



Portsmouth Community Garden – September Newsletter

A place to grow

With cooler weather on the way, the Portsmouth Community Garden is in a constant state of change. The tomatoes continue and the beans abound ... we also have squash and pumpkins proliferating in various plots. Thank you to all who shared their surplus harvest. We delivered **200+ pounds** of fresh produce to Gather since we started that program and know many individual gardeners continue to drop off extra veggies to the Portsmouth Senior Activity Center.



Action Items

- **Gardening Next Season?** – If you are eligible and plan to keep your plot for next year, take no action now. You will receive a request for sign up and payment in early 2023. If you do not plan to garden, [please let us know immediately](#) and no later than the end of the day on **Sunday, October 2**. This will enable us to finalize build out plans and advise future gardeners on the wait list.
- **Same Bed, New Year** – You will be assigned the same bed for the 2023 season. Expect a notification for 2023 payment and a kick-off information session in the spring. Two of the 8x16 beds will be free and available to swap on a first come basis.
- **Last Call to Donate Surplus Harvest** – **Sunday, September 25** marks the last day the Gather cooler will be out to collect surplus harvest. If interested, continue to drop off extras at the Portsmouth Senior Activity Center at 125 Cottage Street from 9-5 Monday through Friday or 8:30-10:30 weekends. Thank you to all who participated as every little bit helps!
- **Sign up for Work Days** – We want to make it easy for you to remain eligible for membership for the 2023 season. Register via the [sign-up form](#) now and note the newly added opportunities. As a reminder, all current members must complete three work day shifts of two hours each. If you are in danger of becoming ineligible, you received notification. If you did not receive a reminder email, you are all set and eligible for next season. Contact jennifercotrupi@gmail.com with any questions.
- **Survey Says ...** – Watch for the end of season survey and please plan to provide your feedback so that we can learn from our inaugural season and make improvements as necessary. We will provide a synopsis of the survey responses once reviewed.

- **Knotweed Plan** – Thank you to all who helped pull and flag knotweed. Please remember to leave the yellow/orange flags in your garden when you clear your plot for the end of the season. The Board of Directors will conduct a careful plot review this fall and spring to ensure we caught all of the knotweed.



End of Season Celebration

You received an invitation for the End of Season celebration on Sunday, September 25. Please RSVP to that invitation for the **Sunday, October 30 event**.

From **10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**, we will meet at the garden to put the plots to bed and clean up the area for the winter. At noon, we will gather for a potluck lunch to celebrate the success of our first season. Plan to bring an item to share, perhaps from garden ingredients!

*Garden beds remain open until **Saturday, November 19**.*



Phase 2 Updates

Board of Directors members continue to fundraise and apply for grants to continue to grow the garden.

Note the following updates:

- We submitted a proposal for our garden shed that will house shared tools, a notice board, and more. After that priority, we'll work on a gazebo with picnic tables, a gutter system, and rain barrels. More to come!
- We look forward to scheduling build out days in the Spring to complete the total 75-90 beds to get people off the Wait List and into the garden. As garden members, you will receive the invitation to volunteer. The initial build out events were quite fun! Volunteers built the beds and conducted "wheel barrow" brigades to fill them with soil.
- We want to give a major "shout out" to garden member, **Shawn Parkhouse**, who helped us gain entrée to the Whole Foods Community First Grant. We submitted the application for the grant, which will help with the Phase 2 build out as well as Phase 3 plans to develop educational and community outreach programs. Winners are announced in November. Thank you, Shawn!

If the company you work for has grant programs, you know of someone at a local company who might want to support us, or you know an individual who may want to support the garden with a donation, [please let us know](#). Garden members with connections to Bank of America and Fidelity made grant connection for our inaugural season! If you'd like to make a donation, visit [our website](#) and while you are there, check out all the donors, small and large, who have helped to date.



Compost Bin Reminders

- **Don't Bury the Thermometer** – The compost thermometer lets us track the temperature of the compost pile. The ideal “cooking” temperature is 135-degrees and the 150-degree range is even better. When you add your garden waste to the bin, **pull the thermometer out of the way so you don't cover it up**. Thank you!
- **The Two-Inch Rule** – Place any garden waste including leaves, stems cut into two-inch lengths, flowers, and rotten produce into the designated bin.
- **No Roots or Weeds** – Please do NOT dispose of the roots of your plants in the compost bins. This is a precaution for this season to reduce the chance of spreading knotweed. Also, continue to take home any weeds for disposal.



What Is a Cover Crop?

Some garden members asked about putting in cover crops for the off season. That is not an option for this winter as we continue to monitor the knotweed situation. A cover crop is a form of crop rotation that helps put nutrients back in the soil along with other benefits. The cover crop stays in the soil over the winter and is tilled into the soil in the spring. Read the article [18 Cover Crops for Raised Beds](#) to learn more.



Member Spotlight

Stop by garden plot 2A to meet **Mike Reilly**.

New Portsmouth Resident

In April of 2022, my wife, Eileen, and I moved to Portsmouth from New York City suburb of Long Island to be closer to our grandchildren in Somerville, MA. While readying for the move in 2021, I read about the garden online and signed up knowing that my new condo home would not allow garden plots. I feel fortunate to have gotten in on the ground floor!

Background

Eileen and I are both retired from executive jobs in the financial markets communications field, mine allied mainly with Reuters, now Thomson Reuters, where I began work as an economic news editor and correspondent. Until 2020, I consulted and taught business writing and public speaking.

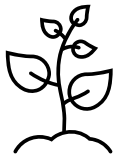
What are you most excited about growing this year?

Cucumbers, tomatoes, and snap peas are my go-to crops and they are doing very well this season. I also have a dozen herbs growing in deck boxes at home.

Fun when not gardening

Away from the garden, I enjoy exploring the Seacoast, birdwatching, photography, hiking, and being a remote volunteer Board Member at the [Seatuck Environmental Association](#), the leading wildlife conservation group on Long Island. Eileen and I spend the winter months at a small condo in Florida, where this year I look forward to becoming the regular pro bono announcer and emcee for the Naples Concert Band, a throwback to an early career in broadcasting.

All of these activities take a back seat to the grandchildren whom we see about every three weeks. They love Grandpa's cucumbers ...



Member Photos

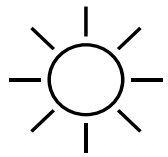
Gather Drop Bounty

Vegetable Medley
(Debra Kam photo credit)

Pollinator Magnet
(Mike Reilly photo credit)



Garden Members Rock!



Laura Gunning



Daniel Riedlinger



Judy Miller



Our Mission

To create a community space where individuals and local organizations can grow food in a peaceful, respectful and inclusive environment



Find us on Instagram and Facebook –
search “portsmouthcommunitygarden.”

communitygarden603@gmail.com

portsmouthgarden.org

Thank you for helping us grow!

Send your [garden photos or content for future editions](#) of the newsletter.

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