



BEVERLY CITIZEN

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2008

A life blooms in Beverly

By Maggie Leojacques
Special to The Citizen

Lifelong Beverly resident Karen Harrington is always there for everyone else. Cook a meal. Organize an event. Watch a child. She's there.

This disabled 55-year-old grandmother, who recently completed treatment for breast cancer, is a busy lady. She adopted and has raised her eldest grandson, Nathan. He is now 14 and an honor student and football player at Beverly High. She is in the process of adopting his 1-year-old cousin, Payton.

On Saturday, September 20, Harrington's Davis Street neighbors including Councilwoman Maureen Troubetaris, friends and family let Harrington know how much they care about her. They worked with the Dedham based non-profit Hope in Bloom to plant a garden at Harrington's home.

Hope in Bloom, which provides free indoor and outdoor gardens in Massachusetts at the homes of men and women being treated for breast cancer, offers recipients more than a beautiful garden.

According to a recent Harvard University study, women who were anxious, nervous or worried, common reactions to radiation and chemotherapy, were happier and perked up after looking at flowers.

Other research shows the calming effects of nature increase serotonin, which boosts energy levels and helps ward off depression, another common side effect of breast cancer

And so the digging began.

Two new flagstone paths were laid to make it easier for Harrington to reach her new plantings. An ancient rhododendron was relocated to make room for a perennial bed now flanked with white azaleas and filled with vibrant pink meadow sage, peonies, coral bells, purple mums and spring bulbs. Lilacs were planted along with viburnum and a new rose and deutzia section to



Hope in Bloom garden recipient, Karen Harrington.

brighten the back yard. A climbing hydrangea was installed on the back deck across from a new Rose of Sharon, which symbolically is linked to immortality

Lexy Wright of Campania donated a bench where Harrington can sit and admire her garden. Landscape Designer, Charleen Maunsell of Potscapes, who had a hand in Harrington's garden layout, delivered a birdbath to round out the arrangement.

Harrington appreciated the work so much, she couldn't resist having a barbecue for all the volunteers.

Hope in Bloom works with landscape architects and designers who donate their time to tailor gardens to each client's personal space, taste and lifestyle.

Private donations fund the gardens. Indoor container gardens cost \$200 to \$600; outdoor patio gardens are \$800 to \$1,500

How to help

To learn more about Hope on Bloom or to make a tax-deductible gift visit www.hopeinbloom.org or call 781-381-3597.

and outdoor in-ground gardens range from \$1,800 to \$3,000. With well over 100 requests, for both indoor and outdoor gardens, Hope in Bloom is scrambling to meet the demand.