

Market Gardens help immigrants connect to their local community

By Carolyn Kresser, P-Patch Gardener

At first glance, the High Point Juneau and New Holly P-Patches look just like any other P-Patch in Seattle. There are tidy rows of green beans, carrots, and lettuce. There are gardeners planting, watering, and tending their gardens.

But there is much more to these two community gardens than meets the eye. They are both Market Gardens, operated through a collaboration of the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods, GROW, and the Seattle Housing Authority (SHA).

The Market Gardens project began in 1995 with a goal of not only helping immigrants grow food for



The array of vegetables and flowers on the Market Gardens sale tables is always appealing.

themselves and others, but also assisting them with the transition into the local community. Participants must live in Seattle Housing Authority properties and be low-income. Often they have limited English proficiency.

“We thought, ‘how do you embrace and learn to be a part of your community as an immigrant?’” says Julie Bryan, one of the Market Garden coordinators with the City of Seattle. “The market garden concept came about because we had a lot of Southeast Asian refugees who loved to garden, but there wasn’t a place for them to do that on SHA properties. The market gardens are a way to help them with both their language and social skills.”

One of the most noticeable differences between the Market Gardens and regular P-Patches is that they’re the only locations where gardeners work communally (rather than having individual plots) and then, with the assistance of P-Patch staff, sell their produce directly to the general public.

“They all work together cleaning paths, composting,

planting, and harvesting,” says Bunly Yun, another Market Gardens coordinator with the City.

The Market Gardens program originally included three gardens, but because of an SHA restructuring several years ago, the program lost a garden in the Rainier Vista neighborhood. That left the High Point Juneau garden, located along Southwest Juneau and 32nd Avenue Southwest in West Seattle, and the New Holly garden, located along Holly Drive South and 40th Avenue South in the Beacon Hill area.

Both gardens offer a unique feature called Farm Stands, which act as a mini-farmers’ market held at the garden every week during the summer months. New Holly opens its Farm Stand on Fridays during the summer from 4 to 7 pm. High Point Juneau’s Farm Stand is open Wednesdays from 4 to 7. All community members are welcome to stop by and purchase fresh organic produce picked that day.

In addition, both gardens offer Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) subscriptions. CSA is a program that allows families to buy a share (or a half-share), entitling them to one bag of fresh seasonal produce each week during the 20-week summer harvesting season. A full share costs \$500 for the season, while a half-share is \$300. Participants can partner with other families to share both the costs and the produce, and they can pick up their produce at one of the gardens or at several participating Seattle churches.

(Continued on page 3)



News from the P-Patches...

Haller Lake P-Patch benefits from a co-located tent camp

By Susan Stillman, Haller Lake P-Patch

Every P-Patch has a wish list – new tools, improved walkways, more comfortable sitting places – but it’s probably rare to wish for a tent encampment to move into your neighborhood.

The Haller Lake P-Patch (HLPP) is located on Haller Lake United Methodist Church property. Every year the church hosts a tent camp in the parking lot opposite our P-Patch. On their way in and out, folks who live there walk past the gardeners, sometimes chatting with us and sometimes patrolling for litter or checking out the safety of the area. Within a fenced-off corner of the parking lot, their community maintains the tents

and some common areas. They have to follow rules in order to live there. Members do community service as part of their commitment to the camp, which is relocated about every three months.

Arriving at the P-Patch one sunny morning in June, I was shocked to see plants pulled up, thrown into the street and strewn on the paths between our raised beds. The destruction was senseless, clearly not the work of a gardener, and extended into church plantings. Since no one else was around, I went over to talk with Richard, the leader of the tent camp, which is called United We Stand. The next day Richard had more details and an idea about

who might have gone on an angry rampage: a man who had recently been evicted from the camp.

In one more day he had additional details and a plan in place. The police had been contacted. The individual was now banned from the neighborhood and has not been seen again. The residents were on more frequent rounds to check the perimeter of the church’s property. Richard also came over to talk with me. He offered to have the residents pay for replacing the plants. We declined.

(Continued on page 4)

Queen Anne P-Patch creates a demonstration berry patch

By Barbara Freeman and Betty Lucas, Queen Anne P-Patch

The Queen Anne P-Patch was established in 1994 and consists of 77 individual plots. An orchard along our west boundary provides a common-area buffer between individual plots and neighboring houses. Over time, several gardeners grew vegetables and flowers in areas under the fruit trees, which complicated the maintenance of the apple, pear and Italian prune trees.

Because these gardeners already had individual plots elsewhere in the garden, we decided several years ago to eliminate individual gardening in the orchard and consider common uses for any remaining sunny spots, provided they didn't conflict with the fruit tree maintenance.

A garden-wide online survey in the spring of 2013 asked gardeners to identify their top three

A berry committee was formed, including gardeners interested in choosing the specific cultivars and varieties. The final design included:

- 2 types of raspberries – one fall-bearing, one ever-bearing
- 2 types of blueberries with varying forms
- 3 types of strawberries – 1 day-neutral, 1 June-bearing, 1 Alpine
- 1 blackberry – erect rather than trailing form
- 2 varieties of currants

In 2015 we applied for a Department of Neighborhoods Small and Simple grant of \$1000, using GROW as our fiscal agent. With a letter from GROW as our 501(c)3 organization, and letters to businesses describing our orchard renovation project (including the berry patch, herb garden,

built in a garage and then re-assembled onsite. We also amended the soil with compost and installed a root barrier (typically used to contain bamboo) around the edges of the raspberry beds. In February we purchased and planted the bare root berries. One of our gardeners grew the alpine strawberries from seed.

