

Gardening in a time of climate change

by Polly Freeman, Phinney Ridge P-Patch (Billy Goat's Bluff)

As gardeners, we can tell that the climate is changing. Though I had been aware of climate change for years, my gardening wake-up call came a few years back when a very warm spring meant my plum tree bloomed early. The blooms were triggered by the warmth, but pollinating insects respond to the change in daylight. When those cycles are out of sync, pollination is compromised. I had no plums that year.

My raspberries have ripened earlier each year for the past several years. I'm sure most P-Patch gardeners can tell similar stories.

What does climate change mean for Northwest gardeners?

Climate scientists tell us that Northwest temperatures will increase year-round, the cold winter of recent months notwithstanding. Weather in general will be more extreme, with more intense rainstorms -- as we have already seen. The snowpack will decrease and melt earlier, so summer water will be in shorter supply while summer temperatures will be hotter.

We'll be able to plant some crops earlier (if the soil is dry enough) and the first fall frost will be later. We'll see a change in the migration cycles of birds and butterflies. As with my plum tree, flowering cycles may be out of sync with pollinators.



What can I do? How can we adapt as gardeners?

In the garden, as in all areas, we need to acknowledge and observe the change, and build in resilience wherever possible. Many of the things we should do are standard good gardening practices -- and now there's more urgency about implementing them.

As always, **build soil** with organic matter, add compost, and mulch bare soil to help cope with winter rains and keep beds more moist in dry seasons.

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New infrastructure projects in the P-Patches

By Carolyn Kresser, Uptown P-Patch

Several P-Patch community gardens are getting much-needed infrastructure and safety upgrades thanks to Seattle voters.

In 2014, voters approved the Seattle Park District, which provided funding to perform major maintenance improvements in P-Patches. That funding is now being put to good use, with major projects being completed in five gardens in 2016: Estelle Street, Thomas Street, Jackson Park, Squire Park, and the New Holly Power Garden.

The program, called the "P-Patch Rejuvenation Initiative Plan," got its start in 2015 with a study of all the city's 88 P-Patches, to assess current garden conditions, identify major maintenance needs, and prioritize which sites should be renovated.

"We used various criteria to rate the gardens, including condition of infrastructure, neighborhood demographics, accessibility, and safety and security," said Pamela Kliment, a Neighborhood Planner with the Seattle Parks & Recreation Department who assisted with the study. "We also wanted to support gardens located in areas that are lower income, where the gardeners might not have the ability to raise the money to do the improvements themselves."

Based on the results of the study, Seattle Parks staff picked 10 possible gardens, and then further whittled the list down to the five gardens finally selected for improvements. Landscape architects and City staff then got busy putting plans into action.

The **Estelle Street P-Patch**, a 19-plot garden next to John Muir Elementary School in south Seattle, is getting a new water meter installed at the site.

"The problem at Estelle was that the gardeners were getting water from a meter from a housing development next door, and sometimes the water wouldn't work, or it would be turned off, and they would have to haul their water to the garden," says Kliment.

The Parks Department worked with both Seattle Public Utilities and the Seattle Department of Transportation to figure out the best location for the water meter, as well as managing a lot of the construction and installation work for the project.

"Everyone was out there trying to figure out the best way to do it," says Kliment. "It's great that all of the agencies are chipping in a little to get these projects off the ground."

Due to the need to work with other City agencies, the water meter is still waiting to be installed, but City officials expect the project to be completed soon.

Thomas Street Gardens, a 28-plot garden in the Capitol Hill neighborhood, was also selected for upgrades in 2016.

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The P-Patch known as Thomas Street Gardens is tucked into a high-density residential neighborhood on Capitol Hill and provides a significant place of quiet and openness. The prominent entry columns, topped by a trellis with mature grape vines, lead walkers through the P-Patch. The new shed and cistern sit at the back of the site, where there's vehicle access.



Learning by doing: Composting at Maple Leaf P-Patch

By Alice Hanson, Maple Leaf gardener

Last July, our garden was awarded a Small Sparks grant from the City of Seattle to overhaul our nearly non-existent compost program so we would have proper tools and facilities, fewer rats, and fewer unsightly/overflowing compost bins of mondo yard waste. We also wanted to create compost for our gardens, rather than buy compost we had no money for... but badly needed.

