

## Roots and Shoots Intergenerational Garden

Freshly laid out garden plots, marked by crisp new header boards are filling with young, tender lettuces, arugula, and peas at the Arboretum.

27 third and fourth grade children from the Gooden School, along with five volunteer "grandparents," are participating in the Roots and Shoots - Intergenerational Garden program. The children with their "Gardening



*A full watering can takes four hands as two generations work together.*

Grandparents" are plotting the garden, choosing plants and seeds, and building compost to enrich the soil. Later in the spring they will enjoy the fruits of their labor as they harvest and eat the foods they have planted.



*Gooden School students place plants into the soil while the fourth member of their team casts an observant eye on their progress.*

Coordinated by the California Arboretum Foundation (CAF), the Roots and Shoots Garden is off to an exciting start.

Roots and Shoots, which originated at the Elizabeth Gamble Garden in Palo Alto, brings two generations together working in the garden, and making use of it as an outdoor classroom.

There are many lessons to be learned. Transplanting, composting and mulching are taught along with studies on herbs and seed propagation.

A favorite subject is to solve the mystery about which insects, birds and animals are friends of the garden and which are not.



*Leigh Talmo discusses watering techniques for young plants with a young gardener.*

Gardening Grandparents may be seen helping at the compost, filling watering cans and guiding young hands as they dig holes and place tender young plants in the soil.





One of the many lessons learned is the resiliency of nature, and how the proper use of land and nature's resources adds to the quality of life in ways that cannot be underestimated. Preparation of the garden plot is an example of this, while the actual nurturing of the plants completes the larger picture for our Roots and Shoots participants.

*Knowing that the ground is almost ready for planting brings smiles to young faces.*

Roots and Shoots is supported by a generous financial gift. The Arboretum staff has spent many hours in preparation of the layout and irrigation system. Getting ready for the children to arrive in January, a barren piece of land was transformed into a workable garden plot. Dale Witt, senior gardener, laid out nine plots, made pathways and cleared brush. Cesar Ruvalcaba and his crew pruned back trees and shrubs. Bobby Ramirez and his workers dug the ditches and laid out the header boards, pipes and sprinklers.



*Good conversation goes along with cultivating plants at the Intergenerational Garden.*



*Members of the Arboretum staff explain plans for layout and the irrigation to an interested student.*

We give special thanks to George Brock, Burkhard Nursery and Office Depot for their generous donations.

We hope that all of you will visit the Roots and Shoots Garden on a regular basis. Third and fourth graders alternate weekly visits to the

garden. From 1 to 2:30 each Wednesday afternoon the garden is alive with children looking at seedlings with magnifying glasses, listening to stories, weeding their plots, building their compost piles and caring for their new plants. Leigh Talmo, an experienced gardener, and an active volunteer at the Gooden School, plans the curriculum and is the on site leader. We look forward to seeing you at the Roots and Shoots - Intergenerational Garden.





1994. "Roots & shoots intergenerational garden." *Arboretum News*  
1994:spring, 5-6.

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