

## Greenacres South Ornamental Ponds Gets A Facelift



Intern Mike Secrest shows off the “25 pound tea bag” of barley straw pellets we placed in the greenhouse pond in May 2004

Greenacres South Ornamental Pond was once a beautiful showpiece that featured a small waterfall, but neglect over the years has resulted in this feature becoming an eyesore choked with weeds. In Summer 2003, Greenacres Foundation and Greenacres Farm jointly sponsored Mike Secrest, a local middle school teacher from Winton Middle School, in a special intern project to restore the pond and waterfall. The project included getting the aquatic weed problem under control, restoring the waterfall fountain, and planting trees and other vegetation in and around the pond. To get the weeds under control, rakes were used to literally comb the weeds out of the water and onto the shore where they were composted. Then the pond was drained and the remaining algae were removed. Several options were considered to restore the waterfall and re-circulate water in the ponds. In preparation, an electric service line was extended to the ponds to run the pumps and work has been done to replace the shut off valves needed to keep water in the pond. A variety of wetland and other plants were also planted on the island and around the pond last fall. This summer 2004 an old swimming pool pump will be installed to begin circulating the water.

To keep the pond free of algae and weeds, it was treated with Barley Straw Pellets in May 2004, a commercially available natural product to prevent re-growth of the algae. Barley straw has been used for centuries in European ponds to control algae naturally with no chemicals. The old method called for bales to be thrown into the pond or lake, but newer methods use pellets or a concentrated liquid. We used pellets sewn into a burlap bag that looks like a giant 25-pound tea bag in our pond. Next spring we hope to add additional trees,

shrubs, and other plantings. This fall Mike provided Greenacres with a detailed report of both his inventory work and a summary of his special project. We would like to thank Mike for all of his hard work and his contributions to Greenacres