

# Rice Street Gardens (RSG) 2019 Report

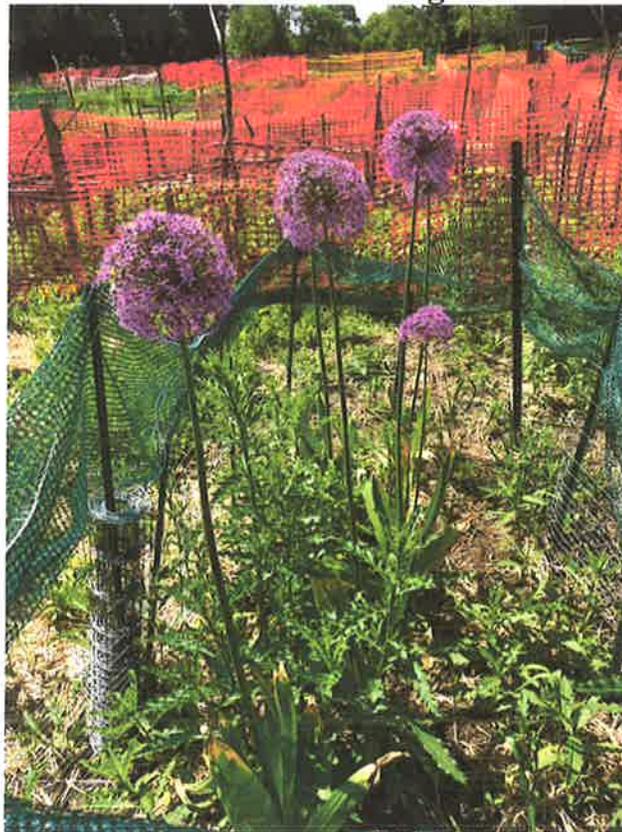
## **Introduction and Summary**

The fourth year of the Rice Street Gardens has continued this valuable resource for the people of the North Metro area, primarily Maplewood, Roseville, and St. Paul. There were 247 family plots this year. The ethnic makeup remained about the same: Nepali/Bhutanese 95, Karen/Burmese 54, Hmong 17, Others 7, and English speakers 62 (although with numerous first languages). We began the season with \$5883 in our checking account and ended with \$7195.

Changes in 2019 were monthly health checks courtesy of the Open Cities Health Center and Do Good Roseville, discontinuing the garden monitor program, and supporting the Rice/Larpenteur Alliance with a big Fall Festival at the site. Looking ahead, Galilee and RSG received a 3-year grant for a total of \$11,000 from the national office of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). We have also spoken with one contractor who is interested in developing the site with housing while maintaining the gardens.

We are particularly thankful for all the physical, monetary, and moral support we receive from St. Paul Regional Water Services, Galilee Lutheran, McCarrons Pub and Grill, the cities of Maplewood and Roseville.

## **A New Season Begins**

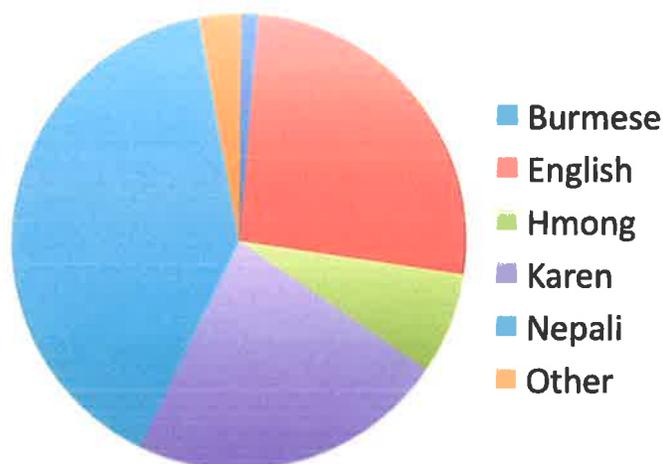


## **2019 Startup**

Getting the garden started each year is one of our most difficult tasks. Through emails and our website we instructed all returning gardeners how to sign-up online in February and then accepted new gardener applications in March. All gardeners were then asked to attend training sessions in one of 3 languages, to receive wristbands, and pay their \$30 entrance fee (up from \$20) in late March and April. That part was difficult, and we had to rerun the sessions 4 or 5 times to get to everyone. By June 1 the gardens were well underway. This was a very rainy year, which made both gardening and garden maintenance difficult.

## **Ethnic Makeup**

The ethnic makeup remained about the same this year, but with a drop off of Karen speakers: Nepali/Bhutanese 95, Karen/Burmese 54, Hmong 17, Spanish 6, Swahili 2, and English speakers 62. Many of the English speakers are Chinese, Somali, East Africans, or Hmong who now speak excellent English and identify as American.



## **Issues and Progress**

We did recruit a team of garden monitors to be a presence at the garden during the harvest, but program ineffectiveness and difficulty in hiring monitors led us to discontinue that program. Loss at the gardens due to human theft, deer, rabbits, mice and bugs remains a concern.

The garden founders (Sherry, Katheryn, and Ron) are dealing a bit with management fatigue. Communication with the gardeners is a struggle. That is why we are delighted to report that the \$11,000 Domestic Hunger grant from the ELCA will help add both administrative and translator support next year.

## **Budget**

We began 2018 with \$5,883 at North Star Bank. Galilee church is the fiscal agent for RSG, which manages the gardens as a special account. After collecting a \$30 fee from all gardeners we transferred \$6000 to the account. The largest expenses are for the biffies, water system maintenance, and buying and repairing mowers and tools. We ended the year with \$7195 in the account.

## **Lease Extension**

By this report we are officially requesting that our St Paul Board of Water Commissioners lease be extended through 2020. Thank you again for all the physical, monetary, and moral support we

receive from our gardeners, St. Paul Regional Water Services, Galilee Lutheran Church, McCarrons Pub and Grill, and the cities of Maplewood and Roseville.



Health Checkups



The Rice/Larpeur Fall Festival

