

# A Romp in Our Shadow Garden

It's been 10 years since the Children's Art Project at M. D. Anderson Cancer Center published a story book, but this year they're at it again with *Our Shadow Garden*.

The latest story book is both educational and an interesting read. The storyline focuses on a grandmother who loves to garden, but has been prohibited from being in the sunlight. Her young grandchild and husband conspire to make to make her happy again, coming up with a special garden that blooms at night.

Hence, *Our Shadow Garden* is planted. In the book there are sidebars where young readers can learn about special plants that thrive in the nighttime and nocturnal birds, bats and bugs. There's even a gardening glossary and instructions on how to plant a seed.

Cherie Colburn, author of *Our Shadow Garden*, which is illustrated by pediatric patients in the Children's Cancer Hospital at The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, was on hand recently for the finale of Kolter Garden Week. All students in Kolter Elementary School participated in planting new vegetable, wildflower, butterfly, Texas native plant and other types of gardens at the school. Colburn, who is also a certified Texas Master Gardener, was there to read the book to the kindergarten students and to celebrate a student who will soon complete his treatment for leukemia.

The book's text is based on Colburn's own issues with a disease that kept her out of the sunlight for a time. Colburn is a landscape designer and owner of Nature's Tapestry. In addition, she is also a freelance garden writer and has been a garden/feature writer for numerous publications. Colburn is owner/developer of [www.GardenStops.com](http://www.GardenStops.com), a site for

Texas gardening info and a frequent speaker for various organizations, including garden clubs and community groups. *Our Shadow Garden* is her gift to the children of the M. D. Anderson Cancer Center's Children's Art Project to show the love and healing power inherent in gardening.

The artwork in the book has all been created by young patients in the Children's Cancer Hospital at M. D. Anderson. While some of the art is new, inspired by the Children's Art Project's educational classroom curriculum in the Children's Cancer Hospital, other art has been previously published before finding a new use in *Our Shadow Garden*.

The Children's Art Project at M. D. Anderson began in 1973. Through worldwide sales of young cancer patients' artwork featured on seasonal note cards and gifts, the project has funded educational programs, college scholarships, summer camps, ski trips, the Child Life program and other exciting



Pat Casey, grandmother; Peggy Stewart, principal; teachers Ella Menefee, Mary-o Yeager and Debby Rapp; Cherie Colburn; and teacher Joy Hoyos. Carrie and Peyton Busch, kindergarten, are in front.

activities that benefit cancer patients and their families.

Each child with art in the book is a current or former cancer patient at M. D. Anderson.

Our Shadow Garden, which re-

tails for \$20, is available through the Children's Art Project at their Uptown Park retail store, online at [www.childrensart.org](http://www.childrensart.org) or by calling (800) 231-1580 to place an order or receive a free catalog.