

# STONE SOUP NEWS



Summer 2010



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Garden Rules CMTG reported transferred to Parks Dept* **2-3**
- Town Hall Meeting* **4**
- Garden News Farming Concrete & Young Artists CMTG a Visit* **5**
- Notes and Deeds* **5**
- Thoughts and Ideas Black Farmers* **5**
- Evolution of a Garden* **6-7**
- CMTG Gardeners* **8-9**
- Gardeners Response to City 118 Street Festival* **10**
- Community and Quotes* **11**
- A Trip to ATL ACGA Conference* **12**

## Welcome to STONE SOUP NEWS.

This is a special extended issue due to recent matters concerning gardens and green spaces in NYC.

All gardeners and anyone who appreciated greenery in the concrete jungle should let your city officials know that we need these spaces in order to survive.

**Unity is the order of the day.**

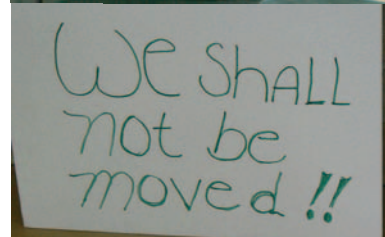


## CITY HOLDS PRESS CONFERENCE ON GARDEN RULES

Recently urban gardens took center stage as the clock ticked down on the 2002 Agreement that acknowledged the need for protecting citizen-managed green spaces. Land is a valuable commodity and its allocation is critical to the quality of life. In the hopes of saving our HPD held garden, We joined the New York City Community Gardens Coalition: whose Board took the lead in representing the position of community gardeners for preservation. Members attended meetings, rallies, and hearings; Steve joined the Board.

The (city office holders) were on a political time line to demonstrate that they had responded to the rising public demand that gardens must be preserved.

Rushing to show that some progress was being made



before the primary, the Parks Department held a press conference (held September 13th) to announce the new rules and receive a response from the Community Garden Coalition. Both the rules and the Coalition's response, presented by Haja Worley, are archived on our website [www.harlemgarden.org](http://www.harlemgarden.org).

It was evident that many of the officials had hoped for a ringing endorsement of the new rules from the Coalition; not that the rules were so bad, but we needed to understand the small print and raise questions on specific issues before giving an endorsement.

The focus of the gardening community now turns to analyzing the new rules, with legal counsel and planning for State-wide legislation at a Town Hall Meeting to be held on October 2, 2010 at the New School. We hope the Coalition will provide a bus to get more Harlem garden advocates to attend. (Pg 4)

At the same time we know that it was the State power, through the Office of Attorney General that made the





(left) Haja Worley presents Coalition response; State Senator Perkins spoke, and stated his intent to file a bill to increase state-wide protections for community gardens. Featured speakers, who were all supportive of the future of community gardening included Council Speaker Kathleen Quinn, City Council Parks Chair Melissa Mark-Viverito, Parks and Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe along with CMTCG members as well as representatives from other gardens. The garden recently purchased a membership in the New York Community Gardens Coalition; so that rotating members attending meetings will have a vote.



2002 “compromise” agreement, under which we’ve been operating. We basically have a strong Mayoral type of municipal government and do not want to have to go through this with each new administration. We have to strengthen the position of gardeners through legal changes that will last.

This should propel us to even greater accomplishments and support. Certainly, we have validated the faith of Mrs. Carrie McCracken and her supporters (from the late eighties) as well as, the youth and leaders of TRUCE (up to the turn of the century). We have proven WE

After three years of uncertainty regarding the future of our "Stone Soup" operating philosophy, has earned us a change of fortune. Steve Kidd recently received a congratulatory call from Edie Stone, Director of Green Thumb. She informed him that the Carrie McCracken TRUCE Garden had been heard by the City Administration; and would be transferred from HPD (Housing Development and Preservation) to the Parks Department for preservation as a Community Garden under the new Parks Department rules. This was a big step forward, validating the faith and efforts of CMTCG’s Steering Committee and supporters, to make the garden "a green and welcoming space" for the neighborhood. Other spaces that weren’t cared for were lost. Garden advocates; led by the Coalition and people speaking well of our efforts led to a concession.



CAN renew these lots as a resource for the whole neighborhood.

