

Garden club teaches Habitat homeowners about lawn care

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CONWAY — The Mountain Garden Club chairperson for Habitat for Humanity projects, Ralph Lutjen, developed course materials to conduct a free series of lawn clinics for the Mount Washington Valley Habitat for Humanity homeowners on Morrell Drive in Conway during the 2011 growing season.

The first session in May was instructional, giving the residents an idea of what was necessary to create and maintain a healthy lawn, outlined in a handout prepared by Lutjen. The initial “get-onboard” session was enthusiastically attended by all of the homeowners.



Kerri Descoteaux and her son liming the lawn in front of their Habitat home in June.

In the beginning of June, there was a hands-on lawn preparation and seeding at the 11 homes in the community. The Master Gardener’s Association generously provided a grant of \$345 to help the garden club cover the cost of materials, which included one ton of lime, seven 50-pound bags of fertilizer, seven 25-pound bags of grass seed, and one 25-pound bag of clover. Helping the residents with this session were Ralph Lutjen, Jackie Hamblet, both Master Gardeners, and Russ Norton, the Agricultural Resources Educator at the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension in Conway. Bob Magoun, a board member at Habitat for Humanity, was a huge help instructing the group on the spreading of lime, fertilizer and grass seed.

There will be two more sessions. In mid-summer, Lutjen and Norton will conduct an instructional clinic on lawn mower maintenance. They will supply spark plugs, air filters, oil and sharpen blades on the homeowners’ lawn mowers. A final evaluation of homeowners efforts will be held in the fall, as well as tips on how the prepare the lawns for wintering over.