Because our P-Patch has a high proportion of seniors who could not do heavy turning of compost, and because tumbler advertisers touted their products as fast, rat-proof and so hot they would bake weeds, we got three different kinds of composters. A green tumbler model and a black low-barrel-style compost tumbler were generously donated to us by the Roosevelt and Magnuson P-Patches, respectively. We also bought a double-barreled lifetime compost tumbler, which is easy to turn and high enough off the ground for all our seniors to utilize easily.

We knew squat about compost. Joyce Moty at Bradner P-Patch and Shawn Mincer at Ballard P-Patch gave our compost grant committee a tour of their successful hot compost programs. We held a class for the community and our gardeners, taught by Kate Vincent from the Garden Hotline, so we could learn about the basics: greens and browns, and how to get ideas for instituting a program at our small 22-plot P-Patch.

We learned we needed a chopping block. We wanted two: one for the seniors who tend our giving garden, and a second one for the upper-plot gardeners. This was achieved very successfully. We received a beam provided by Tom Standaert at Picardo P-Patch topped with a “cutting board” of white recycled plastic. We were blown away by his generosity. Thank you, Tom! And for the seniors, we got a big



The so-called “shed” at the Maple Leaf P-Patch is a round adobe-and-straw building constructed by the gardeners (after a collaborative design process) when the P-Patch was established in 2007. The tiles around the wall were made by students at nearby Olympic View Elementary School.

slab of a cut tree (which created a generous safe area upon which to wield a knife), perched on top of an old upside-down metal garbage can. Both the tree slab and the two garbage cans came from advertising on our local Buy Nothing-Northgate website. We also bought a third metal can at University of Washington Surplus for 10 bucks to allow us to shred our leaves in the can with a loaned gas-powered weed-eater.

Our grant paid for two machetes. They seemed awfully big, and they were stolen before we could get them out of the package. Susan Casey at Interbay P-Patch wisely suggested we buy cleavers, which we did. A Winco cleaver on Amazon.com was under 15 bucks. We now have three of them; they re-sharpen well, and gardeners are actually chopping up their stuff. They say it’s a good way to vent frustration. Great advice, Susan!

Our operations and rules are still evolving. We are a small garden with only 18 individual plots and four giving-garden plots religiously tended by 10 seniors from Alijoya Assisted Living. (Our seniors raised over 200 pounds of food for the food bank last year, so they need compost. Yaay, Alijoya!) So we need a plan that works for both seniors and our 22 younger gardeners. We bought 10 green plastic garbage cans, and marked them “unchopped” and “chopped” using duct tape and laminated signs. (The P-Patch office will laminate stuff if you send them a digital file of the sign you want laminated.) Free listings on the Buy Nothing-Northgate website and on Nextdoor.com-Northgate yielded us bags of donated leaves last fall and wire fencing last month to make corrals to store leaves in – like Bradner does.

We have three rotating tumblers (two were donated via the P-Patch InSite list; thank you, Roosevelt and Magnuson P-Patches!) that are attractive and easy to use, and don’t attract rats. But the bottom line: compost tumblers are over-advertised.

Why? There’s not enough volume for them to get hot enough to cook out bad stuff. Ads for the tumblers say they get very hot; not true! But they have their place. They do make nice cold compost in six weeks if you turn them several times a week and don’t let them get too wet. We threw in Starbucks coffee grounds donated from the local store, with offsets of dry leaves or shredded paper to keep the moisture in balance. The tumblers get flies when wet, but a few spins make them go away. Flies are a signal to tend the tumbler.

In the rainy months, tent the tumblers with a sheet of plastic because they are not watertight.

The tumblers are perfect for our seniors to use, and they are enthusiastic about loading/turning them.

We are glad we kept the waterfall-style compost bins that came with the garden, though we need to modify them and put lids on them. This year, we aim to do hot compost for our upper gardens that serve our younger gardeners (who have the oomph to turn the piles) to see how well this bin heats up and whether we can indeed handle weeds and moldy squash plants to make gold-standard hot compost in six weeks like Ballard and Bradner do. Our team from the Alijoya senior center will use the tumblers to make compost for

the giving garden, carefully sorting what is chopped before it is put into the tumbler and then turning it and adding dry leaves when the flies appear.

People have asked me to report on how our compost efforts have gone, because you are wrestling with the same issues in your garden.