Members were urged to call 311 and leave a message for the Mayor to thank his administration, for giving our garden more permanence as a Parks Department community garden. We need to show the wisdom of that change by making our garden an even better example of community-managed green spaces, for the City of New York. But we haven’t received the notice yet.



[above] gardeners and concerned citizens attend hearings and testify regarding agreement. [ Left] members of CMTCG attend meeting at Chientell a Harlem Garden to discuss garden rules

# HELP SAVE OUR GREEN SPACES PRESERVE COMMUNITY GARDENS

The American Community Garden Association defines a community garden as "any piece of land gardened by a group of people." These spaces - peaceful enclaves where one can reconnect with their soil, food, and fellow gardeners - are meaningful across age groups and cultures, and serve as valuable assets for community identity. Healthy food production in community gardens is especially relevant today, when the number of New York City residents who rely on emergency food and lack access to affordable fresh produce in grocery stores is increasing. In the context of a dysfunctional food system, urban agricul-

Farming Concrete website

continued from previous page

When informed of this news, Laura Vural, former Director of TRUCE, who held on to the garden until community support emerged to take care of it, responded by email - "This is wonderful. As I have said so many times you were a God-send. Thank you for everything. Very busy now, but will try to come by. " "Peace"

Even though she has been promoted and reassigned within the HCZ organization, she has encouraged the renewal of "her" garden. Only two HPD gardens seem to have been given this liberating treatment; indicating our member's outreach, presence, and participation during the campaign paid off. CMTCG was represented by Ivy, Michelle, Roy, Mamie, Garland, Mother Jordan, Steve and Marilyn.

At the press conference. See the website for news clips of our members in action.

Like Jackie Robinson we aren't the best; yet, we're among those who can endure the tough times and keep to the winning strategy. We're on a mission for more Harlem gardens to be strengthened and created.

We are proud to have spoken up; and to have had friends who spoke up for us when we weren't there.



"Before and after Parks' public hearing in August, we were told that the proposed rules offered improved protections for gardens. Upon closer inspection, there were concerns that were brought up by our membership that needs to be addressed."

NYCCGC President Karen Washington (pictured standing right)



# NEW YORK CITY COMMUNITY GARDEN COALITION (NYCCGC)

## TO CONVENE TOWN HALL MEETING TO DISCUSS

### CITY'S NEW RULES AND THE FUTURE OF NYC'S COMMUNITY GARDENS

*Environmental Justice Experts to Provide Analysis of Pending*

*"New Rules" for NYC's Community Gardens and*

*Share Insights Into Strategies for Long-Term Preservation and Legislation;*

*Open Community Q & A to Follow*

**Event Date: Saturday - October 2, 2010**

**Location: The New School - Wollman Hall, 66 W. 12th St, 5th Floor**

**Time: 12:00pm - 4:00pm**

**Info / Website: [www.NYCCGC.org](http://www.NYCCGC.org)**

**Email: [United@NYCCGC.org](mailto:United@NYCCGC.org)**

**Contact: Vandra Thorburn (718) 623-2515**

**NEW YORK** On October 2, 2010, the New York City Community Garden Coalition will convene a Town Hall Meeting to discuss the recently published "new rules" for community gardens on City land set to go into effect on October 13, 2010, as well as look to alternative legal strategies for long-term preservation.

While media reports have characterized the Coalition's opinion of the rules as favorable, NYCCGC has officially held comment, and has been meeting with Coalition members, conferring with other other greening groups, and consulting with legal experts to fully assess the scope and impact of the recently updated rules.

On the morning of August 10, NYCCGC rallied supporters outside the City's public hearing concerning the new rules, before helping fill the Chelsea Recreation Center's gymnasium to overflow capacity. Over 300 garden devotees shared their passion as well as their consternation at the then-proposed rules, positively influencing the rules recently published and praised by the City's Department of Parks and Recreation. While NYCCGC had originally been involved with the drafting of the new rules, negotiations eventually broke off, leaving the Coalition and its allies frustrated.

**"We held comment on the new rules for a reason," says NYCCGC President Karen Washington. "The far-reaching impact of these rules is not something to be taken lightly, and needs to be analyzed thoroughly. While we appreciate that steps in the right direction have been made, there are still some serious concerns that need to be addressed before we claim victory for the City's community gardeners."**

**12:00pm - 2:00pm:** The first half of the Town Hall meeting will include an introduction to the current state of community garden affairs, followed by analysis of the new rules governing community gardens on city-owned land by several experts in the field of environmental justice. The discussion will conclude with comments from invited greening groups, and an open question & answer session.

