

Report for 2008 on Babula Children's Garden

The Babula children's garden continues to gather interest as the community becomes aware of all the different components of the garden, and they wander to the back of the garden to check things out. We are excited at the progress made this past summer in the garden. This past summer during the GBG Garden Faire we moved all children's activities to the Babula Garden and were pleased at how well we were able to use the area.

The following is a summary of our accomplishments this summer and our proposed list for 2009.

Round-a-bout and entrance

This project is complete except for still needing to gluing capstones on the retaining wall and cutting some small pieces to fit some odd angles on all our retaining walls. This year the entrance was planted with squash, scarlet runner beans and morning glory. Side entrances were totally covered making it like a tunnel exactly as we envisioned. The squirrels continue to dig caverns into the soil. We have discussed options but have not come up with a good one yet. We will continue to add trees and shrubs to the area surrounding the entrance to direct people to different activities and help stabilize the hillside from erosion. We added a tire sand box for the youngest visitors. They love it.





Pioneer Log Cabin

The log cabin continues to be a favorite visiting place for young children and small improvements are made each year. This year we added current bushes along the front rock wall, a small strawberry bed, and raspberries just up hill. We also painted the cabin.



The Great Hedge Maze

The maze layout was completed this year although there is still some tree planting that needs to take place. Petal 4 is completely done while petal 3 and 5 still need to have planting completed. Petal 1 was pruned for the first time, and any missing/dead trees were replanted.

We ha the second year of the Dead End Poet's Society competition in all elementary schools in the Fairbanks North Star Borough school district. We installed the winning poems in the dead ends of the maze. In addition to the poetry contest, we hosted 15 elementary school field trips, one section of which is an exploration of the maze. We will continue to add features and activities to the maze over the next few years.



Landscaping

We continue planting trees and shrubs throughout the area.

Interactive Stream

The stream had water running in it during the summer and the rocky streambed is complete. The waterfall is still in need of completion. We add a bucket of containers to entice kids into the water. To complete this project we still need some electric lines, the water wheel, a flume, and a weir. Grant did some design work on the flume for the valves to switch water from the stream over. We held paper boat races here during the faire- it was a huge success. There is a nice new picnic table next to the first bridge and room beside the stream for another picnic table now that the retaining wall is completed and filled in. We also planted Saskatoon bushes along the wall face.



Tree House

Grant completed all three decks, two bridges and part of the last bridge. The large octagonal entrance deck was completed. Deck 2 (southwest of the entrance deck in the trees of the windbreak) has been completed and attached with its bridge. The south deck (deck 3) has been completed and has the metal railings in place. The suspension bridge continues to be a challenge. Leroy Hulsey has agreed to complete plans for this bridge but has not done it yet.

Weather Garden

The physical space for the weather garden has been completed. We have money donated for the weather station and other weather monitoring equipment and have them in the office. Next spring we will put in the pipes to hold the monitoring equipment and mount them. The garden areas need to be tilled, dug up, grass removed, mulch added and planted in the spring.



Composting Outhouse

Pheonix Composting Systems has responded to emails and has given us options for a packaged system. The port-a-pottie is an acceptable temporary fix.

Signage and displays

In 2009, our goals are to:

1. complete the tree house (staff, construction class)
2. plant the Caragana seedlings to complete the maze. Continue pruning the Caragana shrubs and replace missing plants.
3. plant the garden around the Pioneer cabin (4-H club)
4. continue training the willows on the willow tunnel (volunteers)
5. finish rock work on stream (staff and volunteers)
6. glue cap stones on all retaining walls
7. move trees and shrubs to develop landscaping

2008 Workers and Volunteers (*) on the Babula Children's Garden

Boy Scout Troop 1 and 10 and helpers for Eagle scout projects

Dr. Babula *

Susie Zimmerman*

Susan Dearborn*

Sherry Lewis*

Junior Master Gardener 4-H club*

Joanne Klumb*

Grant Matheke
Pat Holloway
David Norris
Shannon Pearce
Colin Taylor
Ron Inouye*

Jan Hanscom
Mark Kochenbach
Jill Michalak
Brittany Blackwell
Matt Dunton
Laura (helped grant on decking)