


**Blooming
Saint Paul
Showcase
2024**



BLOOMING SAINT PAUL SHOWCASE

Celebrating the folks making Saint Paul more vibrant through gardening





PEACE







“Our garden is expanding and changing every year and I'm so happy to bring the community joy! We're on a corner lot and are trying to utilize all the spaces around our home, including the boulevards and spaces along the alley, to create a haven for birds and pollinators!”





813







My garden has brought me joy for the past 30 years and I am happy when others, both human and non-human, enjoy it too. Wherever I go I love to see flowers. I've been inspired by and traded plants with many other gardeners. This garden was made through lots of trial and error. Every year I expanded it until our whole yard is now garden. I didn't like to mow and I like to weed, though I don't need to weed very often because I use a living mulch. If it isn't a weed and I don't mind it growing there I let it be. My garden is different each season and has evolved over time to include more and more native plants. Spring is my favorite season, with species crocuses and native woodland wildflowers; in summer my native prairie (my latest experiment) is in bloom; in fall asters and goldenrods take over; last to bloom are the fall crocuses, always a pleasant surprise. I try to keep my paths clear—but my garden is usually vigorously doing its own thing and that's what I love most.

Spring



Summer



Fall







213







“This spring we had an arborist out who told us our 70 year old Norway Maple tree was at the end of its life and needed to be removed for safety reasons. We had it taken down in March and that has really made a big difference in our backyard landscape. We are constructing a first floor bedroom addition on the back of our house starting this fall so the backyard landscape will change again and look totally different next Spring. It’s a challenge but also an opportunity.

“This is a before picture which includes the tree.”



“After the removal of the tree.”

“All the backyard perennials will have to be moved to a temporary ‘holding’ garden offsite.”



“This perennial hibiscus doesn’t break dormancy til sometimes mid-June and then it grows into this by mid-August. It’s magic!”





“This is the 4th year for my boulevard gardens in front. It amazes me how fast things fill in. I tend to ‘overplant’.”







297

BEWARE
OF THE DOG



1509

Amy
Klobuchar
OUR UNITED STATES SENATOR
www.amyklobuchar.com
2018



“Hope you enjoy some of these from my garden. I’m honored to be nominated for the 2024 showcase. It’s wonderful to have someone acknowledge my work, although it’s a labor of love. My neighborhood is filled with people who respect their property and do their best to have a community of beautiful and ecologically sustainable yards and gardens. It makes me so happy!”

















866

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“Things I have learned in 45+ years gardening:

- Gardening is a process, not a project. There is no completion date and there will always be things that need attention.

- Plan an entire garden, then break it into phases, otherwise the time spent, heavy labor needed, and costs could kill you. It will also give you the opportunity to see how plants progress and adjust. (see the art of compromise below)

- The art of compromise. I have my plan and Mother Nature has her plan. Mother Nature wins every single time. I have learned to adjust my plan accordingly. There are so many plants that I would love to grow but they just will not flourish or even survive in my gardens. A lesson learned many times over!

- Mother Nature does not do formal balance. A garden designed with plantings on one side mirroring the ones on the other side is a recipe for frustration and sadness. The plants will not be twins of each other over time.



“ Plants may love fish emulsion and bone meal. My dogs also love to eat both, and they will dig and destroy plants to be able to eat either/both, generally right after I just finished planting and fertilizing. Not good! I now use them only in gardens that are safe from dogs, mine or anyone else’s.

• Over 45+ years I have developed several favorite perennial plants, including:

- o Peonies – I have tree peonies, herbaceous and Itoh

- o Bloodroot – Native early Spring wildflower that makes big clumps over time

- o Bleeding Heart – Makes really big clumps and doesn’t die back in my gardens

- o Tulips and daffodils

- o Showy Lady Slipper – She gets babied a lot!

- o Anne Magnolia

Since they are all Spring flowering, I have worked to incorporate many others to help fill in the growing and flowering season. I like them but they are not as special to me.



“ I recommend having a drip irrigation system to anyone who cares for gardens. I installed mine about 9 years ago. It has 9 different zones due to the size of my gardens. It has made a HUGE difference in the vitality and hardiness and happiness of all my plants. It takes me about 3-4 hours in the early Spring (before everybody gets too tall for me to find all the hoses and sprinklers) to do the repairs and maintenance and then it's good to go for the season. It's a really easy DIY project after a bit of a learning curve.

- Green grass (lawn) is a concept that needs rethinking. It's what we grew up with but that doesn't make it a good idea. Step back and think about the rituals of lawns...

- o repeatedly fertilizing to make it grow (with run off into our aquifers)

- o cutting it repeatedly because it grows

- o Using weed killer to eliminate natives that aren't grass

That's a huge amount of time and money spent with very little benefit and some serious long-term costs to the environment.



“Over the last few years, I have seeded my backyard (where the dogs hang out) with clover. This year I have mowed 3 times (it’s the end of July), mainly to cut down weeds. The clover is much more resilient to dog traffic than grass ever was, and the pollinators are very busy when it blooms.

I have encouraged Wild Violets in the front yard. In the Spring they are a gorgeous carpet of white, lavender and purple blossoms (giving pollinators early food options) and they only grow about 3-4” tall.

I have mowed once to cut back weeds and the “native lawn” looks greener than the neighbors.”









