

# NeighborNews

BOONTON • BOONTON TWP. • MOUNTAIN LAKES

## MOUNTAIN LAKES

# Laura Luc keeps young performers' dreams of musical stardom flying

BY ELIZABETH MARTIN  
Managing Editor

Last week, fireworks weren't the only flying spectacle. Children filled the air, too, taking flight in the Mountain Lakes High School auditorium when Kids of the Arts (KOTA) presented its sixth main-stage musical production, "Peter Pan."

Featuring kids of all ages, KOTA is an extraordinary organization that gives children and teens the opportunity to perform onstage

with Broadway and local performers from across New York and New Jersey. What really distinguishes this organization from other children's theaters is its founder, college student Laura Luc of Mountain Lakes.

About to enter her sophomore year at Susquehanna University, where she majors in theater production and design, Luc founded KOTA in 2001, when she was 10 years old.

"I began dancing at the age of 3, and became really interested in

theater at the age of 8. Ever since then I have performed, stage managed and directed shows," said Luc. But, from the start, her organization has existed to not only give children and teens the opportunity to perform, but also to donate money to charity.

The charitable donations started with a production in Luc's parent's living room where she raised \$34 for a young girl with cancer. Since then donations have come a long way from their humble origins with last year's production of "Seussi-

cal" raising more than \$5,000. The proceeds from the latest production of "Peter Pan" went to benefit The Christopher Stitt Family Fund.

"Picking the right musical is a very important task in order to make a KOTA production work," said Luc.

When selecting a musical, Luc has to choose one that can work with a wide range of ages and talents, and has to pick a show that is family-friendly. "Peter Pan" proved to be a good, if challenging, choice

for her organization.

"This is by far the most difficult I have ever been involved with!" commented Luc on "Peter Pan." As the director, producer, choreographer, designer and more for the show, Luc has been busy making this 70-kid cast a success.

"There are so many different aspects, that in the end all have to come together," Luc said, "This is what we are using flying, and a live orchestra - the sets are also very

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## Garden Club making Boonton greener



PHOTO COURTESY OF LLOYD CHARLTON

On June 30, the Rockaway Valley Garden Club planted a rain garden at Leonard Park in Boonton Township as part of its efforts to Go Green. Shown at work are, from left: Juanita Galluzzi, Dan Yu, Ingrid Witty, and Keith Brown. See page 8 for a story and more photos.

## Community

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NEIGHBOR NEWS BO

### BOONTON TOWNSHIP

# Garden Club creates rain garden for park and environment

JULY 9, 2008

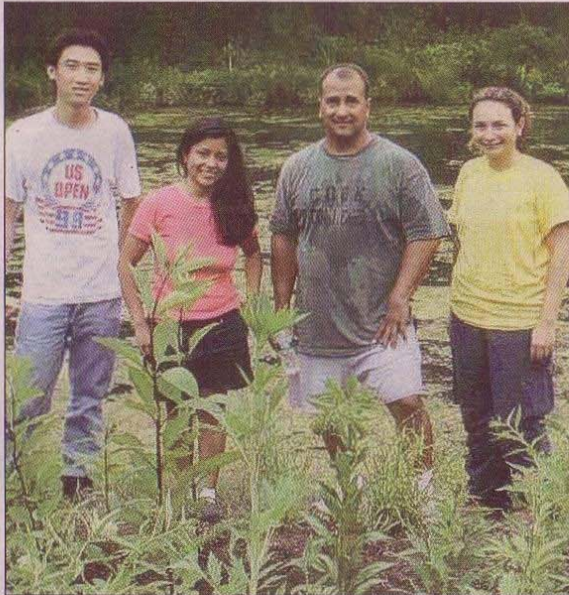
On June 30, the Rockaway Valley Garden Club planted a rain garden at Leonard Park in Boonton Township as part of its efforts to Go Green. RVGC members, Keith Brown, Juanita Galluzzi and Lloyd Charlton, Landscape Architect - J.S.L Greentree and President Ingrid Witty worked together with Christopher Obropta, the Water Resources extension specialist for Rutgers Cooperative Extension, his program associate, Amy Boyajian, and one of the undergraduate Rutgers engineering students, Dan Yu.

According to the NJ Agricultural Experiment Station in Rutgers, a rain garden is a landscaped, shallow depression that allows rain and snowmelt to be collected and seep naturally into the ground. This helps recharge the groundwater supply and prevents a problem called polluted runoff.

As storm water runs over streets, parking lots and lawns, it can pick up and carry many materials which get washed into nearby waterways.

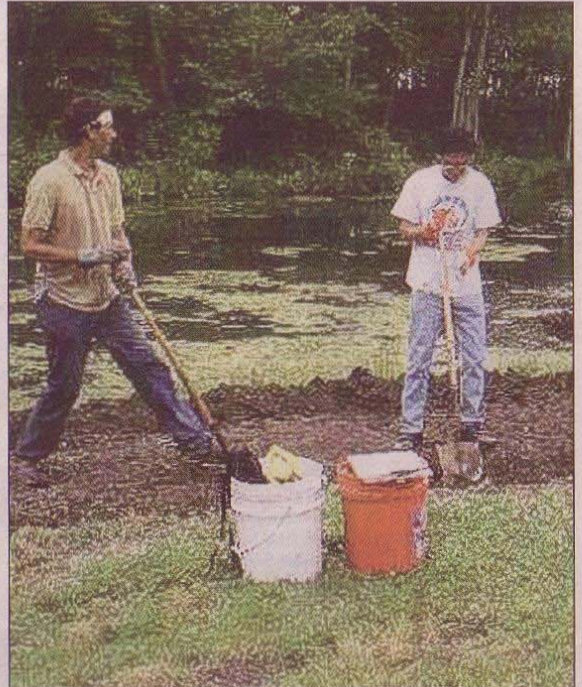
Rain gardens are very simple means to enhance the landscaping around homes while improving water quality of local waterways.

For additional information, call 973-263-6317.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF LLOYD CHARLTON

Dan Yu, a Rutgers engineering student, RVGC President Ingrid Witty, Christopher Obropta, water resources extension specialist for Rutgers Cooperative Extension and Program Associate, Amy Boyajian.



From left, Keith Brown and Dan Yu.