

# Memorial garden for community underway

## Donations sought for 'Pathways' project

BY KELLY VIRDEN  
Pine River Journal Editor

Pine River-Backus needs the community's help to establish a memorial garden to honor those who have passed away and left their memories with staff, students and the community.

Organizers seek donations for the Pathways Pine River-Backus Memorial Garden, which will be constructed in the center of the circle drive in front of the main entrance to the new district office and the elementary school.

The idea for the memorial garden has been circulating for years.

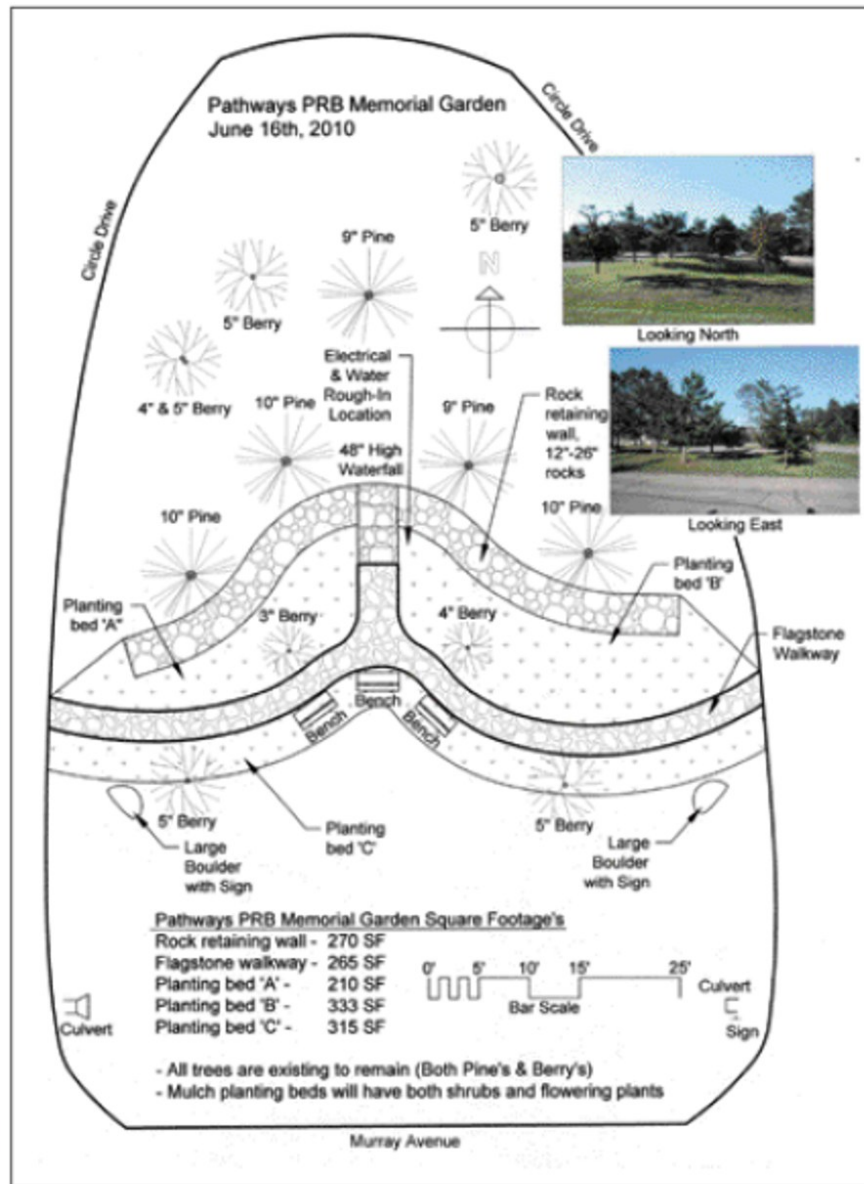
"Several times over the years the (school) board has talked about putting something together to give people the opportunity to remember and reflect on friends and family who have been part of our Pine River-Backus community who we've lost," said Superintendent Cathy Bettino.

A memorial garden committee formed to discuss features for Pathways memorial garden, including a stone walkway, plants, benches, a small waterfall and reflecting pool. Daniel Dix of Wood Spirit Gardens in Backus assisted the committee, made up of Bettino, Barb Mann, Jerry Peterson, students Cate Zebroski and Jade Krueger.

"We kind of decided that we wanted to do something that would celebrate life for all of the people that have died in the past years," Zebroski said.

*Continued on page 15*

The diagram at right depicts how the memorial garden will look upon completion. Organizers hope to get funds secured to do more construction on the project this fall. Donations are sought to assist with the memorial garden located at Pine River-Backus School.



## From the front Memorial garden for community underway

"As part of student council we kind of just wanted to be able to support it and just help as much as we can," Zebroski and Krueger, both PR-B juniors this fall, are co-presidents of student council.

Zebroski said that the student council hopes to have fundraisers throughout the year to enable students to contribute.

"I think it'll be closure for a lot of people and it (they) will be happy about it," she said.

"Honoring people who have passed in

our community is really important," Krueger said. "There's just been so many people, teachers and students and faculty members from our school, who have passed away. It's important that we find some way to honor them."

Some of the work on the memorial garden is already underway. Organizers hope to get funds secured to do more construction on the project this fall.

Flowers and shrubs can be planted next spring.

"All of the pieces kind of started coming together and we've had community support already," Bettino said of the process.

A number of workers involved with the building of the new district office have donated their services to the memorial garden. Ray Schrupp, of Schrupp Excavating; Bill Smith, of Pine River Electric; and Dave Overbeek, of Peterson Sheet Metal, have assisted so far.

Community members can make a donation in any amount, or donate \$150 for a

stone engraved with a message up to 25 characters, including spaces, for the garden.

Donations can be sent to PR-B Community Education, P.O. Box 610, Pine River, MN, 56474, or online [www.prbpay-online.com](http://www.prbpay-online.com) under the link "Community/Memorial Garden Donation."

"We just want it to be really nice and a quite place where people can reflect and think about their Pine River-Backus family," Bettino said.