

Many hands make light work of Seine projects



Michele Kading
COMMUNITY
CORRESPONDENT

ST. VITAL

Save Our Seine would like to thank community groups that provided volunteers for two major 25th anniversary projects in September.

On Sept. 16, volunteer groups from the Louis Riel School Division, the Division scolaire franco-manitobaine, RBC (Team RBC), and the Real Canadian Superstore pitched in with over 30 individual volunteers to create the Niakwa Trail Rain Garden. This was a major community project that required planting over 600 native plants.

Experts laid out the plants according to the plan and provided training. Volunteers carefully removed the plants from their pots, loosened the roots and planted them in the new garden.

Thanks to the Grade 7 and 8 students from St. George School (teacher Brent Atkins) and École Lacerte (teacher Alain Cenerini). The students worked tirelessly with the adult volunteers on a legacy project that will protect the Seine River from pollution.

In the words of a very proud teacher: "They are teens — and what teenagers do that? Amazing — no?"

Special thanks to the school administra-



Supplied photo

Volunteers from RBC helped plant over 600 plants in the new Niakwa Trail Rain Garden on Sept. 16.

tors for supporting student activities beyond the classroom. And hats off to companies that allow employees to volunteer as a group during work hours.

- Community benefits: A beautiful rain garden for birds, other wildlife, and people.
- Volunteer benefits: Pride, sense of

ownership, stronger connections with the community.

- Seine River benefits: Cleaner water — priceless.

On Sept. 22, over 20 employees of Lafarge Winnipeg spent a sunny fall day working with Save Our Seine volunteers on a weed

eradication project.

Dawn Fraser of Lafarge worked with Ed Labossiere (SOS) to organize the event. The goal was to remove an infestation of burdock (a rhubarb-like invasive weed) along the South Trail.

Armed with clippers, shovels, garden forks, and wheelbarrows, the group scoured the riverbanks between Shorehill Drive and Creek Bend Road.

They cut and bagged the second-year stalks that were loaded with sticky, seed-filled burs. Not an easy task when dealing with the plant that inspired the invention of Velcro!

Next, they dug out each plant's tenacious roots. The crew removed over 50 bags of burdock. A huge thank-you to everyone involved. Heather Dyck organized lunch; Jason Gavel provided equipment, safety instruction, and leadership; and Karl Thordarson of the City of Winnipeg provided bags and arranged for disposal to the landfill or compost.

- Community benefits: \$1,600 worth of work donated (based on a "volunteer rate" of \$10/hour)

- Volunteer benefits: Fresh air, change of scene, team-building, camaraderie, sense of accomplishment

- Ecosystem benefits: Priceless.

Michele Kading is a community correspondent for St. Vital and the executive director of Save Our Seine.