



July 2025 Newsletter

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Ice Cream Social!
Wednesday, July 23rd, 6-8PM

Ben Franklin Community Garden
1981 - 2021

50/50 Raffle!

hot dogs, brats, chips & drinks for sale!

Ice cream is provided at no cost to gardeners & their family members

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Looking for Volunteer Tasks You Can Do on Your Own?

Several gardeners have asked about work outside of scheduled events. Starting soon, we'll post **current task suggestions** on the **shed door by the logbook**—just look for the checklist!

In the meantime, here are a few ideas

from Sam that you can take on now:

- Remove vines from the alleyway fence and cut mulberry saplings (avoid the poison ivy near the yellow garage)
- Remove saplings growing along the Tampa fence
- Weed and water the perennial beds (around the shed and bee cage)
- Weed chickweed-like plants from the pollinator habitat
- Sweep leaves and debris around the shed
- Relocate the stockpile next to the metal container into the woods
- Remove old strings and rebar along the Tampa fence
- Patrol the grass pathway for stray hoses and move them aside

Group Work Days

Join us for our **monthly garden upkeep meet-ups**—no advance sign-up required. Come for whatever time you can spare:

- **Sunday, August 24** · 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.
- **Saturday, September 20** · 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

If you've signed up for a **season-long task** on your own schedule, thank you! We ask that you try to stay consistent—and if something changes or becomes difficult, please let us know so we can support you.

And one last thing:

Please remember to log all volunteer hours in the book at the shed, under the main gardener's name. Every hour helps us track and celebrate your contribution!

New messaging platform

GroupMe garden alerts

Stay in the loop with GroupMe!

We've launched a messaging tool to communicate announcements and reminders quickly and efficiently — straight to your phone.

Two easy ways to join:

1. Use the app:

- Download the **GroupMe app** (free on iOS/Android).
- Tap this link to join:
 https://groupme.com/join_group/107762855/Br1qpc9T
- Make sure to **enable notifications** so you don't miss anything!

2. Without the app:



- o You can join the group and **get messages as regular texts** (SMS).
- o Just tap the same link above, enter your mobile number, and follow the prompts.
- o You'll receive our announcements as simple text messages—no app required.

□ **A few notes:**

- GroupMe is completely free to use—there's no cost to download or participate, and no in-app purchases required.
- This is an **announce-only group**—only Garden Committee members can post.
- Messages are for essential info only—no clutter, no group replies.
- If you have a question or want help signing on, just reach out to a committee member or email us at grow@benfranklincommunitygarden.org.

□ Thanks for staying connected to keep the garden running smoothly!



Pictured: 2022 BFCG blue ribbon

County Fair update — Want to help with our entry?

The **Cuyahoga County Fair** is just around the corner! If you'd like to help design and assemble our garden's entry (think: fun volunteer hours!), join us for a **quick planning meeting immediately following the Ice Cream Social on Wednesday, July 23 at 8:00 p.m.**

Can't make the meeting but still interested—or have ideas to share? Reach out to committee leads **Rick Gall** and **George Rouse** at □

grow@benfranklincommunitygarden.org

They'll also be putting out a call for **fresh produce from our plots** to feature in the display. So keep an eye out—Saturday, Aug. 2nd is the likely date for contributions.

Rule Reminder — #1

21. Gardeners should compost organic material within their plot throughout the season (see Garden Coordinator for instructions). Diseased and infected plants should be removed from the Garden and disposed of properly. Gardeners may also choose to bag and remove organic waste. It is the responsibility of the Gardener to remove all garden waste and trash from the Garden premises. Gardeners may not put anything in compost bins.

Don't Trash It — Compost It!

Easy Ways to Compost in Your Garden Plot

Want to improve your garden's soil and cut down on waste? Try composting right in your own plot! It's simpler than you might think, and there are several methods to fit your style.

End-of-Season Tip

At the end of the season, you don't need to remove vegetation or organic material from your garden—in fact, it's better if you don't. Leaving plant matter helps return nutrients to the soil.

- **Flowers:** Leave them standing to support pollinators.
- **Other vegetation:** Cut stalks, vines, and debris into pieces under 2 feet and spread them evenly across your plot. That's all there is to it!