In July, as the raspberries and blackberry were growing taller, we completed our work by adding the crosspieces and wire on the berry structures to keep the berries upright. We also produced a maintenance manual providing directions and timing for fertilizing, watering and pruning.

The berry varieties we chose:

Raspberries:

- Fall-bearing – Primocane*- fruiting red/yellow – Fall Gold
- Summer-bearing – Floricane*-fruiting black – Jewel Black Raspberry

Blackberry: Erect – Prime Ark 45

Blueberries:

- Northern Highbush – Jersey – large shrub, blue berries
- Rabbiteye – Pink Lemonade – small shrub, pink berries

Strawberries:

- June-bearing – Sweet Sunrise
- Day-neutral – Albion
- Alpine – grown by gardener Laima Pec, from seeds collected in Lithuania

Currants:

- Consort Black
- White Imperial

* Raspberry and blackberry canes are biennial, living two years. Primocanes are the first year of growth; the same cane in its second year of growth is a floricanes. Fall-bearing berries fruit on primocanes, while summer-bearing and fall-bearing berries produce fruit on floricanes.

We are very fortunate to have excellent sources of information about growing berries and selecting cultivars for our region. We used Oregon State University Extension berry guides for the Pacific Northwest: <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/topic/gardening/fruits-and-nuts>

We are now working on the next phases of the project for this common area: the herb garden and the pollinator garden.



Matt Peel, Jason Turck and Greg Cain finished the sturdy berry trellises.

choices for use of the orchard area. The top choices were a berry patch, an herb garden and a pollinator habitat area.

We measured the actual dimensions of empty spaces and the locations of trees to create a scale drawing for later meetings. Later that spring we held a garden-wide meeting to discuss how to design and build these new common areas. At that meeting we decided to allocate the largest sunny space for the berry patch and to work on its design first rather than work on all three areas simultaneously. Because the space was limited to an area 11 by 22 feet, we clarified the intent to make the berry patch a demonstration garden. The berry patch would not be able to supply berries for all our gardeners, but everyone would have the opportunity to learn about berry maintenance and any structures needed, as well as to taste several different berries.

At our 2014 spring Gardener Gathering, we looked at alternative designs for the berry patch. Some gardeners were concerned about having the raspberries, potentially six feet tall, right next to the path between the orchard and individual plots, because they might shade neighboring plots. We also discussed options for fewer types of berries with more individual varieties (better for blueberry yields), versus more types of berries. A show of hands suggested that most gardeners favored more types of berries.

and pollinator habitat), we solicited donations from lumberyards, home improvement centers, nurseries, and landscape material suppliers.

We got the Small and Simple grant and received donations from Home Depot and Lowe's for building materials, from Swanson's for plants, and from the Dirt Exchange for soil amendments.

In the summer of 2015 we performed a soil test, primarily to measure pH, and amended the soil with elemental sulfur to adjust the acidity in the blueberry beds.

We started building the berry structures last fall. In keeping with our desire to have the area be a demonstration project, one of our berry trellises is red cedar lumber on post brackets in concrete, another is metal posts in concrete with red cedar crosspieces, and the third is red cedar posts in rammed earth.

In January we built the strawberry raised bed, using yellow cedar. Because of rain, it was



Marilynn Carlson assembling the strawberry bed

Market Gardens

(Continued from page 1)

Gardeners who have plots in the Market Gardens say they love being involved in the program. “The garden is where my heart is. I’m so happy when I see the vegetables grow. And I enjoy seeing the community get a benefit to their health from eating the fresh produce,” says Oun Yeav, through a translator.

Yeav, who moved to the Seattle area in 1986, came from Cambodia. She’s now a Master Gardener who has been gardening at the High Point Juneau Market garden for the past 15 years, and has taken on a leadership role. Yeav says she enjoys seeing people from the surrounding neighborhoods come and enjoy the garden, as well as enjoy the food. “Many people come in and hesitate, because they’re not sure if they’re allowed to be there, so I offer to show them around.”

Many of the participants in the Market Gardens program are from Cambodia, Laos, or Vietnam. Some have prior gardening experience, but others do not. “The veteran gardeners are always happy to help train the new gardeners, and give them work assignments,” says Yun.

Immigrants from China and Somalia are also working at the two sites this year.

And the Market Gardens are always looking for new gardeners, especially young people, as longtime gardeners begin aging out of the program. “We used to have a wait list to participate in the market gardens, but we don’t anymore,” says Bryan. “The younger generation doesn’t stay in public housing as long, and with the high cost of living in Seattle, more and more are moving outside the city.”

Yun concedes that while they do continue to recruit new gardeners, progress is slow. “We are definitely looking at other options for getting young people involved, such as partnering with a youth organization.”

It’s also difficult to get young people involved because, while the gardeners do make some money selling their produce, it’s not a replacement for a full-time job. “The gardeners get to keep 60 percent of whatever they sell. The other 40 percent covers operating expenses such as supplies and composting,” says Bryan.

