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The Sonoma Valley Seedling

notes and reflections from the garden • a project of the sonoma ecology center

early
summer
2004



There's gold in them thar flowerbeds! Join us amongst the flowers for a fun-filled children's treasure hunt featuring the Garden's bounty.

Treasure Unearthed on Seventh Street East!

**Join us on June 5 to celebrate
the Grand Opening of
The Sonoma Garden Park**

A children's treasure hunt is among the activities planned for the grand opening of the Sonoma Garden Park, formerly known as the Pauline Bond Community Garden, on Seventh Street East. The Saturday, June 5 opening features live music and refreshments, garden tours, demonstrations, an herb walk, children's activities, and sales of live plants and fresh produce, flowers, and herbs. The event also celebrates the renaming of the park.

Why the new name? "Many Valley residents have heard of the Pauline Bond Community Garden, but few are aware that this amazing 6-acre garden is actually a city park," explains Mollyanne Meyn, Garden

Coordinator. "Pauline was a local school teacher who owned and lived on the property for many years. When she willed the land to the people of Sonoma in 1979, she did so with the requirement that it be preserved as a public park for everyone to enjoy. This gift to the community is a little-known treasure that we hope everyone will want to rediscover. By renaming the park we hope to inspire visitors both old and new to come and experience this gem of community space."

The grand opening event is the kickoff to a full season of special events at the Sonoma Garden Park, including the weekly Harvest Market, outdoor movie nights (with films screened on the barn door!), Volunteer Saturdays, cooking demonstrations in the new cobb oven, and classes and workshops throughout the summer. Proceeds from all events will fund development of new programs and improvements to the Garden, such as a native plant nursery, expansion of the family garden plot area, additional xeriscaping and habitat restoration, volunteer and mentoring opportunities, public meeting areas, improved handicapped access, fire safety features, and installation of electricity and permanent restrooms.

Festivities take place on Saturday, June 5, 2004, from 11am to 2pm at the Sonoma Garden Park on Seventh Street East between Denmark and MacArthur. For further information, please call the Garden at 707-695-2164. [↗](#)

Special thanks to ... Russ Howington for many wonderful things including redwood posts, parts, a whole spool of drip irrigation tubing, and hours of service ... **The Rotary Club** for a very generous donation that allowed us to replace our broken well pump with a state-of-the-art new one ... **Keith Slobodnick** from **Weeks Drilling and Pump Company** for 30 feet of submersible wire for the new well pump ... **Richard Dale** for a new garden cart ... The people who brought the **Earth Day** celebration to Sonoma Plaza for donating eight fresh hay bales, and **Russ, Diane, Scot Foreman, Tina Tovey, Michael** and **Cheryl Itamura** for getting the bales into the barn ... **Ruth Fotouhi** for donating a riding tractor style gas powered mower, a 14 cubic foot Craftsman handy dump trailer, a weed wacker, an electric hedge trimmer, a redwood picnic table and bench set, 3 wrought iron and wood park benches, an axe, a pick, a hoe, pruning shears, a weed popper, a shovel, two pitch forks, twelve 1"x1" wooden stakes, and a chipper ... **Gary Edwards** for two new shovels, two new spades, and ten pairs of new work gloves ... **Scot Foreman** for keeping the paths mowed in the children's orchard, rototilling family garden plots, donating materials, and building birdbaths and a new greenhouse including wonderful new wire shelving for plants and a lockbox for storing tools (with assistance from **Gaby** and **Tina**). *The Garden has so many helpful friends sometimes it's hard to be sure we've thanked everyone! Please let us know if we've missed you so we can include you in the next newsletter!* [↗](#)

A note from our Program Director

In December, the Garden Council was formed with a group of dedicated volunteers committed to advising for the Master Plan as well as coordinating and developing many of the tasks necessary to run the Garden and its programs. Their energy, guidance and leadership have brought new opportunities to the Garden.

The Garden Council is currently made up of six volunteers who meet monthly. Each volunteer is associated strongly with one or more areas of focus, such as infrastructure, PR, volunteers, and events. As our team of volunteers grows, the Garden Council will be able to form committees in these areas, so that the responsibility can be shared and more can get done! Individuals with experience or interest in the areas of K-12 education, fundraising, grant writing, environmental education, or event organizing are invited to consider joining the Garden Council and developing these areas.