[Click here to watch the story](#)





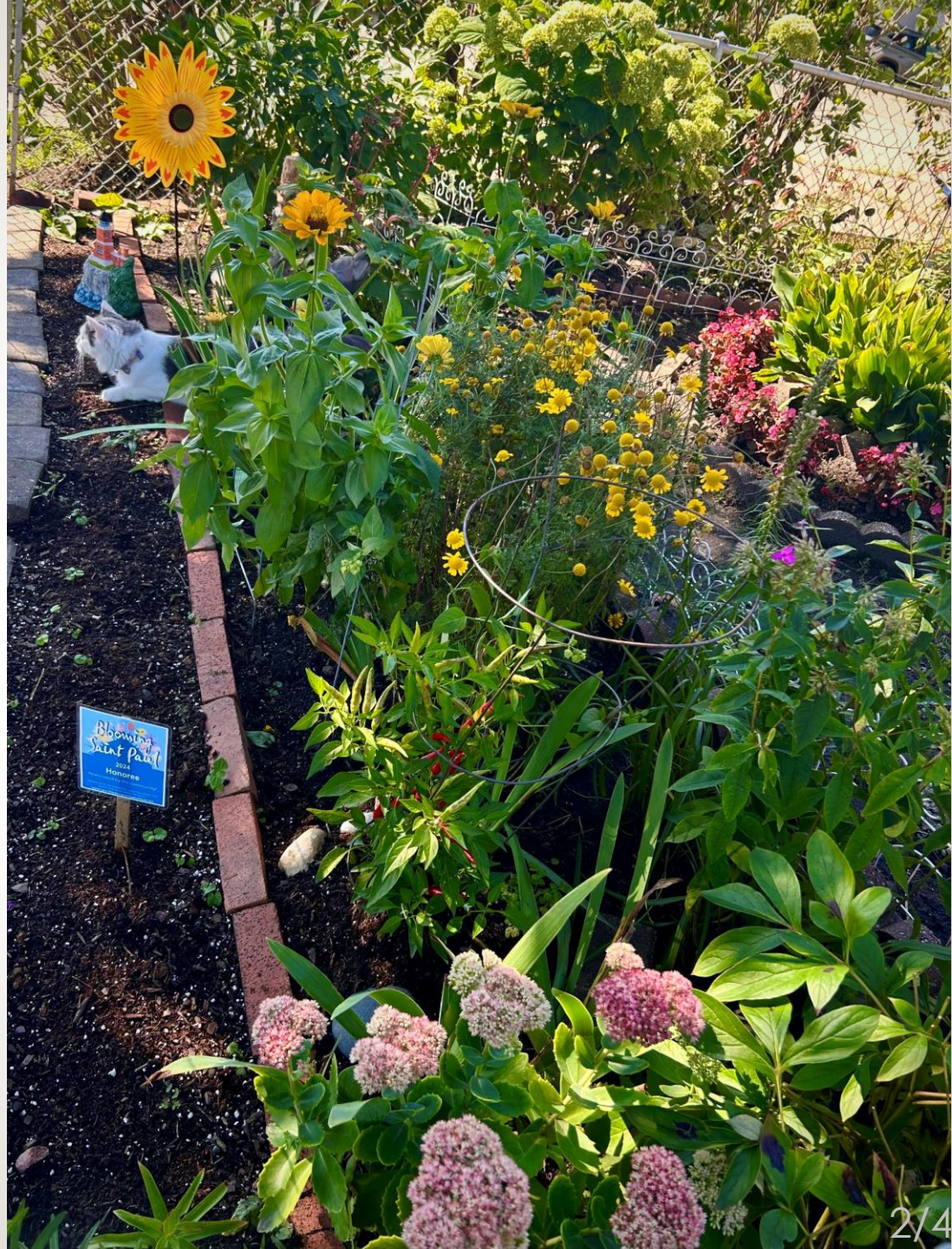
WILDLIFE HABITAT



2255



“Thank you for nominating our garden. Ever since I immigrated from the Philippines, gardening has been very fun and relaxing for me, and it's my therapy before work. I love planting in the spring while my cats sit outside with me and watch what I'm doing, then I like to sit under the umbrella when I'm done for the day. I'm an avid fan of the color yellow and plant my favorite sunflowers in the backyard every year. In the front yard, we keep a hibiscus plant in the summer that my mother-in-law gifted my husband and I for our wedding. We bring it inside the house every winter to save it from the cold, and it's now over 40 years old. The birds enjoy the bird bath whenever the cats aren't attempting to drink from it, and it's still standing strong even though it's older than my grown daughter. Knowing that people enjoy seeing our garden motivates us to work even harder to beautify it next year, and thank you so much for your appreciation.”







