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# THE SEEDLING

DECEMBER 2022

## BARAGA's 40th Anniversary Picnic

*by Ann Talbot*





What a great celebration day we had on August 13th. As you can see from the pictures, we had remarkable weather, attendance and a great team of volunteers to make this the best day ever!

Because of our 'special anniversary' we invited the Burnaby City Council and Parks and Recreation Commissioners and School Board members. We were delighted to have so many members of these groups attend. This is a copy of the email we wrote to thank these members for attending our event:

Hello Elaine,

It was so nice meeting you last Saturday, along with the Mayor and all of the City representatives that came as well. It was amazing to see so many Councillors, Parks Commissioners and School Board members. Can you please do me a big favour and forward this very sincere thanks to all for supporting our garden and for helping us celebrate our 40th anniversary. You are all very welcome to come back, enjoy a nice walk and chat with some of our gardeners.

It was a busy day, so please forgive me for forgetting names!

### **Highlights of the day included:**

- The volunteer team who had the entire picnic area set up 2 hours in advance of the picnic! They also worked throughout a very busy day, managing the great Best in Garden contest, cooking, cleaning and putting the party to bed!
- The beautiful location and friends: flowers, the orchard in full

colour/fruit, piano music, beautiful flower arrangements, friends/family gathered at picnic tables, the barbeque grilling the sausages, the gardens bursting with life and produce.



- Speeches by some very appreciative guests: Mayor Hurley and several Commissioners, School Board and Parks commissioners and Theresa from Ryan's rainbow.
- Food - What a spread! I was worried that we wouldn't have enough food for all of the guests that showed up, but our members came prepared to share!

## THANK YOU to the City of Burnaby!

We have been applying for a Student Summer Grant from the federal government for several years and have always been successful up until this year, when we were denied funding.

As this had been an important budget item, we decided to pursue other funding and applied for the City of Burnaby Community Grant. We were very pleased when we got the news that City Council had approved a grant for \$3000 at their July 25, 2022 meeting.

We have been able to use this funding to help pay for maintenance of our 14 acres over the 2022 season. **THANK YOU** to the City of Burnaby. We really appreciate your support!

## Vice-President's Annual Report

*by Dick Mackin*



In my role as Vice President one of my major functions is to ensure the garden infrastructure is kept in good repair. This work generally gets done by volunteers, either at work parties or ad hoc project work. Where necessary we have professionals come in to do some work.



The work parties were quite successful this year and we were able to complete a lot of work - helping to clear abandoned plots, maintaining the orchard, screening and distributing soil from our common compost along with bark mulch on pathways, trimming and clearing the ditches etc. - and the whole garden looks good because of your efforts.

Unfortunately, we did not get a Canada Summer Jobs Grant this year and were not able to hire a student groundskeeper. Thanks to a grant from the city of Burnaby we were able to contract the mowing of the common areas which kept the garden looking neat and tidy.

Many of our members will have noted the change we have made to the maintenance of the main drainage ditch. One of our new members, Javier, has taken on this project and with the help of other members and work party crews the ditch has been cleared of all the invasive yellow flag irises and other blockages.

Once again, we had a number of trees pruned by professional arborists under the direction of The City of Burnaby Parks Board and we would like to extend our thanks to the City.

Over the course of the year, between members clean up of their own plots and along with work party efforts, we were able to remove and dispose of over 48 tons of waste wood and scrap from the gardens. We will keep the construction bin on site in 2023 and encourage all members to clear their plots of all rotting wood. These wood piles are a haven for rodents and fire ants. If you have a wood pile that you need help to clear, let me know and we can arrange to help at a work party.

I would like to add a special thank you to the following members who provided assistance with special projects as well as general maintenance and upkeep of the garden: **Frank Sartori, George Krastev, John Djuric, Javier Bernal, Alan Utok, Andrew Davis, Sharon Jackson, Ruth Siemers**

What kind of socks should you wear at BARAGA?  
*Garden hose.*

## Food Bank Donations: Looking Ahead to 2023

*by Monica Jones*



This year, we have continued to have a good working partnership with **Ryan's Rainbow Food Security**. They are very appreciative of all the produce we have donated and our switch to harvesting and pick up on Wednesday was helpful to them. They now distribute to more than 200 families. A team from Ryan's, headed by Teresa, attended our picnic this summer and got to meet many of you.