Market gardeners accrue benefits in addition to supplemental income

In 2015, the program’s gross income was \$15,585 for both the Farm Stands and the CSA. That meant the gardeners collectively received only \$9,351 over the course of the summer. “The gardeners aren’t doing this for the money, because they honestly don’t earn that much. They just find it fun, it gets them out of the house, and they get to meet new people in the community,” says Yun.

And while the extra cash is welcome, the coordinators stress the real purpose of the program is connecting people with their neighbors. “Our goal is to create a sense of community and friendship,” says Bryan.



GROW – the nonprofit advocacy organization for community gardening in and around Seattle – provides fiscal sponsorship, financial services, and funding for the Market Gardens program to ensure its continued operation.

For more information on how you can become involved with the Market Gardens, go to: <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/programs-and-services/p-patch-community-gardening/market-gardens>



The aluminum troughs at Ballard P-Patch get Dave Smead’s vote as the best accessible gardening site among Seattle P-Patches. Adjacent parking spots for gardeners with handicapped parking permits are also a much-appreciated feature.

Insights from a temporarily handicapped gardener

By Dave Smead, Interbay P-Patch

Gardening with a handicap is not for sissies! I learned this after breaking my left ankle in April. With an all-terrain knee scooter, I managed to get to Interbay P-Patch in mid-May. I swear the weeds just beyond the reach of my long-handled weeder were laughing. Trying to reach them, I leaned the knee scooter over a little too far and toppled into my plot. I’m guessing that didn’t engender any respect from the weeds, except maybe those I crushed.

Fortunately, the P-Patch Program is sensitive to those with special needs and sets some plots aside for them. How extensive is that? I visited the Program website with the list of P-Patches: <http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/programs-and-services/p-patch-community-gardening/p-patch-list>

Finding those with accessible plots entailed visiting the website for each garden. That took the better part of a Sunday. (If you can’t get out to garden, the next best thing is looking at pictures of P-Patches.) The 24 sites offering accessible plots are in the list below.

I wanted to go to all of them and take pictures, but my problem with visiting P-Patches is the tendency to walk through the whole garden and marvel at the diversity of art and plants. The accessible gardens at Ballard were most impressive, both in quantity and the appearance of being loved by their owners. They are situated in “horse troughs,” mounted on wood so the working height is appropriate.

The small taste of being physically challenged has given me new respect for those who deal with such life on a daily basis. Can we make it easier for people with accessibility issues to garden with us? Please send me suggestions how we can do that. Please send responses to dave@maildr.us and I’ll compile the list and make it available later.

P-Patches with accessible beds and/or containers

Angel Morgan
3956 S Morgan St.

Ballard
8527 25th Ave. NW

Beacon Food Forest
15th Ave. S & S Dakota St.

Bitter Lake
Linden Ave. N & N 143rd St.

Bradner
29th Ave. S & S Grand St.

Delridge
5078 25th Ave. SW

Eastlake
2900 Fairview Ave. E

Good Shepherd
4618 Bagley Ave. N

Greenwood
343 NW 88th St.

Greenwood Station
Fremont Ave. N & N 89th St.

Haller Lake
13035 1st Ave. NE

Hazel Heights
Baker Ave. NW & NW 42nd St.

Horiuchi Park
156 Boren Ave.

Interbay
2451 15th Ave. W

Jackson Park
13049 10th Ave. NE

Judkins
24th Ave. S & S Norman St.

Lake City Court Garden
12536 33rd Ave. NE

Leo Street
51st Ave. S & S Leo St.

Licton Springs
College Way N & N 92nd St.

Linden Orchard
Linden Ave. N & N 67th St.

Longfellow Creek
SW Thistle St. & 25th Ave. SW

Phinney Ridge
5926 3rd Ave. NW

Roosevelt
7012 12th Ave. NE

Spring Street
E Spring St. & 25th Ave.

Thomas Street Gardens
1010 E Thomas St.



Growing pains result in major gains at Greenwood P-Patch

by Ron Post, Greenwood Station P-Patch

From 2013 until this year, the 32-plot Greenwood P-Patch on Northwest 88th Street underwent a large facelift: ADA-accessible paths and planter, new fruit trees, improved maintenance and drainage, shaded seating with mobile tables, a children's sandbox, an arbor in the new community area, a new shed roof and window, and planter fences that contain herbs and flowers and function as a backdrop for the arbor.

The makeover changed the look and feel of the plots, broadening sightlines and giving the garden more formality, especially where the herb planters and flower beds set it apart from the alley behind the P-Patch.

When the community comes out to celebrate the harvest in late summer or fall, there is always live music and a heavy turnout. Sharon Harding, who has gardened at Greenwood for five years, spearheaded the rebuilding of the P-Patch. She is a retired teacher who comes from a family of Seattle gardeners. Her son, who uses a wheelchair, can now access this community garden near their home. "It's wonderful," she says. "I couldn't be happier with the way it all looks and the way we come together as a community."