1153

Blowing Rock Plant
2024
Horticulture





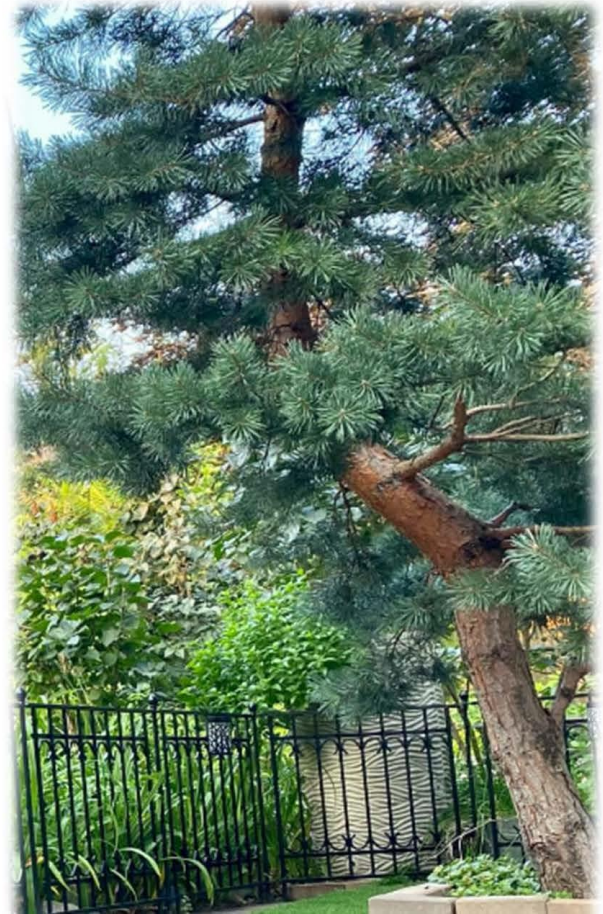
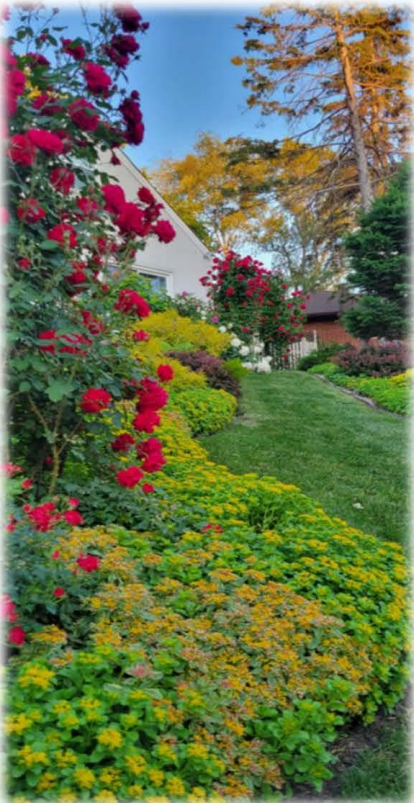
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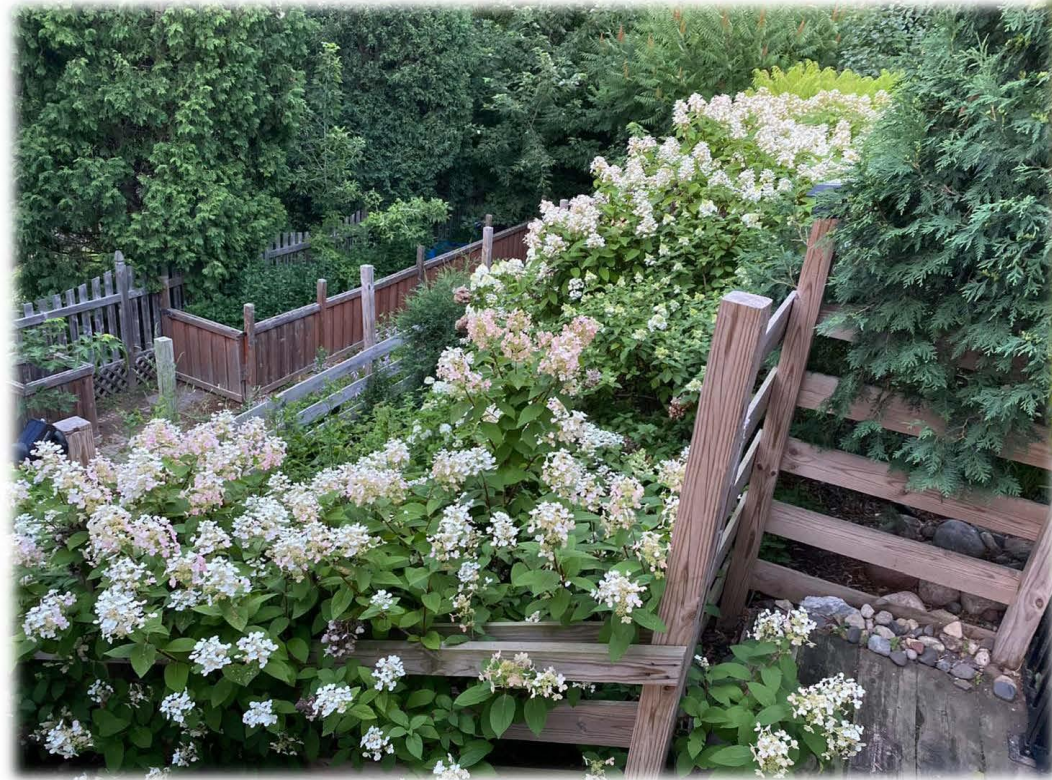
HOME