**2:00pm - 4:00pm:** The second half of the event will be devoted to looking above and beyond the new rules: the pervasive sentiment, shared by supporters including City Council Speaker Christine Quinn, Parks and Recreation Committee Chair Melissa Mark-Viverito, and Christina Grace of the NYS Office of Community Gardens, is that true permanency for the gardens lies in legislation. Several legal strategies will be discussed; the Coalition is urging all elected local and state representatives with an interest in this important environmental justice issue to attend.

### CMTGARDENING NEWS...



Steve visited the garden at Lincoln Housing this past spring to reshift flowers and lend some support to fellow gardeners. Eartha (left) and Thelma (right) are the caretakers of the Glory Garden. They would like for area youth to become more involved, We will help.

[right]Young Woman's Leadership School & Big City Walls came by in July and painted three boards.



The theme was garden nurturing, mother nature, females in community development and empowerment. The new artwork will be installed in the garden. The project is in collaboration with Paula Coleman and Renaissance Fine Arts, local gallery support from <http://www.therfagallery.com/>. Gallery also interested in hosting a small community party to celebrate the installation of the project. Amelia Wiles Carolina Diaz and Lady K Fever; great artists and mentors brought the visions of youth back into the garden.



We had a visit from Ricky and Susan of Farming Concrete a volunteer, citizen science project to measure how much food is grown in New York City's community gardens.



Calculating the area, weight, and monetary value of food grown in these spaces to enhance the perceived value and legitimacy of community gardens as a public land use in

New York City. Many gardeners were suspicious of the effort because statistics are usually used to cut not enhance services. But next year we will seek to add this data collection to our member duties. Record keeping is a good business practice. No one knows just how much food these gardens are growing. That is what this project seeks to measure. See <http://farmingconcrete.com/>

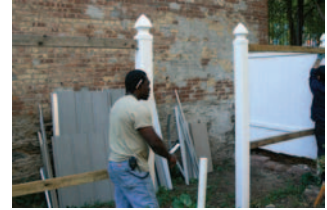


**Abdul Kareem Muhammad**, a community leader, working to improve conditions between the police and youth on the streets of Harlem, He planted some Sunflowers after speaking at the May Pablo David Memorial. He also believes that gardens need to play a role in the struggle to Save our youth from the streets.

### NOTES AND DEEDS

#### APPRECIATION AND THANKS GO OUT TO:

Mike for fixing the tarp on the awning, also for co-building the shed with John.



Senator Perkins (the only Harlem politician who took the time to appear at the Press conference).

Georgia for their southern hospitality. Hosting ACGA 2010 conference. New York's turn is next.

All gardeners who contributed pictures and content to this issue.

To all gardeners and non-gardeners for cooperation in making the garden a viable entity in the community.

Congratulations to gardeners who had a good harvest this season.

Haja Worley for speaking on behalf of all gardens in NYC. At Parks press conference.

This fall the garden has to be prepared for the winter. The garden shouldn't be neglected just because it's turning to forest grey.

### THOUGHTS IDEAS AND INFO



Farmers are an endangered species, especially black farmers.

After years of discrimination from the USDA regarding loans they took the agency to court. The Pigford v. Glickman case was settled 11 yrs ago. According to Federal terms dating back to 1999 qualified farmers could receive 5 billion dollars which works out to

50,000 per farmer. However, they have yet to receive this money as it has to be voted on in the Senate. Demopulicans go at each other tossing the decision in each other court delaying the disbursement of these badly needed funds. Some farmers have been waiting at least 20 years for compensation and need this money to save their land. If they can bail out Wall St.

and Banks why can't they come to a vote. It's simple.

WE CAN HELP—call your state senators Schumer and Gilibrand. Tell them to vote for the funds to be dispersed to the black farmers by the end of September.