As the Garden Coordinator, I am inspired daily by the contributions that are being made by the Garden Council volunteers, and all volunteers at the Garden. Truly one of the most beautiful aspects of the Garden is not only what grows there, but the intentions and dedication of these who are making it grow. Please contact me at 707-695-2164 if you'd like to learn more about the Garden's volunteer structure and consider joining the team!

Mollyanne Meyn

Program Director & Garden Coordinator

In other news ...

Do you enjoy gardening, or just love getting your hands dirty? Please join us as **Volunteer Saturdays continue**, from 9am to noon on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month. Volunteers and staff come together to share in the work that makes the Garden grow, then gather in our outdoor community kitchen for a potluck lunch. The Garden provides tools and instruction; all ages are welcome and no experience is necessary. See you there!

Harvest Market reopens for the season on Saturday June 5, offering just-picked organic and seasonal vegetables, fruits, flowers, and herbs for sale every Saturday morning from 9am to noon. Tell a friend—or better yet, bring one or two with you!

Our **Wish List** has been updated for the 2004 season. New or used items in good condition are welcome (and cash always comes in handy, too!). To make a tax-deductible donation, call Mollyanne at 707-695-2164. Thank you!

TOOLS, EQUIPMENT & MATERIALS: Lockable shed for farm equipment • Hedge-clippers • Pitchforks for digging • Services of a trencher • Weed whacker • Sturdy shovels • Pruning shears • Irrigation materials & equipment • Materials for pathways • Building materials for office, restroom and classroom area • Diatomaceous earth • Greenhouse (16' x 32') • **PLANTS:** horseradish, rhubarb, peanuts, filberts/hazelnuts, currants, elderberry, blueberry, yellow yarrow, sage • **SEEDS:** beans, leeks, turnips, celeriac, chayote, wheat, millet, and rye • **MISCELLANEOUS:** Large coffee / tea maker, large tablecloths, baskets and vases, printing services, clipboards, large Igloo coolers, portable shade tents. ☺



Life is a garden... Dig it! Intrepid garden volunteers Scot, Michael, Russ, and Steve spent a recent Saturday morning digging a trench that will become part of a new watering system for the crop circle. Thanks, guys!

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Early Summer 2004

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Advertising is available for \$20 per issue for one business card sized ad, with larger sizes also available at an incremental rate. To place an ad, please call 707-695-2164 or email sec-mollyanne@vom.com.

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The Sonoma Garden Park is located on Seventh Street East in Sonoma, between Denmark and MacArthur Streets.

Our Mission is to demonstrate sustainable practices, to create a beautiful park, and to inspire a spirit of community.

The Sonoma Garden Park is a project of the **Sonoma Ecology Center**, a nonprofit organization working toward a condition of sustainable ecological health in the Sonoma Valley through community supported research, restoration, education, and preservation. To learn more about the Sonoma Ecology Center, please visit our website at www.sonomaecologycenter.org.

Garden education grows minds, bodies & hearts

Sonoma Valley students take a walk in the park

A NOTE FROM MISS STEPHANIE AND THE MORNING GLORY KINDERGARTEN

In the kindergarten this year, as we have gotten to know each other, the "Morning Glories" have gotten to know our neighborhood, and the whole community too. We have met the people, animals, and plants that grow along side our school as we walk our varied routes to nearby parks. Yet of all the exploring we have done, there is one place, full of interesting people, creatures, and green growing things, that has been most special for the Morning Glories, children, teachers, and parents alike. This place is the Sonoma Garden Park, which we have visited every month since the beginning of the year.

Our visits have included stories in the barn with the sixth grade, fig harvesting and drying, a bonfire to welcome winter, and working in the orchard. Farmer Molly has lead us on great adventures. During each visit we drop off our compost, and the children love to search through the piles where insects thrive. We have collected eggs and shoveled goat manure at the Honey Farm next door. At the Honey Farm, Farmer Sam has introduced us to giant turkeys, honeybees, sheep, chickens, goats, sheep dogs, and even a tiny parrot named Jo-Jo. All of this is really just the beginning. Any of you who have been to the Garden know the endless possibilities for exploration that await you there.

