

Bringing Books to Life for Children, One Garden at a Time



Did you ever feel the need to take the child in your life to somewhere fun but nurturing; exciting but safe; and innovative but warm and inviting? Bookworm Gardens, a new organization with the unique concept of a children's garden based on children's literature has set out to accomplish just such a marvelous place. Bookworm Gardens invites the community to share experiences, explore and learn about the natural world, be creatively inspired, and visit sites of the imagination. Bookworm Gardens supports the countrywide focus of family activities and tourism by providing an additional engaging local attraction which interprets the love of earth and the satisfaction of reading a good book. The creating of Bookworm Gardens, in the city of Sheboygan, will promote a beautiful, healthy alternative to life in an urban environment.

An innovative children's garden, Bookworm Gardens is adding a new dimension to Sheboygan County. Six different garden areas organized by concept;

CULTURAL HISTORY

Celebrating the many diverse cultures that weave through the County of Sheboygan is a crucial aspect of Bookworm Gardens. The cultural history gardens bring just a few of these cultures to life. A small Hmong village, including a house, chicken coop, blacksmith shop and rice pond will be tucked into the hillside, representing the story *Jouannah*, a Hmong Cinderella. Native Americans will be featured in the collection of folklore titled *In the Three Sisters Garden*, while our German heritage is celebrated in *Hansel and Gretel*, the whimsical Administration Building.

MEMORY

Visitors to the Memory Area will first be enthralled by the colorful and beautiful butterfly garden complete with crawl-through leaves. A secluded area in the quietest part of Bookworm

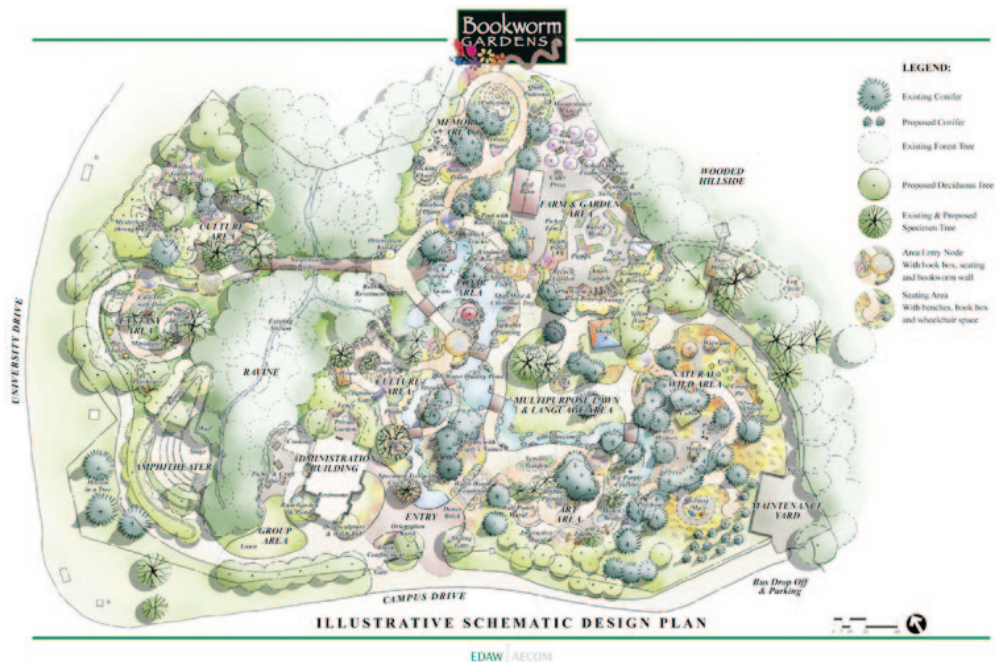
Gardens is furnished with comfortable rocking chairs where visitors may share memories. A memorial library will allow for remembrances of individuals with engraved granite books in the library wall.