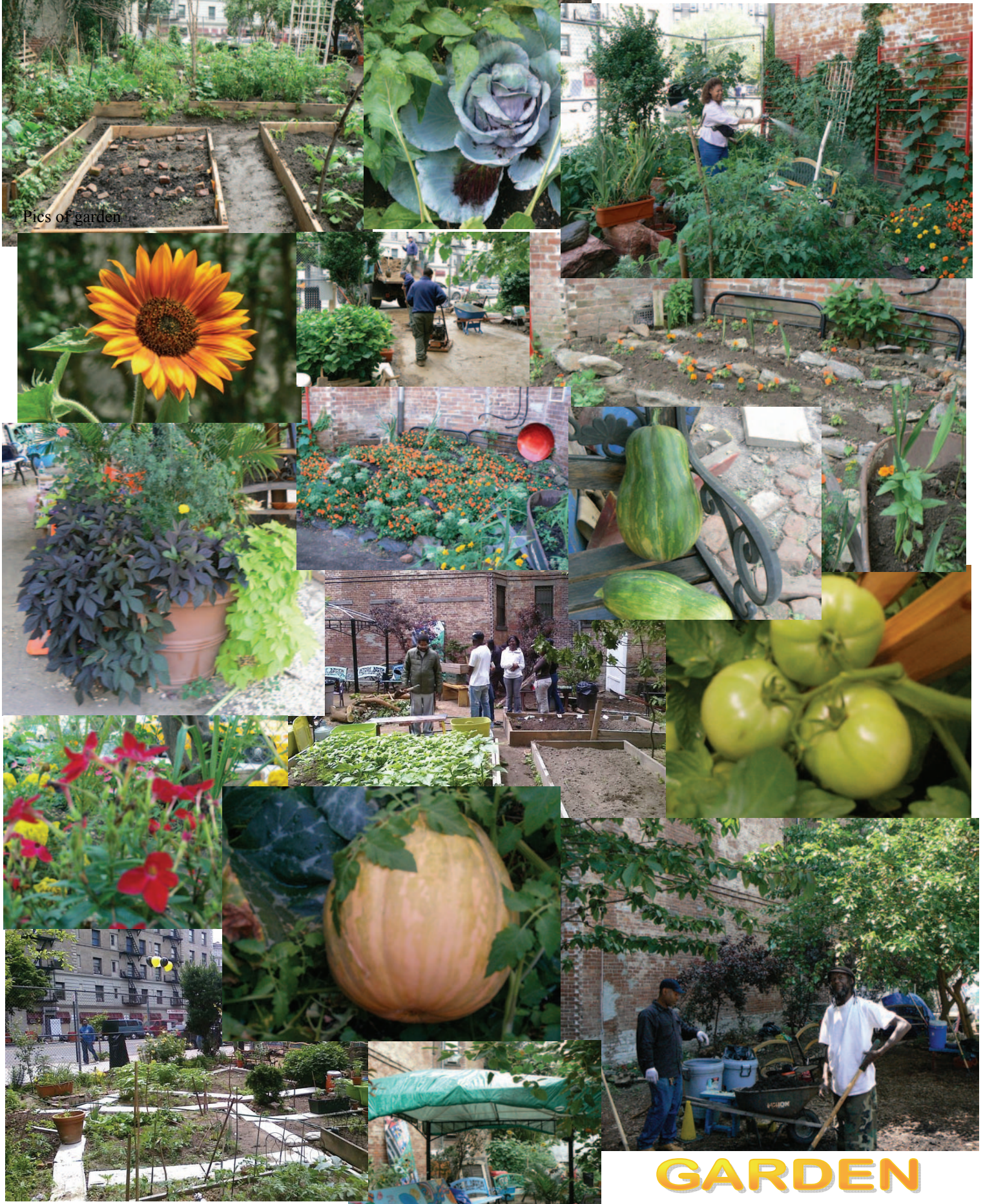
**NATIONAL BLACK FARMERS ASSOCIATION**

**WWW.BLACKFARMERS.ORG**

"If we build it they will come".



# EVOLUTION OF A



Pics of garden

# GARDEN

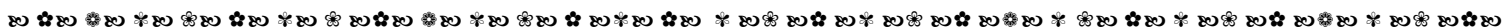
\*\*\*\*\*  
 \* **“STONE SOUP” Diversity In Our Garden** \*  
 \* \*\*\*\*\*



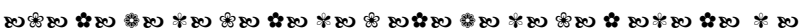
**TEENA**—is a founding member of CMTG. Her parents and great-grandmother were gardeners. She lived on a farm when she was five years old and remembers picking cotton, milking the cows, fresh churned butter, garden fresh vegetables, cherry and peach trees. Long hot days, the coolness of the earth. She liked getting her hands dirty, sitting and listening to her elders as they snapped the beans. She has always been fascinated with earth, God’s planet, “He put everything that we need here. She is sorry we have lost what the ancestors knew about medicinal herbs. She remembers holding an unborn egg, she believes children who are exposed to something like that have a better appreciation of how nature works. She is a leading member of the Canaan Baptist Church; giving many hours to the maintenance of that vital community institution.