Blue Sign

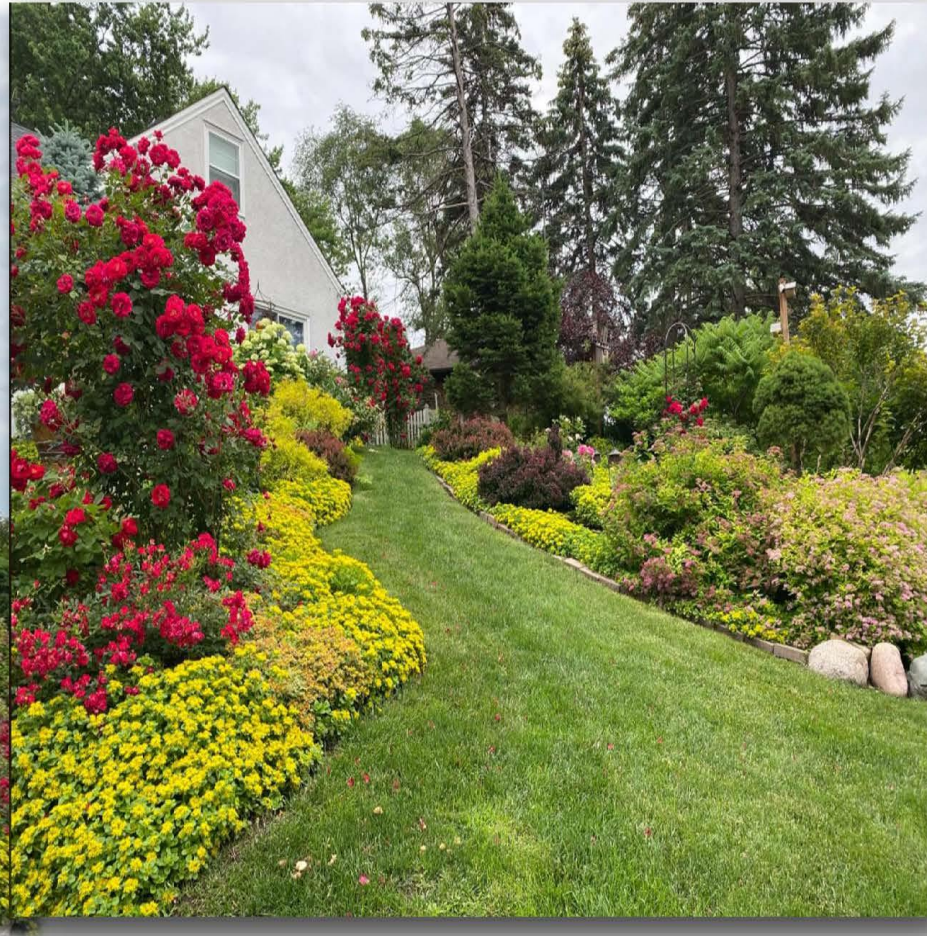
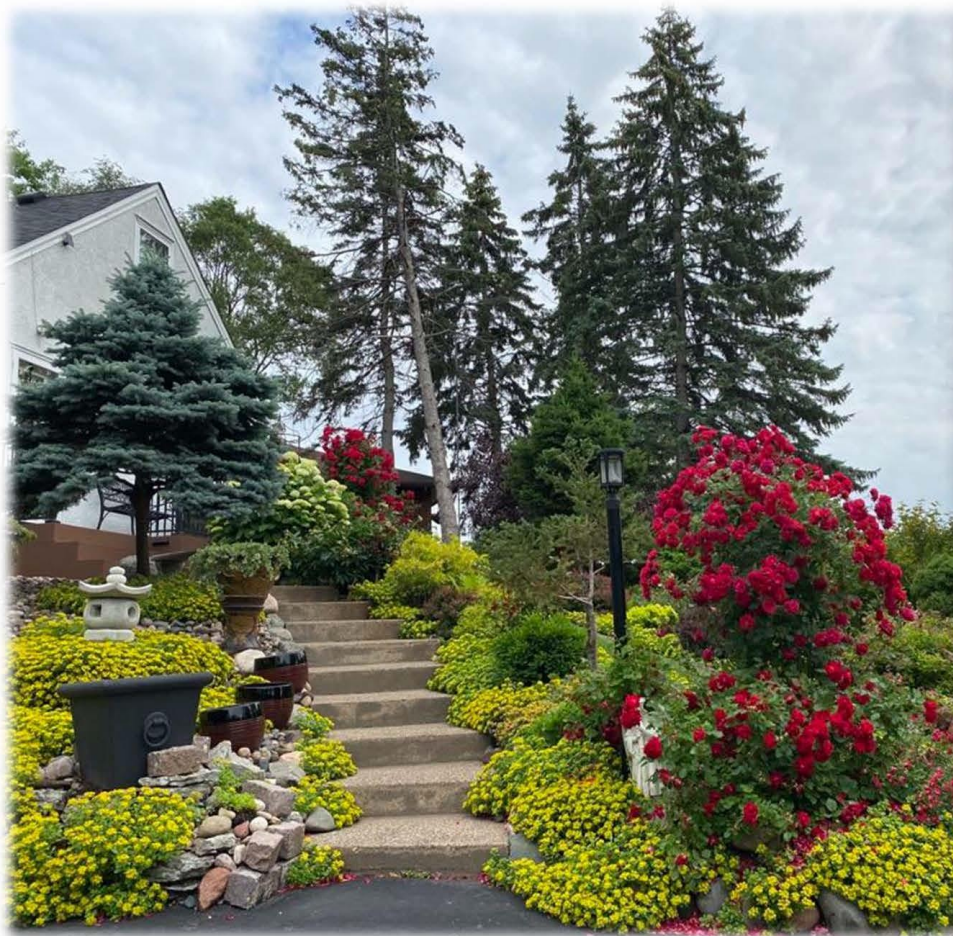
Gardening is food for my soul. When I'm in the garden, I'm in the moment. It's my escape, my happy place. It makes my world beautiful



**“My Secret Garden, a place
where you can't remember,
and you can't forget”**



Front Yard



FRONT OF THE HOUSE



FRONT OF THE HOUSE



Zen Garden



Dog Park



**Doggies Welcome
people tolerated**



Court yard



Night Life front of the house



Birds are welcome





Steppingstones leading to the backyard. I like to use mixed plants that give me year-round colors





