

Rice Street Gardens (RSG) 2017 Report

Introduction and Summary

The second year of Rice Street Gardens was quite successful. The garden expanded from 240 plots to 260 by adding new edge areas. Fences became taller this year to keep out pests, and gardener structures more amazing. A “Garden Leadership Team” was established with members from each of the main ethnic groups to help with communications and planning. Several workdays and potluck lunches helped people get together and share their food. A beekeeper from the University of Minnesota added a beehive near the gardens, and we participated in the Rice Street Parade for the first time. Financial support from the St. Paul Area Lutheran Synod, Thrivent Financial, the Kiwanis Club, Prince of Peace Lutheran, and several individuals, as well as almost 100% collection of the \$20 plot fees, helped get us through the year with a \$4932 surplus. In October this year we got the “Governor’s Certificate of Commendation” from the Minnesota Horticultural Society and we were highlighted on a KSTP TV story (Google: Minnesota moment community garden)

Looking ahead, we hope to expand into some remaining open areas of the St. Paul Area Water System (SPAWS) land that we are leasing. We are also helping other churches to establish gardens by consulting with them. An wristband system will be used to help protect garden areas from pilfering and so gardeners can establish more friendships and work together in their areas. In 2018, we will also be using a totally online reservation system for the first time.

We are particularly thankful for all the physical, monetary, and moral support we receive from SPAWS, Galilee Lutheran, Roseville, McCarrons Pub and Grill, and Maplewood.

Ta blü (Thank you in Karen).



2017 Startup

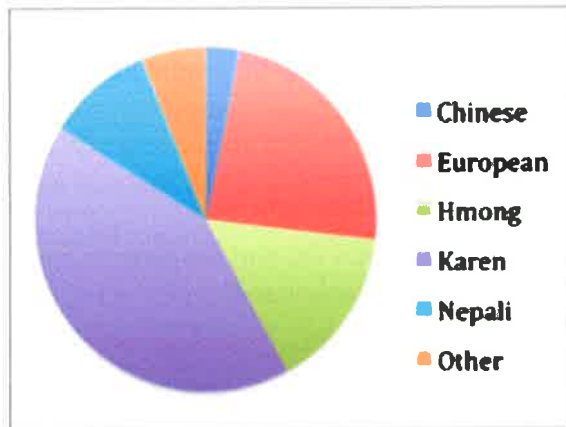
The **garden founders** Ron Peterson from Galilee Lutheran church, our fiscal agent, and 2 local community leaders, Katheryn Schneider and Sherry Sanders meet nearly every Monday morning to plan the week’s activity. We got **approval** from the SPRWS Board in November to continue the garden in 2017.

We held meetings with potential gardeners in February and March 2017, collected fees and had everyone sign rule agreements. In April we had general workdays to prepare the 2-acre site for gardening. Around May 1, specific plots were assigned and the gardeners went to work on their plots.

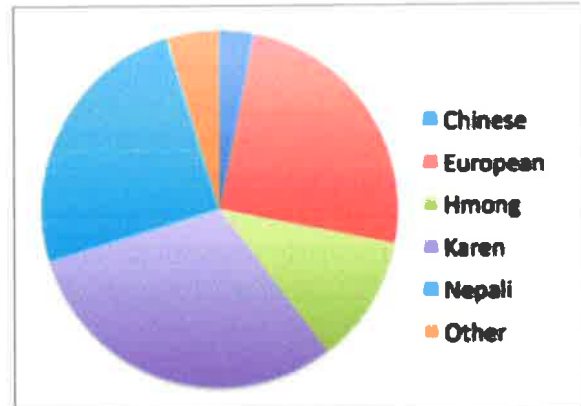
Ethnic Makeup

About 50 gardeners did not return from 2016 and we had a waiting list of around 100 people in March. Also, a large number of Nepali moved into the area around the garden and their participation at the garden grew this year, as shown in the chart below. About 10 distinct first languages are spoken. The "other" ethnic category on the chart includes Latinos, Liberians, Somalis, Congolese, and several others. The gardeners live mostly in St. Paul, Roseville, and Maplewood.

