



June 2025 Newsletter

Summer's here—and it's not shy. Gardeners, please stay cool out there!

For your plants:

- Water in the morning or evening
- Skip the leaf-sprinkling
- Don't overdo it—established plants can handle a little dry time

For you:

- Light clothes
- Lots of water
- Shade breaks = smart breaks

In this issue:

- New volunteer opportunities
- Garden closing time
- Garden etiquette
- Time is money—and then some
- Ice Cream Social
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Coming soon: We hope to announce a new messaging app to help keep you informed and in the loop.



Volunteer days added

We need a crew to tackle the alleyway—our service lane won't stay serviceable for long without some attention. Join us on **Wednesday, June 25, from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m.** (Come for any part of that time you can manage.)

Note: A large tree limb came down during the recent storm and is currently blocking the alley. That removal will be handled separately—it's *not* part of this cleanup event, but we'll keep you posted on when and how that gets addressed.

Looking ahead, we're scheduling a few **additional volunteer dates** for general upkeep

and routine tasks—no doubt including more alley work! No advance sign-up needed, and, once again, please come for whatever time you can spare.

- Thursday, July 17, from 5:30–8:00 p.m.
- Sunday, August 24, from 10 a.m.–2:00 p.m.
- Saturday, September 20, from 10 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

A big thank you to those who've taken on season-long tasks and are working on their own schedules. Your quiet consistency will make a big difference.

Reminder: Please record all volunteer hours in the **volunteer logbook at the garden**, under the main gardener's name. Every hour helps us track and celebrate your contributions!

A Friendly Reminder About Garden Closing Time (Don't Be That Gardener)

We kindly ask all gardeners to respect the posted garden closing time. Lately, a few folks have been arriving just before closing or have been tempted to sneak in "just one quick thing" right before the gates lock. We get it—just one more weed to pull, one more tomato to stake. While we understand how easy it is to lose track of time, it's important to be considerate of the closer who is responsible for locking up. Our closers (whether staff or volunteers) are generous with their time, but they're not enchanted gnomes—they have evenings to get to, too! So please be kind and pack it up before closing time. It's one of the simplest ways to show respect for the people who help keep our garden thriving. Thank you for your cooperation!

Community Garden = Community of Gardeners

Our garden is shared space—and courtesy is crucial. This reminder has been shared before and may sound old hat or even a little preachy, but like a well-tended bed, it's worth revisiting: if we want a positive, productive, and enjoyable season, we all need to be mindful of one another.

Respect the resources.

Beyond the land itself, tools, water, and other shared items are communal resources. Courtesy means using them responsibly and fairly. That includes following garden guidelines, being mindful of others' needs, and not monopolizing or misusing what's available.

Good Neighbor Policy.

For the benefit of your neighboring gardeners—and everyone else—good order is in order. Courtesy means maintaining your plot (yes, that includes weeds), keeping to your own space, cleaning up after yourself, and following agreed-upon rules for both individual and common areas. It all adds up to a garden that's pleasant and productive for all.

(What's So Funny 'Bout) Peace, Love, and Understanding?

Courtesy also means consideration. Gardeners come from different backgrounds, with different needs and challenges. Respecting these differences—and communicating with kindness—helps us solve problems instead of escalating them. If something comes up, rely on your

Coordinator or a Committee member for support. We're here to help the garden run smoothly, not stressfully.

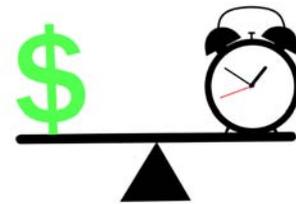
Grow relationships.

A little kindness goes a long way. Offer guidance, lend a hand, share what you know. The courtesy you show builds connection, encourages mutual respect, and helps everyone feel welcome. When we look out for each other, we all grow more than just vegetables.

Your hours or your dollars

What's an hour of your volunteer time worth?

According to [Independent Sector](#), the estimated value of a volunteer hour in 2023 is **\$33.49 nationally** and **\$31.18 in Ohio**. At BFCG, we use **\$25/hour** as our benchmark when calculating donation equivalents for time given.



But let's be honest—**your time is priceless**. Every hour you spend helping in the garden strengthens our community and keeps this space thriving. We can attach a number to it, sure—but your dedication, effort, and passion go far beyond any dollar amount.

SAVE THE DATE!

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

Ben Franklin
Community Garden
1943-2021

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50/50 Raffle!

hot dogs, brats, chips & drinks for sale!