2172



My Gardens



*Every nook,
every corner
has its special
blooms*

*Gifts to the bees,
butterflies,
insects, and birds*

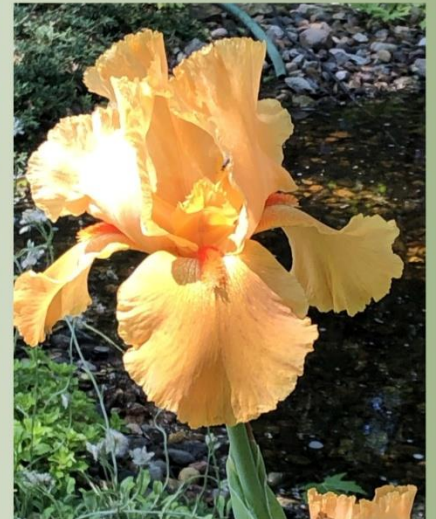
*Gifts for the
spirit and soul*

Blooms for the chill of spring

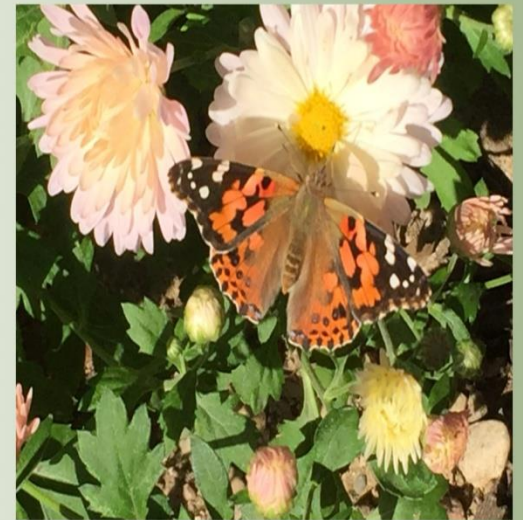
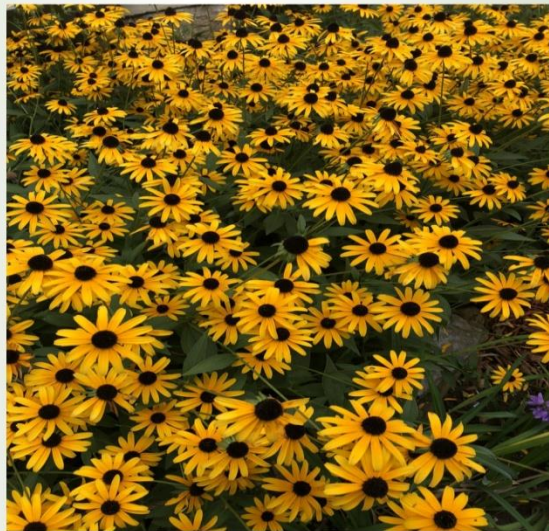




Blooms to sweeten the breath of summer



*Blooms that
defy the frosts
of fall*



Gifts from family, friends, and self
Gifts to the passersby









“When we installed a retaining wall in 2020 across the front of the house, I designed it to allow for a raised garden bed and converted the rest of the lawn on the top tier of the yard into a vegetable garden. My passion for growing veggies in my own yard started when I was an inaugural participant in the Beans on the Boulevard program, a collaborative project between Growing West Side and the West Side Community Organization. All these years later I'm still growing beans in my yard every year on the tall trellis next to the front door.

My flower beds have also evolved over the last four years as I've become more aware of the need for native plants to support the pollinators. I've been working to add more native plants including blazing star liatris, purple cone flowers, swamp milkweed, and butterfly milkweed. My yard is now filled with butterflies, bees, and fireflies.”





LEXINGTON-HAMLIN COOPERATIVE GARDEN
SHARING
GARDEN
FREE TO PICK

CUCUMBER









“I am filled with gratitude to be the caretaker of my small plot of land. Gardening and photography - my two greatest passions - combine perfectly in this beautiful place I call home. My front yard is mostly perennials and native plants, providing habitat for wildlife.”















BLACK LIVES MATTER

1001



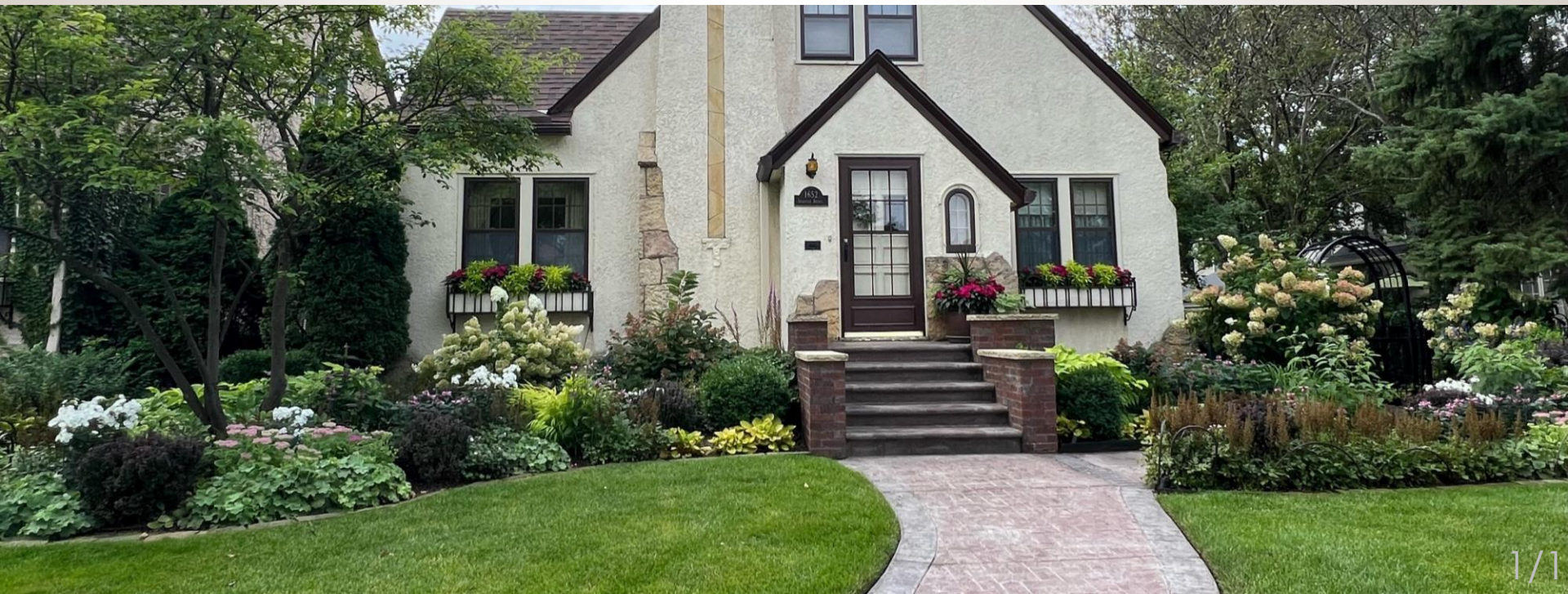
1139

“My garden is a labor of love.

At this time of the year [July] I enjoy watching the birds, butterflies, and bees flittering around.

