

## News



### Learning Garden

(August 5, 2005) - The Communities in Bloom Chair Helen Crook “planted the seed” with an idea to create an appreciation garden in front of the Education Centre during the Rainy River District School Board Meeting in December, 2004. Crook presented her vision of a garden that would beautify the property and honour staff who has worked for the Board.

The Board recognized this as a worthwhile project that would encourage student participation and promote community involvement. Although the project would be based on the development of a partnership between Robert Moore students, staff and community volunteers, a challenge remained regarding the funding to purchase trees and plants.

The challenge was overcome In February, 2005, when the Ministry approved funding of \$3,700 for this valuable project. The “Learning Garden” was one of nine Innovative Project proposals submitted by the Rainy River District School Board. Innovative Projects encourage creativity and address needs that have not been met through any existing school board program.

A committee was developed and lead by Marie Anderson who provided her expertise as a horticulturalist, and created the plan, organized the resources and supervised the actual project. All plants were provided by Lowey’s Greenhouse. Deciduous trees planted provide shade in the summer and allow sunlight to reach the windows in the winter.

Shrubs were chosen for suitability to the location, and provide contrasts in textures, colours and a variety of bloom times to offer interest for the entire growing season. Two large perennial beds present constant change for the spring, summer and fall. A small quiet sitting area amongst the plants was created with a bench donated by the RMS Builders' Club. In the wet perennial bed a sundial was placed to signify the passage of time and the importance of the time spent educating children.

Educational sessions were held between Communities in Bloom volunteers and student to educate the students on planting techniques. The actual plants grown by the students were placed in the garden.

The "Learning Garden" began to take root in May, 2005. Grades 6, 7 and 8 students, the Robert Moore Builders' Club, and staff and members of the community donated many hours of their time landscaping the Education Centre grounds in the development of this commemorative garden.

Sponsored by the local Kiwanis Club, the Robert Moore Builders' Club provides young people with the opportunity to help others, serve their school and community, and build a positive future. Communities in Bloom promotes the involvement and action of citizens, municipal governments and businesses in efforts to improve the visual appeal of their areas.