We have our own small and growing team that makes all this possible. Each season we are planting more in the orchard and we have members committed to harvesting on Wednesday mornings. If you need help harvesting on your plot and wish to donate, please let us know and we will do our best to help out. We have a member who supplies us with the boxes that we need each week and another member fills in to deliver our donations when Teresa is unable to come.

**West Coast Seeds and the Compost Council of Canada** also deserve a shout out for their annual seed donations. When you are thinking about your volunteer hours for 2023, and if you are available Wednesday mornings, please consider joining the Food Bank harvest team.

## Composting at BARAGA

*by Ann Talbot and Ramiro Coto*

As we try to maintain our **common compost piles**, we have noticed that more and more members are taking their compostable materials to these piles instead of composting on their own plot.

**Using BARAGA compost piles.** This means a couple of things:

- Some members are missing the opportunity to create healthy soil for their plots. By composting on their plot, they would be creating new nutrients, microorganisms and earthworms. Instead, when they remove all of their compostable material, their plot soil gets slowly drained, and low soil levels mean more flooding. This also means that (expensive) soil/manure is needed to replace the material lost to the compost pile, not to mention the hard labor involved in moving compost and soil back and forth.
- Good farmers don't ship their compost off to the dump or to another farm; they take care of this valuable resource and recycle it.
- We have an ever-growing pile of composting material to deal with in both the east and west areas; this requires rental of machinery (about \$500/visit) to move and turn the compost as well as hard work during work parties to maintain these piles.

**How to compost on your plot?** There are several possibilities:

- Create an area for composting. This could include cages, compost bins, wooden crates...whatever you feel can handle the space you've chosen. This compost should be maintained and/or can be buried when it has broken down.
- Bury your compost. At the end of the growing season, you will see several plots with large holes dug to bury the compost. This helps to

decompose the compost more quickly and by the time spring arrives, you will have some beautiful soil. Another option is to pile your compost over the winter to let it break down and then bury it in the spring. Below are a couple of pictures that show the before and after of the “dig and bury” method.



### **Worried about invasive weeds in your compost?**

Invasive weeds such as ivy, horsetail, creeping buttercup etc. can be killed before adding to the compost. Drowning, burning (by drying in the sun!) or choking are great ways to get your frustrations out on these nasty weeds! See this link for more ideas.

<https://www.epicgardening.com/composting-weeds/>

### **What about brown matter? Branches, canes, etc.**

These materials can also be composted but can take longer to compost. There are piles available for brown matter which we can chip through our relationship with arborists in the City. BARAGA is looking at buying a small chipper to help keep up with the chipping in the meantime.

### **Other Resources:**

<https://iwrc.uni.edu/5-reasons-farmers-should-compost>

<https://speedibin.com/blogs/joyce/5-ways-composting-helps-the-environment-and-your-soul>

*When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is*

*to pull on it.  
If it comes out of the ground easily, it was a  
valuable plant.*

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS: 2023 AGM

**WHEN?** Saturday, February 25, 2023

**WHERE?** Alan Emmott Centre, 6650 Southoaks Crescent, Burnaby

**WHY?** AGM decisions and time to meet friends and fellow gardeners!

We will send more details in the AGM notice coming in January.

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Eat, drink and be rosemary, Get a twiggle on, Turnip the volume, but most of all...Peas on Earth!

## Need to Contact BARAGA?

Do you have questions, comments, or concerns about matters related to BARAGA? You can reach out to the department you need to reach by visiting the [CONTACT](#) page on the BARAGA web site and filling out the form with the details of your inquiry.

Please keep in mind that directors are volunteers and your message will receive a response as soon as possible.

### CONTACT US



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