Here’s a summary of what we’ve learned so far:

- Compost tumblers are a partial answer.
- Listings on InSite, online neighborhood sites like Nextdoor.com and “Buy Nothing” groups yield valuable free stuff.
- We are not there yet. We need to create a program. I hope to meet with people at any garden that has a compost program, and I’m open to suggestions. We have four gardeners who are game to be on a compost team, but we don’t know how to organize ourselves.
- We are making great progress and hope to have a basic program in place by May 30. We are noodling how to store greens and browns (both chopped and unchopped), what kind of signage works best to make the program simply understood (and complied with) by all, and how to clearly tell gardeners what to do with their plot waste.

Last year, the Small Sparks grant bought us what we needed to get started. The City gave us a kitchen through a grant. This year, we are psyched to start a compost cooking school!



One of Maple Leaf’s innovative – and free! – chopping blocks is an enormous cross-section of a tree, which rests on top of an aged trash can.

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Consider investing in some garden infrastructure. Raised beds can limit pests and help with drainage, because soils may be extra-saturated in the early spring. To augment scarce summer water, install a cistern and/or drip irrigation. You might need a rain garden to handle runoff from strong winter rainstorms.

You may want to buy plastic mulches or build hoop houses to protect plants from excessive rain, and install shade cloth over tender plants for hot summers.

Add diversity to your gardening, in the types of plants you plant and when you plant them. Experiment with different varieties; some will do better one year, some another. And **pay attention:** keep track of what you plant and when, and what worked and what didn't.

Do succession planting. I like to plant seeds and starts at the same time. If a weather event – torrential rain, early heat, wild wind – plays havoc with one set of plantings, the next one might survive/do better. When my little broccoli plants got toasted in a hot spell one spring, the seeds I had planted at the same time were just far enough behind to thrive.

Be a resilient gardener and **keep an open mind.** If something doesn't work, try something else.

Persist! One year a windstorm struck my bean plants at just the wrong time. Cursing, I pulled up the damaged ones and immediately planted more seeds in their stead. Bingo! Suddenly I was doing succession planting and the total bean crop was just fine that year.

Plant blooming flowers spring through fall. This will attract all kinds of pollinators, whatever the climate conditions in a given year. Consider renting mason bees: it's easy and inexpensive, and nurtures your garden as well as boosting the pollinator population.

Keep an eye out for new insects and pests in the garden and for plant diseases you haven't seen before. Not sure? Take a picture and send it to the Garden Hotline: <http://gardenhotline.org/question>

Adapt! Learn to identify and eat edible weeds. They will be better at adapting, and we must adapt with them.

Harvest promptly! Pay attention to your garden and pick produce when it is ripe – which may be sooner than you think. Practice good garden hygiene so that you don't lose good food to heat, rain or wind, and so that pests have less time to find and munch on your yummy edibles.

Save open-pollinated seeds from your garden and use them next year; they will adapt to your microclimate.

Keep an eye on the weather. Watch the forecast and garden accordingly. Don't water if it's going to rain; get out and harvest your berries if a hard storm is predicted. Protect your plants from extreme events as much as you can.

Most of all, **keep gardening and stay positive!** Growing our own local food is going to be increasingly important. Share your bounty with neighbors and the food bank; share lessons and strategies with your fellow P-Patchers and other gardeners. Together, our knowledge and experience are a huge resource that can help us continue to garden successfully in the years ahead.

Author's note: Many thanks to Tilth Alliance and Tilth Alliance educator Veralea Swayne for the great class about climate change and planning a resilient garden, from which much of this information was drawn.

Projects in the P-Patches

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Jackson Park P-Patch's renovated shed features handicapped-accessible doors and concrete flooring, with permeable paving surrounding it. A partially hidden cistern (below) collects rain water from the shed roof.

"Their biggest problem was safety. Their shed was located in a way that made it easy for people to hide, and there were people doing illegal drugs and sleeping in the garden," says Kliment. "The idea was to redesign the shed location and gathering space so there were no longer any hiding spaces."

The garden got a new shed, and the gathering area and path were reset with new flagstones to make it ADA accessible. The project also included renovation and/or replacement of existing raised beds.

Jackson Park P-Patch, a 51-plot garden overlooking the Jackson Park Golf Course in North Seattle, received some needed ADA upgrades. Gravel paving around the raised beds, gathering area, and shed was replaced with a smoother, permeable surface that's safer, especially for people with disabilities. Raised beds were repaired. And the garden's shed was retrofitted to make it more accessible for gardeners.