The three-year process is largely finished, but it did not occur without some fallout. In the later stages of reconstruction, City engineers decided to include a nonporous ramp to make the patch accessible. Their decision followed a series of grant applications and led to permitting decisions that surprised and frustrated some neighbors. Others were shocked at the momentum of the project after they had seen little development in the P-Patch for more than 15 years.

"It was typical and not typical" of such projects, says Eric Higbee, the landscape architect who organized the public process that led to a final design.

He characterizes the community involvement that took place in Greenwood as a success and, although

he admits some opposition to the renovation was "significant," he says "we had a very, very transparent process" that eventually won overwhelming support.

The ramp, which resembles a small driveway, was built, but one neighbor says new drainage problems occurred afterward. "You learn," says Harding, who is still on speaking terms with the neighbor and praises him for his patience and understanding. "Some things are hard. Change is hard. But really good things can come. People bought in and became positive. Some of the neighbors love the changes."

The community had many chances to become involved in the facelift, and many neighbors did. An initial grant brought on board Higbee, a local expert in community engagement. He organized a series of community meetings to formulate and discuss three design options. The choices were whittled down to the one that was eventually chosen by a vote of the local community.

A second grant of \$24,000 funded the project. That money was spent on materials, grading, a tree service, permitting and fencing. Volunteer labor accounted for most of the work.

In the end, some community members who had worked large areas were left with fewer square feet to garden. But the final plan "went over really well," Higbee says, as people saw their ideas take on form.

Harding was on a waiting list for her plot at this site for nearly four years, and she still would like to see some unused space in the 32-plot P-Patch become a small children's playhouse. Also, she envisions the kiwis fruiting over the arbor soon, and more annual community celebrations like the late-August party she was already planning in July. She beams at the mention of the giving-garden plot that helps feed clients at two social-service organizations. To her, "That's just one of the great things" about the renovation.



Ornamental plantings at the entrance to the Greenwood P-Patch glow in early-evening light (above). The accessible entry ramp is visible at the right edge of the photo. The photo at left shows the garden's airy and colorful gathering space, with the tool shed beyond it.

Haller Lake P-Patch *(Continued from page 1)*

Many P-Patches have the occasional problem with destruction or theft. I know ours has, although rarely. This was the first time anyone has taken responsibility for rectifying the situation. At times when there wasn't a tent city we have had homeless people sleeping in our P-Patch, attempting to "move in." These problems are much less likely to occur when a tent camp is in residence.

Last year we renovated Haller Lake P-Patch. We spent most of the spring removing the old raised-bed timbers and re-landscaping the common areas. As it happened, United We Stand was living in the parking lot at that time. A few strong residents offered to assist us with some of the most herculean tasks we faced. They dug out huge tree roots and helped clear out dead trees – work few of our gardeners could manage. Their helping hands gave us a great boost!

Greater Seattle now has 10 tent cities operating under the auspices of greaterseattlecares.org, a 501(c)3 non-profit. Thanks to the Haller Lake United Methodist Church, HLPP counts itself fortunate to have tent city neighbors. Perhaps your P-Patch is located near a potential tent camp host and would see a benefit, too.

John's Sponge Garden: Water conservation in the P-Patch

by John Siemion, Magnolia Manor Park P-Patch

In the spring of 2014, I created a water-conservation experiment in my plot at Magnolia Manor Park P-Patch (plot #8025, just southwest of the bee apiary.) The results have been fantastic: the experimental area requires much less water than is otherwise needed. The other good news is that the control portion is very water-retentive as well, due to the deep layer of compost added.

With properly timed planting during rainy periods (especially during the fall), very little supplemental watering is needed. The goal is to achieve a system that requires no watering at all throughout the entire year. The wet and mild climate in Seattle seems a perfect match to make this possible. I'm not quite there yet, but am getting closer. Here's what I've got so far, including water usage data and future plans:

The plot is 140 square feet, divided into two equal-sized sections: the experimental north end and the control south end. An adaptation of the hugelkultur mound method, the experimental side is a pit two feet deep filled with a combination of fresh and decayed deciduous logs and branches from my backyard pile at home.

Materials for the sponge garden

As I filled the space with the wood, I mixed in some of the original soil with added blood/bone meal and greensand for nutrient and mineral balance (see Figure below). I call this section the "sponge" garden because the seasonal winter rains soak the woody material, providing consistent, year-around moisture to the growing layer above.

The control side was simply filled with the bulk of the excavated soil. On top, I added a few yards of leaf mulch and compost to both sides. Since then, I've been adding leaf mulch/compost every season to both sides equally while all plant refuse is recycled back into the garden (except for anything with bad pathogens, e.g. garlic rust). My latest favorite amendment mix includes rough/woody compost, coconut husk/coir, earthworm castings, fertilizer (Dr. Earth's 2-4-2/Walt's P-Patch blend) and kelp meal.

I had the soil tested by the University of Massachusetts Amherst in the fall of 2014; the results indicated adequate amounts of nutrients,

minerals and organic matter with a 6.5 pH. I ensure that any added fertilizer is very limited (1/4 of the recommended amount at most), and much of the time I don't add any at all. The tests clearly show there are enough nutrients, so I mainly focus on a fall and late-winter amendment of leaf mulch, compost and earthworm castings.

