

# MCGA Monthly Newsletter



This is the last edition of the year. We look forward to seeing you next year and Happy Holidays!

NOVEMBER 2022

Website: [Marymoorgarden.org](http://Marymoorgarden.org) Email: [mcgaboard@gmail.com](mailto:mcgaboard@gmail.com)

## A Note from the President...

Hi MCGA Gardeners! Thank you for a great season! I hope you each were able to get great harvests and learn something new this year.

**Return Registration** We are working to finalize our records and invite returning gardeners to register for next year. This year will be easier than ever. If you are a gardener in good standing, you will receive a link to the website where you can pay directly. No more applications or forms needed. **We plan to send emails in the next couple of weeks, so be on the lookout! Return registration is due December 31st at the latest.**

**Autopay Option** You will also have the choice this year to Auto-Renew by subscribing. If you plan to be at the garden for years to come and remain in good standing, this will automate your return registration each year by charging your credit card during the registration season. If you go out of good standing, we will cancel the subscription so you are not charged when you should not be. This is optional-you are welcome to only pay for the upcoming year.

**New Gardeners** New gardeners, as usual, will be allowed to apply for a plot or bed starting January 1st. This year, though, if someone volunteered with us and does not have a plot, they will receive the application on December 28th. Feel free to share the news with those you think would be interested in gardening with us.

-Michael L

## Featured Board Member -Betsy G



I think my love of “home grown” began on my grandparent's farm in West Virginia. They canned everything they grew and kept them in jars neatly lined up in a secret cupboard under the stairs. And I have always loved snap dragons-they grew by the hundreds around their house. I can still smell the juniper, lilacs and lavender and the sensory memory gives me a warm hug.

Our family started gardening in every nook around our house in Chicago like grandma did. Today our eldest is a farmer, inspired at 5 years old by yellow tomatoes that “magically” turned into yellow jelly. After 28 years, we moved to the PNW and since our property is shaded, we opted to garden at Marymoor about 5 years ago. Come by and visit plots I 9 and I 10 on the south road where we watch birds and dogs alike!

I recently retired and I swear I have no idea how I did all the gardening, volunteering at a hospital, freelance calligraphy or even laundry when I worked full time! I love the freedom now, especially being able to go to the garden anytime. I am happy to be a mentor, serve on the Finance Committee and as Editor-in-Chief of this Newsletter. I treasure my experiences, my husband, friends and food here but I must thank grandma for the early inspiration!

## Gardener Spotlight! - Mia S.



Although I've been a (nearly) lifelong resident of the Eastside, it wasn't until accompanying a friend to the Dog Park at Marymoor 5 years ago that we discovered the PPatch! Deciding to explore, we walked through the garden and I immediately fell in love with the beauty, creativity, productivity, and whimsy of the gardens here. Having always lived in heavily wooded areas, the novelty of being able to garden in full sun - combined with a desire to eat the healthiest food available - was an irresistible opportunity. I applied for a full plot, but quickly got cold feet! I knew next to nothing about vegetable gardening! It was only with then-registrar Bev's encouragement and support that I didn't reduce it to a half plot. Within 2 years, that single plot expanded to two. I'm located in plots D6&7.

MCGA makes gardening so easy! Access to wheelbarrows, compost, & green bins are all so convenient, but it's the friendly, generous advice and inspiration from fellow gardeners that makes working here so special. Flowers such as dahlias, zinnias, poppies, cosmos, snapdragons, knockout roses, and a proliferation of high scent sweet peas (which are my bliss!) have come to inhabit more and more of my space. Yet I continue to grow the basics (tomatoes, peas, radishes, kale, chard, onions, leeks, carrots, herbs & berries! In general, the best advice I received was when Gia told me to "Watch what Michelle does, and do that." :)

I appreciate the opportunity and satisfaction of helping plant crops and harvest during FB work parties. Sharing my garden of tasty treats and beautiful blooms with my grandbabies is my absolute happy place!