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



Pictured: 2024 BFCG blue ribbon entry

Cuyahoga County Fair – Community Garden Competition

Each year, we proudly enter the Community Garden Competition at the Cuyahoga County Fair—and we’ve built a solid track record of wins! This year’s Fair runs **August 5–10**, and the Garden & Produce theme is “Garden Party.”

Committee members **Rick Gall** and **George Rouse** will take the lead on designing and assembling our entry, but they’ll need help from a small team of gardeners. As the Fair approaches, we’ll also put out a call for fresh produce from your plots to feature in the display.

If you’d like to join the “Garden Party” effort, please email grow@benfranklincommunitygarden.org.

Note: Many gardeners also enter produce and preserved items individually. To learn more about the rules and categories, check out the Fair’s [Premium Book](#).



June 7th – Global Connections An energetic blend of Afro-Latin and world grooves. This genre-spanning ensemble delivers infectious rhythms, cross-cultural instrumentation, and vibrant global spirit.

June 21st – Northcoast Jazz Collective A swinging quartet bringing fresh life to classic jazz standards. Rich vocals and dynamic musicianship deliver timeless tunes with style.

July 5th – Alla Boara Ancient Italian folk songs reimagined through jazz, percussion, and passionate vocals. This ensemble breathes life into forgotten melodies and celebrates cultural roots with dazzling artistry and emotional depth.

July 19th – Mud Window Mud Mirror Early music meets modern imagination. Soprano and percussion duo blend marimba, bells, and voice to explore Medieval and Renaissance repertoire through seasonal themes, bold textures, and experimental soundscapes.

August 2nd – Uzizi All-original folk-rock with a global soul. A wide palette of world music influences drives this alternative ensemble’s rich, rhythmic, and genre-bending sound.

August 16th – Population of One & Morgan Mecaskey Population of One weaves ambient pop with textured rhythms and ethereal vocals. Morgan Mecaskey offers soulful, introspective indie folk rock with lyrical clarity and depth.

September 6th – Sunflurry Baroque rock at its most intimate and expansive. Cello, sultry vocals, guitar, and foot drums create a lush, genre-defying blend of original music and imaginative covers.

September 20th – Village Bicycle Psych-pop with mathy melodies, shoegaze textures, and vintage synths. Vocal harmonies shift from delicate to brazen in this witty, unpredictable, and sonically rich ride.

Performances are at 6 p.m. on the first and third Saturdays June – September. Bring a lawn chair & join us!

**wheel-chair accessible! Contact Mark Tapajna if more details needed on accessibility. (216) 276-1197.

Master Gardeners of Cuyahoga County

Tuesday Talks at Ben Franklin

On June 10, our Master Gardeners gave a well-received presentation at the garden on “Native and Keystone Plants.” You’re invited to join the **Master Gardeners of Cuyahoga County** for more upcoming **Tuesday Talks at Ben Franklin**—held right at their Demonstration Garden.



Upcoming Topics:

- July 8: Hostas
- August 12: Hydrangeas
- September 9: Fall Blooming Plants

All talks run from **7:00–8:00 p.m.** They’re open to everyone, but space is limited, so please contact Sue Gifford (sue@gifford1.onmicrosoft.com) to register.

For programs at other locations, visit the full schedule at cuyahogamg.org/events. There are lots of great topics, like **“Pest Control without Chemicals”** at the Brooklyn Branch of the Cuyahoga Library on **September 11**.



Want to help shape the Garden's future?

What does the Garden Operating Committee do?

The Benjamin Franklin Community Garden Operating Committee is made up of eleven gardeners. Members are elected at the Annual Meeting during the Harvest Picnic in September, each serves a three-year term. The Committee meets monthly, all year round.

The Committee’s job is to help the garden run smoothly, stay strong, and keep improving. That means taking care of the behind-the-scenes work that supports everyday gardening—maintenance, planning, funding, communication, and coordination with Old Brooklyn CDC. We also serve as the voice of gardeners, representing your interests both within the garden and in the broader community. Our goal is to create a welcoming, productive space where people can grow food for themselves and for those in need. In addition, we help provide programming that welcomes the wider community and invites more people to connect with the Garden. [For the full description, see our [By-Laws](#).]

Several spots on the Garden Committee will open up this September—and **we’d love to see some new faces step forward**. You don’t need special experience, just a willingness to pitch in, collaborate, and care about the Garden’s future. If you’ve got ideas, energy, or even just curiosity, consider running. It’s a great way to give back, learn more, and help keep our garden community strong.

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.

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