

Pool digs in as Beautification chair

BY MARY RODRIGUE
STAFF WRITER

Betti Pool is the new chairwoman of the Farmington Hills Beautification Commission, replacing Lincoln Avery.

Pool is a master gardener who has lived in the area her whole life. Her sprawling Farmington Hills ranch on an acre of land has all the markings of a nature and garden lover, from the blazing yellow forsythia marking the eastern edge of her property to the elaborate flower gardens stretching across the front of her home.

Amid tall white birch trees, colors of spring are in full bloom, from the lilacs to tulips to crocuses.

"I want to put a pond in over there," she says, gesturing to a low lying area on the front lawn. "Eventually I'd like the yard to look like a small park."

Pool is full of good ideas on beautification. She was asked to join the beautification commission three years ago, and then asked to run for the chairmanship earlier this year.

"We meet once a month all year long, except December," said Pool, who wears many hats, both civic and career wise.

She is a garden designer for McFarland's Florist and Greenhouse, owner of Plantings by Betti, and past president of the Farmington Garden Club.

Pool is also garden coordinator for the Farmington Historical Museum (Warner Mansion) and a public speaker with over 25 years gardening experience.

"We just started meeting again and will continue to do so every Wednesday morning from 9 until noon at the Warner Mansion," said Pool. "We really need more volunteers. There are about six of us who come out. It's a lot of fun. All gardening tools are provided and you don't have to be



Keeping it green: Betti Pool, new chairwoman of the Farmington Hills Beautification Commission, tends to plants.

knowledgeable about gardening. Anyone who'd like to help can call me at (810) 442-2742."

A former Realtor, she is past president of the Metro Detroit chapter of the National Association of Career Women, was the perennial garden designer for

the Michigan State Extension Service, Tollgate, and a volunteer coordinator for Meadowbrook Festival Gardens.

"I've always enjoyed gardening, being outside," Pool said. "I specialize in perennial gardens. My clients are all ages."

With the beautification commission, Pool hopes to begin a project to improve the landscaping around the Farmington schools.

"They're so plain," she said. Another priority is sprucing up the Farmington Road corridor between Eight Mile and Nine Mile roads.

"The road is going to be widened and sidewalks will be put in," said Pool. "We are going to design a plan to make it prettier."

And plans are already underway for the annual awards breakfast, held in the late fall, to honor local businesses for their beautification efforts.

Pool also hopes to continue to spur businesses toward keeping their properties clean and neat.

"We look at the area near the Dumpsters," she said. "We try to work on areas that need improvement."

She said the commission is currently working with one local business that doesn't spend the funds necessary to keep its appearance.

"They'll put in shrubbery and then never water it or take care of it," she said.

Pool had a beautification tip for even the least of the green thumbs among us.

"A container garden is easy and looks nice by the front door," she said. "Fill the container one third to one half full of Styrofoam popcorn, then a layer of newspaper, before adding soil," she said.

"You don't need it totally full of soil, and the popcorn will keep it lighter weight for moving it around."

Pool's container gardens feature a multitude of plants and colors.

WEDDINGS/ENGAGEMENTS

DEVINE-RIDDELL

Burton Manor before leaving on

Heidi Ann Riddell and Leo C. Devine were married September 22, 1995 in Meadowbrook Congregational Church in Novi by the Rev. E. Neil Hunt. She is the daughter of Paul and Caroline Riddell of Farmington Hills and he is the son of Jack and Theresa Devine of Farmington Hills.

The bride is a graduate of Farmington High School and is employed as a medical biller.

The groom is a graduate of Harrison High School and is employed by Forge Tool & Die in Farmington Hills.

Melissa O'Brien served as maid of honor with bridesmaids Corrie Riddell, Lesley Devine and Pam Carravallah.

Gary Devine served as best man with groomsmen Jerry Weaver, Tom Weaver and Paul Riddell.

The couple received guests at



a trip to Las Vegas. They are making their home in Farmington Hills.

LAHULLIER-NEIKIRK

Robert and Kathy LaHullier of Farmington Hills announce the engagement of their daughter, Tracey, to Jeffrey Neikirk, son of Jerry and Nancy Neikirk of Fuquay Varina, North Carolina.

The bride-to-be is a graduate of Harrison High School and Central Michigan University with a degree in graphic design. She is employed as a graphic designer for O'Brien/Atkins.

Her fiancé is a graduate of Harrison High School and North Carolina State University and is employed by Pet Depot.



A May wedding is planned in Antioch Lutheran Church in Farmington Hills.

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