

# Student landscapers helping keep city green <sup>12/19/02</sup>

• Charter School students take on responsibility for upkeep of entrance to Laguna preserve

by Corey Young  
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SEBASTOPOL — The city's adopt-a-landscape program is moving into high gear with a group of schoolchildren dedicating themselves to beautifying the entrance to the Laguna wetlands preserve.

For the next two-and-a-years, the current sixth-grade class at the Sebastopol Charter School will take responsibility for maintaining the plants in the gravel parking lot behind the Youth Annex and in front of the wood gateways to the Laguna

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**CARETAKERS** — Sixth grade students (above) from the Sebastopol Charter School recently adopted the landscaping around Sebastopol's Laguna wetlands preserve entryways as part of the city's adopt-a-landscape program. They will care for the area until June of 2005.

## Green ...

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trail system.

With the help of a few parents and their teacher, Craig Cook, the children pulled out crabgrass and weeds, dug holes for trees and put down mulching material. Finally, they planted a variety of native plants including oak trees and irises.

The area will be under the student's care until they graduate from the school after eighth grade.

The city hopes their example will lead to more adopted landscapes around Sebastopol, and a list of areas needing extra care has been compiled.

The city is interested in sprucing up the medians and islands sitting in the middle of Sebastopol streets, including those at Petaluma and Sebastopol Avenues, Covert Lane, Laguna Park Way and Jewell Avenue.

The rose garden at Ives Park, the gazebo at Libby Park and the downtown plaza are also places where the city needs a local group or business to lend a hand.

Those who adopt landscapes can either perform the work themselves or make a donation to the city, which will go toward a specific area chosen by the person or group making the donation.

The city is also looking for more people to join the Laguna Keepers, a group that meets regularly to clean up areas of the wetlands preserve. Groups like Planting Earth Activation (P.E.A.) also have scheduled monthly planting projects around Sebastopol.

Groups or individuals who sign up to care for a particular landscape will have their names advertised on a sign at the location after one month of "active adoption." Areas have to be adopted for a minimum of one year, and the adopting party needs to sign a "letter of understanding" with the city to make sure they know the requirements of the program.

The city is inviting schools, youth groups, clubs and local businesses to get involved. For more information or to sign up for a landscape area, call the public works department at 823-5331.