Garlic and onions do best

The best results from the sponge side are with alliums. With consistent wicking action from the wet material underneath, they thrive -- requiring almost no watering at all, especially if planted during the fall/late winter. This includes garlic, shallots and onions. The control-side alliums noticeably suffer without this effect and are consistently smaller and less vigorous. Deep-rooted plants such as carrots, beets, parsley and kale do very well, even during the heat of the summer, with no watering for several weeks/months.

One particular plant that does better on the control side is the potato. Its roots travel sideways about three feet in diameter, then descend five feet or more. Potatoes prefer an unimpeded path through deep soil, so the control-side growth is better because the logs on the experiment side hinder this downward movement. Other deep-rooted plants such as sunflowers do just fine on both sides.

One thing I've noticed is that more watering also means much faster depletion of organic matter. It's astonishing how quickly the worms, bugs and microorganisms in the soil can work through organic compost. They can go through literally yards of material every season, even for a small area like my plot. This is another advantage to not watering as much, because the mulch on top doesn't break down so readily and therefore keeps its water-retentive qualities a lot longer.

Also, it makes a huge difference to always have something growing in every area of the garden, year-around. The soil food web "party" going on below the soil surface just continues, including the action of roots drawing moisture from deep below.

Data collection: This year I've carefully monitored weeks/months-long periods during the spring and summer to see how much water

was actually used, including nearby Magnolia weather station data (KWASEATT328-WeatherUnderground) for rainfall during that time. I measured the watering rate using a stopwatch and a 5-gallon bucket with tickmarks for gallons used. The east end includes a watering-intensive period for germination and growing seedlings (one day was a 1/4-water session). The rates indicate averages, because many weeks can go by without any watering and/or rainfall.

Here are the results that divide the garden into two halves, east and west, with each 70-square-foot half including an experimental north side and a control south side:

Garden Half: West

Monitoring period: 4/09 - 6/30 (83 days)

Plants: garlic and shallots

Watering frequency: once, on 4/09

Watering duration: 20 minutes

Watering rate: 2.6 gallons/minute (using "shower" setting on hose nozzle, with valve open full)

Total water volume used: 52 gallons

Total watering rates: 0.63 gallons/day, 0.009 gallons/day/square foot

Total rainfall: 3.0 inches

Total rainfall volume: 130 gallons

Total rainfall rates: 1.6 gallons/day, 0.022 gallons/day/square foot

Garden Half: East

Monitoring period: 04/22 - 08/10 (111 days)

Plants: potatoes, onions, beets, carrots, parsley, kale

Watering frequency: six times, 4/22, 5/09, 5/18(quarter), 6/03, 6/06, 6/12

Watering duration: 20 minutes

Watering rate: 2.6 gallons/minute (using "shower" setting on hose nozzle, with valve open full)

Total water volume used: 270 gallons

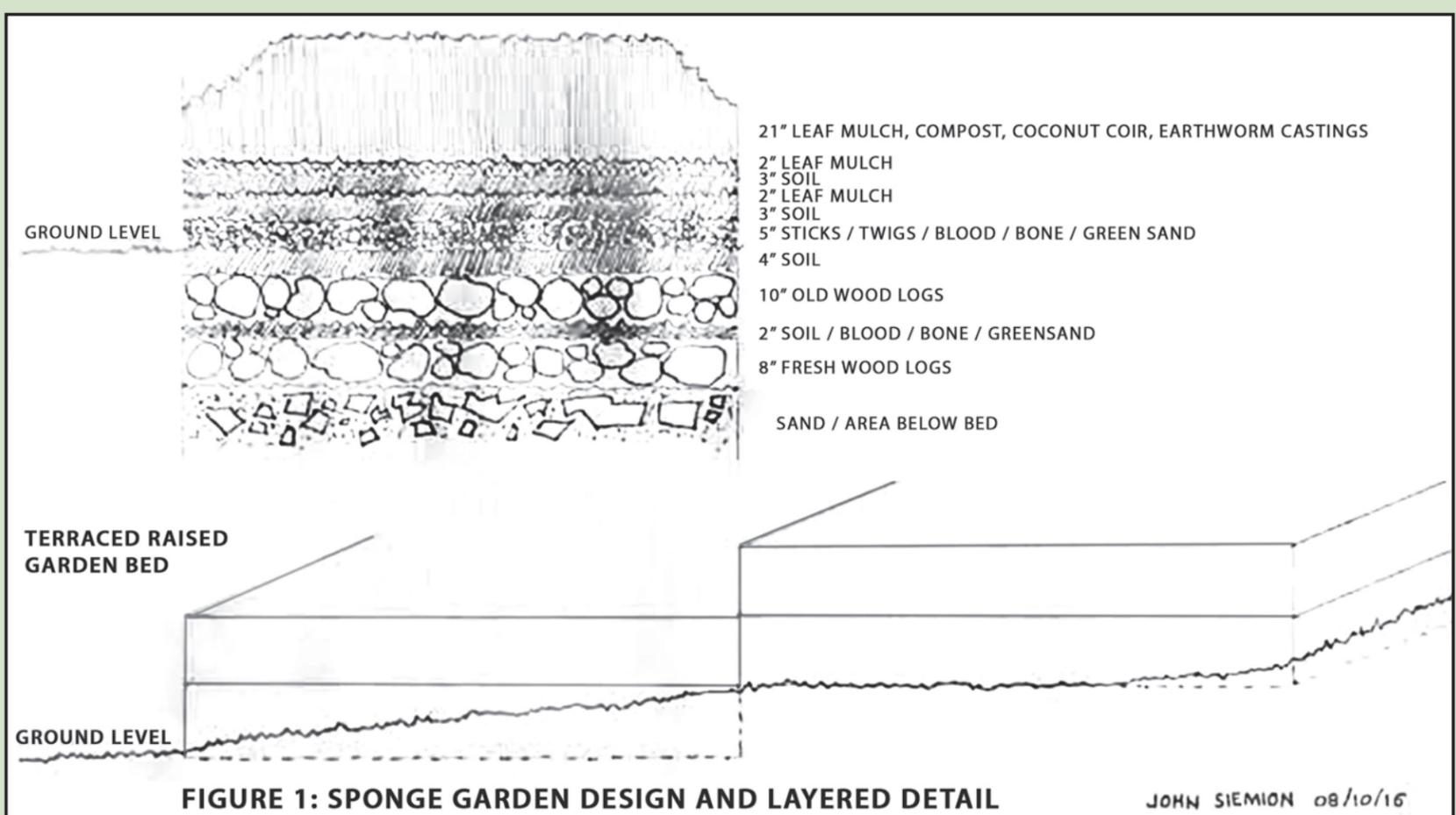
Total watering rates: 2.4 gallons/day, 0.035 gallons/day/square foot

