

March 2009



ROTARY

RANCH

REPORT

DISTRICT 5890 DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

March Madness!!!

By DG Rhonda



Rotary Houston Skyline Brings Garden and Education to Port of Houston Elementary School

Houston (February 7, 2009) – The Rotary Club of Houston Skyline (RCHS) picked a beautiful Saturday morning to begin its \$2,500 garden project at the Port of Houston Elementary School. In the fall of 2008, they were awarded a \$2,000 District 5890 Simplified Grant in addition to the \$500 the less-than-a-year-old club pledged. Together with Houston’s Urban Harvest Organization, RCHS has designed a plan for an edible forest for school children and the community, alike, to enjoy. This will provide children with an opportunity to learn about nutrition and gardening, provide fruits and vegetables for the surrounding community, help beautify the campus, and most importantly, create an outside classroom where the entire school can enjoy and learn. Additionally, they plan on creating a compost pile for the school to use, and a rainwater capture irrigation system.

the commitment that the club has to the communities (especially underserved areas) of Houston.” The RCHS is incredibly excited about this project not only because it is their first project of their very own as a club, but because of the potential growth for similar Rotary gardens around the United States and world. Meghan Zimmer, the RCHS’s service chair, said, “Our club truly is all about service. Each member is passionate about giving back to their community, and the success of this project thus far is a true testament to our commitment



Removing a cloth material that lined pond we dug out

to impact the lives of our fellow Houstonians.”

In addition to Rotarians attending an Urban Harvest class to become educated on the best fruit trees to grow in Houston, RCHS Garden Project Coordinators Duncan Child and Meghan

Less than a year to the day of the club’s first official meeting, the Club’s Founder and President, Corbett Parker, said, “I am so excited we have already begun a first project that we have taken ownership of. While beautifying the school is great, I feel the profound impact will come from educating the young students about nutrition, sustainability, and agriculture.”

RCHS will begin planting the trees and vegetables Urban Harvest has advised on Saturday March 7th, and welcomes anyone wishing to join them, or contribute to the project financially. The club will be asking the community to help contribute benches and stepping stones for the garden. Please send an email to President@rotaryhouston skyline.org.

Update on Rotary Skyline: RCHS’ membership is now at 32 members, we were recently officially granted a Matching Grant of \$10,700 (bringing total financing to \$21,400) for prevention of Dengue Fever in the Philippines (led by PDG D’Lisa Simmons), and member David Eagleman’s launch of his extraordinarily fascinating book “Sum- Forty Tales of the Afterlife” landed in the top 50 best sellers on Amazon.com in its first week.

Submitted by

Corbett Parker



[Left to Right] Michael Godoy from Urban Harvest, Duncan Child (RCHS Project Co-Coordinator), Reid Whitaker (Principal of Port of Houston Elementary School)

Saturday, Principal Reid Whitaker, parents and teachers of Port of Houston School, and Rotarians united as a group of about 30 worked to clean up and prepare the garden’s space. About the project, Principal Whitaker said, “Skyline Rotary’s project is bringing to the children of Port Houston Elementary is endless possibilities! I am so grateful to Mr. Corbett Parker and the Rotary Club for sponsoring the restoration and expansion of the garden at Port Houston Elementary. Their dedication to donate time, energy, and money to such as worthy cause is valiant and show

Zimmer have worked tirelessly organizing the effort with Michael Godoy from Urban Harvest. Child said, “Urban Harvest has been a fantastic partner. Their expertise and education program have helped RCHS understand the challenges of designing a sustainable school garden. We hope that this project can help inspire other Rotary Clubs to get involved with permaculture projects in schools across the city and country.”