## Feature Article: Food Preservation, Seal Safety - Robin B.

This month we asked Robin to share some information about how and why checking your canning seals often is important. Robin is a past MCGA President and long time gardener. She's been preserving vegetables, fruits and herbs for many years. She and her family garden in plots A 9-11.

New to canning? How to check seal safety while storing.

Some canners store their jars with the sealing bands on. Other canners will stack a row of jars on top of another to save space. And while that might be okay for someone with experience in detecting spoilage and falsely sealed lids, I want to convince new canners to **never stack your Ball/Kerr-style jars** - and to **always store them with the sealing bands removed**.

### Detecting a bad seal:

If you practice canning long enough, you will eventually produce a bad seal that festers during storage. These faulty seals do not clearly fail during canning. Those failures can take weeks or months to become obvious. And the spoilage does not always produce visible mold or bacteria.

- Before using any home canned item after storage, check the seal. Pick it up by the lid to make sure that the seal is strong before using its contents. And please - never taste the jar's contents if the lid comes off in your hand.
- Storing jars with their sealing bands adds downward pressure on the seal. This can mask a false seal and make it hard to detect. Similarly, stacking jars on top of one another can mask bad seals, too.

### Tips for identifying and avoiding a false seal:

- After removing jars from the canner, leave them to sit at least twelve to twenty-four hours with the bands. Then remove the bands and pick up each jar by the seal to be sure it stays on (see photo below). Be bold with this test. It is a little soul crushing to do this after working so hard. If the lid

comes off, though, the seal will have otherwise failed later on during storage.

- Go through your jars and periodically test them by picking each one up by the seal. That is the easiest way to find a false seal before visible mold or bacteria appears inside of the jar.

And please - to make detecting a false seal easier, always store the jars without their bands and do not stack them on top of one another.

I hope you have a wonderful fall and winter season. See you in the spring!



### *What to harvest now: Celebrate Fall!*

All those lushly robust kale plants will keep you in greens most of the winter, even after the first freezes. Cold snaps will turn your brussel sprouts and parsnips sweet and flavorful.

Continue digging potatoes. Store them in a dark, dry, cool place like an unheated garage or basement. The cooler, the better.

Here come all those beautiful winter squashes and pumpkins we've been waiting for. It's a delight to walk the gardens and see the huge array of varieties, colors, shapes and sizes that our members grow - time to enjoy!

### *What to plant now:*

November ends the season for most of us. Frost and freezing temps are on the way and you've earned some rest after this extended fall season!

If you're feeling intrepid and want to squeeze in a little more gardening, now is the time to cover your late crops like lettuce, spinach, cilantro and even carrots. Build a hoop house over those rows or just spread fabric and anchor with rocks, bricks, or landscape staples:



***YOU CAN STILL ORDER AND PLANT GARLIC, SHALLOT, TULIPS, DAFFODILS, AND OTHER FALL BULBS!***

If you want garlic next year, November is not too late to plant. Some **FB** favorite garlic & shallot sources:

<https://www.johnnyseeds.com/vegetables/garlic/>  
<https://www.harriseseeds.com/collections/shallot-sets>

<https://territorialseed.com/collections/hardneck-garlic>

<https://irisheyesgardenseeds.com/#>

(Irish Eyes is a long-time local FB favorite located in Thorp WA - check them out for potatoes too!)

Consider adding some tulip, daffodil, and many other flower bulbs in Nov and even early December. You know you'll be thrilled to see some gorgeous color in early spring!

A few good resources:

<https://www.whiteflowerfarm.com/tulip-bulbs-flowers>

<https://www.whiteflowerfarm.com/daffodil-bulbs-flowers>

<https://www.easytogrowbulbs.com/>

<https://www.tulips.com/category/spring-blooming-flower-bulbs> (Mount Vernon WA)



If you prefer not to lay down straw, leaves, or other weed barriers; you may want to consider planting cover crops.



