

DIG THIS by Peg Tillery (for 9-19-07) Raab Park Youth Garden Celebrates 10 Years  
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The Raab Park Youth Garden in Poulsbo is 10 years old! The WSU Master Gardeners are hosting a big party on Sunday September 30 from 1-4 p.m. They hope everyone will attend.

The day includes lots of garden related fun plus compost demonstrations and a composting class at 2:30 p.m. Come harvest and sample fruits and veggies from the garden and help harvest produce to donate to Fishline in Poulsbo.

You'll be able to see the scrapbook with 10 years of photos and notes on the garden. Children visiting the garden for the anniversary celebration can attend story time read from our new collection of gardening story books. Every Monday during the summer activities Master Gardener Barbara Rudolph reads stories to the children.

And, of course, food is part of the celebrations. Many of the herbal ingredients for the treats came from the garden. Master Gardener Susan Bowers is an herbalist and visitors will be able to ask her lots of questions.

Garden coordinators for this year, Marilyn Mathis, Barbara Rudolph and Mary Neyhart, along with a host of other Master Gardeners will be on hand to answer questions too. Come visit the new bird and wildlife habitat area and also enjoy the new native plant garden.

The Master Gardeners are hoping all the families and community groups who've attended or helped out at the Raab Park Youth Garden over the past ten years will attend the festivities. Some of the children who started gardening at Raab Park in 1997 when the garden opened are now in college.

Four Eagle Scouts have completed projects at the garden in the last ten years. Kiwanis and Rotary have made contributions and so have Valley Nursery, Savage Plants and Roadhouse Nursery. Our newest addition at the garden is a new shed with all the materials generously donated by Kingston Lumber. For three years a group of students from West Sound Academy planned, planted and tended the "Giving Garden" until they went away to college. All the food grown was donated to Fishline.

Through the years visitors from as far away as Japan have toured the garden to learn how they too could create a family friendly youth garden and community garden p-patch. The garden has also hosted Master Gardeners visiting from Texas who wanted to come learn about youth gardening.

The official garden opening was April 12, 1997 celebrating Arbor Day. Community volunteers, parents, children, Master Gardeners, Kiwanis and Poulsbo City Council members celebrated Arbor Day by creating vegetable beds, flower beds and pathways. Children planted the perennial beds with plants and bulbs donated by Savage Plants

Nursery, Master Gardener Don MacDonald and North Kitsap gardeners. All April, May and early June students from the first and second grade Options class at Gordon Elementary came every Monday to plant seeds, weed, water and tend the garden.

Each year, approximately 800 children and their 250 plus parents and guardians attend classes at the garden every Monday during summer break. The garden is also a GWA (Garden Writers Association) Plant A Row (PAR) garden site. The produce grown at the youth garden is donated to Fishline in Poulsbo.

So many wonderful Master Gardeners, Poulsbo Garden Club volunteers and community members have made the garden such a lively place for families to come learn about gardening and the environment.

The current crop of Master Gardeners is working very hard to make this 10 year celebration a huge success. Please come join them for this special day on Sunday September 30 from 1-4 p.m.