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[Kids help plant Peace Garden in Youngstown](#)

By Don Glynn Niagara Gazette

YOUNGSTOWN — They were small for green thumbs but they proved a big helping hand with plantings Wednesday for the Peace Garden project in Falkner Park.

Under the watchful eyes of parents and teachers, some 20 pre-schoolers from the day care facility at the First Presbyterian Church, Main Street, planted marigolds in pots around the new garden. It marked the first formal event at the site.

It's part of an international effort to commemorate the peace that has prevailed between the U.S. and Canada since the War of 1812 ended. The garden project is an initiative by the Binational Economic & Tourism Alliance, area arts councils, the International Peace Garden Foundation and community partners.

After a briefing by Gaylynn Long, chairman of the Youngstown Bicentennial Peace Garden Committee, the excited youngsters from "The Children's House," the Montessori center at the church, scurried to add some dirt and water to the tiny plants. One child, who obviously didn't take to the "marigold" name, insisted on calling his a sunflower.

"Our all-volunteer committee has been meeting for almost a year planning and organizing the process," said Nancy Gruelich, a spokesperson for the eight-member garden committee,

"We need to meet the standards of the official Bicentennial Art of Peace Garden Project and make this dream come true."

She said the major fundraiser has been the sale of commemorative bricks soon to be placed as part of the walkway that approaches the garden. The Youngstown Public Works Department has offered to lay the bricks.

The garden will be formally dedicated Aug. 20 with dignitaries from both sides of the border and members of the Tuscarora Nation participating in the ceremony. That event will be part of the annual Community Picnic in Falkner Park.



Pre-K students from The Children's House at First Presbyterian Church in Youngstown get a lesson on planting plants from Gaylynn Long, chairman of the Youngstown Bicentennial Peace Garden Committee, who recruited the local children to help plant flowers in the garden at Falkner Park. The garden will be formally dedicated on Aug. 20. James Neiss



Pre-K student Anna Cumbo, 4, from The Children's House at the First Presbyterian Church, waters a plant she just planted in the Youngstown War of 1812 Bicentennial Art of Peace Garden at Falkner Park. James Neiss