Ways to compost

- **Pit or trench:** Dig 12–14 inches deep where you have space, add weeds and chopped debris, then cover with soil.
- **Garbage bag:** Fill with weeds and other “green” materials, plus some “browns” like paper, straw, or dry leaves, and a little soil. Shake and open it often for air. Double-bagging helps; biodegradable bags may not hold up.
- **Bin or box:** You're making a compost pile—just a tidier one. Layer browns, greens, and a bit of soil. Keep it moist and turn weekly. Your bin can be open at the bottom or not, built from repurposed materials or framed with chicken wire or hardware cloth.
- Great ideas abound online. Reach out to Greg—he'll be happy to help you get started!

Note on shared compost bins

They're for garden-wide projects only—please don't add your own plot waste. And never compost diseased plants; toss them in the dumpster instead.

Have you noticed the bin outside the (north) gate?

That's our **community compost bin**—and yes, you're welcome and encouraged to use it!

It's there for **approved compostables only** (check the list below and posted by the bin). It's *not* for trash. It's *not* for recyclables. And please—don't dump your garden weeds.

Lately, volunteers have spent way too much icky time sorting junk from usable compost gunk. (Spoiler: that's not the fun part of gardening.) So when in doubt, leave it out—and help keep the compost clean and useful.

Thanks for being a tidy composter!

Composting Guide

Yes!

Greens and Browns

Greens are quick to rot and provide important nitrogen and moisture. **Browns** are typically slower to rot, but provide fiber and carbon and also allow important air pockets to form in the mixture.

- Fruit peels
- Vegetable peels
- Rotted fruits and veggies
- Coffee grounds and filters
- Egg shells
- Tea bags (non silk)
- Nuts and nut shells (absolutely no walnuts)
- Small white and brown paper scraps (in small amounts only)
- Paper bags (brown or white only)
- Newspaper
- Fall leaves
- Seaweed
- Human hair

No!

Do not include:

Putting these items in bin can encourage unwanted pests and can also create odor.

- Weeds
- Yard waste (due to chemicals)
- Dairy
- Bread
- Oils
- Plastics
- Animal products
- Metals

Another (Don't Be *That Gardener*) Friendly Reminder

Our volunteer mowers are doing their best to keep things trimmed and tidy—but they're running into trouble. Literally.

Please **keep your hoses out of the way of the mowers**. Hoses slow down the job and risk damage to equipment (and your stuff!).

Let's all help by keeping paths clear and gear tucked away. Thanks for being a good garden neighbor!

Rule Reminder — #2

*17. Garden paths must be kept free and clear of all obstacles (i.e., **hoses**, tools, wagons, wheelbarrows, etc, including your plants). **Hoses** must be run along paths (not through other plots), disconnected and properly stored after use. Unattended watering is not permitted. Any personal supplies/implements (hoses, tools, sprinklers, etc.) must be stored within one's plot. Neither OBCDC nor the Garden Staff are responsible for tools or personal property left unattended on the premises.*



An evening dedicated to ART in the neighborhood

Friday August 1st from 5-9:00 p.m. neighborhood galleries and businesses will be open and bringing you creative events!

The event highlights the growing creative sector in Old Brooklyn, that

now has three dedicated art galleries, as well as multiple other area businesses that will feature creative events and/or products. We're hosting a **mini art fair at the Garden** featuring some of our own gardeners!

Check [online](#) for the most up-to-date list of participating businesses and events including a scavenger hunt with prizes!

Program change

August 2nd: Creating Lewis

Creating Lewis, featuring Kyla Burks, blends avant-pop, neo soul and musical theatre to investigate collective care, systems of power, authentic wholeness and radical love. Come hear this 4-piece ensemble with guitar, piano, drums and vocals.



First and Third SATURDAYS • 6 p.m.

JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT.
7 & 21	5 & 19	2 & 16	6 & 20

Garden Operating Committee Monthly Meetings

Your Garden Operating Committee meets year round! Unless otherwise indicated, committee meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at

Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation
4274 Pearl Road, rear entrance.

All gardeners and members of the public are welcome to attend!



Ben Franklin Community Garden

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A program of
Old Brooklyn Community Development Corp.

communications@benfranklincommunitygarden.org

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