

Family time in the garden

Focus on garden design with Sandi MacRae Landscape Design



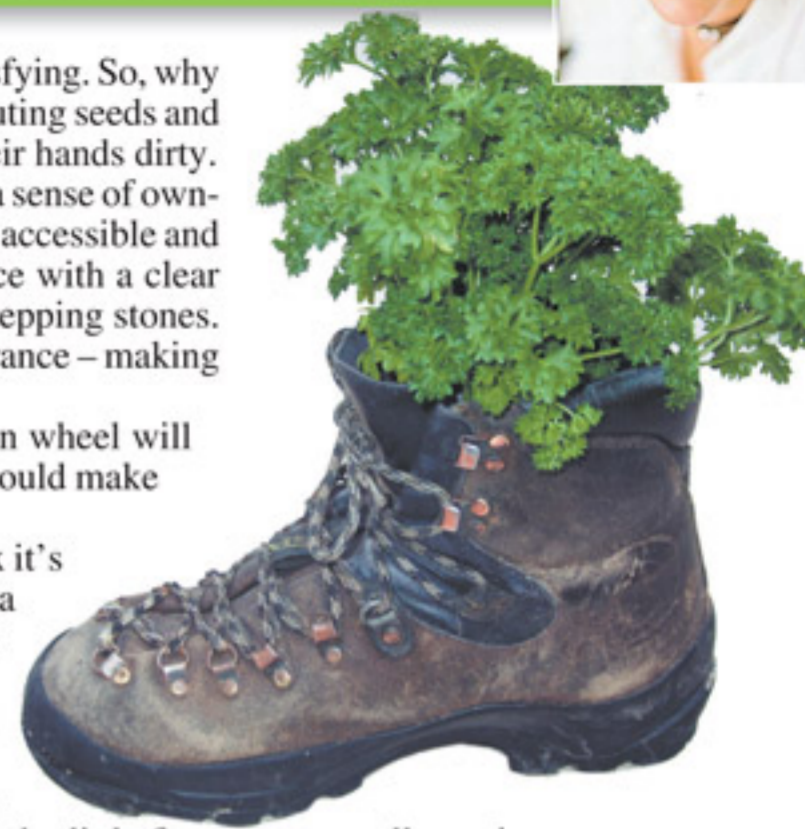
Involving children in the garden is fun and satisfying. So, why not indulge their curiosity in bugs, worms, sprouting seeds and bulbs, and encourage them, for once, to get their hands dirty.

Children love to have their own space. Create a sense of ownership by choosing a small plot of garden that is accessible and has plenty of sunshine. Define the chosen space with a clear edge, and provide easy access with a path or stepping stones. Place a sign with the "owner's" name at the entrance – making this could be an ideal wet-day project.

The garden can be any shape – using a wagon wheel will divide it into sections, and raising the height should make it easier to manage.

After filling the area with a good compost mix it's time to plant – head to the nursery to choose a variety of plants and objects that appeal to the five senses.

Vegetables that your child loves to eat and are easy to grow are a good choice to start with. Strawberry plants and cherry tomatoes where the fruit nestles under leaves awaiting discovery



by little fingers are usually a winner.

A mixture of herbs satisfies both taste and smell. For visual effect, sunflowers against a sunny back wall are hard to beat; these happy flowers are fun for children and adults alike. How about a home-made scarecrow (another fun wet-day project)? It will look interesting and add character to the space.

The lamb's ear plant is an ideal low ground cover that has a comforting, furry feel, while the tinkling of a wind chime can beckon and delight.

Another fun way of involving children in the garden is to plant in containers. Remember, a container is just something that holds soil and has a few holes in the bottom to let the water out. How about using that old pair of boots or shoes that are about to be biffed? Even a saucepan, concrete block, tyre, pipe or barrel can make a successful and creative container garden.

In the communal part of the garden allow room to kick a ball around or set up a cricket pitch. Plant a climbing tree. Open the eyes of your children to the multitude of delights a garden has to offer, so that at the end of a happy and rewarding day mucking about, they retire to bed, their senses fully satisfied.



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Giveaway Winners

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS

The following readers have won prizes in the draws from the last issue of Nor'West News. **MRS V.J. HENEY** of Merivale has won a double pass to the Royal New Zealand Ballet's performance of *La Sylphide*. **PENNY BEARDSLEY** of New Brighton has won a CD, courtesy of Radar.

Thank you to all those readers who entered the draws.

**SANDI
macrae**
LANDSCAPE
DESIGN