Total rainfall: 3.4 inches

Total rainfall volume: 150 gallons

Total rainfall rates: 1.3 gallons/day, 0.019 gallons/day/square foot

(Continued on page 7)



John Siemion's cross-sectional diagram illustrates the layered composition of his sponge garden.



Ray's Corner

By Ray Schutte,
Interbay P-Patch Gardener

BRASSICA UPDATE

Patch Post readers may remember that I set upon the heretical path of not using crop rotation to overcome club root – and wrote about it in the Spring 2015 issue of the *Post*. I have taken the stance that the best way to avoid diseases caused by soil pathogens is smart organic soil care.

I raised the Ph in my brassica bed to 7.5, added bone meal and worm casings to the plant zone, planted and harvested arugula (and removed the roots from the garden), planted and turned rye grass in the spring, and provided a good organic mulch.

So far things are looking good: the cauliflower is heading and the cabbage is growing steadily. I harvested a 3.5-pound red cabbage; a second one was stolen when it weighed about 3 pounds. I enjoyed some broccoli, and the kale prospers and is headed for winter. It is super in both growth and taste.

Abundance in Thistle P-Patch



The last issue of the P-Patch Post included a late-winter photo of Thistle P-Patch, a three-acre site in South Seattle adjacent to Rainier Avenue and the Link Light Rail Line. Except for a few overwintering crops, the garden was mostly bare. These photos shows the way the P-Patch appeared in August: a thick, nutritious forest of corn, beans, turnips and other greens – many of them vegetables that immigrant gardeners cultivated to feed their families at their former homes in Africa, Central America and the Middle East.



has a Facebook page!

Please visit



GROW: The Power of Gardening

and "like" the page to receive updates about GROW's advocacy work and Seattle's community gardens and orchards.

YES!

I want to help GROW acquire and advocate for community gardens, and preserve and protect our existing community gardens.

Here is my contribution as a:

- FRIEND: \$25-\$34** (pays the fiscal agency fee for one garden for one month)
- GARDEN HELPER: \$35-\$49** (pays the plot rental fee for one low-income gardener)
- SUPPORTER: \$50-\$99** (pays one year of liability insurance for one garden)
- CONTRIBUTOR: \$100-\$249** (funds a GROW tool grant for one garden)
- BENEFACTOR: \$250-\$499** (pays a portion of the property taxes on GROW's gardens)
- PATRON: \$500-\$999** (pays a significant percentage of the annual support for Lettuce Link)
- GARDENING ANGEL: \$1000 or more** (pays for printing one edition of the P-Patch Post)

You may be able to multiply your contribution through your employer's matching gift program. Please check with your Human Resources Department for information and the necessary form. Adobe, Amgen, Bank of America, Boeing, Microsoft, Starbucks and Chase Bank are among the major local employers that match contributions to non-profit organizations.

Please check here if you would like to have a paper copy of your contribution acknowledgement mailed to you rather than receiving an emailed version.

Thank you! For more information, contact us at info@GROWnorthwest.org or call 425.329.1601

GROW is a nonprofit, 501(c) (3) organization and donations are tax deductible to the full amount allowed by law. Our federal tax identification number is 91-1091819.

My contribution is \$ _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email _____

Check here if you want to remain anonymous.

Make your check or money order payable to: "GROW" and mail it to P.O. Box 19748, Seattle, WA 98109.

You can also use a credit card (VISA or MasterCard) to make a contribution to GROW via our secure website: www.GROWnorthwest.org



The *P-Patch Post* is published twice per year by GROW, the nonprofit organization that advocates and provides services for organic community gardens. (GROW was formerly the P-Patch Trust.) The *Post* is produced by volunteers, and GROW welcomes articles, photos and story ideas for future issues. Please send them to p.patch.post@GROWnorthwest.org.



