

# These gardens are blooming delights

By JUDITH BERNÉ

People don't realize how much enjoyment they can get out of a garden for the little time put in. That's Bob Heckert's feeling as he assessed energy versus results in terms of his flower beds and vegetable garden now at their peak at his Pinecroft Drive home.

"Some people don't like yard work, per se," said the former commissioner of North Farmington-West Bloomfield Little League Baseball. But he says it's not necessary to give up other leisure time activities to have a thriving garden.

His choice of flowers and planting reflects Heckert's systematic approach to life.

"I like to think of myself as highly organized. I like a formal garden," Heckert said, as he reviewed his begonia bed planted to form a "H" for Heckert. Wooden barrels hosting red and yellow tuberos begonia ring the front of the house and garage.

"I guess what I like is discipline and neatness. Begonias are a neatly structured flower. I know exactly what they're going to do."

NOT SO WITH petunias, which Heckert planted this year for the first — and last — time.

He is completely exasperated with the bed of faded, scraggly petunias where he had sowed 250 immaculate begonias last year. Although the side bed nettled raves from neighbors and those driving through Potomac Green subdivision, Heckert and his family couldn't look out at them from inside their house.

So he dug a new backyard begonia bed and tried the petunias along the side. "I never should have deviated," he mourns. "Petunias are an undisciplined flower."

Heckert's four children give him some help with the yard. His wife Betty is supportive, but is happy to leave the work to him.

"I have to give full credit to my husband. I'm very much a supervisor," she says.

"She's the inside person," Heckert acknowledges. "She's a good example of someone who isn't turned on by outside work."

Heckert does not stand alone in his love of gardening among his Potomac Green neighbors.

Heckert is not alone in his love of gardening in the Potomac Green subdivision where the well-kept yards back up to one another. "I don't know how much is love and how much is intimidation," Heckert laughs.

He leads the way two doors north, where it is evident another



Bob Heckert formed "H" for Heckert out of red and white begonias at the suggestion of his youngest son. A begonia lover, he promises never to repeat this year's petunia fling.

true gardener resides. Marg Colman's backyard is a symphony of color.

A rose bed flanks her chimney. Impatiens ring her patio and a bed boasting a variety of flowers

adds vivid charm. "I like to put in as much as possible. It's less maintenance," says Mrs. Colman. The number and variety of flowers represent "many trips to the nursery," she admits.

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