

ABBOTSFORD COMMUNITY GARDEN

DeLair Road, Abbotsford *Established 2008*

APRIL 2013

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 1

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, May 8, 2013 7:00 pm
at the garden greenhouse

Proposed Agenda:

- 1) Welcome
- 2) Minutes from the last AGM
- 3) Treasurer's Report
- 4) Work-in-Kind
- 5) Ag in the Classroom
- 6) Community Areas
- 7) Election of Directors
- 8) Adjournment

Director Opportunities:

(elections will be held at the AGM)

President, responsibilities include:

- Liaisoning with the City of Abbotsford
- Overall co-ordination of the Garden

President Elect, responsibilities include:

- Providing continuity of leadership, accepting the presidential position for the following year
- Supporting presidential functions

Secretary, responsibilities include:

- General secretary duties
- Maintaining and updating the website
- Producing four monthly newsletters for gardeners

Treasurer, responsibilities include:

- General treasurer duties
- Plot registration

Plot Maintenance Coordinator, responsibilities:

- Providing guidance on individual plot maintenance and corresponding communication

Volunteer Coordinators, responsibilities include:

- Coordinating monthly work bees.
- Providing weekly guidance (via the greenhouse white board) on tasks that require attention
- Co-coordinating work-in kind initiatives

Social Coordinator, responsibilities include:

- Coordinating four "Garden Walk" learning events for gardeners during the season
- Coordinating two Garden barbecues for gardeners during the season



NEW DIRECTORS WANTED

An open letter from Diane Murphy, ACG Treasurer

In 2007, Lloyd Riekman began work on his vision for the first community garden in Abbotsford. I was fortunate enough to work with Lloyd as his idea for a community garden blossomed and I gained a great appreciation for his vision and his commitment to community. Lloyd was passionate about creating an inclusive community where people would come to learn about food production and healthy eating. He didn't want just a garden with plots, he wanted a garden that brought people together. Lloyd saw the community areas and annual barbecues as the catalyst for building a true community atmosphere.

When a site was finally agreed upon in the spring of 2008, I dragged Mark along to help out. Lloyd's energy was contagious and it didn't take long for Mark to get involved. Lloyd and Mark worked closely together providing the leadership to build the Garden into the community center that it is today. When Lloyd left the Garden after the 2010 season, Mark was an obvious choice to continue where Lloyd had left off.

Mark and I have spent countless hours at the Garden over the past five years. While we were building the raised boxes for BC Agriculture in the Classroom we were reflecting on all of the incredible times we have had and all of the awesome people we have met because of the Garden. It has been so amazing to watch children grow up at the Garden. It has been a source of great joy for us over the past five years.

There comes a time when new ideas are needed to push an organization further toward its vision. While Mark and I cannot imagine not being part of the Garden, we feel that it is time for us to step out of executive roles. We will both be resigning at the next Annual General Meeting. Even so, we

will not be far away and will make ourselves readily available as a resource for anyone who is willing to take on any executive positions.

Nancy and Ian Moore have been with us every step of the way to see Lloyd's vision to fruition. They have been there to action each and every one of Lloyd and Mark's ideas. We have relied heavily on their support and guidance over the past five years and are so grateful for their unwavering commitment and friendship. Both Nancy and Ian have also decided to step back from the Garden this year. Nancy has handed in her resignation and while Ian still plans on maintaining the morning coffee club at the Greenhouse, he is hoping to spend more time enjoying the Garden and less time on maintenance.

Take a moment to watch the video documentary that was created in the early years of the Garden. It's on the home page of the website. Listen to Lloyd's vision and if you, too, are inspired, please consider taking on an executive position at the Annual General Meeting on May 8.



GREENHOUSE

Part of the greenhouse is available for us to use in a limited way. There is no temperature control, so it functions as a cold house at best. It is recommended that you start your seeds at home where temperature fluctuations are minimized, then move them into the greenhouse as seedlings if you wish to use it.

The water has been turned on for the season. Please remember to conserve water in the greenhouse, and to be sure you turn off the taps when you are finished. We had serious flooding last year when someone left the water running.

Greenhouse Reminders

1. Do not water other gardener's plants unless you have specifically been asked to do so.
2. Clearly label your plants with your plot # and name.
3. Limit your use of the greenhouse to a small area so that your plot neighbors to also can find some space to use the greenhouse.
4. Keep your plants to the two south rooms of the greenhouse only.
5. Check your plants regularly since the temperatures fluctuate significantly and plants will quickly dry out.

More About Water

The outdoor water has been turned on. If you're in the west side of the garden, you'll need to turn the water on at the road first before your local water station will work.

If you have water problems, there is a number on the white board in the greenhouse to phone.

As always, conserve water and be sure to turn everything off when you are done watering. Last year some plots were flooded because of taps carelessly left turned on.



