The Learning Gardens at Kradwell surround Kradwell School, located on the 30-acre campus of Aurora Behavioral Health, 1220 Dewey Ave., just south of the village in Wauwatosa. The gardens were installed in October of 2010.

As Kradwell is an alternative school for grades 5 - 12, the gardens were designed not only for students to learn the basics of seed starting and transplanting, along with plant nutritional value, but also to enjoy the therapeutic aspect of the outdoors and the garden ambiance. To that end, a vegetable garden was augmented with an upland prairie, two rain gardens, a sensory garden, a butterfly garden, a gazebo and a pond. Besides students, staff and clients of Aurora can also be found taking advantage of the peaceful setting.

In the past, herbs, tomatoes, peppers and squash have been used in easy recipes for the students to eat, often for the first time. Decorative gourds and pumpkins have been combined with tall grasses to make fall decorations for the porch area in front of the school.

Geri-lynn Bialzik (markgerilyn@icgglobal.net) is the garden chair, Kelly Kramer (kelkramer@hotmail.com) is co-chair. Feel free to contact either with questions or if you’d like information on volunteering.