I have marveled at how the Garden, with its open space, lush rows, lively compost, fig forest, hay castle, tiny pond, and friendly farmers brings out the best in the children. In the Garden, the children receive what they truly need. They are given beauty, wonder, and plenty of space to move and play. They experience a true connection with the natural world, and are nurtured by the rhythms and cycles of the Garden. They see adults working with purpose and care, and they are able to imitate this. For these reasons, every trip to the Garden has been a joy, well worth our efforts.

The parents and teachers have also been nurtured by these things, and by the lessons the Garden offers. In the Garden, just as in our classroom and our school community, diversity brings harmony, health, and vitality. The creatures that poke and sting or eat rotting pumpkins play a role that is just as important as those creatures that offer shade, medicine, or fruit. That's the web of life, which supports us all!

Looking around the Community Garden, we see lush, full rows. The soil is rich. The barn is sturdy and always open. The greenhouse is full of sprouts and the trees are full of fruit. Yet, the Garden has not always been this way. Countless hands and hearts have worked rocky and weedy soil to create what now appears to grow effortlessly. Countless hearts and hands continue to maintain the old growth and make way for the new. The Garden was not always so lush, but the community held its vision and worked towards it together, just as we have done and continue to do for our school.

The plants in the Garden are tended with care. They are given what they need at just the right time so that they will grow up to be sturdy and strong. Well rooted, these plants will, in their time, bear healthy fruit, and seed. In this same way, we nourish our children, so that they too will grow from a strong foundation towards maturity, each bearing fruit in their own time.

With endless and joyful parent support, the Morning Glory class has just begun to cultivate our own patch at the Community Garden. We look forward to growing strawberries, beans, cucumbers, and all of the things you need to make a good pizza sauce. There in the Garden we will grow more than tasty food. We will grow the children's minds, bodies, and hearts, as well as our own understanding of the nature of things.

To learn more about opportunities for environmental education at the Sonoma Garden Park, please call 707-695-2164, or drop by the Harvest Market on Saturday mornings between 9am and noon to speak with a Garden volunteer. ♻️

Calendar of events SUMMER 2004

For up-to-the-minute information about events and activities at the Garden, please call us at 707-695-2164.



JUNE

- Saturdays • **Harvest Market.** 9am to noon.
- June 5 • **Grand Opening Celebration** at the Garden Park in Sonoma! 11am to 2pm.
- June 12 • **Volunteer Saturday.** 10am to 12:30pm, followed by a potluck lunch.
- June 18 • **Plein Air Painting Workshop.** 9am to 4pm.
- June 19 • **Sonoma Ecology Center Appreciation Day.** 5 to 7pm.
- June 20 • **Summer Solstice.**
- June 26 • **Watercolor Workshop.** 9am to 4pm. Sponsored by the Sonoma Community Center Fine Arts Department. For more information call 707-938-4626.
- **Volunteer Saturday.** 10am to 12:30pm, followed by a potluck lunch.
- **Movie Night.** Babette's Feast. Invite friends and plan to bring a picnic! Movie starts at dusk on the East end of the Straw Bale Barn.

JULY

- Saturdays • **Harvest Market.** 9am to noon.
- July 4 • **Fourth of July.** Visit our food booth at the Plaza Celebration from 10am to 5pm!

July 10

- **Volunteer Saturday.** 10am to 12:30pm, followed by a potluck lunch and Herb Walk in the Garden!

July 24

- **Volunteer Saturday.** 10am to 12:30pm, followed by a potluck lunch.
- **Movie Night.** The Wizard of Oz. Invite friends and plan to bring a picnic! Movie starts at dusk on the East end of the Straw Bale Barn.

AUGUST

Saturdays
August 7

- **Harvest Market.** 9am to noon.
- **Center of the Universe Café** goes Al Fresco! For details call 707-938-4626.

August 14

- **Volunteer Saturday.** 10am to 12:30pm, followed by a potluck lunch.
- **Kaleidoscope Fundraiser.** 2 to 5pm. Add your own splash of color to the Garden Wall with a one-of-a-kind tile handmade by YOU!
- **Movie Night.** Attack of the Killer Tomatoes and Little Shop of Horrors. Invite friends and plan to bring a picnic! Movie starts at dusk on the East end of the Straw Bale Barn.



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