



Submitted photo

Amy Shaklee and her sons, Noah (middle) and Eli, apply yellow paint to rocks and boulders in the Kulshan Creek community garden. The Shaklees belong to the Mount Vernon Second Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. They were participating in the church's annual day of service.

Kulshan neighborhood focus of fall cleanup by church volunteers

By KATHY BOYD
Features Writer

MOUNT VERNON — A church's recent day of service benefited the Kulshan Creek neighborhood.

Dozens of parishioners — nearly the entire Mount Vernon Second Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints — turned out Saturday, Sept. 17, to complete a number of community service projects within the Kulshan community. They also improved the new off-leash dog park at Bakerview Park.

Three people spearheaded the projects: Megan Petterson, animal-control officer with the Mount Vernon Police Department; Kulshan Creek Neighborhood Resource Officer Jon Gerondale; and Second Ward project organizer Tanya Garcia.

Petterson said about 80 volunteers — adults, teens and young children — worked to create a covered cedar structure at the dog park. Then they built a culvert and sitting area at the entrance to the Kulshan Creek community garden and installed a community activity board along the Kulshan Creek walking trail.

Garcia said the church chose the Kulshan project for its annual day of service because it would benefit a

large number of people and take a relatively short time to complete. She said she felt fortunate to work with Petterson and Gerondale, who helped identify tasks that were easy to complete in just a few hours and were flexible enough to accommodate all the volunteers, even children as young as 3.

"I feel it is very important to teach our children at a young age to serve and show their friends that ... they, too, have made a huge difference in their community," Garcia said.

The church particularly was interested in the garden aspect of the project, to enable families without yards or gardens to grow their own produce.

"What better way to help, especially in these times of need," Garcia said.

The volunteers also built four bookshelves for the Kulshan Creek Neighborhood Station, applied coats of paint on neighborhood signs and picked up trash along the Kulshan walking trail between North LaVenture Road and Bakerview Park.

Petterson said the finished projects are a boon to Mount Vernon residents.

"The dog park and Kulshan Creek neighborhood have been greatly improved, and the community can be proud of the work accomplished," she said.