

## Spring Ahead!

March 2016

Volume 4, Issue 2

### Are you ready?

Did the last warm streak motivate you to get your seedlings started? Were you one of those who actually got out in the garden to see if the soil has thawed yet? I have to admit I was in one of my plots pulling out some plants that remained from last year. (But not one of the PPCG plots, mind you!)

A reminder that we will have a spring **All-Gardener's Meeting** on March 19th. The [Evite](#) has been sent - see the following article for details.

The good news is that we are receiving a ton of interest from folks wanting to join the gardening ranks at the PPCG. The problem is the only availability are GardenShare memberships at the Cornerstone site. But there is a lot of change pending there this year, so we're taking it step by step in 2016. More on that in the article below and at the Meeting.

Many people have been working behind the scenes to strengthen our operations. Our Gardeners Agreement will become a [Commitment Form](#) and a [Gardener Handbook](#). Both of those will be revealed at the Meeting along with the new Web site. And we are setting up teams to share the workload of maintaining our sites.

I have attended some strategy meetings about how we include healthy food and healthy living in the future plans for [Prospect Park 2020](#), especially the area north of University Avenue. Wow, where do I start—let's just say that we are well recognized for the contribution we have already made to the healthy lifestyle in our neighborhood.

So prepare yourself for the changes ahead as the vision for our Urban Agrihood becomes a reality. I'm excited to share more of this news with you at the All-Gardener's Meeting.

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### All-Gardeners Meeting - March 19th

The [Evite](#) for the meeting was sent on Friday, March 4th. 60% have viewed the invitation, but only 41% have RSVPed so please take a moment to RSVP. Space will be tight in the **Luxton Park Rec Center** Multipurpose Room so we really need to plan appropriately. Next year I hope to have the meeting in a larger room, none of which were available this year.

Once again, this is a **REQUIRED** meeting. If you are unable to attend please have someone attend on your behalf. It is a great opportunity to meet your fellow gardeners. We will unveil policy and procedure changes, discuss new projects, and answer questions on your "official" plot assignments. Everyone will be required to sign the new [Commitment Form](#) and Cornerstone gardeners need to sign an updated Memorandum of Understanding. In addition you can sign up for your service commitments there. So again, please RSVP to the [Evite](#) so that we can plan accordingly with space, numbers of copies of the materials to have on hand, etc..

### Plot Fees

Thanks to all of you for getting your plot fees in by March 1st. Surprisingly we had some plots turn over at Yale and Arthur, but they were quickly filled with gardeners who have been on the waiting list, some of them for up to three years. We still have a waiting list for Arthur and Yale, and now for raised beds at Cornerstone. The only availability is for GardenShare memberships at Cornerstone.

### New and Improved Web Site

We hope to cut over to the improved PPCG Web site on the [new platform](#) next week. Not only will the navigation be easier, it will better support the functionality we need to take the next step. The pages under [Member Information](#) will include signing up for [Garden Teams](#) and a [Volunteer Hours log](#). Kit and Kompany have done an absolutely fantastic job of building this out. They will also help with maintaining the [Facebook group](#). More on this at the All-Gardeners Meeting.

### Welcome to the New Gardeners!

See the article on Page 2.

### PicStrip (click to enlarge):



# PPCG NEWS—PAGE 2

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## Welcome New Gardeners!

We have been able to find space for the following new gardeners. Welcome aboard!

- Charles Lavin (Cornerstone)
- Cori Sherlock (Arthur)
- Jim Polakowski (Arthur)
- Jimmy Wu (Yale)
- Mike Robinson (Cornerstone)

## Service Projects

In 2016 we will be organizing around [Garden Teams](#) to handle the shared work of keeping our garden sites looking good and organization operating efficiently. We will make another run at composting and the food donation (garden gleaning) to make more progress there: these are two areas where we need to do much better. More on this at the All-Gardener's meeting. The teams you will be signing up for include:

- Composting (Organics Recycling)
- Food Donations (Garden Gleaning)
- Fundraising
- Site Leaders
- Technology
- Vacation Watering
- Administration

Click [HERE](#) for a description of the teams. The time spent on these projects will count towards the required service commitment.

## Big Changes at the Cornerstone Site

On February 6th 2016, The Cornerstone Group, current owners of the site where the PPCG Cornerstone community garden is located, informed me that there will be some stormwater system construction work taking place this year. They need to turn over a "clean site" to the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization (MWMO) for this work. As a result some soil remediation work will take place prior to the stormwater system construction. Both of these projects will have an impact on the location of some PPCG Cornerstone structures, including the raised beds, the hydroponics tables and rack, the dye garden, the new greenhouse, etc.

The soil remediation work will require that they excavate and remove three feet or more of soil from targeted areas of the community garden site. The Cornerstone Group has committed to backfilling any areas used by the garden, but in the meantime it will require that we move anything that sits on an area which will require soil excavation.

I am still waiting for an updated plan on what areas we need to clear, but the last plan I saw requires anything east of the center aisle to be moved and probably more. Sadly that includes all of the new raised beds we constructed last year. We are working on a map for where to move the beds. Our plan is to move the raised beds and the soil within them. We are hoping to present the plan and have a discussion about this at the Cornerstone site breakout at the All-Gardeners Meeting on March 19th.

## SGAD Flash Mob Workday

I am happy to announce that once again [Surly Gives A Damn](#) will be having a work day on April 16th for the PPCG projects. In addition to moving the raised beds and other structures at Cornerstone, they may help us build a community bed at the Arthur site. As with last year we'll have our hands full keeping up with them so I'm going to ask that the PPCG gardeners and volunteers give them the space to do their thing and we pull the PPCG ranks in for a work day at another time. Thanks just the same to those who have offered to be there. However I am looking for a handful of reliable PPCG folks who can act as leaders for each SGAD work team. If you fit that bill let me know.

The image displays five educational cards from the University of Minnesota Extension, arranged in a grid. Each card features a title, a small image, and the name of the preparer. The cards are:

- VGB 1: Getting Ready to Garden** - Prepared by: Dal Hampton, University of Minnesota Extension, Master Gardener Program - Hennepin County 2013. Image: A book cover titled 'WHAT DO PLANTS NEED TO GROW?'.
- VGB 2: Planting Your Garden** - Prepared by: Dal Hampton, University of Minnesota Extension, Master Gardener Program - Hennepin County 2013. Image: A garden path leading to a raised bed.
- VGB 3: Veggies One By One** - Prepared by: Mollie Dean, University of Minnesota Extension, Master Gardener Program - Hennepin County 2013. Image: A variety of fresh vegetables.
- VGB 4: Designing Your Garden** - Prepared by: Julie Davis, University of Minnesota Extension, Master Gardener Program - Hennepin County 2013. Image: A garden layout plan.
- VGB 5: Maintain Your Garden** - Prepared by: Mary Weisz, University of Minnesota Extension, Master Gardener Program - Hennepin County 2013. Image: A close-up of a garden bed.

At the bottom right of the grid is a large, stylized sun icon with a smiling face.