"The shed was set up in a way that you couldn't get in if you were in a wheelchair," says Kliment. "We ordered sheds without floors, and set them on a concrete pad so disabled gardeners could get in and out easily."

Squire Park, a 31-plot garden in central Seattle, also was dealing with several ADA issues, so it got a retrofit to the gathering area and adjacent paths to make them accessible. A service gate was also repaired to make it more accessible.

Work also included moving hose bibs out of pathways. "Over the years, the paths had changed, so in several cases the hose bibs were right in the middle of the pathway, and needed to be moved," said Kliment.

The final garden to receive upgrades in 2016 was the **New Holly Power Garden**, a 23-plot space located right next to the Chief Sealath Trail in south Seattle. "This garden had in some cases migrated out of its original boundaries," according to Kliment.

To fix the problem, workers replaced old fencing with a new fence, added gates at all entries,



and at the main entry posted multi-lingual signs welcoming people to the garden.

P-Patch staff met with the gardeners at each of the five gardens to discuss priorities and get ideas on needed upgrades, and they're already working on plans for upgrades for five additional gardens in 2017: Hawkins, Longfellow Creek, Ravenna, Roosevelt, and Thistle.

The Park District allots a total budget each year of \$200,000, which includes design, materials, and project management, so gardeners can expect to see more new improvements in the P-Patches for years to come.

Please save the date!

GROW will again have the honor of Tom Douglas and his catering crew producing our popular summer fund-raising event: the Chef in the Garden will be held Thursday, July 27, from 5:30 until 9 p.m. in the Interbay P-Patch. The evening, as always, will feature an elegant and innovative four-course meal complemented by Northwest wines. Ticket-purchasing options and the menu for the evening will be announced in the next few weeks.

For details, visit the GROW website: www.GROWnorthwest.org.

We hope to see you in the garden on **July 27!**



Belltown P-Patch gets creative with Find It, Fix It Grant

By Patti Beasley and Alan Francescutti,
Belltown P-Patch

In August of last year, the Belltown P-Patch was selected by the City of Seattle to receive a grant of \$1540 as part of the “Find It, Fix It” Community Grant Program developed by Mayor Ed Murray and the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods.

The grant process began earlier in the summer, when Mayor Murray and roughly 70 Belltown residents and heads of 15 City departments participated in a Find It, Fix It walk through Belltown. The walk was designed to highlight positive aspects of the community as well as to promote discussion of issues of public safety such as street lighting, damaged sidewalks and unauthorized camping.

During the walk the group was escorted on a tour of the Belltown P-Patch by gardener and site coordinator Chris Gorley, who was accompanied by Councilwoman Sally Bagshaw. Chris was given the opportunity to discuss the P-Patch as an important centerpiece of the Belltown neighborhood. She also talked about the grant proposal to be submitted by neighbor and artist Christine Federhart.

Christine’s Find It, Fix It grant proposal addressed several maintenance and beautification projects that would enhance the Belltown garden. Among them were the purchase of plants, compost and mulch, and a few tools. In addition, she proposed restoration of a painted mural on an existing tool shed and the creation of a new mural on the southwest wall of the garden that borders on Elliott Avenue.

With the approval of the proposal, work began to refresh and rejuvenate the vital community areas of the P-Patch. In Christine’s words, the intent was to “increase vibrancy of the Belltown P-Patch boundaries, and increase [the] sense of lush well-being.”

The first order of business was to refurbish the border areas of the P-Patch, particularly along the eastern alley. This area was negatively impacted during the construction of the Walton Lofts apartment complex throughout 2016. Chris purchased 50 bags each of mulch and compost, as well as shrubs and perennials including Russian sage, nandina, orange sedge, kinnikinnick, white foxglove and more. Volunteer hours were spent planting and mulching the P-Patch borders along the alley and other common areas and sidewalks most frequently used and enjoyed by the public. The work was accomplished by a number of work parties in the summer and fall.