They are checking out the:

- Hydrangeas “White Diamond, Torch, and Little Lime
- Phlox – White Flame
- Turtlehead (Chelone) Hot Lips and Tiny Tortuga
- Sedums – Neon and Carl
- Astilbes – Purple Candles, Lavendar late – tall
 - Vision in Red are finished
- Annuals
 - Azalia – Sun King – tall lime
 - Compact Purple Impatiens – window boxes
 - Coleus Flame Thrower Lime
 - Salvia guaranitica – Black and Blue
- Serviceberry Tree – birds cover the Juneberries”





THIS HOUSE IS
WASTING LESS





“The Story of My Gardening Life

I have always loved to grow things. My mother was an avid gardener, and I have fond memories of going to the nursery with her after the last day of school to get the plants for that summer’s garden. She taught me to identify plants and where to grow them. She taught me how to grow tomatoes the way my grandfather did. My father, whose parents escaped Russian shtetl in 1908, taught me how to plant potatoes the way his father always did. On vacation we went hiking and identifying the plants and birds along the way was part of the adventure.



“In 1975 my husband and I bought a kind of run down house in Merriam Park with a yard that was all grass and snow-on-the-mountain. He worked on the house and I worked on a large vegetable garden in the back yard. Flowers were mostly annuals that I planted in the front yard. The first year we lived here the city cut down the old elm tree on the boulevard, we planted a maple tree. For many years, as we raised our son, the vegetables were the highlight of our summer. I then became more interested in ornamentals and creating habitat for the birds and the veggie gardens shrank as I began to plant other things.



“Then, my husband became ill and I could no longer care for the veggie garden, nor could I eat all the vegetables. 10 years ago, he passed, leaving me with a half-renovated house and a mess of a yard. I retired and decided to do something about it. I began with improving the house and finishing the renovations. In the summer and fall of 2014 I decided I could no longer mow the steep bank in the front of the house. I called on a landscaper and said I wanted no more grass to mow both in the front and in the back (the green patch in the photo of the back is clover and wild flowers). Huge boulders became a part of the design that fall and I joked about the job of caring for the boulders through the winter.



“As I thought about what to plant that winter, I realized that I wanted to create a wildlife habitat the best way I could in the city. The following spring, again with some help from a designer, we planted many kinds of perennials. I put up bird feeders and houses. Over the following ten years things have matured, I got through two years of drought, and now my yard is the most beautiful it has ever been. I continue to have some help on the maintenance of the yard, and I do some of the work myself, introducing more native plants to the landscape each year. This fall I am going to “rewild” the boulevard, hopefully into a mini-Minnesota prairie.



“Thank you Northern Gardener magazine and the MSHS for ideas! Thank you, Bluebird Gardening, for not thinking I am nuts. Thank you to my non-gardening friends who put up with my excited phone calls about an amazing flower or bird. Thank you to my neighbors who were a little hesitant about what I was doing, some of whom are now following my lead. Thank you to my son who let me put in a veggie garden in his sunnier backyard a short distance away and helps care for it. Thank you, St. Paul, for being a great city to live in!”











"Historically, I have not been known to have a green thumb, and I've certainly killed more plants than I've kept alive. When I bought this house in 2017, I didn't even give much thought to the garden. My main focus was finding an old house--I love antiques, history, and imagining the lives of those who went before us. Luckily, this one came with an established garden and a big old sugar maple that shaded the back patio.



“In those first years as I worked to maintain the garden, I became exceedingly aware of the neighbor's garden kitty corner to ours. It always seemed to be in bloom with the most interesting and varied assortment of plants--drawing regular admiration of those passing by. I felt intimidated by the mastery playing out across the street and was surprised when, after meeting the owner, she told me gardening is just moving things around your yard and experimenting with what does and does not work. This demystified things for me and gave me the confidence to do some of my own experimentation.



“When our beautiful sugar maple came down, I was at a loss of what to do. I recalled my neighbor's thoughts years before and started moving some things around to see how they would do. This resulted in a thick row of lilies running the length of our fence and wrapping up around the driveway. The clematis thrived in its newfound sunlight, and it quickly grew down the fence and around the corner. We also planted a new sugar maple that is doing well!



“After an uncertain start to my gardening journey, I've learned that I love it more each day and for the same reasons I love old houses. I often think of my neighbor (who passed a few years back) and her magical garden and wise advice. I often think of those who lived in this house before me and their contributions to the yard. Gardens might offer beauty and decoration to the cityscape, but I think they also offer a direct connection to those who went before us. What a lucky and lively way to connect our city's past, present, and future.”









“Thank you for the nomination. It meant a lot to see my garden acknowledged for the hard work we have put into it. We moved in four years ago and have transformed a plain green lawn into a front yard garden filled with vegetables, berries, annuals and a lush boulevard pollinator garden.