Field Peas



Crimson Clover



Hairy Vetch

Cover crops can be beneficial in many ways, typically by protecting and improving the soil, suppressing weeds, and attracting beneficial insects. However, no single crop can provide all the benefits so are usually planted in combination. For in-depth information about the best use of cover crops please see this great WSU article:

<https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2015/06>

The Eco Bin has been paved!! And the Bulletin Board has been corked (thanks Amy C.!).



*Follow the Food Bank:*

*Wow - What a fantastic season!!!*



**Please give yourselves a huge pat on the back for such OUTSTANDING volunteer work in the FB gardens this season!!!**

Week after week our volunteers consistently filled every signup slot - showing up faithfully with cheerful faces, tremendous enthusiasm, and strong backs!

Thank you for contributing produce donations from your personal garden bounty, for supporting the FB managers helping to keep the beds watered, and for giving extra service hours far beyond the minimum.

Special thanks to Michelle U. and all the drivers who made daily pickups & deliveries throughout the season! Lisa M. and Ben C. provided herculean efforts packing, hauling, then unloading several hundred lbs. of crated produce at a time, every single week after the big work parties for months. Now, that's a workout!

It's been a truly amazing season! All your hard work is greatly appreciated by the FB committee, not to mention of huge importance to the Hopelink Food Bank Community food insecurity.

*Have you been watching our DONATION poundage to local Food Banks grow ?*

*The FB managers made "best guess"*

*estimates that ranged between 6,000 and 8,000 pounds for 2022.*

**GRAND TOTAL: 7,031 lbs!**

*That's 3.6 TONS!!!*

*Here's how the crops broke down by type and poundage:*

Radishes	217	Broccoli	170
Leeks	429	Onions	657
Cabbage	379	Beans	510
Beets	411	Cucumbers	404
Potatoes	1037	Carrots	170
Turnips	208	Tomatoes	169
Peppers	58	Tomatillos	149
Cilantro	76		
Lettuce, Spinach, Chard			438
Zucchini, Summer Squash			749
Winter Squash/Pumpkins			358

\*Add'l produce types not itemized in the subtotals above include:

Assorted leafy greens (collards, mustards, kale, and choi)

Assorted herbs/spices (garlic, sage, rosemary, thyme, mint and oregano)

\*These items are weighed and added to the final total, but in quantities that are not itemized here.

*Each fall and winter the FB team plans for the season ahead. We are in that process now. We could certainly plant to maximize total poundage (i.e. more potatoes, squash, and beets). Instead, we concentrate on specified Hopelink customer food and dietary requests; leafy greens, peppers, tomatillos, and herbs. They may be lightweight but are mighty in dietary diversity and nutrition!*

*No further official FB Work Parties until next Spring. Thank you everyone!*

## *Garden Reminders (PLEASE READ)*

### ❖ IMPORTANT WINTER NOTICE:

The rains have returned. From now throughout the winter months, the South Road (by the dog park) and the Back Lawn area which runs the length of the Pet Memorial Wall, will be water-saturated and unstable. **Please refrain from driving on the South Road and parking on the Back Lawn - it causes terrible damage to the road and grass. Do not schedule deliveries that utilize these areas without authorization of the Board and Park Office.**

- ❖ **REMINDER:** K.C. is issuing parking tickets again! Your “MCGA watering can” sticker only allows you to park in our garden parking lot. *You must still get a \$1.00 daily pass.* Even better, BUY a seasonal parking pass from K.C. It's easy online: <https://kingcounty.gov/services/parks-recreation/parks/parks-and-natural-lands/popular-parks/marymoor/marymoorparkingpermits.aspx>
- ❖ Return all tools and wheelbarrows after use DO NOT leave them in your plots.
- ❖ Please remember to accurately enter your work party hours (either for FB or Grounds) on **BOTH** the **sign up sheet and the website**. If you need assistance, please ask!

## *MCGA Board Meetings*

We welcome your attendance at the monthly board meetings. Learn about issues and decisions being made about our garden. Meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday of each month (except December) at 7pm, via [Zoom](#).