2016 Ethnic Chart



2017 Ethnic Chart



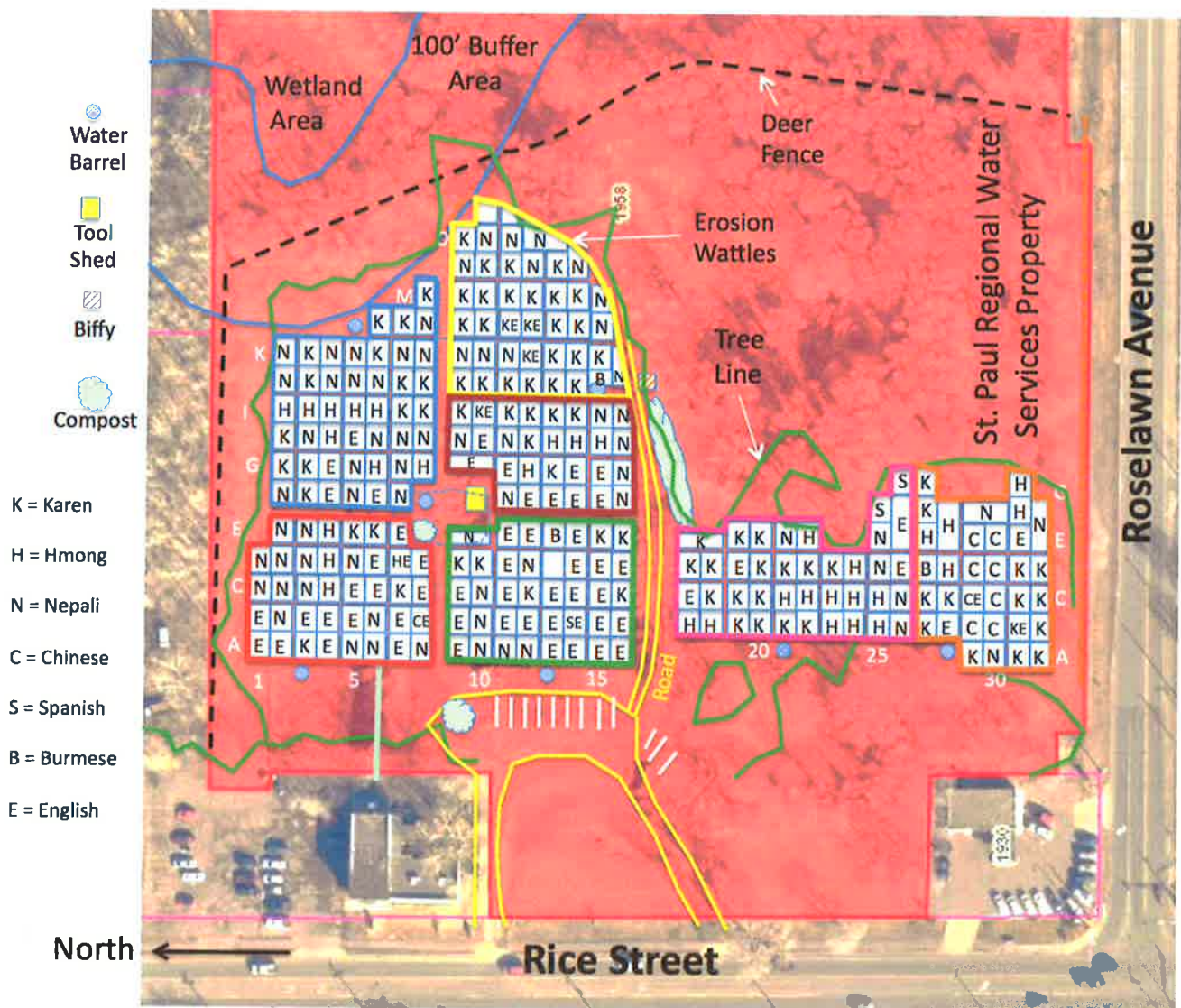
Communications and Leadership

During the summer we enlisted several people who were bilingual from each of the main cultures to help us with communications and other tasks. Our goal is to train this group to become the new leadership team. Here is the current list:

