

NEWS / NEIGHBOURHOODS

DAN Doings on The R T H



ACCESS FOR ALL: Ontario Transportation Minister Harinder Takhar (far left), joins, from left to right, Ward 30 Councillor Paula Fletcher, Ward 31 Councillor Case Ootes, TTC Chair Howard Moscoe, Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit Chair (ACAT) Chair Bill Brown, and Toronto Danforth MP and Federal New Democratic Party leader Jack Layton in a ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the opening of two elevators at Broadview subway station on March 21. The elevators allow access to both the eastbound and westbound subway platforms. *Photo by Colin Grant*



MERRY MARCH IN MARCH: The annual Greek National Independence Day Parade on the Danforth on Sunday, March 26 was a colorful and well attended affair, benefitting from mild and sunny weather. The parade marks the beginning of Greece's War of Independence against the Ottoman Turks on March 25, 1821. Victory for Greece came seven years later. Following the parade, a wreath laying ceremony took place at Old City Hall *Photo by Colin Grant*

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TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES

Riverdale Meadow Community Garden volunteers reach out to the neighborhood

By: Kyla Dixon-Muir

Four years ago if you wandered along the Discovery Walk pathways that connect City Adult Learning Centre with Riverdale Park East, the garden on the meadow appeared abandoned. Thistles and Queen

Anne's lace were chest-high and raspberry canes drooped on the ground. Individual plots couldn't be discerned and there were no signs advising visitors whom to contact to participate - the sad suspension of a dream began almost a decade earlier.

Now, the dedicated efforts of a small new team have taken the garden beyond its original hopes.

"All 25 food plots are open and active again," says George A. Moore, the new membership coordinator, "and 350 square feet of grass have been turned into space for new perennials, including an herb plot and hilltop bed for Jerusalem Artichokes, purple orach and strawberries. We've dug a border garden just inside the perimeter fence to edge the food plots with native plants, a colorful hillside flower garden is edged in big white stones which were once buried beneath overgrowth, and we have begun laying pathways from old bricks donated by neighbors.... made from

clay once mined right here in the valley."

Since 2003, this team has not only worked hard to revitalize the garden, but to grow connections with the neighborhood. Local businesses and generous homeowners have made donations, and the gardeners, all of whom are volunteer-members paying a nominal fee to share in the work, have in turn reached out to deliver both fresh organic produce to shelter kitchens and perennial plants to school and other community gardens.

The progress is evident to any who walk by. One sign offers neighbors in apartment buildings the opportunity to bring their food scraps to be composted; another describes plans for an Ontario Native Species wildflower garden, now in its nursery stage; a third thanks all those who made donations last year, by name; and there are two mailboxes with take-home information about this and other community and allotment gardens.

George built cold frames and raised beds from scavenged wood last year.

"We've been eating salad greens from here all through the winter, and sharing some with others in the neighborhood and city-wide community gardeners. They were a really fun experiment, and we're looking forward to developing the frames even further for next winter."

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