Meanwhile, armed with gallons of acrylic paint and sealant, Christine applied her considerable talent to refurbishing the mural on the tool shed. And she joined forces with Becky Jhu, a graphic designer and Belltown gardener, to create an original mural along the western perimeter of



Christine Federhart and Becky Jhu were pleased with the results of scrubbing the mural wall (behind them) near the corner of Elliott Avenue and Vine Street. After many hours of work, the drab surface is coming alive with color and a fanciful design. The top photo, computer-generated, shows what the finished mural will look like.

the garden facing Elliott Avenue. The inspiration for the new mural – entitled “Why Not Grow?” – was the result of conversations Christine had with Belltown gardeners Becky Jhu and Hanahn Korman. It was Hanahn who suggested adding the word GROW to the words WHY NOT. As fellow artist and sculptor Jim Pridgeon says poetically, “In essence, the garden grows you. This mural speaks of connectedness, exploration and the courage to grow.”

In that spirit, Christine, Becky and Hanahn set to work scrubbing graffiti and grime from the garden wall and turning it into an inspired work of art. Bold flower graphics pop from a background of fuchsia and pink and the overlying white words “Why Not Grow?”, leaving no doubt about the purpose of this corner at Elliott and Vine.

The Belltown P-Patch has long been an urban oasis, with hundreds of visitors from around the world (thanks both to neighbors and to the cruise ship layovers). Thanks to Mayor Murray’s Find It, Fix It grant program, the leadership of Chris Gorley, the inspiration of Christine Federhart, and 177 hours of volunteer labor, the Belltown P-Patch is more beautiful and vibrant than ever.

Come visit!

For more photos of this project and information about artist Christine Federhart, please visit:
www.federhart.com

Additional information about applying for a grant:

Christine Federhart lives in Belltown and gardens at Interbay P-Patch. She walks past the Belltown P-Patch often and describes it as a precious, rare green spot in Belltown. Christine saw a sign about Find It, Fix It grants at Belltown Community Center and decided to apply for a grant because she wanted to “boost Belltown P-Patch’s vigorousness as a place to feel peace.”

She wrote the basic grant and then reached out to site coordinator Chris Gorley. The two put their heads together to work through the details, including building the manual labor volunteer base. Christine describes it as “easy and simple.” She has a bachelor’s degree in art and says she has always wanted to do public art. The Belltown mural is her first effort, and she says she has found it to be very fun and gratifying.

Residents in each neighborhood where a Community Walk is held can apply for up to \$3000 to lead volunteer projects that improve the safety and/or appearance of the neighborhood. She suggests that anyone interested in applying for a grant should first visit the website: <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/outreach-and-engagement/find-it-fix-it-community-walks>. The website provides a list of the 2017 neighborhoods that will have walks, and a specific focus for each. Is your neighborhood on the list this year? GREAT! Applying for a grant is so simple, and not competitive.

Examples of what you can do with a Community Project Grant include:

- Host litter pick-ups or graffiti clean-up events
- Paint a mural on a public space
- Create and install new educational or wayfinding signage
- Plant flowers along a sidewalk or street median
- And so much more! How have you always dreamed of improving your neighborhood?





Spring Street P-Patchers memorialize one of their gardeners with a cairn

By Jeana Greco, Spring Street P-Patch

A lover of both quick-paced city kitchens and vast idyllic mountains, KC Boehly divided her time between the two. During the fall, winter, and spring she was a manager at Café Flora in Seattle’s Madison Valley, but spent the summer season cooking for Camp Denali and North Face Lodge in Denali National Park, Alaska. Her flair for cooking was evidenced by her ability to take any available ingredients and create delicious, intricate feasts. KC’s valuing of good-quality food stemmed from growing good quality-ingredients.

KC joined the Spring Street P-Patch, located only a couple blocks from her home, in 2014. She wanted to participate in this community of neighbors who respect ingredients that travel from the ground to the plate. As KC dug through the soil, bare-handed, she meticulously picked out tiny rocks and weeds while envisioning great meals to come.

She greatly enjoyed being a member of the P-Patch because it is an organization that brings people together and shares a communal product. Hers was one of the most gracious and generous souls.

KC’s tragic death occurred on August 27, 2015, while hiking in Denali National Park with her best friend and co-worker, Ashley Phillips. Their three-day backpacking trip turned catastrophic when a gentle stream crossing morphed into a rushing river due to heavy rains and melting snow. Crossing the river on the return to Camp Denali was fatal for KC.