GROW's vision

We see inclusive, vibrant Northwest communities fed by organic gardeners and farmers, and a healthy food culture.

Our mission

We build healthy and diverse communities by:

- Advocating for, managing and funding organic community gardens, urban farms and green spaces
- Providing educational opportunities for growing, sharing and preparing food
- Acquiring and holding land for organic community gardens, urban farms and green spaces.

P-Patch Post volunteers

Alice Burgess, managing editor
alice.b@GROWnorthwest.org
Carolyn Kresser, editorial committee
Joyce Moty, editorial committee

GROW Board of Trustees

Karen Abbey
karen.a@GROWnorthwest.org
Michelle Blume
michelle.b@GROWnorthwest.org

Alice Burgess
alice.b@GROWnorthwest.org
Katie Bulger
katie.b@GROWnorthwest.org

Mark Huston
mark.h@GROWnorthwest.org
Brenda Matter
brenda.m@GROWnorthwest.org

Michael McNutt
michael.m@GROWnorthwest.org
Joyce Moty
joyce.m@GROWnorthwest.org

John Jaffe
jon.j@GROWnorthwest.org
Ray Schutte
ray.s@GROWnorthwest.org
Milton Tam
milton.t@GROWnorthwest.org
Eric Todderud
eric.t@GROWnorthwest.org
Sue Wilkes
sue.w@GROWnorthwest.com

GROW Accountant

Lance LaRowe
llarowe@comcast.net

Lettuce Link liaison

Kathleen Penna
kathellen@solid-ground.org

FRNF (Food Resource Network Federation)

Helen Gabel
heleng@igc.org

P-Patch Program

Rich Macdonald, Program Supervisor
386-0088; rich.macdonald@seattle.gov

Angela Vega-Johnson, Administrative Specialist
615-1787; Angela.Vega-Johnson@seattle.gov

Julie Bryan
Community Garden Coordinator
684-0540; julie.bryan@seattle.gov

Kenya Fredie
Community Garden Coordinator
733-9243; kenya.fredie@seattle.gov

Sandy Pernitz
Community Garden Coordinator
684-0284; sandy.pernitz@seattle.gov

Lisa Uemoto
Community Garden Coordinator
684-0303; lisa.uemoto@seattle.gov

Bunly Yun
Community Garden Coordinator
684-8495; bunly.yun@seattle.gov

The *P-Patch Post* is published by GROW. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of GROW or the P-Patch Program.

Courtland Place P-Patch: *a neighborhood gathering spot*

By Ashley Mouldon, Courtland Place P-Patch

Established in 1999, the Courtland Place P-Patch was built out of the need to reclaim an unused portion of South Spokane Street and to bring together the community and neighbors in the area.

Armed with a Small and Simple Grant from the City of Seattle, a collective of eager neighbors took on the task of building and designing the garden. “The area was overgrown and had a pathway through it. It also was an area where illegal activity was conducted on a regular basis, so clearing it out and putting the land to good use was something the neighborhood was eager to see happen,” says former Courtland Place P-Patch gardener Kevin Dour.

Kevin was part of the original group of gardeners dedicated to turning the plot of land into something enjoyable and productive for the community. “I knew little to nothing about gardening, but I am a civil engineer and project manager, so planning and coordinating the construction of the garden was something I felt I could do.”

Another longtime Courtland Place gardener, Catherine Gribos, also remembers what it was like before the garden was built: “When we started, Courtland was a pretty rough neighborhood. Across the street on the east side of the garden were run-down duplexes that were a hotbed of criminal activity. Where our garden is now located was so overgrown. It took a lot of man-hours to get the garden in shape and ready to garden. Each original gardener had to commit to something like 20 hours in order for the City to designate the land as a P-Patch!”

After the construction of the garden, neighbors began filling out applications in hopes of participating in the P-Patch Program.

Gribos is still an active gardener at Courtland Place, but remembers how different it was when she started: “I had had a fairly large vegetable garden at a previous house, but when I moved to Mount Baker, my yard was marginal for growing. As soon as I saw the sign (for the P-Patch), I applied for a plot. There have been good years and bad years, but at the beginning there was a group of really dedicated gardeners. The first few years were pretty consistent and we

“One year we had three gardeners with cancer, and everyone pitched in to make sure their plots were taken care of and harvested for them.”



The 23 plots in Courtland Place P-Patch, located at 3600 36th Avenue South, have identical raised beds. Gardeners share a cedar tool shed and a space for meetings and other gatherings.

got to know each other quite well. There were several families, so we devoted one plot to a children’s garden. During the summer, the children not only cared for the plot; one of the moms did crafts with them and decorated the garden.”

Today, there are 23 raised beds in the P-Patch, including one designated as a Giving Garden to donate produce to the Rainier Valley Food Bank. This gardening season saw a large turnover of plots, but new, eager gardeners filled in and now there is an energetic mix of both longtime and new gardeners. It still functions as a community “center” where neighboring families bring their children and adults bond over their vegetable patches. As Dour recently said, “It was great to see the plot of land come alive with the activity and chatter of adults working together and

children playing. My saying ‘yes’ to a volunteer activity to fill out a grant application became quite a journey into the community gardening community of Seattle!”