Parking

On weekends we ask that you park in the parking lot just past the entrance to the Garden. We want to remain a safe environment, and limiting the traffic and parked cars in the Garden will prevent accidents that no one wants to experience.

We understand that some gardeners have physical conditions that prevent them from walking significant distances. If you must park near your plot we ask that you try to come to the Garden in the early mornings or evenings when there are fewer people in the area.

If this is a concern for you, please send an email and we will try to reallocate you to a plot that is closer to the parking lot.

administrator@abbotsfordcommunitygarden.com

YOUR GARDEN PLOT

COMMUNITY ETIQUETTE

Please take a few minutes to review the Garden Agreement that you signed. [Click here](#) to link to the copy on our website.

It is important that everyone respects their neighbours and follows the rules of the Garden.

Remember:

- No dogs in the garden.
- Dispose of your weeds in the compost bin. Put any debris in the greenhouse garbages. Do not leave weeds or debris in the pathways.
- Lock the greenhouse and the garden gate if you are the last one in the garden.
- On the far east side of the fenced in area, a local bee keeper (Heather Higo) has research hives. Do not disturb the bees.
- It is your responsibility to maintain your plot and keep the weeds under control. Plot holders who do not seem to be caring for their plot will receive a notice by Friday, May 10 that **they must have their plot weeded by Monday, May 19**. If the plot has not been tended satisfactorily, the plot holder will receive a cancellation notice by Friday, May 19 and **the plot will be reassigned** at the Saturday, May 27 registration. This may seem a bit harsh, but we do turn many would-be gardeners away and it's good stewardship of the land to make sure that every single plot is in the hands of someone who truly wants to grow a garden in it.

COMPOST

All Seasons Mushrooms has generously donated organic mushroom compost in the past. We will be asking if they would be willing to supply compost again for delivery in the beginning of May.

ROTO-TILLING

We have talked to other community gardens and have not found any that offer roto-tilling services. A new plot holder had a great suggestion that the Garden co-ordinate a landscape company (with their own insurance) to come out for a couple of days and rototill any plots that require rototilling for a fee. Anyone interested in having their plot roto-tilled would pay for the rototilling and ensure that their plot was empty prior to rototilling. Mark and Diane are away for the next few weeks and are unable to organize this, nor are they around to ensure the rototiller is operational. If someone is willing to work on this, I'm sure some of the gardeners would like to take part. If you are interested in coordinating this, please email administrator@abbotsfordcommunitygarden.com to inform us.

An interesting point to note is that during the Soil Garden Walk last year, the Ministry of Agriculture Soil specialists strongly recommended not rototilling. To improve your plot soil structure, they recommended digging your plot by hand.



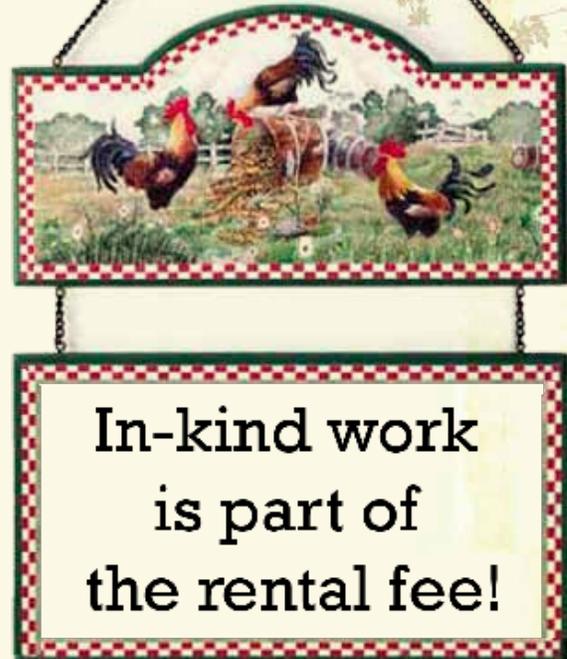
IN-KIND WORK AND PLOT CARDS

Our community garden is 100% volunteer run, and as such we require all of our plot holders to contribute to the maintenance. Working together for the common good is what strengthens our community, something we are dedicated to building. To facilitate our commitment to community and help all plot holders get involved, all plots are assigned a plot card. Plot holders are expected to account for six hours of work-in-kind on their plot card by documenting the day, the number of hours and the task that was completed. Once plot holders have accounted for six hours, they are not required to continue to document any volunteer hours they give to the Garden.

The plot cards will be reviewed during renewal for the 2014 season. If the plot card does not document 6 hours of in-kind work, the plot holder will be asked to explain their circumstance. The plot registrar will make the decision, based on the circumstance, whether or not to permit the plot holder to retain their plot for another year. If the decision is to not permit the plot holder to renew, then the plot will become available for a new plot holder who shares our common value of community.

