



The SEEDLING

Newsletter of the Burnaby and Region Allotment Gardens Association



When buying fertilizer, three numbers are normally displayed on the label which refer to the principal nutrients it contains - Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium. For simplicity, they are often referred to by their chemical symbols (N), (P) and (K), respectively. The numbers represent the percentage of each of the nutrients in the mixture available to plants in one year.

A common commercial fertilizer is 5-10-5 which means that it contains 5% Nitrogen, 10% Phosphorus, and 5% Potassium. You'll notice the numbers do not add up to 100% - that would be a killing strength. So, most of the mixture is actually filler which includes other trace elements. In commercial fertilizer, the three numbers often add up to more than 15. Organic fertilizers such as compost and manure, seldom reach that number. It doesn't mean they're less effective - only that more may need to be applied. Organic fertilizers build living soil while chemical fertilizers can degrade it over time.

It is a common mistake to believe that more of something good is better. This is not true for fertilizers. Too much may actually damage the plant, particularly the roots. Each of these three common elements has their own qualities and usages:

Nitrogen (N) promotes rapid plant growth and dark green leaves. Plants lacking nitrogen may be pale, yellowish, or stunted. Leafy crops such as lettuce or spinach benefit from a good nitrogen supply. Be cautious when nitrogen is applied - perennial plants stimulated with nitrogen late in the season will be tender and susceptible to winter damage. Nitrogen is volatile and needs yearly replacement. Surplus nitrogen can leach into the soil and the run-off will contaminate waterways.

Phosphorus (P) is important for root growth, plant sturdiness, and flower and fruit production. Insufficient phosphorus may result in stunted plant growth, and may have a very dark green or purple cast. Bonemeal and rock phosphate are two good organic sources of phosphorus. Excess phosphorus can also be a source of contamination in run-off.

Potassium (K) regulates plants' water retention and the formation of new cells. Plants lacking potassium may wilt in hot weather. The older leaves may yellow or brown, wither and fall off. Occasionally leaf edges turn red. Wood ash was once considered a good source, but compost and well-rotted manure are good substitutes.

As vegetable gardeners, when we remove crops, we also remove nutrients from the soil which need to be replenished. Composting and adding manure periodically are good options. Food scraps, grass clippings, and fall leaves are cheap ways to feed soil. Organic commercial fertilizer can be applied by scratching it into the top inch of soil and watering. When plants need a nutrient supplement, a weak solution of liquid fertilizer can be sprayed on leaves, making nutrients immediately available.

Working a previously uncultivated area may mean nutrients are low. But a plot worked by competent gardeners for many years should be well supplied. Nitrogen, is only produced naturally by a few plants, so must be replaced yearly. Phosphorus and potassium only slowly become available, so adding them may sometimes be overkill. While soil tests can reveal nutrient deficiencies, observation and renewal of the soil are usually enough to enjoy abundant crops year after year.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Ann Talbot

Hello Fellow Gardeners!

We are fast approaching the end of the year and have already put most of our garden to bed, except for those who like to winter garden. Above, you'll see a photo from last year on the "Friends of BARAGA" Facebook posting of Jonathan's Christmas Eve harvest. Amazing what we can do at BARAGA!

Looking over the past year, much has been accomplished, thanks to the help of many awesome volunteers. Some highlights:

Garbage

We have made a huge dent in the amount of garbage we were generating by 1) hauling out 3 large containers of rotting wood and debris over the spring and fall seasons, 2) hiring a recycling company to deal with our plastics and cardboard/paper and 3) creating composting areas to help divert valuable compost from the garbage.

Wood Chips and Trees

Bartlett Tree Experts have been helping us out with wood chips. The City of Burnaby arborist removed several rotting and dead trees.

The Orchard Formerly Known as the Bee Meadow

We have started work on repurposing the formerly-known bee meadow. The plan is to create an orchard with companion plants and to create a sitting area with an arbor from the platform that was erected for the bees. The soil is being remediated and we have fruit trees ready to plant in the spring. Anyone interested in 'adopting' a fruit tree can contact us at directors@baraga.ca

Maintenance Projects

The machine shed and the office have new floors. We've also created a work yard area for storage and the beginning of a composting system that will be more contained and hopefully, sustainable.

Summer Student

We also hired a summer student, Matt Kolrud who did a great job on grounds keeping and helping with projects.

A Big Thanks

As a new president this year, it has been a steep learning curve. I want to thank the Board of Directors for their support and hard work; this board has worked very well together and although we all have very 'unique' personalities, it has overall been a respectful, hard-working group.

We will be looking for more directors, so please consider stepping up! I also want to thank some of our special volunteers - you know who you are!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Membership Renewal Dates



You should receive your membership renewal soon. You can submit your renewal in one of two ways:

BY MAIL

Mail your completed form and payment to the address shown on the form.

