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Friday, June 29, 2007

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### Neighbors grow together

Published: Friday, June 22, 2007  
By Lee Logan  
Free Press Staff Writer

While building the new Archibald Community Garden in the Old North End, Melissa Stiebert helped dig a shallow trench for one of the large, kidney-shaped beds that will eventually hold a variety of veggies.

"I would recommend that people stand back," Stiebert said. "Megan's seen me try to row a boat. I'm no more coordinated with a pickax."

Thankfully, no one was injured during the production of this garden.

As a member of Grow Team ONE, Stiebert is the site coordinator for the project, which will kick off Saturday with a community planting day. The garden, behind Dot's Market on Archibald Street, is similar to the neighborhood gardens in the Intervale, except that those are run by Burlington Parks and Recreation; this one is operated by community members.

Stiebert said the organization is leasing the site from the Visiting Nurse Association. The group will run the garden communally, and if this season is successful, it hopes to negotiate a longer lease.

Anyone in the Old North End can participate, as long as they sign a couple of forms and become a member of the group. The group will hold two planting days each week, Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings, but members can work in the garden at any time.

"I think it's a great way to build community," said Chris Howell, another member of the Grow Team. "And a lot of people are really interested in local foods."

For every hour worked, members will reap a percentage of that week's harvest. What will they grow?

"Lots of veggies and some mixed herbs," Stiebert said, listing off eggplants, tomatillos and cantaloupes as part of the selection. "We'll have a good variety."

The beds are raised and will be lined with plastic, because the soil was formerly contaminated with lead. Even though they're shaped like kidney beans, they won't grow any kidney beans, at least at the beginning. Behind the beds, though, will be an area of sunflowers, which help draw the lead out of the soil. The back of the site will house a rainwater collection system that will provide the garden's water.

Many of the project's materials were donated, including soil and compost from Intervale Compost Products, lumber from Shelburne Farms and seeds from Red Wagon. The group also has received donations from Friends of Burlington Gardens, Gregory Supply and S.D. Ireland.

During the build, Megan Humphrey, who lives kitty-corner to the site, showed up to take pictures.

"I'm going to sort of do time-lapse photography," Humphrey said, adding that she wants to chronicle the garden's progress and send the photos to Stiebert.

Humphrey said the garden is a great example of people volunteering to improve their community.

"Melissa lives a couple of blocks down," Humphrey



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THIS WEEK IN PHOTOS

Dan Goosen of Intervale Compost Products dumps a load of compost at the site of a new neighborhood garden on Archibald Street in Burlington.  
GLENN RUSSELL, Free Press



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said. Pointing to another volunteer, "she's Old North End. Gavin's Old North End. There are so many people who are really active."

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