Chinese	Yong Long	Zou	612-979-5306	ylzou98@yahoo.com
English	Katheryn	Schneider	651-485-3856	katheryn.l.schneider@gmail.com
English	Ron	Peterson	651-483-2394	Ronald.peterson1@mac.com
English	Sherry	Sanders	651-772-3311	ibmgirlx@aol.com
English	Consetta	McDonald	612-296-8481	cmcdonald1102@gmail.com
English	Abraham	Watson	651-489-7905	candace.robinson@saintpaul.edu
English	Pastor Dana	Nelson	651-488-6769	dnelson.galilee@gmail.com
Hmong	Kelly	Thao	763-412-6626	vang40001@gmail.com
Hmong	Song	Thao	651-331-1498	songsthao@yahoo.com
Karen	Kaw	Wah	612-479-3749	kawwah474@gmail.com
Karen	Klaer	Paw	651-675-7149	hogepee21@gmail.com
Karen	Lwie	Eh	651-363-5595	nithaw28@gmail.com
Karen	Eh Hey Hser	Win	612-666-4041	ewin@caprw.org
Nepali	Kumar	Tamang	434-806-3015	kumartamang2517@mail.com
Nepali	Devi	Karki	651-434-7872	devikarki2013@gmail.com

General Garden Work

Continuing work during the year was easier because of volunteers. For example, a mowing team of six people shared that work. Others took responsibility for filling the water tanks and turning the compost. We requested and received compost weekly from Roseville as well as some gravel to improve low wet areas. We still struggle with pests: Japanese beetles, mice, rabbits, deer, and people. Pilfering by people (we think mostly from outside the garden) is very annoying when food is stolen just as it becomes ripe. To deter this activity we have put up no trespassing signs and security cameras. In addition, next year we will have colorful wristbands for all the official families so we can easily spot intruders. Here is a map of the designated areas and general garden layout.



Budget

Our income and expenses for RSG were much lower than 2016, because most of the big startup costs are finished. Thank you again to the Saint Paul Area Synod, Thrivent, the Kiwanis Club, and Prince of Peace Lutheran for your generous financial support. We ended the year with \$4,932 surplus, which may enable some serious improvements next year (expansion into new areas, and workable deer fence, etc.)

LINE ITEMS	ACTUAL 2016	2017 PLAN	2017 ACTUAL	COMMENTS	2018 PLAN
REVENUE/INCOME					
Galilee Garden Fund	8312	0	0		0
Plot Fees (\$20 EACH)	2560	2500	5250	All fees paid this year	5000
Grants:	4920	1500	500	Saint Paul Area Synod	
			1139	Thrivent Choice Individuals	1250
			1000	Prince of Peace Lutheran	
			250	Kiwanis Club	
			250	Thrivent Action Team	
Balance from Previous Year		1555	1555		4932
Total Income	15792	5555	9944		11182
Expenses/Costs					
Conditional Use Permit	1696	0	0		0
Water System Items	6333	1150	557	System turn on and off, chain	500
Plot Stakes & tags	1145	300	427	More new stakes and tags than planned	400
Tools	140		86		100
Deer Fence	780	200	0		0
Wrist Bands	0	0	0		300
Tool Shed	289		0		0
Rototiller and chipper	882	400	0		200
Mower, repair, & gas	351		354	2 workable used mowers	300
Events & food	175	250	257	4 or 5	300
Signs and Bullitin Board	223	100	359	No trespassing signs	0
Portable Restroom	763	800	1177	Biffs	1177
Picnic Tables		0	405	3 new picnic tables	260
Miscellaneous Items	1460	1450	1390		1450
Total Expense	14237	4650	5012		4987
NET INCOME (LOSS)	1555	905	4932		6195

Looking ahead

By this report we are officially requesting that our St Paul Board of Water Commissioners lease be extended through 2018.

We have developed a "Google Forms" document so that all the gardeners next year can sign up online, beginning in February for returning gardeners, and in March for new applicants. We will have colorful wrist bracelets for each family so we can identify "official gardeners." There seems to be a very large demand for garden plots such as ours, so we are helping Lakeview Lutheran organize a garden for about 50 new gardeners. We also will consider expanding our garden into a relatively treeless area to the south of the road near the back of the garden. We would need a plan and approval by Maplewood for that expansion.

Next year, we want to do a better job of teaching the rules and norms we expect from the gardeners by having several instruction meetings in each of the key languages. All of our past meetings, perhaps 50 per year, have been at Galilee Lutheran, so we plan to give Galilee \$1000 for use of the church facility in 2018.

We have attached a DVD movie with an aerial overview of the garden and our favorite photos (some of which are shown below). The RSG has been put to bed for the winter now, but it was a wonderful year. A final thank you to all the gardeners and supporters who have made the Rice Street Gardens a valuable addition to our area.

Respectfully submitted by Katheryn Schneider, Sherry Sanders, and Ron Peterson