Ashley, I (her former roommate), and other close friends decided that a lasting memorial in the Spring Street P-Patch would be most fitting to honor KC’s memory. A cairn is a symbolic stack of rocks to help guide travelers on their way; it is most commonly found on trails in the wilderness. As travelers pass by, they add a new and smaller rock. A cairn stands indefinitely, its presence a reassuring guide. For our dear friend KC who never made it home, we honor her with this cairn. We invite you to add a small stone as you pass by to honor KC’s memory and the memory of someone you hold close to your heart.

FIVE TIPS FOR BEGINNING GARDENERS



By Caitlin Moran, Unpaving Paradise P-Patch

Congratulations! Community gardening is a great way to meet your neighbors, spend time outdoors, and enjoy fresh vegetables throughout the summer season. This will be the second year of gardening for my fiancé and me; we joined our neighborhood P-Patch on Capitol Hill last spring after waiting several years for a plot. We still have plenty to learn, but here are a few tips based on our experiences so far:

- 1. Set aside time to prepare your plot.** In my mind, I envisioned a pristine, weed-free patch of fresh soil waiting for us at our local P-Patch. In reality, the previous gardener had left behind several plants that needed to be removed. Before you’re ready to plant, be sure to factor in at least a couple of hours to weed, add organic matter, and turn the soil.
- 2. Take advantage of others’ expertise.** The Internet abounds with limitless information about vegetable gardening, but online research can be overwhelming if you’re just looking for simple information about how to get started. The P-Patch Community Gardening Program offers several free introduction to gardening classes each spring through Seattle Tilth Alliance. The class I attended, “Organic Gardening: The Basics,” helped me conceptualize what we needed to do to get our plot ready and grow a few simple vegetables.
A related tip: Talk to your neighbors. The collective expertise is one of the things that makes community gardening more rewarding than going at it alone. The resident experts will be able to tip you off to everything from local pests to the specific sun patterns created by the buildings around your patch.
- 3. Start small.** Amid the excitement of getting started with your plot, it’s easy to grab more plant starts than you need or to overindulge in the variety of crops you plan to grow. Starting with four or five easy-to-grow crops will help keep your workload manageable and ensure you don’t end up with more zucchini than you know what to do with.
- 4. Timing is everything.** Before you start planting, you’ll want to think carefully about what weather will be most conducive to which crops and how long you’ll need for each one to mature. For example, if your kale is going to be over and done by mid-June, you might want to think about another quick-yielding crop to take its place. There was plenty of trial-and-error our first season — herb starts that were put in the ground too early, and carrot seeds that we planted too late. So long as you have a few reliable crops, you can learn from your mistakes while still enjoying your successes.
- 5. Don’t give up too easily.** Last year, a round of intense spring heat fried my arugula starts. After removing the dead leaves, I wrote them off as a lost cause and started thinking about something else to plant in their place. But several weeks later, when I went to weed out that portion of the plot for re-planting, I noticed a “weed” I pulled up smelled peppery — the arugula had sprouted again! Lesson learned: Plants are resilient. Give them ample time to recover from disease, weather or pests.



Michelle Blume

Michelle Blume, the new president of GROW’s board of trustees, gives credit to the P-Patch Program for developing her enthusiasm for organic living and a “buy local/eat local” philosophy. She lives in West Seattle and has been gardening at the Solstice P-Patch near Lincoln Park for the past 12 years. Michelle says her favorite things to grow are broccoli and kale. “I’m trying to develop a better appreciation for

GROW welcomes new Board of Trustees president

greens, so I love experimenting with varieties of these, as well as collards and bok choy.”

Michelle became the site coordinator for her garden in 2007, and was instrumental in creating a leadership team to administer the Solstice site. She currently holds a leadership position as finance/fundraising coordinator for her P-Patch. “The leadership forums that GROW offered in past years contributed to helping me establish the team leadership approach to managing our P-Patch, and I’m glad GROW’s plan is to continue these leadership forums and perhaps build on them to empower strong leadership in the multitude of patches citywide.

“GROW’s role in advocating for and supporting Seattle’s community gardens is an essential one. I am a firm believer in the concept of self-sustainability, in

accordance with our individual capabilities, so through our advocacy we are promoting and propagating this doctrine. One of my goals for GROW in the coming year is to enhance our advocacy program by building upon the collective voice of the community gardeners. The voice of the gardeners is key to keeping the program active and to maintaining strong, healthy communities.”

