

Hope Grows Here: Making a New Garden for The Children's Room



Gardens are places of wonder, bringing together the beauty of nature with the creative efforts of a thoughtful mind. At **The Children's Room** in Arlington, Ma., a new garden will bring solace to those who play and refresh here.

In winter 2007, The Children's Room (TCR) contacted **COGdesign** with a request for a garden design that would support the nonprofit's mission of helping children and teens grieve for the loss of someone dear.

COG's pro bono designer, **David McCoy of Geographia Landscape Design** in Beverly, developed a plan that would reflect the process of healing, emphasize the natural cycles of life, and bring beauty and animation to TCR's landscape. According to Barbara Clarke, TCR Executive Director, "David met with us many times and created a wonderful vision to transform our external landscape to reflect our mission. The resulting design is inspirational and thoughtful and will bring year round beauty to our site."

An old crumbling and unsafe stone wall along the perimeter of the property was a potential roadblock to installing the new garden. Fortunately, Barbara secured a significant Smith Family Foundation grant to replace the wall. After this structural improvement, garden work was ready to start.

Eileen Michaels, owner of A Yard and A Half Landscaping in Waltham, stepped forward to donate her company's expertise to grade the site, prepare the soil, and build a needed retaining wall. Her crew installed a new paved walk that starts from the sidewalk and winds its way into the new front garden. They have installed sod and helped with planting.



The plants! A plant palette of floriferous, ornamental, and multi-featured selections will bring butterflies, insects, and birds to the site and dazzle the young people with seasonal displays of flowers, fruit, form, and color. **Lynne Bower, manager of Stonegate Gardens** in Lincoln, personally ordered David's selection of plant material and provided it, at cost, to the project.

Skilled volunteer gardeners made joyful work of putting plants into the ground in early May 2009: **Justine Bloch, Eliza Burden, Ruth Butler, Jane Coutre, Stephanie Leonard, Karen Longeteig, David McCoy, Charlotte Milan, Ruth Riske, and Mike Smith;** with help from A Yard and A Half's crew **Carolyn Edsell-Vetter, Gonzalo Flores, and Koletta Kaspar.**

Photographer **Kathy Tarantola** captured the day.

The new front yard garden represents more than a make-over. It is a message to all that

Hope Grows Here!



Photos by Kathy Tarantola; www.ktphoto.com .