**DEREK** is one of our original members of the garden. In fact he was in the garden when Ms. McCracken tended it. He said he would help her out once in a while. Derek grew up in Harlem and still lives here. His rose bush is the talk of the garden and gets a lot of attention from passersby. He was very generous this season and gave out some cuttings as he was pruning, his pride and joy. We hadn’t seen him for a while, the roses bloomed just in time for his return. He planted it last season. Derek plans to add two more Rose bushes to the gar-



New members **MIKE** and **MAMIE** joined Carrie McCracken (Truce) Community Garden in May 2010. Mike is a long time gardener from Liberia, West Africa. Mamie is a first time gardener from Brooklyn, NY. They both reside in Harlem. In their 2 planting plots, they have planted okra, tomatoes, cucumbers, collard greens, eggplant, and peppers which has grown beautifully. They look forward to many planting seasons to come and working with the other members to continue making Carrie McCracken a great community garden. Several great friends have been drawn to the garden by this great couple’s presence.



**ILA** has held the first box position well, with a fantastic veggie display. Daughter and Daddy (have been by more often too this year.

We wish them luck with their home search; but we don’t want them to forget their garden, here.



# Never Give Up—Garden Members Reaction to Parks Decision

Garden Co-Contact **Marta Dansie** wrote: I am overjoyed that our efforts are being recognized. This transfer lets us dream about the future and will inspire us to work even harder to offer welcoming green space for our community.

The strength of our community spirit and our desire for workable green spaces in our neighborhood, led us to work hard to preserve our garden land. To know that our garden is finally officially protected under Parks gives me an overwhelming sense of happiness. I am so thankful for all of the friendships, food and beauty that have grown out of this endeavor. It is truly a remarkable day. **Michelle Jackson**

**Ivy Walker** also stated; "...We are happy to announce that we are now under the Parks Department. We are proud of our garden and will do our best to make it an example in the neighborhood." Ivy got to give a brief lesson on cooking Collards over NY1 a treat we've received from her and our garden many times.

While new member **Garland Roberts** pointed out to a reporter that, we are looking for even stronger protections; a feisty **Marilyn Moseley** told the Daily News " I was nervous, and I was prepared for a good fight. I'm glad somebody came to their senses and understood that green spaces are important."

Attendance at Coalition meetings and events paid off when we were the thin green line.



**Have Garden, Will Travel**

Contact  
www.harlemgarden.org




I came  
I saw  
I harvested

at the  
118th Street  
Festival  
Harlem, NY

September 18, 2010

# Sunflower Harvest



Neighborhood kids had a great time harvesting seeds from sunflowers at the 1st Annual 118th Street Festival. We had a table where kids harvested Sunflower seeds for next year's planting..

Once again Michelle gave us an opportunity to interface the garden with the wider Neighborhood.

They made it all about the children and proud parents on 118th.



COMMUNITY & QUOTES

**CARRIE McCracken TRUCE  
COMMUNITY GARDEN**  
143-145 ST NICHOLAS AVENUE @ 117TH ST  
HARLEM, NEW YORK, NY 10027  
P.O. BOX 1428

**CONTACTS:**

STEVEN KIDD (212) 662 9557

OR

email at: nybigbob48@aol.com

MARTA DANSIE email at:

marta@harlemgaden.org


**WE HAVE A WEBSITE!**  
**WWW.HARLEMGARDEN.ORG**



**CARRIE McCracken  
TRUCE COMMUNITY  
GARDEN**

In our struggle between the "haves" and the "have-nots," they want to keep the poor divided - and we have to insist, by our words and our actions, that there is no difference between us.  
As we move forward together, I urge you to remember this Life is a grindstone. But whether it grinds us down or polishes us up, depends on us.  
Thank you for all you are doing to challenge poverty and racism. I look forward to working and struggling right by your side.