NATURAL WOODLANDS

The main feature of the woodland area is, of course, the treehouse, based on the series of chapter books entitled *The Magic Treehouse*. Cantilevered over the ravine, the children will feel as if they are eagles nested in the canopy of a tree. The Japanese teahouse and garden, based on *Flags and Sadako* and the *Thousand Cranes*, is also located in the forest, showcasing woodland and shade loving plants. Finally, the cabin from *Little House in the Big Woods* offers children a chance to pretend they're keeping house in a log cabin or traveling across the Midwest in a covered wagon.

ANIMALS

Because children love critters, animals are an important part of the garden. In the *Dinosaur Bones Garden*, children will dig for prehistoric fossils surrounded by ancient plants guarded by a friendly dinosaur.



Horton protects his eggs as he is perched in a giant tree in *Horton Hatches the Egg*, while nests and eggs of other sizes offer opportunities for learning and creating. *Is Your Mama a Llama* features plants with animal names (Bee Balm, Lamb's Ears, etc.) while miniature plants surround the home of *Stuart Little*.

There are sure to be many small volunteers wanting to wash *Harry the Dirty Dog* who will often need a bath.

POND & WETLANDS

Water always seems to be an attraction for children, and these areas are planned to entice and thrill. Located at the core of the garden, the *McElligot's Pool* pond is visually highlighted by a wooden bridge and whimsical fish sculptures. Children can lean over the rope railing above the shallow water to look for frogs and fish. Bird sculptures reside in the wetland environment and bring to mind the efforts to save the whooping cranes and trumpeter swans.

FARM AND GARDEN

Dominated by a small, Wisconsin-style post and beam barn, the farm area is enclosed by a white picket fence. The garden plots are accessible for planting, nurturing and harvesting. Typical farm crops will be grown representing the books *Charlotte's Web* and *Click, Clack, Moo*. The scarecrow from *Peter Rabbit* guards the crops. Sculptures and planters made from recycled "junk" teach children stewardship and enforce themes



The barn depicted in the children's book *Charlottes Web* was constructed by the following SCHBA members who are proud to have contributed 450 hours to this community project; JT Construction; Binder & Halverson, Inc. Gen. Contr.; Stuckmann Const.; Abacus Architects; D & D Carpentry, Inc.; Mullikin Const.; Oostburg Lumber; B & P Roofing; Macco's Floor Covering; Richardson Building Prod.; Kiel Building Supply; Bank First National. The barn beam frame was constructed by the students in the technical education class at Sheboygan Falls High School.

from the *Tin Forest*. A worm box nearby for *Dairy of a Worm* sports window for viewing their world.

THE BOOKWORM GARDENS CONCEPT:

Bookworm Gardens is a vibrant, playful children's garden that enhances literature, the natural world, and the imagination. Located in Sheboygan, Wisconsin, the garden is adjacent to UW Sheboygan and is across from the UW Extension offices which house the Sheboygan County Master Gardeners. The 1.5 acre garden will offer the young and young at heart the opportunity for free, unstructured play in a beautiful and secure environment. Classes in horticulture, literature, art and cooking will be offered, as well as concerts, plays and special events.

The garden is based completely on children's literature – over 70 different books are represented, selected by reading specialists, librarians, teachers, and kids.

- Entrance to the garden is FREE. We hope children visit frequently!
- Special elements of the garden include outdoor classrooms, a small amphitheatre, greenhouse and teaching kitchen.
- Nooks and crannies for reading are plentiful, as are benches for resting and chatting.

The garden is unique to southeastern Wisconsin, celebrating our diverse geographical region as well as our multicultural residents and local industries.

ACTIVITIES AND EDUCATION

- Horticulture and the Environment
- Literature and Language
- Art Expression
- Culture
- Classes and Special Events.

MISSION

To enrich the mind, body and spirit of the young and young at heart through exploration in the garden environment based on children's literature.

For information on upcoming activities, education and special events or to take part through a contribution, visit the web site at www.bookwormgardens.org.