- November 16

## *Fun Facts: Our Crazy Weather*

We reported last spring that it was the **wettest** May since 1948 and boy did we feel every drop. In addition, May and June were unseasonably cool (avg. temps were around 55-65 degrees), and planting was unavoidably delayed.

Then came the **Summer of 2022**-- June 21-September 21 where we experienced the **driest** 3 month period on record. We saw only 0.5” of rain when the average is usually 2.98” of rain in that time period. And as we all know, it did not rain again until October 21! In addition, we hit a new record of 13 days over 90 degrees in a calendar year. AND we had the longest consecutive 90 degree or warmer stretch in recorded history. \*Please see below where we have tracked the garden's water usage in this crazy, warm year!

Now they say November is the wettest month here in the PNW with an average of 17.6 days of rain with a minimum of 0.4”, but our wettest season is upon us, October 9-May 2, with a greater than 35% chance of rain daily.

The National Climate Prediction Center forecasts above-average temps over the next few weeks and we are entering our 3rd La Niña winter. It usually brings cooler temps and above-average rain and snowfall.

Whatever our weather brings, we all have to find a way to get through it. Be prepared-wear the right outerwear, layer for warmth, wear your boots, or galoshes, hats, gloves and don't forget your-



-Stats courtesy of King 5 News Weather Blog, google & weatherspark

## Produce Pounding Data

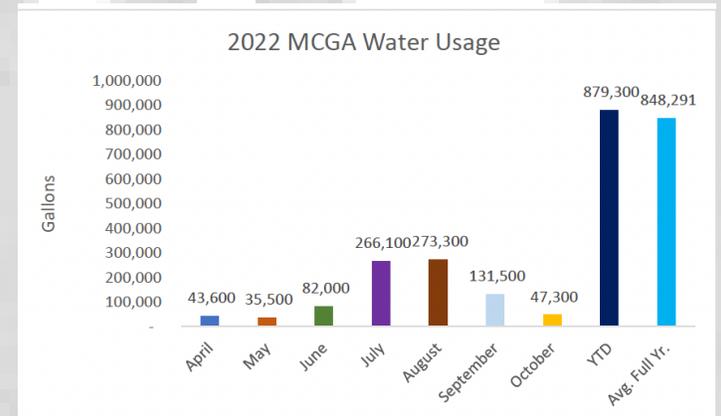
-Compiled by John T.

### 2022 Food Bank Donations to date:

May	19.0 lbs
June	428.5 lbs
July	475.5 lbs
August	2504.25 lbs
September	1779.5 lbs
October	939.0 lbs
YTD	7031.0 lbs

## MCGA Water Usage

-Compiled by John T.



## Historical Water Usage

- Data compiled by John T.-THANKS!

### October YTD Water Usage 2019-2022 (gallons)

2019	642,900
2020	697,000
2021	973,407
2022	879,300

### 2022 Water Usage by Month (gallons)

April	43,600
May	35,500
June	82,000
July	266,100
August	273,300
September	131,500
October	47,300
YTD	879,300

## Mentors By Section:

Carol	pinecreekgal@hotmail.com	Mentor Coordinator
Kirby	kirby.cartwright@marymoorgarden.org	A and B
Betsy	betsygraham57@gmail.com	C
Michelle	interscapesinc@hotmail.com	D and H
Hilary	hacartwright@gmail.com	E and F
Barbara	bbmoo@icloud.com	G and Z
Didi	didemnokta@gmail.com	I
Anna	Asczan@gmail.com	X and Y

## HELP WANTED:

★ Tech Specialists! We need you and your expertise! Please contact Michael at:

[mcgaboard@gmail.com](mailto:mcgaboard@gmail.com)

*PS-We would love to hear from you regarding our inaugural*

*Newsletter year. Please send comments to:*

*[betsygraham57@gmail.com](mailto:betsygraham57@gmail.com) until 11/15/2022. Thank you!*