Shirley Sherrod



I love when I plant them. I plant different kinds of flowers.”

Naomi—age 4  
interviewed at the Pablo David Memorial Sunflower Planting

STONE SOUP NEWS  
Edited by  
Marilyn Moseley &  
Steven Kidd  
Newsletter designed by  
M. Moseley  
Photography by  
various contributors  
*Please address your comments  
and future contributions to*  
**stonesoupnews117@yahoo.com**  
*Marilyn Moseley via email:*

comm nity

It doesn't work until **U** get in the middle  
of things



commUnity

## MY TRIP TO THE ATL by Steve Kidd

Each year The American Community Garden Association (ACGA) sponsors a conference providing fresh dining, local entertainment, and workshops.

This year the conference was held in Atlanta, Ga. It was superb. I went on a scholarship available to gardeners through Green Thumb.. For \$200. we Got a mega deal.

The bus was loaded with gardening talent as many NYCCG and other local garden advocacy organizations were aboard.

The ticket included bus fare, room,, meals, shuttle service, and workshops, it was a great educational vacation. ATL was hot and teaming with gardeners from 37 states. It was



meet, greet, share, and learn by the minute the whole time.

The meals were excellent and healthy.

They served fried green tomatoes the first night that were so good; I can't get them out of my mind. I'm hoping and waiting to see who'll leave some in the garden!

The highlight of the conference: trips to dozens of urban gardens of all classifications, sponsorship, and sophistication. My list of contacts will take at least a month to get through: and the suggested ideas years to try out.

Next year the conference will be hosted by New York. Get in touch with Green Thumb Director, Edie Stone if you can volunteer to help take up the challenge to match Atlanta's great hosting.

Among the personal highlights a walk back through historic black Atlanta to the MLK Jr. memorial. A pilgrimage, that is a must for any activist.

Certainly all is not perfect in Atlanta nor anywhere else for that matter, But ATL pulled together

and showed their gardening city off well.

And it was great be surrounded by so many others improving their communities by operating green spaces. just like we do. We do, we learn, we do more.

There are more of us, than you might think, looking out from your plot on a hot afternoon. We are the World !!



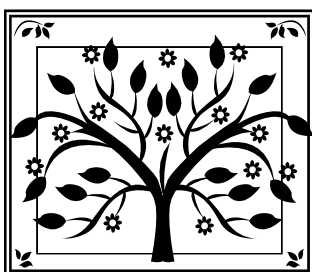
### CMTCG—MEMBERSHIP PARTICIPATION

CMTCG Membership-

Requires attendance at least two meetings which are held on the second Saturday of every month @ 12pm in the garden or at an available site TBD for inclement weather. Eight hours of service in the garden. Signature on the pre-amble.

To Plant-

Seasonal fee is \$20.00—this includes a box, some seeds( if you want the variety we have on hand) place on the steering committee which enables you to vote.



Boxes are assigned on a first come first serve basis. You can sign a waiting list. Should someone drop out or not tend their garden for at least two weeks, then that box becomes available.

If you cannot afford the fee, you can still participate in group planting, or the Market Garden Club. We can find a way; for a willing worker to have space to grow. For participation in a group or activity talk with a contact. (pg6)

We need members to attend Green Thumb classes in order to acquire supplies for themselves as well as the garden.

[www.greenthumb.org](http://www.greenthumb.org)

Children are welcome but not allowed to

be in the garden without adult supervision, meaning parents and teachers are responsible for their welfare while in the garden.

No pets are allowed to live in the garden. Smoking is discouraged, and no personal items stored.

Members presence in the garden is needed in order to make it accessible to the public. Activities in the garden are open to the public. (Except private events)

WE WILL APPRECIATE AND ACCEPT ANY DONATIONS OF CURRENCY, ITEMS FOR AND OR TIME TO THE GARDEN. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING YOUR SERVICES TO THE GARDEN AS A MEMBER OR JUST WANT TO LEND A HAND. GET IN TOUCH WITH STEVE, MICHELLE, IVY, OR MARTA.

STONE SOUP INVITES ANYONE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THIS NEWSLETTER- JUST SEND US AN EMAIL. DON'T BE AFRAID TO COME IN AND ASK QUESTIONS AND ENJOY THE SPACE.

**NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!**