IN PERSON

Bring your form and payment to the **Vancity at Market Crossing on January 14th or 15th from 10-4** for processing.

We will also be processing forms at the AGM, but would appreciate that you do this in advance to save long waiting times at the AGM.

Please make sure to complete your form carefully or your renewal may not be processed.

Deadline for membership renewal is January 31, 2017.

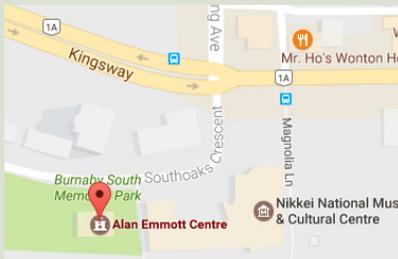
BARAGA AGM



WHERE

Alan Emmott Centre
6650 Southoaks Crescent
Burnaby, BC

The centre is located a short walk from Edmonds Station. Sperling Avenue turns into Southoaks Crescent at Kingsway. Street parking is available on Beresford Street behind the centre as well as limited spaces in front.



WHEN

January 28, 2017
1:00-3:00pm (doors open at 12:30pm)

WHAT

You will be getting an AGM package with your membership renewal forms. Please read over the agenda and motions and bring your package with you to the meeting. The minutes from last year's meeting will be posted on the web.

NOMINATIONS FOR BOARD POSITIONS

BARAGA members can submit nominations for Board positions to Camilla Dietrich no later than January 16, 2016 using the info below:

By Mail

214-67 Miner Street
New Westminster, BC V3L 5N5

By E-mail

camillamdietrich@gmail.com

Nominations will also be taken at the AGM.



As many of you may know, the soil in the area now known as the orchard is not very good for trees. This year, we decided to add compostable materials to improve the soil's composition and texture. We dug several trenches and we filled them with members' extra greens. This material will help the old wood chips decompose faster which in turn will help the soil with water filtration, retention, and nutrient content.

The future plans are to have several people dig a few more deep trenches, and mix more compostable material during work parties. In the spring and fall, we will slowly bring in a couple of fruit trees and shrubs and see how they perform.

Last year, several fruit trees were planted, but only a few survived the worst dry spell our area has ever experienced. The ones that survived are looking really good.

Our hope is that, as members see the potential of this area, more and more people will become involved. It is a large area and there are many very good fruit trees and shrubs that could be planted here. Please keep in mind that suggestions and donations are always welcome, not to mention that all hours dedicated to the orchard will be counted towards your community service hours.

For donations, suggestions, or to get involved please contact BARAGA at directors@baraga.ca



Board of Directors

Ann Talbot
President
directors@baraga.ca

Glenn Helmlinger
Vice-President
directors@baraga.ca

Cathie Hickson
Secretary & Structures
directors@baraga.ca

Joyce Wishart
Treasurer
directors@baraga.ca

Carly Franklin
Co-Treasurer & Communications
communications@baraga.ca

Grace Shigenobu
Membership
membership@baraga.ca

Dullss Kleamyck
New Members/Wait List
waitlist@baraga.ca

Ramiro Coto
Site Maintenance/Flower Beds
directors@baraga.ca

Doug Eng
Plot Inspections
inspections@baraga.ca

Ravil Chamgoulov
Composting Site/ Inspections
inspections@baraga.ca

Jonathan Candy
Communications
communications@baraga.ca

Doris Shi
Membership/Work Hours
workhours@baraga.ca

Sheila Stickney
Community Events
directors@baraga.ca

Looking For New BARAGA Directors



We are looking for BARAGA directors interested in helping us with managing this amazing 14 acres of land.

Being a director has its challenges, but also its rewards!

EXPECTATIONS OF DIRECTORS

As a director, we would ask that you:

- **Enjoy Working With a Group**
We are focused on sustainable, community gardening and helping members of our community
- **Attend Monthly Board Meetings**
If you can't make the meetings, we ask that you report to the group on the work you have done and will be doing prior to the next meeting.
- **Take On a Portfolio**
Portfolios include managing Plot Inspections, Work Service Hours, or Membership Information.

When you take on a portfolio, you would recruit members to help you manage the jobs required of that portfolio.

The board currently consists of 14 members, including 4 executive members.

Although it may seem daunting, it is very rewarding to help make BARAGA the best it can be!

WANT TO RUN FOR THE BOARD?

See the AGM Info section on Page 3 for information on nominating yourself or someone else for the Board of Directors.

We look forward to working with you in the coming year!



BARAGA Contact Information

Mailing Address

Burnaby and Region Allotment Gardens Association
Box 209, 4974 Kingsway
Burnaby, BC V5H 4M9

Telephone

The BARAGA telephone has been disconnected. Please use the email addresses above to contact directors.

Facebook Group

www.facebook.com/groups/146218968736245