Michelle earned her bachelor’s degree in business management while raising two teenage daughters and working full-time as a purchasing agent for the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. In addition to gardening, she enjoys reading mystery novels and taking long walks in Lincoln Park with her husband, Tom, and their dog Abby.

“Interbay mulch” is a good winter soil fertility treatment. It requires more than just putting some leaves on the soil and covering it with burlap. You need to mix some greens into the leaves; good options include chopped, mildewed squash leaves, end-of-season flowers, lettuce and coffee grounds. Cover the mulch with burlap, and the happy detritiuores will work day and night all winter to provide your soil with rich nutriments.

PLANT SOMETHING! No matter what winter crop you choose, do choose one. Your soil, left bare, will compact in the winter rains. The microorganism populations will be decimated and your garden will suffer unnecessarily in the spring.



Your volunteer time is worth money!

By Michael McNutt, GROW treasurer

Did you know you can help GROW provide support to those in need even without writing a check? While we at GROW are extremely happy to accept your cash donations, and the matching money that many employers will contribute to increase your gift, many employers around the Northwest (and we have some from across the country!) will match the labor you donate, as well.

We currently receive matching donations from companies such as Boeing, Microsoft, Starbucks, Verizon, the Gates Foundation, Apple, Home Depot, Safeco, Key Bank, Chase Bank and Adobe – to name just a few. And there are hundreds of smaller companies that also support their communities by matching their employees’ contributions of both money and TIME. In fact, approximately 65 percent of all Fortune 500 companies have some form of matched donation program. Please check with your human resources department if you are unsure about your employer’s policy.

So, even if you can’t help GROW directly with a cash donation at this time, you may be able to make a big difference by simply recording the hours you work on behalf of your community garden. You don’t even have to be a gardener for these programs to work; just volunteer your time. Then submit those hours to your employer for their contribution to GROW.

There are also other ways you can help aside from giving directly to GROW. For example, many retailers will donate a portion of every dollar you spend with them – dollars you are already spending – to charitable organizations like ours. Two examples: Fred Meyer, a longstanding Northwest company, has a Community Rewards program. You simply go online and specify GROW as your charity of choice, and they will allocate a percentage of your weekly grocery bill to supporting GROW’s mission. Amazon’s program is called Amazon Smile, and they give .5 percent of all purchases made through their site to charities – including, if you specify it, GROW!

So please give, whether it’s a direct donation to GROW that can be submitted online through our website at www.grownorthwest.org/donate, or a check sent to us at GROW, PO Box 19748, Seattle WA 98109, or a contribution through one of these employer-led programs. We greatly appreciate your support and couldn’t function without it.

Supporting **GROW** through Amazon Smile is easy!



Barton Street P-Patchers produce remarkable art

The Barton Street Artistes are a group of artistically inclined women who garden at the West Seattle patch and have applied their skills to creating unique and eye-catching features for the site.

Their most significant project to date, a mosaic sign set into a retaining wall, features a sun that always shines (made from part of a ceramic dinner plate.) The sign was completed last August after the Artistes had searched for and saved dishes and other crockery for the project for an entire year.

Kate Farley, Barton Street’s site coordinator and a member of the Artistes, says sculpture is her passion. She has enlisted help in creating made-in-place animals that sit at the corners of low retaining walls and are anchored to them, “finishing” the corners. There are presently six different animals, including a rooster and a rabbit, with two more in the works, according to Kate. They’re made of concrete and assorted rubble, with a good bit of embedded rebar to make them extra-sturdy.

The pig’s blue eyes, which gleam in the sun? They’re marbles. “Gardeners say the pig feels wise,” Kate says.

This will be the fourth summer of regular use for the P-Patch’s pizza oven, which sits prominently at the corner of 34th Avenue SW and Barton Street. The oven has become a neighborhood favorite: once each month during the growing season, the gardeners bake and sell pizza onsite. Sometimes they also make and sell bagels. The public is invited; “pizza Saturdays” will be announced on the City of Seattle’s listserv as dates are established. Proceeds from the sale of pizza and bagels pay for compost and debris bags for the P-Patch. But more important than the revenue, according to Kate, is the neighborhood impact of the pizza gatherings. “People walk over to the P-Patch to have lunch, and stay to socialize.”



When gardeners were designing the pizza oven at Barton Street, they wisely included a prep area including a sink – which facilitates organizing and serving food for crowds.

