

'Captain Bear' Goes to the City

'Garden in a City' May 13-21

Presented by Target, Parkways Foundation, Chicago Park District, City of Chicago,
and designed by Douglas Hoerr Landscape Architecture, Inc.

- Rachel Logterman- Product Planning & Development



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On a beautiful sunny Sunday in May, my sister, my 8-year old brother and I took a train down to Chicago to check out the new 'Garden in a City' Urban Garden Show at Butler Field in Grant Park. I was excited to see some of our plants in action in our customers' urban gardens, but would the show hold the attention of a non-gardener and a hyperactive little boy? (And did I bring enough batteries for my camera to take enough pictures of both the gardens and 'Captain Bear', who proved to be somewhat of a camera hog.)



We soon discovered that this unique garden show was exiting for all ages and levels of gardening knowledge. Everyone could pick up realistic ideas and inspiration for their homes, learn new skills, or do a little shopping. It differed from the usual garden shows by offering solutions for gardens in small urban spaces, and focusing on urban greening, green roofs, and the (surprising amount of) options for city dwellers.



From a distance we immediately spotted the 'Target bulls eye', brought to life by 3,500 red and white wave petunias from the **Chicago Park District** and donated by **Ball Seed**.

Up the path to the gardens we walked under **Moore Landscape's** beautiful 'Flowering Skyframes' with cascading flowering annuals and vines.

Inside the massive white tent was a wave of lush cool green, and an immediate feeling of tranquility from the sounds of the water features and the light scent of the plants. The first thing we saw past the evergreen display at the entrance was the fantasy garden by **Doug Hoerr Landscape Architecture** and **Mariani Landscape**. This amazing display was another variation of the 'Target bulls eye', with three round islands that seemed to be floating on a rectangular pool. The islands were planted with mosses and other unique plants, from Japanese maples to a weeping willow. The water flowed over the edge of the pool creating the impression of an endless pool.



We explored more than 50 amazing and diverse exhibits by the Midwest's foremost Landscape Designers, Architects and Contractors. Each garden was set against a backdrop of typical Chicago-style buildings, with paths to view both front and back yard from three sides. These unique and extremely creative displays were based on actual urban condi-

tions, and proved that amazing gardens can be possible on any scale. The exhibitors brought to life a wide variety of sites including typical 25'x25' city backyards, balconies, patios, decks, front stoops, parkways, fenced yards, vertical gardening, and container gardening.

Exhibitors competed for The Comer Award (Lands' End founder Gary C. Comer donated \$50,000 in prize money for the top three designs). Each garden was judged for design concept, execution/craftsmanship, and education.

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Captain Bear's Favorites:



Clauss Brothers 'Serenity in the City' tranquil backyard oasis, with vertical gardening, green arborvitae wall for privacy, a green roof, an array of textures and cool colors.

Mariani Landscape's 'Come Discover' backyard garden, with an interesting stone patio, rain garden, and fragrant, textured, and edible plants. The best part was the platform tree house sitting in a huge maple tree.



Countryside Industries and Thompson Dyke & Associates 'Avant-Garden', a modern, sustainable, low-maintenance garden.



Christy Webber Landscapes 'Whimsical Frosted Entry', in white, silver, and blue. It was unique and fun, with organic, recycled material mixed in with beautiful plantings



Landscape Concepts Management and archi-treasures 'Metropolitan Treasure'. A public city garden made with natural materials, highlighted by sculptures and bold container displays of annuals and tropical plants.



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Captain Bear's Favorites (cont):



EcoChicago's 'Green Wool' ideas for recycling and conservation in an eco-friendly backyard. We got a kick out of the green roof doghouse. (EcoChicago is a one-time partnership of a dozen green industry companies, organizations, and community groups)

Ball Horticulture Company's 'Container Gardening' display (with help from Midwest Groundcovers, The Natural Garden, Architectural Artifacts, Pacific Home and Garden, Doug Hoerr Landscape Architecture) 150 container gardens overflowing with colorful annuals, perennials, shrubs, grasses, and native plants.



Architecture is Fun, Chicago Park District, Keystone Ridge Designs (with the help of The Morton Arboretum) Children's display, where kids can experience the garden through all senses, and learn about the importance of water in the garden. Throughout the week there were activities for families to have fun and learn together including planting seeds and making crafts, storytelling and music.



AIS Construction, Inc 'Back to the Al Fresco Table' with local chefs doing demonstrations in a gourmet outdoor kitchen with fruits, vegetables and herbs from an urban kitchen garden by The Chicago Botanic Garden (with help from Scott Byron & Co.)

'The Marketplace' with more than 2 dozen vendors selling tools, cut flowers, wine, how-to books, and even plants.

Chicago Community Gardens- more than 400 gardens in Chicago, GreenNet Chicago, www.greennetchicago.org

There were many more spectacular gardens that we all enjoyed. To check out the full list of Exhibitors including their lists of plants used, go to: www.gardeninacity.org

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