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Evanston Review



Residents of The Mather recently showcased the retirement community's lush gardens. | PROVIDED

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A lavender in full bloom. | PHOTO BY LORI KEENAN

Mather residents enjoy downtown gardening spot

PIONEER PRESS STAFF

Some residents of The Mather are reaching for their garden tools these days on the retirement community's two acres of lush greenery located just east of downtown.

Mather officials hosted a garden walk July 17 through their award-winning grounds east of Davis and Hinman, just east of Evanston's downtown, celebrating its diverse gardens of roses, bonsais, vegetables and herb sections.

The Mather offers its residents several gardens with specially designed access for residents with limited mobility.

Raised gardens, "plant-your-own" plots and EarthBox gardening tools are some of the features offered in the two acres of lush greenery.

"I especially enjoy watching the neighboring boxes burst into beauty while learning the names of the flowers new to me," resident Mary Quaid

says. "Our maturing public trees, plantings, rose trellis sculptures and singing birds are joys to behold."

Among older adults everywhere, gardening is also proven to be a powerful form of health and healing. The interaction with botany is not only great physical activity, according to a 2011 University of Nevada study, but the integration with nature and community is important for healing, especially for adults with Alzheimer's.

For others still, gardening provides a liberating sense of enjoyment.

"The outdoors give me a feeling of freedom," said Frances Savage, who maintains a garden with her daughter. "Now with my low vision I have to have help, but it still remains my responsibility. It gets me out into the garden where I get to meet other people interested in gardening."

The public can have a lot at the residents handiwork. The gardens are open to the public daily from noon to 4 p.m. ■