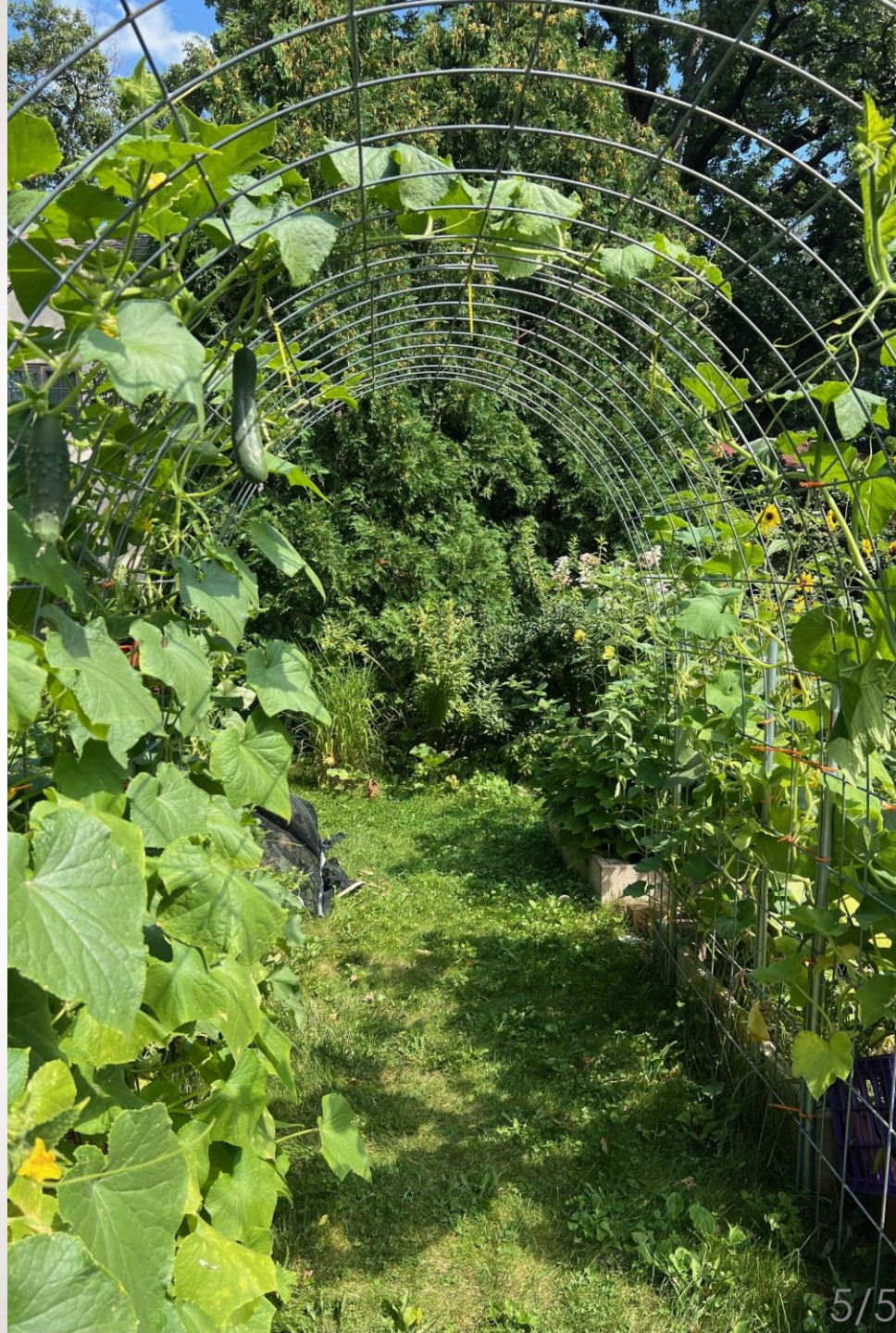
“I have always admired others in the gardening community and decided I wanted to try my hand at it. We started with small pollinators (1-2” high) in 2020. We then found some free, mismatched bricks and dug out an area around the street light to create our bee playground. It has grown to over four feet tall and expanded beyond what we imagined. Being able to watch the bees dance around the hyssop, bee balm, coneflowers and asters while having a constant buzzing sound is just magical and stress reducing. The monarch watching isn't too bad either with all the milkweed.



“After we lost our boulevard tree to storm damage, we added two raised garden beds to try our hand at vegetables. It was a success and over the next two years we went from 2 to 3 to 6 garden beds! We also added our beloved cow panel to allow trellising of squash, cucumber and cantaloupes. This year our garden has had an abundance of tomatoes, zucchini, raspberries, strawberries, tomatoes, onions, cantaloupe, potatoes, peppers, beets, carrots, radishes, turnips, and blueberries.



“We have grown most plants from seed and it’s become a hobby which the whole family has come to enjoy.”











How my Garden Grows

Summer of 2024

"I would like to say thank you to my community for this nomination honoring my yard. Thank you everyone who stopped, I've spoken with about it, and thank you for your kind words, I really appreciate them.

I would also like to say thank you for giving me this opportunity to share, A bit more of my creativity with our community.



“I love the mud just so everyone knows, I like to wiggle it between my toes!
But wait, that’s totally off the topic?

Ok.....moving along.....

How my garden grows:

All I really do? Is save my seeds, I hide them in a good dry and dark place, (my basement). I put them in any type of paper - (not wax) but also cardboard works.

Then when I feel it’s our last Real Snow, or one real close to it.

You know? the kind that melts faster than it fell?

I go out in my yard, I throw my seeds by the handful! Anywhere I think I want them to be, then I wait and see what comes of it... It’s a surprise every time.



“From time to time I move some of the plants. I like to move them around so they can have their space. I give a lot away to my family and friends.

But I think our **Mother Earth** does all the real hard work. All that you see growing?

That's Her Magic!

No, it wasn't me. **Because** all I really do is throw seeds out into the snow! It's fun.

I feel my yard is thanks to our EARTH, and would like to take this opportunity to

Honor our Earth.



I like to Say Thank You!
To You **EARTH.**

Thanks for giving us a Home, where we can live, be prosperous, where we thrive, we all Have one Mother, One Earth, One True Home, For All Life.

So I say Thankyou Mother Earth You and your life-giving waters, you made this nomination possible, and with the delicate balance, this is how my garden grew.

Truly yours,
ADM

I'm so glad you enjoyed my yard 2024!







"I'm 75 years old and have been a Gardener since April, 1996. I began gardening as a way of coping with the passing of my beautiful and endearing mother. I'm a self-taught gardener.

Over the past 28 years, I've removed about 90% of all of the grass in my yard on my own, amended all the soil, purchased all the plants, dug holes, planted each plant, laid all the mulch, pruned, weeded, and divided plants on my own. What I needed to learn, I talked with local greenhouses, read books and sought out information on the Internet. One year I laid 4,000 lbs. of peat gravel to make a path on the top of my yard for the mailman to walk across and deliver my mail. I'd say at least 90% of all of my Perennials and Annuals are Pollinators, filling the yard with hundreds of bees and butterflies on a daily basis. Several years ago I added window boxes which display flowers and decorations depending on the time of season we're in I also added a trellis to showcase my climbing roses.



