



NEIGHBORHOOD GARDENS ASSOCIATION

A Philadelphia Land Trust
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Well-Preserved

Newsletter of the
Neighborhood Gardens Association/
A Philadelphia Land Trust

Preserving community-managed green spaces since 1986

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Our Mission

The Neighborhood Gardens Association / A Philadelphia Land Trust (NGA) is a private nonprofit corporation founded in 1986. Its mission is to ensure the continuity and long-term preservation of community-managed gardens and green spaces in Philadelphia neighborhoods.

Spring is here and gardening is in full-swing. NGA continues its work preserving community-managed gardens and green spaces around Philadelphia and, through our strategic planning efforts, determining the future role of the organization in the city.

We have exciting summer plans! For our twentieth anniversary, and to share our new solar energy systems, NGA and the gardeners will hold **Solar Sun*day in the Garden** at Aspen Farms in June. Visitors can get a first-hand look at the solar system while enjoying the beauty of this award-winning community garden. On the first official days of summer, NGA will be the recipient of **Borders Benefit Days**. You can use your NGA coupons to shop at Borders stores. You'll get 10% off and NGA will receive a 10% donation. In July, **The White Dog Café** will host an NGA community garden trolley tour, which includes a light breakfast before and lunch at the café after visiting several of the gardens. NGA is thrilled to have the support of these two businesses.

Finally, we're throwing ourselves a **20th Birthday Party** at Southwark Queen Village on **July 21st** (the actual date of NGA's incorporation) from 4 to 7 PM. Come and try your luck at our now-famous raffle, and help us celebrate with cake in the garden!

Read on for more information.
See you in the garden!



Young gardener at
Glenwood Green Acres

CONTACT NGA

For information on preserving a Philadelphia community garden or contributing to NGA:

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More announcements...

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Solar Sun*day at Aspen Farms: Sunday, June 18th from 2 to 4PM. Come check-out the new solar system and enjoy the garden. 49th and Aspen Streets.

Borders Benefit Days for NGA! Shop at select Borders locations on June 22, 23, and 24. You'll get 10% off and Borders will donate 10% of your purchase amount to NGA. Use coupons included here or on our website. Thank you!

White Dog Café Neighborhood Tour of NGA Gardens: Saturday July 8th at 8:30 AM. Includes coffee and breakfast breads, trolley tour, and lunch at the Café all for \$45. White Dog will donate a portion of the proceeds to NGA. Call 215-386-9224 for registration and details.

Happy 20th NGA! Friday, July 21st from 4 to 7PM. Come celebrate 20 years of preserving community green spaces. Raffle, refreshments, and birthday cake at Southwark Queen Village Garden, 3rd and Christian Streets. RSVP 215-988-8797.

Flea Market Days at Hansberry Garden & Nature Center, 2nd Saturday of the month, May through September. Rent a table for \$10 and sell your stuff to raise money for your garden. Wayne Avenue and Hansberry Street. Call Dorothy Hannibal at 215-438-9190.

www.ngalandtrust.org

SPOTLIGHT ON: *Solar Energy*

This issue's Spotlight focuses on solar energy systems installed at two NGA gardens.

Two award-winning community gardens in Philadelphia neighborhoods have chosen to go solar with their energy systems in order to conserve energy, be environmentally friendly, and reduce expenses. The gardens are Aspen Farms Community Garden at 49th and Aspen Streets in West Philadelphia and the Southwark Queen Village Community Garden at 3rd and Christian Streets in South Philadelphia. Solar energy contractors installed clean-running, state-of-the-art systems, which were paid for by Neighborhood Gardens Association donors with grants from the Office of Housing and Community Development and several foundations.



A solar-powered pump maintains the pond at Aspen Farms



View south at Southwark Queen Village Garden



Solar panels installed on the shed at Aspen Farms

The gardens have installed "grid-connected photovoltaic systems". These solar systems use panels of photovoltaic cells, which directly convert sunlight into electricity. Also called grid interface systems, they supply surplus power back through the grid to the utility, and take from the utility grid when the system's power supply is low. In addition, the gardens participate in "net metering", which allows the gardeners to sell excess solar power back to PECO. The gardeners have chosen solar energy because it is non-polluting and renewable, extremely reliable, silent, and low-maintenance, and it requires no special training to operate. Power is used at the gardens to run lights and other ongoing electrical needs, some gardening tools, equipment, and for special events.



Learn about other NGA gardens on our website: www.ngalandtrust.org

GARDEN UPDATES

Borders Benefit Days June 22, 23, and 24

Borders has selected NGA to be the recipient of *Borders Benefit Days* in June. Use the Borders coupon included here and bring it to participating Borders stores on **June 22, 23, or 24**. You'll get 10% off your purchase and Borders will donate 10% of your final purchase amount to NGA. Coupons are also on our website at www.ngalandtrust.org. If you don't have access to the internet please call us and we'd be happy to mail you some. Shop at Center City, Chestnut Hill, Bryn Mawr and Wynnewood locations. Give coupons to your friends, fellow gardeners, fellow book-lovers. ***Note: If you print-out or copy coupons, they must be on white paper only.** Please support NGA and thanks!



Church Lane Garden

Chris and Helen Nicholson, Garden Coordinators

One of the biggest pleasures of this work is the people that you meet in the gardens. They are all ages, races, and cultural backgrounds, but they all have one thing in common – a willingness to give of their time to make their communities greener places to live and work.

Chris and Helen Nicholson are examples of this dedication. They have been married for 56 years and raised four children in Germantown. In the 1960s, The Redevelopment Authority acquired and demolished the 200 block of East Church Lane in order to build the Belfield Bypass. Neighbors fought the project and won, only to be left with vacant land that became a dumping ground for trash. In 1978, the Nicholsons and their neighbors decided to use the land for a community garden. The PHS Philadelphia Green program supplied fencing, tools, and soil, and the neighbors cleared the lot and began gardening there. Nine years later, the RDA put the garden up for sale. The gardeners approached the newly-formed

NGA for help saving Church Lane Garden. NGA and the gardeners negotiated a 10-year mortgage with RDA to buy the land for \$11,000. The mortgage was paid off in nine years and the garden is now permanently preserved.

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Today, the Church Lane Garden has eighteen gardeners as diverse as its Germantown neighborhood. One of the Nicholson's daughters and her husband are active in the garden as well, making it a family tradition. Each year high school students from the Germantown Friends School spend a day in the garden helping to get it ready for spring. Several years ago, they built a wall along Church Lane with broken pieces of the old sidewalk that was being replaced. The wall still stands and is a lovely border for the garden.

The White Dog Café partners with NGA

In honor of NGA's twentieth anniversary year, **The White Dog Café** will hold a community tour of NGA gardens on **Saturday, July 8th** starting at 8:30 AM. Tickets are \$45 and include coffee and muffins, a motorized trolley tour to some of the gardens and lunch at the café. The tour will be led by NGA's Executive Director Terry Mushovic. The White Dog will donate a portion of your purchase price to NGA for community green space preservation. For details and to buy tickets, call the café at **215-386-9224** or go to **whitedogcafe.com**. We hope you'll come!