

## Sustainable Pacific Grove Community Garden Annual Report-2022

The Pacific Grove Community Garden continues to provide its 40 members a special place for growing healthy food, exercise and social contacts. Considered an “essential service” during the pandemic, we were able to stay open, with COVID safety measures in place. We have a steady flow of applicants for our plots and maintain an active waiting list.

To maintain and improve the garden, our members joined in several work days during the last year, cleaning up the common areas and improving our walking paths with cardboard and wood chips. We also built a new green house, which we were able to purchase as a kit at half price. We now require our members to participate in three work days each year.

The garden has been involved in several projects and events that has connected us with the larger community, as described below.

### **GREENS FOR GOOD and PG GROWS HEALTHY**

*When your hands are turned to the soil, you'll be full.* Hawaiian Proverb

We want our garden to be a source of healthy food not just for our members, but also for others in the community. As part of this commitment, we have dedicated two recently vacated boxes to growing greens for local food programs, including Al's Breakfast.

Our longtime member Keith Larson has volunteered to head up this project, using his past experience as manager of a large food production garden. Even though it has only been a couple of months since he first planted the greens, we are already harvesting enough for a large salad at Al's Breakfast meals.

## Sustainable Pacific Grove Community Garden Annual Report-2022



Al and his board members checked out the new Greens for Good beds during a visit in July, with gardener Keith Larson,.

We are planning to expand our community outreach by teaching local residents to grow healthy food in their home gardens. **PG GROWS HEALTHY** will offer gardening workshops where our members and others share their experience of growing a year-round garden in our local area. Urban farming, even on a small scale, can provide low-cost, healthy food for the community, in addition to general environmental benefits. We hope to begin a pilot project for the program in September 2022.

### University of California Santa Cuz (UCSC) Ant Lab Biodiversity

Heidi Feldman, garden manager, is a part of the study's advisory commission. In-person visits to the garden have resumed, after a pause during the pandemic.

Some highlights from the past two years include:

- \* Doing two experiments to see how a) adding mulch and b) adding connections between garden plants influenced natural enemies and pest control
- \* Publishing a paper about bird diversity in the gardens
- \* Publishing a paper about microbiomes of orchard bees collected from the gardens

## Sustainable Pacific Grove Community Garden Annual Report-2022

- \* Learning about the factors that influence pollen collection by bees and pollination services
- \* Examining how socio-demographic features of gardens influence pest control practices and plant species
- \* UCSC received a second USDA grant to continue research on insect communities, pest control, pollination and gardener decision making. This research will run from 2021-2024. They will continue partnering with our community garden.

### Blue Zones Project, Monterey County

This project aspires to improve the well-being of our local communities, with a focus on healthy living. As part of this mission, the local Blue Zones staff has convened a group of community garden leaders. After a few initial meetings via ZOOM, the group scheduled their first in-person gathering at the PG Community Garden. The visitors represented various local agencies, gardens and nonprofits. They were very impressed with our garden, variety of food grown, and general appearance.

### Gardening Education

We held a special class for our garden members, featuring Keith Larson to teach about sequential planting to harvest year round, and growing seedlings in our new green house and existing hoop house. We continue to offer our **organic, non-GMO seeds**, available to our gardeners at low cost.



Gardeners gathered for a special class about year-round planting.

# Sustainable Pacific Grove Community Garden Annual Report-2022

## 10th Anniversary and Earth Day Celebration

The Community Garden hosted a special public event on Sunday, April 24 to celebrate its 10th anniversary and to honor Earth Day 2022.

Members of the community were invited to join this special celebration. Garden members offered garden advice and tours of the garden area. Vegetable and flower seedlings raised in the new garden greenhouse were available during the event, along with light refreshments, Appalachian tunes performed by local musicians, and information about maintaining a green household. Free garden books from a collection donated by a local family were available to spread even more gardening knowledge.

As part of the celebration, Khenpo Karten Rinpoche, a local Buddhist teacher, performed a ceremony to bless the garden and its occupants.

Volunteers started the garden 10 years ago, under the auspices of Sustainable Pacific Grove and the leadership of garden founder Karin Locke. The garden is part of the Pacific Grove Adult School campus.

## Pollinator Garden

Our pollinator areas have thrived since we first planted them two years ago. Garden volunteer Patricia Hamilton continues to maintain and improve this special project which attracts a big variety of bees, bugs and butterflies. For the coming year, we plan to focus more on native pollinator plants.

Our garden became eligible for a plaque from the Xerces Society for our work with pollinators.

## Sustainable Pacific Grove Community Garden Annual Report-2022



### The PG Community Garden in- Social Media

Facebook page to promote organic community gardening -Likes 859

Facebook page to promote Monarchs and pollinator gardening- Likes 3,625

Garden YOUTUBE videos by garden member Bonnie Adams, posted on her channel Bonnielama. First installment:

[A CARDBOARD BOX GARDEN - Does it REALLY work? - YouTube](#)

### Celebrating Art in the Garden

We will host a public art event in the garden, scheduled for Saturday, Aug. 27, 10 a.m. to noon. Local art teacher Claire Phillips will help participants create nature prints. They can also use other media, such as plain air painting or photography, to enjoy art in our garden.

Pacific Grove Adult School brought their photography students to the garden during a recent art class.

**In conclusion**, our community garden is thriving, we have many committed residents and a strong volunteer base. Our collaboration with the Pacific Grove Adult School remains strong and supported.

Thank you, and see you in the garden!

# Sustainable Pacific Grove Community Garden Annual Report-2022

Heidi Feldman

Volunteer Garden Manager