“I've given neighbors information about gardening, and also provided them with my Fall division of plants. There's numerous fun-gardening neighbors on my block here in St. Paul!

I planted a "Flowering Crab Tree" in the yard, and there's plenty of activity with the Bird Houses and Birdbath close by. My house is almost 100 years old! I was born and raised less than a mile from where I live.”











“Much of our garden we can’t see from our porch
Splashes of color draw the eye
For anyone passing by
It is our gift for them
And no mowing is required!”











[Click here to watch the story](#)



“Welcome to the garden of 735 Geranium, on the East Side of Saint Paul. We’ve taken inspiration from the name of our street and have hot pink geraniums hanging from baskets on the wrap-around porch. This is a joint effort between myself, Denise (the landlord) and Rachel (the tenant) who has lived here for eight years. The baskets and the pots are all Rachel. They started small and grow more elaborate every year. She overwinters the geraniums down in the basement, and in the spring adds annuals like petunias and sweet potato vine. She and her husband Curtis made a clever irrigation system leading to every basket and pot; it’s on a timer, so she never has to worry about watering.



“I am responsible for the foundation plants. When I bought this duplex, in 2013, there was almost nothing growing here. First, I decided that old-fashioned Annabelle hydrangeas would look just right around the porch, since it dates to 1903. In the back I planted a living fence of Limelight hydrangeas. I bought these Limelights on clearance when they were one foot tall and almost dead. That’s one way I’ve been able to transform this yard on a budget. The rhododendrons, the azaleas, the magnolia and the arborvitae—all of them came from the clearance center. So take a risk, and bring home a half-dead Charlie Brown hydrangea...most of the time it will come back to life.



“I’ve discovered over the years that the trick to having a low maintenance garden is to plant bushes, bushes and more bushes. Plant them close enough that they press against each other and jostle for the light—completely shading the ground. I do very little weeding here, and that’s the way I like it.



“Years ago, Rachel asked if part of the back yard could be turned into a vegetable garden. I said “As long as *you* do the weeding there, go for it!” So now, in early spring, she gets together with the other tenant, Emily, to plan what they’re going to grow. This year, it’s tomatoes and tomatillos, hot peppers and bell peppers, herbs, carrots, onions, chives, strawberries and rhubarb, cosmos, zinnias, snapdragons and bluebonnets. They get to eat what they grow—and bring this wonderful color into their homes. The insects also benefit; every year there seem to be more and more butterflies stopping by, which is one of the reasons we let milkweed grow between the roses. We’re hoping that those Monarchs will stay and lay their eggs.



“About half of the housing units in Saint Paul are rental properties — and there’s no reason they can’t be beautiful. Now, I know that very few tenants have as green a thumb as Rachel does. She’s pretty unique. But it’s not unique to take joy in growing your own food, or in picking a bouquet from your very own yard. Landlords: encourage your tenants to plant a garden (if they haven’t already) and they will feel more rooted in their homes. Tenants: ask your landlord to plant some bushes (if the house looks kind of bare), or maybe a young tree—it will beautify your properties. It doesn’t have to be expensive, or time consuming to maintain. Everyone will benefit...tenants, landlords, neighbors walking by, bumblebees, crickets, and of course, the butterflies.”



707

Madam & Resident
Real Estate







1463





405





885

“My garden is my canvas, it is my space for making art and healing. I have a very small yard and I am disabled, so it is so nice when I am able to be out working with my plants, getting dirty. It brings me joy when folks stop and visit, and tell me how much they enjoy my creative experiments. I started with a Monarch way-station garden and now I have mostly shade. Still lots of animals, birds and lovely insects share the space. I garden year-round, overwintering plants in my home and bringing them out into the garden for extra interest. If you stop and look carefully, there are lots of little playful mixes of texture and pops of color in a very small space. I love watching it all change with the seasons and it's different every year as I play with new ideas.

My garden also provides inspiration for artwork and poetry I make and share with friends and family online.”

















1537



“It all started 20+ years ago when I had to lower the crest of the hill in my yard by 17” in order to be able to mow the lawn. And continued when I saw a TED talk which said “grass should be an area rug not wall to wall carpeting.” My dad loved butterflies so I have always gravitated toward plants that bees, butterflies and other insects are attracted to.”













“This garden was made in 2020 to celebrate that we’re all in this together through the pandemic.

My wife was suffering through an illness that ultimately took her life in 2023- scleroderma with complications of pulmonary hypertension, etc..

We had so many people wanting to know about what flowers or what they were,so we put up signs to let people know what flowers they could expect to see.(depending on the wave of wildflowers and the time of year.)

I have also planted a mini food forest of fruit trees, raspberries, strawberries, and a vegetable garden. I am happy the gardens make people smile Shannon Carey would’ve been thrilled. Thank you.”



BE CONSIDERATE
PLEASE LEAVE
THE FLOWERS
IN THEIR NATURAL
HABITAT FOR
ALL TO ENJOY

WERCY
351-30
Dan's Electric
651-7





1700

Blowing Rock
Great Plant
2014
MAY 2014





2071

"I came to laugh, To live out loud...And so I did."














CLEVELAND
GARDEN





“We are so pleased to be nominated for 2024. We were inspired to add a pollinator garden by the lovely native gardens installed by Kate and Andrea on our block. When we saw multiple monarch butterflies visiting these gardens we thought we might add one ourselves. Just today I saw four monarch butterflies visiting the Liatris in our new native flower bed. It is so nice to be recognized for our yard and we thank you!”



**Thanks to all the folks making
Saint Paul more vibrant through
gardening, and the folks that
appreciate all their efforts!**

Nominations for next year's showcase will open in May 2025!

saintpaul.gov/BloomingSaintPaulShowcase