreement with the City of Ottawa, and to *present a good image to the surrounding community*, whose good will we depend upon for support.

Since 2012 representatives of the BOD have inspected each garden plot throughout the growing season, and end of season, for clear violations of the TCLs. Because the Board has taken the issue more seriously in the recent past the condition of the garden in 2014 was much improved over previous years. Yet, many gardeners still ignore the warnings. The number of letters being sent this year will be much less than last year. Along with the annual lease renewal, some members will have received additional

letters indicating problems with their plots, and a determination of the Board of Directors subcommittee on weeds. The determinations are as follows:

[ ] **Monitor the member's plot during the 2015 gardening season.**

[ ] **Reduce the member's number of plots.**

[ ] **Issue final notice: The membership in NAGA will be cancelled in 2015 if serious violations of the TCLs persist.**

[ ] **Problems were very bad in 2014, warnings were ignored. Immediately cancel membership in NAGA.**

Remember, the Board has no desire to interfere with you or our gardens as long as all reasonable efforts are made to work within the TCLs. The amount of time it takes for volunteers to monitor, record, track, and follow-up on the problems in the garden is much more than anyone can imagine. We would much rather be working in our own gardens at those times.

## **Headlands: What Are They?**

**... and what are your responsibilities?**

The "Headlands" are the area between the border of your plot and the mowed area beyond the border. They need to be kept trimmed and tidy, just like the mowed areas. Excess soil left on the headlands (by the plow) should be raked back into the garden. Weeds should be pulled.

The Terms and Conditions of Lease are:

- Plots are to be kept neat and tidy and the long grass on the perimeters is to be trimmed.
- Paths, laneways and the parking lot must be kept free and clear of obstacles and vegetation.
- Rocks are not to be placed in the paths or laneways.

## **Theft from Gardens**

Every year the garden struggles with theft of produce from our plots, particularly once the crops become mature and ready for eating. Taking produce from another plot without clear permission from the lease holder of the affected plot is STEALING. It also involves TRESPASSING (going on a plot that is not yours, and without the permission of the plot lease holder). Last year one NAGA gardener had a 20 foot row of tomato plants completely removed in the night! Some people have witnessed cars pulling up in the morning and walking through the garden with a hockey bag (these are very large bags).

If you suspect that someone (a member of the public or another NAGA member) is stealing from a plot, if possible, record the license plate number of the vehicle. Even better, if you have a camera or cell phone at your disposal, take a photograph of the vehicle and its license plate, and try to take a picture of the person (or persons) stealing from the garden. The police do not advise confronting the offender. Note that if the accused is a NAGA member (it happens, though not frequently), the Board has the right to immediately terminate a membership if there is proof of stealing from another plot.

## **Composting on Your Plot**

**It's a "must" this year**

With the demise of the community composters and piles, composting on your plot is now **the way** to manage your organic waste.

First, do your weeding early, before the weeds bloom and go to seed. This means that there will be far fewer weeds in your garden next year and far less organic waste altogether since the weeds will be smaller.

Second, use these weeds as well as vegetable trimmings to control other weeds. Place them in a thick layer between the rows of vegetables. They will dry up and rot down amazingly quickly, meanwhile providing mulch for the garden.

Alternatively, build a compost pile in one area of your garden. Cut the waste into manageable pieces before piling. After adding six inches of organic matter, throw a few shovels of soil over it. before adding another layer to help it decompose faster.

Watering your pile during a dry spell helps too as well as turning it over occasionally. In the fall, chop the remains of your garden into manageable pieces (6" to 12") and spread everything including your compost pile evenly over your soil so it will be plowed under. By the time that it has been plowed and gone through a long winter it will have decomposed and released lots of humus and nutrient back into your soil.

When the NAGA management asks you to clean up in the fall, they need all of the fencing, boards, frames, garbage, metal etc. off the garden, and the garden levelled so that there is nothing to interfere with the plowing. Everything that you don't want next year must be taken home for disposal.

Items that you do want next year can be stored in the fenced compound behind the wood chip pile. They should be labelled with your name and plot number.

## Waste Management

The garbage piles by the shed and in the composters had become unmanageable. Non-gardeners were leaving all sorts of things including their toxic waste. The volunteers couldn't handle it anymore and Spring and Fall cleanup became far more work than they needed to be. As a result, we've removed the bins and implemented the following:

## Naga's new Garbage Policy

**"All garbage and other waste must be taken home for disposal. There are no exceptions."**

This policy will be on your rental form as a condition of your renewal.

**DO NOT DUMP ANY GARBAGE,  
ANYWHERE ON THE GARDEN  
ALLOTMENT GROUNDS**

**This a public park** not just for NAGA gardeners, but also for the general public to use and enjoy. So please don't shove your garden garbage items into the **city public garbage bins** designed to handle food wrappers, drink cans and coffee cups.

Thank you for respecting these basic guidelines, so that we can all enjoy the garden. Together, let's have a great and safe summer.

**James Koss**  
**Director at Large**

## Are You "Fence Friendly"?

Our regulations state:

Mesh fences for groundhog control only, are to be **NO taller than 3 feet (1m) and placed 6 inches (15cm) within the border** of your garden to allow for grass cutting. No plants are to be grown on these fences.

Fences and trellises for climbing plants that are taller than 3 feet are to be **placed 2 feet (60cm) inside the garden boundaries** to prevent sun blockage, to allow for weeding and to prevent injury to your neighbours.

***Please, consider your neighbours when putting up fences.***



## *Tips, thoughts and tales*

### Did You Know?

**Honey Bees** are not native to North America; they are an import from Europe. They are now important pollinators here but they do not pollinate tomatoes or eggplant.

**Bumble Bees** are the major pollinator of beans (and a lot of other plants). Most beans are pollinated before the blossom is open, by bees that chew a tiny hole at the base of the bud. Take a look this summer.

**Bumble Bees** nest in a hole the ground. The nest is built in the spring by a new queen and never exceeds a couple of hundred bees. In the fall, the nest dies except for a few newly hatched queens who hide themselves in safe spots over the winter, waiting to start over in the spring.

**There are an abundance** of different kinds of native bees and wasps that are very useful in your garden. There are specialized squash bees that pollinate squash and cucumbers, blueberry bees and many more. Planting brightly coloured flowers in your garden amongst your crops will help ensure that you have pollinators when you plants bloom.

I found an interesting web site with all sorts of information if you want to find out more:

<http://bugguide.net/node/view/475348>

**Corn** is strictly wind-pollinated, and the pollen is very heavy so it doesn't blow far. You need to plant your corn in rows that run from East to West to catch the prevailing winds so that you get maximum pollination. Modern corn won't survive in the wild because it needs to be planted so closely.

**Carrots** have very delicate seedlings. The ground where they are planted needs to be kept moist so the tiny plants can force their way through when they germinate. Place a board over your planted and watered row to help maintain the moisture. After a week, check each day and when you can see the seedlings, remove the board.