

Report from the Interfaith Garden

Saturday, 3/25/2023

Year 14 got a cold, raw start this morning. Yet, when I looked around, everyone was smiling. People were layered up and it didn't matter much how cold it was. (Which kind of reminds me of that saying, "There is no such thing as bad weather—just inappropriate clothing.") I think all of us just felt good to get going. What did we do? Mainly cleaned out the sections of the gardens that were earmarked for planting on Tuesday, 3/28.



Carla's methodology has shifted somewhat over the years. In prior years, the first job each spring was spreading an inches-thick layer of composted cow manure which would then be rototilled into the soil by Tom. It was



a rite of passage to be among those early volunteers shoveling the 5-ft tall pile of manure. (As seen above to the left). Nowadays, it is better understood that turning over the soil interferes with the good bacteria in the soil. Additionally, cover crops can do an even better of feeding the soil. Carla has adapted by relying more on winter cover crops and more judicious use of compost and manure. She thinks this approach is working well--all validated the other day when she got the soil analysis back from 3 discrete sections of the Garden and the results indicate fewer amendments needed!

I'm always learning from Carla. What is the latest gardening tidbit from today? It is better to use field peas and oats than winter rye as the winter cover crop. We pulled off the protective tarps and found the winter rye thriving, whereas the field peas and oats had withered away. So, it took a fraction of the time to clean up the sections planted with the field peas and oats vs the amount of time it took to fork up the winter rye, get all the roots and beat off the clinging soil clumps. Next year? All field peas and oats; no winter rye.



Smiling Helen & Keranie



Smiling Reuben in his trusty hi-vis rain & biking jacket—exactly what he needed on this gray morning as he biked over.



Smiling Mark