New in 2013 – As a demonstration of good faith, and in an effort to spread out work-in-kind hours throughout the year, Gardeners will be required to have completed 3 hours of work-in-kind by June 30. Any plot cards that do not indicate three hours of work-in-kind completed by June 30 will not be able to renew their plot for the following season.

In the past, some gardeners have not done their share of the work in spite of signing the agreement, which results in the Garden maintenance falling on the shoulders of people who have already given so much of their time to make this a great place for all of us. We take the community aspect of the Garden very seriously, and gardeners who do not complete their community hours are taking advantage of those who do. We hope that spreading out the in-kind hours will help solve this problem.



WORK-IN-KIND TASKS

Mow the lawn

Weed the community areas:

- Community Herb Garden
- Community Squash Garden
- Community Strawberry Patch
- Community Rhubarb Patch
- Community Potato Patch
- Community Orchard

Sweep the greenhouse

Clean the bathroom

Organize the tools and wheelbarrows

These are a sample of the tasks to be done. If you see something that needs attention, please look after it. As well, check the white board in the greenhouse for seasonal chores and current needs.

MOWERS AND WEEDERS

- SAFETY FIRST

Mowing and edging are an important part of the upkeep of the Garden, so it's important to review the instructions for safe operation of lawn mowers and weed whippers. These are common lawn care tools that need to be handled with safety in mind.

Lawn Mowers

- Never smoke when filling the gas tank. Wipe up gasoline spills immediately and do not attempt to start the engine but move the machine away from the area of spillage and avoid creating any source of ignition until fuel vapors have dissipated.
- Never over-fill the fuel tank. Replace the gas cap and tighten securely. Don't remove the gas cap or add fuel with the engine running. Allow the engine to cool before refueling.
- Never tamper with safety devices. Check their proper operation regularly.
- Do not allow children near the area of operation. If there is a risk that children may enter the area you are mowing, have another responsible adult watch them.
- The blades on mowers spin very fast and can pick up and throw debris that could seriously injure a bystander.
- Be sure to clean up the area to be mowed before you start mowing.
- Do not operate a lawnmower without the discharge guard (reflector) or engine grass catcher installed.
- The mower deck has spinning blades that can amputate hands and feet. Do not allow anyone near the mower while it is running.
- Always allow the mower blades to stop completely before leaving the mower's operator position.
- Turn off the mower when crossing a sidewalk or a driveway.
- Do not put your hands or feet near or under the mower.
- Never tilt a walk-behind mower; always keep all four wheels on the ground.
- Do not pull the mower backward unless absolutely necessary. Always look down and behind before and while mowing backwards.
- Never attempt to lift or repair the mower with the engine running.
- When mowing with a walk-behind mower, wear heavy-duty shoes with non-slip soles and long pants to protect your legs.
- Always wear eye protection when operating a mower.
- Never adjust mower height, clean grass chute, or remove grass catcher with engine running.
- Always stay clear of hot engine. Mufflers can reach up to 648 C.

Weed Whippers:

- Always wear eye protection when operating, servicing or performing maintenance on a weed whipper.
- Do not operate the weed whipper when you are tired, ill, or under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medication.
- Always wear heavy, long pants, long sleeves, boots and gloves and all other required personal protective equipment. Loose clothing or jewelry, or clothing with loosely hanging straps, ties, tassels, etc. can be caught in moving parts.
- Do not swing the unit with such force that you are in danger of losing your balance.
- Never start or run the engine inside a closed room or building.
- Inspect the area to be cut before each use. Remove objects (rocks, broken glass, nails, wire, string, etc.) which can be thrown or become entangled in the semiautomatic head.
- Always keep the engine on the right-hand side of your body
- Hold the unit firmly with both hands.
- Keep firm footing and balance. Do not over-reach.
- Keep the semi-automatic head below waist level.
- Do not raise the engine above your waist.
- Keep all parts of your body away from the semi-automatic head and muffler when engine is running.
- Cut from your right to your left.
- Hold the weed whacker as close to the ground as possible, so as to find a comfortable position before you even turn it on.



Update on the Agriculture in the Classroom Grant

In 2012, the Abbotsford Community Garden and BC Agriculture in the Classroom received a City of Abbotsford Agriculture Enhancement Grant. The grant was to be used for the following projects:

- restore the milk house at the Abbotsford Community Garden for Ag in the Classroom storage of gardening equipment
- create a more permanent area within the Abbotsford Community Garden for the Ag in the Classroom students
- add fruit trees to the Abbotsford Community Garden
- provide two educational workshops open to the public on food production. Over the winter the milk house was restored and work is currently underway to provide a more permanent area for BC Agriculture in the Classroom students. You may have notice the colourful raised boxes built over the Easter weekend. There will also be a pergola built and a sign placed as an entrance to BC Agriculture in the Classroom area.