



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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Irish American Heritage Center, Shamrock Kids Club paint rain barrels, plant seeds to promote conservation

In the spirit of conservation and the protection of natural resources, the Irish American Heritage Center (IAHC), Chicago Irish Immigrant Support volunteers, and the Shamrock Kid's Club decorated rain barrels at the IAHC in Chicago on Saturday.

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) donated the rain barrels to promote sustainable stormwater and wastewater management practices. Rain barrels are a part of the MWRD's green infrastructure initiative, which also includes use of rain gardens, native landscaping, stormwater trees, bio-swales, green roofs, greenways, wetlands and porous pavement to manage stormwater and reduce pollution.

Seed Savers Exchange is a non-profit organization that promotes the use of heirloom seeds and has developed a seed donation program. They have built a network of gardens around the world to fight hun-

ger, build communities and teach children and adults the virtues of homegrown food. The Seed Savers Exchange encourages members to share garden advice, plant seeds, share harvested fruits and vegetables, and save seeds to pass on.

"The Irish American Heritage Center and Chicago Irish Immigrant Support are thrilled to partner with Seed Savers and the MWRD, as this event not only provides an opportunity for conservation learning and growth among the participating children but supports our center's overall conservation and educational initiatives," said Mary Gorski, Chair of the Shamrock Kid's Club.

"The MWRD enjoys working with our community partners to help them educate the public about ways to manage stormwater," said MWRD Commissioner Frank Avila. "Rain barrels are a great way to collect rainwater that can be reused in the garden."



Irish American Heritage Center artist and teacher Kathy Kelly, left, painted a garden scene on her rain barrel with colorful flowers and a cat. Many other creative and vibrant rain barrel designs were on display, including the underwater ocean scene above.

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Established in 1889, the MWRD (www.mwrdd.org) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.