Dour looks forward to joining the P-Patch again in the future, when he has more time for the upkeep and the community. As for Gribos, she is looking forward to the future of Courtland Place, and remembers what it has meant to the people who garden there: “One year we had three gardeners with cancer, and everyone pitched in to make sure their plots were taken care of and harvested for them. I really like the camaraderie of well-attended work parties and events; the social aspect of the garden is important to me.”

As a Courtland Place gardener myself, in my third year at the P-Patch, I am also excited for the continued growth, and look forward to connecting with my neighbors over a head of lettuce or some juicy red beets.

John’s Sponge Garden

(Continued from page 5)

Future steps: I would like to lessen the amount of watering required for germination and seedling growth by using clay balls. Presumably, seeds can be rolled into strawberry-sized balls with a soil/clay/water mixture and then planted with no added water. I think this would probably work best if a living mulch (e.g., white clover) surrounded the planting holes. I would also like to use bulkier material (e.g., wood chips) as compost to slow the breakdown rate. I firmly believe that any nitrogen-depletion issues are fully balanced by the natural, long-term decomposition of chips in healthy soil.

In addition, more efficient watering might be achieved by other systems, such as semi-automated drippers and low-flow emitters. The “shower” setting on the hose nozzle is quick, easy and unobtrusive, but it does have a high flow rate.

The main reasons I haven’t used soaker hose: and related hardware are because they’re a hassle to maintain and move around, and they get in the way of gardening and adding organic matter whenever and however desired. Perhaps I’ll find simple compromise that also allows a way to easily measure the water flow.

After watching plant growth and soil behavior over the two years of this experiment, it’s clear the log-sponge method works well for water retention. It’s also evident that a sponge effect can be created using a large amount of compost at least two feet deep. However, the material below must be very chunky (e.g., wood chips) so it doesn’t break down too quickly, thus maintaining its water-holding capacity.



“I firmly believe that any nitrogen-depletion issues are fully balanced by the natural, long-term decomposition of chips in healthy soil.”



Storm-water runoff: Hazel Heights' environmental impact

By Maria Geokezas
Hazel Heights co-coordinator

Photos by Didi Anstett and Maria Geokezas

The Hazel Heights P-Patch Community Garden in the Fremont neighborhood is one of only a few P-Patch sites with a cistern, and the only one to harvest rainwater from roofs of nearby homes. You might think the most important reason for the cistern is water conservation, but think again! In reality, storm-water runoff is an even more important factor driving our rainwater capture system.

Storm-water runoff can cause serious flooding to private and public property, as well as water quality issues in our local waterways. Many areas in Seattle, including the Fremont neighborhood, route roof drainage into sanitary sewers. This creates an ongoing risk of harm to downstream water due to combined sewage overflow (CSO) during heavy rainstorms before it can be treated. This problem was a motivating factor in pursuing a cistern at Hazel Heights – to protect the fish and other wildlife of Salmon Bay and Puget Sound.

Hazel Heights opened in March 2010 after an arduous process of grant-writing and fundraising. With lofty goals of creating a community gathering spot and promoting sustainable, earth-friendly practices, a concrete cistern was designed to sit under the central plaza.

Capturing runoff water from neighbors' roofs

The cistern is fed by rainwater catchment from nearby neighbors' roofs, diverting it from the sanitary sewers to irrigation use. Any overflow during big storms goes into a separate storm-water drainage system that helps prevent CSOs. The rainwater catchment system and improved alley at the upper edge of the P-Patch were sponsored by the King County WaterWorks Program to demonstrate strategies that help reduce pollution in Puget Sound from storm-water runoff.

The Hazel Heights cistern holds 8,000 gallons of rainwater. It is a small yet important contribution to helping the City of Seattle with its goal of managing 700 million gallons of polluted runoff each year by 2025.

The P-Patch Program's mission envisions helping neighborhoods make connections and improve their surroundings through environmental stewardship.



Local schools use the Hazel Heights cistern project as a teaching example of water conservation, surface water quality, and storm-water management. Posted signage at the site informs gardeners, neighbors, and passers-by of the benefits the cistern provides in managing storm-water runoff to protect our local ecosystem.

The Hazel Heights rainwater-capture system is a success story because of its direct impact on the environment and also through ongoing environmental education. All that hard work was worth it!

For more information about Hazel Heights, please visit our blog. <http://hazelheightspatch.blogspot.com>

The Hazel Heights cistern visually overwhelmed the P-Patch during excavation and construction, but is now much less significant thanks to mature plantings. Gardeners enjoy the seating on top of the cistern, especially because it offers views of Elliott Bay to the west.



NON-PROFIT
ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SEATTLE, WA
PERMIT NO. 1531



CHEF IN THE GARDEN



The plaza at Interbay P-Patch was transformed into an elegant al fresco dining area for the annual Chef in the Garden evening in July. Tom Douglas Catering again provided an innovative and delicious meal, including a first course of artfully arranged garden-fresh vegetables. The Chef event raises funds for GROW, which publishes this newspaper, subsidizes plot fees for low-income P-Patch gardeners, and provides other vital services to ensure the continuation of community gardening in Seattle.



GROW
P.O. Box 19748
Seattle, WA 98109